

ELEMENTS

in collaboration with



Everything under one roof!



ELEMENTS ONE provides a clean collaboration solution for all platforms – to replace dated, “messy” infrastructure

It's all in the name. Post Control deliver precisely what they promise: utmost controlled post-production. With decades of experience, the Helsinki-based facility is the ultimate place for finishing demanding projects. Post Control serves top production companies and creative agencies – and is by far the largest post-production house in Finland. After having finished more than 100 feature films, thousands of commercials and countless TV shows, one can be sure: They know what they're doing.

Topic:
Fast media storage across all fabrics

Project:
Post Control

Partner:
TV Tools Oy

Location:
Helsinki Oy (FIN)

Challenge:
Centralized collaboration

System used:
ELEMENTS ONE
60bay + JBOD
expansion + Media Library

Covering the entire chain of post-production services, Post Control is ready and well equipped to take on every project. From data wrangling and offline editing to color grading, visual effects and online mastering in 2K/4K/DCI/HDR, they even assist in film scanning, printing services and provide sound design.

With their vast experience and expertise, Post Control is also the go-to resource for post-production consulting and supervision to ensure smooth and hassle-free post-production processes after the cameras have stopped.

Roadblock: Legacy infrastructure

While Post Control's company philosophy has always been to apply unconditional flexibility and adaptiveness to every project, their dated IT infrastructure demanded too much of those commendable characteristics over time.

Composed of an Apple Xsan and StorNext-based Fibre Channel SAN storage units, mixed with Ethernet-based NAS nearline storage, the old solution had performed well for many years; however, the overall set-up was rather “messy” and required

high maintenance effort. But even worse: it put noticeable limitations on Post Control's post-production workflows.

“As a high-end post-production house, it's important for us to be in the forefront, also technology-wise. With our renewed post-production platform, we can now handle the growing demands of our clients' local and international productions.”

Toni Valla, Managing Director, Post Control

After the original SAN set-up provided sufficient performance back in the days, the needs of Post Control had changed significantly over time. Larger and more intricate projects increased the demands on performance and collaboration.

The right partner, ready to deliver

TV Tools, our highly experienced partner and strong ELEMENTS advocate in Finland,



Toni Valla, Managing Director

“It was nice to continue our long-lasting partnership with TV Tools and spice it up with cutting edge technology from ELEMENTS.”

Toni Valla, Managing Director,
Post Control

have been serving the field for many years, supplying customized high-end solutions to numerous post-production houses. Thankfully, TV Tools proudly count Post Control to their vast list of patrons and didn't hesitate to introduce ELEMENTS to the post-production professionals.

“After our thorough assessment of their requirements, ELEMENTS was hands down the best solution for Post Control.”

Mikko Kujala, CEO, TV Tools

While the experts at TV Tools have a proven track record of successfully upgrading and replacing outdated and end-of-life systems to bring them in line with increasing demands of modern media workflows, the project with Post Control was particularly challenging. “This wasn't just a simple replacement or upgrade to a newer system – this was a major overhaul with the request to improve and simplify the overall post-production workflow at Post Control,” Mikko Kujala added. “The requirements were rather special, as using the latest high-resolution frame based codecs in a collaborative real-time editing environment was on the list of must-haves.”

These requirements provided the opportunity to utilise the latest technologies in moving from Fibre Channel to an Ethernet only solution.

TV Tools created a dedicated concept, specifically designed for Post Control, outlining a high-end IP workflow accommodating the particular requirements at Post Control.

Embracing everything

From DPX workstations such as Flame, Lustre, 3ds Max, Baselight, Nuke, Houdini, DaVinci Resolve and Cinema 4D: The unusually versatile machine park at Post Control consists of multiple 4K DPX 16bit VFX and color grading suites, and more than 20 clients handling 2K/4K ProRes 4444 – plus, of course, a large number of offline editing workstations.

Despite – or maybe even because of! – this vast variety of different post-production software and hardware tools Post Control is utilizing, covering pretty much all operating systems and workstation types available today, the higher goal was to create a solution that

would allow unifying all storage needs in a single infrastructure.

Creating a 21st century infrastructure

While the offline editing suites, handling compressed media assets, merely needed standard 10Gb Ethernet connectivity, the DPX clients undoubtedly required high-speed performance similar to a Fibre Channel network.

ELEMENTS ONE, the media storage solution allowing to simply connect all clients to the central server and storage, delivers Fibre Channel-like performance – but without the costly Fibre Channel equipment.

After TV Tools successfully demonstrated that ELEMENTS would deliver the performance required to meet the expectations of their demanding day-to-day workflows, Post Control was convinced. What finally tipped the scales though was when they learned about the unique set of collaborative workflow tools that are embedded in ELEMENTS' solutions.

A smooth install - during production

With no production downtime required, the install of the two ELEMENTS ONE 60 bay main units and two 60 bay JBOD expansion units took place during running operations at Post Control. The new Arista-based Ethernet infrastructure was built utilizing much of the existing Fibre Channel cabling in the facility, which TV Tools had built years ago for the SAN infrastructure.

“Utilizing the existing infrastructure saved a lot of money – without losing performance.”

Jussi Elonen, Project Manager, TV Tools

Thanks to the smart planning of TV Tools, and the boundless flexibility of ELEMENTS' hardware design, the final set-up of the two ELEMENTS ONE 60bay systems and the JBOD expansions can be managed as a single global namespace, allowing all suites at Post Control full access to the accumulated raw media storage capacity of 1.4 PB.

A 40GbE matrix backplane with uplinks to the Arista performance media switches

“From colorists’ perspective the ELEMENTS storage has proven to cope with our growing needs. We are now able to operate much smoother with larger formats and higher material volumes.”

Marko Terävä, Colorist, Post Control



Marko Terävä, Colorist

ensured the highest performance. As intended, all DPX clients were connected via dual 25GbE while the clients for compressed workflows used standard 10GbE connections.

Two dedicated time slots, outside of production times, were scheduled to put the system through an acid test. After the entire ELEMENTS ONE set-up passed the test with flying colors, TV Tools transferred all media assets from the legacy system to the new ELEMENTS production storage. Mission accomplished – everything is up and running!

Hero of the month: TV Tools!

In the course of the project with Post Control, TV Tools proved once again: the industry veterans are a model partner! They took over the entire handling – from the initial assessment to sign off.

Alistair Washbourn, ELEMENTS Commercial Director, noted: „Our close cooperation with TV Tools not just on this project completely vindicates the efforts we have both put in to provide the Finnish market with leading-edge media storage and workflow solutions through a well-known and experienced solutions provider.“

Back to the daily business – simplified.

Aside from a lot of more storage capacity – enviably, Post Control has now more than 1PB of usable space! – the post-production professionals now enjoy a significantly faster infrastructure, providing noticeably increased overall performance. Also, the ELEMENTS solution can handle bigger file sizes and higher amounts of material far better than the previous solution.

It goes without saying that running merely one streamlined storage infrastructure, as opposed to a medley of various storage pools, dramatically simplifies administration and maintenance efforts. Especially with ELEMENTS embedded workflow tools, providing easy-to-use project, workspace, and user management is a breeze.

“Having only one big storage pool for the entire facility simplifies the overall

management and maintenance significantly.”

Petri Riikonen, Producer, Post Control

But those are just the obvious benefits: Beyond the superior performance and simplified day-to-day management, ELEMENTS provides Post Control with the advantage of sharing content easily across DPX and compressed workflows – all within the one system.

ELEMENTS: An entire workflow ecosystem - beyond storage

Thanks to the extensive demo TV Tools provided to Post Control, the post-production experts recognized the priceless value of ELEMENTS Media Library – and added it to their package to simplify the entire review and approval process.

“The Media Library is extremely helpful as a collaboration and communication tool.”

Petri Riikonen, Producer, Post Control

Seamlessly integrated within the IP workflow at Post Control, the fully intuitive and easy-to-use GUI is accessible through every standard web browser. Authorized users, both from the team at Post Control and the customers, can now preview, share, and comment assets anytime from anywhere. Even on-screen drawings with annotations, using any standard mouse or tablet will be visible from virtually all editing applications.

Post Control also benefits from the tight integration of the Media Library with Adobe Premiere Pro, providing seamless collaboration by allowing visual access to the assets and previously created sequences, automatically linking from proxies back to the raw assets for editing.

Closing words from the Commercial Director

Alistair Washbourn, Commercial Director at ELEMENTS, states: „TV Tools have been with ELEMENTS for only two years now; yet, they are our fastest growing partner.“ Commenting specifically on the project at Post Control, he added: „This project was particularly high spec and rather demanding, and we benefited hugely from the expertise that TV Tools provided on site.“