Utah Valley University Incorporates CatDV into Its Digital Media Curriculum

The Department of Digital Media at Utah Valley University (UVU) prepares students for careers in digital media by providing hands-on experience using the latest technologies. To manage the department's fast-growing collection of video assets and enable students to use a leading media asset management (MAM) system, the department implemented CatDV asset management. Students can keep files organized, accelerate project workflows, and learn how to work with a popular MAM solution.

UVU created the world's first college degree program in digital media in the 1990s, when digital technologies were just coming into the mainstream. In the UVU Department of Digital Media, students learn how to integrate graphics, text animation, video, and audio digital materials to entertain, educate, and communicate ideas through meaningful human interaction.

For the department's professors and staff, asset management has become increasingly complex over the years. "As our students' video projects have become larger and more sophisticated, we've had to keep track of an exploding volume of multi-terabyte
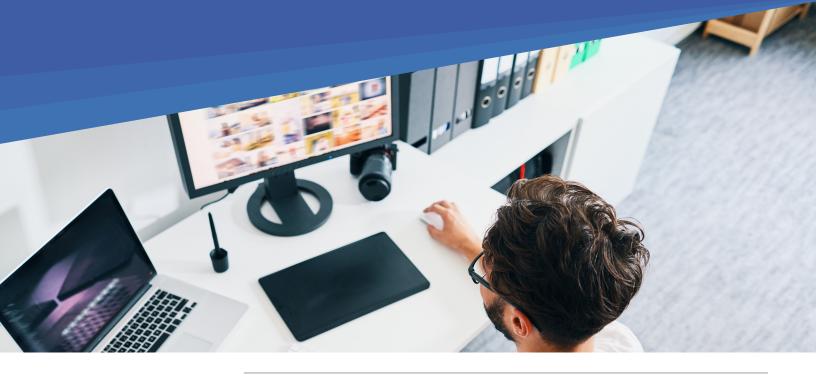
UTAH VALLEY UVU UNIVERSITY

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> Founding Member, Department of Digital Media, Utah Valley University

FEATURED PRODUCTS

CatDV

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- CatDV asset management system

KEY BENEFITS

- **More efficiently managed department video assets** with a modern media asset management (MAM) solution.
- **Provided students with hands-on training** using the widely deployed CatDV MAM system.
- **Accelerated student workflows,** enhanced efficiency, enabling them to manage large projects and meet tight deadlines.

media files," says Dennis Lisonbee, founding member of the Department of Digital Media. "Previously, we used a standardized file-and-folder scheme to store these files on computer hard drives and taught our students how to search and navigate the folder structure. But we had outgrown these traditional methods as the digital files grew in both numbers and size, and it was taking too long to find and access the assets."

ADOPTING ROBUST ASSET MANAGEMENT WITH CATDV

The department needed to implement a more robust MAM system—one that would not only help the department organize its growing asset volumes but also provide students with some hands-on training. "Since many of our students come into the program from high school with little or no organizational skills, we wanted to

include training on the MAM tool as part of the digital media curriculum," says Lisonbee. "It was important to adopt a tool that had widespread use in the industry, to give our students a boost once they entered the workforce. Also, since our upper-level students work on sophisticated video projects, they need the ability to catalog, search for, and access very large digital files."

The department chose CatDV. "As one of the media industry's most widely deployed MAM solutions, supporting some of the world's most sophisticated media workflows, we knew it would be robust enough to handle even our largest video projects," says Lisonbee. "At the same time, CatDV is easy to learn and deploy, and offers an extremely low cost of ownership, making it an ideal component of our training curriculum."

STRENGTHENING MAM SKILLS

Every semester, the department deploys CatDV in its 30 student labs. "We've placed the software at the core of our 'Digital Output for Film' course, a required class for lower-division students that teaches them how to manage assets through a full production workflow, from camera files through post and distribution," says Lisonbee. "Upper-division students delve into the software even deeper and work with some of its more advanced features for building search terms and working with metadata."

CatDV helps students develop both specific MAM skills and more general organizational skills. "Our students are amazed by the power of the system for ingesting assets and assigning metadata according to any attribute, such as location, date, featured persons, and project category," says Lisonbee. "CatDV teaches them important organizational skills and helps them learn to approach a project in a systematic and disciplined manner."

ENHANCING THE SPEED AND EFFICIENCY OF STUDENT FILM PROJECTS

The department prides itself on delivering an extremely high level of instruction in digital media while also challenging students. For example, seniors are expected to finish a film project that's more on par with graduate projects in other schools. "The CatDV MAM system plays a critical role in helping students manage their video files and finish their projects on time," says Lisonbee.

Over the years, UVU student production crews have traveled to many countries to create senior-project documentary films on a wide range of topics. For one project, students traveled to the Beit Lehi archaeological site south of Jerusalem in Israel. In partnership with the Beit Lehi Foundation and Jerusalem's Hebrew University, five separate groups of digital media students filmed the work of UVU Engineering Graphics and Design Technology students working together with the Beit Lehi archeology team.

Documentary projects generate large quantities of high-volume video files—with up to 6 TB of data from just one Beit Lehi visit. CatDV helps manage that large volume of data. "While on location, the students were able to use the CatDV web client to classify and store all of those assets—including video clips and still photographs—in much the same manner as an archeologist would catalog an ancient artifact," says Lisonbee.

Back home in the production facility, the students transcribed the videos and stored the transcriptions in CatDV, rather than having to waste valuable time in an edit bay for that purpose. When it came time for editing, they could search for and access the assets they needed quickly and easily. "Speed is of the essence for graduating students who must complete their projects before the term ends," says Lisonbee, "and CatDV gives them the edge they need to work as efficiently as possible."

For another documentary project, focusing on the Falco's Children Village orphanage in Tanzania, students were only able to travel to the location during their spring break, which left only another month for them to edit and finish the program.

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"With CatDV, the students were able to come back from the shoot with everything ready to go in CatDV, including raw footage, transcripts, and B-roll," says Lisonbee. "Through CatDV's seamless integration with Avid, the students were able to rough out the program on the paper transcript then import it as a .txt file directly into Avid. From there, Avid's ScripSync 'magically' matched each line of text with its corresponding video clip. The resulting rough cut could then be edited quickly and easily into the final result."

BECOMING A CORE RESOURCE ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY

Over the years, CatDV has become an integral part of the Department of Digital Media. The success with the tool has spread to other departments as well. For instance, the UVU on-campus production facility is now planning to transfer its entire video catalog over to CatDV from an obsolete Apple MAM system.

"Most importantly, CatDV prepares our students for the real world of film and video production by giving them experience on a system that will take them far in their careers," says Lisonbee.

ABOUT UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY

Utah Valley University was established in 1941 as Central Utah Vocational School, with the primary function of providing war production training. Today, the university offers a wide range of certificate programs, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and online programs. Nearly 41,000 students are enrolled, making Utah Valley University the largest public university in Utah.

The Department of Digital Media enables students to combine art, science, and technology to earn degrees in animation and game development, digital audio, digital cinema production, and web design and development. The department offers real-world opportunities for students to engage in industry best practices, and it challenges students to master new and emerging technologies.

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