DIGITAL FilmMaker
ISSUE 42 £2.99

YOUR NEW GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING

THE FEAR FACTOR

Essential advice for the DIY filmmaker from Jason Figgis

Digital storyboarding

The new software package that could transform your next film

The brutal truth

Behind the scenes of a gritty new documentary project

Motion magic

We explore the fascinating world of stop motion

Doing the business

Filmmaker James Owen tackles the business aspect of making his new Vanguard movie

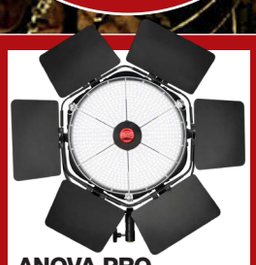
Filmmaker Emma Dark tackles another crop of your questions on kit and much more...

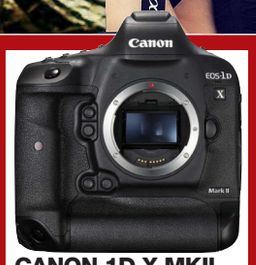
KIT OF THE YEAR!

YUNEEC TYPHOON

ATOMOS ASSASSIN

SARAMONIC MIXMIC


ANOVA PRO



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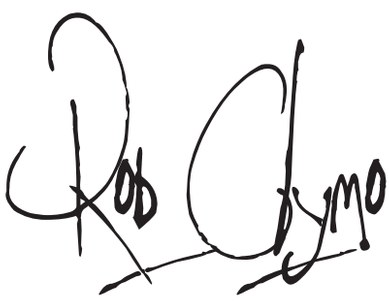
Welcome to DIGITAL FilmMaker

ISSUE 42

We might be at the tail end of what has been an interesting year but, as always, there's no shortage of great content for you over the next 116 pages. Joining us this issue is filmmaker Emma Dark, who is stepping in to fill the shoes of Sean J Vincent. Sadly, he has so much on his plate that he can't write for the magazine anymore but has supported us from the beginning. Sean never once let us down during his stint writing his Ask the Filmmaker column either. So, I'm sure you'll join me in wishing him all the best for his future endeavours. Meanwhile, Digital FilmMaker continues to power onwards and upwards with another bumper selection of filmmaking fun. We've got features, shorts and the odd documentary along the way too, while towards the back on the magazine we have a bumper kit review of the year section that looks at some of the gear you might have missed over the last twelve months or so. That kicks off on page 99. It's all for the bargain price of just £2.99 too, while if you want to save even more money then head along to www.pocketmags.com and sign up for a 6 or 12-month subscription. Thanks for your support during the last twelve months or so and I hope you'll continue to do so in the new year. Issue 43 is out on the 2nd of February, so see you then.



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DIGITAL FilmMaker

Contents

ISSUE 42

10 The fear factor

8. Digital FilmMaker news
The lowdown on the latest developments from the world of digital video filmmaking

10. The fear factor
Producer and director Jason Figgis explains how he has been reaping the rewards of digital

18. Motion magic
Adam Ciolfi is a filmmaker who uses a healthy dose of ingenuity to get his stop motion work

24. Future world
Patrick Ryder is a prolific filmmaker with a penchant for creating science-fiction movies

30. Doing the business
Budding producer James Owen is back with another update on his Vanguard movie project

34. The brutal truth
Gary Jay has found a niche for himself by creating documentary content on social issues

42. The story board
Joe Skillington runs a commercial video business shooting a wide variety of projects

48. Commercial vehicle
Sunil Thomas is a director who spends much of his time shooting adverts around the globe

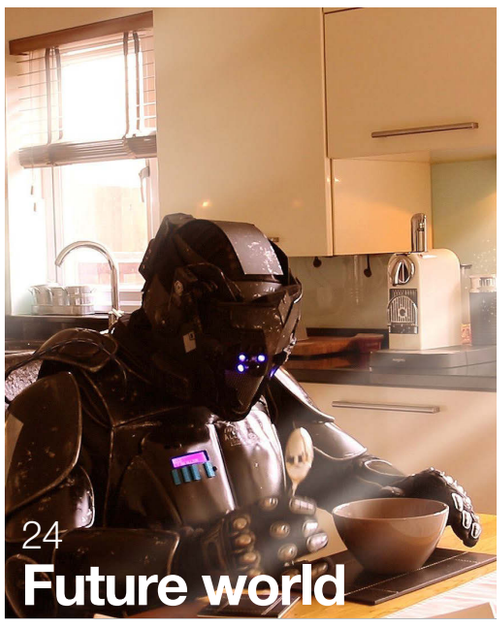
54. Ask the filmmaker
Professional filmmaker Emma Dark tackles another round of your kit and career questions

60. Digital storyboarding
Daniel J. Harris is back to talk about his brand new software package Digital Production Pro

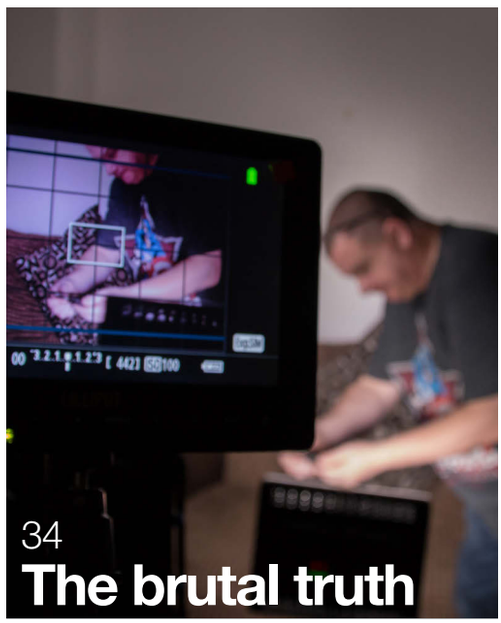
66. Budget buster
Daniel Finney has been pushing the creative envelope with his very thrifty filmmaking work

72. iClone 3D compositing
We delve ever deeper inside this incredibly useful software package from Reallusion

18 Motion magic



24 Future world



34 The brutal truth

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30
Doing the business

42
The story board

48
Commercial vehicle

78. Note perfect
Chris Mariotti is an American musician and filmmaker documenting his band projects

84. The student perspective
Kirsty Dexter is a student filmmaker from Cornwall who is dabbling in production work

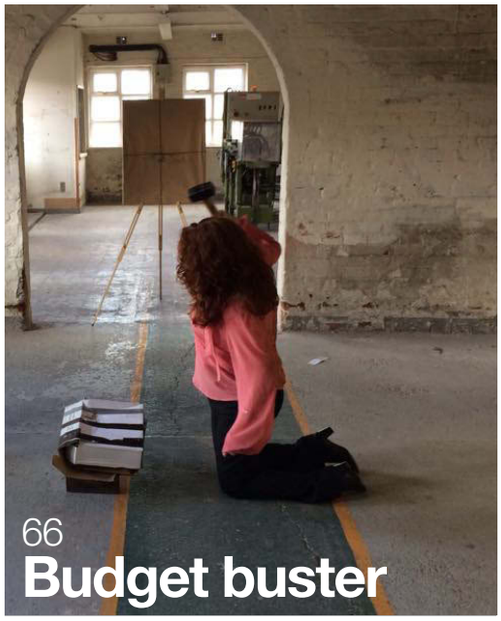
91. Hardware advice
We take a look at all of the latest kit plus people who keep the industry ticking over

99. Kit of the year
We pick through the hardware highlights during 2016 from cameras through to gimbals

92. Interview with a pro
Dr. Marc Batschkus from Archiware explains the importance of backing up your video work

114. Next month
Make sure you make a note of the date when the next action-packed issue hits the stores

54
Ask the filmmaker



66
Budget buster

78
Note perfect

Interview with a Pro

Archiware's Marc M. Batschkus explains the common problems and easy solutions when managing production data to ensure your filmmaking projects run smoothly in the future...

Editing on a Mac has always been popular and became even more attractive with the easily accessible and powerful Final Cut Pro X and other powerful tools. Additionally, Thunderbolt makes local storage really fast and affordable and contributes to this attractive scenario. Local and affordable storage today offers the sort of performance that was available only to data centres some years ago. This leads to a typical situation where local storage is expanded and expanded until it becomes hard to keep track of those all-important files themselves. Now the blessing of fast and affordable storage becomes a curse - not only because it is hard to find files and re-use or reference them, but also to protect the data in those files. What then is the best way to carry out a regular backup and how do you keep files for the long-term and find them when you need them?

Some basic guidelines can lead the way:

- 3-2-1 Rule
- Automatic backup
- Combine backup and archive
- Plan for mishaps and crashes
- Document the recovery process
- Include all necessary files (plug-ins!)
- Store off-site
- Test the restore!

What is the difference between Backup and Archive?

In one sentence: Backup is like the spare tire in your trunk and Archive is like the winter tyres in your garage. The first you always need around in case something goes wrong. The second keeps valuable files that are not needed for daily production anymore, but need to be kept for reference, re-use and monetization. Both are needed and can work together seamlessly!

Let's look at the rules one by one:

3-2-1 Rule:

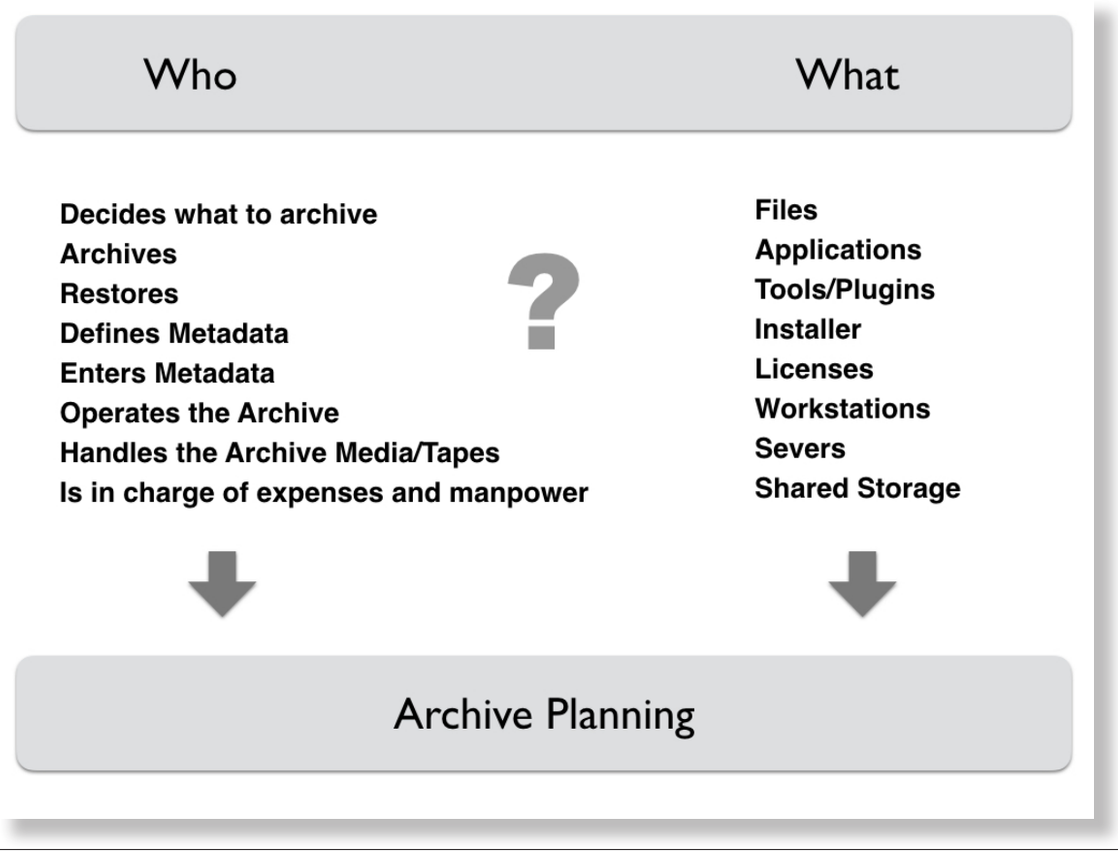
Keep three copies of each file on two different media (disk, SSD or tape) of which one is stored off-site.

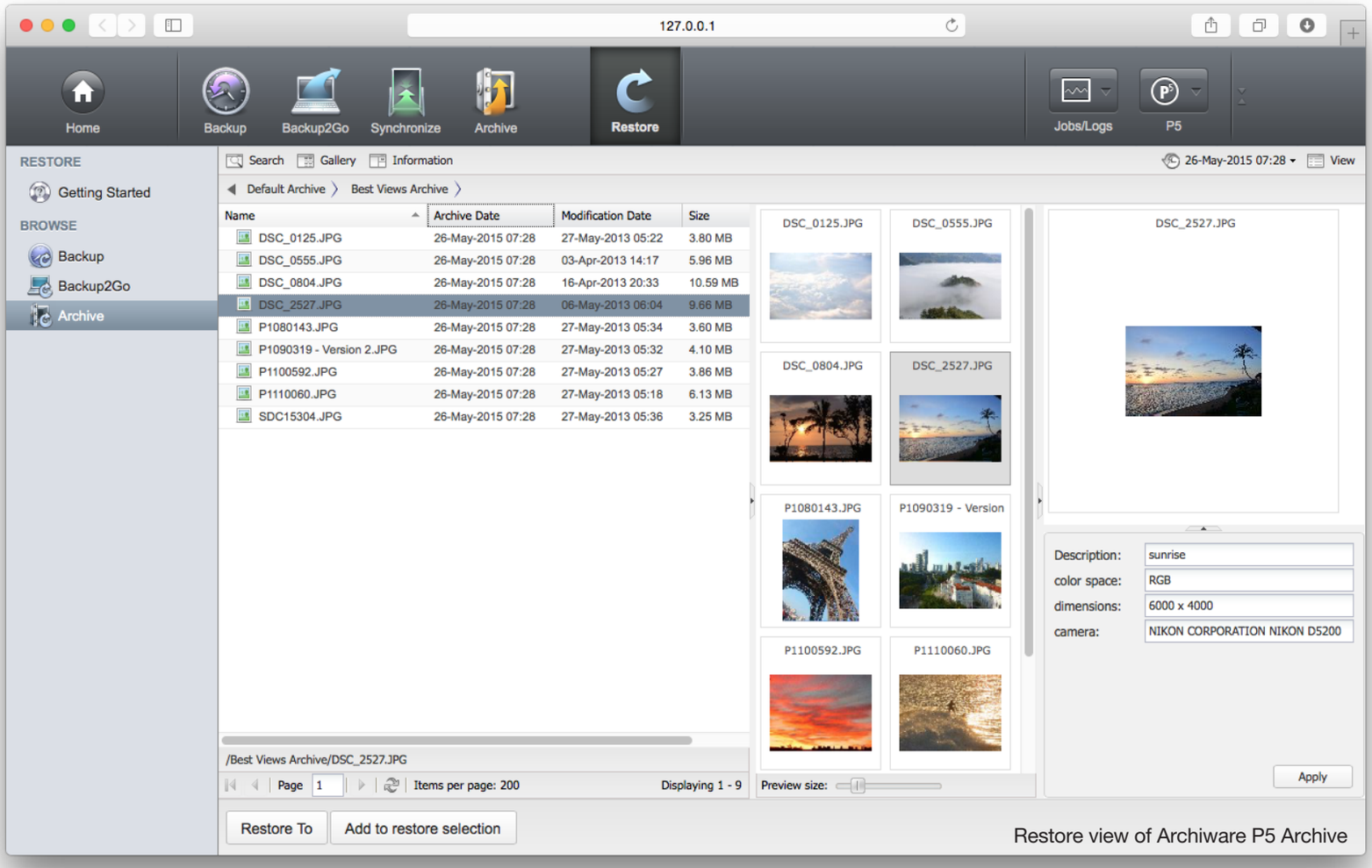
Automatic Backup:

Manual Backups are doomed to fail when you need them most, in situations with time pressure and deadlines. Only automatic Backups run independently of the current production situation.

"Backup protects files that are used for daily production and reside on your production storage"

Combine Backup and Archive: The Backup protects files that are used for daily production and reside on your production storage. Everything that is completed should be migrated to the Archive. This way, the production storage can be kept at a reasonable size, resulting in the Archive actually paying off financially within a few years. It is also easier to keep track of present production files. The Archive makes it easy to find files because it can be browsed visually, searched for file and directory names and, also, searched for metadata. Archiware´s P5 Archive offers all of that plus an Add-on called P5 Archive App that can archive from within FCP X and directly from the Finder.





Restore view of Archiware P5 Archive

Plan for mishaps and crashes:

Anything can go wrong and especially with the increasing time pressure and increasing number of formats and sizes, accidents are almost inevitable. Protect each stage of the workflow accordingly and especially follow the next rule.

Document the recovery process

How to recover servers, routers, workstations and production storage needs to be written down and made available to all involved (and printed out!).

Include all necessary files

This sounds obvious, but think of those sometimes highly specialized and customized workstations that have lots of tools, plug-ins and specialized software. They deserve their own complete Backup, including OS and Apps. Additionally, server configurations and the Archive catalog itself need to be backed up.

Store off-site:

Things happen locally, so a local Backup might be affected. Storing data off-site and in a different building makes them accessible in case of major incidents.

Test the restore:

A Backup is only as good as the restore that it can provide. Many things can happen here, from misconfiguration to not starting the Backup at all, from filled up backup storage to network failures and much more. To avoid problems the restore needs to be tested regularly.

The freelancer dilemma

More often than not, freelancers are involved in the workflow. This increases flexibility and reduces cost. At the same time, and often unnoticed, is the fact that the data they contribute runs a higher risk of being lost and for two reasons. Their data is not part of the routine Backup like the rest of the production, and they often work remotely from different places, increasing the risk even more. P5 has a solution that eliminates this risk and gives greater control back to the production: P5 Backup2Go. Using this application, mobile workstations can be backed up automatically and independent of their location. As soon as there is a network connection, new or changed files are sent to the central Backup repository. Interrupted runs continue automatically with the next connection. Depending on the work relation, only a specific directory might have to be included in the Backup. Additionally, to the freelancers, all workstation data in the office can be saved using P5 Backup2Go as well.

> *"The fewer files that reside on a production storage, the lower the risk of making mistakes"*

Archive to the rescue

The fewer files that reside on a production storage, the lower the risk of making mistakes. This is another reason why data management and Archiving in particular are so beneficial in media production. Since Archiving is actually a migration of files, the load on the production storage is reduced. Everything that is completed and only blocks space on the production storage should be archived and

deleted afterwards. To be able to find files years from now, it is of crucial importance to add relevant metadata to the Archive. Metadata can be either descriptive (human intervention necessary) or technical like resolution, codec and camera. What metadata is most useful in your case is easy to find out. Sit down with a piece of paper and write a use case. Who will be using the Archive in a few years, what will he/she know, what is he/she looking for, what terms are most useful, what categories? Thinking in detail about these and related questions is extremely beneficial to the Archive later on. Involving everyone who is relevant makes it even better. Since metadata is the key to the Archive, time invested in finding the right combination of metadata is time well spent. The specific set of metadata used is called a metadata schema. Creating the respective metadata fields and drop down menus in P5 Archive only takes minutes.

Protection

There is one other very important consideration when building an Archive. How to protect the data? Since archived files have been deleted from the production storage, the Archive is the only place where they reside now. At least one secondary copy must be stored off-site for maximum security. P5 Archive offers two solutions to this requirement. Archive media can be cloned at the time of writing, resulting in either two tape sets or two disk sets. As an alternative, a second Archive Plan can be configured to Archive to the Cloud. This has two advantages: there is no need for any logistics and the data is far enough away to not be affected by any local incidents. Archiving to the Cloud empowers the user in one specific way: For the first time it is possible to archive without any hardware investment. From any workstation, Archiving can take place. There is no limitation to the size of the Archive or number of files. The Archive catalog of P5 Archive keeps track of all archived files and displays associated metadata, previews and proxies. It can be browsed and searched to locate files that are needed. Now, let's have a look at concrete solutions that you can use to protect your files. Archiware P5 is a software suite that contains modules for Backup, Cloning and Archiving, uses the browser as interface and runs on all important platforms.

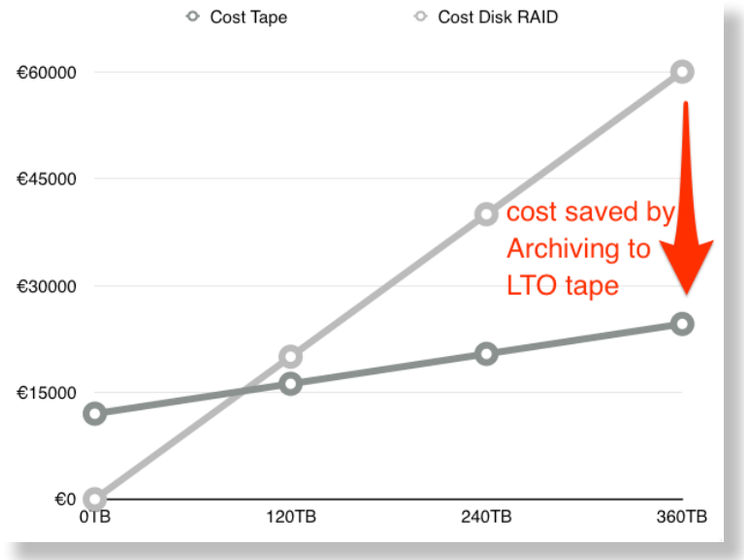
> *"Creating the respective metadata fields and drop down menus only takes minutes"*

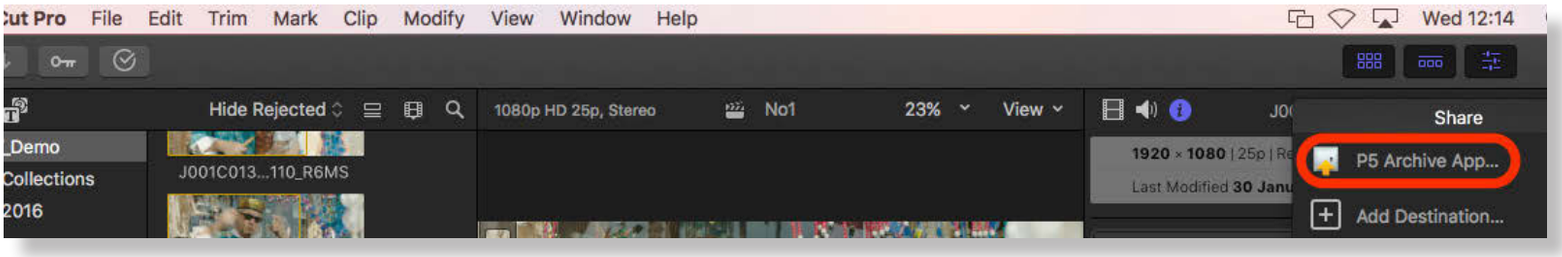
The P5 advantage

P5 is unique in the way it makes data management accessible and easy, while being very powerful and scalable: Multi-platform, browser-based, one solution and interface for Backup, Cloning and Archive, able to use disk, SSD, tape and cloud storage, installed an configured in minutes, a free 30-day trial and a very attractive price point are some of the advantages of P5.

Highly capable

With MacOS and FCP X integration P5 Archive is already a highly capable Archive software with features that make life easier for the media producer: browser interface, media previews and proxies, customizable metadata fields, using disk, tape and cloud storage, scalability from a Mac mini to several Petabytes of storage and an attractive price point. You can find out more about

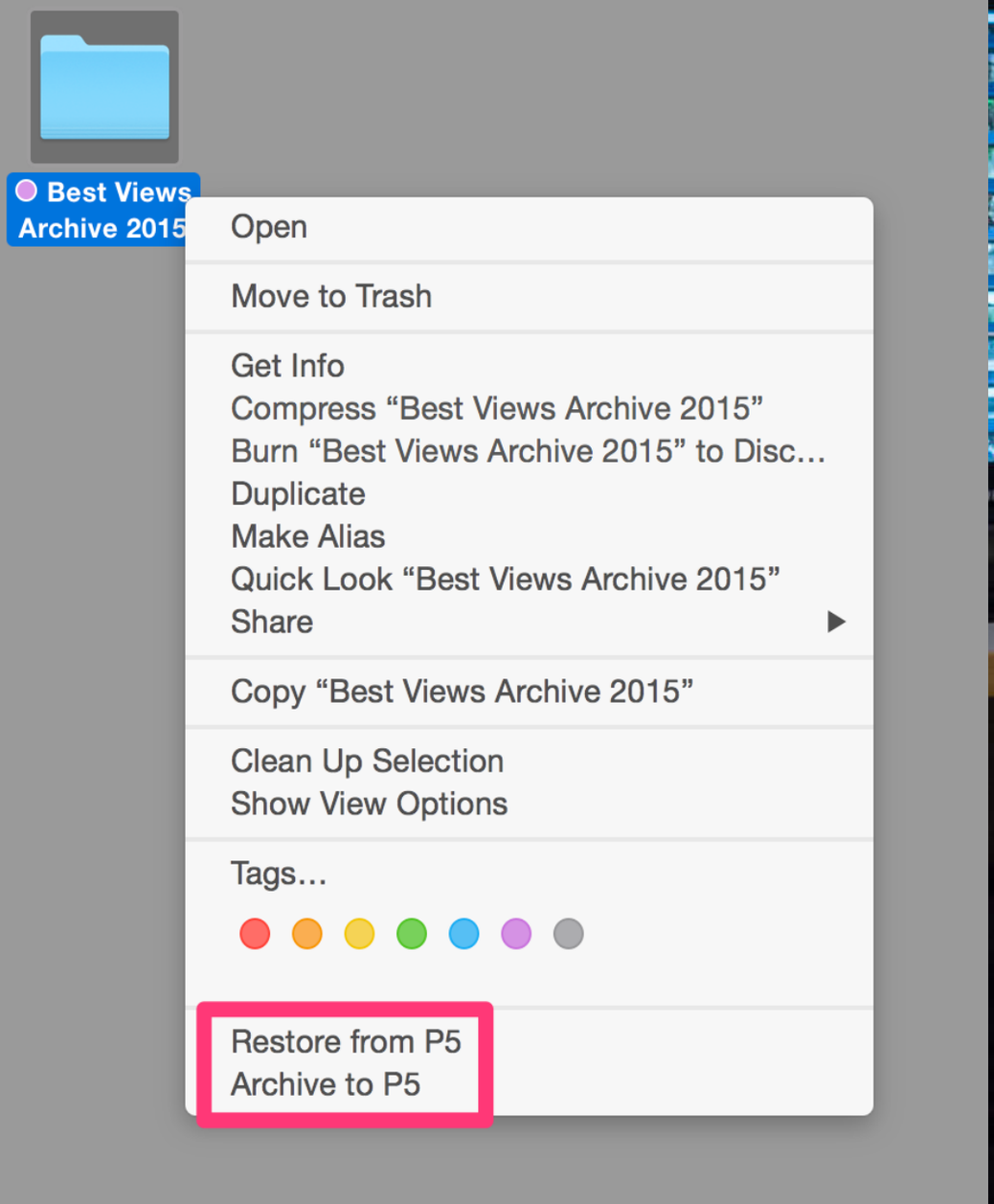




the options at www.archiware.com/products/p5-suite

Power packed

On the Mac, it is even more powerful, yet even easier to use. Combined with the add-on P5 Archive App, archiving can be done from the finder with just a right-click. Within FCP X, the P5 Archive App offers a share destination to easily archive a complete library including metadata and even customized motion templates (as of FCP X 10.3). In case of external media linked to the library, they are also included in the Archive, making it media complete. This way, local production storage can be kept at a reasonable size and only populated with the files needed for current productions. Taking into account how expensive it is to constantly expand production storage, the investment in archiving actually pays off after a number of years. For the first time, collaborative workflows where an FCP X library needs to be transferred from one workstation to another are now easy to achieve within a company using the Archive as a hub. Find out more at www.archiware.com/products/p5-archive-app

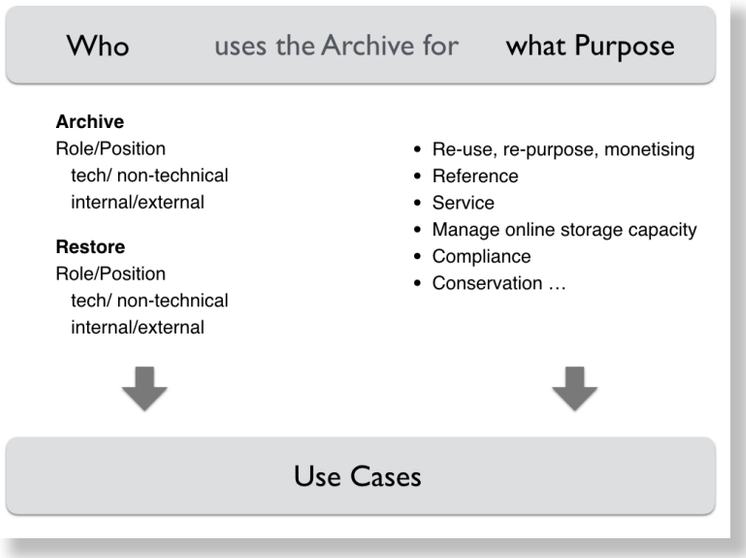


Prime example

As an example, the world´s largest producer of workplace health and safety videos, WorkSafeBC is using the P5 Archive App to manage their files. Find out more from this article www.archiware.com/case-studies/worksafeBC

Archive storage

Storage used for archiving should be durable and last for years. The best track record and price point per TB is found in LTO tape. It has a shelf life of 30 years! An LTO-7 cartridge has a native capacity of 6TB and a throughput of 300MB/s. There are LTO drives available with Thunderbolt connection, such as mTape by mLogic. www.mlogic.com/products/mtape-thunderbolt-lto-7. Others offer SAS, Fibre Channel or USB. Since tape is not for everyone, an alternative might be RDX disk storage, which is geared towards archiving for small to medium environments. RDX by Tandberg Data has been around for many years and is the only professional removable disk system available. Since its disks are specifically certified and well protected against physical damage in their special cartridge, Tandberg



Data recommends them as archive storage. RDX is also superior and simpler than standard disks for shipping data. Find out more at www.tandbergdata.com/us/index.cfm/products/removable-disk/

How to keep track of files?

Since the Archive is only keeping track of files that have been archived, depending on the number of files in use there is a need for a media asset management (MAM) system to keep track of all files used in production. Usually, MAM systems are complex, highly customizable and used by at least medium-sized companies. Examples of MAMs are CatDV, CANTEMO, FocalpointServer and eMAM. Smaller companies or even single person productions can profit from a newer class of entry level MAM systems. axle video belong in this group and is very easy to use and happy to run on a Mac mini. Noteworthy is its integration with P5 Archive that allows axle to trigger an archive process and indicate that the file has been archived. Find out more over at www.axlevideo.com

Fast and efficient

Keyflow Pro is one of the most modern and powerful "small" MAMs. It only runs on Mac and is available in the Mac App Store for $299. The set of features, the elegance of the interface and the capability to catalog all disks containing production files are impressive. It can also be used in smaller workgroups where a catalog can be shared. Metadata can automatically be transferred from and to FCP X. www.keyflowpro.com Want to know more about how to efficiently plan Data Management, Backup and Archive in media production? There´s a free ebook for just that: https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/data-management-backup-archive/id850538526?mt=11 ■

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