

# Optimizing Workflows to Accommodate Rapid Growth

## CASE STUDY



## Background

Wildstar Films is a Bristol-based production company founded in 2018 by Emmy and BAFTA winning film makers Vanessa Berlowitz and Mark Linfield, whose titles include Planet Earth 1 and 2, Frozen Planet, Attenborough's Life of Mammals, and six Disney nature theatrical films. Recent launches include America's National Parks and Animals Up Close with Bertie Gregory for Disney+ and National Geographic. They are currently in production for 2 features for Disney nature and multiple premium series for Disney+ and National Geographic, including Queens, Sentient with Darren Aronofsky's Protozoa Pictures, and Underdogs with Ryan Reynolds' Maximum Effort.

## Challenge

Experiencing rapid growth between 2018 and 2020, Wildstar Films quickly found that its initial workflows had become outdated. Despite investing in an LTO system for backups, the company quickly found that its existing storage architecture was causing limitations, and concerns were raised around potential point of failure. However, as the hardware was practically brand new, a complete infrastructure replacement would not be a viable option.

Instead, Wildstar Films decided to optimize its existing workflows by implementing a system that could easily scale to meet evolving industry and production demands.

"To avoid bottlenecks or failures, we planned to implement systems that could be adjusted to handle higher video data throughput and then be scaled as demand changed."

### Ed Northey-Vyse

Technical & Workflow Supervisor at Wildstar Films

## Objective

To maximize operational efficiency in its video production workflows, and to avoid any scalability issues in the future, Wildstar Films knew it needed to incorporate a cloud-centric approach. Additionally, it needed a provider with a thorough and proven understanding of video workflows to provide assistance when required.

Knowing it wanted to deploy a media-focused object storage system to enhance its workflows, Wildstar Films had certain key criteria to be met before making a decision. The company required:

- **Simple Cloud Workflow:**

Aiming to promote a cloud-centric mindset for video production throughout the organization, Wildstar wanted an intuitive solution that could seamlessly integrate with existing workflows.

- **Secure Offsite Storage:**

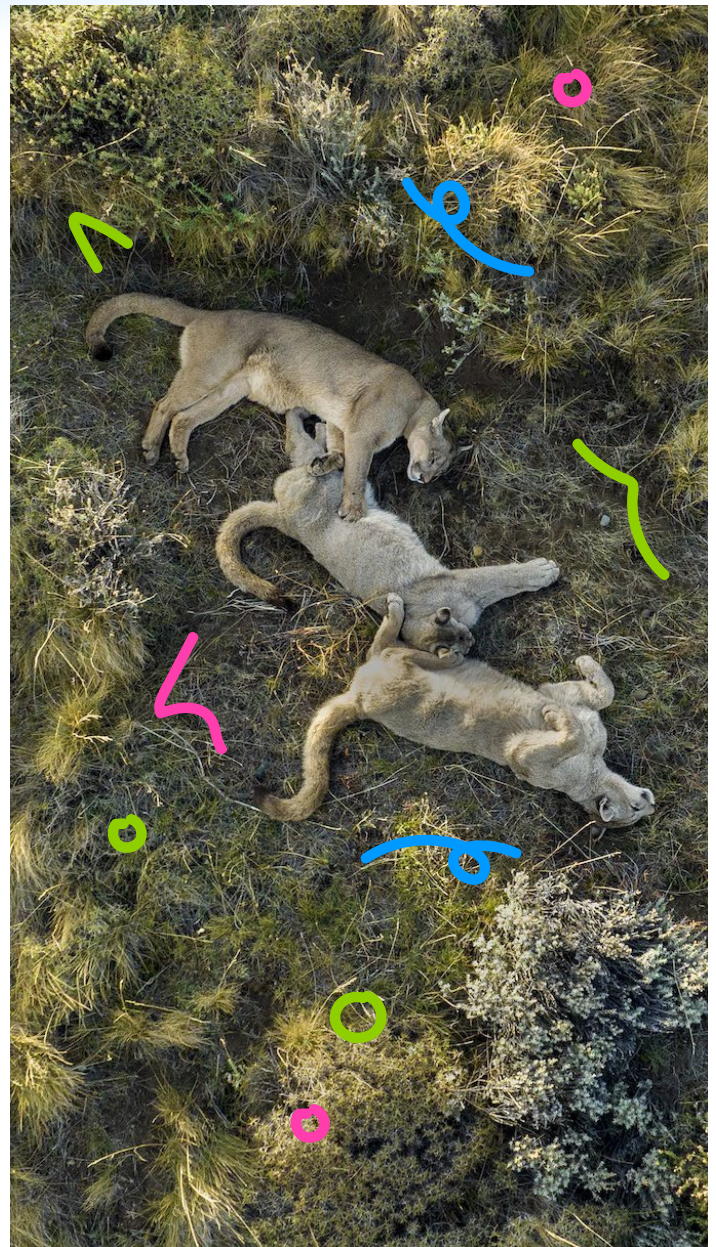
Securely storing duplicate copies of media in an offsite location was crucial. Additionally, maintaining knowledge of the content's exact whereabouts and retaining visibility at all times, was essential.

- **Fair Pricing:**

Costings were a key factor; the pricing had to be predictable, transparent, and fair.

- **Additional Video Tools:**

Given the diverse nature of the M&E sector, Wildstar Films wanted a solution that not only met their primary storage needs, but also offered additional tools to streamline and enhance production operations.





## The Solution & Workflow

While exploring object storage solutions from several large providers, the Wildstar team discovered that although they each had advantages, these were often counteracted by the downsides or restrictions.

When introduced to the media focused OMcloud object storage platform by ccktech, a media, storage and workflow solutions provider, and close partner of Pixitmedia, Wildstar Films quickly discovered that it ticked all boxes. Designed specifically for media workflows, OMcloud gives media and production teams instant access to their content, from anywhere at any time. Users of the platform have complete confidence that their media assets remain protected, thanks to the full data provenance and sovereignty features.

The intuitive and flexible nature of OMcloud meant Wildstar Films could effortlessly integrate it into its existing workflow, without worrying about incompatibilities or disruption. Any by providing self-serve access to content without reliance on technical teams, the object storage solution ensured the team at Wildstar Films could effortlessly manage their media without needing external assistance.

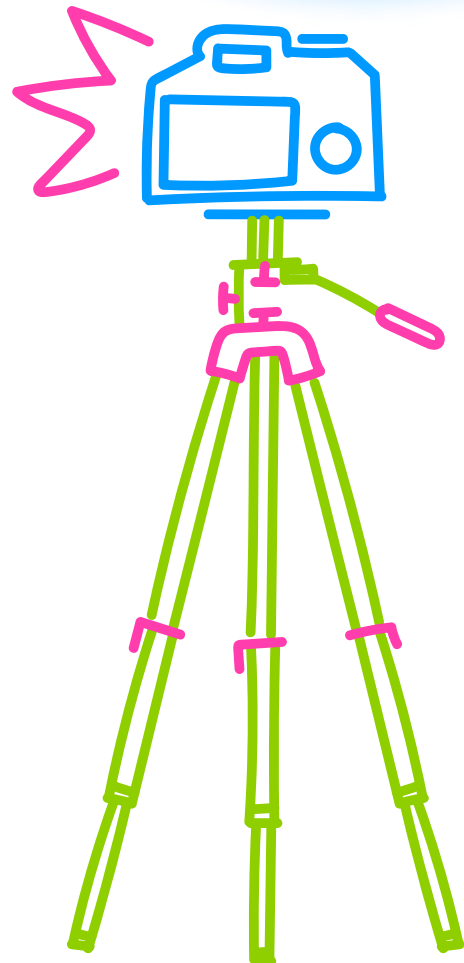
After deciding that OMcloud was the most suitable platform for Wildstar, the next challenge was to migrate over 400TB of content from on-prem to OMcloud. There were several options around this, from a simple S3 sync to file acceleration built into the Vision interface on OMcloud, however these were all likely to take a considerable amount of time. Instead, Pixitmedia sent over an Object Matrix on-prem in a rolling rack to speed up the process. Once the data had been copied across and shipped back to Pixitmedia, the team got to work uploading it to OMcloud.

Wildstar Films now has over 500TB stored within the OMcloud system which sits across multiple datacentres in the UK. With predictable costs and no hidden egress fees, the production company can confidently maintain data availability and scale per requirements, without being hit with penalties. OMcloud also comes with additional applications, including asset management, analytics, and file system, meaning Wildstar Films is equipped for continued future growth and success.

“Typically, we found that prices only became ‘reasonable’ once data was moved to a deep archive, however, as things change daily, we needed to maintain data availability. And despite being able to select the storage region, we anticipated difficulties in pinpointing the precise location of our data.”

**Ed Northey-Vyse**

Technical & Workflow Supervisor at Wildstar Films



"When we were introduced to OMcloud, we found that it already had the infrastructure for video workflows in place. It provided object storage with a video front end, allowing users with varying levels of IT knowledge to easily access it. We knew exactly where our data was being stored because they were a business in the next city over."

Ed Northey-Vyse

Technical & Workflow Supervisor at Wildstar Films



**The Premier Supplier of Storage and Workflow Solutions to Media & Entertainment**, Public Services and the Corporate Sector for over 30 years. Working closely with carefully selected partners enables us to provide the latest products and systems to our expanding customer base. Ever present at all of the major global industry events such as IBC and NAB, keeps us at the forefront of technological advances with storage solutions and workflow platforms. Our company is built on strong foundations with a team made up of dedicated and experienced individuals who pride themselves on providing the highest level of customer service and technical support at all times.

Whether you need to Capture, Edit, Deliver, Back-up or Archive, we are here to share our knowledge and assist with your specific requirements. **wildstar.tv**



**Pixitmedia by DataCore**, is a leading provider of intelligent content and metadata management solutions for the media and entertainment industry. We go beyond storage to deliver a smarter ecosystem for media workflows, with end-to-end solutions that combine high-performance file, nearline, and archive platforms with metadata enrichment, indexing, and search. Enabled by data orchestration tools, our multi-tier technology simplifies content management and migration to ensure media assets are always where our customers need them.

Pixitmedia's innovative solutions integrate seamlessly into existing M&E workflows, optimizing efficiency and collaboration at every level - from ingest to archive to delivery. With Pixitmedia, content is always searchable, secure, and available whenever it's required.

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