

# EOS.Web Media Case Study:



*CBS News Archives is the collection of moving images captured in the process of reporting news. The operation (under the direction of Dan DiPierro, Executive Director, CBS News; Garrett Johnson, Systems Engineer/News Archives; and Archives Manager Roy Carubia) involves the collection, processing, distribution, and re-shelving of some 2,500 - 3,000 media products per week. Carubia, DiPierro, and Johnson were interviewed for this case study by Guy St. Clair of SMR International.*

*The collection was described in a recent news release as "a virtual video history of the world from the mid-20th Century on." According to a newspaper article published in 1998, the collection was established in 1954, when reporter Edward R. Murrow and producer Fred Friendly convinced CBS News management that "it would be economical if CBS reused news film instead of discarding it after each program aired." The collection itself contains "millions" of feet of film and over 2 million videocassettes. Obviously storage is a problem, so as video began to be used to replace film, a computer database was installed to monitor the cassettes and film reels.*

Users of the collection are 200 CBS News researchers and 28 internal archives staff, as well as external clients. As you can imagine, at a 24/7 news operation support facility speed is of the essence, and researchers from CBS News production offices working with breaking news stories can require immediate turnaround delivery of media products. Archive materials are also used for background information for news stories and documentaries prepared over a longer period of time. In any case, turnaround time is expected to be no more than 24 hours, and staff workflow must accommodate that schedule. Service is provided on a 24/7 basis.

Some archive materials are offered to the larger public through an arrangement with BBC, positioning the archives as a revenue source for the company when used by other television and film producers. Prior to the collaboration with BBC, external sales had been a small part of the archives function, but in the five years that BBC has been representing global sales for CBS News Archives, that picture has changed. New commercial uses of the materials include an arrangement with Amazon, in which members of the general public will be able to create customized DVDs of selected material from the archives.

## EOS.Web Media Solution Overview

**Challenge:** For CBS News Archives, the challenge was to replace the legacy system with a Web-based solution that would have all the elements of the highest-level integrated library system. The idea behind the development of the product was to create a solution that would replace an inadequate legacy system and provide a state-of-the-art solution that meets library, broadcasting, and archives industry standards of performance.

### Requirements:

- Web-based
- Reliable and stable
- Back-up facility provided
- Global keyword change function
- Ease of use
- Location metadata management
- Scalable
- Provide for growth & change

**Solution:** EOS.Web Media, developed with CBS News Archives, meets the standards and client criteria required by CBS News Archives and is now their state-of-the-art archives collection management system. EOS.Web Media will provide for growth and change at the CBS News Media Archives, while enabling archive staff to provide excellent service to their end users.

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**Challenge:** For CBS News Archives, the challenge was to replace the legacy system with a web-based solution that would have all the elements of the highest-level integrated library system (ILS), but which would not be structured for a print-type collection usually found in libraries. In fact, at CBS News Archives the development of a tool to replace the legacy system was required to be specifically a non-library product. In describing the development of the solution, Carubia noted that the focus was intentionally on developing a solution for a production facility, not a reference library. Basically, the idea behind the development of the product was to create a solution that would replace an inadequate legacy system and provide a state-of-the-art solution that meets library, broadcasting, and archives industry standards of performance.

From the outset, CBS News Archives management expected the product - which would be developed by EOS International in conjunction with the client - to be Web-based. As Johnson commented, "We wanted to move off a software client-server model, to a Web-based application. It's easier to propagate our changes to a single server than a host of client machines, and you have fewer issues with heterogeneous client machines. You can count on people having a browser."

Other client criteria required that the solution would be more reliable than the legacy product (which was quickly becoming obsolete, both hardware and software) with proper backup capability, and, primarily, that the product would be stable. In fact, the stability of the product seems to be the primary driver in the development of the solution; it could not become obsolete in the foreseeable future.

Not surprisingly, CBS News Archives required that the solution have all the functionality of the legacy system, but with additional features, and keyword management, e.g., the ability to enact a "mass" change in the keyword/authority file system, was expected. Additionally, capacity for future enhancements (such as linking program transcripts to respective media products) was to be a specific feature.

User training and ease of use of the product were other important considerations. Because EOS.Web Media is a more powerful product than the system previously used, there would be a learning curve, but even so, it was important that internal clients find the product easy to use (external clients do not access the system - external orders are routed to archives staff who use the system in processing the orders). In the particularly fast-paced environment typical of a breaking news operation, the luxury of extensive or detailed training is not cost effective and with the CBS News/EOS.Web Media product,

the transition for users from the legacy system to the new solution was required to be as close to seamless as it could be.

Another key requirement was attention to the "library location," as Carubia described it, the ability to attach metadata to the physical objects to support the placement of each item in a particular location. The location and shelf space needed to be calculated shortly after the viewed media (e.g., footage shot for a particular broadcast, whether used or unused) is cataloged according to metadata and keywords. CBS News Archives requires that the system match a record of where each item "belongs" with the actual location, so that the item can be returned to the same space when it is returned or, if shelf space opens up as materials are removed permanently or are re-located to a different shelf location, the new location and shelf space can be re-calculated as required. This shelf management system is handled through the use of a barcode read by EOS.Web Media.



**Solution:** The process of building the product began with staff from CBS News Archives working with EOS product development staff to design and build the system. The development process focused on scalability from the beginning, with the result that EOS.Web Media is designed to accommodate metadata for the CBS News Archives collection as it grows over the years. Ease of use and re-education and training issues were addressed as well, and EOS training staff came to New York to work with CBS News Archives staff, an activity that paid off well for the client. One CBS staff member commented on the flexibility of the system, which "makes it easier to work with" than the previous system used.

EOS.Web Media, developed with CBS News Archives and now utilized to support that function, meets the standards and client criteria required by CBS News Archives and is now the state-of-the-art management system for the archives collection.

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