

Client: Liquid Compass

Industry: Advertising, Marketing & Media

Streaming Media's Liquid Compass reorients its file management

Innovative firm takes control of its round-the-clock updates of digital content



Liquid Compass, a national award-winning Streaming Media company, has been an innovator in assisting terrestrial radio stations with monetizing their online streaming content. Liquid Compass forged a new path in the industry by providing services on a variety of levels from streaming services to creating state-of-the-art customized media players.

Like many companies that support the live global exchange of information, the operations of the Denver-based firm are not prescribed by the traditional workweek or the 9-to-5 workday.

“Because streaming content runs 24/7, we’re on call all the time,” explains Administrative Director Anita Williams. “We handle problems whenever they occur, regardless of our individual locations.” For these round-the-clock operations, various administrative and technical team members have to constantly keep a large set of internal documents up to date.

Liquid Compass had the digital means to keep a large amount of information required for hundreds of clients ready to use at a moment’s notice, but it sometimes took longer than it could have. Often it was harder to tell whether all office contributors had in fact updated a current document. Before the move to a comprehensive document management system, Williams says, employees had to be extra vigilant when starting work on a shared file.

“I would consistently need to answer requests: ‘Is this the correct document?’ ‘Who has the latest version?’ ‘Did so-and-so already update this?’” she recalls.

Because the up-to-the-minute accuracy of operational files was so critical, Liquid Compass managers sought out a digital file manager that could show at a glance the status of a document within the workflow. Liquid Compass implemented M-Files, by Motive Systems.



File management through database attributes

M-Files document management software uses a database to manage and track any kind of Windows application file. The software identifies each document through a set of precise keyword attributes, as well as time- and author-stamped properties. Instead of remembering and navigating a complex path of folder names, users add these metadata properties to indicate essential information, like the client, project, document type, or other categories. Administrators can further customize this identification scheme to include workflow definitions, which set the status of working documents within a process. These workflows can be as simple as a two-stage process consisting of “waiting for approval” and “approved” or “completed,” or they can accommodate very specialized processes consisting of multiple stages with a variety of stakeholders.

A simple way to create custom workflows

With the addition of these status-related properties in the M-Files database, Liquid Compass created a series of simple but effective custom workflows for its recurring updates.

“Instead of emailing the person ahead of me in the process and asking if they completed their work yet, I can see the status in M-Files,” explains Williams. “This has increased accountability because you can easily check past transactions. You know you can proceed with your own work, because the file management system shows you a certain document has been worked on by Person A and updated by Person B. If it’s not done, you know exactly who’s responsible within the process.”



Another important version control measure includes check-in/check-out procedures for when two people are working with a file at the same time. When files are open concurrently, M-Files protects against overwritten changes and alerts users if an item is checked out. “Now I can tell if someone else is using the document, and I can tell when they’re done,” explain Williams.

Centralized access and version control

The data management system also gave the creative media firm additional advantages. All company content now resides in a single repository accessible to all departments, which eliminated the possibility of updated versions of important files floating around on hard drives or in email attachments.

In addition, because employees can log into M-Files remotely, any computer outside of the office can access any up-to-date company document just as if it was inside the office, which was ideal for the company’s 24-hour on-call operations.

Streamlined workflow for streaming content

“Our interdepartmental coordination has improved and we are able to work more efficiently,” Williams says. In addition to giving Liquid Compass a more fluid process to handle updates, the file management software also provides a much faster search function. “M-Files has definitely improved our response time when servicing client requests because we can readily retrieve the relevant information.”

Williams says after more than three years using the document management software, the company is “absolutely satisfied” with M-Files.

“Our output is constantly streaming day and night, so we need up-to-the-minute accurate information on a continual basis,” says Williams. “With M-Files’ file management capabilities, we don’t have to wonder whether we’re working with reliable information; just eliminating the confusion and numerous emails back and forth alone has saved us a lot of time and money.”

About Liquid Compass

Founded in Denver in 2001, Liquid Compass is one of the first-ever “creative media” companies to service the streaming media industry. During the last several years, the Liquid Compass Streaming Media Network has grown into one of the most recognized streaming media companies and has provided live and on-demand stream hosting and web services to some of the largest media companies in the world including Entercom, Lincoln Financial Media, Bonneville, Salem Communications, Clear Channel, ABC Radio, NBC/Gannett, Saga Communications, and Entravision. For more information, please visit: www.liquidcompass.net.