

# Corporation for Public Broadcasting:

## MIGRATING THE AMERICAN ARCHIVE OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

In 2011, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting selected Crawford Media Services to provide digitization service for the American Archive Project. A substantial undertaking, the task as outlined was to digitize 35,000 hours of audio and video content across 55,000 tapes, and transcode another 5,000 hours of born digital content from approximately 100 stations from across the nation.

There were a lot of challenges to overcome during the span of this project, but the team at Crawford Media regards challenges as opportunities to learn. One of the project's initial hurdles was the need to hold the majority of the content in-house, simultaneously. Space in our temperature-controlled, secure vault was reallocated to handle the additional capacity. All told, fifty-eight pallets and hundreds of additional boxes of tapes were stored to ensure safe, efficient availability to our migration team.

Once a strategy to house the assets was outlined, the project team had to determine how best to label the thousands of objects from various different locations. In order to alleviate organizational headaches in the scanning process, station-specific barcodes were printed and shipped to each location.

The project team then transitioned to the task of getting the assets to the Crawford facilities. Because materials from stations in Unalaska, Alaska and Guam – locations where truck freight transport was impossible – were part of the project scope, Crawford elected to transport the assets as luggage on passenger flights bound for Atlanta. For those stations in the contiguous U.S., climate-controlled pharmaceutical trucks were used in a series of three runs to transport the tapes to the Crawford vault. The logistical strategies worked to save approximately \$85,000 over the term of the project.

After the magic of shipment was done, it was time for the migration team to get to work. To handle the various analog formats, Crawford set up a series of tape bays. Allocated for the project work were three bays for video tapes, two for audio tapes and a transcode bay for born digital. The BagIt container bundled up to 27 objects for each source asset, including the media essence files, closed caption files, SAMMA migration logs, technical metadata files, and checksums among others. Nearly 1.5 million pieces of information were generated and tracked during the migration.

Along the way, the team uncovered priceless gems like Robert Frost reading a selection of his poems from WFCR, a Frank Zappa interview from KGNU, an Ayn Rand speech from WFCR, and three long-lost tapes from KQED that were actually interviews with film director Akira Kurosawa, Francis Ford Coppola and George Lucas.

The massive digital migration project has enabled the American Archive of Public Broadcasting to grow into one of the most educational and culturally diverse archives in the country. Crawford is proud to have provided the workforce and technology to realize this ambitious project for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

## American Archive

OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

### THE AMERICAN ARCHIVE PROJECT

#### By the Numbers:

# 24

hours a day, five days a week,  
tapes were being digitized to  
stay on schedule.

# 1/4"

Thousands of 1/4" reel-to-reel  
audio tapes and 3/4" Umatics  
have been baked.

# 2

Petabytes of new data at the  
conclusion of project.

# 280

Terabytes of born digital data  
derived from 33,000 files.

# 1000+

Well over 1,000 LTO-5 data  
tapes have been written.

# Migrate.

TIME IS NOT ON YOUR SIDE.

Today, the world is undergoing a renaissance for the distribution and consumption of rich media content, yet essentially all of the world's audiovisual content is at risk. Whether we are talking about brand new born-digital files, or legacy film and tape assets, without a preservation strategy, that content will simply expire. Experience has shown that no off-the-shelf product meets all the needs of audiovisual preservation. That is why Crawford Media Services is dedicated to offering the most professional and comprehensive solutions to the challenges of preserving and accessing media collections.

When it comes to digitizing media collections, time is not on your side. The fact is there are more tapes in the world than there are machines available to transfer them. Content that exists only on magnetic tape is facing a game of musical chairs. When all of the decks of a given format are worn out, the music stops, and that content is lost forever.

**Bottom line:** you may only get one shot at digitizing your collections. That's why some of the most respected organizations in the world have entrusted this critical task to Crawford Media Services.



## Migrate



metaforce<sup>SM</sup>



Archive



CRAWFORD  
ENGAGE<sup>SM</sup>

## Are your rich media collections showing their age?

- *Sticky shed syndrome*
- *Chemical breakdown/leeching*
- *Mold*
- *Splices and leader that fail during playback*
- *Poor tape wind*
- *Physical damage to the shell or case*
- *Dust or debris*
- *Vinegar syndrome*
- *Shrinkage*

*Crawford has acquired and maintained a large collection of legacy professional playback decks and systems. Our expert engineers ensure optimal playback of vintage media. We have the capacity for mass migration of nearly all legacy audio or video formats (NTSC or PAL) as well as HD video formats.*

## ABOUT CRAWFORD MEDIA SERVICES

Crawford Media Services, Inc. is an Atlanta based, privately held company and proven leader in the electronic media services industry whose mission is to provide creative, turn-key electronic media solutions for television, film, Internet and archival clients. Crawford has offered premium post production services and media management solutions to domestic and international clients for over 30 years.

### OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

#### Media Management

- Digital Migration
- Metaforce<sup>SM</sup>
- Digital Archive
- Crawford Engage<sup>SM</sup>

#### Creative Services

- Audio
- Editorial
- Post Production
- Visual Effects

More information about Crawford's range of solutions can be found at [www.crawford.com](http://www.crawford.com).

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