

The Customer

Stretch Internet

The Challenge

Bringing their clients' camera feeds into popular live streaming software through a universally-compatible and easy-to-deploy capture solution

The Solution

Magewell USB Capture external video capture devices

Benefits

Easy deployment, streamlined training, cross-platform support and broader source compatibility

**Magewell Devices Provide Flexible, Cross-Platform Capture for Stretch Internet**

Stretch Internet is a streaming platform provider that takes pride in the “freakishly good support” they deliver to their customers. Founded in Arizona in 2003 to provide affordable streaming services to athletics departments at smaller colleges and universities, Stretch has grown to become the largest streaming provider in North American collegiate athletics – with a footprint of more than 400 schools – while extending its customer base to other markets including entertainment venues, churches, healthcare, municipalities and more. Today, over 600 organizations large and small trust Stretch to stream over 65,000 live events each year, which collectively garner over 10 million views.



Stretch is devoted to utilizing innovative streaming technologies and providing a first-class presentation, backed by the best customer service in the business. Stretch's live streaming platform makes it easy for clients to control and manage their broadcast operations while providing first-class experiences for their viewers, blending high-quality HD video, social media, revenue-generating advertising and game statistics within customized, client-branded web destinations.



**The Challenge**

Although the centerpiece of Stretch's offering is its own live streaming platform, the company's involvement with their customers' productions goes far deeper. For each client, Stretch's experts custom-design an end-to-end production workflow to meet their specific requirements while maximizing both resources and quality.

“We treat every customer individually and separately, as they each have their own needs, budgets, goals, and varying levels of technical expertise,” said J.D. Fox, Operations and Production Manager at Stretch Internet. “We don't take a cookie cutter approach. We design the workflow starting with where to put the cameras and producers within the venue, and make all the equipment recommendations right down to the cables, trying to be as thorough as possible.”

While some of Stretch's clients use dedicated encoding hardware, the majority of their projects use a camera-to-computer workflow with software-based streaming production tools such as Telestream Wirecast. A key component of those workflows is a capture device to bring HDMI or SDI-based video and audio signals into the



computer. “Particularly in the college sports space, everyone has a laptop lying around and everyone has a camera,” said Fox. “But they still need an interface device to bridge the two.”

The IEEE-1394 standard, also known as FireWire, had previously enabled camera connectivity with many computers, but Stretch started searching for alternatives when 1394-compatible products became less common. Ease of use and reliability were obvious requirements, and with their clients using an evolving mix of Mac and Windows computers alongside a wide variety of cameras, flexible compatibility was also important. “FireWire was dying as a connectivity standard, so we were looking for what was going to work next, and what was going to work universally,” recalled Fox. “Magewell had the right product at the right time.”



***“For a lot of our use cases, the USB Capture series is not only the most cost-effective product available, but it’s also the best product in the space irrespective of price”***

### The Solution

Stretch recommends products from multiple vendors depending on their client’s exact needs, but for a significant – and growing – percentage of use cases, Magewell’s external, plug-and-play USB Capture devices top the list. In addition to Wirecast, Stretch’s customers use the Magewell devices alongside software including BlueFrame Technology’s Production Truck, Open Broadcast Software (OBS), vMix and Adobe Flash Media Live Encoder.

“For a lot of our use cases, the USB Capture series is not only the most cost-effective product available, but it’s also the best product in the space irrespective of price,” Fox praised. “They are extremely flexible and work in any scenario, and can capture video formats and frame rates from some popular cameras that other products can’t handle. And for many uses, it’s the only product on the market that’s truly cross-platform compatible.”

Although Stretch only discovered Magewell devices in late 2013, nearly a quarter of Stretch’s college sports clients now use them. More than half of those Magewell-equipped clients use multiple USB Capture units – some with as many as seven – for streaming several camera angles and multiple sports.

### The Benefits

The ease of use of the Magewell devices has proven beneficial for both Stretch and their clients. “The USB Capture devices have really streamlined our ability to get users up and running quickly,” said Fox. “It’s very easy to train somebody and get them up to speed, which is significant at colleges where student volunteers may be running the streaming, or Sports Information Directors who have a dozen other responsibilities to focus on. Just plug HDMI or





SDI into one end of the device, plug USB into the other end and into the computer, and you're good to go."

Magewell's seamless integration with third-party software has also proven beneficial. "Unlike other products we've tried, with the Magewell devices we can change input parameters directly in the streaming and encoding software without stopping the stream first, and without needing a separate utility," said Fox. "For example, if a laptop has been running for many hours in the heat and its processor performance is dropping, we can lower the capture resolution on the fly, without interruption."



*"Our goal is to elevate our clients' production quality and make their jobs easier, all while working within their budgets. Magewell's products enable us to do that."*

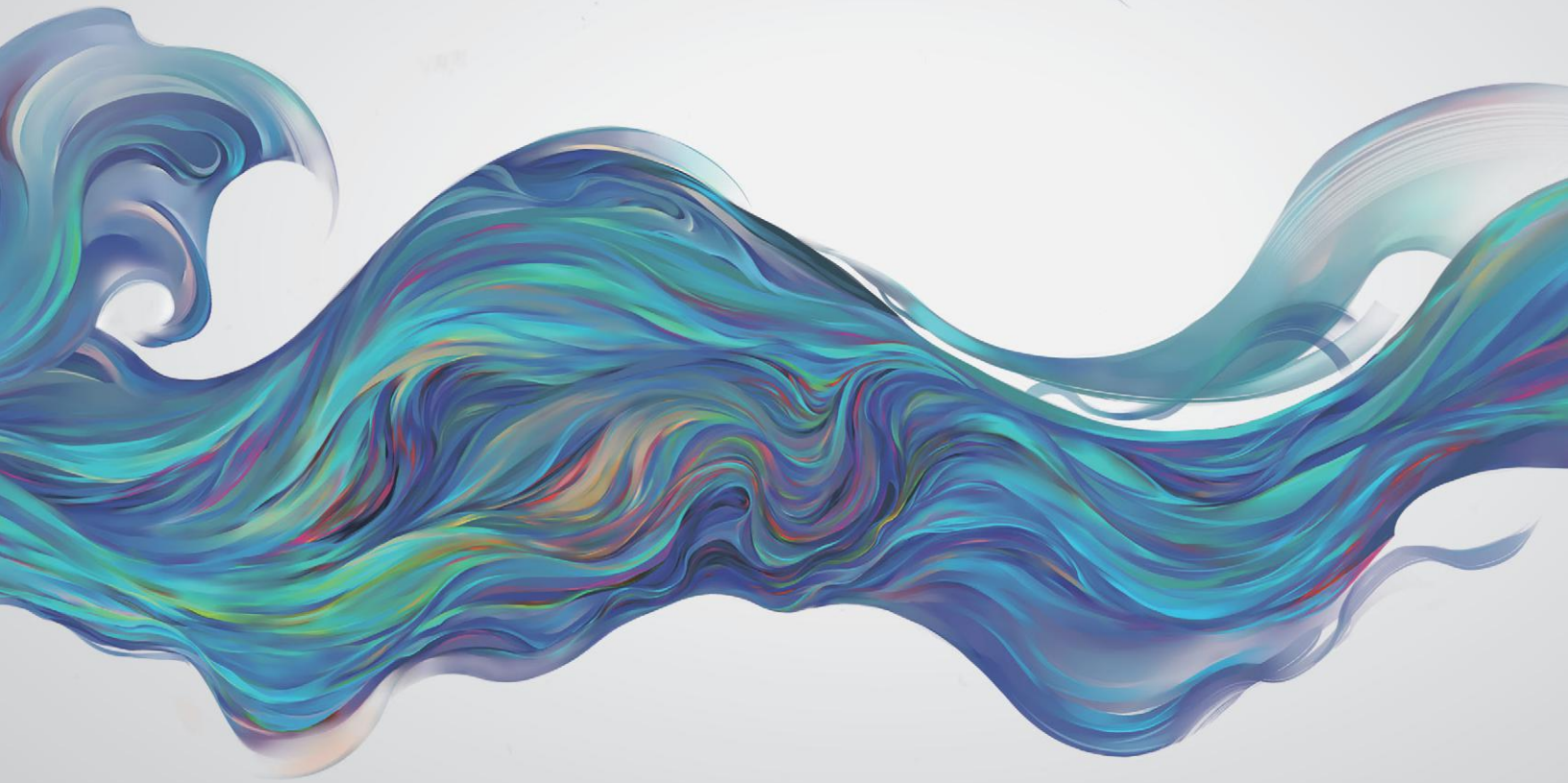
Beyond the Magewell products themselves, Fox is complimentary of the service he receives from both the company and Magewell distributor Mobile Video Devices. "We always look for partners who share our philosophy of making customer service a priority, and Magewell and MVD both do," he said. "Magewell has been very receptive and responsive to our feedback, and MVD is always quick to help us out while making us feel like part of the family."

Most importantly, the Magewell devices are helping Stretch Internet meet and exceed the expectations of their customers. "Our goal is to elevate our clients' production quality and make their jobs easier, all while working within their budgets," Fox concluded. "Magewell's products enable us to do that."



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