

BuffVision Streams Live Sports With Affordable, Versatile, Future-Proof Osprey Setup



At the University of Colorado, Boulder, BuffVision is the primary source for the athletic department's video content. The BuffVision team produces video content for the CU Athletic Department's 17 NCAA Division I programs, the video boards located at Folsom Field (home of CU football) and the Coors Events Center (home to the volleyball and men's and women's basketball programs). Through video on the CU Buffs website, CUBuffs.com and live streams on Facebook, Periscope and Pac-12 Plus channels, BuffVision is a destination for all fans — especially the players' long-distance family and friends — who can't attend the games in person. It is also a recruitment tool, allowing prospective student athletes to watch the teams in action and see what it's like to be a Buff — from the game day experience, to the locker rooms, training rooms, and practice facilities, to what it's like living in Boulder. By "broadcasting" sports that wouldn't ordinarily get airtime on the Pac-12 Network or elsewhere, BuffVision fills an important niche.

A high-volume video operation

BuffVision is also responsible for video-board programs at Folsom Field and the Coors Events Center. In the 2016-17 season, BuffVision handled 69 live events, 55 of which were board shows that appeared on the in-venue video boards during the games or matches, and 14 of which were fully produced shows for live streaming. (Essentially, BuffVision live-streams any games that aren't televised on

the Pac-12 Network.) In addition, BuffVision live-streamed 55 postgame press conferences and 16 weekly football press conferences.



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Upping the streaming game



BuffVision was born in 1999 and began streaming around 2005, with limited success in terms of quality and reliability. As technology evolved, and the amount of content and the number of end-user devices grew, BuffVision knew it needed to improve its streaming game.

In 2011, after overhauling its operation with a new facility, BuffVision began live-streaming on the conference’s digital platform, Pac-12 Plus. The Pac-12 partnered with Ooyala for content delivery and recommended Osprey Video — and that’s when BuffVision got its first Osprey Video SDI capture card. The crew has never looked back.

The Osprey card makes it possible to do live, multi-camera HD streams and multi-bit-rate encodes — all with instant replays and graphics — and the Osprey card handles everything. In essence, BuffVision can simply take its board shows, package them with audio and score overlays, and live-stream them through the Osprey card. One of the most important features for BuffVision is the card’s SimulStream® capability, which can send multiple streams to separate places simultaneously from the same card.

“When we got the Osprey card, we instantly had a very high-powered tool that allowed us to be successful in delivering our live streams to our fan base. We were finally able to do what we had always wanted to do,” said BuffVision Assistant Director Eric Pelloni.

Results: More power, better quality and reliability.

With the Osprey card in place, BuffVision saw the success of its streaming operation skyrocket, not only in terms of video quality and reliability, but in being able to deliver multiple, precisely converted streams anywhere without fail. No matter what the end device, BuffVision can be confident the stream will suit varying bandwidths and viewing formats, so fans always have a positive viewing experience.

The installation process was simple, and the cost was far more affordable than buying an all-in-one streaming system. BuffVision operators simply plugged the card into a high-powered PC built by the IT department, set the configurations, and started live-streaming games with impressive results. Furthermore, unlike some other video cards on the market that simply take in HD-SDI video and pass it on to the computer to do the heavy lifting, the Osprey card has enough processing power to handle the encoding and delivery as well.

Since 2011, BuffVision has added more Osprey cards, installed in control rooms at different venues on campus. Having multiple cards lets BuffVision scale the number of simultaneous streams it can deliver and makes it possible to go live from anywhere the cards are housed.

New streaming destinations, no new cards.

In 2016, the power of the Osprey cards and the SimulStream functionality became even more apparent when BuffVision made another shift. Recognizing the popularity of video-sharing platforms and the fact that so many people are on social media immediately after a game ends, BuffVision began live-streaming all press conferences on Facebook Live and Periscope. This move enabled BuffVision to meet and engage fans where they are, something that would have been impossible without the Osprey cards.

“When we decided to stream to Facebook and Periscope in addition to Pac-12 Plus, the Osprey cards made it easy,” Pelloni said. “We were able to increase our output to multiple places without having to invest a dime. It drove home the fact that we have cards that will grow with us for years.”