

30 YEARS SONIC FOUNDRY

A pioneer in streaming video



Sonic Foundry

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the streaming video platform of Madison-based Sonic Foundry has kept business and distance learning on track.

Adoption of streaming video had gradually grown before the COVID-19 pandemic struck, but its value has been vividly illustrated ever since. Madison-based Sonic Foundry has been a pioneer in this market.

HOW HAS SONIC FOUNDRY EVOLVED SINCE ITS INCEPTION?

We have a rich history in Madison, which we are proud to call home. We were founded in 1991 as an audio editing company, and after acquiring Mediasite, our flagship enterprise video platform, from Carnegie Mellon University in 2001, Sonic Foundry was born. We sold our consumer audio tech to Sony in 2003 and shifted to streaming video applications with Mediasite. We entered the lecture-capture market in higher education and pioneered in-classroom video solutions. Over the years, Sonic Foundry has developed a variety of Mediasite software for schools, corporations, health care associations, and government agencies — now 5,200 clients in 65 countries — to power learning and collaboration despite distance. In a COVID-19 world, where the value of streaming video is front and center, we're helping organizations swiftly keep classes, business, and events going — virtually.

HOW HAS YOUR INDUSTRY CHANGED?

As you can imagine, our industry experienced a decade's worth of change in a matter of months as schools and organizations were catapulted into this new video-first world due to the pandemic. It became a challenge for corporations and campuses to maintain operations, and for planned classes, meetings, and conferences to take place in person. Living, working, and learning suddenly depended on digital platforms and streaming video. The amazing potential of streaming video is now permanently front and center.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAS THE COMPANY HAD TO OVERCOME OVER THE YEARS?

Our biggest challenge over the years is how to evolve our product line to meet the changing needs of our global customer base. Industries such as higher education increased their video platform needs back in the spring. Campuses scaled up their use of Mediasite to set up online classrooms

within a week, giving them the foundation to continually refine their virtual plans. However, the interruption was more dramatic for the conference and events industry. Mediasite Events, a full-service group that has spent 15 years creating dynamic online event experiences for companies and continuing-education conferences, saw its pipeline drop as events and trade-shows were canceled. As this important line of business closed up shop, we quickly created a complete virtual event platform to address new market needs. Mediasite Events is working with meeting planners to help them pivot from in-person conferences to customizable online events.

TO WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THE COMPANY'S SUCCESS AND LONGEVITY?

Sonic Foundry has the fortitude to have weathered a storm or two over its rich 30-year history with a technology that is stable and well recognized in the market. We owe our success and longevity to our dedicated employee base, many of whom have spent decades here. They are not only committed to their work, but they are passionate about what we do as a company. We have worked hard to create relationships with our clients who are raving advocates for our products and who are willing and eager to share their success with Mediasite.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMPANY?

With video now "the new normal," the sky's the limit for Sonic Foundry. In addition to the full-service virtual events platform that will continue to play a pivotal role in hybrid (online and in-person) events once the world returns to normal, we're building the next generation of our platform for the classroom of the future. Whether some students are in seats and others are watching online, everyone will be able to collaborate despite distance with Mediasite. This accelerated macro trend toward e-learning and distance learning is a growth opportunity for Sonic Foundry, and we look forward to what the future brings.

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