

A glowing blue globe is centered on the page, with white circuit lines and dots extending from its right side. A vertical red bar is on the left side of the globe.

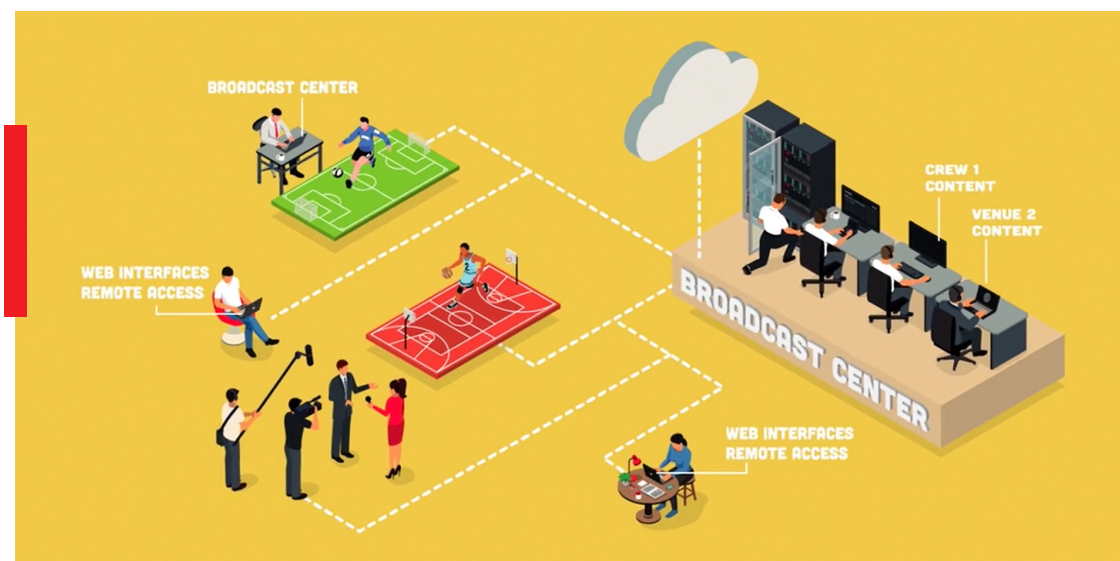
# *Live production anywhere*

as the new post-Covid  
reality for sports  
broadcasters

## INTRODUCTION

*Sports broadcasters today are challenged to produce more content, more efficiently, while coping with shrinking budgets. Traditional live production, as we have known it for many decades, where all primary equipment and staff are located at the production site, is making way for alternative models, to better adapt to the new realities of the industry. Remote production for instance, is known to create more efficient workflows for the coverage of live events and is changing the way crews collaborate. And while the ability to produce an event from a distance is not new, it has gained momentum over the past few years and has become more relevant than ever since the Covid-19 outbreak.*

The sharing of content between multi-sites is key for productive live operations. EVS lets you easily build and monitor workflows that allow you to share content and data between the distant sites, with instant access through web-based interfaces.



Although remote production can have different meanings depending on who you talk to, it is generally recognized as the overarching term that describes a production with some elements of the production happening remotely from another element. Depending on where the staff, equipment and facilities are located, this model of production can be broadly categorized into different approaches including distant remote, centralized, or distributed.

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, remote production was mostly synonymous with centralized production, sometimes referred to as 'Home-Run' or 'At-Home' production. It was the most widespread of these approaches, referring to setups where the majority of the equipment and staff are housed in a broadcast center for a production separate to the venue where the event is taking place.

Broadcasters using this model before the pandemic already reported many benefits; it greatly reduces travel expenses, since fewer people and less equipment are needed at the venue. In turn, less travel means a reduced carbon footprint for a more environmentally friendly way to produce live events. Additionally, remote production means more games can be covered in a shorter period of time. By spending less time on the road, operators are able to produce back-to-back games (perhaps even in the same day) or work on a wider variety of sports. This allows operators to rapidly gain new skills and experiences, leading to smoother, higher-quality productions.

When the coronavirus swept the world, broadcasters were thrown into the deep end of remote production. The travel restrictions and social distancing measures brought by the pandemic, meant crews needed to be shifted away as much as possible from studios and centralized production facilities. Despite the little time they had to prepare, many broadcasters found new and creative ways to adapt their existing setups on the fly, allowing parts of their production crews to work from the safety of their own homes. By creating distributed remote workflows, businesses were able to continue producing and delivering content while helping contain the spread of the virus. Almost overnight, this 'operator at home' production model became the prevalent form of remote production, and the only way to get programs back on air safely.

## OVERCOMING THE REMOTE PRODUCTION FEAR FACTOR

It's fair to say that sports productions are among the most severely hit by the pandemic - while newsrooms and talk shows have been able to more easily adapt their formats and find solutions and workarounds to continue their programming with little disruption, it's the entire sports business model that has been affected by the blank sports calendar. But despite being hit harder by the crisis, the absence of live games has also given them the opportunity to take a step back and start rethinking their production models for the better.

Before Covid-19, transitioning to remote workflows was an intimidating process for many. Perhaps because remote workflows were not routinely used for complete productions of tier-1 or prime time live sports events but rather as an add-on or expansion of traditional production methods. In lower tier sports where it could be considered less was at stake, it was more regular. Broadcasting equipment and technology also represent significant investments, and the prospect of making substantial transformations to already established production infrastructures was a daunting prospect.

The circumstances of the coronavirus crisis have led to widespread adoption of remote workflows, showing the entire industry that the remote way of working is well and truly a viable option. As we emerge from this pandemic, it will be important for broadcasters to take note from these recent achievements and make sure they make the right technology choices with business continuity in mind.

## A STEPPING- STONE TO LIVE PRODUCTION ANYWHERE



The good news for broadcasters is that transitioning to remote production models doesn't necessarily mean having to perform a complete overhaul of existing infrastructures. The core ingredients are there today to allow them to easily complement their current production setups to accommodate (or better support) remote workflows while capitalizing on their current investments.

By leveraging IP-based toolsets, software-defined technologies, and cloud-based solutions, broadcasters can seamlessly move towards production models where location is no longer a constraint – at the end of the day, whether it's REMI, GREMI, centralized, at home or distant remote – what you want to achieve is live production anywhere.

As an example, the replay element of a broadcast usually represents multiple operators in a confined environment, but with replay systems that exist in the market today, operators can work from literally anywhere in low-latency conditions, providing there is a secure IP connection. They can conveniently set up the replay controller and a multiviewer either in the broadcast center, or from the comfort of their own homes, connect to a server deployed at the event location, and begin working immediately. They can build their replay and highlights packages from a distance, sometimes even thousands of miles away, in a similar way to how they would do back at the venue.

Another possible scenario is moving the servers away from the event site, back into the main production facility. This allows the creation of live programming with minimum equipment and staff at the event site, since most operations are done from a distance.

This client-server decoupling is not limited to replay systems. There are review systems (VAR), all-in-one production systems and live switchers that also rely on this type of architecture, allowing operators to work from anywhere, at any time.

Content management from different sites is also possible. With natively web-based tools, as well as other technologies such as remote desktop and PC over IP Technology (PCoIP) production staff can manage ingest, metadata and clipping, as well as playout from any location.

A live production is a highly collaborative process, and with crews becoming geographically dispersed, finding ways to facilitate content exchange between remote sites will be critical to help maintain the same level of efficiency in the production process. Broadcasters can make use of file accelerators, but also cloud integrations to enable users to access content from anywhere, for real-time collaboration and contribution. In this context, adding a layer of monitoring, that provides complete control and visibility of exchanged content is the key to streamlined distributed workflows.



### **EVS' LSM-VIA IP-based replay and highlights system.**

By decoupling the operation of the LSM-VIA from the server managing multiple channels, many different flexible deployment models can be supported, including remote and even multi-site simultaneous production.

## CONCLUSION

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*By further exposing the fragility of traditional approaches, the challenges brought by Covid-19 have strengthened the idea that remote production will play a central role in the future of live production. As we move forward, we can expect to see improvements in today's tools and technologies and an acceleration of innovations that will bring the future live remote production experience to the highest level with crews collaborating live, from anywhere.*

**To learn more** about EVS' Live Production Anywhere solutions, please visit:

**[EVS.COM/LIVE-PRODUCTION-ANYWHERE](https://www.evs.com/live-production-anywhere)**