Quantum

CASE STUDY

General Assembly Offers World-Class Post-Production Services for Documentary Filmmakers and Unscripted Content Creators

General Assembly is dedicated to offering premium post-production services to businesses of all sizes, including teams generating some of the most engaging documentary and nonfiction series streaming today. The company implemented the Quantum StorNext platform to provide the reliability required for meeting tight project deadlines without fail.

FEATURED PRODUCTS

StorNext®
File System

Scalar®
Tape Storage

> We're just completing our picture finishing work on *Coach Prime* season 2, and we have had zero down days with Quantum—zero issues when it comes to finishing.

Beau Tipton
Founding Partner and Head of Post Operations
General Assembly

> We've decided to use Quantum for our offline storage as well as our online storage. We realized we should build our storage environment on one—extremely reliable—storage platform.

Tanner Alvarez – Founding Partner and Head of Post Production, General Assembly

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- Quantum StorNext® File System
- Quantum Scalar® Tape Library
- LTO Drives

KEY BENEFITS

- **Avoids downtime and meets tight project deadlines** with a highly reliable storage platform.
- **Streamlines workflows by integrating online and offline** storage with Quantum StorNext.
- **Offers exceptional services with enterprise-grade technology** to nonfiction and documentary teams.

Tanner Alvarez and Beau Tipton had built impressive careers in television production, yet they realized that the post-production landscape was changing. Several medium-sized post-production companies had been acquired by larger facilities, leaving few options for creative teams producing nonfiction content, such as documentary series. Those teams often lacked the budgets to work with larger post-production facilities that catered to feature films and scripted series.

Alvarez (a former Netflix post-production executive) and Tipton (a post-production supervisor with 20 years of experience in film and TV) decided to form General Assembly to address the changes in their field. They built a leadership team that includes Beau's brother John Tipton, an award-winning cinematographer, and Brian Thomas, a director and producer with more than 20 years of experience.

Together, they set out to build a full-service post-production studio that could serve creative teams and businesses of any size, including those working on nonfiction projects.

One of their first steps was designing a technology infrastructure. "We asked ourselves, 'how can we offer premium post-production services for nonfiction projects—using the latest and greatest technology—while also controlling costs?'" says Alvarez, head of post-production at General Assembly.

Finding the right storage solutions would be a key part of the equation—and reliability was the highest priority. "I wanted us to build the right storage infrastructure so that when we are in the most critical stage of post production, there are no issues with hardware—it just works," says Alvarez.

BUILDING NEW POST-PRODUCTION SERVICES ON QUANTUM STORNEXT

Early on in the technology selection process, the General Assembly team homed in on Quantum. Alvarez knew that the Quantum StorNext platform could deliver exceptional reliability. "In one of my previous positions, we used Quantum storage and we never had a down day in my three years there," says Alvarez. "It was the only time in my career when we never had a down day from storage. So it was an easy choice to select Quantum StorNext for General Assembly."

The company implemented a flash-based StorNext solution for online storage. Fibre channel connectivity provides post-production teams with fast access to online content, while flash storage delivers excellent performance. The company created multiple StorNext volumes, each configured for a unique use case. For example, one volume is configured to address potential issues with audio and picture finishing.

For nearline storage, General Assembly implemented a Quantum Scalar tape library with LTO drives. "We offer robust, multi-layered backups at no additional cost to our clients," says Alvarez.

ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING RELIABILITY WITH QUANTUM

Since its founding in early 2023, General Assembly has rapidly acquired several high-profile projects, including the Amazon Prime docuseries *Coach Prime*, which follows NFL legend Deion Sanders in his impressive college football coaching career. These projects demand fast work. "With projects like *Coach Prime*, the turnaround time is insane," says Beau Tipton, executive producer at General Assembly. "And if we don't make our deadlines, there will be hell to pay."

Fortunately, the StorNext platform has helped the General Assembly team deliver all work on time. "We're just completing our picture finishing work on *Coach Prime* season 2, and we have had zero down days with Quantum—zero issues when it comes to finishing," says Tipton.

FACING SLOW PERFORMANCE AND DOWNTIME WITH OFFLINE STORAGE

While Quantum online storage has been flawless, the General Assembly team faced reliability issues with its offline solutions from other vendors. "Initially, we selected very economical solutions for offline storage—but we're paying the price now," says Alvarez.

"We have one offline storage solution that promised to support a certain number of editors at certain speeds with no latency or playback issues," says Tipton. "But it was probably designed for the needs of scripted series with two or four cameras, not a docuseries where you might have 30 cameras, with 18 editors and story producers, all working at the exact same time. With our projects, that storage hasn't been able to keep up."

"We've been looking at 'pending media' issues that have lasted 10 minutes," says Alvarez. "And we've had downtime, including a large amount of time dedicated to maintaining the system. We would have rather spent that time scaling our business."

INTEGRATING ONLINE AND OFFLINE STORAGE WITH QUANTUM

Consequently, the General Assembly team is making a change for offline storage. "We've decided to use Quantum for our offline storage as well as our online storage," says Alvarez. "We realized we should build our storage environment on one—extremely reliable—storage platform."

"Now, if you're working on nonfiction or documentary projects, you can partner with General Assembly to access enterprise-grade Quantum technology without enormous budgets."

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Founding Partner and Head of Post Production
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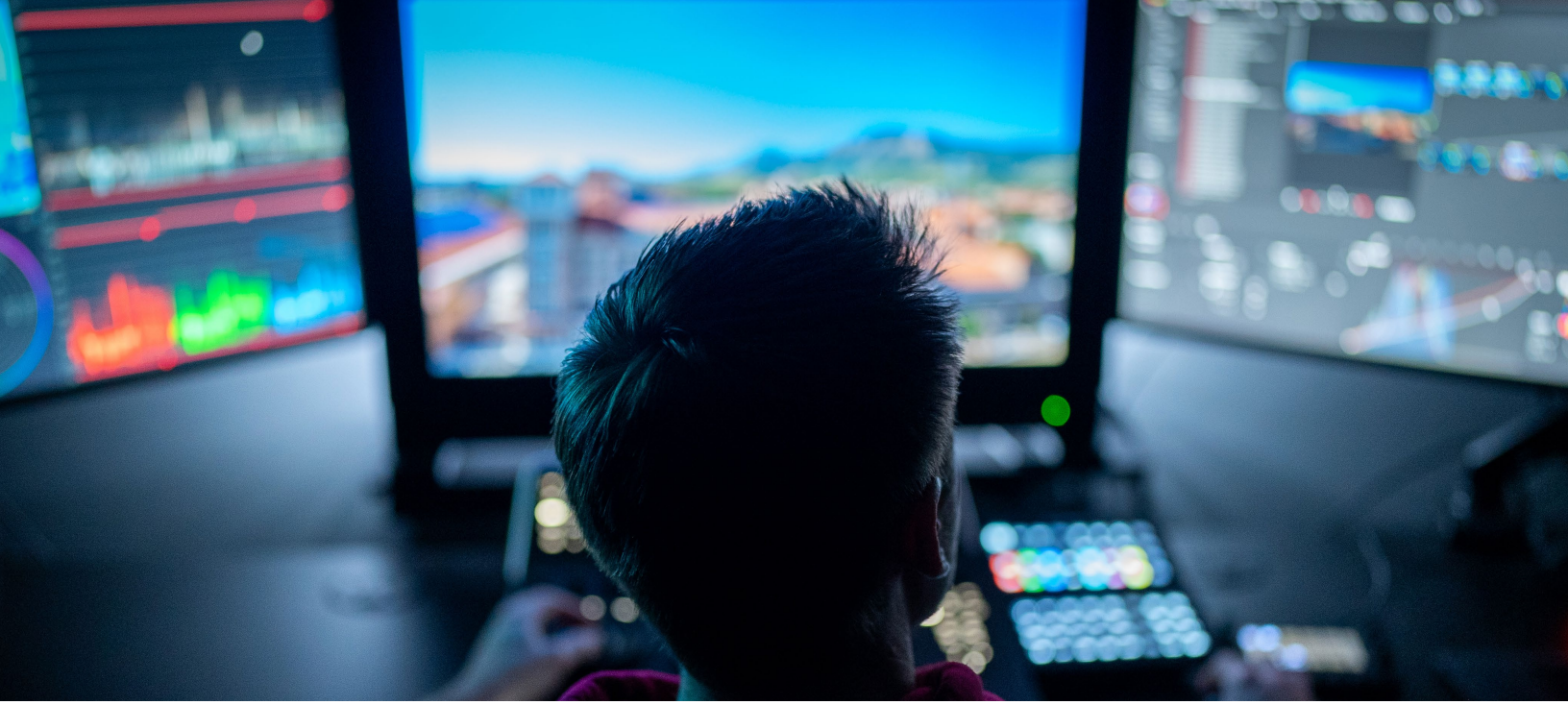
ABOUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly is a full-service post-production facility dedicated to providing premium services to businesses of all shapes and sizes. The company has a 2,700-square-foot state-of-the-art facility in Los Angeles and also offers services nationwide in a remote capacity. General Assembly is uniquely positioned to leverage its relationships and expertise to bring the best talent and technology to its clients at a competitive price.



General Assembly began working with Quantum to design the new build-out of flash-based offline storage. The team will use the StorNext Distributed LAN Client (DLC), which provides high performance and reliability through a SAN-like connection over Ethernet.

Having a single storage platform for online and offline storage will streamline workflows for the General Assembly team and its clients. “Our aim is to provide our clients with a one-stop shop,” says Alvarez. “We can offer offline storage that is integrated with online storage, which makes conform and transfer processes much easier. Basically, you drop the media off, and we deliver the finished results. You don’t need to go anywhere else.”

The integration of online and offline storage will help General Assembly simplify delivery of not only projects but also promotional content. “For large customers like Amazon Studios, we constantly need to pull assets from our archive to deliver elements to the marketing team,” says Tipton.

OFFERING ENTERPRISE-GRADE TECHNOLOGY TO CLIENTS OF ALL SIZES

With modest budgets, teams working on nonfiction and documentary projects are often relegated to outdated technology. “When I’ve worked on documentary series in the past, shows were typically edited on aging, legacy storage systems,” says Alvarez. “We know that teams working on those types of projects are ready for a change.”

StorNext is helping General Assembly achieve its goal of offering premium services, based on robust technology, for all types of projects. “Everyone in the post-production world knows that Quantum provides enterprise-level solutions,” says Alvarez. “Now, if you’re working on nonfiction or documentary projects, you can partner with General Assembly to access enterprise-grade Quantum technology without enormous budgets.”

Looking ahead, the General Assembly team plan to widen their workflow capabilities by adding more of Quantum’s platform solutions such as CatDV asset management and workflow orchestration tools, which could further benefit clients. “Access to enterprise-grade technology is going to be really exciting for our colleagues who work in the nonfiction world,” says Alvarez. “We look forward to seeing all the ways in which Quantum can help us deliver exceptional services and enable our clients to create the most engaging content.”

Quantum

Quantum technology, software, and services provide the solutions that today’s organizations need to make video and other unstructured data smarter – so their data works for them and not the other way around. With over 40 years of innovation, Quantum’s end-to-end platform is uniquely equipped to orchestrate, protect, and enrich data across its lifecycle, providing enhanced intelligence and actionable insights. Leading organizations in cloud services, entertainment, government, research, education, transportation, and enterprise IT trust Quantum to bring their data to life, because data makes life better, safer, and smarter. Quantum is listed on Nasdaq (QMCO) and the Russell 2000® Index. For more information visit **www.quantum.com**.

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