

Why use PIX instead of FTP sites?

What is an FTP site?

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is a basic way to transfer files over the Internet to your computer from another computer. Your computer, using FTP software, connects to a server from which you upload and download files. In this way, an FTP site acts like a large filing cabinet. The only “key” necessary to unlock the filing cabinet is a user name and password. An SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol) site uses the same protocol to transfer files, but uses a secure connection while transferring material.

Security & Control

With PIX, you have a security system that far exceeds the protection offered by an FTP or SFTP site. We enforce encryption protocols during transfer and we also encrypt files on your computer before they are even transferred on our secure server. This means your content is secure while in PIX. Additionally, we use a “fingerprint” to check the integrity of every file that is uploaded to ensure large files are not corrupted and do not need to be re-uploaded.

With an FTP site, your user name, password, and file contents are sent in “clear text”. This means the data is transferred without any encryption. Anyone eavesdropping on your network can intercept user names, passwords, and even content. With an SFTP site, material is protected during transfer, but not necessarily protected once the file exists on your computer or on the server. Further, when using SFTP you must make sure everyone you share files with is selecting SFTP when transferring files – often the default setting may be FTP even though SFTP is an option. This means users who do not know how or do not remember to transfer files with SFTP instead of FTP, are sending material insecurely where it may be intercepted.

PIX protects your material in our world-class tier-1 data center, using servers that we control completely. Often times, FTP sites keep your material on virtual hosts – shared computers on which multiple clients lease space. This means your content is susceptible to any problems that occur on that shared computer, either with your own material or with others’ material.

Notification

With PIX, we eliminate extra steps that exist with FTP sites. With a few clicks you upload, download, and alert individuals or an entire department that new media is available. No more waiting by the computer for a file to upload - you’ll automatically be sent an email from PIX.

When you upload or download a file on an FTP site, there is nothing to alert you the transfer has finished. An FTP site requires extra steps: you must monitor the upload or download, wait for it to complete, and then send emails or make calls to let the rest of the team know the media is available. If you’re waiting to watch Dailies, you will have to call the lab to ask if the clips are up yet on the FTP site. If you are responsible for uploading material, your day will be interrupted by emails and phone calls asking for the media.

Media Viewing

Our built-in media viewer lets you review material moments after logging onto PIX. eliminating the need to download dozens of files, with a few clicks you are instantly watching clips, reviewing images, and reading documents. An FTP site merely provides you with online storage. With an FTP site, there is no media playback feature to watch clips, view images, or read documents. You must download everything onto your computer and open a separate application to review it, creating added steps and wasting your time. In the case you're downloading several large files – cuts or dailies – you're also wasting space on your computer.

With an FTP site, users must download material in order to view it, which means every user will have a copy of the content and the freedom to do what they like with it. With PIX, you can restrict downloading capabilities to specific users and you can remove material from PIX, knowing it is no longer accessible to users because they have not been able to download a copy.

Feedback

PIX has designed Notes, Playlists, and Approve/Decline systems that are tailored to the workflow of a film or television production. You can send reviewed material and notes to others' PIX inboxes, you can make frame-specific notes, and you can quickly see which material has been "approved" for further use.

An FTP site requires added steps just to send material to your production and creative teams. To approve or make notes on media, you must create a file, send an email, or make a phone call to share your ideas. You waste time creating this feedback, ensuring this feedback reaches the right people, and waiting for others' notes to circle back to you.

Implementation

PIX is easy to implement because we use ports commonly open on most firewalls when transferring material to you. It is very unlikely that any reconfiguration of your company's firewalls will be needed to use PIX. Whereas with some FTP sites, your IT department may need to reconfigure your company's firewall in order to filter active FTP traffic and ensure the material being transferred from the FTP site is getting through to you.