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Magic, Mon 01 Jun 2009

Capped.tv - High quality videos for the masses

By Micksam7 of Dolphins & Magic of Nah-Kolor

Prologue

In Hugi #34 we had an article about demoscene.tv. Since then, Capped.tv has more and more found its way to the demoscene community. At Pouet.net a lot of demos have a capped.tv link. A link to a high-res video, the next best thing instead of watching the .exe and a nice service for those sceners who don't have the minimum specs to run the specific demo. With all those links to either 'capped' or 'demoscene.tv' or just a video which can be downloaded I hope this doesn't mean sceners skip seeing the .exe in the beginning or perhaps even at all. This may never be a substitute of watching the .exe if the demo can run on your own equipment. Nonetheless Hugi decided to contact the main person behind capped.tv who also is the founder: Micksam7 of Dolphins, to have a closer look at capped.tv... enjoy!

Magic:

Hi there Micksam7! I know it's still a bit early in America but please tell our readers something about yourself.

Micksam7:

My handle is micksam7, I've had the handle for 8 years now, but I simply go by "Mick". I started with the scene around 2005-06, first demo I saw was MFX's Aether. First demo was released this year at Blockparty '08 with major help from s_tec from Trailer Park Demos. I live in the US and currently 19 years old.

Magic:

Where did you get the idea for capped.tv and when did it all start?

Micksam7:

I wanted to show demos off on my blog late 2007, and I was disappointed with you-tube quality, so I encoded my own videos in VP6 and put them in a video player that flash 8 came with. Early 2008 I decided to turn it into a full-fledged site and bought a domain.



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Demoscene.tv around this time was still kinda sucky in the easy-viewing department, so I thought it was a fairly good idea. Capped.TV now uses h.264 video and player runs off JW FLV Media Player that was modified a bit.

Magic:

What equipment/software is used for capped.tv and how much are the costs to run a website like this?

Micksam7:

It runs on a quad-core xeon that costs way too much. Fortunately another project I help with currently pays for that server. Video hosting doesn't require powerful hardware, just a large uplink. The xeon helps with video-encoding though. For the video captures I make myself, I use two sets of machines to capture and encode videos. Typically capture to 1080p and scale down to 720p [for HD videos] and 640x480 [for capped] unless asked not to scale them. Some more useless info about capped: Capped.TV runs on my own set of php scripts. The player is based on the popular JW Media Player with a few custom hacks and fixes in it. The encoder is x264, ffmpeg, and mp4box controlled by a php script once again. Capped.TV's video data is served by a content distribution network hosted by Internap. Logos on capped were made in flash or illustrator.

Magic:

What other project?

Micksam7:

Me and a few friends got the server for all our random side-projects. I'd rather not list them all if you don't mind.

Magic:

Do you have many vistors a month? Please share some statistics with us.

Micksam7:

You can see the statistics on the title of the Capped.TV website. Most of the views were Linger In Shadows as of this writing, due to quite a few gaming sites linking to capped. About 5k videos are served up Monthly.

Magic:

What are the top 10 of visiting countries of capped.tv ?



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Micksam7:

- 1 Other
- 2 Finland
- 3 Norway
- 4 United States
- 5 Germany
- 6 Poland
- 7 France
- 8 Sweden
- 9 United Kingdom
- 10 Spain

Magic:

You've told me you plan to update your website soon. What have you planned?

Micksam7:

Anything and everything to out-do DTV. They decided to do a massive update recently, and I still see room for improvement on their site, so I'm going to work on Capped to fill in those gaps DTV leaves.

Magic:

What room for improvements do you see and what gaps are you talking about? Could you be more specific?

Micksam7:

Capped.TV is meant more as a repository for videos. We focus on content quality. This stance may change in the future though, but we'll see. Capped trumps DTV in video quality, as well as in general simplicity. I don't like adding features no one will use, or cluttering the interface too much. As a side note, eventually capped.tv will start to take donations. And instead of your donations going nowhere, you could use your donations as a "Vote" for what feature gets coded and implemented next into capped.

Magic:

Are you the only person working on capped.tv? If not, please tell us who is also helping out, If so, how can you manage this all by yourself?



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Micksam7:

Only one so far; I have too much free time. Capped is pretty much fully automated, so there's no real maintenance to be done except for video change requests.

Magic:

What drives you, what is your motivation for running a website like capped.tv?

Micksam7:

When I started Capped, I did so because I wanted to show people demos, but hated youtube quality. At the time, DTV didn't have flash right yet, so I started Capped. What keeps my motivation up? Pure scene spirit.

Magic:

Please tell me about the capped.tv kiosk. How did this idea come to live, for what purpose and why wasn't it set up at NVscene? If you can tell anything more about the kiosk be my guest. Thank you!

Micksam7:

Most of the information you need is contained within the first post of this thread. It wasn't shown due to lack of hardware. No one had a machine they were willing to spare. As well, it required a bit of a powerful machine for the HD codec I used. The codec doesn't run too well the way I had it encoded, but it should be fixed soon with a re-upload of the videos..

Magic:

How do you see capped.tv in 5 years time? Will it still be online? What will it look like?

Micksam7:

5 Years? Hmm.. I don't think that far ahead. Probably in 5 years, the codec would have changed again, and 720p would probably be the 'default res' on capped. By then, you'll probably have directx 12 or something, with some people still using XP and refusing to budge, so capped.tv would become an invaluable source.

Magic:



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All the best with capped.tv and we hope to see more improvements soon!

Links related to this article

Official website

Capped.tv Kiosk 2008

Micksam7 & Magic