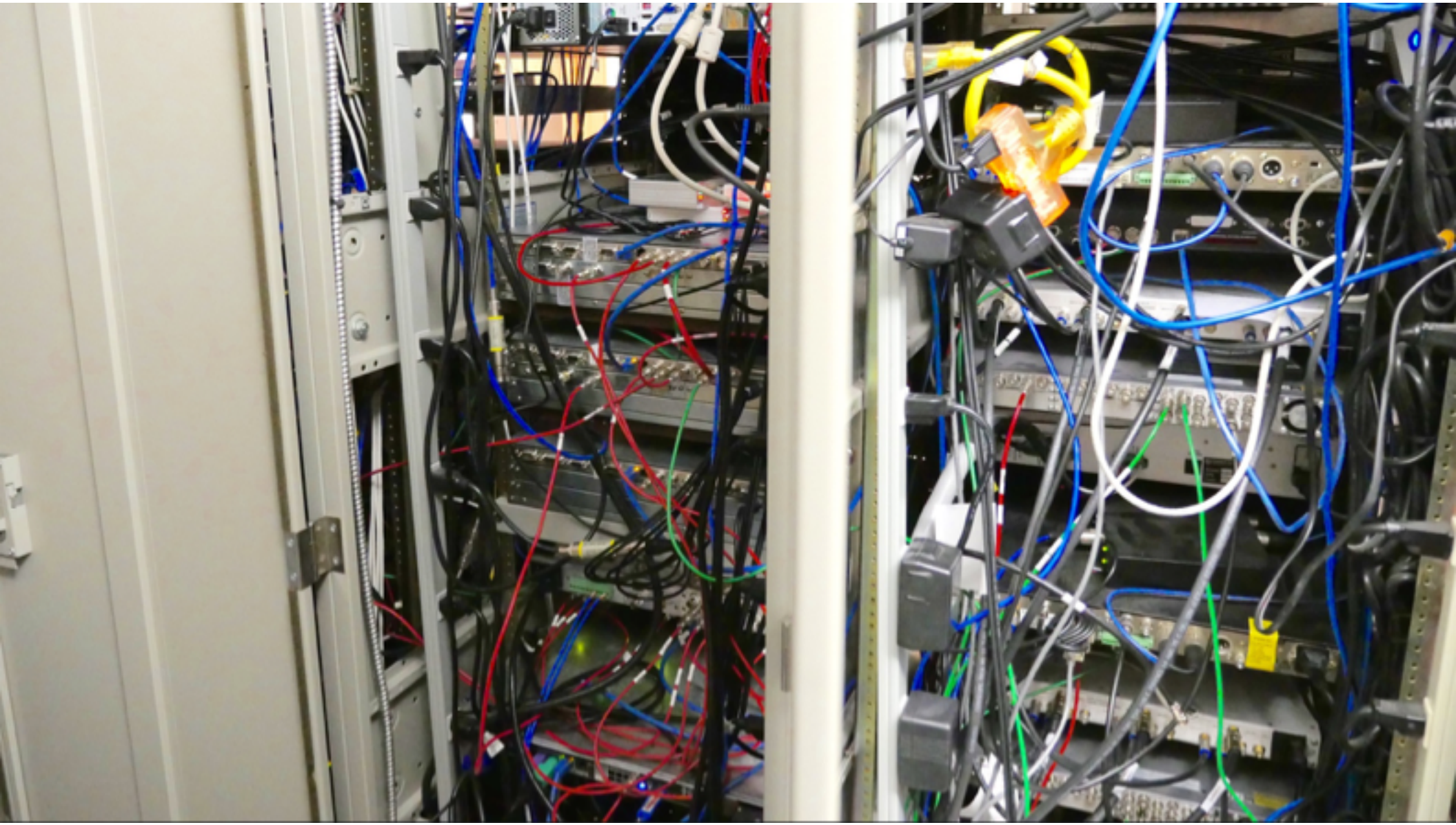
2016 has brought many challenges, and countless improvements.

As you may know, we've been working hard to get everything around here working properly.



It hasn’t been easy…

…but we’re getting there, a little at a time.

We've made smart choices, saved money wherever possible, and have made a positive impact on everything we've touched.

We do this…

…so they can do this.

We keep building more of these…

…so they can create more for our viewers, our clients, and our community.

We’re working to deliver FOX in HD, and to improve all our video and audio output, wherever viewers see and hear it.
(We’re also upgrading the electrical capacity of our rack room to support all these improvements!)

We’ve become a part of CBS All Access…

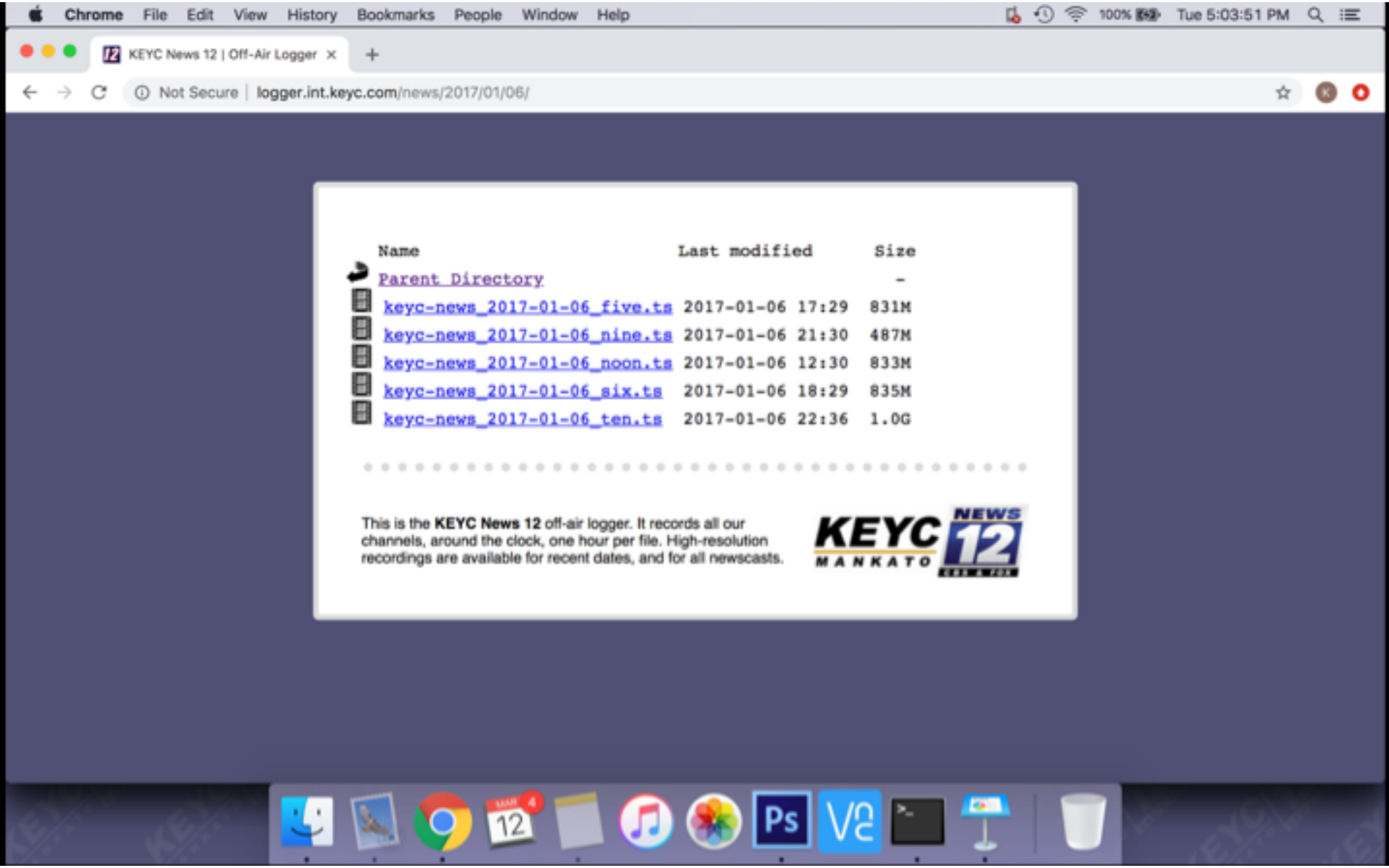
…invested considerable effort into improving our closed captioning (it's now more accurate and in-sync than all other newscasts in the local area)…

…and worked with all our cable and satellite providers to improve their connections…

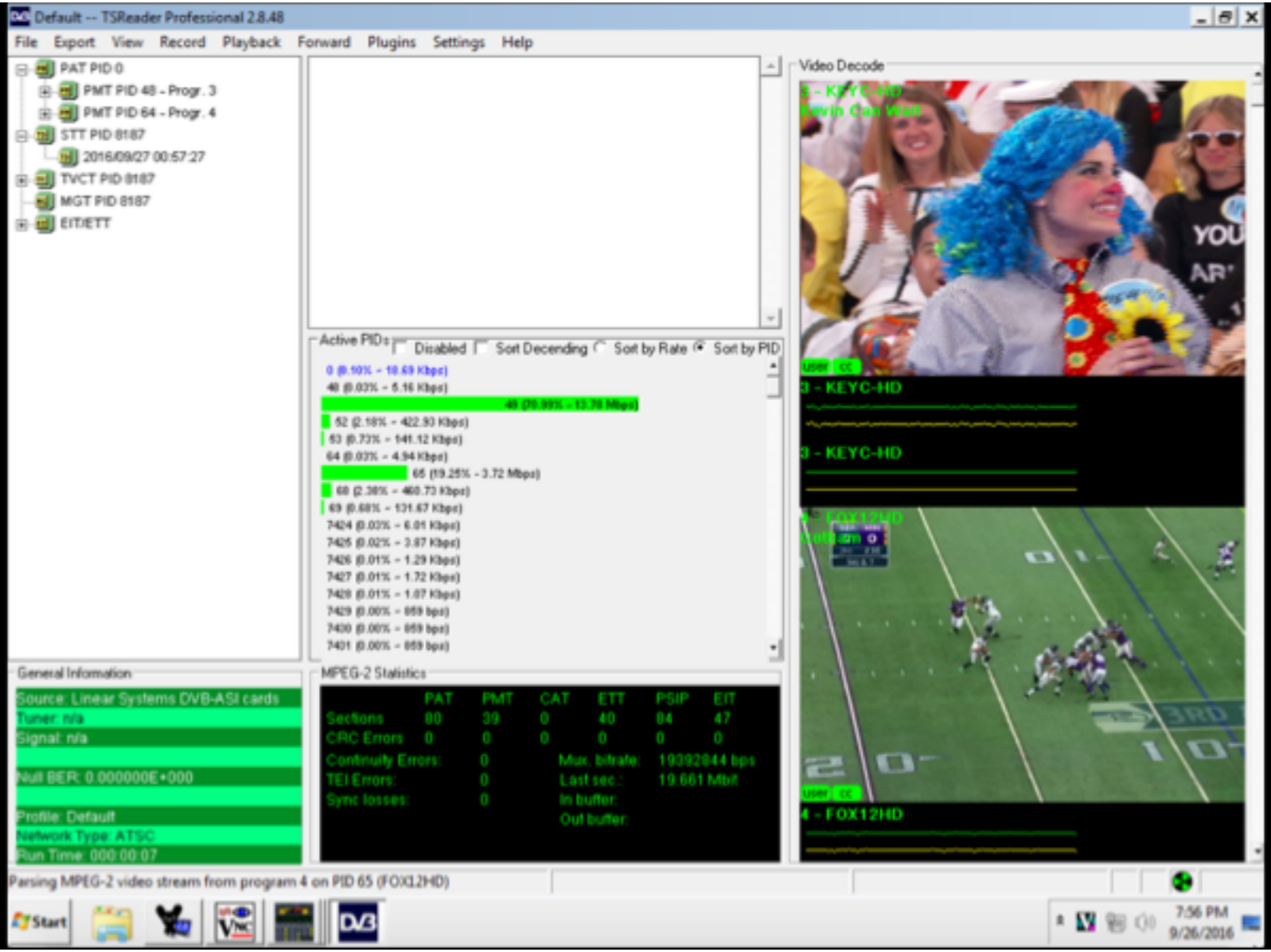
…by creating a proper co-location space and “clean feeds” for each provider.

It’s taken a lot of days, nights, weekends - sometimes all of the above - but we’re making it happen!

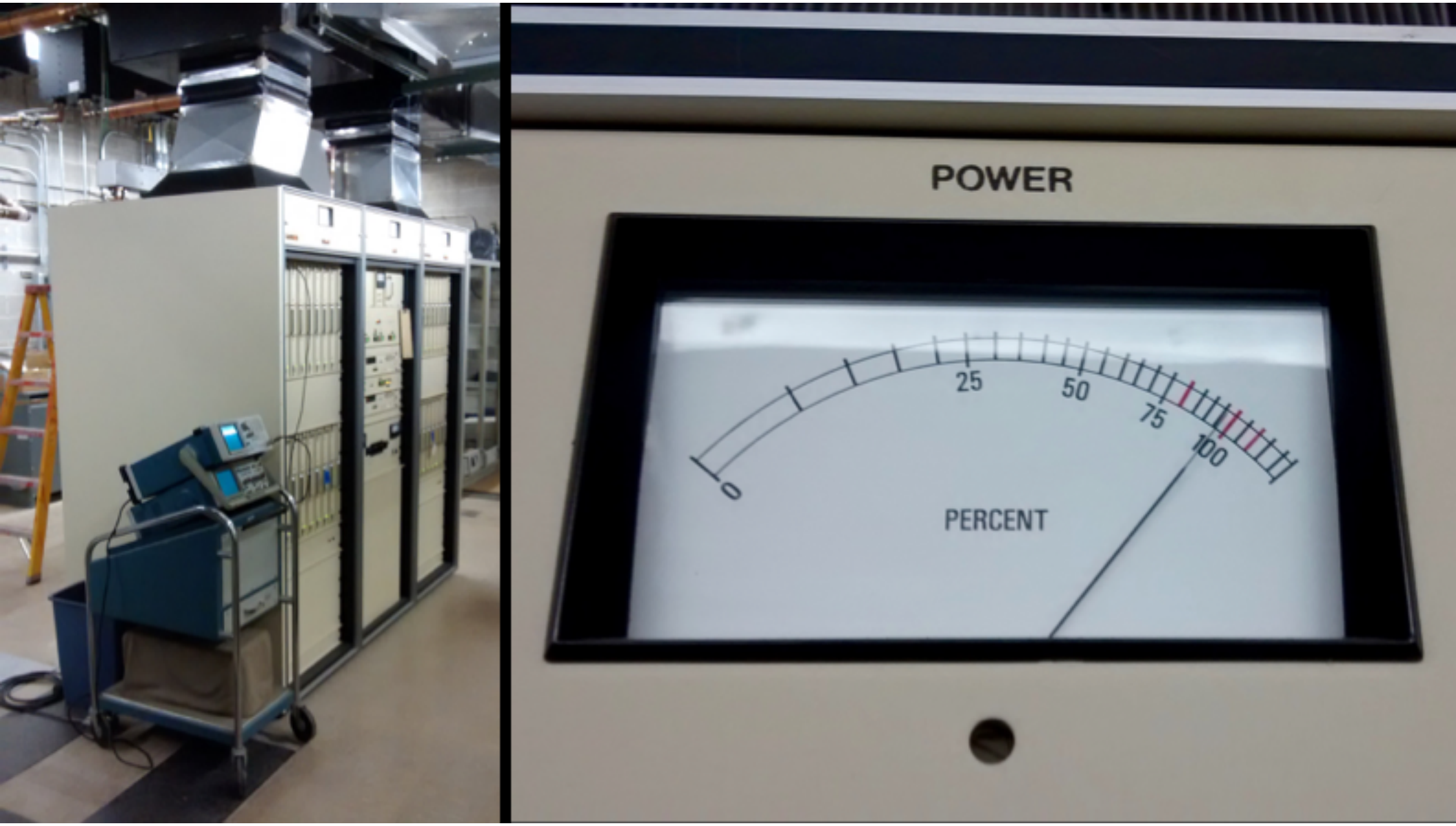
While many of our projects are about fixing what's broken, others are more creative in nature. For example, we've been combining various pieces of open-source software to create a video playout system and CG that will soon act as a backup to our on-air systems.



We built an inexpensive video logger system, which captures everything that goes out over our airwaves and saves it to disk. It's available from any computer in our facility, and will be able to save video for a year or more.

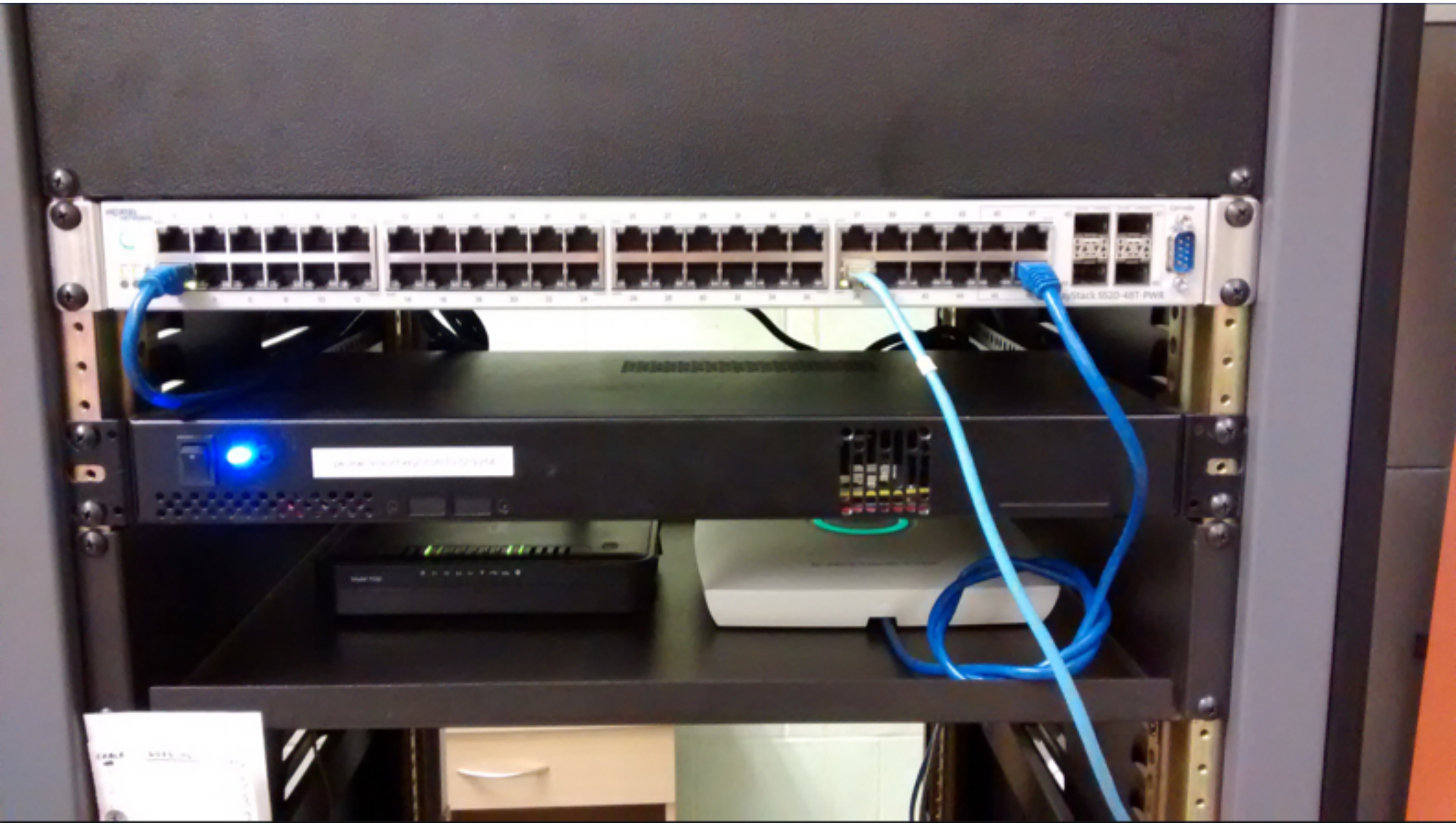


It also combines with our new transport stream analysis system, allowing us to “go back in time” to diagnose digital video issues.



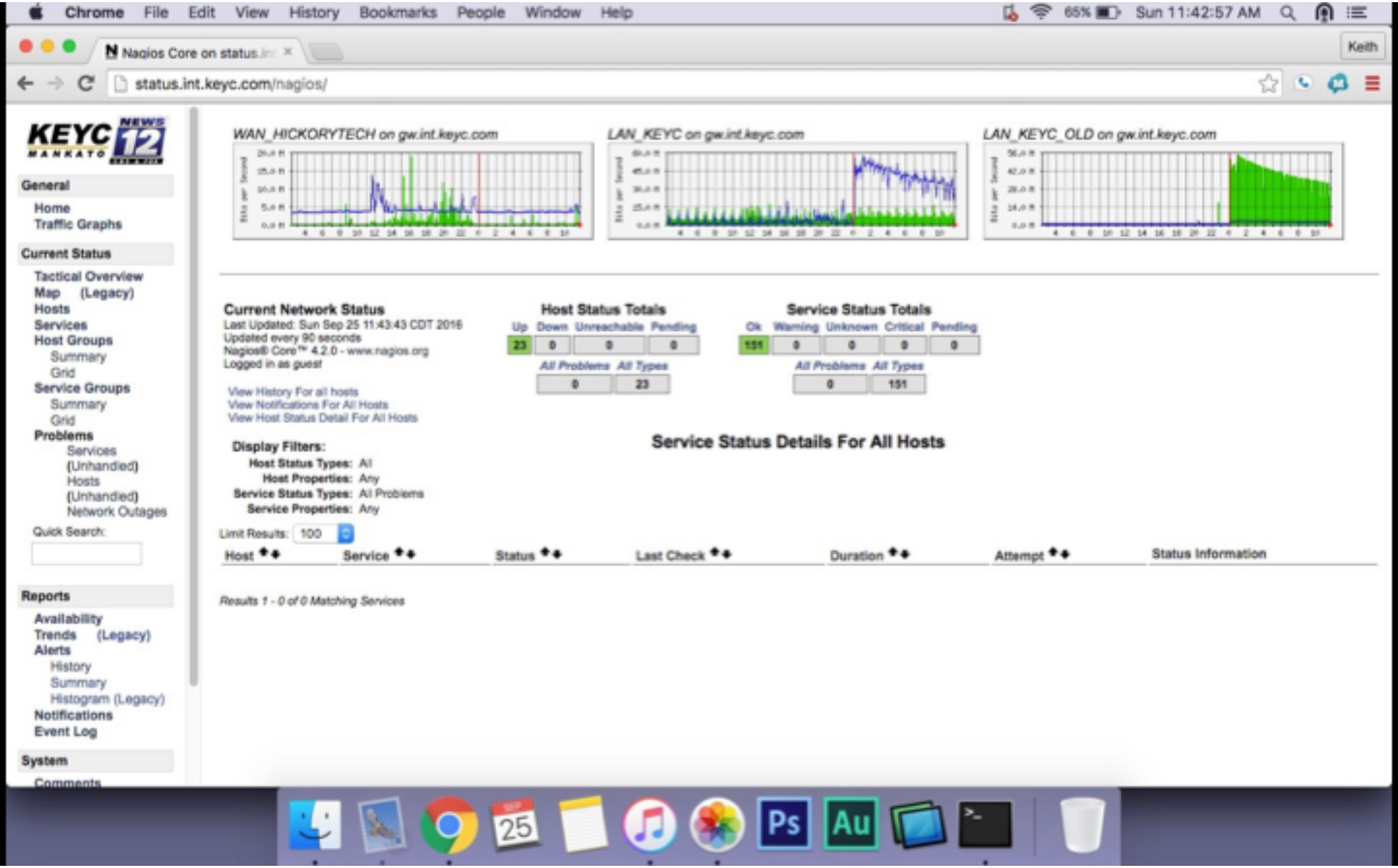
That allows us to keep a sharp eye on our output, and ensure everything is running right.

Upgrades at the transmitter site have also been a high priority for us.

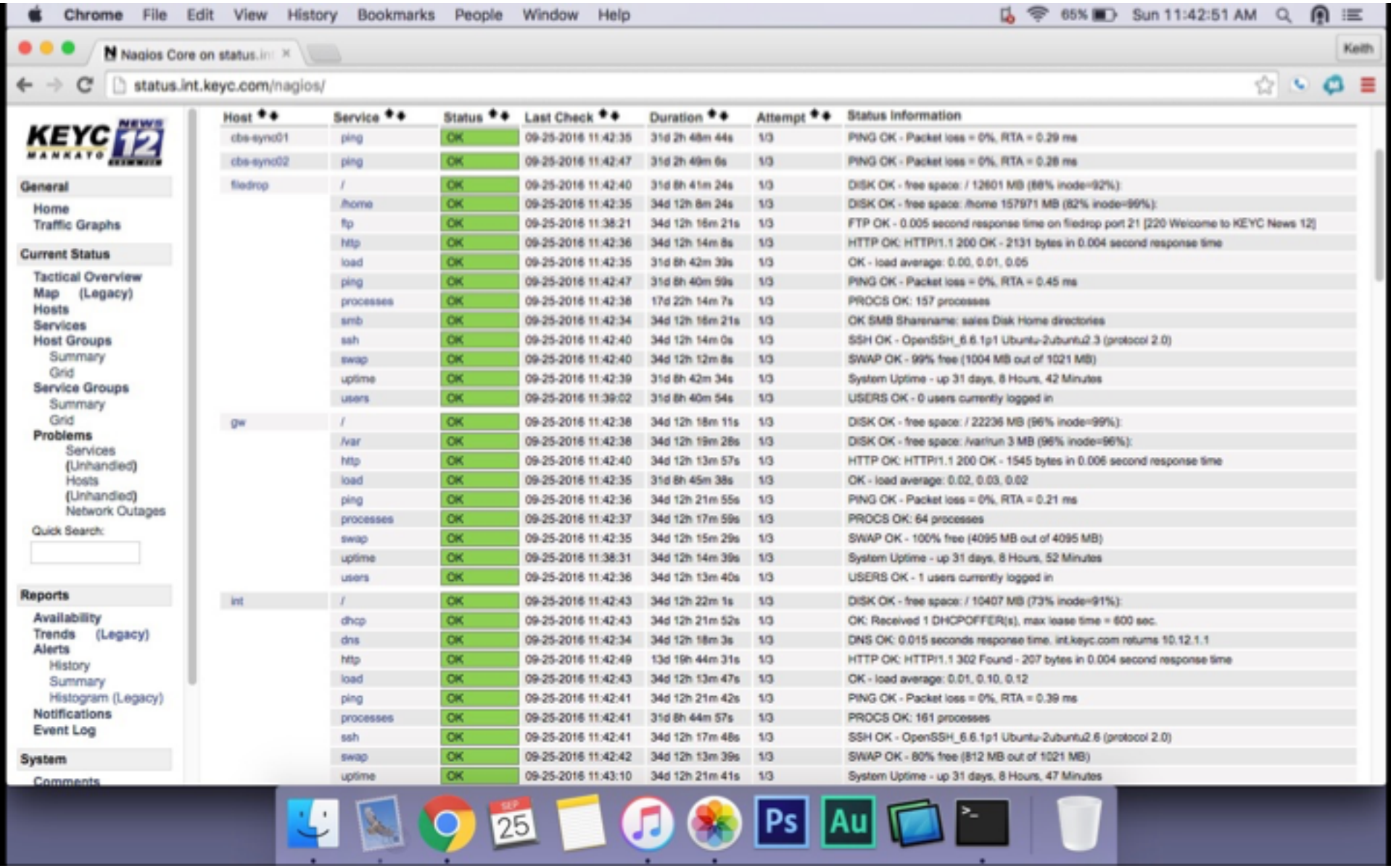


Our site now has IP connectivity, and will soon have two diverse, redundant paths to the studio.

We’re also expanding our remote control to add capacity for the newly-assembled backup transmitter, so that we can run both units automatically, and keep track of what they’re doing from wherever we are.



Speaking of “keeping track of things”, we’ve also deployed open-source monitoring software, so we can stay on top of all our hardware and software.



Dozens of machines, and hundreds of services, are checked constantly. If one goes down, we'll know right away - no waiting for the staff to complain.

This is especially important as our systems continue to grow. We recently deployed four 48TB storage units, and two 72TB storage units - each with new drives, used enclosures (since enclosures don’t wear out), and controllers we built in-house.

We built them this way not just for the savings - although we did save a bundle - but also for the performance. Here we see a speed test on Production's existing storage…

…and here's the same test on their new storage, which was one of those built right here at the station.

With this super-big, super-fast storage, and the new Macs and software we helped them select, Production will be producing like never before.

Rather than just keep buying Mac Pros as in the past, we performed a series of tests on a number of Apple models, and found that the i7 Retina iMac offered comparable performance at 40% of the price.

This allowed us to upgrade all of their machines this year, rather than just two (as was initially planned).

Of course, there’s lots of other projects underway - such as the HD skycam upgrade and expansion project.

We’re working on adding cameras in exciting new locations, like this downtown rooftop.
And with the research and testing complete…

…and even custom parts made (at our chief engineer's home shop, in this case)…

…such as this heavy-duty leg clamp (on right - “standard duty” factory piece on left)…

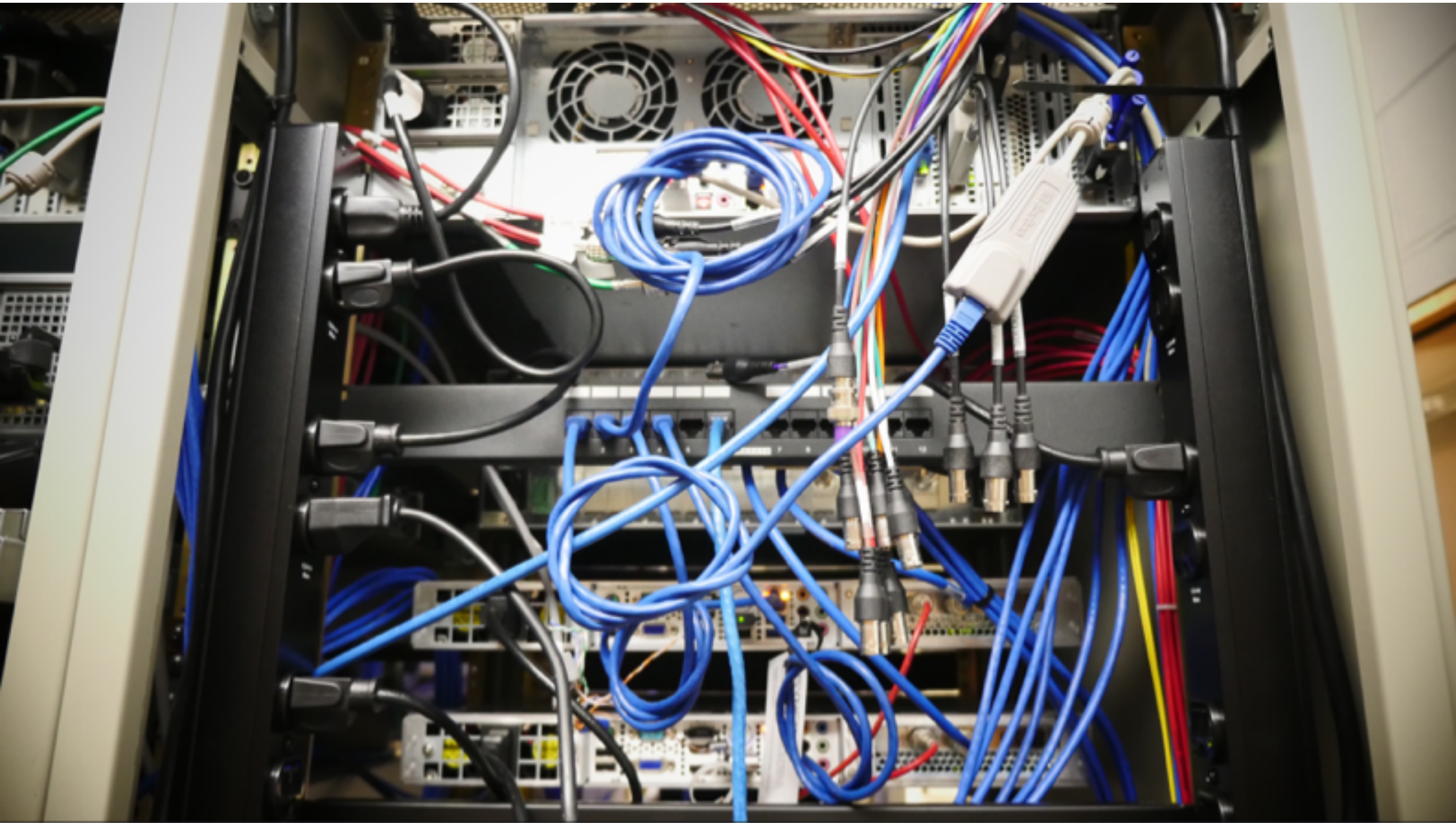
…all that remains is to put them on the towers…

…which - with any luck - will be happening in the next few weeks.

There’s been countless other improvements too small to mention - such as the upgrades performed on our LiveShot equipment yesterday, which will make it perform better in challenging signal situations…

…and the new PCs going into master control tonight, improving on-air stability and relieving our operators from worry.

But we're far from done. We have enormous hopes and expectations for this facility, and realizing them is a process that moves one step at a time.



There’s still a lot of this left to deal with…

…but we keep working, upgrading, and improving.

The foundation we started building last year, is what has enabled this year's projects, and what in turn will enable next year's projects. Everything here is interconnected, and all our efforts are designed to move this station ever closer to its potential.

There are many challenges to come, but we remain optimistic about 2017 and beyond. We appreciate your support of our endeavors, and look forward to advancing KEYC News 12 and FOX 12 Mankato to become rock-solid, top-notch technical performers.