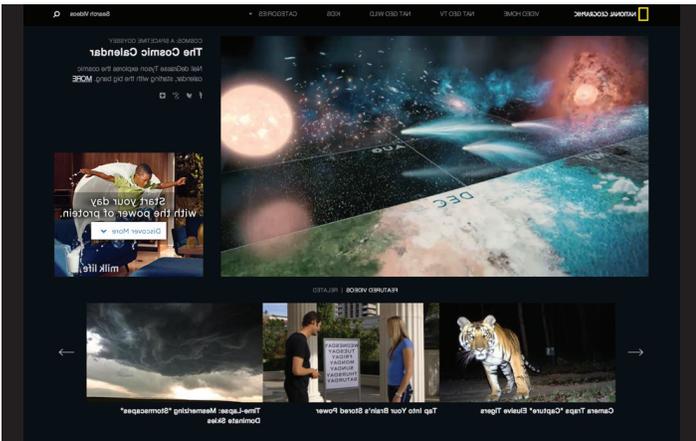




## Perfect Sense Digital and National Geographic: A Multifaceted Solution For Video Integration

Perfect Sense Digital (PSD) is a full-service product company that capitalizes on its enterprise digital application development platform, Brightspot®, to drive innovations in web and mobile development for corporations worldwide.

National Geographic's iconic images are the company's hallmark, and every user that comes to the site expects to be wowed by the visual experience. So it was no small task for the firm and Perfect Sense Digital to partner together to completely revamp National Geographic's online video capabilities and presentation to create a visually stunning new site. By fully integrating with video player solution thePlatform, PSD built a new and substantially improved way to manage, host, and present video content on video.nationalgeographic.com, creating a cinematic user experience worthy of the famous brand.



“ It's a Ferrari of a system. Brightspot has an incredibly fast, sleek front end, and the back end is intuitive, simple, and effective. Basically, it helps us publish faster. ”

MIKE SCHMIDT, DIRECTOR OF MULTIMEDIA  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

“ The PSD team working this project was truly top notch - calm, confident, and very technically capable - even under pressure. We've truly enjoyed working with all of them and really felt we were in good hands throughout the entire project and especially at launch. We have some very experienced folks here at National Geographic - across the different disciplines - and they have ALL been impressed with how knowledgeable and thorough the PSD team has been. ”

SCOTT NORCROSS, VP MEDIA SYSTEMS ENGINEERING  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

## The Challenge

Explained Jim Kelleher, VP at National Geographic, “It was very time consuming and manual for producers and editors to load content in our old in-house CMS. Additionally, we wanted to replace our existing online video player (OVP) with thePlatform’s product, and we needed some improvements to our front end.” Added Mike Schmidt, Director of Multimedia at National Geographic, “We needed to improve our current website across the board. It was slow and dated and didn’t work on mobile. It simply didn’t meet our customers’ or our internal needs.” Ping Pan, PSD project lead, expanded on Kelleher and Schmidt’s comments. “National Geographic thought that their previous video solution was uninspiring to the visitor and unnecessarily complex on the back end. We offered National Geographic the opportunity to wipe the slate clean and build an easy-to-use, efficient, and attractive alternative.”

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“ We had a significant, multifaceted problem and needed a complete solution. ”

JIM KELLEHER, VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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## PSD Solution

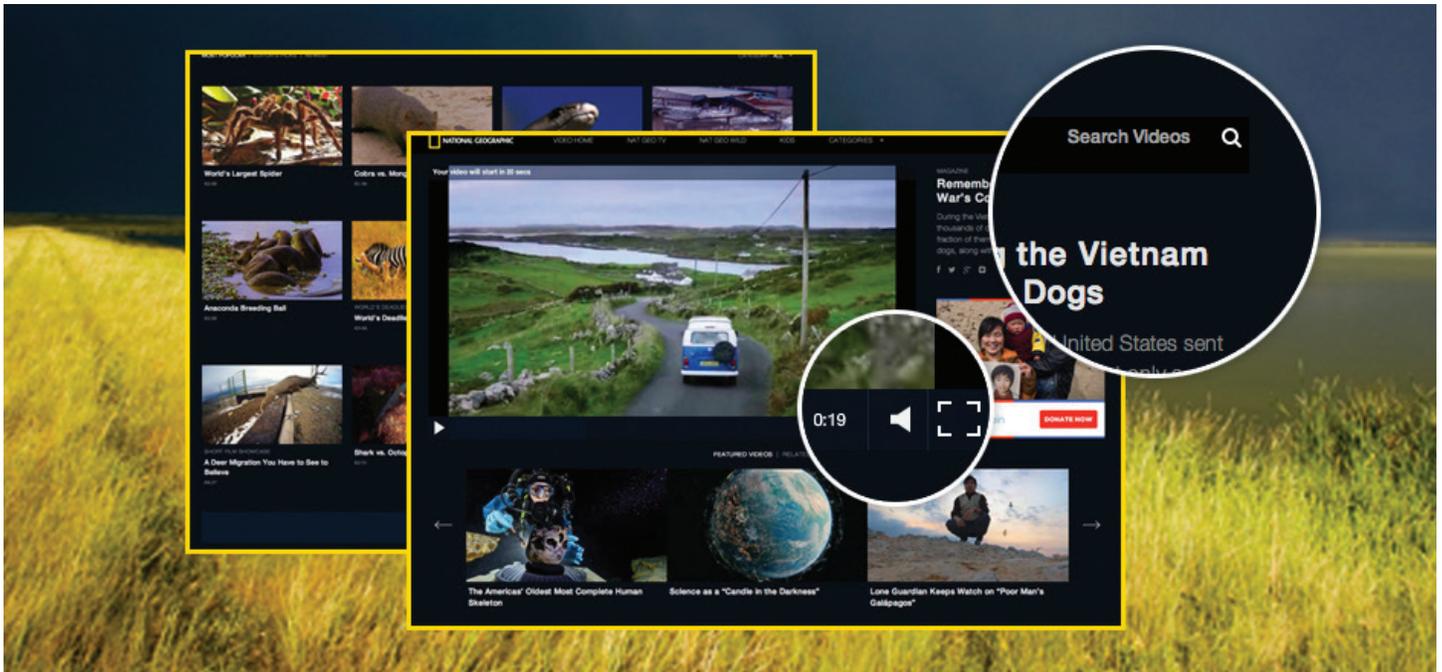
National Geographic engaged Perfect Sense to completely rework both the front and back ends of the video platform. Explained Scott Norcross, VP Media Systems Engineering, “To properly optimize video processing for our multiple business groups, we needed to establish a consistent solution on the front and back end. We brought PSD in to leverage their video experience and help us complete the job faster.”



## Front End

"Their goal was to create a cinematic video experience," said Pan. "National Geographic wanted users to be able to go broad or deep by subject, so ease of navigation was critical, as was enabling users to see related videos for each topic." PSD implemented the designs of the National Geographic digital design team on the new site with a unique dark blue background to enhance the bright, crisp colors of the videos. Featured Videos and Editor's Picks sections allow National Geographic editors to easily curate and showcase favorite content. Kelleher laughed when he talked about the much-improved site, "We needed a face lift but ended up getting a face transplant!"

Perfect Sense Digital created a fully responsive website optimized for desktop, tablet, and mobile experiences. Site visitors are able to select, playback, search, and share videos on all devices within the new video experience.



## Back End

"National Geographic had very specific requirements for the project," remembered Lee Teague, PSD software architect. "They needed an easy to use, intuitive editorial and publishing tool which made PSD's enterprise CMS platform, Brightspot, the perfect choice for them." Brightspot provided National Geographic a customized interface to create and edit new pages, tag videos, and curate galleries around topics. Editors could preview videos inside Brightspot before publishing them and even create dynamic video pages from tags.

Another critical project requirement was integrating Brightspot with National Geographic's existing online video player developed by thePlatform. PSD built a tool for bidirectional synchronization of metadata between Brightspot and the OVP so that any changes made on one end would always be reflected on the other. "Synchronizing communication between thePlatform and Brightspot allowed producers and editors to save time and work more efficiently," said Norcross.

Furthermore, PSD had to integrate Brightspot with National Geographic's internal company-wide taxonomy system for tagging content. Working closely with the National Geographic team, PSD developed a seamless solution between all systems, significantly simplifying and speeding up editorial and development workflows for National Geographic.

## The Results

Fully integrating Brightspot and the existing OVP provided significant flexibility to allow National Geographic to further evolve their video products with additional video page redesigns, enhanced video player deployments, and advanced advertising policies that would have been costly and time-consuming to pursue before this project.

“We have received extremely positive feedback internally from senior management,” said Kelleher. “Analytically, the user growth on our site has exceeded our projections. We are more than happy.” Added Schmidt, “Having video on mobile work seamlessly is a huge traffic driver for us. Plus, the incredibly fast search tools let visitors dig deep and spend more time on our site. In just 3 months from start to finish, PSD created a fully custom solution for National Geographic that precisely met their complex and multifaceted requirements.

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“ The editorial team is in awe of how simple and easy the workflow process is with Brightspot compared to our previous CMS. ”

JIM KELLEHER, VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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## The Conclusion

“I’ve worked with a lot of different CMSs. I immediately saw the benefit of a CMS that was geared directly toward editorial publishing and how that would have a big, positive impact on our internal workflow,” remarked Schmidt.

“There were so many different components to this project: designing a great user experience, lifting a video site off someone else’s CMS, making sure all technical issues were addressed, and introducing a new CMS to our editorial team. PSD worked at a very fast pace to deliver on time and on budget,” said Kelleher.

He continued, “PSD had a genuine interest in getting it right and delivering a great product. From the beginning, they asked lots of questions, and they really listened. They were personally invested in understanding our needs and wants and then exactly meeting those. It was an extremely positive experience; PSD has a lot of advocates here at National Geographic.”

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“ PSD really did a great job on this on a very tight schedule. They established a crisp and modern front-end design and a solid solution to optimize back-end processing. There were certainly complexities encountered along the way, but whenever we thought something might be hard to implement or solve, PSD would come back with a simple and logical solution. They clearly demonstrated a success-oriented approach from day one. ”

SCOTT NORCROSS, VP MEDIA SYSTEMS ENGINEERING, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC.

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