

# Scaling Cloud-First VFX Production with CenterGrid Virtual Studio Services

*From on-prem to agile: The cloud evolution of Boxel Studio*

---

## About Boxel Studio

Boxel Studio is a global visual effects and animation company, known for delivering high-quality work across episodic and feature formats. As remote workflows became the new standard, Boxel partnered with CenterGrid to begin a strategic migration to a cloud-first model—enhancing its existing infrastructure while setting the stage for greater flexibility, performance, and long-term growth.

---

## Remote-First Roots, Cloud-First Future

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Boxel Studio has operated fully remotely. Artists connect from across the globe to on-premise workstations and servers hosted at the studio's facility, using tools like **Splashtop** and **Parsec**. The in-house IT team ensures stability and performance on-site, even as the core production team works from anywhere.

However, as project complexity and demand increased, this hybrid model began to show its limits. That's when CenterGrid became more than a backup—it became the pathway forward.

💬 *"When demand surpasses our internal capacity, we rely on CenterGrid to scale seamlessly. And by mid-2026, our goal is to fully migrate our operations to CenterGrid."*

## A True Extension of the Studio

Partnering with CenterGrid has given Boxel Studio the ability to scale with confidence in a volatile industry. But beyond infrastructure, it's the **people** who made the difference.

💬 *"Their team is very professional—not to mention great human beings. Chris Beard (COO) is present in every meeting. Their support and commitment to making*

*our projects a success are always present. They truly feel like part of our studio.”*  
— **Armando Ricalde**, CTO, Boxel Studio

## What We’re Building Together

### Smarter Deployment of Workstations

Golden images tailored to each department allow artists to get started quickly, with all the tools they need pre-configured and optimized.

### Intelligent Storage Architecture

High-speed centralized storage supports workflow-specific hot and cold strategies. Symlinks reduce duplication while maintaining naming consistency—vital for VFX production pipelines.

### Flexible Rendering Power

Boxel is implementing a dynamic cloud render strategy with burst capacity and VM configurations adapted to each project. Monitoring dashboards provide real-time visibility.

### Optimized Connectivity & Monitoring

Upgraded networking—including static IPs and routing improvements—supports fast, stable data transfers. Artist feedback helps fine-tune profiles and balance performance under real-world workloads.

---

## Growth Plan: 2025–2026

Category	2025 (Current)	2026 (Target)
Artists on CenterGrid	Partial (as needed)	100% cloud-based
On-prem Infrastructure	Primary for most users	Fully decommissioned
Cloud Storage	1PB+	+1PB/year growth
Workstations	100+ hybrid	Fully virtualized

Render Nodes	Burstable	Scalable & cloud-native
--------------	-----------	-------------------------

## Results to Date

- **Elastic capacity** to handle peak demand without delays
- **Rapid onboarding** of new artists and projects
- **Reduced overhead** and hardware maintenance
- **Clear roadmap** toward full cloud operations

## Why Boxel Chose CenterGrid

- **A trusted partner**, not just a provider
- **Fast response times** and proactive collaboration
- **Tailored solutions** that support both legacy and future workflows
- **Expert guidance** through each stage of the transition

## What's Next

- Full migration of all artist workstations by **mid-2026**
- Expanded support for Linux-based production environments
- Deeper automation of provisioning and scaling
- Shared dashboards for forecasting, diagnostics, and optimization
- Continued alignment on innovation, quality, and user experience

---

## Final Word

💬 *“This partnership allows us to move at the speed of our creativity. In a fast-changing industry, we need partners who can evolve with us—CenterGrid has shown they can.”*

— **Sergio Montoya**, Head of IT, Boxel Studio