

Zixi Transcoder Installation Guide

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^{*} See back for additional licensing information

Introduction

Software-based Transcoding Features

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Introduction

Zixi Broadcaster's live transcoding offers a single solution for the universal origination and distribution of high quality, adaptive live broadcast content to OTT workflows, digital MVPDs, MSOs, hotels, cinemas, iPhone and Android player apps as well as other destinations. The Zixi Transcoder supports H.265/HEVC, H.264/AVC, and MPEG2, and Raw video codecs as well as a variety of audio codecs (e.g. AAC, OPUS, Raw) most commonly used for live broadcast and OTT workflows. For OTT and Social Media/eSports, the transcoder can repackage a live stream to HLS, DASH, and RTMP, backhaul via Zixi protocol, and output MPEG-TS, RTP, UDP, NDI, and WebRTC for reintegration into broadcast systems.

With the Zixi transcoder you can:

- Deliver to any device anywhere in different bitrates and protocols simultaneously
- Repackage streams to a variety of formats and protocols including MPEG 2, H.264, HEVC encode and decode
- Synchronize GOPs for multi-bitrate delivery

The transcoder typically employed in the following cases:

- Where a target device does not support the source format.
- Where a target has limited storage capacity that requires a reduced file size.
- To convert incompatible obsolete data to a better-supported or modern format.
- You can add video (H.264, H.265, MPEG2, Raw) and audio (AAC, OPUS, Raw) profiles.

Typical Workflows

Typical workflows for the Zixi transcoder include:

- Broadcast backhaul Compress high bitrate live mezzanine MPEG2 to lower bitrate H264 or H265, at the same quality level, to reduce bandwidth requirements for video uplink. When uplink bandwidth is scarce or cost is at a premium, compression of live content can make possible an otherwise impractical workflow.
- Adaptive Bitrate (ABR) Deliver live mezzanine video transcoded into multiple renditions of H264 or H265 and packaged into HLS or DASH formats to laptops, mobile devices and set top boxes via Content Delivery Networks, YouTube Live or similar services. Adaptive streams can also be delivered via the Zixi protocol to Zixi enabled endpoints.
- Bitrate reduction and packaging for Social Media Deliver live mezzanine video transcoded to lower bitrate H264 and packaged into RTMP or HLS to Social Media sites such as Facebook Live, YouTube Live, and Twitch.

Software-based Transcoding Features

Transcoding Options

The transcoding feature in the Zixi Broadcaster is available using the following transcoding options:

- Software-based codec uses the AVCODEC library for video decode and x264 library for video encode.
- **NVIDIA GPU-based codec** used nvdec and nvenc libraries and is available in PCIe boards for bare-metal installations and on cloud providers such as AWS, Google Cloud Platform, and Azure.

Ad Insertion Options

Zixi's transcoder supports the following ad insertion options:

- SCTE-35 passthrough to Zixi TS
- SCTE-35 converted to CUE-OUT/CUE-IN in HLS
- SCTE-35 converted to Splice Events in DASH
- SCTE-35 converted to OnCuePoint in RTMP
- API Injection with output to SCTE-35 in Zixi TS
- API Injection with output to CUE-OUT/CUE-IN in HLS
- API Injection with output to Splice Events in DASH
- API Injection with output to OnCuePoint in RTMP

Captioning Options

Zixi's transcoder supports the following captioning options:

- ATSC 608/708 ES passthrough to Zixi TS, HLS, DASH, and RTMP
- DVB track passthrough to Zixi TS
- WebVTT generation from ATSC 708 Elementary Stream

Audio Processing Options

- Transcode up to 16 audio tracks
- Passthrough of multiple audio tracks
- Passthrough of unsupported codecs such as E-AC-3
- Audio Sample Rate Conversion 44.1KHz to/from 48KHz
- PID mapping of audio tracks

Audio Decode

- AAC Low Complexity, High Efficiency V1, High Efficiency V2
- AC3 (Dolby Digital)
- MP2 (MPEG-2 Audio Layer II)
- MP1 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer II)
- Opus

Audio Encode

- AAC Low Complexity
- AAC High Efficiency V1
- AAC High Efficiency V2
- E-AC-3 (Enhanced Dolby Digital)
- MP1 (MPEG-1 Audio Layer II)
- Opus

Video Processing

- MPTS De-multiplexing
- Passthrough
- 10-bit to 8-bit color downscaling
- Thumbnail extraction as HLS playlist
- Deinterlacing (except telecine 60i/59.94i to 24p)
- Interlaced and progressive output with software
- Progressive output with NVIDIA
- Smooth up/down framerate conversion with frame interpolation with NVIDIA
- Frame duplication/removal framerate conversion with software
- PID mapping and PID pass-thru
- Preserve aspect ratio with black bar insertion
- Cropping
- Static image overlay/logo Insertion
- Dynamic HTML overlay
- Copy GOP from source or generate new GOP
- GOP synchronization when generate new GOP

Software-based Transcoding Features

- Omit or keep closed captions
- I-frame synchronization of outputs with different FPS
- I-frame injection at SCTE-35 markers
- Preserve all video source color primaries

Software-based Transcoding Features

Software-based transcoding will operate on any hardware configuration supported by the Zixi Broadcaster, including on-premise hardware and cloud-based hardware and on X86-64 and ARM64 processors, but excluding currently excluding MacOS. Although software-based transcoding offers lower density than NVIDIA GPU based transcoding, it is the most flexible from a hardware compatibility perspective.

Software-based transcoding offers the following features:

	Format	Chroma Subsampling	Color Depth
Video Decode	MPEG-2	4:2:0	8-bit
	H.264/AVC	4:2:0, 4:2:2, 4:4:4	8-bit, 10-bit
	H.265/HEVC	4:2:0, 4:2:2, 4:4:4	8-bit, 10-bit
Video Encode	MPEG-2	4:2:0	8-bit
	H.264/AVC	4:2:0, 4:2:2, 4:4:4	8-bit, 10-bit*

^{*} Input stream must be 10-bit

Video Decoding:

Frame Size: SD, HD (720p), Full HD (1080p), 4K (2160p)

Frame Rate: 24fps, 25fps, 29.97fps, 30fps, 59.94fps, 60fps

Video Encoding:

Frame Size: SD, HD (720p), Full HD (1080p)

o Frame Rate: 24fps, 25fps, 29.97fps, 30fps, 59.94fps, 60fps

NVIDIA GPU-based Transcoding Features

NVIDIA GPU transcoding uses NVIDIA GPUs for hardware accelerated video transcoding. Servers with NVIDIA GPUs can be on-premise or cloud-based. NVIDIA GPU based transcoding offers the following features:

	Format	Chroma Subsampling	Color Depth
Video Decode	MPEG-2	4:2:0	8-bit
	H.264/AVC	4:2:0	8-bit
	H.265/HEVC	4:2:0, 4:4:4	8-bit, 10-bit
Video Encode	H.264/AVC	4:2:0, 4:4:4	8-bit
	H.265/HEVC	4:2:0, 4:4:4	8-bit, 10-bit*

^{*}Input stream must be 10-bit

• Video Decoding:

o Frame Size: SD, HD (720p), Full HD (1080p), 4K (2160p)

o Frame Rate: 24fps, 25fps, 29.97fps, 30fps, 59.94fps, 60fps

• Video Encoding:

o Frame Size: SD, HD (720p), Full HD (1080p), 4K (2160p)

o Frame Rate: 24fps, 25fps, 29.97fps, 30fps, 59.94fps, 60fps

Hardware Requirements

Software-based Transcoder Installation

Software based transcoding uses AVCODEC and x264 and will operate on any hardware configuration supported by the Zixi Broadcaster, including on-premise hardware and cloud-based hardware and on X86-64 and ARM64 processors, but excluding MacOS.



To enable transcoding, you will need a Zixi transcoding license. To obtain a license file, please contact Zixi support - support@zixi.com.

Hardware Requirements

The software-based codec option doesn't have special hardware-requirements, however more powerful CPUs will support more transcoding channels with more profiles. To learn more about Zixi Broadcaster's hardware requirements, refer to the **Zixi Installation Guide**.

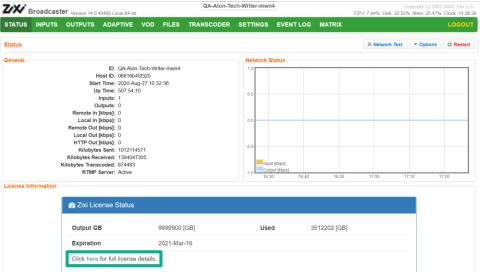
Operating System Requirements

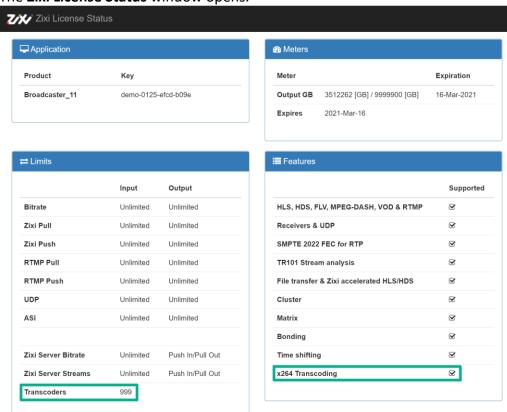
The operating system requirements are listed in the **Zixi Installation Guide.**

License Option Verification

Software transcoding does not require the installation of special hardware. The x264 codec needs to be enabled in the license provided by Zixi. To verify if the x264 license option is enabled, follow the instructions below.

- **→** To verify that the x264 license option is enabled in V16:
 - 1. In the **Status** page of the Zixi Broadcaster, under **License Information**, click on the message "Click here for full license details" in V16.





The Zixi License Status window opens.

- 2. Under Limits, verify that the number of transcoders is greater than 0.
- 3. Under Features, verify that the x264 Transcoding option is enabled.

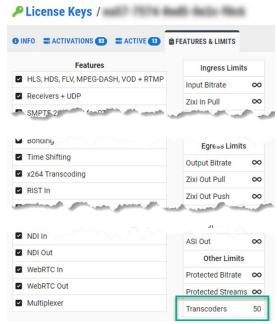
→ To verify that the x264 license option is enabled in V17:

1. Click on "Full License Details".



License Option Verification

The Zixi License Status window opens.



- 2. Under Limits, verify that the number of transcoders is greater than 0.
- 3. Under Features, verify that the x264 Transcoding option is enabled.

NVIDIA-based Transcoder Installation

NVIDIA GPU transcoding uses NVIDIA GPUs for hardware accelerated video transcoding and will operate on any hardware configuration supported by the Zixi Broadcaster, including on-premise hardware and cloud-based hardware and on X86-64 and ARM64 processors.



To enable transcoding, you will need a Zixi transcoding license. To obtain a license file, please contact Zixi support - support@zixi.com.

Hardware Requirements

NVIDIA GPUs are available on consumer gaming graphics PCIe cards, professional CAD acceleration PCIe cards, custom motherboards, and on cloud services such as AWS, Azure, and Google Cloud.

Below are the recommended modern NVIDIA GPUs, although older and new GPUs should work as well:

- NVIDIA Quadro & RTX PCIe Cards
- AWS VM g4dn (T4)
- GCP VM G2 (L4), T4
- Azure VM NCas (T4)
- Tata Cloud VM A16, T4

NVIDIA Pascal architectures or later are required for HEVC/H.265 decoding. NVIDIA Tesla architectures cannot decode HEVC/H.265, but can decode MPEG2 and H.264. As of this writing, NVIDIA does not support decode or encode of 4:2:2 content. More details on specific features supported by different architectures can be found in the encode/decode support matrix from NVIDIA at:

https://developer.nvidia.com/video-encode-decode-gpu-support-matrix

Key information to look for when selecting a GPU card and architecture is the "Max # of concurrent sessions". This value determines how many encodes can be performed in parallel, which is relevant for ABR streaming where you will typically need between three to nine bitrate profiles. The best choice for transcoding for ABR streaming is a GPU card with unrestricted sessions.

Operating System Requirements

The operating system requirements are listed in the **Zixi Installation Guide.**

Installation

Installation

This section focuses on installing NVIDIA drivers necessary for transcoding on bare metal servers and virtual machines. For AWS, GCP, and Azure, it is possible to use ZEN Master to launch Broadcasters on instances with NVIDIA GPUs. Alternatively, you can manually install NVIDIA drivers following the examples below. Install NVIDIA drivers as described below.

Broadcaster V16

Broadcaster V16 requires CUDA 11 and the driver version to be >= 470 and < =515. You can search for NVIDIA driver downloads at https://www.nvidia.com/Download/Find.aspx?lang=enus or simply use the version in the example below.

- CentOS 7.9 on GCP, Azure or any cloud or bare metal or Amazon Linux 2:
 - 1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# yum -y upgrade
# yum -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# yum -y install kernel-devel
```

- Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- 3. Check to see if 'nouveau' module is installed.

```
# lsmod | grep -i nouveau
```

4. If 'nouveau' is installed follow steps below to remove it.

```
# vi /etc/default/grub
```

Append the following line to the line starting with "GRUB CMDLINE LINUX":

```
rd.driver.blacklist=nouveau nouveau.modset=0
```

Update the grub configuration:

```
# grub2-mkconfig -o /boot/grub2/grub.cfg
```

• Add 'nouveau' to the module black list:

```
# vi /etc/modprobe.d/local-blacklist.conf
```

Append the following line:

```
blacklist nouveau
```

Rebuild initramfs.



The /boot partition or folder needs to have enough space for the updated initramfs file.

```
# cp /boot/initramfs-$(uname -r).img /root/initramfs-$(uname -r).img.before_update.bak
# dracut -v -f
```

• Reboot the server and check that the 'nouveau' module is not installed.

```
# lsmod | grep -i nouveau
```

- 5. Retrieve and launch the correct installer for the architecture:
 - For X86 64-bit machines, install the following NVIDIA Linux driver:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-x86_64/470.86/NVIDIA-
Linux-x86_64-470.86.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-470.86.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-470.86.run
```

• On an ARM based machine with NVIDIA, download the following driver:

```
wget https://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/aarch64/470.141.03/NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-470.141.03.run
chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-470.141.03.run
./NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-470.141.03.run
```

- Amazon Linux 2023 (AMI al2023-ami-2023.3.20240108.0-kernel-6.1-x86 64):
 - 1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y kernel-modules-extra
```

- 2. Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- 3. Retrieve and launch the correct installer for the architecture:
 - For X86 64-bit machines, install the following NVIDIA Linux driver:

Installation

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/515.105.01/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
```

• On an ARM based machine with NVIDIA, download the following driver:

```
# wget https://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/aarch64/515.105.01/NVIDIA-
Linux-aarch64-515.105.01.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-515.105.01.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-515.105.01.run
```

⇒ Rocky Linux 9 Optimized for GCP (x86/64, x86_64 built on 20240111):

1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y install vulkan-loader libglvnd-devel wget
```

- 2. Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- Retrieve and launch the installer:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/515.105.01/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
```

⇒ Rocky Linux 9 – Free – x64 Gen2 on Azure (official image from Rocky Enterprise Software Foundation):

1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y install vulkan-loader libglvnd-devel wget
```

- 2. Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- 3. Retrieve and launch the installer:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/515.105.01/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-515.105.01.run
```

➡ To upgrade to a new version of the NVIDIA driver:

- 1. Using the existing installer or any installer version use the --uninstall option.
 - For X86 64-bit machines

```
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-xxx.xxx.xx.run -uninstall
```

On an ARM based machine with NVIDIA

```
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-xxx.xxx.xx.run --uninstall
```

- Then reboot to load the kernel with the NVIDIA driver removed
- 2. Retrieve and install the new version as described above.

Broadcaster V17

Broadcaster V17 requires a CUDA 12.1 and the driver version to be >= 535. If you are upgrading from V16 to V17 you will have an older NVIDIA driver and will see an error like this on the Broadcaster Status page:

```
OS Information
OS: Amazon Linux release 2023 (Amazon Linux)
Build: 6.1.66-93.164.amzn2023.x86_64
Architecture: x86_64
Nvidia Driver: 515.105.01
Cuda Version: 11.7 - Cuda version not up to date - minimum required version: 12.1
```

and an error like the following on the Inputs page:



You can search for NVIDIA driver downloads at https://www.nvidia.com/Download/Find.aspx?lang=en-us or simply use the version in the example below.

Installation

→ Amazon Linux 2023 (AMI al2023-ami-2023.3.20240108.0-kernel-6.1-x86_64):

1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y install kernel-modules-extra
```

- 2. Retrieve and launch the correct installer for the architecture:
 - For X86 64-bit machines, install the following NVIDIA Linux driver:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/535.129.03/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
```

• On an ARM based machine with NVIDIA, download the following driver:

```
# wget https://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/aarch64/535.129.03/NVIDIA-
Linux-aarch64-535.129.03.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-535.129.03.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-535.129.03.run
```

- **⇒** Rocky Linux 9 Optimized for GCP (x86/64, x86_64 built on 20240111):
 - 1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y install vulkan-loader libglvnd-devel wget
```

- 2. Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- 3. Retrieve and launch the installer:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/535.129.03/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
```

⇒ Rocky Linux 9 – Free – x64 Gen2 on Azure (official image from Rocky Enterprise Software Foundation):

1. Update the OS and install development tools:

```
# dnf -y upgrade
# dnf -y groupinstall "Development Tools"
# dnf -y install vulkan-loader libglvnd-devel wget
```

- 2. Reboot to load the latest kernel from the upgrade.
- Retrieve and launch the installer:

```
# wget http://us.download.nvidia.com/XFree86/Linux-
x86_64/535.129.03/NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# chmod 777 NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-535.129.03.run
```

➡ To upgrade to a new version of the NVIDIA driver:

- 1. Using the existing installer or any installer version use the --uninstall option.
 - For X86 64-bit machines

```
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-x86_64-xxx.xxx.xx.run -uninstall
```

On an ARM based machine with NVIDIA

```
# ./NVIDIA-Linux-aarch64-xxx.xxx.xx.run --uninstall
```

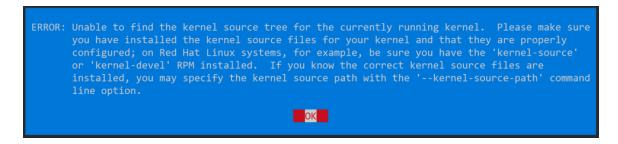
- Then repoot to load the kernel with the NVIDIA driver removed.
- 2. Retrieve and install the new version as described above.

Installer Screens and Prompts

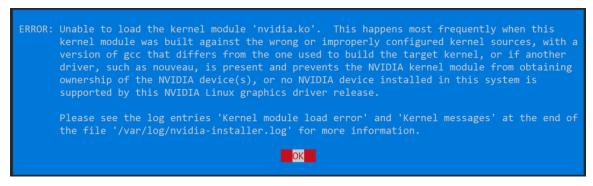
After launching the NVIDIA installer, you will see various messages. Below are explanations of the more common messages and what action you might need to take.

If you see the following error, you might have upgraded the kernel but have not yet rebooted so are still running a previous version of the kernel. Select OK [ENTER] and exit the installer, reboot, and try again.

Installer Screens and Prompts



If you see the following error on Amazon Linux 2023 you are most likely missing the kernel-modules-extra package. Select OK [ENTER] and exit the installer, install the package, and try again.



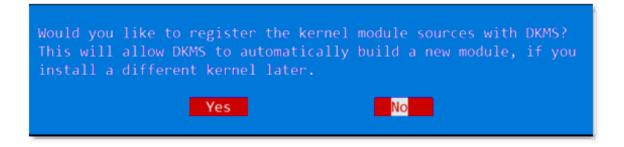
If you see the following error you likely need to install the kernel-devel package. Select OK [ENTER] and exit the installer, install the package, and try again.



The following message is related to the X display and is not relevant to the Broadcaster use of NVIDIA GPUs. Select OK [ENTER] and keep going.



The following message is not relevant to the Broadcaster use of NVIDIA GPUs. Select No [ENTER] and keep going.



The following message is not relevant to the Broadcaster use of NVIDIA GPUs. Select No [ENTER] and keep going.



The following message is due to a missing vulkan-loader package, but is not relevant to the Broadcaster use of NVIDIA GPUs. Select OK [ENTER] and keep going.

```
WARNING: This NVIDIA driver package includes Vulkan components, but no Vulkan ICD loader was detected on this system. The NVIDIA Vulkan ICD will not function without the loader. Most distributions package the Vulkan loader; try installing the "vulkan-loader", "vulkan-icd-loader", or "libvulkan1" package.
```

The following message is due to a missing libglynd-devel package, but is not relevant to the Broadcaster use of NVIDIA GPUs. Select OK [ENTER] and keep going.

```
WARNING: Unable to determine the path to install the libglvnd EGL vendor library config files.

Check that you have pkg-config and the libglvnd development libraries installed, or specify a path with --glvnd-egl-config-path.

OK

OK
```

This final message confirms the installation is complete.

```
Installation of the NVIDIA Accelerated Graphics Driver for Linux-x86_64 (version: 535.129.03) is now complete.
```

Validating the NVIDIA Driver Installation

Validating the NVIDIA Driver Installation

Run the following command to verify that the NVIDIA drivers have been installed:

```
# nvidia-smi
```

The output will look something like the following:

```
[root@localhost ~]# nvidia-smi
Wed Dec 1 15:12:20 2021
NVIDIA-SMI 470.86 Driver Version: 470.86 CUDA Version: 11.4
 GPU Name Persistence-M Bus-Id Disp.A | Volatile Uncorr. ECC
 Fan Temp Perf Pwr:Usage/Cap| Memory-Usage | GPU-Util Compute M.
                                              MIG M.
0 Quadro P2000 Off | 00000000:01:00.0 Off |
                                                N/A
   55C P0 20W / 75W | 0MiB / 5058MiB |
                                       3% Default
 Processes:
 GPU GI CI
            PID Type Process name
                                           GPU Memory
     ID ID
                                           Usage
______
 No running processes found
```

If the nvidia-smi command does produce a result like shown above then the NVIDIA driver has not been successfully installed and you will need to repeat the installation process and try to determine where it failed.

If the nvidia-smi command was successful, open the Zixi Broadcaster UI in your web browser and on the Status page find the Machine Information and OS Information sections. You should see an NVIDIA GPU listed and a driver and CUDA version as shown below:

```
Machine Information
System Model: Alienware Alienware X51
Processor Model: Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-3770 CPU @ 3.40GHz
Processors: 1
Logical Cores: 8
Installed RAM: 15 GR
GPU(s): Quadro P2000 [ Quadro ] [ Pascal ]

OS Information

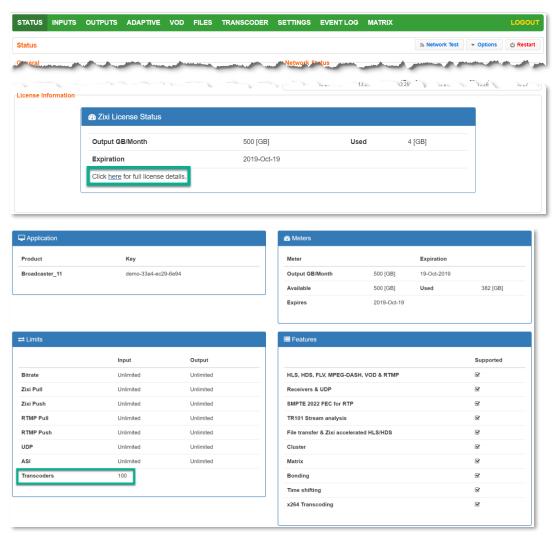
OS: CentOS Linux release 7.9.2009 (Core)
Build: 3.10.0-1160.45.1.el7.x86_64

Architecture: x86_64

Nvidia Driver: 470.86
Cuda Version: 11.4
```

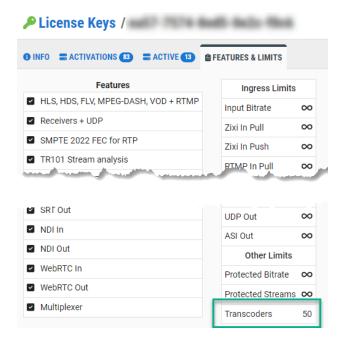
In the License Information section on the status page click the available link to verify that your license has transcoding enabled. Broadcaster V16 looks like the image below.

Validating the NVIDIA Driver Installation



For Broadcaster V17 the License Information section looks like the following and the link will take you to the Zixi customer portal where you can see your license details under the "FEATURES & LIMITS" tab.





NVIDIA-based Transcoder Installation

Validating the NVIDIA Driver Installation

```
This product includes software developed by the OpenSSL Project for use in the OpenSSL Toolkit
(http://www.openssl.org/)
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