Plex is a media management system that takes your entire collection of movies, music, and photos making them available to all media devices in the connected home. With support for streaming music, high definition video, and photo sharing, Plex is an excellent way to centralize and share all of your rich media content on a Drobo. This not only provides significantly increased throughput supporting multiple simultaneous streams, but also ensures that data is stored in a redundant manner protecting content from data loss due to a potential hard drive failure.

Like a Drobo, Plex does not require advanced IT knowledge to configure and interface with the devices. Utilizing standards based DLNA technology; Plex offers out of the box support by nearly all network enabled televisions and media devices. On the go, MyPlex offers access to all content stored on the Drobo streaming to mobile (iOS and Android) devices using a standard broadband internet connections.

NOTE - Plex supports multiple video, audio, and photo formats for full details please visit their website. There are features that Plex offers that we will not be covered in this guide.

Topics

■ **Provisioning Drobo Storage**

■ **Configuring Plex Media Manager**

■ **Accessing Plex Content Locally**

■ **Accessing Plex Content from DLNA enabled devices**

What You Will Need

- Drobo NAS (FS/5N/B800FS) or DAS (Mini/5D)
- The Latest Drobo Dashboard management software
    http://www.drobo.com/support/updates.php
- OS X 10.7/10.8 or Windows 7/8
- Latest version of Plex Media Center
    http://www.plexapp.com/download/plex-media-center.php
- Latest version of Plex Media Server
    http://www.plexapp.com/getplex/index.php

Prerequisites

This document assumes that the Drobo to be utilized with Plex has been installed and is accessible from the host computer. If the initial configuration has not been completed, reference the URL below for installation instructions.
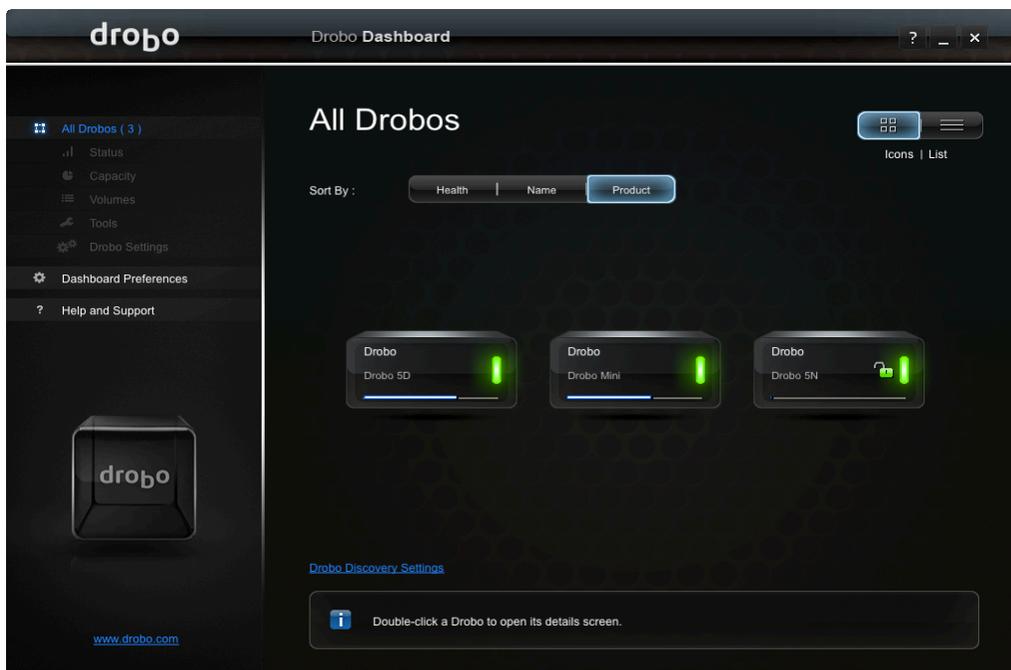
http://www.drobo.com/start/

Both Plex Media Server and Plex Media Center must be installed on the host computer. The download links to both applications can be found in the **What You Will Need** section of this document. The installations can be performed accepting all defaults, as any customizations will be configured later in this document.

NOTE: Once the Plex Media Server installation completes, a dialog will appear to create a MyPlex account. This is an optional service that will allow social and mobile sharing of content stored in the Plex Media Server.   For more information on MyPlex, consult the URL below.

https://my.plexapp.com/

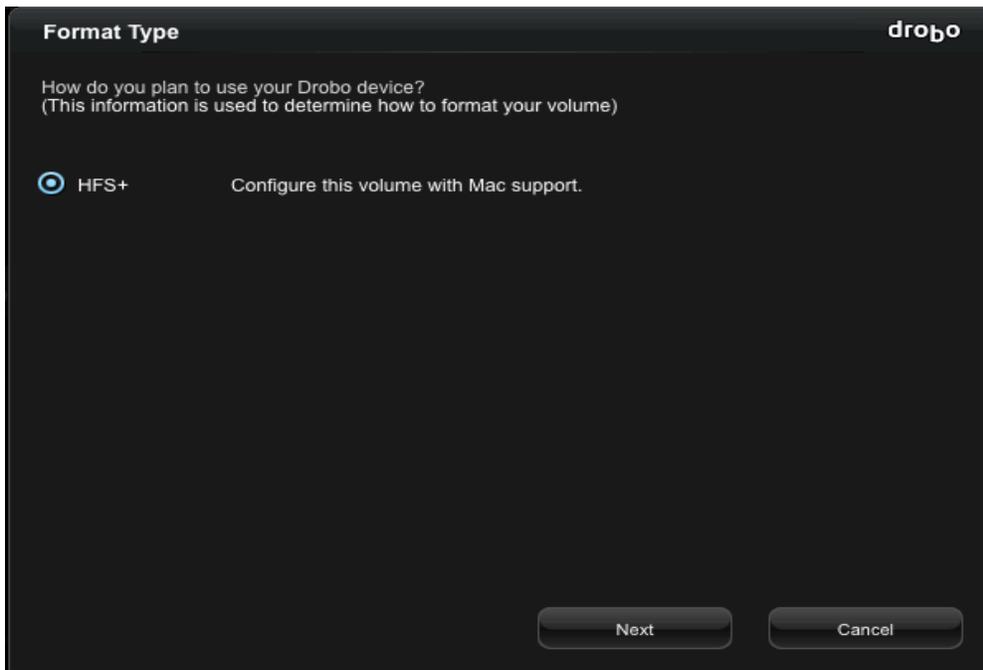## Provisioning Drobo Storage

STEP 1

Load the Drobo Dashboard and select the Drobo that will be used to store Plex content

Drobo How-To Guide

Creating a Home Media Server with Plex and Drobo Storage

As both the NAS and DAS Drobos are compatible with Plex, the next steps are split between connectivity types.

- If the Drobo has been previously formatted/initialized, move to step #4

- For DAS (5D/Mini) Follow the directions in step #2

- For NAS (5N/FS) Follow the directions in step #3

STEP 2A – DAS (5D/Mini)

The Drobo Dashboard will automatically select a **Format Type** recommended for the host operating system.

Click **Next** to continue.

STEP 2B

To take advantage of thin provisioning and instant expandability features of BeyondRAID, it is recommended that a 16TB thinly provisioned volume be created.

Click **Next** to continue.

STEP 2C

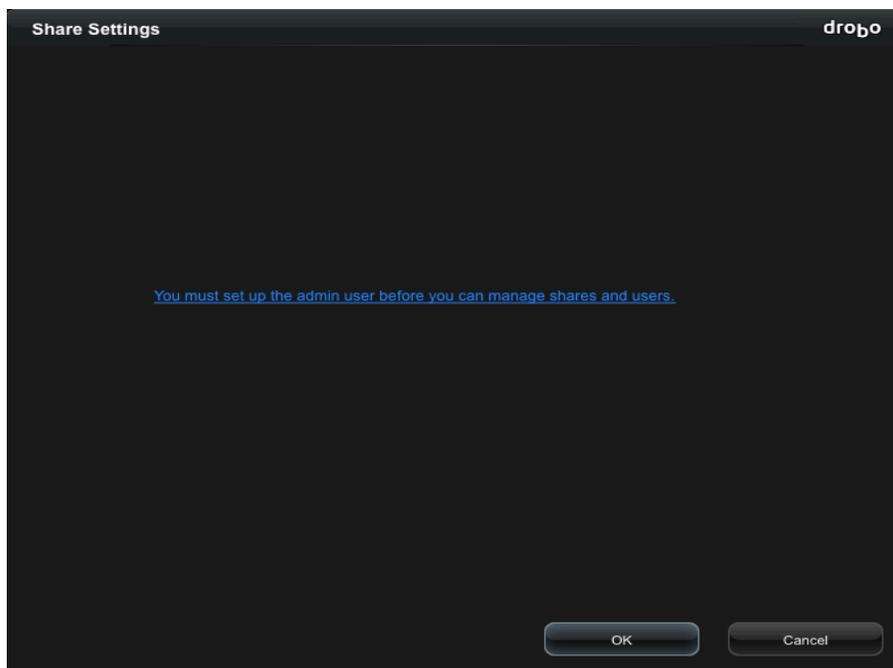Enter a name for the volume that will be created on the Drobo and click **Next** to continue.

STEP 3A

While a dedicated share is not required for Plex, it is recommended.

Click the **Shares** link on the left pane to access the share list.

STEP 3B

If no administrator username and password was specified during initialization, the Dashboard will prompt to create one.

Click **OK** to create an administrative account.

STEP 3C

Enter an administrator username and password that will be used to manage the Drobo.

Enter a **Username** and **Password** and click **OK** to save the account settings.

NOTE – Make a note of the account credentials. This will be required before any changes to the shares or configuration can be made.

STEP 3D

Click **Add** to create a new share on the 5N. In this example the newly created share is named **Plex_Media**.

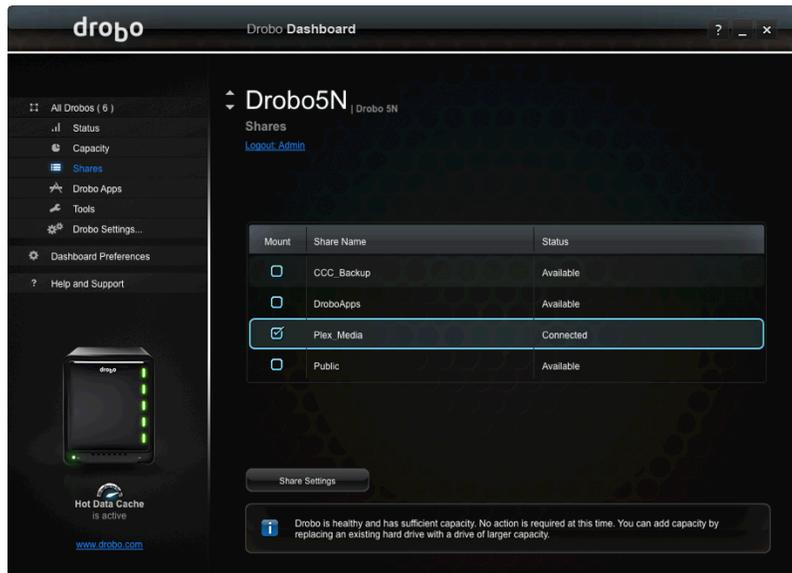In this example the user access is set to **Everyone** allowing access to the share without a password.

To restrict access, click the **Users** tab to create an additional user.

Click **OK** to create the share.

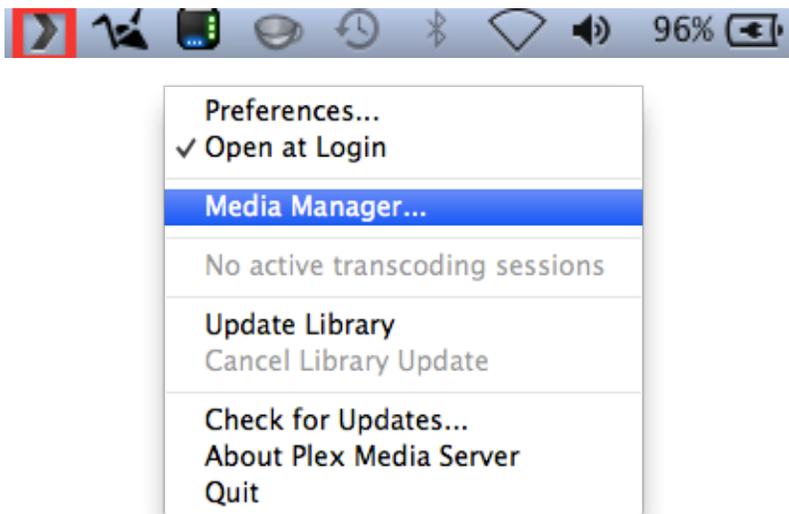*NOTE – The share user must have write access*

STEP 3E

Once the share has been added, click to have it mapped to the host.

NOTE – *On Windows hosts the Dashboard will prompt for a drive letter. Any available drive letter can be selected.*

Configuring Plex Media Manager

Although media can be added to the Plex directory at any time, it is recommended that some content be copied to the Drobo, as it will be used during the initial configuration steps. This provides a visual confirmation that the steps were followed correctly. Plex can monitor multiple directories and separating music, videos, and photos into separate folders is recommended.
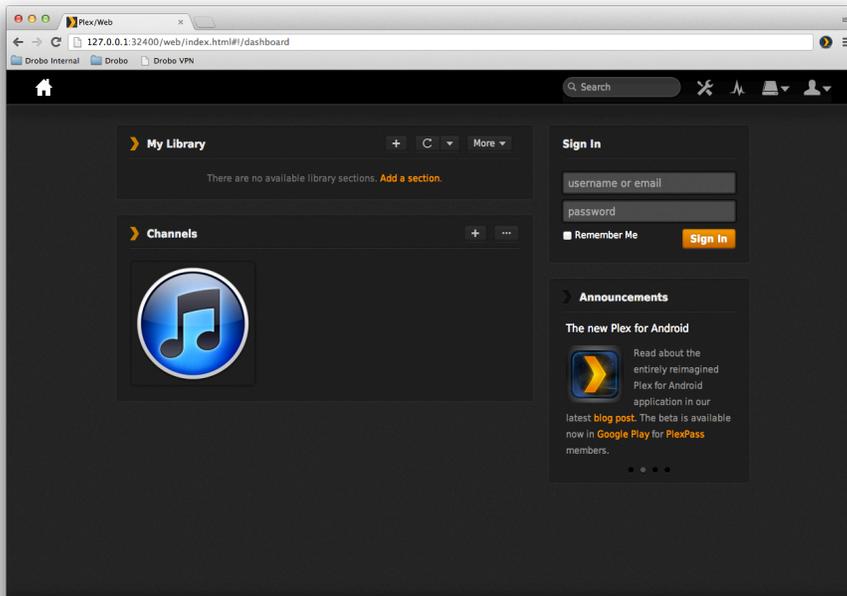
STEP 1

Launch the **Plex Media Server** application from the **Applications Folder** or **Windows Start Menu**

Click on the Plex icon located in the OSX toolbar or task bar on a Windows host. Select **Media Manager**.
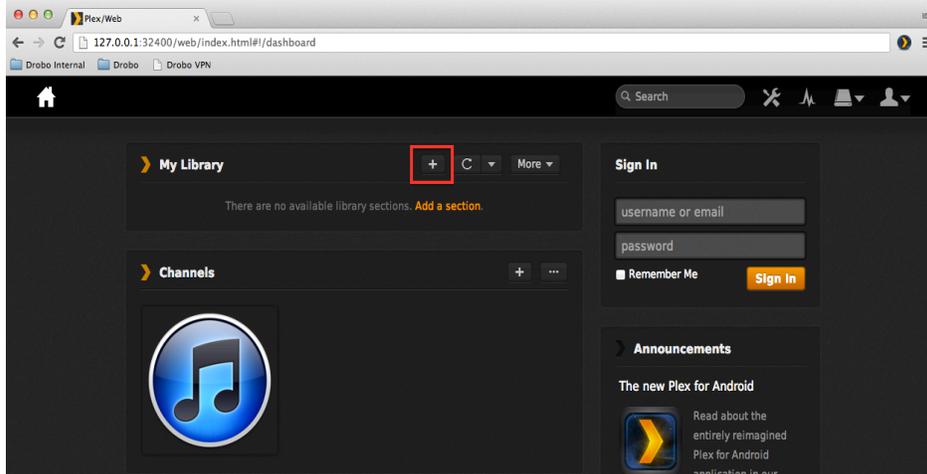
Once at this screen move to the next step.

STEP 2

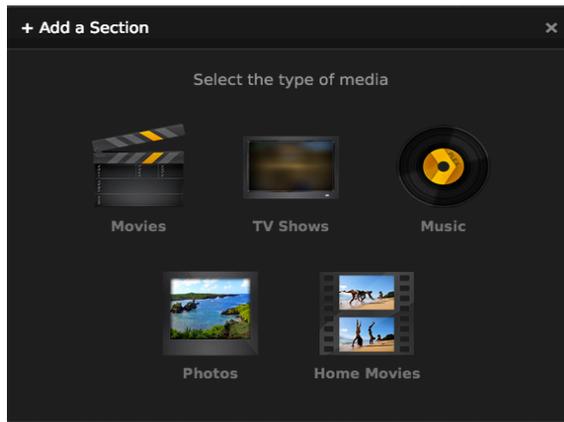The default web browser will be automatically launched and the Media Manager application loaded.

STEP 3

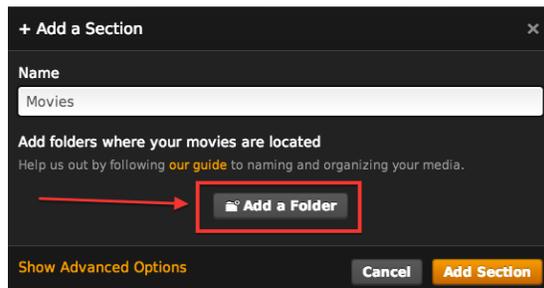To add a folder to the Media Server, click the **+** button in the **My Library** section

STEP 4

For this example, a directory containing movies will be added to Plex.
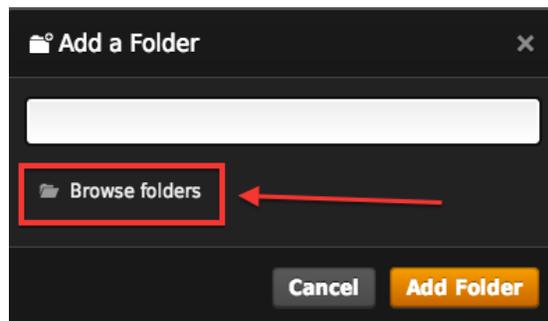
Click the **Movies** icon.

STEP 5

In the **Name** field, enter a name that describes the content being added.
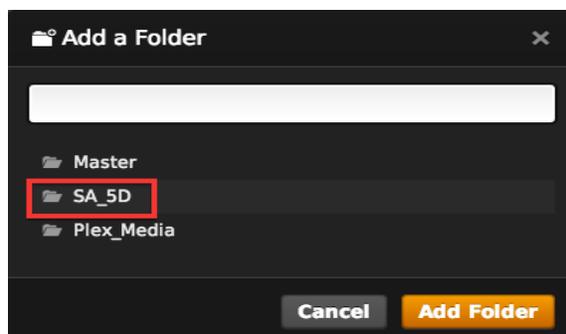
Click the **Add a Folder** button to specify the location of the content that was copied to the Drobo.

STEP 6

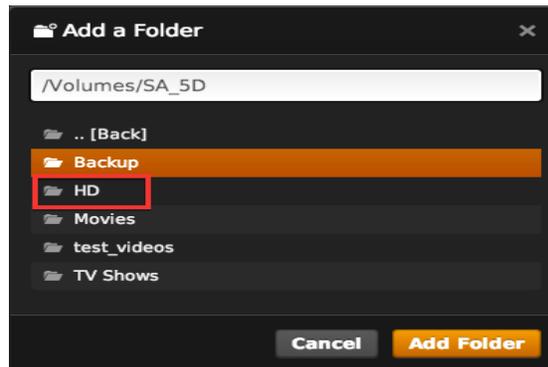Click **Browse Folders** to navigate to the folder on the Drobo.

STEP 7
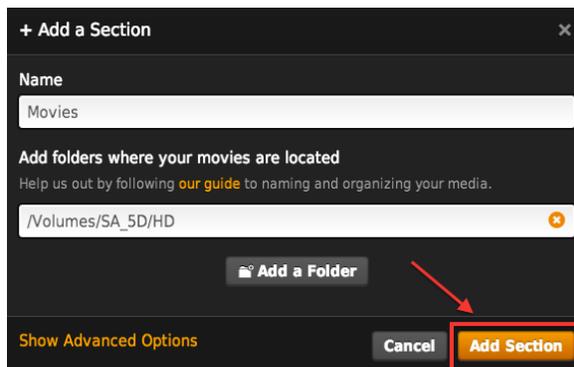

Click on the Drobo drive or share

STEP 8

Continue to navigate to the content directory.

Highlight the directory and click **Add Folder.**

In this example the folder **HD** located on the Drobo 5D contains videos that will be added to Plex.

STEP 9

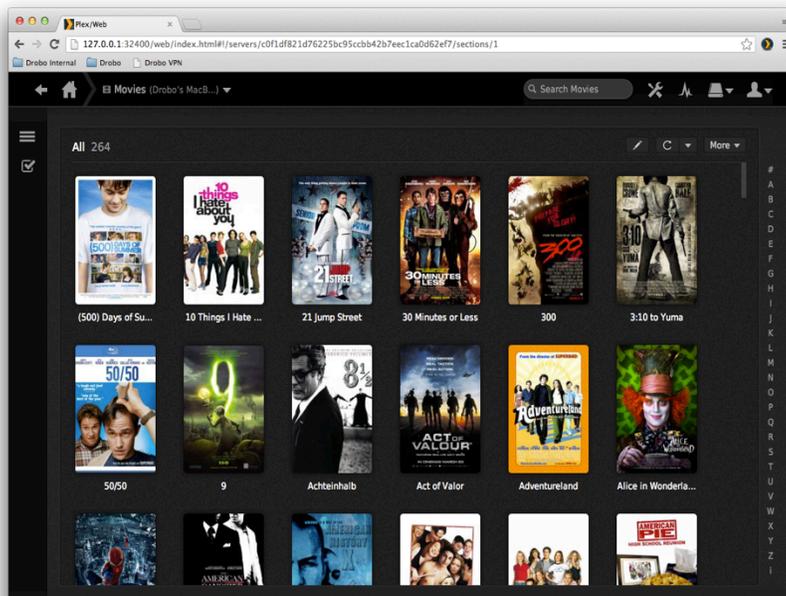Verify that the common name and folder location are correct.

Click **Add Section** to add the content to Plex.

NOTE - *Plex will now scan the entire media library inside the selected folder. The process of building the media library can take some time if a large amount of content was added.*

For addition types of media or multiple locations containing similar content, repeat the steps in this section adding additional source folders.

STEP 10

Once the scan is complete, icons for the media type added will now be available. Click on the **Movies** icon and verify that content is now available in the Media Manager.

Plex is now configured and ready for use locally or by other network enabled devices.

Accessing Plex Content Locally

While content can be access from the Media Manager, for the best experience launch the Plex Media Center application.
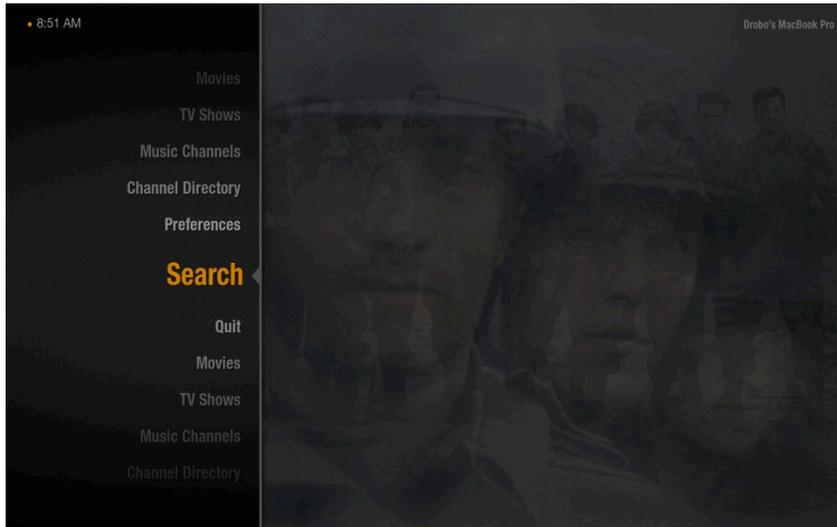
STEP 1

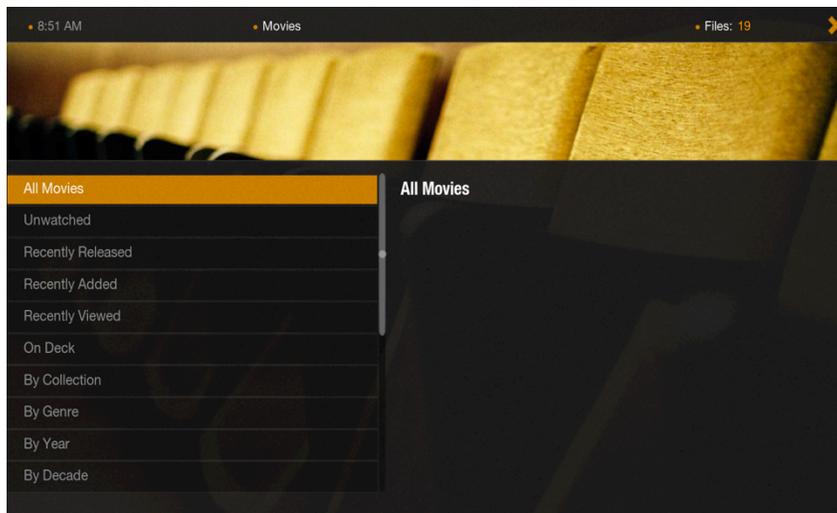Launch the **Plex Media Server** application from the **Applications Folder** or **Windows Start Menu**

STEP 2

Once Plex Media Center has loaded, use the arrow keys to navigate through the menu system.
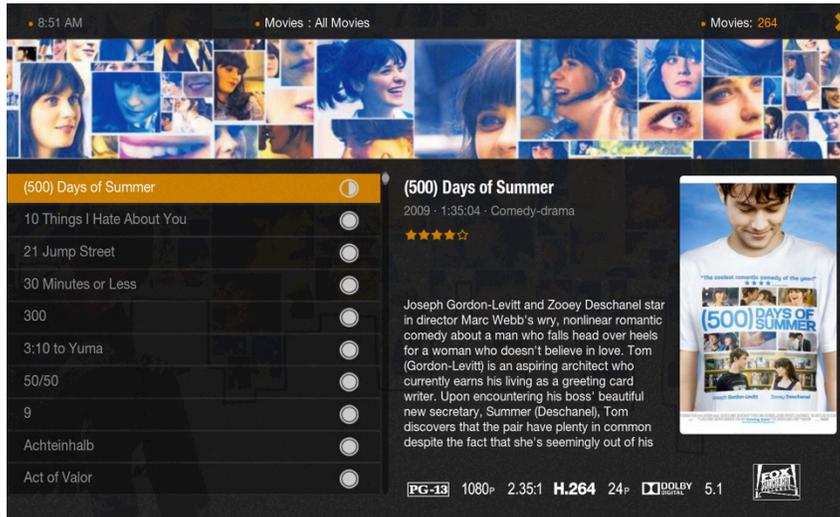
Navigate to **Movies** and press **Return**.

STEP 3

Select **All Movies** to display a list of all video content indexed from the Drobo.

STEP 4

Select a movie and press **Return** to begin playing the movie.

NOTE – When new content is added to a source folder on the Drobo, Plex will automatically add it to the media management system.

Accessing Plex Content from DLNA enabled devices

Once the initial configuration of Plex has completed, support for DLNA enabled devices is automatically enabled. Follow the configuration instructions from the device manufacture to enable DLNA and discover the Plex server. As DLNA utilizes universal plug and play, there is no network configuration information required. For more information on Plex DNLA support, consult the URL below.

> http://wiki.plexapp.com/index.php/How_do_I_connect_my_DLNA_device_to_Plex_Media_Server_running_on_my_computer

*NOTE - The Plex server will appear in the DLNA autodiscovery with the same name as the hostname set in the operating system (OSX/Windows). To change this display name, go to **Settings -> General** in the Plex Media Manager and update the **Friendly Name** field.*