

Enabling multi-platform content delivery for Channel 4's On-demand

Challenge

Since its launch, 4oD has continued to grow considerably each year, placing an ever increasing demand on its existing distribution Network. This demand reached a peak when Channel 4 prepared to re-launch its 4oD service to provide viewers with access to all its archives.

To prepare for the launch, Channel 4 needed to source a quality broadcast network provider, capable of distributing all of its non-linear programming on a daily basis. The network also needed to support a newly automated workflow, where a large number of content would be directly pushed onto various platforms. As a result, Channel 4 began to evaluate possible suppliers.

Solution

Exponential-e was selected for its Network which offers low latency, low-jitter and no packet loss. The Network was already proven in broadcasting environments with Exponential-e serving other major broadcasters.

As Exponential-e was already supplying a 1Gig fibre circuit to Channel 4, connecting various offices in London, it was a trusted partner. Andrew Bell, Technical Project Manager, Broadcast and Engineering, explained the reasons for selecting Exponential-e:

"We chose Exponential-e, as they have been a partner since May 2006 and their service has been excellent. The technology delivers and their teams ensure we enjoy a good working relationship with more than satisfactory service levels. They already had a quality broadcast network in place, so it seemed a natural choice for the latest deployment."

Exponential-e worked closely with Channel 4 to upgrade the existing Network to a 1Gbps capacity, which is capable of supporting bandwidth hungry content such as encoded video files, metadata, ancillary assets, subtitling data and images on a daily basis. The Network is highly resilient and scalable, backed by 99.99% Service Level Agreements to ensure next to no packet loss occurs; it enables real-time data delivery that is crucial in broadcast environments.

This allows for fast and efficient delivery of media rich content to a newly outsourced production facility at RedBee Media, where the preparation of non-linear content takes place, playout and transmission.



CHANNEL 4

Channel 4 was the first UK broadcaster to launch an on-demand platform in 2006, 4oDTV, which quickly proved to be the most popular commercial TV service on the internet. Since then, 4oD has continued to grow considerably each year, with 28 million monthly video views and 7.6 million unique users per month able to choose when, where and what content they watch.

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT

"We need to be prepared in case of a disaster and using a reliable fail-over service from Exponential-e is an integral part in our Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity strategy."

Andrew Bell, Technical Project Manager
Channel 4.



Solution

Content is then distributed via Exponential-e's multiple point-to-point e-pipes to various partners and content providers, including IOKO, Home Choice, Virgin Media, BT Vision, Inq8r and On Demand.

The upgrade enabled Channel 4 to eliminate the time-intensive use of tapes and hard drives, where content needed to be transferred to hard drives then shipped to various UK locations by couriers and post. It also no longer needs to host large FTTP sites for content distribution.

"Rather than relying on an antiquated manual process, we now have a network in place that supports an automated workflow, dramatically speeding up our processes. We can now deliver large number of content directly onto the platforms much faster, significantly freeing up internal resources and making operational cost-savings" explains Andrew Bell.

Channel 4 is also looking to deploy a fail-safe back-up Network in the event of a disaster situation, leveraging Exponential-e's 1GigE Connection and circuit resilience to ensure no disruptions or downtime occurs.

BENEFITS

Channel 4 now has a resilient quality Network in place that can push content to multiple platforms quickly and efficiently, providing operational cost-savings and resource efficiencies. This also enables Channel 4 to meet time-to-market deadlines for service launches and deploy services in a quicker fashion.

Since the launch, 4oD has forged new paths into content delivery and is now available on multiple platforms, including YouTube, Seesaw, iPads, iPhones, Playstations and on TV video on demand services.

RESULTS

- High speed 1Gbps Network.
- 99.99% Service Level Agreements.
- Fail-over back-up Network.
- Broadcast quality, low jitter and packet loss Network.

ABOUT EXPONENTIAL-E

Innovation is at the core of Exponential-e, and has been since our inception in 2002. We wholly own our super-fast Network, and our fusion of complementary technologies - a carrier-class Network and Cloud infrastructure - means we can deliver enterprise applications at wire speed for a superior end-user experience. We deliver scalable, dynamic and bespoke solutions. Renowned for our

responsiveness, coupled with our customer centric approach, and a UK based 24 / 7 x 365 service desk, means we offer unrivalled expertise.

To find out more about Exponential-e visit www.exponential-e.com/Channel4 or email info@exponential-e.com



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