

A SPORTS NETWORK'S MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

THE CHALLENGE

- Expand its presence to reach a global on-line audience.
- Protect and transport relevant content to a brand new online entity without losing vital information or audience share.
- Create a new web presence that delivers regional sports news via high definition (HD) video over the Internet.

THE SOLUTION

- Centralize and organize the management of content into categories that are easily understood by technical and non-technical staff and external viewers.
- Display all of the website's assets through a Flash-based web application publishing tool.
- Accelerate the publishing of relevant news articles through templates that are attractive, intuitive, easy to navigate, and easily re-used.

THE BENEFITS

- Enables journalists to bring sports fans closer to the action by embedding video into their stories.
- Creates a stickier website through intuitive tags that distribute up-to-the-minute sports news to subscribers via RSS feeds.
- Streamlines the previously complex tasks associated with online video publishing through a cost effective technology solution.

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Irdeto has had long-standing success catering to the needs of sports networks all over the world. Based on Irdeto's track record in this market segment, a regional sports network tapped the company and subsequently realized increased online viewership and greater overall success. While still an exemplary deployment reference for Irdeto, the following case study has been cloaked due to corporate policies at the customer site regarding written endorsements.

OVERVIEW

The Irdeto product suite and solutions are a compelling offering that enables sports television networks and premium sports channels like ESPN, Eurosport, Fox Sports, and Sky Sports to protect and monetize digital assets while delivering the highest quality viewing experience to a growing, global customer base.

If you've ever cheered while watching the FIFA World Cup, hushed as you viewed the World Golf Championships or did your own living room touchdown dance during an NFL game, it's likely due to the powerful Irdeto technology that consistently earns its position as a sports network's most valuable player. From rugby to cricket through motorsports, volleyball, and darts, Irdeto enables the viewers of sports networks to be closer to the action.

Irdeto makes this possible by offering the most comprehensive, full service end-to-end technology solutions for sports television providers. The company's offerings go beyond protecting and monetizing content and include content management and distribution along with security across conditional access, digital rights management, business support systems, and set-top box software solutions.

This holistic offering ensures that sports networks including Extreme Sports, Setanta, and 1&2 securely deliver content and protect copyrights while enjoying an added peace of mind that comes from Irdeto's service and support capabilities.

With Irdeto behind the scenes, sports networks exceed viewer expectations as they queue up events and programs like the Olympics, the Hockey World Cup and NBA games.

THE CHALLENGE

For a regional U.S.-based sports network that turned to Irdeto, the specific challenges included:

- Expand its presence to reach a global online audience.
- Protect and transport relevant content to a brand new online entity without losing vital information or audience share.
- Create a new web presence that delivers regional sports news via high definition video over the Internet.

THE GOALS

- Extend the sports network's leadership in regional television sports coverage to the Internet through a technology solution that simplifies the organization, publishing and embedding of video content on its website.
- Use a flexible platform that securely allows journalists to easily upload and publish content online with minimal technology training.
- Establish a scalable, content rich website that is a one stop destination for regional professional sports news.

THE BENEFITS

The Irdeto solution:

- Enables journalists to bring sports fans closer to the action by embedding video into their stories.
- Creates a stickier website through intuitive tags that distribute up-to-the-minute sports news to subscribers via RSS feeds.
- Streamlines the previously complex tasks associated with online video publishing through a cost effective technology solution.

THE CLIENT

First launched over 25 years ago, the sports network has grown into one of the most watched stations in its region. Today, the station has more than four million homes tuning in to its expansive coverage of local and national sports events.

In fact, it has been among the country's top-rated regional sports networks for the past four years and was among the first regional sports networks to originate every game and studio show in HD.

THE STRATEGY

The sports network realized that in order to continue to be the dominant news source for regional sports, it had to deliver the most comprehensive and up-to-date information to its online audiences that extended far beyond the region.

The network's technology choice needed to grant the organization:

- The ability to remain competitive and build its online brand while creating a web following.
- The chance to enable its team of journalists to post stories without delay due to steep technology learning curves or other technical glitches.
- A way to appeal to its online audiences by serving as the most comprehensive source for news, information, statistics, and related sports and player information.
- Support for its technical staff and team of video editors with a flexible and easy-to-use solution.

WHY IRDETO?

Investing in digital content management, delivery systems and related web technology is a serious investment for a sports network. Not only does it require a thorough evaluation of leading offerings, it demands that the solution of choice deliver an ROI within the first year.

While each sports network will have a specific set of criteria that determines its success, Irdeto has discovered several universal requirements. These include:

- Scalability: to support unexpected spikes in traffic and expansion of programming through national satellite providers.
- Standards-based configuration: to easily integrate with existing systems and reduce the need for lengthy and expensive implementations while providing greater overall usability.
- Security: to protect content and prevent copyright infringement.
- Quality: to maintain and grow a viewership by showing sport events in various formats including HD.
- Templates: which are intuitive and easy to use and reuse so that customers can quickly develop and publish content.
- Support: with in-depth product knowledge and experience and are available 24/7 – a critical factor for a newsroom.

For the regional sports network, Irdeto was selected based on the following:

- Irdeto provides an all-in-one comprehensive solution for the customer's content management and video server needs that make for easier management of workflow as different video feeds securely move from the server to the website.
- Irdeto offers the client an intuitive way to easily and instantly publish news stories with embedded video links.
- Irdeto automatically updates content and thumbnails as soon as new stories are published so that visitors always have the most up-to-date information.

THE SOLUTION

To support the need of its growing fan base for breaking sports news, the regional sports network was determined to expand its presence beyond television and step out of the shadow of its parent website. To achieve this, the network decided to take advantage of technology advances and a dedicated audience of sports fans to create an online presence that complemented its broadcast offerings. The goal for the customer was to become the region's definitive sports news site and television network.

Moving away from its built-in readers that funneled in through the parent website and creating a brand new web identity required a balanced team of business strategists, online content experts and experienced technical staff.

Yet even with the right team on board, the sports network needed to be assured that its technology selection would deliver a comprehensive and easy-to-use solution that enabled journalists to easily publish content, technical staff to quickly catalog and manage content, and site visitors to track the latest news on their favorite teams and players.

Upon careful evaluation of leading industry offerings, the sports network selected Irdeto and was up and running within six months. To ensure that all staff were adept at using the new technology solution, a two-week training period was followed by a one week 'behind the firewall' testing phase where employees simulated real-world newsroom scenarios of publishing stories on their own.

The spring 2008 debut of the new website and the more recent site refresh is deemed a tremendous success due to Irdeto's ability to:

- Centralize and organize the management of content into categories that are easily understood by technical and non technical staff and external viewers.
- Display all of the website's assets through a Flash-based web application publishing tool.
- Accelerate the publishing of relevant news articles through templates that are attractive, intuitive, easy to navigate, and easily re-used.
- Enable the client to continue to create and store relevant content on its site due to the technology's scalable and flexible infrastructure.
- Easily embed video code into the CMS and deliver a website that was aligned with the original business strategy and design ideas.
- Provide world-class technical support on a 24/7 basis so that reporters can post their own content at any time of the day and always have a back-up resource for additional technical assistance.

THE FUTURE

The sports network has recently created more than 40 RSS feeds to keep its online audience up-to-date on the latest sports news. Additionally, given the growing interest for more in-depth coverage within each sports category, the network is planning to create separate channels for each sports team that will be built from its home page. Since Irdeto is flexible, scalable and cost-effective, the client will be able to more quickly add these new dimensions to its website. A website that continues to grow in popularity due to its high quality content and accompanying video supported by Irdeto.

Irdeto remains committed to continuously building and enhancing its technology portfolio and extending its expertise in the sports television market. The company continues to grow its footprint in this arena based on its clients' proven success.

