

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

IRDETO CREATES EFFICIENCY AND REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BSkyB

THE CHALLENGE

- Lengthy, cumbersome workflow for publishing and delivering news, sports and entertainment content
- Broken workflow and no integration between multiple production platforms and processing content
- High operational overhead incurring significant costs
- Multiple processes required to add meta-data
- Multiple sources of video content to be digitized, cataloged and distributed
- Inability to meet delivery demands of current contracts, missed revenue earning opportunities
- Need for a non-technical solution for journalist use

THE SOLUTION

- Syndicate content to multiple media outlets and all five mobile providers in the UK and Ireland
- Efficiently publish more content to their own website more efficiently with a faster turnaround
- Publish content to digital partners – e.g. trains and digital signage partners.
- Provide podcast content
- Use one common system to search, view, manage, process and publish content and meta-data to any platform
- Meet commitments on delivery times to media outlets for time sensitive news and sports content

THE BENEFITS

- Easily manage and ingest content, reduce video clip processing time
- Automatically publish to news syndication clients
- Standardize how content is managed across the corporate network from a central location
- Maximize and repurpose content for the benefit of its business, its partners, its affiliates and its viewers
- Eliminate a number of technical barriers to growth
- Double the number of clients, increase revenue opportunities and reduce operational overheads

THE CLIENT

British Sky Broadcasting (BSkyB) operates the leading pay television broadcast service in the UK and Ireland, as well as broadband and telephony services. With 8.8 million customers, BSKyB owns a comprehensive content portfolio spanning entertainment, news, movies and sports, including channels such as Sky One, Sky News, Sky Arts, Sky Movies and Sky Sports. It is also the UK's fastest growing broadband provider and is rapidly growing in home telephony. BSKyB is leading the way in giving viewers more control via the UK's favorite PVR, Sky+, and Europe's leading HD service, Sky HD.

THE SCENARIO

As one of the UK's most visible media brands, BSKyB reaches one third of all UK homes and has a reputation for focusing on quality growth by increasing product penetration and innovative entertainment options. In 2005, as part of its focus on growth and innovation, Sky wanted to streamline its workflow for delivering video content to multiple platforms. It was the Sky News side of BSKyB that took the initial steps to enhance its existing workflow processes, which had become manually intensive.

"At that time, everything was on tape," said James Weeks, Executive Producer, New Media for Sky News. "Staff had to manually convert video clips to appropriate formats for each different platform or device. A single clip might get transcoded eight times, meaning Sky News handled thousands of clips per day. This manually intensive process was limiting the number of new clients we could take on board, and was restricting our growth."

THE STRATEGY

After a market evaluation, Sky News selected and implemented Irdeto's Media Solutions. Irdeto's Media Solutions enable rapid delivery of rich media content to consumer digital platforms. Irdeto automatically recognizes and transcodes content into its required format, regardless of digital media platform or mobile device.

"Using Irdeto, we were able to remove our manual processes completely, enabling journalists to publish with one click," added Weeks. "Irdeto's Media Solutions has enabled us to double our clients, increase new revenue opportunities and significantly reduce our operational overheads. It is a key ingredient to what we're doing as a company. One of our strategic objectives is to get as much video content onto our Web site as possible."

Irdeto's Media Solutions provide one distribution engine which can be plugged into a PC, and then content is operationally managed and ingested by Irdeto. Irdeto configured to many of Sky's requirements and its Media Solutions enabled BSKyB to standardize how it manages video content across its corporate network and increase the efficiency of sharing that content. As content was stored centrally, rather than locally, teams could access and encode software video clips quickly and easily from anywhere on the BSKyB network.

With the support of the Irdeto system, Sky News was able to launch a news product for outdoor digital screens, sending out news clips to partners and affiliates, which include 18 UK railway stations, and more than 30 shopping centers

THE SOLUTION

The system went live in just 12 weeks, which was an important factor for Sky News as the entire company was moving into its new studios at the time and had a hard deadline of when the system needed to be live and fully operational. "Once we removed the restriction on the quantity of material that could be transcoded, people found more and more reasons to have video," said Weeks.

"We went live with Irdeto's Media Solutions and experienced no business disruption to our service. Irdeto's Media Solutions allows us to scan our main database system, automatically recognize when a clip matches certain set criteria, and then automatically publish that content out to various platforms and devices."

Away from News, Sky Sports has the mobile rights for the Champions League football and the FA Premier League. BSKyB also secured a three-year agreement for live coverage of the UEFA Champions League from the 2009/10 season. Under the new contract, Sky Sports secured cross-platform rights for mobile and broadband and highlights packages.

In light of an increasingly portfolio of mobile rights, the Irdeto platform has been deployed by Sky Sports to support the faster delivery of clips and highlights to mobile platforms, including Sky's 24-7 Football service, which sends customers video clips of goals on their mobile phones within minutes of a goal being scored in a live match. "Irdeto plays a significant role in helping the Sky Sports Mobile and Broadband production teams deliver content faster," comments Andy Paterson, Head of Mobile Operations BSKyB.

THE FUTURE

As a result of the efficiency gains Sky News and Sky Sports were experiencing with Irdeto's Media Solutions, BSKyB has decided to extend its use of Irdeto even wider across the organization. "Video has really come into its own in the past couple of years," adds Jonathan Payton, Service Operations Manager at BSKyB's Online Business Unit. "Two years ago it was still in its infancy and we had a mixture of different workflow systems, however we could see the potential of having one congruent platform across the business. We wanted to have the ability to create a video library within our systems where content can be seamlessly shared across different areas of the business using Irdeto's Media Solutions."

Sky is working on greater integration between Irdeto's Media Solutions and its corporate content management system, Vignette, which will further streamline video content for its own Web site as well as news feeds like MSN and Yahoo. Irdeto's Media Solutions integrate to Sky's Quantel system for News, Leitch servers for Sports, as well as with the Vignette corporate content management system.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Reduced Sky News video clip digital processing time
- Journalists can publish with just one click
- No need for technical skills or manual intervention because content is automatically published to news syndication clients, including railways, student bars, portals, mobiles and Web sites of major newspapers
- Enabled Sky News to double the number of clients, increase revenue opportunities and reduce operational overheads
- Eliminated a number of technical barriers to growth
- BSkyB can now fulfill its strategic objective of maximizing video content on its Web site
- Fully live and operational in just 12 weeks. No business disruption to service.
- BSkyB has one distribution engine, enabling easy management and ingestion of content in a user-friendly manner that is scalable for growth.
- Standardized how content is managed across the corporate network for easy sharing from a central location, enabling BSkyB to maximize and repurpose content for the benefit of its business, its partners, its affiliates and its viewers

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