



Speeding on demand workflows with Aspera's cloud-ready file transfer solution

AT A GLANCE

Industry

Media & Entertainment

Products

Server On Demand

Challenge

Improve efficiency and reliability of delivery to VoD platforms, while providing a future proofed scalable solution.

Solution

Channel 4 selected Aspera On Demand for its high-speed transfer of content directly to cloud storage.

Results

- Channel 4 delivers 7 terabytes of video to multiple platforms each month.
- Aspera protects Channel 4's valued content, including proprietary and third-party content.

Channel 4 is a publicly owned and commercially funded television broadcaster in the UK. In addition to the main Channel 4 service, the company's portfolio includes E4, More4, Film4 and 4Music, as well as an ever-growing range of online activities such as channel4.com, Channel 4's bespoke video-on-demand service, 4oD, and standalone digital projects.

For its popular 4oD service, Channel 4 uses high-speed transfer software from Aspera to deliver cross-platform video content to approximately 14 different platforms supporting multiple devices, resolutions and formats.

CHALLENGE

Faced with hundreds of hours of proprietary and third-party content in various formats that needed to be delivered to different platforms each week, Channel 4 was hindered by the bottlenecks and reliability issues it encountered during the transfer process.

Previously, Channel 4 delivered content to 4oD via FTP, but with an increase in platforms, particularly those using Adaptive Bitrate video technology, they required a more efficient and reliable solution. This requirement was made even more important by an increase in the volume and size of files, which began to exceed 2 to 3GB each.

While Channel 4 wanted to improve the speed of delivery, it was also keen to improve the reliability and efficiency of the file delivery. The broadcaster sought a solution that could not only address all of their file transfer needs, but also integrate seamlessly with their third party workflows.

SOLUTION

After reviewing their options, Channel 4 selected Aspera On Demand, which enables high-speed transfer of large data files and volumes directly to cloud object storage. The positive feedback they received about Aspera from their service partners – as well as their own past experience with Aspera technology – reinforced the company's decision to implement Aspera On Demand.

Channel 4 was able to quickly and easily integrate Aspera On Demand into its existing IT infrastructure that interfaces with several third-party workflows.

“Aspera offers a mature, fast, reliable and secure solution capable of handling the high volume of video content we need to deliver directly to cloud storage.”

 Simon Christie
Broadcast Systems Engineer, Distribution &
Broadcast Technology, Channel 4

BENEFITS

High-speed transfers

Aspera reduces end-to-end workflow times by transferring video content at maximum speed, regardless of file size, transfer distance or network conditions.

Reliability

Automatic resume for partial transfers and retry for interrupted transfers ensure media files are delivered dependably.

Cloud-ready solution

Aspera On Demand moves large files to the cloud without requiring costly infrastructure implementations, allowing users to take full advantage of all the benefits of cloud computing.

Strong security

Aspera's enterprise-grade security features built-in SSH authentication, encryption in transit and at rest, and data integrity verification for each transmitted block, protecting valuable media assets throughout the transfer process.

ABOUT COMPANY

Channel 4 is a publicly-owned, commercially-funded public service broadcaster. They do not receive any public funding and have a remit to be innovative, experimental and distinctive. Channel 4 works across television, film and digital media to deliver its public service remit, as outlined in the 2003 Communications Act and most recently the 2010 Digital Economy Act.

Videos are first transcoded by a third party for play-out on multiple devices, after which the resulting multi-format videos are delivered via Aspera On Demand to the cloud for distribution to various end-user devices and platforms.

RESULTS

With Aspera On Demand, the broadcaster now benefits from a powerful, easy-to-manage solution that significantly reduces transfer times while maintaining high-level security and reliability. Video content is transferred efficiently and securely from Channel 4's playout provider in West London to its cloud object storage in Dublin, Ireland.

Using Aspera, Channel 4 now delivers approximately 7 terabytes of video per month to 14 platforms.

"Aspera offers a mature, fast, reliable and secure solution capable of handling the high volume of video content we need to deliver directly to cloud storage," said Simon Christie, Broadcast Systems Engineer, Distribution & Broadcast Technology, Channel 4.

The high level of security Aspera offers is especially important because it protects their valued content, whether it's proprietary or licensed from third-party studios. Today, Channel 4 can rest assured that the files will arrive safely at their destination and can be played back without any issues.

The entire process of transferring content to the cloud is now fully automated, including automated error handling, eliminating the need for manual intervention.

"The efficiency, reliability and error handling that Aspera On Demand provides gives us confidence that every part of the packaged file is delivered without corruption – something that's crucial when we're updating the platform with a hundred hours of content each week," added Christie.

In the future, Aspera On Demand will allow Channel 4 to take advantage of the endless scalability of the cloud, enabling 4oD to grow and make more content available.

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About Aspera

Aspera, an IBM Company, is the creator of next-generation transport technologies that move the world's data at maximum speed regardless of file size, transfer distance and network conditions. Based on its patented, Emmy® award-winning FASP® protocol, Aspera software fully utilizes existing infrastructures to deliver the fastest, most predictable file-transfer experience. Aspera's core technology delivers unprecedented control over bandwidth, complete security and uncompromising reliability. Organizations across a variety of industries on six continents rely on Aspera software for the business-critical transport of their digital assets.

Learn more at www.asperasoft.com and follow us on Twitter @asperasoft for more information.