



Media & entertainment case study

High-quality video boosts news brand viewership by 20%

When a multinational news division improved the video quality of its mobile apps, the enriched user experiences resulted in higher viewership and app store ratings.

The challenge

The news division of a multinational media and entertainment company held an enviable market position with brands that included some of the industry's most trusted and recognized outlets. As the division began moving into the streaming sector, however, it realized its mobile app experiences were falling short. The apps lacked the reliable, high-quality video needed to attract advertisers and subscribers, impeding success with streaming models like over-the-top (OTT) and direct-to-consumer (DTC). In addition, app store ratings were low and growth had stalled.

Identifying video engineering goals

The company outlined its video engineering goals, which included providing a consistent experience across all platforms, from mobile and online apps to OTTs and smart TVs. Achieving these goals required controlling and improving KPIs for mean opinion score (MOS), which is a common metric in video experience.

At a glance

The news division of a multinational media and entertainment company was moving into the streaming sector but realized the video quality of its mobile apps was not attracting the desired level of advertisers and subscribers. Our team's innovations in video, content ingestion and dissemination helped the company make needed changes, resulting in a range of business outcomes:

- Increased Net Promoter Score by 10%, from 44 to 47
- Boosted app ratings from 2.0 to 4.7 for Android and from 2.5 to 4.3 for iOS
- Increased content viewership by 20% year-over-year from 2014 to 2020
- Reduced test lead time 50% through automation

The approach

Originally partnering with the division to support platform development and QA for streaming services, we transitioned to product engineering to address the news division's video setbacks. Cognizant brought a unique mix of video engineering expertise and Agile development methodologies, along with innovations in video, content ingestion and dissemination.

Finding little consistency in video quality across devices, our team set to work revamping the behind-the-scenes solutions. Enhancements included:

- Agile development to speed up feature upgrades, making enhancements ready for release every two days, down from two week
- Upgraded video playback using a combination of cloud- and HTML5-based development technology
- Improved playback by streamlining the content management solution and supporting microservices architecture

In addition to focusing on new development technologies and transitioning the apps' infrastructure to cloud, we customized and implemented an automated QA solution to identify the root causes of playback issues. The solution allowed IT teams to analyze the impact of incremental changes on playback across all platforms.

Enhancing the system to detect playback issues faster makes it possible to identify and address problems before viewers encountered them, which eliminated the low MOS KPIs.

Our team also addressed tactical needs such as crowd testing the apps prior to launches, which helped assess features and incorporate user feedback. We tapped pools of several dozen people to use the apps and compare features against those of competitors.



Business outcomes

The boost in video quality helped the news division's streaming efforts gain traction, offering a range of benefits:

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Scaling the solution to other brands

The division's parent company scaled the solutions and video player platforms we created to launch streaming platforms for its lifestyle and entertainment brands, leading to an increased subscriber base that generated higher revenues from ad monetization.

Our teams continue to partner on advancing the news outlets' user experience. We're now working to create personalized landing pages that reflect the individual interests and preferences of viewers. Pointing to the success of the engagement, at the center of each news app experience is the high-quality video experience that keeps viewers coming back.



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