Mired in platform chaos?
The cloud can set you free

Delivering the same OTT service with the same content and features to the same customers shouldn't require multiple systems, right? But that's what often happened over the past decade as service providers scrambled to stay ahead of consumer demand in the fast-changing OTT universe.

A torrent of trends – from linear to time-shifting to streaming, and from wired to Wi-Fi to mobile – has kept service providers recreating delivery architectures. The reasons for this fragmentation are many: consumers' insatiable desires for anytime, anywhere content; the ability to target viewers by interest, demographics, location, and other factors; and the business opportunity of reaching entirely new audiences. With the inability of existing on-premises solutions to support these new services, service providers often wound up with a patchwork quilt of OTT, TV Everywhere, direct-to-home, cable and IPTV – all running independently, and without unified user experiences or feature parity.

As pandemic viewing soared in recent years, the need for a solution to platform chaos has come into sharp focus. Providers who built new silos to capture audiences as linear and TV Everywhere gave way to streaming and on-the-go viewing found it costly and complex to add capacity and capabilities to meet – and monetize – new viewing trends. As a result, money often was left on the table, even as growth surged.

Here's why this is a problem: The replication of individual systems to deliver content to individual audiences is one thing; keeping those systems in step with consumer and industry trends is another thing altogether. Do you really need separate back-office solutions for cable, streaming and mobile delivery? How is it possible to make accurate market and monetization decisions when data is scattered across different sets of viewers? And aren't there more efficient and more nimble ways to scale to meet big-event peaks than by investing in and integrating expensive new equipment?

For forward-thinking service providers, the answer to those questions are in moving away from legacy on-premises installations and instead leveraging the clout of platforms that are based 100% in the cloud. Using a single cloud-native platform providers can:

- Leverage a single back end and CMS to seamlessly and efficiently deliver services to wired and mobile devices, connected TVs, and gaming consoles;
- Develop new features in days, rather than weeks or months, to engage and monetize a growing subscriber base;
- Gain a 360-degree view of viewer preferences and behaviors to inform subscription, content and monetization decisions; and
- Scale instantly to meet peak demand, particularly for high-viewership live events.

What's more, service providers with a single-platform approach can create promotional strategies that can more effectively target viewers by understanding the context and the device in use at any particular time: short, snackable highlights and videos on mobile during rush hour, for example, and long-form films and series in living-room environments.

Looking back over the past decade, there's no question that investments in individual systems made sense in the helter-skelter early days of streaming. What the past two years have shown is that for service providers who are serious about upping their OTT game, a rethink that provides a holistic approach to service delivery and management – ideally harnessing the power of a cloud-native architecture – will be the key to future success.

Source: Firstlight Media

About Firstlight Media

Firstlight Media is **Tekmark Broadcast's** strategic partner in the OTT transformation space. Founded by a team with deep OTT video expertise, Firstlight Media is expediting OTT's transformation to ultra-scalable, cloud-based platforms that use AI to drive true engagement and monetization for Tier 1 operators on any screen. The company is headquartered in Toronto and has additional locations in Los Angeles, San Diego and Chennai, India. Curious to find out how you can benefit from Firstlight's next-gen cloud-native platform that is outperforming legacy online video platforms? Drop us a message **here!**