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itv STUDIOS NETHERLANDS

CASE STUDY

ITV Studios Netherlands Lowers Storage Costs Without Sacrificing Performance

Overview

ITV Studios Netherlands is one of the largest production houses in the Netherlands that creates a wide variety of media and entertainment content for both the domestic and international market. In addition to creating engaging and informative content in virtually every genre and for many platforms, the company also distributes and broadcasts its programs or sells them to other major broadcasters in the country. In their home country, the United Kingdom, ITV also recently began its own streaming service, ITVX, which is responsible for creating and publishing various streaming content for subscribers.

Challenge: Navigating expanding storage demands

As a content creation factory, ITV Studios Netherlands requires a lot of storage capacity in multiple tiers. For a long time, the company stored its raw footage and programs in various stages of editing on an on-premises file cluster that also stored a large volume of corporate data. The file cluster was able to accommodate many terabytes of data, but over time, capacity became an issue. Not only was the company storing footage in that location, but also continually adding new footage to the cluster—in ever-increasing resolutions up to 4K. Demand for storage space was increasing while the file cluster size remained static. Eventually, it became clear that ITV needed a different solution, especially as the on-premises file cluster was "an expensive parking space" to store the company's media, according to the company's Team Lead of Infrastructure and Networks, Jordy de Muijnk.

While de Muijnk had considered cloud storage over the past several years, the ingress and egress fees were always a deterrent. ITV needed a large volume of premium hot storage and that seemed too expensive with providers such as AWS.

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>
> **— Jordy de Muijnk, Team Lead, Infrastructure and Networks, ITV Studios Netherlands**

de Muijnk and his team worked with Wasabi partner Real Solutions to explore other cloud storage options and became extremely interested when they saw that Wasabi offered hot cloud storage without extra fees—just simple, straightforward per-terabyte pricing.

Solution: Wasabi Cloud NAS enhanced access and efficiency for ITV Studios

ITV trialed Wasabi Hot Cloud Storage for a time and soon realized that Wasabi Cloud NAS would deliver exactly the level of performance and quick access to content that its editors needed.

"Wasabi Cloud NAS is exactly the tool that I had been looking for," said de Muijnk. "It serves as the perfect arm's length extension to our local storage."

One feature of Wasabi Cloud NAS that the team particularly liked is its space reclamation, which monitors how often data is accessed and moves unused data to Wasabi—freeing up space on their local device. For the editors using Wasabi Cloud NAS, the front end is simple and intuitive. Everything works behind the scenes, allowing de Muijnk to deliver the same consistent experience to users.

Wasabi Cloud NAS enables editors to quickly access any clip from terabytes of raw footage, which is a significant benefit in a broadcast world where minutes matter. "I cannot afford to wait 12 to 24 hours to get a clip back from AWS Glacier or LTO tape," said de Muijnk. "If you compare Wasabi to Glacier, it's probably going from 12 hours to five minutes, a difference that can really break or make a day here for people working on that project."

Results:

Cloud scalability when it's needed

With reserved capacity from Wasabi, de Muijnk said that giving every team the storage space they need is no longer a problem. Before Wasabi, available storage was divided into segments, and each team got a piece. When their storage was used up, that was it. Now, teams feel like they have "unlimited storage and capacity at a very decent speed and high availability."

On-premises access and performance

de Muijnk is pleased with the on-premises feel of Wasabi's performance and ease of access. "This feels like the physical storage hardware is next to my desk, but it could be anywhere in Europe, and we get the same speeds and throughput," he said. "There's no more waiting time for stuff to get imported or ingested because we're always good to go."

Simple, seamless implementation and setup

"I've been in the game for 11 years now and I can't think of an implementation that went without a single hitch—but this was the first one," said de Muijnk in regard to implementing Wasabi Cloud NAS at ITV. "Set-up was straightforward and worked the way it should right from the beginning, out of the box, which is absolutely the dream."

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Straightforward, predictable pricing

de Muijnk enjoys not having to predict monthly cloud costs and ensuing fee possibilities. "Finally, there's an affordable hot cloud storage solution that is applicable to many scenarios, but media and entertainment in general." With Wasabi, he said, "you can simply multiply. You take the terabytes you need and multiply them by one figure, and you're done—instead of doing complex calculations that no one understands and no one knows what they're adding up to by the end of the day." By eliminating ingress, egress and other fees, Wasabi also makes it simple for de Muijnk to know exactly what cloud storage is going to cost throughout the year, which he said "makes life easier."

Summary/Next Steps

Thanks to the success ITV has had with Wasabi cloud storage, de Muijnk said the company's ultimate goal is to "eliminate completely the on-premises storage solution and replace it with Wasabi." He's happy that Wasabi is also helping ITV advance in its sustainability goals, specifically by enabling the company to support their on-premises SFTP system with Wasabi Cloud NAS. de Muijnk is also looking forward to trying Wasabi AiR, which is an AI-based intelligent media storage system. Editors are sometimes tasked with pulling old footage from long ago to feature clips in new programs, "and we have to go through like 12 seasons of content to find one three-minute clip," said de Muijnk. With AiR, however, he said that they can query the system to find all songs from a particular artist located within hundreds of hours of footage, "and it only will take a second to get our content back, instead of having someone look through the whole archive for a week or so to find a clip. Wasabi AiR will really change the game."

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