

Urban Brew Expands Capacity to Take on New Opportunity with Wasabi, Signiant, and iconik

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*-Trevor Nkosi, Information Officer and IT Manager,
Urban Brew Studios*

Overview

Urban Brew Studios is a full-service television studio based in Johannesburg, South Africa. The company operates eight studios, two TV channels, and produces its own content for delivery to major broadcasters in South Africa. The company was effectively managing the data demands of their business using on-premises storage hardware. That was until streaming platforms came knocking.

New business model meant new storage challenges

Over the past two years, new productions from Netflix, Amazon, and Disney arrived in South Africa. With these new opportunities came new challenges for the creators in the area. These productions came with higher resolution requirements and new encoding models, adding up to an overall higher data burden for local producers. “Now, we need to conform to a different standard and the data sizes are not the same,” said Trevor Nkosi, Urban Brew’s Information Officer and IT Manager.

Urban Brew’s next project would utilize 24 cameras shooting in 4K resolution. The project necessitated an expansion in storage, but Nkosi and his team were hesitant to pay the upfront CapEx cost they’d need to meet demand,

CUSTOMER



INDUSTRY

Media & Entertainment

USE CASES

- File acceleration
- Remote collaboration

CHALLENGES

Increasing storage capacity to take on demanding new projects, accelerating data transfer to cloud-based media asset manager

SOLUTION

Wasabi + Signiant + iconik

RESULTS

- Budget-friendly cloud storage
- Expanded data capacity
- Workflow efficiency
- Reduced dependence on storage hardware
- Ability to take on additional workloads

a strain made worse by the high price of storage devices in the region and the long setup phase that would eat into production time.

Solution: Wasabi Hot Cloud Storage + Signiant + iconik

At the outset of the project, Nkosi knew he wanted a hybrid model for storage. Urban Brew's existing storage array was robust but the team would still need additional capacity if they were going to deliver the project on time. Expanding into the cloud would give his team ample room to grow and set Urban Brew apart from the pack. Still, Nkosi was hesitant to adopt a hyperscale cloud due to the unpredictability that transaction fees such as egress or API calls would bring. Amafu Technologies, Urban Brew's technology solutions provider, introduced them to Wasabi. With simple, predictable pricing, Wasabi was leagues ahead of other cloud storage services. Their Reserved Capacity Storage payment model coupled with the lack of egress and API charges made Wasabi a budget friendly alternative. "It actually felt great because Wasabi came in around 60% below budget at the time," Nkosi said.

With their cloud storage in place, Urban Brew selected iconik as its media asset manager, but there was still one piece left to complete the solution. Amafu and Nkosi knew that ingesting 24 4K-camera cards to the cloud in a single day would be horribly inefficient. With only days before shooting was set to begin, Amafu set up Urban Brew with Signiant file acceleration. The entire solution came together quickly and allowed the production team to quickly offload the day's footage into their cloud-based MAM.

Room to Grow

Moving their additional storage capacity to the cloud has given Urban Brew the freedom to expand their storage capabilities and remove administrative inefficiencies, beginning with their archive strategy. "Once the production is done, under normal circumstances, we are asked to LTO all this footage and ship to client. With our content in Wasabi cloud, we can simply do a cloud-to-cloud bucket transfer and share with the client, and eliminate the additional LTO tape costs," Nkosi said. The transition has saved the team from burdensome CapEx costs, too. "In the last two years, prior to moving to Wasabi, we've had to spend over R12,3 million rand [\$633,440 USD] on storage alone," he said. Now the Urban Brew team can easily spin up new storage as needed without the demands of adding new hardware. The added flexibility will grant the production house the freedom to take on new, more data demanding projects entering the region and for his business to grow along with his data.

ABOUT WASABI

Wasabi provides simple, predictable and affordable hot cloud storage for businesses all over the world. It enables organizations to store and instantly access an unlimited amount of data at 1/5th the price of the competition with no complex tiers or unpredictable egress fees. Trusted by tens of thousands of customers worldwide, Wasabi has been recognized as one of technology's fastest-growing and most visionary companies. Created by Carbonite co-founders and cloud storage pioneers David Friend and Jeff Flowers, Wasabi is a privately held company based in Boston.

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