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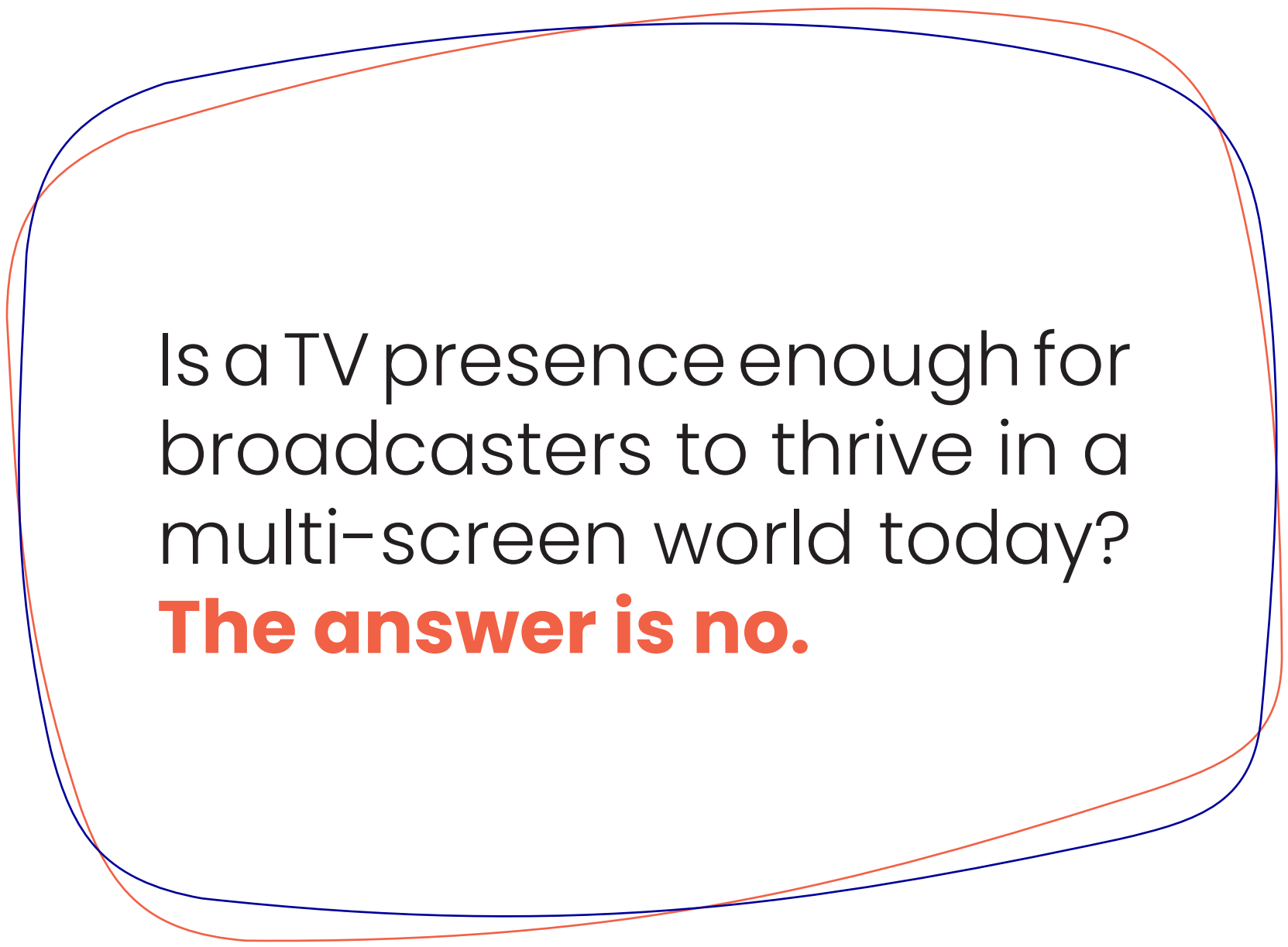
UNIFIED BROADCAST WORKFLOWS

Unleash growth & agility with cloud

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What if we told you that we can help open up new revenue streams for you? What if we told you that there's so much more you could do with your content?

Whether you are a traditional broadcaster with a massive on-prem setup or someone who has already moved to the cloud but is yet to explore the power of Free Ad Supported TV (FAST)—we are talking to you.

Consumer needs are evolving rapidly and you need to move fast to stay relevant and offer services that add value. **The secret to successful broadcasting today is— getting the balance of TV and OTT right. This means, embracing unified broadcast workflows that help you straddle both the worlds with ease.**

Read this white paper to explore how you can leverage the many advantages of unified broadcast workflows to thrive on TV and OTT, and get maximum ROI from your content.

Is a TV presence enough for broadcasters to thrive in a multi-screen world today? **The answer is no.**

IT'S TIME TO DIVERSIFY YOUR PRESENCE

Given the way Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV (FAST) platforms like Pluto TV, The Roku Channel and Peacock are becoming increasingly popular, every broadcaster must have a balanced OTT presence as well.

Diversification is the key here. You need to look at agile solutions that can handle the changes in customer needs based on which business requirements change rapidly.

In the past, when TV was the primary source of entertainment for most people, broadcasters had the power to decide the telecast schedules. Over the years, a lot has changed about the way people consume content. Now, not only do viewers want access to their favorite content anytime, anywhere, they also want niche content tailor-made to their taste. Now these requirements can't be met by just being present in the TV world. You need to go beyond it.

While many of the leading broadcasters across the globe have already made this transition and introduced their FAST offerings, some are yet to take this route.

Most traditional broadcasters run their linear and digital businesses as two separate units. This causes a lot of duplicated workflows, unnecessary hardware, substantially increasing the overhead costs.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR IS TO MOVE BEYOND LEGACY WORKFLOWS.

Take a look at some of the major disadvantages of legacy workflows.

- **Lack of agility & scalability:** The workflows are fragmented, operationally inefficient, and lack automation & innovation. As a result, they are unable to cope with any exponential surge in content, limiting growth.

- **A so-so viewing experience:** The Serial Digital Interface (SDI) based point to point infrastructure that limits various functionalities. For instance, it makes it difficult to launch new channels, serve high-resolution videos or provide value-added services with agility. Additionally, SDI-based scaling is a cost and effort intensive process. On the other hand, shifting operations to an IP-based setup opens up more flexible avenues to scale up.

- **Failure to launch on-the-go:** The limitations of these workflows make it impossible to launch new channels quickly.

Legacy workflows can put your broadcasting network at numerous risks. The most critical one being the dependency on expensive hardware and data centers. Anything from a small issue in the machines to a big natural disaster can lead to considerable downtime.

Is there a way to avoid these consequences? Yes, switch to unified workflows to enjoy greater cost savings and unlock operational efficiencies.

UNIFIED CLOUD WORKFLOWS: A DEEP DIVE

By moving to cloud-powered, unified workflows, you can eliminate the shortcomings of legacy infrastructure, while also embracing whole new areas of revenue opportunities.

One of the other major perks of hopping on to cloud workflows is – being able to repurpose your content library.

You can convert the same content into different formats and reuse and monetize them on a different channel. This content can then be used to launch on-demand offerings and ad-supported linear channels that would have been utterly non-viable in a traditional TV network world.

With cloud-based, unified workflows, you have the flexibility of quickly moving around different forms of content based on what your customers want to watch. You can thus optimize the viewing experience, thus improving your viewership numbers too.

Many opportunities. One workflow.

The pandemic has forced many broadcasters to rethink their traditional strategies and business models. They no longer have the liberty of following the conventional path and risking their revenue.

CLOUD ADVANTAGES

Here are some benefits broadcasters have unlocked from their move to the cloud.

Better remote production & monitoring opportunities

Cloud workflows have totally reformed the post-production process. Traditionally, it used to involve a large-scale content transfer activity that led to a rigid and unnecessarily long post-production process.

Thanks to powerful cloud-based unified workflows, you can now upload the master content on to the cloud, send low resolution versions for post-production, make edits and then push back the final changes to the cloud in a batch process.

The entire content and channel creation process becomes location-independent, empowering you to run it from anywhere in the world.

A traditional network operation center monitored linear and broadcast, with digital monitoring largely left to its own devices. As the importance of digital has grown, and monitoring becomes more important – and easier – the monitoring of the rest of the operations center begins to fall under the digital realm as well.

Scalability (both up and down)

Cloud-based workflows give you the freedom to pay for only what you consume. You can reduce or scale your monthly payments and resource usage based on your needs. Hence, you get the flexibility you need to adjust your operation as needed.

Cloud playout also provides the unique ability to create and tear down pop-up channels around special events.

Flexible regional deliveries

Regional deliveries are difficult in a traditional setup. You first need to find a data center near the area you want to broadcast to, send your device over, install it, test everything, then play out your content for the event.

Cloud broadcasting simplifies this operation for you. You can use your technology partner's existing set of Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) to stream content wherever needed, efficiently and smoothly.

Unlock staffing agility

In a typical setup, manpower is the most cost-intensive part of the operations workflow. To handle almost all processes right from monitoring, management to review–broadcasters need manpower.

This entire picture changes with cloud-based, unified workflows. As these workflows make remote production a reality, you no longer need to worry about the location of your staff. You can choose them based on just one thing–their talent.

With the right cloud solution where all the tools are unified in an intuitive manner, you can focus on finding people who can handle multiple tasks at the same time. With the requirement to do different tasks at different times for different delivery, you can shift the staff around even within the same day to take on tasks when they are most needed.

All in all, you gain significantly more flexibility in choosing staff and how best to deploy them

Monetize your content library like never before

With new streaming TV platforms, content owners can now use a single unified workflow to better leverage their old content archives.

You can generate multiple on-demand offerings and segregate them into different segments - thus catering to different viewer sections. These workflows can also be integrated with third party systems, thus forming a solid media asset management system.

Unified cloud workflows enable you to launch both lean-back (linear) and lean-forward (Video-On-Demand) offerings.

This way, you can make the most of your massive content library; something that's impossible in a traditional TV setup. You can repurpose content by converting it into different formats based on the channel type.

One tech partner for all your needs
A big question for you is: Aren't you tired of coordinating with multiple tech vendors for different broadcasting requirements?

Unified workflows allow you to switch from a multi-vendor operational system to a single tech partner and experience reduced efforts, complexity and costs involved.

Experience faster channel rollout

We are living in a world where pop-up channels are increasingly

becoming popular. The best part about these channels is that they are time-bound and can be launched for both traditional broadcast TV networks and OTT platforms as well. As they come with no long-term commitments, pop-up channels are relatively less expensive than fully-loaded linear channels.

Unified workflows give you the power to launch multiple live linear channels on-the-go. You can spin up pop-up channels and take them down at will. It goes without saying that these channels can open up newer revenue streams for broadcasters as they target very niche audiences and provide hyper-personalized viewing experiences. Broadcasters can also have super-targeted and meaningful ads for the audience while continuing to offer an immersive viewing experience.

Effective metadata generation

Metadata is critical for content discovery. It is a complex system of structures that include thumbnail images, detailed descriptions, subgenres or even trailers. No matter how good your content is, it's useless if the viewers can't discover it.

Good quality, rich metadata makes it possible for the viewers to run quick searches, and review content to decide on or confirm that they want to include it in playlists and programming. Therefore, what you make from your content solely depends on the quality of your metadata.

Unified workflows enable you to generate rich metadata that can be adapted to different platforms based on their individual requirements. By eliminating two separate paths and editorial workflows from the picture, you can enjoy the benefit of next to none operational errors.

Two ad channels. One bill.

Traditionally, linear and digital ad sales would have been done separately. But buyers on the agency side start to integrate with an eye to buying ad space on a connected TV or connected TV plus basis.
Content providers can start to sell based on the audiences for their linear and digital audiences, and make the process seamless for the advertiser - with one bill at the end.

Greater transparency, easy monitoring

A traditional network operation center monitored linear and broadcast, with digital monitoring largely left to its own devices. As the importance of digital has grown, and monitoring becomes more important – and easier – the monitoring of the rest of the operations center begins to fall under the digital realm as well.

Easy integration with third-party applications
Cloud-powered, unified workflows ensure scalability and agility by offering easy integration with third-party applications.

For instance, Amagi CLOUDPORT cloud playout system integrated with TripleLift's personal brand integration solution offers advanced graphics capabilities for TV networks and content owners to deliver rich viewing experiences. TripleLift is a leader in programmatic advertising and specializes in delivering integrated ad experiences on streaming TV. Together, they are able to deliver engaging, in-video ads that are relevant to the content being played.

Similarly, Amagi CLOUDPORT developed a custom HTML5 application for AccuWeather based on the designs provided by them. As a result, the popular weather channel was able to efficiently present a myriad of advanced data on the US weather conditions, such as temperature, humidity, rain, UV index and so on.

Robust security

Content is everything for broadcasters and hence many of them are against the idea of storing it in a non-physical location—the cloud. The truth, however, is entirely the opposite. Instead of storing content in physical data centers, you can relax better by relying on cloud storage.

With unified, cloud-based workflows, you can at all times control the level of security including who has access to what.

To have a more resilient storage design, broadcasters can also look at going for a single cloud provider that offers multi-region storage.

Threats come in different forms, and patterns have to be recognized and learned. While this may be a difficult task for on-prem operators, cloud can learn threat detection and management quicker using artificial intelligence and machine learning. All in all, your content gets better protection.

FAST, FUTURISTIC AND FANTASTIC

Like almost everything, the inflation rates have had a major impact on the cost of cable TV subscriptions as well. **As a result, people are seen flocking towards FAST services because they want entertainment and news for free even if that means watching some ads.**

If you look at the number of cord-cutters in the US over the years, the numbers are just rising. Compared to 24.9 mn cord cutters in 2017, 2022 has seen 55.1 mn so far.

This exponential growth of FAST streamers has impacted the cable TV reach across the US. In fact, cable TV penetration is expected to fall below 60% by 2030.

These numbers clearly state that the **future is FAST. The penetration of Connected TVs (CTVs) across the globe has had a major role to play in this.**

ENABLING BROADCASTERS ESTABLISH THEIR PRESENCE IN THE FAST WORLD

As a broadcaster who wants to make it big in today's time, you cannot be oblivious to the rate at which FAST is gaining popularity. What's in it for you?

- **Massive reach & revenues:** The demand for FAST channels is growing and hopping into this space definitely means better reach and newer revenue opportunities for broadcasters and content creators.

- **Targeted advertising opportunities:** Niche channels automatically open up the opportunity to deliver targeted ads. On one hand they mean more revenue for the advertisers, and on the other, they offer more relevant ad-viewing experience for the viewers. Based on Amagi's May 2022 FAST report, the ad opportunities across FAST channels are up by 110% YoY.

- **Content monetization at its best:** You can break down massive chunks of old content into hyper-personalized FAST offerings, and distribute them to niche audiences.

- **Multilingual user targeting opportunities:** A good chunk of regional audiences love to watch content in different languages. This presents an opportunity to create and distribute such content with subtitles, on an ad-funded OTT model.

HELPING LOCAL NEWS STATIONS DIVERSIFY THEIR PRESENCE

Local storytelling is gaining a growing appetite in the US. More and more people want to stay abreast with the latest elections, weather and sports updates. To cater to this demand, local news stations need an effective strategy to go beyond the traditional cable TV network.

A growing number of local stations are entering the FAST and OTT world with cloud-based, remote workflows and extending their offering to where their audiences are.

Some examples include Sinclair Broadcast Group's offering, STIRR, which was launched in 2019. Similarly, Pluto TV enabled its viewers to watch the latest news and updates from Boston, Bay Area, Chicago, Denver, Minnesota, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

This move has helped local US news stations see newer horizons both in reach and revenue.

4-fold action plan

Before taking the FAST route, local US news stations need to think through four crucial parts of their strategy:

1. **24x7 programming:** One of the most significant hurdles in the way of local news stations taking the FAST route is the lack of 24/7 programming. Local news stations usually have a total of about 5-6 hours of programming, while FAST channels run 24x7. Creating more content to bridge this gap isn't a feasible option.

   Instead, they could put together a 24/7 linear channel using live content, live recordings and a sequence of pre-recorded playlists. Three categories of content formats that are being used included:

   a. **Live:** With Amagi LIVE–Amagi's UHD ready, cloud-based live orchestration platform, you can orchestrate broadcast-grade live content on the go. It also enables you to spin up live channels and manage multiple live feeds, graphics and ads.

   b. **Live recordings:** The news channels can simulcast and record 5-6 hours worth content during a live telecast. When not live, you can stream some of these live content recordings in interesting formats to keep the audiences engaged.

   c. **Shorter clips to re-run:** Creating smaller segments of live news is common in news production rooms. These segments areleveraged to create a run-down of multiple 3–5-minute clips about a story, supported with rich metadata.

   These newsclip collections are then played during the day to keep the audiences hooked to an evolving news story. **Amagi's MOS protocol integration simplifies the process of integrating these mini playlists from the production rooms with broadcaster's cloud playout enabling you to stream pre-recorded playlists with ease.**

2. **Breaking news:** This is undoubtedly one of the most critical parts of a news channel. Local news stations receive breaking news updates from different sources and hence need a mechanism to switch into breaking news in real time.

   With Amagi LIVE, you not only get to have multiple input sources but also get all the support you need for the breaking news segment. You also get to experience multiple advanced features such as manual ad break extensions, seamless MCR/PCR interplay and rapid-prep for playout, you can effortlessly deliver breaking news to audiences.

3. **Exceptional graphics to power unmatched viewing experiences:** Another very critical element of a news channel is the quality of secondary graphics displayed.

   These graphical elements such as channel bumper, full screen NOW / NEXT / LATER, 'Back in' counter and countdown timers not only create magical viewing experiences for your viewers, but also deliver some key pieces of information to keep them updated.

   Amagi CLOUDPORT supports these and also digital video effects (DVE) which are commonly used for promotional purposes and can be automated using Adobe After Effect templates.

   Apart from these, we also enable custom HTML graphics to provide advanced tickers that render real time scores and other data from external sources.

4. **Advertising:** With FAST, local news channels can explore new monetization opportunities using DAI (Dynamic Ad Insertion). These enable news channels to offer targeted ads that are more relevant to the viewers, thus increasing the chances of conversion.

   Amagi's DAI platform, Amagi THUNDERSTORM lets channels launch targeted ad campaigns and measure their ad and content performance with Amagi ANALYTICS.

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THUNDERSTORM
DAI advantages

- Improved ad inventory control to maximize monetization & offer best viewer experiences

- Powerful ad break controls to improve viewer experience

- Native support for innovative ad formats enabling new monetization opportunities

- Rich insights on content consumption & reporting accuracy

- Improved ad request latency to increase fill rates

WHY MOVE TO CLOUD-BASED, UNIFIED WORKFLOWS WITH AMAGI?

While moving to cloud-based, unified workflows has a lot of advantages, partnering with an expert tech provider like Amagi can help you achieve new milestones, with agility and confidence.

Customer stories

Let's have a look at various customer success stories that were made possible because of Amagi's unmatched cloud & unified workflows expertise.

Reduced operational costs

ABS-CBN, a leading media and entertainment organization, joined hands with Amagi to scale their operations while unlocking a cost advantage. They launched seven global channels with Amagi CLOUDPORT, our end-to-end cloud playout solution.

They were able to manage their end-to-end workflow on the cloud, eliminating the need for expensive hardware/broadcast center operations. They also got the flexibility to run their global channels with live news, from anywhere.

Through all these efforts, ABS-CBN was able to reduce their operational costs by 30% and achieve 30% growth in linear content monetization on their digital platform in the US.

Hybrid content distribution & better ad monetization

Cox Media Group (CMG), an industry-leading media company chose Amagi to fuel its digital strategy to power its streaming across connected tv, mobile, web and distribution. CMG leveraged Amagi CLOUDPORT to power and distribute content across its different platforms.

As a result, CMG was able to launch 30 new linear channels within three months. These included 10 24x7 Now Channels, 10 news channels and 10 weather channels, **resulting in a 3x growth.**

Amagi handled many complex processes such as EPG ingestion, manipulation and formatting.

Additionally, Amagi ADS PLUS ad sales service enabled CMG to improve ad monetization by selling their inventory—increasing fill rates and reducing blank slates—to create better ad experiences and happier, more loyal viewers.

Effortless sports broadcasting

Pac-12 Networks is the first and only sports media company owned by its 12 member universities. They partnered with Amagi to launch their 24/7 FAST channel, Pac-12 Insider.

They leveraged Amagi CLOUDPORT for program scheduling and cloud playout delivery for Pac-12 Insider on Pac-12 Now and Pac-12.com as well as third party FAST platforms, including The Roku Channel, Pluto TV, Samsung TV Plus, Redbox Free Live TV and Xumo.

Additionally, Amagi THUNDERSTORM helped them enable Server Side Ad Insertion (SSAI). Amagi was ultimately able to offer seamless cloud playout to connect fans to the universities and sports they love.

Live, on-the-go action & automated workflows

Spark Sport, a New Zealand-based premium sport streaming service joined hands with Amagi for content aggregation and playout services for their OTT linear channel, Spark Sport 1.

Amagi LIVE, our live orchestration platform, helped orchestrate the delivery of a "best of Spark Sport" 24/7 linear channel (Spark Sport 1) featuring both live and replay content by ingesting content, automating the playlist, adding rich graphics and channel playout.

The platform offered them a broadcast-grade, low latency playout. Additionally, it also offered the flexibility to the operator to control break durations, insert and edit graphics and breaks, switch between input sources, and more, using its ganged control feature.

Amagi CLOUDPORT further helped automate the content playlist, ensuring a smooth

transition from 'playlist to playout'. This minimized human intervention and delivered an exceptional viewing experience for the fans.

Unique brand image with powerful graphics

AccuWeather, one of the world's most-trusted weather sources partnered with Amagi to launch its 24/7 linear channel, AccuWeather NOW, and create a differentiated offering of the channel for distribution to The Roku Channel in the United States.

The most critical requirement for AccuWeather NOW was to have a unique brand image with powerful, customized graphics. With Amagi CLOUDPORT, they were able to make the most of advanced graphics, and powerful HTML5 graphics rendering. Apart from these, Amagi CLOUDPORT also helped AccuWeather with 24/7 playout and monitoring, ad-masking based on The Roku Channel's requirements, thus managing delivery, EPG, and playlist, and server-side ad insertion.

Agility & flexibility

Xiaomi, one of the largest smartphone brands in the world chose Amagi to manage and monetize their linear TV and Video-On-Demand offerings to their mobile and connected TV consumers across multiple countries. The content was part of Xiaomi's direct-to-consumer app.

With Amagi CONTENT PLUS, they were able to manage the workflows of multiple streaming TV channels and other Video-On-Demand assets. They also monetized their content using Amagi THUNDERSTORM, our dynamic ad-insertion platform and Amagi ADS PLUS, our virtual ads solution.

As their tech partner, Amagi offered an umbrella of cloud services powered by unified workflows, thus unlocking agility, flexibility and speed to market.

Broadcast-grade playout

Tennis Channel, the only 24-hour, television-based multimedia destination dedicated to both the professional sport and tennis lifestyle, partnered with Amagi to launch its new channel—T2.

Amagi CLOUDPORT helped them deliver a broadcast-grade, low latency channel with true cloud deployment. Some of the other services Amagi powers for them include content scheduling, Master Control Room (MCR), and Amagi LIVE, a UHD-ready, cloud-based live orchestration platform for orchestrating broadcast-grade live content on-the-go.

The live to VOD functionality powered by Amagi allowed them to effortlessly switch between live and recorded content. Further, Amagi LIVE helped deliver exceptional viewing experience by powering industry-standard advanced graphics templates, native graphics, HTML, and singular.live.

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CLOUDPORT: YOUR KEY TO UNLOCKING EFFICIENT, CLOUD-POWERED, UNIFIED BROADCASTING

Since cloud-based unified workflows have a lot to offer and there are many technology vendors in the market, it can be an overwhelming exercise to choose the right one.

Amagi CLOUDPORT is the only solution available in the market that caters to the needs of both streaming/digital TV and traditional broadcast TV.

WHAT
SETS IT APART
FROM THE OTHERS

Cost-efficiency: Excels in minimizing implementation and operational costs to enhance your revenue.

Versatility: Provides a highly versatile platform to meet all your requirements for a diverse range of channel types.

End-to-end workflow management: Delivers comprehensive end-to-end workflow functionality providing greater value to your content while reducing the complexity of managing it.

Reliability & efficiency: Focuses on superior integration of the latest IT cloud native software innovations for reliably and efficiently delivering your media anytime and anywhere you need it.

A QUICK SUMMARY OF OTHER FEATURES OF amagi CLOUDPORT

Pay-as-you-go offering low OPEX and zero CAPEX	Managed services including hosting and monitoring	Lowest per-feed cloud resource using microservices	CPU provisioning eliminating the need for GPU resources
Browser-driven HTML-based UI	Linux-based operating system	Compressed IP I/O using standard transport streams	Graphics subsystem inclusion
Live, linear channels over satellite, fiber & OTT delivery	Fully virtualized channels or remote edge playout if needed	Broadcast live events to multiple feeds & platforms	Create sub-feeds for preferences, regulations & rights
Automated ad-insertion using SCTE markers	Advanced HTML5 graphics rendering with dynamic effects	Automatic playlist generation	Automated graphics scheduling
Automated EPG creation from playlists	Subtitles/closed captioning management	Cloud-managed media transcoding for VOD channels	Ingest, delivery of multiple formats in UD & UHD

Unlock the goodness of unified workflows. Start your cloud journey with Amagi.

Reach out to us at cloudandme@amagi.com

Amagi is a next-gen media tech company that provides cloud broadcast and streaming TV solutions to TV networks, content owners and streaming TV platforms. Amagi enables content owners to launch, distribute and monetize live linear channels on Free-Ad-Supported Streaming TV and SVOD platforms. Amagi also offers 24x7 cloud managed services bringing simplicity, advanced automation, and transparency to the entire broadcast operations for traditional TV networks. Amagi delivers 2000+ channels with deployments in over 40 countries. Amagi has presence in New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Singapore, New Delhi and Bangalore.

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