

PLANNING YOUR ENTERPRISE VIDEO STRATEGY

7 steps to a successful deployment

An introductory guide for technology decision makers and business planners.



INTRODUCTION

Video is everywhere, it seems. From our social media feeds to website advertising to office reception areas; when it comes to telling a story or delivering a message it is becoming obvious that video is emerging as the preferred method.

It is easy to see why; improving networks and data capabilities for mobile users, cost reduction for media production, instinctive inclination to focus on moving images and a vastly simpler means by which to tell a story have all made video a viable business medium.

However, ensuring the correct platform is selected and ensuring the right strategy is adopted is critical. When it comes to enterprise video you're not just looking for a solution to cover you for the next six months or even the next six years, but the next decade and more.

To do that you have to be sure you've started with the right platform, ensuring that platform can scale, your provider is on a sound footing and the technology will evolve as your needs change. Our seven step strategy will help you understand the considerations you need to make before you start your journey or look to make the next step.



STEP I - CONTENT STRATEGY

It is often hailed that 'content is king' and the virtues of a clear strategy are vital when discussing Digital Signage, but when it comes to Enterprise Video content is not simply king, content is everything.

Amongst other things, an Enterprise video solution is used for;

- Internal staff communications
- Training
- Compliance
- Staff and Site Inductions
- Health and Safety Messaging
- Marketing and Brand Promotions
- Product Launches
- CEO/Town Hall Addresses
- Distributing Live TV content

Some of this content is produced for you by the production companies working for TV broadcasters, but much of it is reliant on you as a business. To get maximum value from any investment, it is vital that each area of the business buys into the concept of Enterprise Video, has a genuine need for a delivery platform and there is a clear understanding of their role in its operation and who will oversee the creation of the content and who will make it.

Some lucky organisations have their own internal content producers, some don't; this can be owing to budget or lack of previous requirement. Regardless of this, content production doesn't need to be expensive; simple head and shoulders recordings from a mobile phone can serve to get a message across, so long as over time your strategy develops and quality content is added, you can deliver what you want.

Our standards are changing, we watch low production value videos on YouTube and Vimeo regularly; broadcast has changed and with it has brought a more forgiving expectation of what to expect from video content.

Key takeaways: Establish what kind of video content you want to deliver and who is responsible for its production; always best to share the responsibility around the organisation.

STEP 2 - ENLISTING THE SUPPORT OF IT

Rather than seeing the IT department as a barrier or complication to deployment, you should look at them as your best resource. By engaging and bringing the IT department on-board early you will see that they can identify potential challenges early, smooth out issues with roll-out and ask the questions that a non-IT person may not think to ask.

To ensure the success of an Enterprise Video deployment you need to harness the IT network backbone within your organisation, you need to understand what is permissible on the network and what isn't, how scalable that network is and how internal support can be utilised to ensure a successful project.

IT is a key player in your project, make sure you treat it as such and you will see that their knowledge of network ports and multicast permissions comes in hugely vital when you discuss your project both internally and with your potential providers.

Key takeaways: The IT department is a vital resource to ensure success.

STEP 3 - SELECTING A CMS & HEADEND

Once you know the content strategy, you then need to find a Content Management System (CMS) and IPTV headend solution that suits your requirements. The platform needs to adhere to content encryption and DRM standards appropriate to the type of content you're distributing, it needs to transcode and encode for appropriate formats for each device used and should come complete with User Interfaces and User Access Controls.

Content sources include;

- Video on Demand (VOD)
- IP Camera Feeds
- HDMI Input Feeds
- Direct IP
- Free-to-air Broadcast TV
- Satellite and Cable
- Videoconferences
- Digital Signage

While you will need to consider encryption standards such as;

- AES and HLS-AES
- LynkDRM
- SecureMedia
- Pro:Idiom
- vSecure
- HDCP

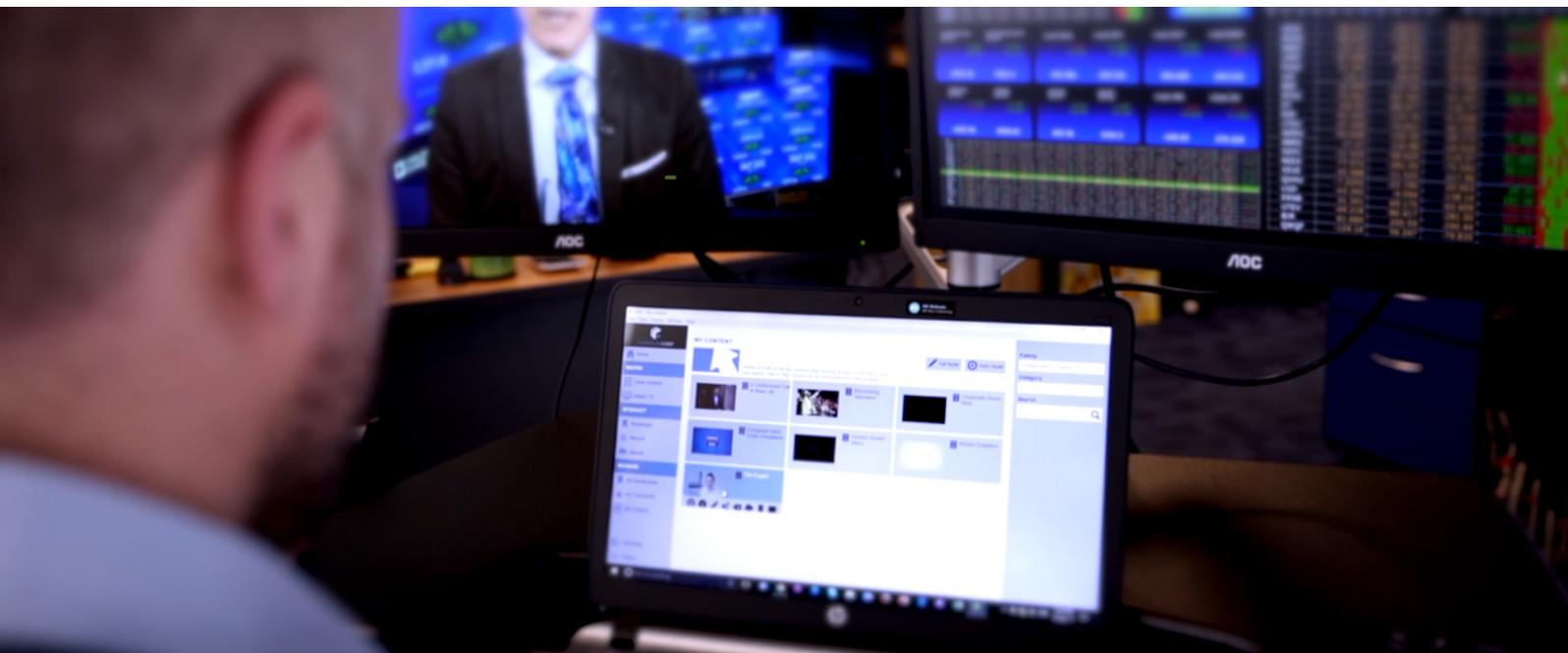
Each content item and each type of delivery device needs specific encryption standards and capabilities, which means that your CMS needs to be multi-purpose and all-encompassing. It should also integrate into IT systems such as LDAP, Active Directory and SAML to allow single sign-on, have full workflow control and also work with 3rd party business tools to allow content to be displayed in intranets and chat tools.

The CMS and Headend platform should also incorporate centralised monitoring and management, as undoubtedly, when an Enterprise Video project goes well it will grow and having a central monitoring solution will help support and grow confidence in the platform.

Ensuring that your CMS also has Digital Signage capabilities is another important element, and one we will cover in Phase 4.

Key takeaways: Understand your legal content distribution obligations and ensure your CMS can make the process simple to control and monitor.

STEP 4 - THE DESKTOP



Once your CMS and IPTV Headend is selected and IT are on board you must then consider where you are delivering content and through what conduits. The desktop is the premiere point for content delivery in an enterprise, whether that is live business news for traders or training videos for new starters. This brings some challenges but nothing that can't be solved if you have the right CMS and Headend in place!

As business practices changed, for desktop users it is essential that a solution is chosen that can work across multiple end-device types. Core to this are;

- Windows PC
- Apple Mac
- Citrix Thin Client

Over the past half a decade, virtual desktops have become a widely adopted method for delivering business software to employees but for a long time video was a non-starter, poor latency, pixelation and awful audio prevented its wider adoption.

However, a small number of IPTV providers have cracked this, permitting the delivery of full HD, low latency Live TV and Digital Media to virtual desktops which now enables a consistent performance for all users across a corporate network. A key element to this is also ensuring the platform supports full Digital Rights Management (DRM) across all delivery device types to ensure your platform is legally compliant.

Aside from the technical delivery of the media, the platform also needs an attractive user interface (UI) and painless user experience (UX) to ensure that employees 'buy in' to the concept and don't revert to high-bandwidth, unsecured online platforms like YouTube.

Key takeaways: Consider all desktop delivery scenarios and ensure your platform supports them.

STEP 5 - DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Digital Signage in its own right is an industry, but its place within an Enterprise Video Platform is not to be overlooked. Digital Signage offers a means by which to relay and deliver video and live streams to television screens within a business premises incorporated into branding, other messaging, advertising and ensuring the content gets maximum exposure; remember, not everybody is desk based!

Digital Signage can be linked to your Enterprise Video CMS and delivered as a hosted service too, meaning you can scale up and down as your needs change and benefit from low monthly costs.

Digital Signage, when deployed can have a number of business benefits, including;

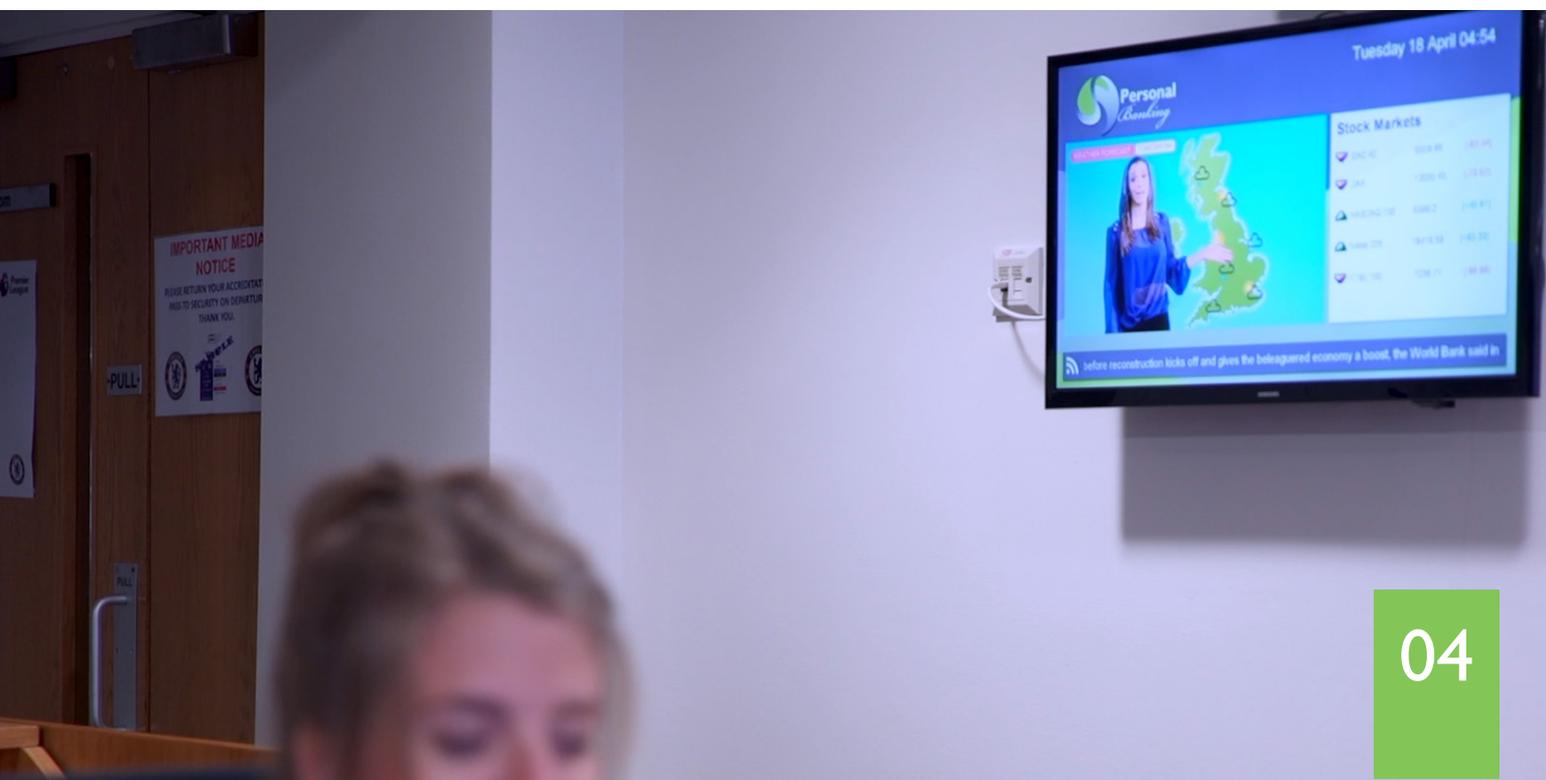
- Brand reinforcement
- Modernised workplace
- Improved knowledge share
- Quick broadcast method

As a part of a wider Enterprise Video strategy, Digital Signage is a key player, catering to a different generation of employees who don't want to use their personal device to access content or don't have time to watch content on their desktops.

A good Digital Signage platform will have a number of IT and user features including workflow management, content scheduling, drag and drop layout creation, user access controls and instant event triggers support.

Digital Signage can also be linked to 3rd party systems such as building management software for wayfinding, electronic point of sale (EPOS) systems for dynamic digital menus, providing an additional level of automation and value.

Key takeaways: While giving people control to access content when and wherever they want, through digital signage you can open your audience and maximise exposure.



STEP 6 - GOING MOBILE

So, you've now considered how you manage and create the content and have started delivering it across your corporate network to desktop users and TV screens; the next frontier is getting your mobile strategy right!

While many businesses are shying away from allowing Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), companies who issue personal business mobile phones and tablets have a great opportunity to engage their employees wherever, whenever they are connected to a network.

Mobile video in a business doesn't just need to be about streaming live via HLS, it can also be about assisting with offsite support, training for remote workers and better engagement for engineering or field based staff.

Enterprise Video Platforms that provide the capability to deliver mobile content should also be able to centralise other services into that app, for example;

- Chat and messaging
- Encrypted content download
- Playlist creation
- Favourites and personal libraries
- Surveys and feedback

By incorporating a number of other non-video related features a business can create a single point of reference for field-based workers and ensure they are engaging with other mission-critical content. Of course, you could also simply deliver VOD and live streams; but why not the option of having these capabilities when and if you need them?

Key takeaways: Mobile may not be for everybody, but your platform **MUST** be able to support it to help future proof your investment.



STEP 7 - CDN

Finally, once an Enterprise Video Strategy has emerged from its localised beginnings the importance and need for a content delivery network (CDN) begins to grow. Through a CDN an enterprise video solution can become genuinely and truly global, assisting with quality of service (QoS) requirements, uptime and management.

This is another point where central management and monitoring becomes hugely important.

CDN providers such as AWS, Azure or Verizon, ensure that content is distributed locally to minimise latency, maximise security, intelligent data handling, performance and availability.

Key takeaways: When your project grows beyond your LAN you really need to start thinking about QoS and CDN support.

SUMMARY

There is no need to be intimidated by an Enterprise Video roll-out, the whole point of choosing the correct platform is that it should be able to flex, grow and deliver as your needs change. Each deployment phase can stand alone to help ensure you can structure your deployment in-line with budgets and project goals.

There are platforms that deliver all of this and more, Tripleplay for example, with deployments live, tried and tested. Enterprise Video delivery is about more than just streaming content, and a considered and structured approach to its planning will help make the process easier and ensure your business gets maximum benefit too!