CinePostproduction

Speeding delivery of digital cinema packages for theatre release using hybrid cloud model

Overview

The need

CinePostproduction needed to speed the ingest of media files and the delivery of large Digital Cinema Packages (DCP) to cinemas throughout the DACH region

The solution

IBM Aspera On Demand speeds the ingest and delivery of large video files, enabling CinePostproduction to get DCPs to cinemas faster and more reliably than ever before

The benefits

Delivery of high-resolution Digital Cinema Packages (DCP) takes minutes or hours instead of days, and in many cases, standard DSL or cable Internet lines can be used for the transfer

Secure and reliable transfer of data volumes between 150GB and 1.5TB across Germany, Austria and Switzerland

CinePostproduction is a leading postproduction facility in Germany and developer of the SHARC system for distribution of Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) via its in-house content delivery network.

CinePostproduction created the SHARC distribution system with the goal of simplifying the handling of video trailers and DCPs. SHARC offers both traditional hard drive delivery services and now e-delivery using the DCP-portal and download client.

Through a partnership with Aspera, CinePostproduction integrated IBM® Aspera® on Demand into their new SHARC system to speed the ingest of DCPs from studios and the delivery of DCPs directly to cinemas, allowing feature films to be delivered on time and with built-in security and control over bandwidth allocation.

The slow, costly process of transporting Digital Cinema Packages

Until 2014, physical shipment was the main method used at CinePostproduction to distribute cinema content to their partners in the DACH region. Other traditional digital transfer methods were unreliable, inefficient or costly.

With the transition from 35-millimeter film to digital cinema, film producers and distributors are faced with the question of how to deliver DCP masters electronically. Producers have invested heavily in digital

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Solution components

Software

- IBM® Aspera® on Demand

cinema encoding facilities to produce and quality control check a digital cinema package before release, while cinemas have upgraded to state-of-the-art digital projectors. Despite this wide shift to digital, the most common method for distributing DCPs has paradoxically remained the physical shipment of specialized hard disks via courier or satellite delivery. The challenge is further complicated by the large volume and size of the media files: DCPs typically range from 100GB to as large as 400GB. And the data volumes are even greater for its TV and cinema postproduction business area; CinePostproduction needs to send data sets between 150GB to 1.5TB per feature film, which occasionally need to be transferred globally.

Aspera on Demand provides fast, secure delivery of DCPs from the cloud

Thanks to their new system SHARC, which fully integrates Aspera on Demand running in the cloud, CinePostproduction can now transfer encrypted, high-resolution Digital Cinema Packages (DCP) with up to 2K or 4K resolutions between the CinePostproduction Content Delivery Network servers in their data center and the participating cinemas in the DACH region.

CinePostproduction's SHARC replaces traditional slow, unreliable and expensive delivery methods with a state-of-the-art hybrid cloud distribution platform comprising a secure online web portal for ingest and Aspera FASP® high-speed transfer running in the cloud for fast and secure delivery directly to the cinemas. Running the platform in the cloud means storage and transfer capacity can scale up and out to help meet variable customer demands without impacting CinePostproduction's on-premises infrastructure used for post-production and archiving.

The distribution platform is extremely cost effective because theaters can utilize their existing infrastructure to achieve maximum speed delivery; they simply install the CinePostproduction download client software, which contains an embedded Aspera client, and receive DCPs directly from SHARC to the theater over their existing broadband connection. Unlike satellite delivery, which only makes sense for large-scale distribution to hundreds of theaters at the same time, CinePostproduction SHARC powered with Aspera is cost effective even when delivering a new DCP to a single theater.

Decreasing DCP delivery from a week to hours to over 100 movie theaters

By providing cinemas with the option to receive video files over the Internet via the in-house SHARC DCP portal and download client, rather than limiting the service to traditional hard drive delivery methods, CinePostproduction has established a more robust, secure, and reliable method for on-time delivery directly to the cinemas.

With Aspera On Demand transparently integrated within their SHARC system, CinePostproduction positions itself as a marketplace leader for cinema content distribution in the DACH region. While in the past the physical shipment of hard copies could take up to one week, today content is delivered within hours. The rapid speed at which they can provide their clients with new media content offers a compelling advantage over other solutions.

"Most of our studio and production customers were already using Aspera to deliver content to our post-production facilities," said Thomas Ramin, CTO of CinePostproduction. "Embedding Aspera on Demand running in the cloud directly into our SHARC digital distribution platform was an obvious choice and allowed us to extend the benefits of high-speed digital delivery to over 100 movie theaters using SHARC."

By fully integrating Aspera into their existing infrastructure, CinePostproduction was able to complement the innovative SHARC portal with powerful, high-performance transfers for fast ingest and distribution of large media files.

The compute and storage resources needed to distribute DCP change over time depending on the number of movies and the number of theaters involved in the release. Running Aspera On Demand in the cloud allows CinePostproduction to scale up transfer capacity as needed to help meet the variable demand and provide on-time delivery to the cinemas.

Other notable benefits include the following:

Fast transfers: Enables large content transfers over any network at maximum speed to help provide on-time delivery for the cinema release.

Cost effectiveness: Cinemas can utilize their existing infrastructure to achieve maximum speed delivery, cutting out the expense of pricey IT upgrades and fibre optics connections.

Cloud-ready solution: Utilizing Aspera On Demand enables CinePostproduction to scale out their workflow as needed to help meet demand, which fluctuates over time based on the number of films and theaters involved in a release.

Strong security: Aspera's enterprise-grade security features SSH authentication, encryption in transit and at rest, and data integrity verification for each transmitted block, protecting valuable media assets throughout the transfer process.

About CinePostproduction

Founded in 1911, CinePostproduction is one of Germany's leading post-production facilities and has been operating in the digital cinema market for several years. Along with post-production of feature films and TV-productions the services also include duplication of DCP copies, DCP-versioning and -mastering, localization of trailers and KDM-services. CinePostproduction has been developing software solutions for over four years, including the DCP portal SHARC. This solution is used by a majority of cinemas in the D-A-CH region to download DCP cinema trailers and also offers distributors a comfortable and flexible way for DCP key-creation and -management.

About Aspera, an IBM Company

Aspera, an IBM company, is the creator of next-generation transport technologies that move the world's data at maximum speed regardless of file size, transfer distance and network conditions. Based on its patented, Emmy® award-winning FASP® protocol, Aspera software fully utilizes existing infrastructures to deliver the fastest, most predictable file-transfer experience. Aspera's core technology delivers unprecedented control over bandwidth, complete security and uncompromising reliability. Organizations across a variety of industries on six continents rely on Aspera software for the business-critical transport of their digital assets.

For more information

For more information on IBM Aspera solutions, please visit ibm.com/cloud-computing/products/high-speed-data-transfer/ and follow us on Twitter @asperasoft.

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