



BT Sport

*High-speed transfers and automation support
BT Sport's new production hub*

Overview

The need

BT Sport needed a high-speed file transfer solution to support ad hoc ingest and distribution as well as power automated data replication to an offsite data recovery center.

The solution

Deployed IBM® Aspera® Orchestrator for automated workflows, IBM® Aspera® Sync for data replication, IBM® Aspera® faspex™ for ad hoc ingest and distribution and IBM® Aspera® Console for centralized management and monitoring.

The benefits

BT Sport maximizes bandwidth, achieving 5 Gbps transfers between their headquarters and the disaster recovery center.

Up to 40TB/day of live feeds, rushes and produced content synchronized with DR site.

Remote management of all BT Tower facilities from iCity allowing BT Tower to act as satellite production facility.

Launched in August of 2013, BT Sport is a new collection of sports channels offered by the BT Group in the UK. BT's surprise move into the pay TV market with new world-class technical facilities and cutting-edge file-based technologies saw the largest shake-up of the UK sports broadcasting industry in decades.

Comprising BT Sport 1, BT Sport 2, and ESPN UK, the broadcaster provides top-tier coverage of the English Premier League football, Aviva Premiership Rugby, French, Spanish and German top-tier league football, WTA tennis and a host of other European and international sport.

Timeline Television, a leading provider of broadcast technology and services in the UK, provided the broadcast infrastructure for BT Sport, including managing the end-to-end design and build of the production hub, while Aspera provides the high-speed transfer, replication, and automation platform for the live sport production workflow.

Finding a multi-gigabit transfer platform for intense file-based automated workflows

The vision of BT Sport could only be realized with a new, state of the art broadcast facility. London's iCITY, previous home of the Olympic International Broadcast Centre, was chosen for the main production hub, and BT Sport selected their longtime technical partner Timeline Television as the sole managed service provider.

"It made sense for us to use proven, reliable and leading technologies such as Aspera FASP and Aspera Orchestrator to ensure the project was completed on time and workflow productivity was fully optimized," says Charlie Tear, Technical Director, Timeline Television.



Solution components

Software

- IBM® Aspera® Orchestrator
 - IBM® Aspera® Console
 - IBM® Aspera® Sync
 - IBM® Aspera® *faspex*™
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Timeline Television had less than six months to build out the broadcast centre from an empty shell into a 24 hour-a-day operation, including the simultaneous roll-out of a fully automated disaster recovery system. They quickly identified the need for a robust, high-speed transfer platform from a trusted vendor, to power the intense file-based production workflows and meet the project's aggressive timescale. To fulfill BT Sport's stringent requirements, the platform needed to support secure high-speed transfer at multi-gigabit speeds, allow fully automated end-to-end workflows including ad hoc content ingest, review, approval and distribution, and offer reliable, secure data replication of petabytes of media from BT Sport's main site in London's iCITY to the disaster recovery and continuity facilities located at the iconic BT Tower.

Timeline Television settled on the only vendor that offered an enterprise-grade platform capable of bringing together each of these requirements. With a proven track record of successfully deploying these sorts of complex systems under tight deadlines, Aspera was Timeline Television's clear partner of choice.

Satisfying requirements for file transfer speed, automation, management, and replication

Timeline Television and Aspera quickly got to work, developing the architecture and implementation strategy for BT Sport's complex and large-scale infrastructure build-out. Aspera provided a full suite of software including Aspera Orchestrator for complete workflow automation, Aspera *faspex* for ad hoc ingest and distribution, Aspera Sync for high-performance replication to the DR site, and Aspera Console for centralized management and control over the entire transfer environment.

High-speed data replication between BT's new facility and the mirror system at BT Tower enables essential disaster recovery and full redundancy, and allows BT Tower to act as a satellite production facility if required.

Production content and metadata, originated at either site, is immediately synchronized via Aspera Sync. In the event of a disaster, production can resume at the second site, ensuring a rapid return to business-as-usual.

In addition to data replication, BT Sport uses Aspera *faspex* and Aspera Orchestrator to deliver material from production units in the field directly to the edit suite, maximizing edit-time for crucial fast-turnaround stories; to send programming to journalists and executives for review; and to receive and ingest production elements from production houses, programme makers and outside broadcasts around the world.

Lastly, with Aspera Console, BT Sport can trigger, monitor, prioritize and manipulate all of its transfers to help ensure important or time-sensitive content is delivered exactly when it is needed.

Delivering a highly advanced solution in tight deadlines to optimize workflow productivity

With Aspera, BT Sport can transport large media files at the highest possible speeds and in single sessions. BT Sport now maximizes bandwidth between the two sites, ensuring business continuity with near-zero recovery time – which would not have been possible without Aspera.

Thanks to Aspera's ability to integrate easily with any third-party solutions, as well as Aspera's previous experience successfully collaborating with EVS, Timeline Television was able to deliver a tightly integrated solution for BT Sport's complex workflow in under six months, making this project one of the largest and quickest broadcast installations in the industry.

"This project needed to be completed within a very tight timescale and the new infrastructure needed to provide BT with the most advanced tools on the market. It made sense for us to use proven, reliable and leading technologies such as Aspera FASP® and Aspera Orchestrator to ensure the project was completed on time and workflow productivity was fully optimized. Aspera has delivered on all these fronts," commented Charlie Tear, Technical Director at Timeline Television.

Jamie Hindhaugh, Chief Operating Officer of BT Sport, said: "At the core of our new studios build is a spirit of collaboration that brings the best of industry – and sometimes competitors – working together towards a common aim: to make the BT Sport studios a world-class hub for the best ideas and talent. We believe talent attracts talent and our partnership has helped us to foster that mind-set.

Other notable benefits include the following

- **High-speed transfers:** BT Sport fully utilizes available bandwidth and achieves maximum transfer performance with Aspera over a dedicated 10 GbE fibre and private MPLS.
- **Easy integration:** Aspera's is easily integrated with any third-party platform, so Timeline Television was able to complete a smooth integration with EVS, Harmonic MediaGrid and Avid Interplay.
- **Reliability:** Active / Active Aspera deployment with high-speed replication enables full business continuity at the BTT DR site.
- **Fast implementation:** Aspera was able to meet the project's tight timeline, and the entire project was completed in less than six months.

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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