Media Company Grows Revenue from Internet Streaming

Holistic data center strategy helps Mediapro lay the foundations for profitable business growth.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Mediapro

Industry: Media

Location: Spain

Company size: 3000 people

Challenge
· Grow audiences and revenues by tapping into fast-growing Internet streaming market
· Maximize service profitability by eliminating need to subcontract content delivery

Solution
· Cisco Data Center business vision, architecture, and technologies
· Cisco Unified Computing System and Nexus switching platform
· Cisco Capital financing

Results
· Created opportunity for €300,000 potential new revenue
· Estimated savings of €250,000 from insourcing content delivery
· Time to market accelerated by 50 percent

Challenge

Mediapro is one of the biggest and fastest growing media and broadcast companies in Spain, and a leading player in the European audiovisual market. The talent of its 3500 highly trained staff, vast technical resources, and strategic relationships formed with partners around the world enable Mediapro to offer global services in the creation and production of multimedia content.

Available in a wide range of formats, this content includes drama series, films, documentaries, and news and sports programs, including the highly popular Spanish GOL TV La Liga football channels. Mediapro sells directly to end users and also offers live TV, time-shifted programming, and video-on-demand to service providers, which then integrate it within a triple play offer to their customers.

As well as being Spain's largest content producer, Mediapro is considered to be a leading example of how to successfully transition from traditional satellite and leased circuit services to a next-generation broadcast network. The company has built an IPTV transport platform, based on Cisco® Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) technology, which connects 40 sites (known as injection points) countrywide and delivers high-quality, low-cost TV and video services to IP set-top boxes.

Mediapro's constant drive to grow audiences and revenues has seen it extend this IP architectural thinking to the data center. "We wanted to stream GOL TV to the Internet," says Gustau Serra, chief information officer for Mediapro. "But, instead of outsourcing the content delivery to third parties, we wanted to be able to do this ourselves. This meant upgrading our production centers in Madrid and Barcelona. The aim was to provide both facilities with a new design able to support video streaming applications at 10 Gbps speeds. Also, by providing full virtualization capabilities, we wanted to make our operations more efficient and improve our speed to market."

"Although the business has experienced rapid growth, our IT department has remained more or less the same. We have a relatively small team, so the opportunity to bring together our network, server, and storage domains within one cohesive system was extremely attractive."

Robert Cama
IT Manager Networking
Mediapro

Solution

To find not just the strongest technical approach, but also the most favorable financial terms, Mediapro turned to its trusted advisor Cisco. "We were interested to hear how Cisco was transforming its own data centers," says Serra. "They shared their strategy and explained how we could apply this approach to obtain greater value from our servers, networks, and storage systems."

The Cisco Data Center approach is built on three main architectural pillars:

- Virtualization and automation for easier deployment and management of workloads

- Unified fabric that provides a single network optimized to support data and storage requirements

- Unified computing that provides a responsive, adaptable computing platform for both physical and virtual environments.

"Although the business has experienced rapid growth, our IT department has remained more or less the same," says Robert Cama, IT Manager Networking for Mediapro. "We have a relatively small team, so the opportunity to bring together our network, server, and storage domains within one cohesive system was extremely attractive."

Mediapro has created a next-generation data center platform, based on the Cisco Nexus® family of switches and Cisco Unified Computing System™ (UCS).

The Cisco Nexus operating system (NX-OS) has helped to accelerate network virtualization by introducing new capabilities that allow each data center switch to be segmented into a maximum of four different switches. Each virtual device context (VDC) now runs as a separate logical entity and appears as a unique device to the connected users.

At the server and application level, Cisco UCS has provided greater virtual machine (VM) visibility and control. One of the most common barriers to server virtualization is the inability to apply security and policy at the VM level. As well as increasing security risk, this isolated management approach can also undermine consolidation efforts and often end up replacing physical server sprawl with virtual server sprawl.

Embedded in the UCS blade servers, Cisco VN-Link technology removes these barriers and allows quality of service and security to be managed on a per-virtual machine basis. For example, when physical UCS port profiles are associated with virtual port groups, that event is signaled to the data centre network and storage area network (SAN), and the appropriate network profile and storage services move with the VM.

This capability means that, rather than having to create separate VLANs each time on the switch, VMware, router, and firewall, the UCS allows a template to be built and pointed to the new blade. The device then automatically gets the information that it needs from the SAN and configures itself.

In addition, Cisco 7600 Series Routers, ASR 9000 Series Aggregation Services Routers, and ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances, provide a cost-effective and highly robust end-to-end routing and security solution.

Mediapro's choice of technology was complemented by a competitively priced financial package from Cisco CapitalSM. A three-year operating lease helped to offset the risk of changing technology partners and swapping out blade servers, while also replacing the burden of upfront capital expenditure (CapEx) with a predictable monthly operating expenditure (OpEx).

> "Our investment in next-generation data center technology will increasingly become a key enabler as the business looks to expand into new markets."

Gustau Serra
CIO
Mediapro

Results

Replicating the Cisco Data Center architecture across both production centers has helped Mediapro to grow TV audiences and improve service profitability.

Streaming GOL TV to the Internet could open the door to advertising and subscription revenues estimated to be worth as much as €300,000, while eliminating the need to outsource content delivery is expected to save around €250,000 a year.

In addition, Mediapro can bring Internet streaming and other future services to market quicker, and at significantly lower cost. Before, launching a new service could take anything up to three months to scope hardware requirements, and to tender, order, cable, install, configure, and test. Now, with Cisco UCS, a new service can be provisioned and deployed about 50 percent faster.

This improvement is achieved through increased server utilization rates and new advantages provided by Intel's most advanced server technology. Designed exclusively for UCS, the Intel Xeon processor 5500 series makes it easier to "scale-up" by providing extended memory capabilities that enable more VMs to be virtualized on one physical rack or blade server. If further capacity is required, Mediapro can "scale-out" by simply buying a new blade and inserting it into the existing chassis. All hardware and software is already pre-configured, while the shared infrastructure eliminates the need to buy extra adaptors, interfaces, or cabling.

The new Cisco Nexus environment has created a low-latency, lossless 10 Gb Ethernet unified fabric where both Ethernet and Fiber Channel traffic can travel on the same cable, resulting in even less cabling, components, and points of management and a lower total cost of ownership.

Operations have become efficient and more automated. Network traffic can be shaped according to policies established on the Cisco Nexus 5000 Series, effectively rendering the Cisco Nexus 2000 Fabric Extenders management-free. Administrators can manage quality of service between VMs more effectively and much in the same way as with physical servers. Management of fabric, racks, and blade servers has also been significantly simplified.

Flexible commercial terms, offered by Cisco Capital, enabled Mediapro to spread project costs, in turn speeding return on investment (ROI) and improving cash flow management. "We already had a sound business case, but Cisco Capital helped to improve it further by reducing ROI down to three years," says Serra. "Also, our investment is protected against obsolescence with built-in refresh options that allow us to continue to ride the technology wave.".

Next Steps

In the longer term, Mediapro can also expect to see energy consumption and space savings. UCS helps to achieve this in two ways: first, by eliminating the need to constantly add new servers by improving visibility into VMs; and, second, by occupying less physical space. A UCS blade server chassis only requires a third of the space of a traditional rack-mounted server.

"Our investment in next-generation data center technology will increasingly become a key enabler as the business looks to expand into new markets," says Serra.
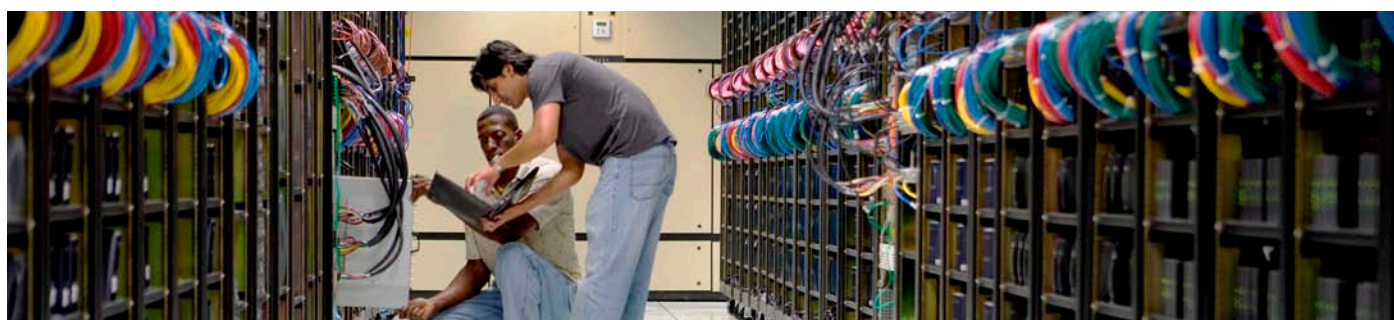
PRODUCT LIST

Data Center

· Cisco Unified Computing System

Routing and Switching

· Cisco Nexus 7000 and Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches with Cisco Nexus 2000 Series Fabric Extenders

· Cisco 7600 Series Routers

· Cisco ASR 9000 Series Aggregation Services Routers

· Cisco MDS 9500 Series Multilayer Directors

Security and VPN

· Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances

Americas Headquarters	Asia Pacific Headquarters	Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.	Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.	Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,
San Jose, CA	Singapore	The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at **www.cisco.com/go/offices.**