StreamGuys Improves Operations and Enables 100% Live Streaming Uptime for ARN

Seamless migration to managed service provider reduces stress, increases streaming capacity, and enables new commercial opportunities for leading Australian media enterprise

BAYSIDE, CALIFORNIA, January 6, 2021 – ARN (Australian Radio Network) is one of Australia's leading broadcast and on-demand audio companies, 'Defining Audio' with ownership or investments in 12 radio stations nationwide plus digital entertainment platform iHeartRadio and Australia's number one podcast publisher, the iHeartPodcast Network. Looking to simplify its streaming operations and prepare for growth, the innovative broadcaster turned to SaaS-based streaming solutions pioneer StreamGuys to provide the reliable, managed services it needed.

ARN has a long history of providing its audience with the latest in streaming technology and was the first broadcaster in Australia to offer clients and listeners dynamic addressable content with interactive inventory. To accommodate evolving technology, ARN had worked with several major streaming and cloud vendors, but found their day-to-day operations becoming too cumbersome.

"While we learnt a lot in the process, the most obvious lesson was the challenge of managing our own public-facing production platform," explained Joe Sexton, technology director, ARN. "It wasn't as simple as 'set it and forget it.' The server farm required constant maintenance, which is time consuming – particularly when dealing with multiple vendors."

ARN made the strategic decision to migrate its services to a hybrid hosting environment and considered moving its streaming infrastructure to its private cloud, but wanted to explore using a managed service that had previous experience with dynamic audio. Its first goal for the transition was to simplify its streaming infrastructure to prepare for the future.

"We had multiple vendors and legacy systems supporting our live streams, making the existing infrastructure overly complicated and difficult to scale," said Sexton. "We also wanted to increase our streaming capacity to accommodate an expanding number of audio channels and ensure suitable headroom for the forecasted listener growth. Finally, we wanted to improve our reporting and analytics, as our management, commercial, and content teams had limited visibility of real-time or historical data."

ARN's iHeartRadio partners in New Zealand, NZME, had similarly transitioned to a managed service one year earlier and selected StreamGuys as their provider. After speaking with multiple potential vendors, ARN reached the same conclusion. "It was obvious there was a certain peace of mind and assurance that StreamGuys' leadership brought to the conversation," Sexton recalled. "StreamGuys also works closely with the AdsWizz platform that we use for ad replacement and monetization, and their proposal provided the headroom we wanted for growth and a clear migration plan."

Seamless Transition Despite Challenging Times

The migration of ARN's streams to StreamGuys commenced in March 2020. "The StreamGuys team was incredibly professional throughout the onboarding and user migration process," said Sexton. "It is honestly the first time I've migrated so many streaming services with no noise. The lift-and-shift was seamless, and this was during the early months of COVID-19 when everything else was difficult."

StreamGuys now manages live streaming with midstream ad replacement for ARN's iconic Australian brands KIIS, Pure Gold, and The Edge, which are all integrated into the iHeartRadio Platform. StreamGuys handles the broadcaster's full audio payload, including radio simulcasts, DAB+ simulcasts, iHeartRadio stations and an expanding array of audio partnerships. Audio streams are hosted through StreamGuys' Australian data center, giving 100% uptime to ARN's listeners.

StreamGuys' SaaS suite also provides ARN with flexible tools to monitor their operations. SGmetadata monitors what ARN is encoding from its studio complex to ensure that ad break replacement is being properly triggered. StreamGuys also created custom alerts in its SGalerts monitoring system to notify staff of changes to ARN's load balancing or other outages in ARN's systems.

The timing of the migration turned out to be perfect. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in streaming traffic across all ARN and iHeartRadio audiences," said Sexton. "In a relatively short time, StreamGuys have delivered multiple significant benefits – doubling our streaming capacity, adding new commercial inventory opportunities, and overcoming our data visualization issues. The operational stress of managing the server farms and day-to-day operation ourselves has not been missed, and StreamGuys have proven to be a valuable technology partner. They have an approachable, can-do attitude that always fills our teams with confidence, and they are a pleasure to work with."

About StreamGuys, Inc.
In business since 2000, StreamGuys is an industry-leading service provider of live and on-demand streaming, podcasting delivery, and software-as-a-service (SaaS) toolsets for enterprise-level broadcast media organizations. The company brings together the industry's best price-to-performance ratio, a robust and reliable network, and an infinitely scalable cloud-based platform for clients of any size to process, deliver, monetize and playout professional streaming content. StreamGuys supports many of the world's largest Podcasts, global TV and radio broadcasters, video and audio production companies, houses of worship, retail and hospitality businesses, government organizations, medical and healthcare services, and live venues for sports and entertainment. The company excels in developing and deploying technologies for business growth and revenue generation, including dynamic ad insertion, Alexa skills, mobile streaming and detailed business and data analytics.

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