A growing world of news and entertainment, served up with speed and security

DPG Media provides digital content to keep people informed, inspired, and entertained

20 PB
Content delivered through Akamai

82K
New subscribers in 24 hours

Immediate monthly savings for newly acquired companies

A foundation for news and entertainment — anytime, anywhere

To compete with global media companies, DPG Media must be a leader in regional news and entertainment online — acquiring smaller brands and scaling up with world-class performance and security. DPG Media relies on Akamai to provide performance, stability, and security to all its online media brands — delivering news and entertainment that millions of people rely on every day.

The confidence to sit back and enjoy the show, with a content delivery network to back it up

Exactly one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, DPG Media hosted a live musical event on its popular news and entertainment portal, HLN.be. With 24 hours of live performances streaming online, it was an opportunity to showcase regional performers in a time when in-person concerts weren't possible. And it succeeded — attracting more than 540,000 viewers across Belgium and bringing 82,000 new subscribers to the site.

It was a big personal win for Jo De Coninck, Content Delivery Network and Web Application Firewall Product Owner on the Cloud Governance team at DPG Media. "We streamed 270 Gbps of live video to hundreds of thousands of people," says De Coninck. "That's an enormous amount of traffic for us, but we didn't have to scale up infrastructure or hosted capacity. We just sat back and enjoyed the show."

With the company for 20 years, De Coninck has spent the last decade helping the media conglomerate drive digital transformation. DPG Media operates 90 well-known regional brands spanning print news and magazines, TV and radio broadcasting, digital publications, and video streaming on demand. And it is taking more of its news and entertainment online, reaching millions of people across Belgium, The Netherlands, and Denmark.

DPG Media
Antwerp, Belgium
www.dpgmediagroup.com

Industry
Media & Entertainment

Solutions
• Kona Site Defender
• Client Reputation
• Download Delivery
• Dynamic Site Accelerator
• Adaptive Media Delivery
• Page Integrity Manager
• Bot Manager Premier
• Cloud Wrapper
• Edge DNS
• Premium Service and Support 3.0
• Security Optimization Assistance

De Coninck has been instrumental in the shift online, making sure the infrastructure has the performance, stability, and security to handle an expanding readership, large-scale video streaming events, and the often-unpredictable spikes in traffic caused by breaking news. He relies on Akamai to get it done — and is leading an initiative across the company to put all public-facing applications behind Akamai.

Lending enterprise scale and volume to smaller media brands

The standardization effort is an important piece of the media conglomerate's larger business strategy: using the company's scale and reach to drive rapid growth for acquisitions and new business ventures. By bringing smaller brands into the Akamai fold, De Coninck can immediately give them the infrastructure resources they need to think big — delivering richer content and reaching larger audiences than they could before. All without expanding the infrastructure. That enables DPG Media to strengthen its regional advantages and compete against disruptive global players such as Facebook, Google, and Netflix.

"Our centralized CDN strategy is an opportunity to optimize the performance of our digital products, improve security, and — since it is a volume game — we can reduce costs versus a stand-alone approach. A triple win!" says Frank Mathys, CTO at DPG Media.

The journey started with a single online publication

De Coninck first introduced Akamai technology to DPG Media almost 10 years ago, as the company prepared to launch iPaper, its first digital publication. He needed to make sure readers had a fast, flawless experience as they accessed the news on their desktops, tablets, and phones. By caching content at the edge with Akamai's Download Delivery product, he could make pages load quickly and create a better reading experience for people — even easier than opening a folded newspaper over breakfast. At the same time, cached content would create a buffer zone for the infrastructure, enabling it to withstand the inevitable waves of traffic that come with breaking news.

"Without Akamai, we simply would not have been able to deliver that first digital product," De Coninck recalls. Since then, he's extended the content delivery network (CDN) to dozens of public-facing applications, adding Dynamic Site Accelerator to further optimize site performance and Adaptive Media Delivery to support DPG Media's newer video-on-demand channels. DPG Media also uses Edge DNS and Cloud Wrapper, keeping performance, availability, and stability high for the news and entertainment sites.

"Even when our applications and hosting infrastructure went down, we were able to keep our news sites running on the cached versions," De Coninck says. "Akamai kept us alive during those times."

Pointed toward a mobile future, with low-cost scalability

Pushing content to the edge also gives the company a clear path to a more mobile future. "Last year, our mobile traffic surpassed regular traffic, and that trend is only going to continue," says De Coninck. "I strongly believe Akamai's edge-oriented approach will become a big advantage for mobile access, as it gets us much closer to users."

What's more, standardizing on a single CDN has helped DPG Media reduce costs by bundling all traffic through Akamai, wherever the applications reside — whether on-premises or on any cloud platform. In its recent acquisition of Sanoma NL, DPG Media found that moving the brand behind Akamai immediately saved €10,000 per month on infrastructure costs while enabling it to reach larger audiences than ever.

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> **Frank Mathys**
> CTO

"Akamai gives us the agility and speed to scale up without high infrastructure costs — so a new brand such as Sanoma can benefit from 10x more visitors without incurring 10x the cost," says De Coninck. "That means we can reinvest the savings in an area that is becoming increasingly important: security."

Protecting news sites from security threats

De Coninck has been working to protect DPG Media's infrastructure by adding perimeter protection with Akamai. The media and entertainment company chose Kona Site Defender to guard against distributed denial-of-service attacks — moving the threats farther away from the infrastructure and stopping them at the edge — with Client Reputation adding an additional layer of protection to the perimeter. Page Integrity Manager protects against script attacks, while Bot Manager Premier blocks attempts to scrape content or steal user credentials.

"We need to protect our applications and user data from targeted threats such as credential stuffing and content scraping," De Coninck says. "Centralizing our applications behind one web application firewall drastically reduces our public attack surface and helps keep our user data safe."

Strong business case, long-term strategy for growth

DPG Media has come a long way since first launching Akamai with its iPaper application. From just a few hundred terabytes a month, the deployment has grown to include 20 petabytes of monthly content, from daily news publications and magazines to streaming video. In large part, that's a result of De Coninck's tireless efforts to drive the standardization initiative. Focusing on the company's top 30 brands with the highest bandwidth requirements, he has already helped move 70% of the public-facing applications behind Akamai. And he isn't finished yet.

Part of De Coninck's job is to help developers transition to Akamai as they build and deploy new applications. He has a strong business case, showing that a single enterprise CDN helps optimize performance, stability, scalability, and security while lowering costs. And he can count on Akamai Premium Service and Support 3.0 with Security Optimization Assistance to keep everything running smoothly. He knows how important it is to keep the CDN separate from the application layer, giving development teams the flexibility to scale applications and move them around.

"As an independent CDN, Akamai provides a way for us to decouple the performance optimization and security features from our application infrastructure," says De Coninck. "That's important as we continue to acquire and absorb smaller companies, giving them the benefit of our enterprise scale and reach."

It's a strong strategy for a company that is constantly evolving and adapting to an increasingly digital industry — extending the same quality journalism and entertainment it has always delivered to millions of people online.

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> **Jo De Coninck**
> Content Delivery Network and Web Application Firewall Product Owner

Our media enriches people's lives by informing, inspiring and entertaining them. We believe that informed consumers and strong communities contribute to a better world. We offer the most effective and reliable media. We are committed to building an enduring, successful media business that is positive, creative and competitive. www.dpgmediagroup.com