A POST-LIVE SPORTS STREAM CHECKLIST

LIVE SPORTS STREAMING
INTRODUCTION

The live event is over, but there are still opportunities for you to maximize the value of your live video stream and capitalize on the post-event excitement that prevails.

A good post-event strategy will allow you to promote user engagement and retention and continue to grow your brand reputation and drive revenues. On top of that, by analyzing everything about your live stream, you’ll gain insight that can be used to improve your next event.

Post-event work can be divided into two main categories:

a) prolonging audience engagement and
b) learning from the event.
PROLONGING AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Having live-streamed a major event, you’re in a position to capitalize on this by offering video-on-demand (VOD) of the live streams after the event. This allows viewers who might have missed the event or who wish to re-live the experience to watch it at a later date.

To encourage viewers to watch or re-watch your event, your video must be able to load quickly and be on par with global VOD quality and standards. Users are also demanding when it comes to VOD and tend to be satisfied only if a video takes less than 2 seconds to load. Within the 2 seconds, a high-quality video must be delivered, regardless of the user’s connection, device, or location.

As in live streaming, the first step to delivering an exemplary video experience is to optimize your online playback. To do this, the same principles for live streaming will apply for video, such as using a cloud-based Content Delivery Network (CDN) that has servers all over the world close to the users for reliability and leverages techniques such as Adaptive Bitrate (ABR) streaming to ensure high quality.

To ensure quality, it is also critical to pay attention to the “last mile delivery”, which is the journey from the CDN’s servers to the user’s device. The last mile is often neglected because it is heavily dependent on the user’s Internet Service Provider (ISP) or network and is therefore seen as uncontrollable. However, even last mile delivery can be improved by using technologies that can integrate directly into a user’s app, so that the user’s device can take on some of the video delivery workload. This, along with faster transport protocols, can ensure that both high quality and fast loading speeds are achieved regardless of local network conditions.

Akamai’s Media Acceleration has been touted as heralding a fundamental shift in online media distribution. Once the video stream leaves the Akamai network, it can be subject to various factors such as cellular network congestion and Wi-Fi interference that can impact the delivery times and hence the quality. Media Acceleration can be enabled by integrating an SDK into consumer applications or browsers and utilizes UDP-based technology to enable a consistent, reliable and high-quality delivery experience for each end user regardless of their circumstances or local network conditions.
LEARNING FROM THE EVENT: ANALYSIS AND INSIGHTS

Live stream and video content

With so many components to your live stream - a system filled with moving parts and changing variables — how do you measure whether it is truly a success?

First, you need the right tools to gain visibility into your entire live streaming process and to collect metrics from the event. Your metrics should be divided into two sets:

a) the quality of your stream and
b) audience behavior and engagement.

A) QUALITY OF THE STREAM

Monitoring, analyzing and collecting data on your live stream and videos-on-demand will let you know whether your streams are optimized and what you need to do to improve.

Key metrics, in this case, include Errors, Start Up Time, Rebuffering, Bitrates Delivered and more. By measuring each component of the stream delivery process, you’ll be able to pinpoint weaknesses in the network and fix them.
B) AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR AND ENGAGEMENT

This is where you’ll measure your audience and user engagement to be able to analyze whether users are truly satisfied with your stream. For example, content owners can track watch time and viewership at specific moments of a stream to gauge if the moments have caught audience's interest and increase viewer churn.

Once all the data is collected, it can be analyzed by segmenting it according to what matters most to your business. For example, if a group of users in a particular geographical location isn’t responding as well to your live stream as in others, you’ll be able to narrow your investigation to a certain area or region. A thorough analysis will help you understand trends and identify patterns, simplifying the task of tackling difficult markets or user segments and crafting a better live streaming experience in the future.

Akamai’s Media Analytics provides visibility into client-side metrics including quality of service and audience behavior and Media Reports which display server-side metrics. It helps businesses monitor and stay on top of crucial metrics that directly affect the success of their business; helping them make timely decisions to manage and optimize content, monetize it, and make sure viewers are interested and engaged.

To complement client-side visibility, Akamai’s Media Reports is an analytics module which provides server-side insights into ingest and delivery performance for operational excellence and unparalleled viewing experiences.

Akamai Media Analytics

Quality of Service Monitor:
Real-time visibility into quality of stream metrics such as startup time, rebuffer rates, bitrate

Audience Analytics:
Customizable Business Summary and Quality of Service dashboards reveal factors influencing the video experience

Akamai Media Reports

Server-side Monitoring:
Gain visibility and insight into first-mile and streaming performance such as traffic, visitors, URLs

API Access:
Access your data with an API to use in any other desired user interface

Intuitive and Easy UI:
Manage and track your data with easy downloads to .pdf formats and recurring email setup

Customized Reporting:
Customize your data in ways that allow you to easily access and share metrics
Akamai’s mPulse, a comprehensive analytics tool, measures bounce rates, click rates, and how much revenue your site has generated. mPulse is able to work in conjunction with both Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics to give comprehensive metrics on site performance and engagement.

Akamai mPulse

- **Real-time Performance Data and Insight across Web and Mobile:** Includes identification of bottlenecks or single points of failure
- **Patented “What-if” feature:** Presents unique relationship between performance and successful revenue and conversion outcomes
- **Full SPA support:** For all SPA frameworks - even custom
- **Control Marketing Campaigns in Real Time:** Combine performance and marketing analytics such as Google Analytics to visualize and adjust campaigns
- **Management of Third-party Resources:** Understand performance impact of all third-party resources and optimize

LANDING PAGE

Your website’s user experience directly affects your business outcomes, especially if it aids new subscriber acquisition or ad revenue or hosts your video content for the sports events. The challenge with site performance is quantifying “how much” it impacts your digital experience - balancing page speed against site changes for the highest business outcome and best customer satisfaction.

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Live streaming huge events - especially when it comes to sports - can be very complex, but also very rewarding when all the elements of planning, execution, monetization, and post-event analyses are put in place and work together like a well-oiled machine. Sport fans are highly passionate and engaged, and you don’t want to disappoint them.

At Akamai, we help clients through the entire process and provide 24/7 support from experts located all over the world. With more than 200,000 servers across 130 countries and more than 18 years’ experience in delivering live streams for some of the largest companies in the world, we understand the challenges and are able to effectively overcome them.
WHAT MATTERS FOR LIVE SPORTS STREAMING?

PLANNING FOR YOUR LIVE SPORTS STREAM

EXECUTING A LIVE SPORTS STREAM

MONETISE LIVE SPORTS STREAM FOR MAXIMUM REVENUE

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Akamai secures and delivers digital experiences for the world’s largest companies. Akamai’s intelligent edge platform surrounds everything, from the enterprise to the cloud, so customers and their businesses can be fast, smart, and secure. Top brands globally rely on Akamai to help them realize competitive advantage through agile solutions that extend the power of their multi-cloud architectures. Akamai keeps decisions, apps and experiences closer to users than anyone—and attacks and threats far away. Akamai’s portfolio of edge security, web and mobile performance, enterprise access and video delivery solutions is supported by unmatched customer service, analytics and 24/7/365 monitoring. To learn why the world’s top brands trust Akamai, visit www.akamai.com, blogs.akamai.com, or @Akamai on Twitter. You can find our global contact information at www.akamai.com/locations. Published 12/18.