

Limelight Networks Case Study

Kansas City Chiefs



Challenge 1: How to create a forum that will engage fans with mobile devices to provide the best game day experience possible.

Solution 1: Create innovative mobile experiences that provide the latest videos of game highlights and interviews with the team.

Challenge 2: How to manage and quickly update a massive video library while providing an optimal user experience.

Solution 2: Leverage the Limelight Video Platform APIs to organize content, simplify workflow, and ease user experience.

Kansas City Chiefs Score Touchdown with New Mobile Site and Apps

Today's hyperconnected consumers expect easy access to high-quality videos anytime and anywhere – a demand that the Kansas City Chiefs are successfully tackling. In the spring of 2010, the Chiefs decided to build innovative mobile experiences that would allow their fans to easily access high-quality videos and photos of game-day footage, as well as live streams of press conferences, via iPhone or any smartphone. The goal: give fans an interactive multimedia forum to create the best game-day experience possible.

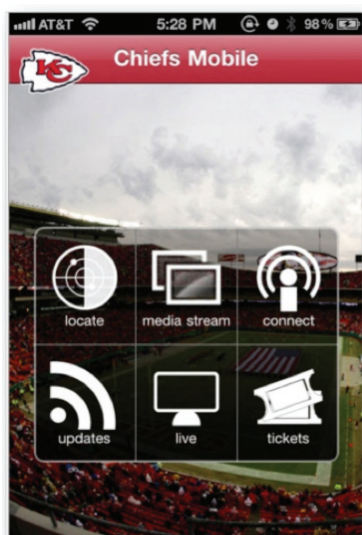
The Chiefs are not rookies when it comes to providing a rich media experience for their fans. In August of 2009, the team revamped their website by making online video the main feature. The result was a jump in video consumption of more than 60 percent. The success of online video prompted them to continue with innovation on their site by creating an engaging mobile experience for their fans. To begin, the Chiefs searched for a mobile video platform solution with a fully accessible API and a content management system that would allow them to quickly upload and manage a large library of videos.

Due to the success of using the Limelight Video Platform for the new website, the team evaluated the Limelight mobile API. According to the Chiefs, the solution stood above the competition because it was easy to use while offering the power to facilitate exactly what they wanted to accomplish. Additionally, they had absolute confidence in the ability of Limelight to handle the size of an NFL team's video library and viewership demand.

The Chiefs' Mobile Site and Apps: The Ultimate Game Day Experience

In the fall of 2010, the Chiefs launched their mobile site, as well as their mobile apps for iPhones and smartphones. At the front of the site and apps is the direct media feed, where fans can view videos and photos of the games, live press conferences with coaches, and interviews with the players. Fans can easily access all of the nearly 2,000 videos published on the Chiefs website from the mobile site and apps.

To make it easier for their fans to navigate the newly renovated Arrowhead Stadium, the Chiefs built GPS-like capabilities into the site and apps. Fans traveling from anywhere in the country to attend the game can view step-by-step directions that take them all the way to their seats. From any location in the stadium, they can get specific directions to restrooms, restaurants, the team store, and any other amenities the stadium has to offer. What's more, a connect feature enables fans to purchase tickets or connect to the Chiefs' Facebook page. Once fans purchase their tickets, they can view a picture of their seat along with its view of the field.



The mobile site and apps have scored big with fans. The apps receive 100-150 downloads a day, with 6,000 downloads taking place in the first month alone. The Chiefs' next steps include monetizing their mobile videos and reconfiguring the iPhone app to work on both the iPhone and iPad. They also plan to add a video sharing capability, enabling fans to submit their own videos and pictures of attending or watching a game.

"These mobile experiences are unlike any other, and the NFL is incredibly impressed by them. The speed at which the videos have become so popular has far exceeded our expectations and has significantly increased fan engagement. Our fans can now enjoy an interactive game-day experience anytime, anywhere," notes Lance Brown, Manager of Internet and Digital Media, Kansas City Chiefs.

Leveraging the Limelight Mobile API for Video Platform Solutions

Mobile API: Targeted and User-Friendly

A primary reason that the Chiefs decided to employ Limelight is its fully accessible, easy-to-use mobile API. Video files that play on mobile phones often require different encoding than video files that play online. Therefore, the Chiefs cannot simply use the same video or video player from their regular website on their mobile site and apps. To make videos available for mobile sites or apps, publishers like the Chiefs need to account for key information about the videos, such as thumbnail images, titles, descriptions, and tags. The Limelight mobile API provides the list of videos with all of this information, in addition to a link to the direct video links that work on the various mobile devices. The Chiefs can use this information to create a graphical interface for their fans to interact with.

The Chiefs found the Limelight mobile API to be more complete than alternative solutions. Competitive APIs are not mobile specific and therefore return a mountain of unnecessary information that the publisher must tediously sort through to find the relevant mobile content. On the other hand, the targeted, easy-to-use mobile API provides only the specific information the Chiefs need to create their mobile experience.

"Limelight has a phenomenal API structure," says Brown "Although it's a sophisticated system, the API is extremely easy to use and is very accessible. If I do have any questions, their team is immediately responsive. No other companies had the capabilities and the customer support that Limelight offered, and that's why we unanimously agreed to integrate their mobile API into our solution."

Content API

In addition to the mobile API, The Chiefs also leveraged the Limelight Content API as an efficient method to upload and manage their entire mobile video library. The speed and ease of using the Content API ensures that viewers are getting the latest game highlights as soon as possible.

"Limelight's content management system is the bread and butter of their solution," states Brown. "Once the videos are edited, we can immediately upload them into the system, making it easy to keep our library up-to-date. Regardless of the growth of our library, our workflow remains simple and efficient."

Tags

An innovative component of the content management system is a tagging mechanism that allows the Chiefs to easily arrange and sort more than 2,000 videos. Tags can consist of a word or a string of words, such as a particular game, player, or coach. The Chiefs associate these tags with each video file in the Limelight system. These tags can then be used to quickly sort, search, and filter the entire video library. Also, the Chiefs have the option to expose the tags' searching ability in the video player so viewers can easily find the videos they want to watch.

Playlists

The Chiefs further leverage tags to quickly create playlists. Playlists, also called channels, are multiple videos grouped together by topic. The Chiefs use a couple of methods for creating a new playlist: they can manually drag and drop individual video files into a channel to quickly build the playlist, or they can automatically create a playlist by grouping videos according to their tags.

The drag-and-drop and tagging capabilities also make it easy for the Chiefs to change the videos appearing in the playlists. For instance, they can sort through a playlist by time of day, month, and year and then easily remove videos, or they can move newer videos to the top of the list and older videos to the bottom. Any changes to the playlist are automatically reflected on the mobile site and apps.

RSS Feeds

Every playlist that is created in the management console has a corresponding link to a hidden RSS feed, which contains direct URLs to the mp4 files that play the videos. The Chiefs use this capability to download the mp4 file and quickly upload it to Facebook as needed.

Search Inside

The Chiefs also use the innovative “search inside” feature, which allows the team and fans to search for a topic within the spoken contents of the video and jump directly to the point in the video where that topic was discussed –a capability that their public relations team uses to review statements made by players and coaches.

By including the Limelight Video Platform in their game plan, the Chiefs easily won the challenge of providing an optimal mobile experience while managing a massive video library. They can quickly upload content, organize their library into channels, and simplify their workflow, thus ensuring that fans always have access to the latest game-day highlights and can easily locate the team videos they want to watch.

What’s Next

The Kansas City Chiefs will soon also leverage Limelight VPS for its new chiefshallofhonor.com site, which is launching at the end of February 2011. Fans can view videos highlighting 50 years of Chiefs History. All of the videos are built entirely in HTML5 and will be deployed on Limelight VPS. Also in February, the Chiefs are updating their iPhone app for the iPad.

About the Limelight Video Platform Solution

Organizations are enabled to quickly take advantage of the fast-growing demand for online video while delivering an exceptional viewing experience with the Limelight Video Platform Solution. The offering provides tools for managing, publishing, and syndicating videos online, including hosting, encoding, channel and playlist management, advertising, and reporting and analytics. For more information, please visit www.limelight.com.

