

# Discovery—Fusion: a single platform for the digital world

High performance. Delivered.



Strategy | Digital | Technology | Operations



This project demonstrates best-in-class collaborative innovation to deliver a premium online video solution which is built to adapt to the demands of tomorrow's digital world. It brings together two global businesses in a true partnership to create a seamless viewing experience for the consumer, wherever they are in the world.





Discovery Networks International is a division of Discovery Communications, the number one pay TV programmer in the world. Its mission is to satisfy the curiosity of consumers around the globe and it does so through content which covers an astounding breadth of subjects—from top sports and award-winning natural history shows, to human interests as diverse as cookery and cars. Comprising 48 channel brands that together reach more than 2 billion subscribers around the world, in more than 220 countries, Discovery Networks International is on a journey to become a digital business.

## Business Challenge

Technology is fundamentally changing how people watch television and how they interact with, discover and share content. Discovery Networks International operates 100 channel websites, 50 premium online video services, 50 online sports destinations, 60 YouTube channels and 300 social touchpoints—and transforming these into a seamless digital experience for consumers is key for its future as a digital broadcaster. Viewers increasingly combine watching shows while simultaneously using the technology platforms, devices and services to interact with content and find out about the shows they want to watch. Meeting consumer expectations by coordinating multiplatform digital content across all Discovery Networks International's brands and shows is nothing short of a transformative undertaking.

The fast-changing landscape demands the effective creation and distribution of content to meet various business models— and has to match the highest possible standards of quality that Discovery Networks International sets for itself. Developing the capabilities to service global consumers' needs is a big challenge for any broadcaster—and Discovery Networks International's huge reach compounds it. Different regions operate with tailored marketing and consumer services, in different languages, to meet the needs of their local market.

With relatively small teams in each territory responsible for creating large volumes of content, Discovery Networks International required a global partner and digital leader which could truly collaborate, supporting its digital journey and understanding exactly how to get there. This demanded an innovative approach that could support a rapid and flexible digital content delivery system for premium online video offerings, while also providing a rich, dynamic and compelling experience at every consumer's fingertips around the world.

# How Accenture Helped

Accenture's relationship with Discovery Networks International extends back nearly a decade. As the partnership has developed, Accenture has deepened its partnership with Discovery internationally through a relationship under which Accenture supports all the web and mobile properties for Discovery Networks International—with a dedicated team of more than 100 people.

In 2013, the relationship entered a new phase when Discovery Networks International asked Accenture to collaborate in creating a unified global digital platform—called Fusion, internally—driving a robust, scalable solution for its digital content, with a focus on video. The platform needed to meet a number of critical objectives. Above all, it had to provide the most exciting, engrossing, simple and beautiful way possible for consumers to engage with Discovery Networks International's incredible range of content. The sheer volume and diversity of the output demanded capabilities that enabled rapid creation and delivery of digital content. That includes live streaming, catch up, long-and short-form video, content rich websites, applications for mobile that work seamlessly with different devices and operating systems, as well as other digital marketing services.

Fusion has to support the international editorial teams, as they publish and update huge volumes of content around the clock. A highly efficient content management system and workflow tools that drive automation are required to save time and expense, while supporting both simple and functionality-rich editorial processes. Automated publishing of video and other rich media has to be supported

with the right metadata, schedule information and geo-location based business rules. In addition, the team enabled simple drag-and-drop page editing and creation with an intuitive interface and easy-to-use tools and the platform also enables easy integration of interactive content from third-party agencies.

The need to respond quickly to changing business needs, create new services 'on the fly' and ensure flexibility had to be balanced against the cost effectiveness and capital requirements of ensuring the appropriate infrastructure. Accordingly, Discovery Networks International maximizes the use of open-source technology solutions and to migrate digital media services to the cloud. Discovery partnered with Accenture to assess the requirements, then planned and executed the migration of existing and new sites to the Amazon Web Services cloud platform, from where all sites and features are now delivered. The cloud's inherent scalability means that the service automatically and rapidly scales up in response to increases in traffic.

Accenture also worked with Discovery Networks International to establish agile delivery across all digital media work, with a global collaborative team put in place—including experts from Accenture, application development teams based in Riga, Latvia, and specialist teams in London and New York. With Fusion, Discovery Networks International is harnessing the power of digital to delight its customers, giving them new ways to connect, share and discover content. It has a state-of-the-art digital platform that is supporting its online growth today and positioning the global business for the digital journey ahead.

Accenture worked closely with Discovery Networks International to deliver a seamless viewing experience, developing the platform for use by more than 100 editors, bringing innovation at scale to achieve a goal of responsive, flexible, agile and cost effective digital capabilities—from a single platform—across all its international markets and channels. Accenture currently supports 67 websites (55 on Fusion) and nine mobile apps for Discovery Networks International. These cover 27 countries and 20 languages. As of April 2014, there were 17 new services in development. During a typical month, the websites that Accenture operates are used by 12 million people who consume, on average, a collective 20 million video streams.

# High Performance Delivered

The ability to create innovative web-services and content rapidly and cost effectively is already driving online growth and digital ad revenues for Discovery Networks International. Fusion enables Discovery's international arm to roll out new launches, promotions and special events without requiring intensive technical effort. In the 12 months between April 2013 and April 2014, 64 services were rolled out on the Fusion platform—an average of more than one every week. In contrast, before the Fusion program started, new launches were running at the rate of one per quarter.

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A robust, scalable and responsive platform is essential for Discovery Networks International to meet the needs of a fast growing international digital audience. As well as supporting three distinct business models—promotional sites with short-form video clips, long-form advertising video on demand and subscription video on demand—Fusion also easily accommodates different sizes of sites.

By operating with responsive design principles, the platform enables content that can be created once for multiple formats and devices, offering the highest quality engaging experience, however and wherever consumers choose to view it. What's more, in today's digital world consumers want to go further than simply watching content. They expect to be able to interact and share their views, recommendations and their own content with their friends across social media platforms. Fusion enables full integration of social media feeds and functions. It makes video and online content available on social sites and enables consumers to contribute their own videos and photos to sites as well as interact socially on specific social TV apps. As well as consumers interacting with digital content, broadcasters in the digital world also need to understand consumer preferences and behavior in detail. To meet that need, Fusion delivers integrated analytics that enable Discovery Networks International to respond to consumers as their demands change.

Testament to the success of the Fusion platform and the collaborative relationship fostered between the two companies are Discovery Networks International's recent online audience results—showing that traffic to its websites increased once again in Q4 14 to an average of 73 million visitors each month—a staggering 737% increase versus Q4 13. With such impressive metrics, Discovery Communications is leveraging the platform for its U.S. linear TV websites—completing the transition of 10 sites in early 2014.



As well as being a platform for today, Fusion is built with tomorrow's digital world in mind. As Discovery Networks International further rolls out its OTT and TVE services, Fusion delivers the ability to scale and supports the next step of the digital journey.

Commenting on the success of Fusion, Dave Schafer, Senior Vice President, International Digital Media at Discovery Networks International said

"To achieve our goals for digital we need to work with a true collaborative partner that understands the journey we are on and brings a commitment to innovation and delivery that can take us where we want to go. With Fusion, we have developed and now operate a complete rebuild of our online infrastructure, with a platform that is addressing what we need today and the capabilities that will be essential for our digital future."



## About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 319,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$30.0 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2014. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).