



Pixagility uses Centreon EMS to provide seamless video broadcast experiences - from infrastructure to viewers' screens



Project Overview

The Client

With its unique technological expertise, Pixagility helps European and African broadcasters enhance video content for their audiences. Considering that even the slightest lag will be immediately detected in live or replay broadcast, Pixagility depends on highly specialized IT infrastructure to provide the quality of service broadcasters and viewers expect. Pixagility needed to find and deploy a holistic monitoring solution that could both fail proof and future proof IT monitoring for their video production chain, keystone of the viewer experience. After some trials and errors, Pixagility selected Centreon, working closely with their teams to build and deploy the flexible and scalable monitoring system they needed. This improved their system's reliability and now guides the Pixagility IT team in their day-to-day efforts to prevent and fix the issues that affect viewer experiences. Leveraging the Centreon EMS' dashboards and cockpits, they cut through the alert chase and instantly get to the most relevant, up-to-date information. The added efficiency and visibility keep the team connected and focused, boosting proactivity, and in turn the customer experience. Pixagility's management also benefit from Centreon EMS' robust analytic tools. In this digital age, a broad view of the entire IT system equals a deep, insight-rich view into the business, which can be actioned into sharp decision-making.

The Challenges

- Live or replayed, broadcasting video is the ultimate real-time experience and requires extreme agility and responsiveness; yet teams lacked a real-time access to the crucial vital signs and visibility into the entire production chain.
- Rapid growth of the company made it difficult to seamlessly connect and maintain a holistic view on the video production chain infrastructure.
- Constantly evolving technology and industry needs made it difficult to future-proof IT investments.
- Alert fatigue was getting at the team, a cluttered solution made it difficult to focus on what was immediately important.
- Teams were not as proactive and responsive as they felt they could be given the right means.
- Fresh means and resources were needed to manage and mitigate operational risks.

The client benefits

- Real time, holistic view of the entire production chain's infrastructure
- Real-time ability to predict peak loads and respond adequately to sustain service
- IT teams are guided and supported in their daily tasks – increased engagement and focus
- Decision-making is now based on actual facts and data
- Significantly improved risk management and investment decisions capabilities

PIXAGILITY: an innovative multiservice video platform that supports broadcasters in enhancing the value of video contents

Founded in 2009, France-based Pixagility provides technical audiovisual expertise to major national and regional broadcasters in Europe and Africa through four broad service areas.

- Hosting services for TV channels (specialized or local), through providing the necessary broadcasting infrastructure;
- Content preparation enabling TV channels such as France TV group to extend the shelf life of video content through replay broadcasting for 125% of the total duration of the media.
- Aggregation of broadcast content pulled from a selection of telecom operators, allowing for bundled packages (notably for France 2 International).
- Editorial animated content for broadcasting groups such as Altice (SFR Sports) or Bein Sport to whom Pixagility provides information that facilitates the consumption of their content.

IT monitoring as a service to viewers

Two years ago, Pixagility was coping with sudden and significant business growth. They realized a robust IT monitoring solution was an integral part of the customer experience. As Michael Benhamou, Pixagility's technical director explains: *"As a digital company, we're confronted with two major issues: real time and continuity of service. Broadcasting content is an instantaneous, non-stop activity. The most discreet anomaly will be noticeable on the viewer's screen in mere seconds. Our initial goal was finding a monitoring solution adapted to the very specific nature and needs of our business. We also wanted a solution that would make us more proactive and future ready as we face a permanent evolution of our IT landscape and exponential growth for the company."*

Michael's team opted for Centreon's open source solution. They swiftly launched a first platform – a step in the right direction. However, some of the choices they had made at the implementation stage were now holding them back.

"We had decided to implement the solution ourselves, relying on Centreon's open source core," recalls Michael Benhamou.

"To say things candidly, we had underestimated the scope of skills and knowledge required to fully benefit from such an advanced solution. As a result, we had an operational solution, but it was built to monitor everything – without any allowances for context. We were quickly overwhelmed by the abundance of alerts we had ourselves set."

"We soon realized that adopting Centreon EMS and the associated support from Centreon's teams were an essential part of building a monitoring solution perfectly aligned with our business needs, while also limiting alert fatigue and boosting efficiency."

Transitioning to Centreon EMS: from alert blind to business-aware

Calling in the Centreon experts proved to be the right decision for Pixagility. Not only the entire team felt in very professional hands to master the transition, they were finally able to concentrate on key data and infrastructure elements, which was a huge relief from the sensory overload brought by an excess of alerts. Centreon EMS now monitors the entire production chain, from the storage management of pooled video content up to the servers that handle broadcasting and the network itself.

"Currently, monitoring stops at the content manager platform, but this will be integrated in a few months. Our entire production chain will then be fully monitored with Centreon EMS," concludes Michael.

"Throughout the implementation and transition process, the Centreon experts provided sound advice – the end result being that we now have a fully relevant monitoring system, with just the perfect balance of alerts and indicators needed to ensure our systems are running effectively."

"We purposely cut down through the clutter of alerts and indicators to focus on the most critical elements of our IT. Getting only the essential information means we stay focused and efficient."

Proactivity and responsiveness for the everyday

Centreon EMS is used daily by about twenty people in the engineering and operations teams, each benefiting from views that specifically relate to their activities (i.e. background information for developers and production information for operations). Centreon MAP was used to create the cockpits that provide views by client and by activity. *“We particularly like the dynamic screen displays and being able to immediately zoom in on what does not work,”* says Michael. *“Centreon EMS is now a daily staple for our teams because it provides the real time vision they so absolutely need to accomplish their work.”*

From the moment Centreon EMS was implemented, Pixagility teams gained in responsiveness. Not only anomalies are now quickly identified and fixed, insightful data collected by the solution improves proactivity in the daily management of operations- as Michael points out:

“Even our network is more reliable, because we’re now enabled to scrutinize the full length of our IT system, anticipating and thus preventing service disruptions rather than correcting them.”

Know thy resources – Make stronger decisions

Through providing a real-time view of the entire IT system, Centreon EMS also assists decision makers in scaling the infrastructure to fit the business. Valuable metrics and data history provide insightful indicators on peak times, making it easier to balance server loads, for example. *“We can immediately identify what is being underused or overused,”* explains Michael.

“With Centreon EMS, we’re quick to spot and manage peaking loads so we’re able to add capabilities before hitting a wall. We’re definitely more agile and aware, making the right decision is a breeze.”

“We have a much deeper understanding of our resources, we see exactly what’s going on and what might happen, with our services fully mapped and visible. On top of that, I’m backed by Centreon EMS’ strong data and reporting capabilities when presenting the executive team with recommendations to evolve the IT system.”

Broadcasting monitoring data to the broadcasters

The monitoring solution that the Pixagility team is raving about might just become a fav feature on the screens of their clients, the broadcasters. Pixagility’s customer support team is currently testing the possibility of providing personalized monitoring dashboards to clients. *“One client has already tested the solution and the feedback is very positive,”* reports Michael. *“Going as far as empowering our clients through securely sharing their monitoring data with them is the next step for Pixagility, as we’re striving for an improved experience at every level – from IT monitoring on our premises to the client’s up to the end users enjoying seamless video viewing.”*

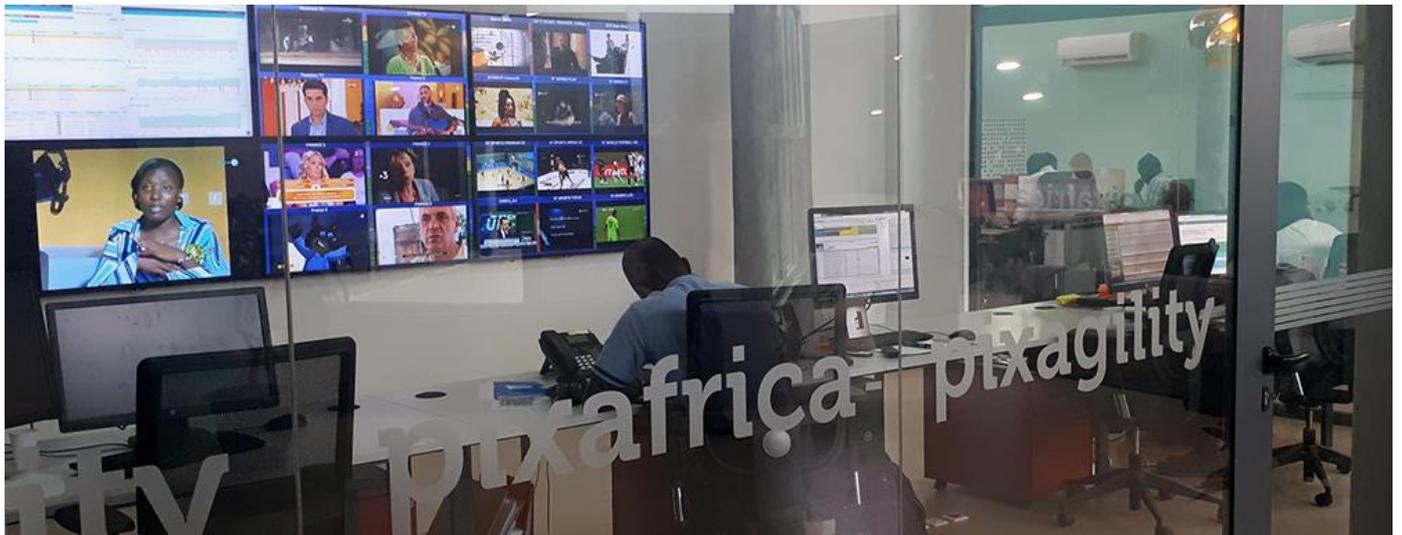
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CUSTOMER STORY



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About Centreon

Centreon is a trusted software provider for enterprise IT monitoring of converging and hybrid infrastructure across a wide range of public and private sectors. Centreon’s flagship solution delivers unified views and streamlined, interoperable monitoring for business-aware IT operations management, eliminating costly downtime and boosting performance analysis. Centreon partners with resellers, enterprise system integrators and SMB service providers, offering on-the-ground technical support and training certification. Founded in 2005, Centreon is a growing reference with head offices in Paris, France, and Toronto, Canada. For more information, to request a demo or read more monitoring success stories: please visit our website



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