



M2A  Media | **Photron**

Photron Accelerates Video Workflows for Live Sports Broadcast with M2A Media

Photron manages live video workflows on behalf of a premium Japanese sports owner. The Tokyo-based company was using Amazon Web Services (AWS) to build and run the multiple workflows needed to manage the capture, production, and distribution of the broadcasts. But the process for managing and running the workflows was manual and time consuming and the company's engineers did not have the resources to build new services. Photron worked with AWS Partner M2A Media to automate and orchestrate its AWS media services. The changes that the companies introduced resulted in time savings of up to 75 percent on workflow preparation and execution and cost savings of 15 percent.

The Challenge

Photron's media business unit delivers go-to-market sports broadcasting in Japan. It had already worked with a number of Japanese sports owners—the companies that own the permanent rights to franchises—and had delivered a series of broadcasts using AWS media services. In 2024, Photron became the service provider to broadcast a

season of matches across three-tier divisions for a premium sports owner in Japan. Specifically, it provides B2B (business-to-business) video streams for broadcasters and other services and platforms.

Photron's engineering team had already developed the workflows to deliver the streams, but it faced three challenges. First, the workflows required significant manual configuration before and during live matches. With up to 30 games taking place on each matchday, this added up to a huge operational overhead, and it was time consuming and complex to manually manage these workflows at scale.

The second challenge for Photron was that several of the engineers who developed the workflows had moved on from the business. This made it difficult to support and maintain the workflows and equally challenging to innovate new products and services. The final challenge, scaling to meet demand, was difficult both for operational and infrastructure reasons, given the highly manual nature of operations. Photron needed a strategic partner that it could work with to deliver a solution in time for the upcoming season.

The Solution

Through its successful and ongoing work with Japanese Rugby Marketing, Photron's sports owner partner had heard of AWS Partner M2A Media and its platform and encouraged the two companies to collaborate. M2A Media's platform, M2A Connect, runs on AWS and helps to simplify complex video workflows with automation while maintaining high broadcast standards.

The Photron team already used Media Services on AWS—a suite of cloud-based tools for building and managing video workflows—to run, process, and distribute streams. This suite includes AWS Elemental MediaConnect to manage the high-quality secure reliable transfer (SRT) and AWS Elemental MediaLive to encode the streams in the cloud.

Up to six workflows are needed for each match. These include the transmission of the SRT stream, the transformation of the SRT stream into different video formats, a backup transmission to YouTube as a live failover, the generation of private video-on-demand (VOD) MP4 files for referees and clubs, a stream that is used to create social media clips, and a video-archiving workflow of matches for the sports owner on Amazon Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3).

Removing the manual effort and orchestrating the workflows was the key to Photron's operational transformation. "We bring together those six different workflows in a single view so an operator can very simply check that everything is running as expected," says Ciarán Doran, CEO at M2A Media. "Ahead of kickoff, we typically allow an hour or so spin-up time so that operators can check all resources are running as expected. This should happen in minutes but, on occasion, if there are any issues, they have time to

triage, and restart or fix."

Eliminating complexity was a critical principle for the project. M2A also worked with Photron to make sure the interface was highly usable. That included ensuring that the commands and keys were accurately converted to Japanese. This makes it much easier for the Japanese operational teams to navigate the system.

In addition, to provide further support, M2A offers a follow-the-sun support team based in Bangladesh, the UK, and the US. This delivers around-the-clock on-demand support for the Photron team. "That always-on support is so important to us," says Tsutomu Nakayama, business development lead at Photron. "With so many moving parts, it's key that, if we find any small error or problem, we can communicate with the M2A team in real time."

Outcome

The results for Photron's operational efficiency have been transformative.

Automation and orchestration of the workflow has reduced the work required by Photron before a match by 75 percent, and the work required on matchday by 60 percent.

A good example of improvement is the VOD workflow. This used to take 3 hours to complete, and Photron and M2A

were challenged to deliver this in 30 minutes. Now it is consistently up to 9 times faster to generate the MP4 file and can take just a few minutes to deliver a multi-hour VOD asset.

Costs have been reduced by 15 percent by automating operation startups based on the match schedule for each workflow.

The project has also resulted in a speed improvement of a factor of 3 in the development of new workflows by using existing templates and presets.

"Media Services on AWS are fantastic and foundational for broadcasting in the cloud," says Doran. "But at scale during live events, orchestration is key to allow smooth operations, and that's where M2A comes in."

Using AWS to manage the stream capture, rather than the more expensive but traditional satellite transfer, also reduces costs for Photron. Above all, the collaboration with M2A on AWS has given Photron confidence that it can always deliver. "We're proud we

can deliver this kind of stability in the system," says Nakayama. "Now we don't have any big issues or any trouble. Everything runs smoothly and this is very important to our client."

Key Benefits

- 75% improvement in pre-event workflow efficiency
- 60% improvement in matchday workflow efficiency
- 15% cost savings using automation
- 3x faster to create new workflows
- 9x faster MP4 video-on-

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