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124

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Evergent
Partnering with Content Providers to Expand Streaming Boundaries

The most successful content providers build their systems based on foundational partnerships out of view of the end user, yet deeply considerate of their patterns and preferences. For such partnerships themselves to be successful requires the right interlocking mesh of forward-thinking requirements, adaptable tools capable of receiving and applying the requests and experienced teams driving the vision to fruition.

Vijay Sajja,
CEO & Founder, Evergent

The further we distance ourselves from the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic, the better the vantage point we have to view just how dramatically our lifestyles, habits and the world around us are forever altered.

Consider the plight of in-home video entertainment providers, thrust into the spotlight role of all-encompassing delivery systems for any form of amusement, news, art and more to occupy a restless and quite captive audience across all corners of the globe. In those early days of enforced lockdowns through our still-fresh climate of baby-step engagements with more of the outside world, these once regional and often formative content providers have for the past couple years been tasked with expanding their reach, their offerings and their foresight quickly amid a streaming landscape literally shifting under their feet – or else perish. The pandemic may have wreaked havoc on countless industries, but in the video streaming world, business was – and still is, according to PwC – booming.

The providers who successfully manoeuvred this enforced scenario of long-term opportunity and short-term challenge did not do so alone. Meeting these demands in such a fast-moving market requires not just the vision to know what needs to be done, but the right-fitting technology tools to enact these requirements, scaled to anticipate and accommodate future end-user needs.

For Shahid, the first Video-On-Demand (VOD) and Subscription Video-On-Demand (SVOD) streaming platform delivering movies, live TV, original content and more to the Arab-speaking world, the subscriber base was skyrocketing – more than 10x growth in under a

year of existence. And, in this evolving Over-the-Top (OTT) landscape, the response demanded had to be both fast and considerate.

Rather than try to assemble its own in-house multi-purpose platform, complete with content delivery and customer management systems, to address such unprecedented growth, Shahid, a part of the Middle East's leading media company, MBC Group, partnered with Evergent to deliver a comprehensive suite of customer management and monetization tools that support user registration, subscription management and other critical functions.

Shahid recognized the service's rapidly growing customer base required not just optimized back-office business functions to stay afloat with demand, but a beefed-up user experience to turn those initial engagements into long-term relationships – and thrive. In the Evergent Monetization Platform (EMP), Shahid found the right collaborative platform to streamline operations by improving usability, enabling reliability and transforming the subscriber acquisition and payment experience, upping its all-important subscriber engagement.

The Evergent team helped this leading provider of entertainment in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) develop a solution that essentially overhauled its internal platform operations. This significantly reduced time-to-market for Shahid's product and service offerings and increased the reliability of those offerings once delivered. Evergent's EMP seamlessly migrated more than a million active Shahid subscribers from the legacy platform. Once migrated, these subscribers enjoyed a

multi-currency payment platform and various pricing models. Shahid's exploding customer base crossed geographic boundaries, each region presenting its own unique payment preference and go-to-market strategies.

As Dominic Farrell, Shahid CTO, noted following the successful Evergent implementation, "The past 24 months have seen a period of unprecedented growth for Shahid, as we successfully pivoted our product from the region's leading Catch-Up platform to a Premium OTT SVOD service. In order to support this growth and the rapidly evolving OTT landscape, we need a trusted partner who was able to help scale our business across complex and varied regional markets whilst supporting multiple currencies, languages and payment methods."

He added: "Not only did Evergent meet this brief, but they allowed us to migrate and deploy their solution in record time with zero visible disruption to our core business."

EMP offered a solution that enabled Shahid's much sought-after speed and flexibility by migrating some of the service's most critical application payloads and addressing complex use cases. By providing Shahid with a true end-to-end solution, Evergent automated workflows, payment processes and promotional strategy. As an example, Smart TV promotional support was enabled for Shahid's SVOD ecosystem based on brands, models and TV screen sizes.

The Evergent team also delivered on Shahid's critical requirements to incorporate flexibility and simplicity into its growth response. By working together to create parent-child hierarchies with multi-regional business units, each territory is managed as a separate business entity with unique product catalogs and segregated subscriber and revenue data. This achievement not only simplified Shahid's revenue model, but drastically reduced billing time. Along with Evergent's broad multi-currency payment capabilities, Shahid now has a wider reach across global locations regardless of subscriber currency.

EMP's subscriber engagement and monetization functionality cuts a wide swath, enabling continuous support for notifications and promotions, including prepay, tiered and lifetime, and powering high-value live events for the provider's sports content arm. The ability to deliver new and

more creative offerings helped Shahid achieve higher customer acquisition rates of as much as 75% since partnering with Evergent.

And for those acquired customers, Shahid's platform is now equipped with a complete view of the ongoing relationship. Evergent gives Shahid the ability to track each and every customer touchpoint by recording the entire customer transaction history, and promotional event data.

Shahid's market reach has also been expanded through Evergent's efficient partner management capabilities, enabling a seamless onboarding of third-party vendors and OTT platforms including GoBx, Toshiba, Tornado, Samsung, PUBG and Hisense.

The Evergent maxim of treating each customer engagement as a partnership 'Aligned with your Business Aspirations' bears itself out here. The Evergent team behind EMP takes a consultative approach to every implementation, interaction and request, in contrast to a more low-touch, transactional sales agreement– providing consistent support during implementation to ensure long-term customer success.

The teams at Shahid and Evergent continue to collaborate and innovate with additional growth opportunities and partnerships, such as Shahid's recently signed deal with commerce firm Paymob, which provides additional payment method offerings to customers.

For Shahid, as with all Evergent partnerships, while the initial desired outcome was achieved, the partnership remains ongoing, creative and just as fruitful.

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