

viaVerio Partner Success Story: Riser Media



viaVerio Partner Riser Media

Challenge

Find a hosting solution that could provide highly reliable service with diverse data protection, accommodate high-traffic along with traffic bursts, and support advanced applications required by Riser Media's clients.

Solution

Verio Managed Private Server
Verio Virtual Private Server

Results

- ▶ Rapid, smooth implementation for Riser clients.
- ▶ The confidence to launch a new hosting division.
- ▶ A profitable new revenue stream founded on solid margins.
- ▶ Anytime support.

Riser Media Launches New Hosting Division to Serve Large Entertainment Companies including ABC Family, HBO and TV Guide

These days, in the entertainment industry it's not enough to just broadcast a TV show. Within minutes after a show ends, thousands or millions of viewers flock to the web site to read about actors or entertainers, watch interviews, play online games, buy merchandise or talk to other fans. It's a whole new level of interactive entertainment.

A full-service design agency, Riser Media helps its clients, many of which are in the entertainment industry, build a compelling online presence. At the forefront of interactive web marketing and branding, this company has established a reputation by creating online sites for major entertainment networks such as ABC Family, HBO, Disney and TV Guide.

The Catalyst for Hosting

In 2007, the company had the opportunity to expand its relationship with an existing client, a major entertainment network that approached the firm about hosting several high-traffic sites for them.

"The network wanted a solution that would give them more flexibility to experiment with new advanced applications to deliver interactive content for their web sites," said Jeff Jolley, VP of Operations at Riser Media.

Prior to this opportunity, Riser Media had been solely focused on designing high-impact web sites for its clients, but saw adding hosting services as a chance to increase its client services and revenue. Riser quickly came to discover that its clients loved this because it provided them with one-stop shopping for all of their web site needs.

The firm's wish list for a hosting partner included some very specific requirements:

- 100 percent uptime
- The ability to handle high volumes and traffic spikes
- Ease of setup and management

"We couldn't come to our clients with a low-end solution. We needed to ensure our hosting partner could provide highly reliable service, especially during peak traffic periods," said Mike Janda, President. "The sites have to be able to handle a rush of millions of visitors tuning in at once."

'A Great Fit'

Initially, Riser Media considered building its own hosting infrastructure in house, but realized that a hosting provider could do it much more efficiently while allowing the firm to stay focused on web design - without the added worry of managing ongoing server maintenance.



“Hosting services are now a new line on proposals, another revenue stream we track independently. We’ve been pleased with the margins. As a service provider, we love recurring revenue. We expect this line of business to represent as much as 25 percent of our total revenue within the next two years.”

▶ *Jeff Jolley, VP of Operations, Riser Media*

Riser Media evaluated three different hosting providers before selecting Verio. It came down to reliability, flexibility and customer support. Specifically, the firm’s clients needed assurance that their content and data would be secure and that any risks to the data would be mitigated through redundant servers in geographically diverse data centers.

Verio provided the extra data protection Riser was looking for with a custom solution that leveraged data centers located on both coasts, providing the peace of mind their clients required in the event of an outage in either geographic area.

Additionally, Verio offers the reliability that comes with the strong IP backbone and support of NTT Communications. When Riser factored in that Verio would develop a custom solution, and provide dedicated customer support, the decision was simple.

“Verio was really the only choice that made sense. They offered highly reliable solutions, superior technical support, quick response time to our needs, and competitive pricing,” Jolley said. “They are our partner because it was a great fit.”

Flexible, Reliable Hosting

Riser Media started with four managed private servers (MPS), all clustered and mirrored together and a virtual private server (VPS) to be used for development. As clients upload content to a single server, the firm distributes

and load balances it across all four servers – ensuring content availability and uptime.

With dedicated – even after-hours – support from Verio, Riser ramps up client sites quickly and smoothly. The initial implementation with the major entertainment network happened flawlessly – and in just three days. The firm understands that Verio went the extra mile for them to make this happen, and that this was not a service level available with other providers.

“We could not have delivered this kind of a high level solution in that kind of timeframe with any other provider,” Mike Janda said.

Riser Media also moved its own web hosting over to Verio, consolidating from three different hosting service providers. Whether for its own sites, or for client sites, Riser values the flexibility it has with Verio. With Verio’s wide range of hosting solutions from basic Signature to VPS and MPS, there is a solution for every type of client the firm serves. Because Verio provides Riser with root access to Verio servers to upload custom software applications, they’re confident they can provide any required solution to meet their clients’ diverse needs.

Riser Media Hosting is Born

The Verio partnership has led to many other hosting opportunities for Riser, effectively providing the infrastructure for a whole new business offering – and



“We could not have delivered this kind of a solution in that kind of timeframe with any other provider.”

▶ *Mike Janda, President & CEO, Riser Media*

revenue stream. Riser’s hosting division carries the tag line: “For years you’ve trusted us with what’s on your site. Now you can trust us with what your site’s on.”

Riser Media hosting provides six different Verio-backed hosting solutions for clients, named Athena (VPS Starter), Spartan (VPS Basic), Titan (VPS Pro), Hercules (VPS Pro Plus), Colossus (MPS Basic) and Zeus (MPS Pro).

Because of favorable pricing on the VPS and MPS solutions, the firm extends services to its clients at competitive prices and attractive margins.

“Hosting services are now a new line on proposals, another revenue stream we track independently,” Jolley said. “We’ve been very pleased with the margins. As a service provider, we love recurring revenue. We expect it to be as much as 25 percent of our total revenue over the next two years.”

Looking ahead, Riser Media also plans to offer software-as-a-service (SaaS) design and hosting for small business clients. The offering gives clients “Riser Media design at an affordable monthly price.” Each of the sites in this model will be hosted on the firm’s Verio servers under a Signature or a VPS plan. This supports Riser in shifting its focus from a few large servers for a small number of clients to a high number of smaller servers for more clients.

hosting services. The Riser team serves clients and does what it does best – creative online and offline design – while Verio ensures that everything runs smoothly on the back end.

“The fact that we know that if we have a problem at 10PM, someone from Verio will be there to help resolve it, provides us with the confidence we need to offer that service,” said Jolley. “Now we have a reliable partner in Verio, and we can tell customers that we can develop and host for them. Now we’re a one-stop shop for a lot of our clients, which helps strengthen our relationships and increase our revenue stream. Verio’s been a great fit for us.”

About Riser Media

Riser Media is a full-service creative agency offering branding, online game development, interactive, print, programming, and specialty design work. Started in 2002, the Utah-based firm has completed 885 projects so far and has worked with some of the biggest companies and programs in the entertainment industry, including ABC Family, AOL, Grey’s Anatomy, Harry Potter, High School Musical, National Geographic, HBO, TV Guide, Disney and many others.

- For more information, visit: www.risermmedia.com.

A Partner in Verio

Hosting with Verio, and with a dedicated Verio account manager, has enabled Riser Media to grow its business with

