

DELIVERING THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE AND AVAILABILITY

ITV PLC leverages Dell EMC Isilon technology and Dell EMC Technical Account Manager to ensure the show will go on



Media

United Kingdom

Business needs

ITV needed to support business growth, maintain the highest levels of availability, and provide high performance for live programming.

Solutions at a glance

- [Dell EMC Technical Account Manager \(TAM\)](#)
- [Dell EMC Isilon](#)

Business results

- Sustained high availability
- Proactive and prompt support
- Seamless growth

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Rob O'Brien

Senior Application Manager, Technology Platforms,

ITV PLC, headquartered in London, is an integrated producer-broadcaster, operating the largest commercial family of channels in the United Kingdom. It delivers traditional free-to-air broadcasting and on-demand content through several platforms, directly and via the ITV Hub.

ITV Studios produces content for its own channels and third parties in the UK and internationally. The ITV distribution business, Global Entertainment, sells finished programs and formats worldwide.

A focus on growth

The company's approximately 6,000 employees have three major objectives:

1. Maximize audience revenue share from the free-to-air broadcast and content-on-demand business
2. Grow the international content business with a focus on making TV programs
3. Grow the production arm to make big shows for global providers

Isilon: critical to success

Dell EMC Isilon technology is helping ITV Studios support production workflows to meet the company's growth objectives in TV production. The Isilon footprint at ITV includes seven production clusters and one test cluster comprising 77 Isilon nodes with 4.5 PB total storage capacity.

The Isilon clusters support the transmission-critical parts of the production chain including content transcoding, content broadcast, content management, streaming media, and post-production.

Rob O'Brien is a Senior Application Manager, Technology Platforms at ITV Studios. He says the Dell EMC Isilon platform is critical to ITV's business objectives. "Isilon manages every bit of media that moves in and out or is worked on within ITV Studios," he says. "The Isilon Support team at ITV Studios is focused on enabling the business to achieve its objectives and make sure the business gets the best out of its programming."

Meeting the challenges of live production

Working side-by-side with the ITV Studios team is a Dell EMC Technical Account Manager (TAM), helping the team meet the challenges of operating in the fast-paced and dynamic environment of live production.

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The TAM works directly with ITV Studios support services and operational management to ensure Isilon clusters are in a healthy state, providing recommendations and best practices to maximize productivity. The TAM also provides proactive guidance to safeguard the Isilon clusters from potential instability issues.

Proactive approach

The TAM is a single point of contact for ITV technical support teams, handling questions and addressing technical concerns. But, as O'Brien notes, "The Dell EMC Isilon platform is best-in-class because it doesn't have many problems. It just works. We credit the proactive approach of the TAM for things running smoothly. With the TAM on hand in the live programming environment, we are confident we can handle anything that comes along."

For ITV Studios, immediate access to technical expertise is essential. O'Brien recalls a specific example with a third party playout software application when the TAM helped them avoid a service interruption. As the application was intermittently reporting IO errors and causing dropouts from time to time, the live record feed was reporting these errors and dropouts during live recording. The TAM worked directly with the ITV production support team to determine the problem was caused by a SMB protocol setting. The TAM amended the change-notify setting and fine-tuned the Isilon client heartbeat notification, which resolved the IO errors and intermittent dropout on the live recording feed.

Consistent service management

ITV Studios also values the consistency of Dell EMC service management. The TAM analyzes the fresh log set on a weekly basis and reports any health-related issues via the weekly TAM report. He also presents at monthly and quarterly review meetings with ITV and the Dell EMC account team.

Other TAM responsibilities include working with ITV storage project managers to plan, test, and validate new releases of the Dell EMC Isilon OneFS operating system. The main objective is ensuring production workflows are spared any unforeseen issues and they work seamlessly with OneFS releases.

The TAM is considered the project owner for new implementation projects such as upgrading OneFS, installing new nodes into an existing cluster, and configuring and

deploying new Isilon clusters. Over a 12-month period, the TAM and ITV team migrated almost 70 Isilon nodes and deployed 66 U-nodes across the estate into the live environment without any outages.

ITV also benefits from the advanced analytics available through their TAM and the Dell EMC Account Management Workbook. It provides an offline, 24-hour snapshot of their global environment. The advanced data visualizations with geospatial mappings, trending and analysis are integrated into the Isilon technical account manager quarterly business review (QBR) reports. The TAM then presents the QBR to ITV management on a scheduled quarterly basis, along with proactive recommendations.

Highest levels of performance & availability

"We have one TAM but multiple locations," O'Brien notes, "so we have our own qualified engineers in other locations. The expert is the TAM, though. That is his day-to-day work, collaborating closely on a daily basis with our Isilon engineers."

With expertise in areas such as capacity and workflow management, the TAM helps the ITV team tune workflows in the most efficient way. The TAM brings the added advantage of experience in other customer environments. This gives him a deeper understanding of the positive and negative ramifications of certain actions.

"We need the highest levels of performance and availability for live production," says O'Brien. "Dell EMC provides both with the Isilon platform and the TAM."



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