

WIZELINE

Turning the Tide: A Guide to the Latest Media Solutions

It's becoming harder to remember a time when media providers controlled our content, programming, and viewing schedule. Empowered by Netflix and on-demand everything, Generation Z won't remember a time when you had to wait until Thursday at 8 PM to watch a prime-time show or the exhilarating feeling of recording on TiVo.

Today's media is ruled by the consumer. Media consumers expect brands to work around them—from watching their favorite TV shows to tailoring ads to their specific taste.

In the fight for the future of media and content, Wizeline often finds itself in the content providers' corner, serving as a coach and advising media companies on the latest technologies needed to succeed.

What have we learned? We believe that media companies will need to function as tech companies, and tech companies, originally just the pipes for content flow, are now trying to catch up as content creators. The internet has irreversibly changed content consumption. Users, viewers, and consumers are king, and successful companies are successful because they cater to the user experience. But more importantly, we've learned that adopting the newest technologies and catching up digitally is feasible.

The following is a crash course in the technologies we see as helping to turn the tide for our media clients.



The Headless CMS

When we think about the latest in digital innovation, a headless content management system likely does not come to mind. But you would be surprised by how many media brands are not leveraging this core piece of technology. While content management systems might not sound exciting, a CMS that's optimized, flexible, and tailored to your needs can provide immense value and make all the difference. For enterprise media companies, a headless CMS helps stitch together all of their sub-brands.

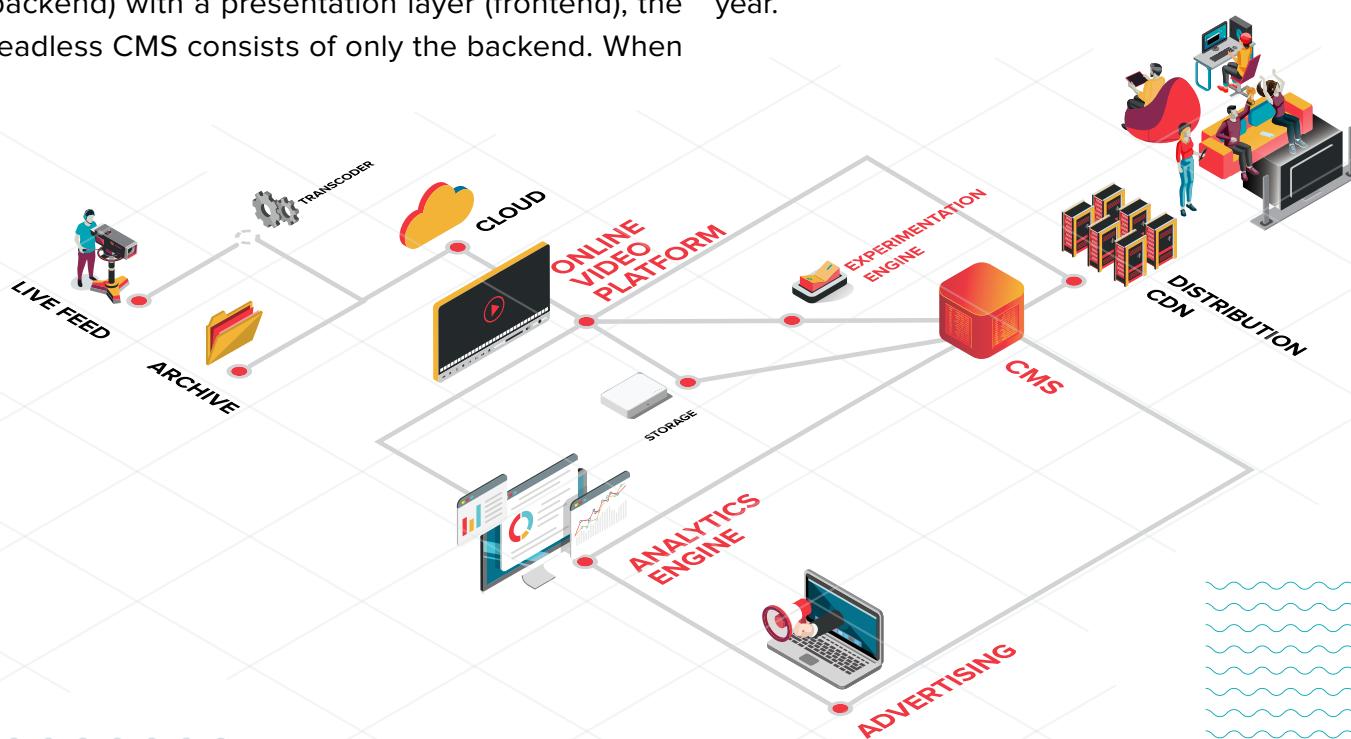
We recently worked with a popular news brand to replace an aging CMS that frequently crashed and couldn't handle a surge in content. This client wanted to replace it with a similar, traditional CMS, but we proposed a cloud-hosted headless CMS that would be better suited to that client's needs instead.

A headless (CMS) differs from a traditional CMS in one critical way. Instead of combining content management (backend) with a presentation layer (frontend), the headless CMS consists of only the backend. When

users access content, the headless CMS serves content and structure through APIs and relies on the frontend to display content.

A headless CMS is device agnostic, allowing media companies to reuse content for any type of device imaginable from web browsers and mobile apps to gaming consoles and emerging platforms. Content creators can easily share content across a viewer's ecosystem by applying new presentation experiences to display content on the desired platform.

While this client was initially skeptical, the team quickly realized the value of using a headless CMS and agreed to move forward. We built and deployed an end-to-end solution with a stellar headless CMS on WordPress. It accelerated content creation and improved UX. The client's system downtime dropped from up to 25 hours a month to 0 hours, and the client experienced an increase in traffic of over 15 percent from the previous year.



OTT Technology

Live streaming is arguably one of the biggest turning points in media consumption. Over-the-top technology (OTT) simply refers to content providers using a standalone product to distribute streaming media directly to viewers online, sans TV or broadcast channels that traditionally distribute content.

Over-the-top (OTT) companies [redefined](#) how consumers watch movies. By giving consumers the power to access the content they wanted and whenever they wanted, these companies disrupted the industry and put distributors such as Blockbuster Video out of business.

Today, over 400M households and 85 percent of U.S. millennials have at least one OTT subscription and this trend is [only beginning](#). Media companies such as NBC Universal and Disney are launching their own streaming services, and streaming services like Netflix are doubling down on creating their own content. New technologies and shifting consumer expectations have created the opportunity for media companies to reclaim lost ground and offer the next big thing.

With more streaming video options than ever before, viewers are [prioritizing services](#) that offer the content they want while also offering a seamless user experience. It's safe to assume that every streaming service will offer on-demand content, so offering a quality experience will become crucial.

What kind of experience do consumers want? They want an immersive video experience. They want to watch video on demand while sharing snippets of

shows that they create with friends. They want to interact with other fans during sports matches. And they want to be the first to try emerging technologies such as virtual reality when they become available.

Many media companies want to provide these experiences but often lack the talent, expertise, or focus to implement them. Tight budgets compel them to invest in infrastructure that will last and maximize revenue.

As the industry continues to consolidate, the largest media companies and streaming services will wield enormous influence over what consumers watch and have exclusive control over viewer data. The longer this trend continues, the fewer control media companies will have over their content and ability to monetize it.



Advertising analytics

Now, here's the good news. Trust in traditional media is at its [highest point](#) in recent years. Consumers are flocking to media companies to read the news, catch up on shows, and follow the latest celebrity gossip. By tracking what consumers are reading, watching, and sharing, media companies have some of the richest consumer data sets in the world.

This data allows companies to accurately segment which groups of consumers respond to different types of content and digital ads. Brands are willing to pay top dollar for better ad targeting and for the assurance that their ads will be featured alongside content that is aligned with their brand. However, many media companies have not fully leveraged their data or ad capabilities to deliver on these opportunities.

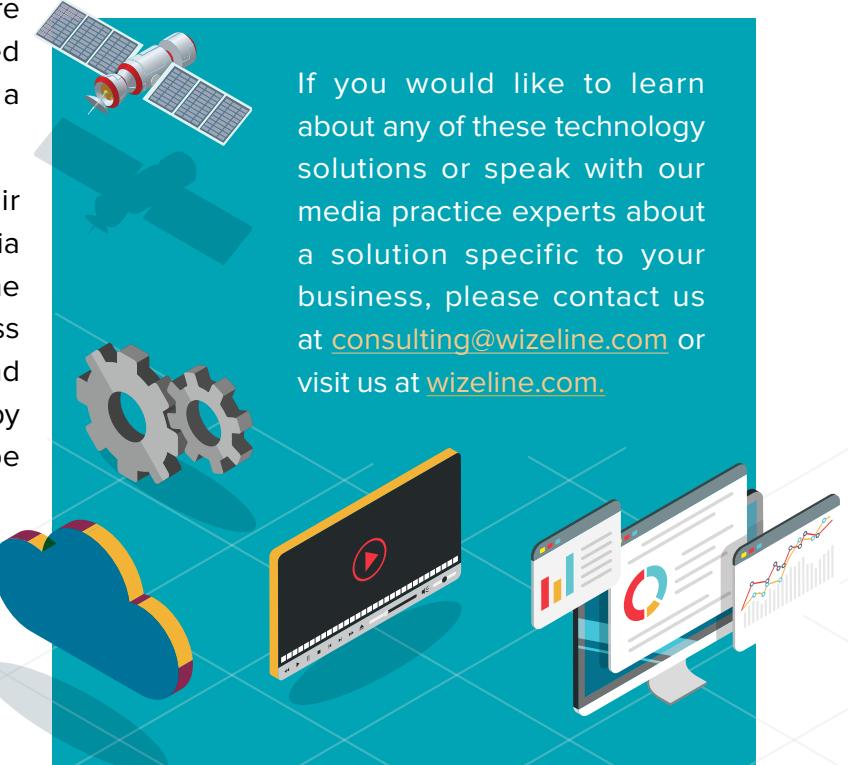
Nearly all media companies track consumer behavior on their sites, but only a few have invested in better data management for more accurate digital ad targeting. For many companies, the data they collect is siloed because their individual properties collect and manage consumer data separately. Others aren't sure where to start. They lack the technology, specialized skills, or vision for designing and implementing a comprehensive solution.

Where should they start? By consolidating their data first. When a visitor reads an article on a media site, uses the mobile app, or shares its content, the company should be able to track this activity across properties and combine it with data from its CRM and CMS. Next, companies should optimize their data by fixing inaccurate or corrupt parts. The process can be

automated using cloud services to maximize speed and accuracy. Finally, companies should store the data in a data lake and use third-party tools via APIs to build models, leverage machine learning, and display insights on a business intelligence (BI) system.

These steps will help media companies better understand their customers. They can also push the data back into their CRM to inform their strategies and offer advertising spots that will maximize spend. Leveraging advertising analytics solutions will help media companies take ownership of their data and monetization strategy, helping them compete with big tech companies.

These technologies are just a few of the solutions that could meaningfully impact media companies and content providers' bottom line. The same principles that made Netflix and Instagram disruptive successes can be applied to traditional media; a commitment to serve the consumer, adaptability, and data-driven content strategies.



If you would like to learn about any of these technology solutions or speak with our media practice experts about a solution specific to your business, please contact us at consulting@wizeline.com or visit us at wizeline.com.