Channel 4 is a popular public service broadcaster based in the UK offering programs at no cost to viewers across television, film and digital media. When Channel 4 first hit the airwaves in 1982 you had to tune in to a favorite show as scheduled or you missed it. And you probably had to use the knob on the TV to change the volume. Today the station’s millions of viewers watch their favorite program whenever, wherever and however they want to.

All of the station’s programs, including “Made in Chelsea” and “Gogglebox” are available for on-demand viewing through a TV, tablet, PC or phone so viewers never need to miss an episode and can catch up any time.

The Challenge: Rapid Innovation and Unpredictable Traffic Spikes

Channel 4 is committed to being on the cutting-edge of online TV delivery. With over half of all 16-34 year olds now registered with All 4, the company sees high adoption rates of on-demand viewing across connected devices. Managed by a small operations team, it’s an ongoing challenge for Declan Toman, Channel 4’s New Media Operations Manager and his team to keep pace with the variety of viewing platforms while still maintaining low error rates.

As a result of the high adoption rates, tremendous scalability is essential as well. While they may be able to foresee that a controversial show will drive traffic spikes, it can be unpredictable and the station needs to be ready for anything. They were looking for a solution that would be:

- Scalable
- Available
- Multi-platform
- Able to handle traffic spikes

The Solution: The Limelight Orchestrate™ Delivery Platform Coupled With Responsive Support

To provide the highest quality video-on-demand on their viewers’ device of choice, Channel 4 chose the Limelight Orchestrate Content Delivery platform. Orchestrate has a proven content delivery network that scales to meet even unexpectedly high viewing demands.

“Limelight is always supportive and responsive far beyond simply delivering on our contract. It’s immensely valuable to us to know they’re there when we need them,” continued Toman.

“Channel 4 is known as an innovative trailblazer at the forefront of delivering programs to our viewers across the UK who prefer to watch on any device at any time. Limelight is a key part of making this happen flawlessly and has always proactively evaluated our configuration and suggested ways for performance improvement.”

– DECLAN TOMAN, New Media Operations Manager, Channel 4
Proactive customer service—Simply delivering on a contract isn’t enough for Channel 4, it’s vital for them to know that if the need arises their vendor will be responsive and take any possible concern seriously.

Reliable performance—Channel 4 viewers expect a TV quality viewing experience at all times, on all devices. Buffering, slow delivery, and unavailability turn away viewers. With Limelight they receive broadcast quality content consistently and reliably.

Global network—When traffic spikes occur, Channel 4 benefits from the bandwidth of Limelight’s global private network to meet an unpredictable demand at any time of the day.

Multi-Device Media Distribution (MMD)—This technology enables Channel 4 to serve multiple devices using the same media files.

About Channel 4

Channel 4 is a publicly-owned, commercially-funded, not-for-profit public service broadcaster and has a remit to be innovative, experimental and distinctive. Its public ownership and not-for-profit status ensure all profit generated by its commercial activity is directly reinvested back into the delivery of its public service remit.

As a publisher-broadcaster, Channel 4 is also required to commission UK content from the independent production sector and currently works with over 300 creative companies across the UK every year. In addition to the main Channel 4 service, its portfolio includes: E4, More4, Film4, 4Music, 4seven, Channel4.com and digital service All 4.