Ars Technica Gives Readers Lightning-Fast Page Loads

"CacheFly has exceeded our expectations on every level, from the technical operation of the actual service, to the top-notch support staff and their responsiveness."

-Jason Marlin, Director of Technology, Ars Technica

Ars Technica
Chicago, IL
www.arstechnica.com

Industry
One of the world's largest Technology news sites.

Challenges
• Needed a scalable, high-performance, fast throughput CDN to load fast, no matter the traffic or file size.
• Required a single point of access to transfer files.

Results
• Infinite scalability easily handles Ars' surges in traffic.
• Reverse Proxy quickly and effectively updates Ars' content.
• Ars' fast speed keeps its readership engaged and growing.

Company Overview
Created in 1998, Ars Technica (latin for "Art of Technology") is one of the oldest and largest technology news and information websites, publishing in-depth news on IT, science, and culture; and reviews and guides on issues such as, computer hardware and software, science, technology policy, and video games.

In 2008, Ars Technica was acquired by Condé Nast Digital, and has since seen year-over-year growth, becoming a trailblazer in technology journalism. Today, Ars serves an average of 60 billion pages per month, and averages around 10 million unique visitors per month.

Business Challenges
Ars Technica's infrastructure served static assets off of the same servers that were responsible for rendering complex dynamic content from their Content Management System (CMS). Problems arose when:
• Ars' growth in readership produced a crushing load for their servers, especially when interest in a particular story or live blog spiked. According to Jason Marlin, Ars Technica's director of technology, "We were using more than 50% of our network bandwidth on our web servers to deliver static content, and 25% of our CPU capacity on these web servers were dedicated to that."
• In addition, Ars ran the risk of packet loss serving content to their global users in far away locations. "We have about 30% of users coming from foreign locations all over the world, and we need to deliver a best in class experience for them as well. It's one thing to get the content to them, but the images and those other files make up a huge portion of the overall user experience."

Ars sought a content delivery network solution and chose CacheFly.

"...the results have been phenomenal in terms of speed."

The Results

According to Marlin, "After implementing CacheFly, especially after our site relaunch, the results have been phenomenal in terms of speed." With CacheFly, Ars has the performance and scalability to serve their ever-increasing number of readers, fast. Marlin sums up the things he loves best about CacheFly...

• **Scalability:** "Now we're seeing around 60 million page views, and sometimes we have spike events, e.g. announcing the latest Apple iPhone. Those types of spike events will sometimes generate 15-16M page views. Without a CDN, a big announcement like that would completely shut us down. With CacheFly, you don't even see an issue. The CDN just absorbs it, while all other websites in the same scenario are struggling to stay up. Customers commend us on that."

"Reverse Proxy has made our deployment process so fast and has reduced the complexity of our deployment. "

• **Reverse Proxy:** "Prior to our last site redesign, we manually synced static assets with CacheFly and were looking for a more seamless means of keeping files updated. We switched to their Reverse Proxy mechanism and were initially concerned about whether assets would be immediately available on the CacheFly servers. We were amazed by how well it worked when deployed. Reverse Proxy has made our deployment process so fast and has reduced the complexity of our deployment. The bonus is that this method requires no work from us in terms of syncing assets – we simply make sure files are available on our servers and reference them from the CacheFly CDN URL – the rest is magic!"

• **Support:** "CacheFly has never passed the buck or pawned an issue off due to 'connectivity problems' or other mysteries of technology. They own the support ticket and work with us to resolve it, even if their network isn't at the heart of the problem. From investigating odd trace routes in remote parts of the world to tracking down assets that were slow to update, they always help us out. I can't say enough good things about the CacheFly support team."

• **Token Authentication:** "With token authentication, we're able to offer our premier members downloadable PDFs of our news stories."

"We are one of the largest, busiest websites in tech news - not just because of the writing, but because Ars loads very fast."

"We have a lot of tech sites ask us 'how do you get your site to load so fast? In the U.S our avg. response is 400 ms (page loads) for users who have cached most of the pages. We are one of the largest, busiest websites in tech news - not just because of the writing, but because Ars loads very fast. Overall, we're very happy."

Are your files delivered fast enough?
Be the fastest with the throughput experts.

CacheFly

1.312.895.3030   sales@cachefly.com   cachefly.com