



WIRED BROADCAST • CLIENT STORIES SERIES

Game on, lockdown or not: top players participate remotely in a live sport event



AMPITO Ampito Group is a Wired Broadcast partner and leading provider of technology solutions, cloud services, and digital media for the enterprise and public sector across the UK, European, African, and US markets. Founded in 2006, Ampito Group has seen rapid growth and has developed into one of the UK's leading MSPs. For reference, the Group has designed, deployed, and supported the largest SD-WAN networks in Europe.



Challenge During lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, live sports events ceased. Little existed to take their place because most sports cannot be played remotely.

Not so with darts. Executives at the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) in the UK saw immediately that an international darts competition is a good candidate for remote sport, so they developed an innovative tour format originally called Darts at Home. The final competition format launched on April 17—the 2020 PDC Home Tour—pitting 100+ players against each other in groups of four over 43 nights. Each player needed only a good internet connection and a video camera to stream live from home.

Sadly, home internet is a problem in rural areas of the UK and Europe.

In the case of Gary Anderson, two-time PDC World Champion, testing revealed that his home internet in Somerset lacked the reliability and performance needed to stream live. When he announced he would not be able to participate, news outlets pounced on the story (e.g., “Gary’s Woe-Fi – Anderson out of PDC Home Tour due to internet struggles”), stoking the disappointment of fans.

PDC urgently needed a solution to ensure that top talent could participate and draw maximum viewership to this new breed of tour.



Solution

Seeing the news story, telecoms and solutions providers reached out to PDC, among them, Ampito Group. Because of their strong track record in rapid deployment and the sport sector, Ampito Group knew that a multi-WAN solution would be the key to addressing PDC's challenge. They described the use case to Wired Broadcast, who recommended the Pileus multi-WAN router from Celerway, and then submitted a proposal to PDC.

Like all of Wired Broadcast's solutions for mission-critical connectivity, Pileus does not rely on any single wired or wireless connection. Instead, it uses up to 6 simultaneous WAN connections (2 cellular) to create a resilient and secure connection virtually anywhere, with load balancing capacity of nearly 1 Gbps.

Turnaround was complete in under a week. The Pileus device underwent two rounds of testing, first in Ampito Group's test environment, with support from Wired Broadcast, and second, at PDC's production company. Then the plug-and-play device was shipped to Somerset in time for Anderson to join the competition with a live stream from his home.

"It was exactly what we hoped. Pileus resolved the problem entirely, enabling a flawless live stream. We highly recommend this solution."

MATT PORTER, CEO, PDC

Results

Anderson usually plays darts in an outbuilding on his property. Even after a local provider had learned of his plight and installed a new high-speed internet connection, the Wi-Fi signal was still weak in the outbuilding.

Once Pileus was in place, however, the weakness of the Wi-Fi signal was irrelevant. Equipped with SIM cards from EE and Vodafone, the Pileus unit combined two LTE connections with the available Wi-Fi to create resilient connectivity with the performance needed for the live stream. Thanks to Celerway's Phantom load-balanced VPN, which enabled the video stream to retain one IP address during seamless switching among WAN connections, the stream was flawless.

Though he came late to the party, Anderson took the lead in Group 30 and went on to the playoffs. He was ultimately defeated by Nathan Aspinall, who thanked PDC for the event, saying, "I think a lot of us were sceptical at the start, but we've all loved it."

For PDC, the outcome was ideal. "It was exactly what we hoped," said Matt Porter, CEO of PDC. "Pileus resolved the problem entirely, enabling a flawless live stream. We highly recommend this solution."

- » **Secured participation of PDC's top players in innovative remote sport event during lockdown**
- » **Ensured viewership of fans loyal to top players and attracted new audiences**
- » **Gained widespread media coverage across the UK for PDC's ground-breaking event format**

Thanks to Ampito Group, PDC is now prepared to run competitions in virtually any situation.

For their part, Ampito is pleased with the collaboration. "At the end of the day, Wired Broadcast delivered. They have a dynamic and helpful team," said Mike Bowman, General Manager of RedVeU, a division of Ampito Group. A recent addition to Wired Broadcast's channel partner program, Ampito Group now offer Celerway products and Wired Broadcast's Mediaport® as part of their solution sets for SD-WAN, rapid deployment, and remote work.

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About Wired Broadcast Wired Broadcast is an international provider of agile connectivity for mission-critical applications and a trusted provider of end-to-end broadcast and live event facilities and services. Since 1992, we have served hundreds of influential clients in broadcasting (BBC), construction (RG Group), banking (Royal Bank of Scotland), live events (Live Nation Entertainment), defence, and more.

We manufacture Mediaport® multi-WAN solutions and distribute related products. Our wide range of multi-WAN solutions provides reliable connectivity for mission-critical applications in fields as diverse as security, law enforcement, the military, construction, education, live streaming, and of course, TV and radio.

To learn more about our multi-WAN solutions for remote operations and rapid deployment, contact us at sales@wiredbroadcast.com or give us a call at +44 20 3376 7710.

