

And...ACTION! Atom Tickets Steals the Show with Dynamic Media Transformation

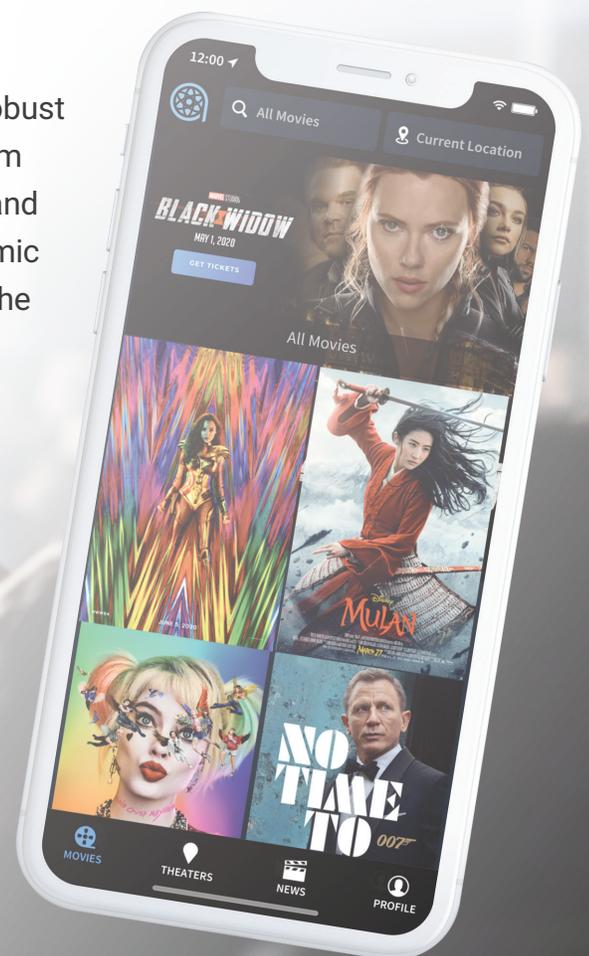


“The beauty of Cloudinary is that all the teams are able to now work faster and with more autonomy. Every team—content, marketing, engineering, and external teams that work with assets—is now able to leverage Cloudinary in a way that suits their working style and needs. This ensures that we can maintain a single source of truth to enable our teams while empowering customers with high-fidelity visual experiences. Cloudinary has been a wonderful partner to us in terms of supporting both our technology and operational needs.”

—Jeff Hsu, VP of Engineering, Atom Tickets

Solution

Atom Tickets, a social movie ticketing app and platform with robust social and sharing features, uses Cloudinary as a single platform to manage the entire lifecycle of assets across internal teams and external partners. The company leverages Cloudinary for dynamic transformations on images, movie trailer stills, and videos. As the company grew from having a mobile-only presence to adding a website for its expanding base of customers, Atom Tickets has relied on Cloudinary to serve high-fidelity images and videos without any performance degradation or spike in bandwidth.



Results

Faster, more efficient content publishing

Engaging, visual experience across every touchpoint

Scalable, future-proof technology stack

Company

Atom Tickets is an award-winning startup based in Santa Monica, California that has changed the way people go to the movies with a revolutionary, social movie-ticketing app and website. Backed by Lionsgate, Disney, Twentieth Century Fox Film, and Fidelity Management & Research Company, Atom Tickets is enabled on more than 20,000 screens across the U.S., including AMC Theatres, Cinemark, Harkins Theatres, National Amusements' Showcase Cinemas and many more. Atom Ticket's user-friendly and socially driven interface allows movie lovers to search for films instantly, invite friends, buy tickets, pre-order concessions, and enjoy a VIP experience at the theater. With Atom Tickets, paper tickets and IOUs have been replaced by the company's innovative platform that keeps all plans, messages, payment, and tickets in one convenient place.

The Challenge: Scaling Media Management with Growing Needs

When the company was founded in 2014, Atom Tickets was a mobile-only movie-ticketing platform for both iOS and Android users. The company first started using Amazon Web Services (AWS) for storing its images and movie trailers on Amazon Simple Storage Service (S3) and Amazon Cloudfront, then Fastly, as its content delivery network (CDN).

Evolving to meet the growing need to serve customers across multiple channels and stay competitive, Atom Tickets launched a website version of its platform in 2016. Immediately the company knew it needed a robust media management platform, with integrated storage and CDN, to support a larger scale of customers across all touchpoints. In addition, Atom Tickets launched a third-party website on behalf of Regal Theaters, the second-largest theater chain in the country. Regal had its own content managers who needed the ability to manage their own assets in a self-service fashion.

"When we decided to create the Atom Tickets and Regal Theaters websites, we started looking for a solution to deliver the highest-quality movie images and trailer videos across these new channels, without slowing down our publishing process. We also wanted a solution with a user-friendly UI that would allow non-technical people to work autonomously, from uploading assets to manipulating them dynamically as needed," said Jeff Hsu, Atom Ticket's vice president of Engineering.

Atom Tickets looked for a powerful solution that could support the large scale of images, trailer videos, and other rich media assets, such as animated still pictures, that require significant bandwidth.

"We create animated still pictures for our studio partners, which are basically looping videos, that we use as advertising on our website and mobile apps," Hsu continued. "These are very popular images since they appear on the homepage. The challenge for us is delivering a high-fidelity experience without using up an exorbitant amount of bandwidth very quickly."

The Clouinary Solution: Automating the Media Management Workflow

The decision to work with Clouinary was an easy one for the Atom Tickets team. Knowing that Atom Tickets needed a solution to manage and deliver high-quality, high-performing assets to all of their customer touchpoints, Clouinary quickly proved it could streamline the entire lifecycle of assets, along with the ability to dynamically transform images, videos, and other rich media assets to ensure an optimal experience essential to converting Atom Tickets customers.

As part of the media workflow, the Atom Tickets team has implemented a nightly build to ingest all the assets it receives from partners, upload a backup copy to S3 and simultaneously upload them to Clouinary via API calls. During this process of uploading assets to Clouinary, all of the necessary settings for selecting the most efficient format, quality, and resolution are set programmatically. This allows Atom Tickets to automatically deliver each asset to exactly match the specifications of the viewing context, such as changing images to portrait or landscape mode depending on whether a user is viewing on a mobile or desktop device.

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"Videos and images are critically important to the movie selection and purchase process. Delivering media rich experiences to our customers quickly and at the highest quality is a must today, especially for a ticket marketplace where time is of the essence. Clouinary and its robust media platform have been essential for delivering the visual experiences our customers demand, giving them the best experience no matter their device or bandwidth—while giving us peace of mind knowing it's being handled."

—Jeff Hsu, VP of Engineering, Atom Tickets

What's more, Cloudinary has helped Atom Tickets to grow its team while being able to seamlessly manage the handoff of assets across functions with a single source of truth. The content team works with producers. These range from small movie houses to large movie studios, such as Fathom Events and Disney, which typically send images and movie trailers via email that are then uploaded directly into the Cloudinary platform. At any point, Atom Tickets has more than 6,000 images, posters, and video assets attached to active movie titles.

The marketing team publishes content for ad placements, typically a sponsored movie title on the homepage, directly from their content management system through an integration with Cloudinary. The editorial team often creates special content around a movie or fan event, such as ComicCon. All the images required for such blogs or other dedicated web pages are managed within and delivered via Cloudinary. Again, this guarantees that the right version of the right asset is available for use without a lot of back and forth.

The Results: Faster Content Publishing and Improved User Experience

In terms of migrating all our assets to the Cloudinary platform, Hsu said that the entire process was very straightforward. "Cloudinary made it really easy on us during the migration process. We only spent a short amount of time with Cloudinary's APIs to automate the entire workflow, from the ingestion process to publishing across different channels. Beyond setting up the admin rights and access management for the right employees, the Atom Tickets team was instantly off and running and we haven't looked back," Hsu noted.

Cloudinary also enabled Atom Tickets to move away from a manual workflow of changing the format and aspect ratio of videos, which historically required significant back and forth between production agencies and Atom Tickets' marketing team. The marketing team can now rely on Cloudinary's automatic optimization capabilities to ensure that all the videos start fast and stream smoothly without buffering interruptions. This has enabled Atom Tickets to drastically reduce the bandwidth consumed by videos, keeping costs under control without affecting the user experience.

"Considering the number of people and teams that work with assets before they're published on our web and mobile apps, Cloudinary makes it possible to reduce all the potential manual intervention that could and would slow down the process of pushing new content to our customers," Hsu added.

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"The Cloudinary team has been very proactive with us from the very beginning, helping us to build and scale with the platform. We consider Cloudinary a true partner with our business and look forward to finding ways to use their media platform to bring the very best digital experiences to our customers."

–Jeff Hsu, VP of Engineering, Atom Tickets

About Cloudinary

Cloudinary's end-to-end solution makes it easy to upload, store, manage, manipulate, and deliver images and videos, efficiently and effectively. Cloudinary has quickly become the de facto solution used by web and mobile application developers at major companies around the world to streamline image and video management and deliver an optimal end-user experience. Among Cloudinary users are Conde Nast, Bleacher Report, Forbes, Wired, TED, Under Armour, Lululemon, Whole Foods, and many others. For more information, visit www.cloudinary.com or follow on Twitter.