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WXPN Syndicates XPoNential Radio with Live, Uncompressed, IP-Based Delivery Service from StreamGuys and Barix

Barix Reflector service operated by StreamGuys provides reliable, internet-based delivery with uncompromised quality at cost-effective price point for expanding “Triple A” radio offering

BAYSIDE, CALIFORNIA, March 12, 2019 – Philadelphia-based [WXPN](#), the public radio service of the University of Pennsylvania, takes great pride in its reputation for innovative programming and operational practices. When the nationally-recognized leader in Triple A (adult album alternative) radio set out to develop a more sustainable distribution model for its [XPoNential Radio](#) channel — which not only extends WXPN’s brand and programming expertise, but also produces revenue — it turned to the Reflector service from streaming solutions pioneer [StreamGuys](#) and IP audio technology leader [Barix](#) to power its new syndication system.

XPoNential Radio showcases an eclectic blend of blues, rock, world, folk, and alternative country with a unique mix of emerging and heritage contemporary musicians. XPoNential Radio is offered to CPB-qualified public radio stations for use on primary terrestrial broadcasts or HD channels, and affiliate stations can brand it at the bottom of each hour with their own messaging and station IDs.

XPoNential Radio was originally distributed to affiliates via satellite and offered only for use on HD2 or HD3 channels. WXPN wanted to widen the usage of the channel to include primary broadcast, and while it continues to use satellite for national programming such as its award-winning World Cafe, it needed to find an alternative, sustainable distribution model for the smaller-scale XPoNential Radio.

“Satellite is still an essential part of the public radio distribution ecosystem, but in a multi-platform and varying-scale environment like ours, we also need reliable, cost-efficient alternative methods to distribute our programming,” said Roger LaMay, general manager at WXPN. “It is essential that we keep the XPoNential Radio service low-cost both for ourselves and potential affiliates, many of which are smaller stations or those looking to program their HD2 or HD3 channels, so a different solution is needed for closer-to-the ground operations.”

Despite cost-effectiveness being one of the station’s motivations, quality and reliability were also key criteria. “We always have a mind for how we can have the highest-quality audio, which made an uncompressed solution attractive,” explained LaMay. “And of course, reliability is essential.”

The Barix Reflector service operated by StreamGuys allows content providers to easily deliver audio over IP without time-consuming network configuration effort. Uncompressed PCM audio is transported between Barix hardware endpoints across StreamGuys' robust content delivery network, while link management is simplified through an intuitive, cloud-based portal. Having successfully used StreamGuys' services for all of their streaming content for many years, WXPN found Reflector immediately compelling, but still put it through extensive in-house and beta testing.

"We weren't sure if affiliates that had only used satellite before would be willing to go to IP, but ultimately there was very little resistance," said LaMay. "Once stations discovered how easy it would be, they quickly got on board. They also appreciated the pristine, lossless, CD-quality audio enabled by uncompressed delivery. Our beta testing was so successful that in one case, the affiliate racked up the Barix unit after just one day and wasn't going to give it back."

The new XPoNential Radio distribution system was launched January 1 and is now serving affiliates as far away as Alaska, including KBIA, KSTK, KUAC, KUCB, KWMU, WFYI, WPLN, WUAL and WWFM.

As a managed service offering, Reflector makes it simple for affiliates to get started with XPoNential Radio. "WXPN purchases the Barix Exstreamer units, and StreamGuys pre-configures and ships them to the stations," said John Bartol, IT director at WXPN. "The affiliate plugs in Ethernet, power and audio cables, and XPoNential Radio programming comes out. It's very much plug-and-play."

The service's cloud-based management portal similarly makes life easier for WXPN themselves. "As the admin, I can log in to Reflector and see that all clients are connected, streaming, and up to date," said Bartol. "I can also start, stop and configure delivery to each affiliate, so if we ever need to terminate service to a client, I can do that directly through the management console. That wasn't possible in our previous approach."

Affiliates also don't need any "special" internet connectivity to use the service. A very modest 1.5Mbps of bandwidth is enough to receive the uncompressed signal, and most consumer-level internet connections are sufficiently reliable and stable. Even WXPN does not require hefty bandwidth regardless of how many affiliates they serve, as the Barix Reflector service takes a single feed from the origin, with StreamGuys' delivery network scaling out the bandwidth for reaching recipients.

"XPoNential Radio is an easy way for stations to offer a fully-prepared programming service beyond what they're doing on their own," concluded LaMay. "The uncompressed Reflector service from StreamGuys and Barix lets us reliably deliver XPoNential Radio in unbeatable quality at a sustainable price point."

StreamGuys and Barix will demonstrate the Reflector service at the upcoming 2019 NAB Show (April 8-11 in Las Vegas), where StreamGuys will co-exhibit with ENCO in booth N2524, and Barix will exhibit in booth C1139.

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About StreamGuys, Inc.

In business since 2000, StreamGuys is an industry-leading service provider of live and on-demand streaming, podcasting delivery, and software-as-a-service (SaaS) toolsets for enterprise-level broadcast media organizations. The company brings together the industry's best price-to-performance ratio, a robust and reliable network, and an infinitely scalable cloud-based platform for clients of any size to process, deliver, monetize and playout professional streaming content. StreamGuys supports many of the world's largest Podcasts, global TV and radio broadcasters, video and audio production companies, houses of worship, retail and hospitality businesses, government organizations, medical and healthcare services, and live venues for sports and entertainment. The company excels in developing and deploying technologies for business growth and revenue generation, including dynamic ad insertion, Alexa skills, mobile streaming and detailed business and data analytics.

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