

LIFE TIME CASE STUDY



[01] **Life Time brings a personal and local experience into their members' homes, thanks to a customized, high-quality video streaming solution from SOUTHWORKS.**

[02] SITUATION

Life Time is one of the largest luxury health, wellness, and fitness providers across the US and Canada. They are focused on bringing an elite and personalized fitness club experience to their members. When the COVID-19 lockdowns began, Life Time sought a solution to help bring this experience to their clients remotely.

They wanted to find a way to deliver the energy and expertise of their beloved fitness instructors into the homes of their members.

Furthermore, Life Time wanted a video streaming platform tailored to their brand, and they were not interested in an out-of-the-box solution such as YouTube, Vimeo, or Brightcove.

As a heavy user of Microsoft technology and services, Life Time sought a more customized platform that could build on top of Azure, Microsoft's cloud computing service.

LIFE TIME[®]

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The process from proposal to finished product was quick and smooth for Life Time.

“SOUTHWORKS took the time to really understand what we wanted to do. They asked a lot of questions, and, born from their previous experience, were able to quickly pull out what our requirements were. Without requiring a lot of time on my part, they were able to deliver on a solution,” shared Brian.

[03] SOLUTION

Life Time partnered with SOUTHWORKS, a trusted Microsoft partner, to create their custom over-the-top (OTT) video streaming platform on Azure.

“They had a very compelling and complete proposal for us. It spoke to our needs and their track record of building media services on Azure for even more demanding situations. Also, their tagline, ‘Make Everything Right,’ really shined through compared to other platforms we

Thanks to SOUTHWORKS, Life Time now has a cloud-native solution to stream live fitness sessions and video content to their clientele, regardless of where they may be. Leveraging Azure Media Services, they have the ability to deliver high-quality video, in various formats, to members using different devices.

Distribution of high-bandwidth, HD video content is powered by Azure CDN, which minimizes latency by caching content at strategically placed physical nodes across the world. Monitoring has also been implemented to immediately notify Life Time team members of technical difficulties such as a physical encoder becoming disconnected during a live-stream.

Instructors are able to easily transmit live events through on-premise equipment located in Life Time's fitness studios. Through a custom management portal, operators are able to render, edit, publish, start and stop live streams linked to clubs across multiple regions. Today, Life Time club access and digital members can choose from up to 1,000 livestream classes weekly that originate from more than 20 clubs across the country.

"With this platform, our members can go to any region of the country and take a livestream class that they may have otherwise taken in person," said Brian. "It also allows them to try new classes and instructors. They love it!"

CLOSED CAPTIONS FOR LIVE STREAM

Life Time had a uniquely challenging need for the platform: closed captions on the live streaming content.

SOUTHWORKS provided a solution through Azure Cognitive Services, which uses Artificial Intelligence, to automatically generate IMSC1.1-compatible transcribed text.

"I don't think any of our competitors can do Closed Captions on their live streams," said Brian. "This was a cost-effective solution that satisfied our requirements and no one else was offering it."



[04]

RESULTS

> Member Retention Due to the Success of the Digital Platform

"Many of our competitors have struggled in the past 12 months. Life Time has been able to retain a greater share of our members—even when clubs were closed—thanks to this alternative content channel," Brian said.

> Excellent Project Communication

"They provide daily status updates and they're ridiculous in their detail," said Brian. "I never received that from another third party before. There's absolutely no question what they're working on, what they're going to work on tomorrow."

> Quick Turnaround Time

The SOUTHWORKS team was able to get this product launched within 8 weeks, start to finish, empowering Life Time to quickly pivot during the COVID crisis.

> Accurate Project Estimates

A frequent difficulty in software development and technical projects is underestimation of time and resources, but with SOUTHWORKS, "it was uncanny how spot-on a lot of the estimates were when things actually came to fruition," Brian said.