



ACM

CASE STUDY

Australian Community Media transforms operations with centralized monitoring and log management



ABOUT ACM

Australian Community Media (ACM) publishes over 160 regional publications and numerous agricultural publications. Its mastheads include The Land, Queensland Country Life, the Canberra Times, and more than 100 community-based websites across Australia.



Media



~900 Employees



Sydney, Australia



“The time savings have been substantial. We are now able to be proactive to ensure there are no issues, rather than reactive after problems occur.”

James Flores
Enterprise Systems Engineer
Australian Community Media




WHY DATADOG?

- Intuitive dashboard creation
- Easy onboarding
- Slack integration streamlines incident management

CHALLENGE

After splitting from its parent company, ACM lost access to critical monitoring tools, leaving its technology team with limited visibility into systems that directly impact revenue generation.

USE CASE

 **Infrastructure monitoring**  **Log Management**
 **Serverless**

KEY RESULTS

**Substantial
time savings**

Shifted from reactive to
proactive problem prevention

**Single source
of truth**

Complete visibility across
previously disconnected systems

**Simplified
troubleshooting**

Intuitive dashboards
streamline log analysis

Navigating system visibility after a corporate restructuring

Australian Community Media (ACM) is Australia's largest independent publishing company, reaching approximately 4.1 million Australians online and 2.4 million in print each month. The company publishes more than 160 regional publications, numerous agricultural publications, and more than 100 community-based websites across Australia.

ACM's IT department provides internal tools that enable its advertising representatives to manage the ads they sell to businesses. These systems support the entire advertising workflow, from booking to production. "Our technology systems are directly tied to revenue generation," says James Flores, enterprise systems engineer at ACM. "We provide the infrastructure that allows our sales teams to serve local advertisers effectively, which is essential to our business model."

Over the last several years, ACM has been working to modernize its technology stack, slowly decommissioning numerous legacy systems and making a gradual move to the cloud. A few years ago, the company was split into several different entities. At that time, the division that owned ACM's only monitoring tool took it with them, leaving the technology team with limited visibility into its systems. The team needed to find a new solution.



Selecting a comprehensive monitoring solution

After evaluating several potential solutions, ACM chose Datadog. “I researched a lot of products, but the main reason why we moved to Datadog was because it was the simplest to use. We got it working, it’s set and forget, all in one single platform,” says Flores.

ACM’s IT team also wanted to avoid adding more infrastructure to manage, and Datadog fit the bill. “I don’t want to have to monitor a server to monitor servers. We wanted a cloud product that could do it all for us—one less thing to worry about,” adds Flores.

ACM initially implemented Datadog for infrastructure monitoring. The platform’s straightforward onboarding process enabled team members to quickly take ownership of their respective areas. With numerous on-premises legacy workloads, ACM also needed a central log management solution, so they soon began using Datadog Log Management as well. “Before Datadog Log Management, we’d open up remote desktop sessions to multiple servers and do a find in a notepad on each one—it was very mundane,” explains Flores.

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Today, Datadog Log Management has transformed how ACM tracks advertisements through its systems. “Now, when we’re searching for a particular advertisement number from a specific client, we can trace it all the way through various unrelated systems,” adds Flores. “We can see its journey holistically because we can search that ad number across multiple log files. We basically throw everything at Datadog and leverage the system to find what we need, all visible in a nice dashboard.”

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ACM uses Datadog’s log anomaly detection capabilities to monitor incidents across its systems. The team uploads logs to Amazon S3 storage and relies on the Datadog platform to flag any unusual patterns or issues. When potential problems are identified, notifications are sent through the integrated Slack channels, streamlining their alert management process. ACM has configured many of their applications to push logs directly into Datadog, creating a centralized repository for all its logging data.

Meanwhile, ACM’s data center team uses Datadog to monitor critical infrastructure metrics like disk space and CPU usage. “It’s especially good for detecting when a certain disk is going to reach the warning threshold,” says Flores. “We are in the process of consolidating all our photo archives across the business. We get alerts saying things like ‘In two weeks, this disk is going to be full,’ which is very helpful.”

Transforming IT operations with centralized monitoring

Today, ACM has experienced significant improvements in its monitoring capabilities and operational efficiency. The IT team can now find problems faster and fix issues before users notice them. The easy-to-use dashboards and filters makes searching through logs simple, giving teams a reliable single source of information. “The time savings have been substantial,” says Flores. “We are now able to be proactive to ensure there are no issues, rather than reactive after problems occur.”

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This shift from reactive to proactive monitoring has fundamentally changed how the team measures success. “People on the team tell me, ‘Imagine if we didn’t have this, our monitoring would be the users screaming.’ Now we prevent those screams from happening in the first place. If there are no problems, it means we’re being proactive.”

Looking ahead, ACM plans to use Datadog to further optimize its AWS spend. The IT team also hopes to expand the platform’s use across more teams and applications within the organization. “I’d like to get more of our applications integrated with Datadog,” Flores says. “I want to know what else it can do for us.”

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