Elevating Streaming Services: Harnessing PhotonIQ to Optimize Discoverability and Revenue



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Introduction	4
Changing viewer habits	4
How do you stay ahead of the competition?	4
Enhancing streaming website experiences: a comprehensive approach	5
Step 1: Content discoverability and SEO	5
Step 2: Traffic management for peak times	5
Step 3: Enhanced security and personalization	6
Step 4: Improved search functionality	6
Step 5: Hyper-personalized advertising and entitlements	6
Transforming the OTT space: a strategic overview	6
Elevating streaming services discoverability and engagement through strategic SEO	7
Optimizing for SEO: key considerations	7
The advantages of prerendering	8
Navigating website traffic and uptime for streaming services	10
Impact of high traffic on OTT platforms	10
The role of virtual waiting rooms	11
Intelligent virtual waiting rooms for streaming services	11
PhotonIQ Virtual Waiting Rooms (VWRs)	11
Enhancing streaming video experiences with PhotonIQ VWRs	12
Enhancing viewer engagement and security for OTT platforms	13
Accelerating engagement through insights	14
Managing fraud and security	14
The path forward for OTT platforms	14
PhotonIQ Fingerprint for video streaming services	14
Visitor identification and personalization	14
Advanced fraud detection and prevention	15
Integration with viewing controls	15
Performance and scalability	15
Leveraging hypersearch to enhance discoverability and engagement	16
Instantaneous search responses for enhanced viewer experience	16
Personalization at scale	17
Enhanced user experience and efficient content discovery	17
Reduced bounce rates and increased viewer loyalty	17
Enhancing hypersearch with location services	17
Strategic advantage of hypersearch in OTT	18
PhotonIQ HyperSearch for streaming services	18
Maximizing ad revenue and personalization	19

Hyper-targeted ad cohorts and dynamic ad matching	19
Entitlements check and serving	20
Real-time data enrichment for more revenue opportunities	20
Scaling to meet the demands of peak viewership	20
Increase revenue up to 300%	20
Implement PhotonIQ services in 30 days or less for fast ROI	21

Introduction

The landscape of Over-The-Top (OTT) video streaming services is undergoing a dramatic transformation, driven by evolving viewer preferences and the relentless pace of technological innovation. The <u>global streaming market</u> is projected to reach a revenue of US\$126.4m in 2024 and further grow at an annual rate of 9.89% (CAGR 2024-2028) to US\$184.3m by 2028. This growth demands that streaming service providers not only match but exceed the digital expectations of today's audiences to stay competitive and relevant.

Changing viewer habits

The shift towards streaming is evident in the changing habits of viewers. <u>Statista</u> predicts that by 2026, Americans will spend 186 minutes a day video streaming on devices, marking a 17.25% increase from 2022. In contrast, traditional TV viewing is expected to decrease by 17.6% over the same period, with an average of 131 minutes a day in 2026.

The rise of video streaming can be attributed to several factors, including the convenience, personalization, variety, affordability, and flexibility it provides over traditional television viewing. The growth in devices that enable easy on-demand access to streaming platforms anywhere, such as smart TVs, as reported by <u>Technavio</u>, has also fueled its popularity.

How do you stay ahead of the competition?

Whether you are a streaming giant like Netflix, Hulu, and Disney or just starting out, the main goal is to grow and retain subscribers. If you are a beginner or rising star, the challenge may be greater as you are trying different ways to get discovered by the right audience. Several key factors contribute to a streaming platform's success, starting before the subscriber journey with SEO visibility and content discoverability. Personalized viewer experiences, dynamic ad matching, and the ability to manage high traffic volumes during peak times are also crucial.

In addition to these factors, securing the platform against unauthorized sharing is necessary to protect digital rights and ensure a fair and exclusive viewing experience, especially during high-volume events. Advanced search capabilities and location-based services can further enhance the user experience by helping viewers find desired content quickly and efficiently while providing customized content and ads based on their geographic location.

As video streaming providers navigate this complex digital landscape, the need for sophisticated solutions to these challenges has never been greater. The adoption of advanced digital strategies and technologies is paramount in creating seamless, engaging, and secure streaming experiences that meet the evolving expectations of today's viewers.

Enhancing streaming website experiences: a comprehensive approach



Photo by Alexander Shatov on Unsplash.

In today's crowded streaming arena, where viewers are spoiled for choice, keeping them engaged and coming back for more is the name of the game. Viewers will quickly switch services if they can't easily find their desired content, get kicked out during a crucial moment of their favorite show, or are bombarded with irrelevant ads. Moreover, if a streaming platform lacks visibility in search results, potential viewers may never discover the content they're looking for, leading to missed opportunities for audience growth. Let's explore six key strategies to attract more viewers and keep them engaged.

Step 1: Content discoverability and SEO

With the vast amount of content available, making your platform's offerings easily discoverable to potential viewers is essential. Implementing prerendering techniques can improve the indexing of dynamic content by search engines, enhancing content visibility and driving organic traffic to the platform. Fast-loading pages ensure a smooth path to content discovery and viewing.

Step 2: Traffic management for peak times

Streaming services often face traffic surges during popular show releases or live events. Employing virtual waiting rooms or similar technologies can help manage these spikes, maintaining platform performance and ensuring a positive viewer experience during peak demand periods.

Step 3: Enhanced security and personalization

<u>Account sharing and unauthorized access</u> are prevalent challenges in the OTT video streaming space. Utilizing technologies like device fingerprinting can help platforms identify and manage shared accounts, enhancing security and enabling more personalized content recommendations based on individual viewing habits.

Step 4: Improved search functionality

A sophisticated search function is key to keeping viewers engaged. Implementing hyper-fast search capabilities ensures viewers can quickly and easily find the content they're looking for, significantly improving the overall user experience.

Step 5: Hyper-personalized advertising and entitlements

In an era where viewers expect content tailored to their preferences, dynamic ad matching offers a way to personalize the advertising experience. This involves leveraging viewer data to serve relevant ads, enhancing viewer engagement while opening up additional revenue streams for the platform.

Transforming the OTT space: a strategic overview

Elevating streaming experiences requires a comprehensive approach to digital optimization. <u>PhotonIQ's AI-powered services</u> are designed to enhance content discoverability through SEO and hypersearch, manage traffic during peak times, improve security and personalization, and deliver hyper-targeted advertising and entitlements. By focusing on these critical areas, PhotonIQ helps streaming platforms create better content experiences that captivate and retain their audience.

PhotonIQ's technology can be seamlessly integrated into existing OTT platforms, helping to smooth out any issues that might detract from viewer satisfaction. Our services are implemented quickly, leading to better performance and faster ROI – without the need for lengthy redesigns or reallocation of resources. Let's walk through the key components of PhotonIQ services to see how you can better attract, engage, and keep subscribers.

Elevating streaming services discoverability and engagement through strategic SEO



Unsplash+ in collaboration with Alex Shuper.

For OTT video providers, securing a top spot on search engine results pages (SERPs) is essential in a market flooded with over <u>300+ services</u> - just in the US. With most viewers starting their search for new shows or movies with a search engine query, ranking highly can significantly boost a platform's visibility and click-through rates (CTRs). A strong SEO strategy ensures that when potential viewers are looking for their next binge-watch or movie night option, your content appears prominently.

Statistics highlight the importance of ranking well: looking at how eCommerce sites that dominate their niche could see CTRs nearing 40%, with each step up in search results potentially increasing CTR by 2.8%. In the crowded video streaming space, where viewer preferences vary widely, achieving a top ranking is not just beneficial—it's crucial for survival, as less than 1% of users look beyond the first page of search results.

Optimizing for SEO: key considerations

Understanding the mechanics behind search engine rankings is vital for OTT platforms. Search engines like Google use <u>web crawlers</u> to index the web, taking into account factors such as content quality, relevance, keywords, and user experience. For OTT sites, which are rich in media and dynamic elements, ensuring fast load speeds and a seamless user experience is critical to maintaining high organic rankings and visibility.

The advantages of prerendering

Prerendering can significantly aid in this by pre-generating pages for quicker load times, enhancing discoverability at those critical moments when viewers are deciding what to watch. For streaming platforms, implementing technologies like prerendering means that their shows, movies, and exclusive content are more likely to be discovered by eager viewers.

This level of visibility is crucial in an industry where viewer choices are influenced by content availability, user recommendations, and ease of access. Higher placement on a search engine rankings page allows streaming services to connect with the right audience at the perfect moment, increasing the likelihood of engagement and subscriptions in the competitive streaming landscape.

PhotonIQ Prendering

<u>PhotonIQ Prerendering</u> enables streaming services to accelerate website delivery and indexing for search engines without infrastructure changes. This service significantly reduces time-to-interactive, delivering complete page renders in milliseconds! Prerendering generates fully indexed static pages from complex JavaScript sites, allowing more discoverability by search bots with limited budgets. Faster page speeds let bots crawl over more pages per day, surfacing more content.

The service handles optimized prefetching, on-demand rendering, global edge caching, and synthetic interactions that simulate viewer journeys to expand dynamic content before prerendering. This ensures search engines can index your up-to-date, full catalog of movies, TV shows, live events, and more.

Seamless integration unlocks speed and SEO in one customizable, future-proof solution tailored to the unique needs of streaming platforms. Search bots often overlook content within JavaScript when indexing, which can prevent streaming pages from reaching their full SEO potential. Not only do the page loads faster than a non-prerendered page, the content is also complete, ensuring that the search bots "see" the right page. By simulating live viewer journeys, such as clicking and hovering across sites, search bots can index more relevant - and previously hidden - content.



Prerendering not only elevates organic search visibility but also enriches the viewer's search experience, guiding them directly to your platform's engaging and diverse content offerings. Experience it firsthand in our <u>Prerendering demo</u> highlighting a streaming service example!

Navigating website traffic and uptime for streaming services



Unsplash+ in collaboration with Wesley Tingey.

In the competitive landscape of streaming video services, maintaining website uptime and managing traffic surges are critical challenges. With an ever-growing library of content and a user base that spans the globe, OTT video platforms must ensure seamless access to their services at all times. High-profile releases, special events, or exclusive premieres can trigger significant spikes in viewer traffic.

Impact of high traffic on OTT platforms

The impact of high traffic on OTT video platforms can be significant and far-reaching, affecting various aspects of the user experience and the platform's infrastructure. Sudden surges in demand can be triggered by a variety of factors, such as highly anticipated premieres, the release of popular new shows, adverse weather conditions that keep people indoors, or even global events like a pandemic that cause a shift in viewing habits.

One of the most noticeable issues during these high-traffic periods is the occurrence of account access difficulties, where viewers may struggle to log in or navigate the platform due to server overload. Such difficulties can deter users from engaging with the platform, potentially resulting in lost subscriptions and revenue.

Moreover, streaming disruptions during high-demand periods can be particularly damaging to an OTT platform's reputation for reliability. When viewers are unable to enjoy uninterrupted access to streaming, especially during eagerly awaited events or popular releases, it can erode trust in the platform and drive users to seek alternatives. Behind the scenes, the backend systems of OTT video platforms face the challenge of scaling dynamically to accommodate sudden traffic surges without compromising service quality. The infrastructure must be robust and flexible enough to handle increased loads while maintaining optimal performance, ensuring that users can easily access their website even during peak times. This requires careful planning and the implementation of advanced technologies, such as virtual waiting rooms and intelligent traffic routing, to manage the complex demands placed on the platform during periods of high traffic.

By proactively addressing the challenges posed by high traffic, streaming services can maintain viewer satisfaction, protect their reputation, and ensure the long-term success of their services in an increasingly competitive streaming landscape.

The role of virtual waiting rooms

To address these issues, adopting virtual waiting rooms can offer a strategic advantage. A well-designed waiting room experience can manage viewer expectations through clear communication and potentially engage them with content teasers or trailers during their wait. This approach helps in maintaining a positive user experience, even under high load conditions.

Intelligent virtual waiting rooms for streaming services

<u>Intelligent virtual waiting rooms</u> can provide crucial insights into viewer behavior, allowing for optimized content delivery and personalized viewing recommendations. These systems can ensure equitable access to high-demand content, reducing wait times for subscribers and safeguarding against service disruptions.

PhotonIQ Virtual Waiting Rooms (VWRs)

<u>PhotonIQ Virtual Waiting Rooms</u> stand ready to address the unique demands of streaming platforms. By effectively managing digital foot traffic, PhotonIQ's VWRs ensure that websites remain accessible and responsive, even during unprecedented surges associated with blockbuster releases or live events.



PhotonIQ Virtual Waiting Rooms Service (VWRs)

Enhancing streaming video experiences with PhotonIQ VWRs

PhotonIQ's innovative approach to managing high traffic on OTT platforms revolves around the use of geo-distributed queues. By strategically distributing the load across multiple geographic locations, PhotonIQ ensures that viewers worldwide can enjoy consistent access to streaming service sites, regardless of their location or the platform's overall traffic volume. With fully programmable queuing and access rules, VWRs adapt to various conditions, including backend loads, suspicious traffic patterns, origin thresholds, geographic regions, traffic spikes, and more. This advanced queue management system effectively mitigates the risk of disruptions and maintains optimal performance even during peak demand periods.

One of the standout features of PhotonIQ's virtual waiting room (VWR) system is its ability to keep viewers engaged while they wait for access to new content. Rather than leaving viewers in a state of frustration or boredom, PhotonIQ allows streaming services to transform the waiting experience into an opportunity for content discovery. By presenting previews, trailers, or exclusive content to viewers in the queue, the platform maintains viewer interest and excitement, potentially even increasing viewer retention and satisfaction. Moreover, PhotonIQ places a strong emphasis on ensuring fair access to new content for all viewers. Queue management options such as FIFO, random, and lottery offer versatility. FIFO maintains order based on arrival time, while random and lottery modes ensure fairness and equal chances for users regardless of their arrival time or internet speed. Strategic queue segmentation by region, domain, and requests per second enhances personalized experiences and optimizes resource distribution.

VWRs also feature Intelligent Flow Control, dynamically adjusting dequeuing rates to ensure server stability. Proportional, integral, and derivative control mechanisms fine-tune dequeue rates based on configured limits and actual user counts. Learn more about all the benefits of Virtual Waiting Rooms in this <u>walkthrough</u> of different use cases from planned traffic to unexpected events!



Enhancing viewer engagement and security for OTT platforms

For OTT platforms, engaging with both anonymous and logged-in viewers is key to driving content consumption and subscriber growth. Anonymous visitors represent a significant opportunity to convert casual browsers into subscribers or one-time purchasers by presenting compelling content and offers aligned with their viewing habits. Furthermore, understanding the behavior of all users, anonymous or otherwise, can optimize content offerings, improve user interface design, and forecast viewing trends.

Accelerating engagement through insights

Fingerprint technology allows video streaming platforms to identify and track devices across sessions accurately. This enables personalized content recommendations for returning viewers and customizes the browsing experience for new visitors, all while respecting their privacy. Identifying viewer patterns also helps streaming services understand their customers' behavior like popular searches, viewing patterns, genre preferences, and engagement times to deliver more watched content.

Managing fraud and security

With the rise of account sharing and the potential for account takeovers, video streaming platforms face unique security challenges. Technologies such as fingerprint and behavior analysis are crucial. They help distinguish between legitimate users, shared account users, and potential fraudsters, maintaining a seamless viewing experience while mitigating risks. This capability is key to preventing revenue loss from account sharing abuses and protecting platform integrity.

The path forward for OTT platforms

As OTT platforms continue to evolve, the focus will be on leveraging technology that enables deep personalization without sacrificing privacy or security. This involves adopting privacy-compliant tracking methods, advanced fraud detection systems, and adapting to changing viewer expectations and regulatory landscapes. The goal is to offer a compelling, secure, and personalized viewing experience that builds loyalty and trust- even before site vistiors become subscribers.

PhotonIQ Fingerprint for video streaming services

<u>PhotonIQ Fingerprint</u> offers a robust solution for OTT platforms, enabling precise viewer identification and engagement while ensuring a secure online environment. With 99.5% accuracy in visitor identification, PhotonIQ Fingerprint facilitates deep insights into viewer behavior without relying on intrusive tracking methods.

Visitor identification and personalization

By analyzing over 300 unique attributes, PhotonIQ Fingerprint creates persistent, unique viewer profiles that track engagement across devices and sessions. This enables OTT platforms to deliver personalized content recommendations, enhancing the viewer experience from the moment they browse to when they watch.

Advanced fraud detection and prevention

PhotonIQ Fingerprint is adept at identifying devices associated with suspicious behaviors, essential for spotting and mitigating risks like unauthorized account access and subscription fraud. This proactive approach helps OTT platforms protect their content, subscribers, and revenues.

Integration with viewing controls

Coupled with viewing controls and account management tools, PhotonIQ Fingerprint forms a comprehensive strategy for managing viewer access and preferences, especially during content releases or promotional events. This ensures that streaming services remain accessible and secure for legitimate viewers while preventing misuse.

Performance and scalability

Designed to be lightweight and unobtrusive, PhotonIQ Fingerprint ensures seamless integration with OTT platforms, supporting their capability to manage large volumes of traffic without compromising site performance. This scalability is vital for platforms experiencing rapid growth or fluctuations in viewer numbers.



Incorporating technologies like PhotonIQ Fingerprint is crucial for video streaming services seeking to enhance viewer engagement and security. It not only improves the

personalization of content recommendations but also fortifies platforms against security threats, paving the way for a successful digital streaming experience.

Leveraging hypersearch to enhance discoverability and engagement



Photo by Glenn Carstens-Peters on Unsplash

In the dynamic world of streaming services, the capability to swiftly and precisely respond to viewer queries is not merely a convenience—it's the backbone of viewer satisfaction and platform success. Hypersearch technology, with its advanced data retrieval and processing power, stands as an essential tool for OTT platforms navigating vast libraries and diverse viewer interests.

Netflix has reported that <u>80% of what its users watch</u> is based on algorithmic recommendations, demonstrating the importance of content personalization to viewers. <u>Disney+ uses a "myriad of data points"</u> and leverages machine learning to analyze user data and personalize content recommendations that aligns with the viewer's interests. Search and recommendations play a critical role in enhancing the OTT video viewing experience.

Instantaneous search responses for enhanced viewer experience

Viewers expect immediate, relevant responses when searching for content within streaming platforms. Hypersearch meets these expectations by delivering lightning-fast search results, ensuring viewers stay engaged and reducing the chance of them switching to competitor

platforms. This immediacy is crucial in retaining viewer interest and enhancing the overall platform experience.

Personalization at scale

Beyond speed, hypersearch offers the capability to deliver personalized content recommendations based on viewer preferences, past viewing history, and real-time inputs. For OTT platforms, where personalization can dramatically influence viewer choice and engagement, the ability to tailor search results to individual viewer needs is invaluable.

Enhanced user experience and efficient content discovery

Hypersearch significantly improves the user experience by providing quick and relevant search results, leading to increased engagement and higher retention rates. Viewers can effortlessly find and engage with the content they love, thanks to efficient, personalized search processes facilitated by Hypersearch, making content discovery a seamless part of the viewer journey.

Reduced bounce rates and increased viewer loyalty

Quick and accurate search results decrease the likelihood of viewers leaving the platform, thereby reducing bounce rates. A satisfying search experience fosters viewer loyalty, with viewers more likely to return for their entertainment needs, knowing they can easily find compelling content.

Enhancing hypersearch with location services

Integrating location services with Hypersearch can further enhance the search experience and provide more targeted content recommendations. By leveraging a viewer's geographic location, streaming services can deliver localized search results, tailored content suggestions, and personalized ads. This customization improves the relevance of search results and creates a more engaging viewing experience.

Location services enable streaming services to provide location-specific content recommendations, offer multilingual content based on language preferences, showcase local events and news, and deliver targeted ads for local businesses. Combining Hypersearch with location-based personalization creates a unique and compelling viewing experience that keeps audiences engaged and loyal.

Strategic advantage of hypersearch in OTT

Incorporating hypersearch into OTT platforms not only solves the immediate challenges of managing complex searches and meeting high viewer expectations but also secures a long-term competitive edge. By enriching the viewer journey from search to streaming, OTT services can stand out in a crowded market, boost viewer loyalty, and drive growth.

PhotonIQ HyperSearch for streaming services

PhotonIQ HyperSearch transforms streaming services by ensuring that searches - whether for specific titles, genres, or actor - yield instant and highly relevant results. With the ability to handle queries with sub-50ms response times, HyperSearch turns the search bar into a powerful tool for viewer retention and conversion, showcasing personalized recommendations and unique content offerings. PhotonIQ HyperSearch also integrates seamlessly with location services, enabling OTT platforms to deliver geographically tailored search results and recommendations.

By indexing data from various origin repositories and enabling rich full-text and vector search from the edge, PhotonIQ HyperSearch unbundles search functionality from the cloud. This allows businesses to provide fast, accurate search results to their users without relying on cloud-based search services.

HyperSearch's integration for OTT platforms signifies a leap forward in digital streaming services. By combining instant, accurate search capabilities with personalized content discovery, PhotonIQ HyperSearch redefines how viewers interact with OTT platforms. This technology ensures that every search not only meets but anticipates viewer needs, offering a tailored browsing experience that elevates content engagement and platform loyalty.

From the initial keyword input to the final content selection, PhotonIQ HyperSearch enhances every step of the viewer's search journey. It employs advanced features such as vector-based understanding for deeper query insights, dynamic categorization for streamlined navigation, and personalized results that adapt to each viewer's unique preferences. This comprehensive approach not only simplifies content discovery but also tailors the viewing experience to match the dynamic interests of today's audiences.

By integrating cutting-edge machine learning techniques, PhotonIQ HyperSearch not only enhances search relevance and accuracy but also uncovers behavioral patterns for more nuanced recommendations. This deep learning approach, combined with the seamless integration of virtual waiting rooms, ensures streaming services can offer uninterrupted, engaging experiences even during high-traffic periods, setting new standards for viewer satisfaction and platform performance.



Maximizing ad revenue and personalization

Photo by Julian Hochgesang on Unsplash.

As the streaming market becomes increasingly competitive, OTT service providers must find ways to optimize their ad revenue and deliver personalized experiences to viewers. Cohort mapping for targeted ad delivery and effective entitlement management are two crucial strategies that can help streaming services maximize their revenue potential and build stronger connections with their audience.

Hyper-targeted ad cohorts and dynamic ad matching

OTT service providers face constant pressure to increase ad revenue for their most valuable content investments, and for good reason. Over <u>half of OTT revenue</u> comes from ads. In 2026, the <u>advertising revenue in the United States</u> for video on demand platform Hulu is projected to reach five billion U.S. dollars, with Peacock and Netflix following at 2.7 and 1.7 billion U.S. dollars, respectively. This is especially important for new challengers and disruptors in the space who are embracing a multi-channel monetization model that includes subscriptions plus ads.

To maximize ad revenue, streaming services are turning to sophisticated approaches like cohort mapping and dynamic ad matching. Cohort mapping involves segmenting viewers into groups based on shared characteristics such as demographics, psychographic data, financial value, and location. The more granular these cohorts are, the more opportunities advertisers have to reach and engage the right interested prospects, leading to greater monetization for the content.

However, cohort mapping at scale for large events or new popular content releases can be challenging. Being able to bucket users into millions of cohorts provides significant ad monetization potential, enabling deep and narrow targeting with the highest "revenue generated per video" segment in the industry - 5x or more revenue per user. This level of scale has been possible but pricey and resource-intensive until now.

Entitlements check and serving

In addition to cohort mapping, streaming services must also manage entitlements and serve viewers according to their subscription model, language preferences, and other criteria. When a viewer opens an OTT video service, the service must quickly map what features and types of content to recommend for that particular viewer based on their plan, device allowances, and language preferences. This becomes even more complex when managing requests for millions of viewers and accounting for thousands of ad cohort groups.

Real-time data enrichment for more revenue opportunities

Streaming services need solutions that can help them enrich a cohort's data in real-time, incorporating new signals, features, and metadata about their customers. This allows for more precise ad targeting and personalized experiences. If a subscriber wants to upgrade their plan before a big event, the service must be able to process that data in real-time so the viewer doesn't miss a second of their newly subscribed service. Streaming services can also use interactive surveys to get more customer insight data, with the results being used immediately to target ads even more precisely.

Scaling to meet the demands of peak viewership

Imagine it's game time and the biggest revenue earner for the season. However, you have to deliver three million requests per second at a latency window of 50 to 75 milliseconds, with one million ad cohorts and hundreds of different entitlement permutations. A centralized database can't accommodate this type of scale or deliver the low latency required.

Increase revenue up to 300%

Streaming services need to implement sophisticated approaches like cohort mapping, personalized entitlements, and hyper-scale serving to compete in a saturated OTT service environment, whether ad-supported (AVOD), subscription-based (SVOD), or a little of both. The Macrometa Global Data Network (GDN) - the backbone of PhotonIQ services - can help

streaming services overcome these challenges, serving millions to several hundred million concurrent viewers for major events like show premieres or sporting events at ultra-low-latency speed. By optimizing online advertising delivery and providing dynamic, personalized experiences, streaming services can increase ad revenue and ensure advertisers' return on their investment.

Implement PhotonIQ services in 30 days or less for fast ROI

As the demand for exceptional digital experiences grows in the streaming industry, AI and edge technology are revolutionizing key areas such as search, content discovery, personalization, traffic management, and user identification. When utilized effectively, these tools enable faster, smarter, and more personalized streaming services. They enhance viewer engagement, create new revenue opportunities, ensure uptime, and help combat unauthorized access.

These services can be implemented in **30 days or less**, providing an opportunity to increase subscriber retention and viewer satisfaction. By collaborating with our Enterprise Solution Architects, streaming services can elevate their digital strategies with AI-driven optimizations. <u>Talk to an expert</u> to get started today and unlock better customer experiences and more revenue opportunities.