Case Study

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Gorillaz Launch the Return of Kong Studios

A Seamless Digital Fan Experience Powered by Vnetrix and Built on Thales Technology

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About Gorillaz

Created by musician Damon Albarn and artist Jamie Hewlett, Gorillaz is singer 2D, bassist Murdoc Niccals, drummer Russel Hobbs and Japanese guitar prodigy Noodle. The BRIT and Grammy-winning virtual band formed following a collision of mishaps, meetings and pure luck to blow up a pre-digital world with their colourful backstory and ground-breaking virtual ways. Based at Kong Studios, the four animated band members settled into a life of musical innovation with an eye-wateringly exciting roster of collaborators, a list that includes musical legends, geniuses and future stars from Elton John to Little Simz, MF Doom to Jean-Michel Jarre, Grace Jones to slowthai, Kali Uchis to Sidiki Diabaté, plus so many more. With nine albums to the band's name, Gorillaz (2001), Demon Days (2005), Plastic Beach (2010), The Fall (2011), Humanz (2017), The Now Now (2018), Song Machine: Season One – Strange Timez (2020), Cracker Island (2023) and the newly-released The Mountain (2026), Gorillaz is a truly global phenomenon, achieving success in entirely new and unique ways, touring the world from San Diego to Syria, Montevideo to Manchester and winning numerous awards including the coveted Jim Henson Creativity Honor.

About Kong Studios

In September 2025, to mark 25 years of the iconic British band, fans around the world celebrated the long-awaited return of Kong Studios - the home of Gorillaz. The band's HQ since early 2000 (before falling into disrepair and eventually being burnt to the ground by Murdoc in 2008), the original Kong Studios was a ground-breaking virtual gathering place for fans, allowing them to connect and explore the band's living quarters and recording studio, listen to music, play games, fight zombies, and much more. Now with a vision for Kong Studios to be faithfully restored to its former glory, it was back with a fresh lick of paint as a gamified, online fan experience.

The return of Kong Studios came alongside a celebrated new immersive exhibition titled House of Kong – an exhibition like no other - which opened at London's Copper Box for a limited 4-week run, ahead of a second and final run in Downtown Los Angeles in February 2026.

Challenges

Delivering a seamless launch for an immersive new Gorillaz site

Known for continually pushing creative and technological boundaries, Gorillaz is a virtual band comprising four animated characters, each with a distinct personality and backstory, creating unique opportunities for world building and audience engagement.

The launch of Kong Studios marked the band's 25th anniversary and came in a period which saw the band open a brand new exhibition in London, perform a series of one-off live shows and announce a new studio album The Mountain.

Industry
Music

Location
London

Website
kongstudios.gorillaz.com/

Gorillaz has a huge global fanbase, with more than 40 million records sold, almost 30 million monthly listeners on Spotify, almost 6 million followers on TikTok, and 7 and a half million followers on Instagram. Building on its success on social media, the band started a new phase of fan engagement with the long-awaited re-launch of Kong Studios, a new website that celebrated the band's story so familiar to fans, while advancing digital creativity.

Developed by Observer Interactive, under the guidance of Eleven Management for Gorillaz, the Kong Studios website was designed as a fully immersive experience, made up of interactive rooms and mini-games. As a creative concept, there was no room to compromise on performance, resolution, or the fan experience when bringing the fabled home of Gorillaz to life.

A hosting solution was required for the gamified website, one capable of delivering a smooth, uninterrupted experience, regardless of how many fans arrived simultaneously. With the band comms and social media platforms driving highly engaged fans and users to the new site – the highly anticipated return of Kong Studios - the team predicted significant traffic spikes from day one. In addition, the platform needed to be fully tested and ready to go live in just six weeks.

This combination of unpredictable global demand, strict timelines, and the need for a flawless fan experience from the outset necessitated that Eleven Management work with a partner that could not only provide resilient infrastructure, but also design, manage, and support a bespoke solution under intense launch conditions.

The brief from Eleven was a hosting solution that could deliver an exceptional fan experience, stay within budget, and meet stringent security requirements, especially as the website is high profile and Gorillaz' fanbase is particularly tech-savvy and engaged.

Deployment

A scalable, secure hosting solution built for global fan demand

After evaluating several proposals, Vnetrix was selected to design, deliver, and manage a hosting solution capable of supporting a high-profile global launch. Vnetrix architected a bespoke environment built on the Thales Content Delivery Network (CDN) and secured with the Imperva Web Application Firewall (WAF), ensuring the platform could scale instantly while maintaining strong security controls.

"It's not always easy to find a partner that understands the music industry and our unique needs," said Mogendorff. "But we found it in Vnetrix, and the Thales solution it offered was resilient, secure, and able to scale with fan demand."

Vnetrix designed and deployed the custom hosting environment within its data centre, integrating and configuring the Thales CDN to support global content distribution. Working closely with Thales, Vnetrix led the setup of a worldwide caching strategy, ensuring fans experienced fast, consistent performance regardless of location - whether in Japan, the US, or Europe. To protect the platform during periods of intense traffic, Vnetrix implemented and actively managed the Imperva WAF, which identifies and blocks malicious activity before it reaches the application.

"With the Imperva WAF dashboard, we have real-time visibility into traffic levels and blocked threats," commented Robert Norman, Founder and CEO, Vnetrix. "This visibility allows us to stay in control during peak demand and ensure the fan experience is never compromised."

A partnership-led approach to meeting tight timelines

Taking a partnership approach, the combined team of Vnetrix and Thales ensured the solution was complete and ready to go live on schedule in just six weeks.

"The project was a significant investment, so trust and transparency were important," commented Mogendorff. "We had complete confidence in Vnetrix and Thales, as the team was very responsive, communicated clearly throughout the project, and brought in-depth technical expertise to every stage of the deployment."

To help balance performance requirements with cost control, Vnetrix and Thales offered a customised pricing model that reflected the sharp surge in demand during the first month, followed by a predictable drop-off.

> **" The new Kong Studios site is a huge success, and the fans love it! We had hundreds of thousands of visits in just the first few days, with traffic peaking at 10 Gbps, but the performance was faultless and security held strong."**
>
> **David Mogendorff, Consultant to Eleven Managementy.**

Results

A flawless experience for Gorillaz fans around the world

By combining Vnetrix's hosting services and expertise with Thales' enterprise-grade CDN and security technology, the new House of Kong website launched seamlessly and on schedule. The platform delivered a consistently high-quality experience for fans worldwide, with zero downtime and great performance, even during peak demand.

The solution successfully handled traffic spikes, protected the site from malicious activity, and maintained fast load times across regions so fans could fully engage with the interactive experience, in line with the creators' vision.

Following the success of the launch, the band's management has expanded its partnership with Vnetrix, which is now also responsible for hosting the main Gorillaz website.

"Working with Eleven Management and Thales was a genuine partnership and far more than a transactional engagement," concluded Norman. "We proved our ability to support high-profile, campaign-driven launches, and we're excited to continue helping Eleven deliver innovative digital experiences in the future"

About Eleven Management

Founded in 2011 by Niamh Byrne and Régine Moylett, Eleven Management is a creative management company focussed on building bespoke business around music and culture for their roster of extraordinary artists. Eleven was established to forge a new way of management, inspired by enabling and fostering artist expression in music, art, tech, theatre, live performance and beyond, taking a multi-disciplinary approach to business. www.elevenmgmt.com

About Thales

Thales is a global leader in cybersecurity, helping the most trusted organizations protect critical applications, data, identities, and software anywhere, at scale. Through Thales' integrated platforms, customers achieve better visibility of risks, defend against cyber threats, close compliance gaps, and deliver trusted digital experiences for billions of consumers every day.

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