

PlayReady — Deployment Checklist

Certificate flow, SL2000 / SL3000 policy decisions, EME key-system selection, four production pitfalls.

1. Server certificate

Microsoft Server Deployment Certificate is non-negotiable.

Apply via the PlayReady licensing portal at Microsoft.

Microsoft issues the Server Deployment Certificate after legal review.

Server SDK ships both .NET Framework (legacy) and .NET 8.0 Core (4.7+).

Roll-over: 4.7.8120 patch lets you rotate without service restart.

2. Security Level policy

MinimumSecurityLevel is the gate, content class drives the value.

SL150 never permitted in production (dev/test only).

SL2000 permits SD and HD ($\leq$ 1080p) under standard agreements.

SL3000 required for 4K UHD and HDR — Hollywood clause.

License server sets MinimumSecurityLevel on every license issued.

3. Packaging

CMAF + cbcs is the 2026 default for multi-DRM.

Encrypt CMAF with cbcs (AES-128 CBC) — PlayReady 4.0+ supports it.

WRMHEADER 4.3.0.0 with ALGID="AESCBC" inside <KID> element.

Embed PlayReady Object in a pssh box (SystemID 9A04F079-...-5F95).

HLS: EXT-X-SESSION-KEY
KEYFORMAT=
"com.microsoft.playready".

4. Client integration

EME on browser, native CDM on Xbox / Smart TV.

Legacy EME key system:
com.microsoft.playready
(SL2000).

Recommended: com.microsoft.playready.recommendation + robustness 3000.

Chrome 140+ on Windows 11 unlocks PlayReady SL3000 hardware-DRM.

Smart TVs (Tizen, webOS, Vidaa) ship native PlayReady CDMs.

Pitfalls — server side

What goes wrong on the license server.

Revocation check disabled. Dev shortcut never re-enabled in prod.

Both cenc and cbcs packaged. Modern fleet only needs cbcs.

SL3000 policy too strict. SL2000 clients on HD lose playback.

Server SDK on .NET 6.0. Migrate to .NET 8.0 by Nov 2026 (LTS).

Hard-coded SystemID UUID. Name once in a shared library, import.

Pitfalls — client side

What goes wrong in the browser, app, or TV.

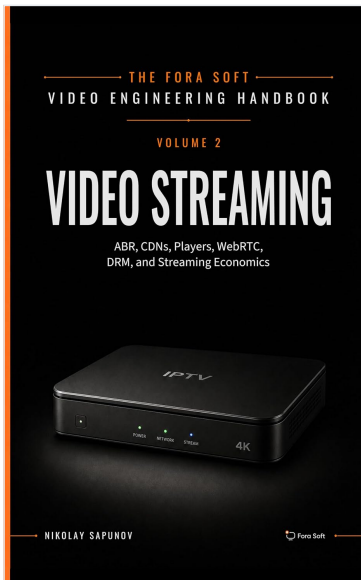
Legacy key-system string for 4K. .recommendation unlocks SL3000.

Missing pssh in CMAF. Player never finds the WRMHEADER.

WRMHEADER 4.0.0.0 with AESCBC. Use 4.3.0.0 for cbcs content.

HLS line without playready KEYFORMAT. Smart TVs fall back to Widevine.

Old porting kit on cheap STB. SDK 3.0 PK fails on 4.6 license.



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This checklist covers the server certificate, SL2000 and SL3000 policy, CMAF packaging, client integration and eight pitfalls. Volume 3 covers DRM in depth together with the rest of delivery: multi-DRM with PlayReady, Widevine and FairPlay, players and EME, CDN and the economics of protected streaming.

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Studio asking for SL3000 and you are not sure your stack is ready?

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