

Wimbledon reaches out to a global audience with IBM.

Overview

■ The Challenge

To enhance the Wimbledon experience for players, media and spectators around the world and build business opportunities while maintaining the essence of lawn tennis in an English country garden

■ Why become an On Demand Business?

To be flexible enough to accommodate a large annual peak in demand and to increase revenue for investment in talented young players

■ The Solution

IBM and Wimbledon continue to partner on real-time solutions that benefit all stakeholders. This year sees expansion of a management solution to support everyone involved in staging Wimbledon and the introduction of a badge scanning security system

■ The Benefits

- Enhances experience for players, the media and fans – around four million unique online visitors and half a million courtside spectators in two weeks
- Increases innovation, efficiency and security via expansion of the management and badge scanning solutions
- Improves funding for players of the future by developing global business opportunities, particularly in Asia and the US via the online shop



The Wimbledon Tennis Championships are a focus of the world's media

The Wimbledon Tennis Championships are an established event in the British sporting season. A unique, quintessentially English occasion that conjures up images of world-class tennis played on immaculate grass courts, good humoured spectators and, of course, the interruptions of the British weather.

A world-class event from a small private club

The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club stages The Championships and is very proud of its unique reputation. For two weeks every year, this small club's infrastructure scales up exponentially

to accommodate the demands of the world's sporting media, half a million spectators onsite, over half a billion television viewers and around four million unique users of the official Wimbledon website.

“IBM enables us to offer an unparalleled level of service to the players, enhanced further by the personalised service provided by the new management solution. It is IBM’s insight that has helped us reach new audiences using channels that were not feasible just a few years ago.”

Chris Gorrige, Chief Executive of The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club

All the flexibility of an On Demand Business

On Demand Business benefits

- Drives business innovation through use of new market channels
- Delivers cost effective scalability enabling a small club to host a global sporting event
- Increases resilience
- Meets increasing audience expectations

Key components

Services

- IBM Business Consulting Services – Strategy and Change Services, Application Innovation Services, Customer Relationship Management Services
- IBM Global Services – e-business Hosting Services, Integrated Technology Services, Application Management Services

Software

- IBM WebSphere
- IBM Tivoli Orchestrator
- IBM DB2 Universal Database
- Linux™
- AIX

Servers

- IBM @server xSeries
- IBM @server pSeries
- IBM @server iSeries

Hardware

- ThinkPad notebooks
- ThinkCentre desktops
- ThinkVision TFT monitors
- IBM printers

The Club plays an important role in funding The Lawn Tennis Association, which coaches young UK players of the future. To continue this it must build revenue by increasing the attention it attracts globally and holding on to its audience in a world with growing choices and distractions. By creating new multimedia “touch points” where people can connect and interact with The Championships, the Club engages its audience, cultivates stronger relationships and builds revenue streams.

The challenge is to enhance and enrich people's experience without detracting from the unique nature of The Championships. While dedicated to continuous improvement for players, spectators and the media, the Club's mission is to maintain the look and feel of lawn tennis in an English country garden.

Sixteen years of synergy

IBM has worked with the Club since 1990, helping to meet the increasing demands it faces. “IBM has a deep understanding of our culture, brand and values,” says Rob McCowen, Marketing Director at The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club. “The innovations it brings are always in tune with our on-going mission.”

Throughout the year, IBM works with Club Executives and the IT Department to drive the business and IT strategy that supports the Club's aims. “The involvement of IBM Business Consulting Services has been integral to enhancing the Wimbledon experience,” says McCowen. “And by handing the hosting and management of our solutions to IBM, we benefit from a scalable infrastructure, with the latest technologies, without a massive upfront capital investment.”

IBM not only takes care of integrating many disparate systems into one seamless solution that flexes to meet business demands, it also manages numerous third parties on the Club's behalf. The Club only has one business and technology partner to deal with.

Service improvements – year on year

IBM helps the Club ensure continual improvements to the responsive service it offers its stakeholders. The introduction of a wireless network to the Wimbledon site offers better service to the media. Sports reporters can gain Internet access from their wireless laptops to mail copy back to the office and international press photographers can send pictures straight from their digital cameras to their editors, greatly speeding up the time to publish.

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The area covered by the wireless network is increasing this year to support the rollout of a badge scanning system piloted last year. Staff working onsite are issued with accreditation badges which are scanned as they enter and leave, improving security.

IBM Business Consulting Services led a data strategy consultation examining the Club's main information sources for key individuals. Following this, a management solution was introduced which was used in last year's Championships to support player accreditation, manage players' guests and coordinate other player facilities such as provision of limousines. This year press, radio broadcasters and photographers will be managed through the solution. Eventually it will cover everyone on site at Wimbledon who is not a paying ticket holder. Administration overheads will reduce as records are no longer prepared manually and there will be less duplication of effort. Managers will also gain access to better reporting facilities, improving security, decision-making and efficiency.

The solution will integrate the different systems and departments that currently hold information about everyone involved in The Championships, ranging from temporary cleaners and ball boys to star players. IBM helped the Club select the solution and provided overall consulting and enterprise architecture guidance.

Drawing the eyes of the world to Wimbledon

Real-time information is important in attracting and retaining new players and audiences. Players use it to improve their game and the information provided on the spot to international television and broadcaster graphics systems gives colour and depth to viewers' experience. Broadcasters can access the Commentator Information System to enrich their commentaries with statistical analysis and comparative performance data.

Tennis fans around the world take a "virtual seat" at www.wimbledon.org and feel part of the action. The IBM On Demand Scoreboard delivers live point-by-point scores directly to the desktop and the new 'Stroke Tracker' ball-tracking system is available online for the first time this year enabling users to compare players' games shot-by-shot.

The Wimbledon web site is vital to stimulating interest in The Championships and IBM Business Consulting Services works with the Club to ensure the site generates year-round business. The online shop is particularly popular in the US, China and Japan. McCowen says: "Previously, we developed business opportunities based on awareness created through our TV coverage. Increasingly, new business opportunities arise through interest generated by our web site. This is particularly relevant in the US and Asia. Companies in Japan for example are learning more about Wimbledon, leading to new revenue streams."

On Demand scalability defined

- A seamless, high performance solution that flexes to meet business demands
- No large upfront capital investment
- Wimbledon does not own, manage or maintain the infrastructure, leaving it free to focus on its key business

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Continual innovation in an English country garden

Players, tennis fans and The Lawn Tennis Association all benefit from innovations that reach out to global audiences through new content channels, optimise revenue streams through e-commerce or awareness raising, and increase the efficiency with which The Championships are organised and run.

"IBM's involvement started with the integration of broadcast systems and continues to offer potentially the richest set of statistics, analysis and extra features provided by a Grand Slam tournament. It allows commentators to deliver first rate insight and brings viewers closer to the action," concludes Chris Gorrings, Chief Executive of The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, retiring after 33 years. "IBM enables us to offer an unparalleled level of service to the players, enhanced

further by the personalised service provided by the new management solution. It is IBM's insight that has helped us reach new audiences using channels that were not feasible just a few years ago. I look forward to enjoying tennis as a spectator in my retirement years and expect to see this level of innovation continue long into the future."

For more information

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