

Helping Wimbledon bring millions of fans to a court that only holds 15,000

Overview

■ Business challenge

To maintain Wimbledon as the world's premier tennis event by continually enhancing the experience for players, media and fans around the world – attracting new audiences against growing competition and choice. Costs and capital expenditure must be controlled and revenue optimised to release funds for coaching young players.

■ Solution

IBM and Wimbledon are creating an increasingly reliable, secure and responsive infrastructure to keep pace with the excitement of a global, grand slam tournament. Growing use of consolidation, virtualisation and energy saving helps achieve more with less.

■ Key benefits

- *Cost effective scalability enabling a small club to host a global sporting event – around 10 million unique online visitors and nearly half a million courtside spectators in two weeks*
- *Over the last three years, the infrastructure hosting Wimbledon and other major sporting events has seen 60 servers consolidated to 6, energy use reduced by 40%, cooling demand down 48%, online visits up 26% and cost per visit down 38%. System security has also been enhanced.*



The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club is very proud of its reputation for staging The Wimbledon Tennis Championships – a unique event which has managed to keep pace with the demands of modern sport and multi-media broadcasting while retaining the charm of lawn tennis played in an English country garden.

Recently, change has accelerated bringing previously unimagined benefits to players, spectators, the media and those who work at the event. As a result, the popularity of Wimbledon continues to increase and it's often hard to remember that a private members' club stages this global, grand slam event.

For two weeks every year, the Club's infrastructure scales up to accommodate nearly half a million spectators onsite, the demands of the world's sporting media and over three quarters of a billion television viewers

on 129 TV channels in 173 countries. Last year the number of unique visitors to the official Wimbledon website – www.wimbledon.org – reached over 10million.

Improving year on year

IBM has worked with the Club since 1990 and has developed a deep understanding of the Club's culture, brand and values, ensuring that growth initiatives and changes are always in tune with its on-going mission – to blend tradition with innovation, to expand the Wimbledon brand around the world and to consistently enhance the quality of the Wimbledon experience for all the key stakeholders.

Engaging audiences by transforming sport

Business Benefits

- Cost effective scalability enabling a small club to host a global sporting event – around 10 million unique online visitors and nearly half a million courtside spectators in two weeks
- Over the last three years, the infrastructure hosting Wimbledon and other major sporting events has seen:
 - 60 servers consolidated to 6
 - Energy use reduced by 40%
 - Cooling demand down 48%
 - Online visits up 26%, cost per visit down 38%
- Enhanced system security
- Satisfies increasing audience and player expectations
- Achieves more with less, freeing up investment to increase Wimbledon's appeal
- Builds revenue streams to fund the future of tennis in the UK.

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. By handing the hosting and management of its Championships' data solutions to IBM, The Club benefits from a scalable infrastructure, incorporating the latest technologies, without a large upfront capital investment. IBM does not just take 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.

Responding to the highs

It's often the unforeseen or unlikely which makes Wimbledon exciting. Will a relative newcomer show unexpected promise? Perhaps a highly seeded player will struggle? And who will be this year's crowd pleaser? A wide variety of factors can lead to unpredicted spikes in demand for the infrastructure underpinning The Championships.

The Club constantly works with IBM to improve its responsiveness through appropriate, proven technologies and techniques. This year POWER6™ systems are increasing capability and flexibility while reducing energy use. Consolidation, virtualisation and sophisticated system management are helping The Club make the most of its resources.

Over the last three years, the IBM infrastructure used to host Wimbledon and other major sporting events has seen many improvements – 60 servers have been consolidated to 6 and the server, storage, network and security environment has been virtualised. By enabling multiple, unrelated workloads to be moved around easily and to share the same physical environment, virtualisation provides the speed and flexibility to cope with spikes in demand, driving down cost without sacrificing resiliency or security.

Keeping the courts green

A single integrated monitoring and management solution is used for the infrastructure and, with the increasing importance of energy efficiency, IBM Systems Director Active Energy Manager has recently been incorporated. Key workloads, server loading and the energy consumption of different elements are represented, providing system administrators, web masters and network managers with clear, immediate access to the information they need in order to manage and control the infrastructure to optimal effect.

Thanks to consolidation and the efficiency of the latest servers, energy use on the infrastructure has fallen by 40% and cooling demand by 48% over the last three years. Consumption is being further reduced by changing the clock speed on the servers at the end of play, only returning to full speed at the start of play. Over the last three years visits to the web sites hosted by the infrastructure have risen by 26% yet consolidation, virtualisation and energy efficiency have reduced the cost per visit by 38%.

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A deeper, richer experience

Attracting and retaining even bigger audiences in a world of growing choice and distractions is a continual challenge. By creating new multimedia “touch points” where people can connect and interact with The Championships, The Club is able to engage its audiences in new and exciting ways. This year, IBM has developed a number of apps for smartphones, providing up to the minute information on everything from queuing times to free seats while helping visitors to The Championships find their way around the large site with interactive venue maps. Realtime information is also fed into the smartphone apps, offering the latest scores and information on player progress to fans – wherever they may be.

Realtime information is vital in attracting and retaining new players and audiences. Tennis fans around the world can take a “virtual seat” at www.wimbledon.org during The Championships and feel part of the action. SlamTracker provides live, online scoring for matches in progress and fans can track player progression, schedules and scores for the entire tournament through an interactive draw feature. The draw feature connects with match and serve statistics, player information and interactive venue maps, helping to create a more personalised online experience.

Keeping the high profile Wimbledon infrastructure secure while allowing the interactive experience required by genuine fans is vitally important. Centrally managed IBM Internet Security Systems offer a comprehensive, multi-layered approach, blocking malicious attacks, mapping and remedying vulnerabilities across the entire environment while maintaining accessibility. Tivoli® Security Compliance Manager helps ensure all systems are kept up to date (in realtime) with the latest configuration and security patches, reducing the risk of a vulnerability being exploited before it is repaired.

Players, staff and tennis fans around the world all benefit from improvements that help enhance the unique experience of Wimbledon.

For more information

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Key components

Software

- IBM Director Active Energy Manager
- IBM WebSphere® Application Server
- IBM WebSphere Message Broker
- IBM WebSphere Portal
- IBM Lotus® Web Content Management
- IBM DB2 Universal Database
- Tivoli Security Compliance Manager
- Rational® AppScan
- Rational Policy Tester (Privacy Module)
- IBM Tivoli Monitoring
- IBM Tivoli Netcool/OMNIBus
- IBM Tivoli Composite Application Manager for WebSphere
- IBM Tivoli Composite Application Manager for Internet Services Monitoring
- IBM Tivoli Composite Application Manager for Web servers
- IBM Tivoli Application Dependency Discovery Manager
- IBM Tivoli Data Warehouse

Hardware

- IBM Power 550 Express (POWER6)
- IBM System x3650
- IBM System i5®
- IBM Storage Area Network

Services

- IBM Global Business Services
 - Strategy and Change Services
 - Application Innovation Services
- IBM Global Technology Services
 - e-business Hosting Services
 - Integrated Technology Services
- IBM Global Sponsorship Events Infrastructure (EI) team

Transformation at a glance

Maintaining Wimbledon's status as one of the World's premier sporting events requires an extremely flexible, responsive and reliable infrastructure. The latest virtualisation techniques help a private members' club scale up for two weeks a year in order to support an exponential increase in demand. Combined with consolidation, energy efficiency and sophisticated systems management, virtualisation helps achieve more with less, enabling the continual enrichment of the unique Wimbledon experience.



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