

Betfair Wins Data Challenge

Betfair turned to Push Technology to save costs, improve the customer experience and extend its competitive advantage in the eGaming market over the last mile.



Quick Facts

Industry

- e-Gaming

Challenges

- Polling model for live data hindered scale, performance and speed
- Deliver real-time data to any device
- Meet high customer expectations and provide a truly immersive game

Solution

- Push Technology's enterprise-grade Internet Messaging solution, Diffusion

Benefits

- Stream information directly to user browsers notifying and updating customers with scores and pricing information within milliseconds of a change taking place
- Easy to implement and required limited infrastructure remodeling
- Provide services using a variety of different native network transport protocols
- Pre-packaged APIs integrated easily into back-end servers

Overview

Betfair is one of the world's largest international online betting providers. Founded in 1999 the Company put itself on the map by pioneering the world's first successful betting exchange, which allows customers to bet on odds set by themselves or by other customers. Today Betfair provides a full range of sports betting and gaming products to over four million customers in more than 100 countries.

Committed to innovation and value, Betfair's success is founded on delivering an exceptionally fast and reliable online experience that ensures customers return again and again. Each day, Betfair's betting exchange processes over seven million transactions – that's more than all the European stock exchanges combined – completing 99.9% of all transactions in under a second.

In a bid to improve the online customer experience and extend its competitive advantage, Betfair took the decision to move from polling to streaming technology to 'push' real-time score and pricing data to customers.

Having evaluated five potential data distribution solutions, the company selected Push Technology's Diffusion™ to achieve its vision in a fast, robust and secure manner with minimal changes to its existing infrastructure.

The Challenge

Operating in a highly competitive gaming market, populated by increasingly savvy punters with high service expectations, Betfair handles high volumes of fast changing data on a daily basis and presents it to customers quickly and efficiently to prompt betting activity. Realizing that its traditional polling model no longer offered the scalability, speed and performance it needed to manage the delivery of volatile real-time data, the Company planned a change.

No matter how unpredictable the demand, Betfair needs to be able to present frequently changing data at very low latency so customers can leverage betting opportunities. At peak times – such as a major football game on a Saturday afternoon – Betfair's pricing service can receive tens of thousands of data requests from customers every second.

As Daniel Alheiros, Delivery Manager at Betfair, explains, "Our systems handle very high volumes of changing data and we wanted a way to present this data to our customers at very low latency and prompt betting activity."

"Diffusion is part of the Betfair success story."

***Daniel Alheiros,
Delivery Manager, Betfair***

Under its existing polling model, multiple customers requesting instant updates generated significant load on the Betfair server infrastructure. This risked customers failing to get the very latest event and market information in the timeframe they required it. With the source data, such as odds changing as often as 10 times per second during peak events, Betfair needed a highly scalable real-time smart data distribution that would ensure failsafe delivery to huge numbers of web and mobile connected users.

Requirements

Betfair wanted a streaming technology solution that would improve the overall performance and scalability of its current service response model, reducing network traffic and load on its servers for a faster and more engaging user experience. It also needed the flexibility to support any mobile or Internet device its customers choose to use without major development requirements.

With a growing number of customers accessing its interactive services using a smartphone or tablet device, Betfair needed to address the fact that mobile users were experiencing poor performance due to network and device responsiveness issues.

“When we looked at mobile we realized that the request-response model in place was affecting our customers’ device performance, leading to a poor user experience,” continues Alheiros. “We needed our web browsers on mobile devices to receive and process information more efficiently, but also in the case of mobile, handle the challenges of loss of connectivity. This would reduce the load on our servers and increase responsiveness, ultimately giving our customers the quality of experience they should expect from our brand.”

The solution

Following an extensive evaluation, Betfair selected Diffusion from Push Technology as the best solution to meet its needs. Easy to implement, and requiring limited infrastructure remodelling, Diffusion supported all current and future devices and resolved mission-critical latency issues.

“Diffusion gives us the ability to provide services using a variety of different native network transport protocols such as Web sockets, Flash sockets and Silverlight. This makes it easy for us to support all mobile devices and web browsers. It also contains APIs that make it easy to implement new applications, all of which significantly reduces our time to market with new services,” explains Alheiros.

Integrating Diffusion into Betfair’s systems did not take long. Diffusion’s pre-packaged APIs integrated easily into Betfair’s existing back-end servers and, following a thorough performance testing program, Betfair went into live production just three months after the start of the project.

Betfair is now able to stream information directly to user browsers, notifying and updating customers with scores and pricing information within milliseconds of a change taking place. Implementation of the Diffusion technology platform means that instead of customers having to continually refresh score information they are now notified immediately when there is any change. As a result of reducing the volume of requests the Company’s servers now have to manage, its website and web services are far more responsive.

Contact Push Technology today for more information on how Diffusion can transform your business.
Email: sales@pushtechology.com
Web: www.pushtechology.com

“In distributing football scores alone, we’ve realized a tenfold reduction in traffic. In terms of bandwidth on a busy Saturday, we’ve achieved a saving of 80-90 GB in bandwidth utilisation.”

**Daniel Alheiros,
Delivery Manager,
Betfair**



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