Worldwide Partner

1998 Nagano Olympic Winter Games: a model of e-business success

For the 1998 Olympic Winter Games, IBM provided a technology solution to the Nagano Olympic Organizing Committee (NAOC) similar to those it implements to help other businesses around the world face many of the same challenges every day. The same technology that served a worldwide Internet audience of millions can be applied by companies of all sizes to reach new markets and stay ahead of the competition.

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—Mark Hardie, an analyst with Forrester Research.

High tech with a human touch

At the end of the Nagano Games, Francois Carrard, Director General of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), declared, "Technology did win Gold in Nagano," offering a special thanks to IBM for its role in making the Winter Games "the Games of high technology, with a human touch." Scalability, security, collaboration and connectivity are exactly the same criteria for profitable e-business. As companies become more deeply engaged in e-business, those same values are the foundation of profitable, sustainable customer relationships.

The technology behind the scenes

The official Winter Games Web site gave spectators around the world an intimate view of the 154 competition events plus behind-the-scenes activities. The interactive nature of the Web site, populated by split-second data feeds from dozens of event locations, gave the IOC's "customers" a truly engaging experience.

To enhance that "almost there" feeling among fans, direct Visa card payments for membership in the Snowlet Club were made possible by Net.Commerce, which is based on SET Secure Electronic Transaction™ protocols.

Scalable, high-performance technology available in Lotus Domino Go Webserver enabled the Nagano Web site to balance resources with traffic, which reached more than 100,000 hits per minute on Day 14. Pages loaded quickly because IBM eNetwork Dispatcher

Application	Official Web site of the Nagano Games
Business Benefits	Cross-platform, fault-tolerant, mission-critical IT infrastructure providing realtime information and electronic commerce
Software	Lotus® Notes® Lotus Domino™ Lotus Domino Go Webserver™ IBM® MQSeries IBM OS/2 Warp IBM DB2® IBM Net.Commerce Tivoli TME 10®
Hardware	IBM RS/6000™ IBM AS/400® IBM S/390® IBM PC Server Family
Services	IBM Global Services

IBM's e-business solutions helped make the Nagano Games "the Games of high technology, with a human touch."

e-business

workload balancer routed requests among multiple back-end servers while maintaining the appearance of a single connection to one logical server. And the Nagano Web site exhibited solid reliability because of the Distributed File System (DFS™) from IBM and Transarc, which replicated mirror image files on backup servers.

The 84,000 members of the Olympic Family who were on-site in Nagano used IBM's Info '98 intranet application — provided in English, Japanese and French — to conduct more than 6 million transactions involving results, news and e-mail. With content created using Lotus Notes and delivered by Lotus Domino, similar scalable data warehouse applications from IBM are now adding e-business value where collaboration and information-sharing are essential to success, such as insurance, banking, direct marketing and wholesale distribution.

The close to 2,000 athletes who competed in Nagano had many opportunities to experience IBM technology during the Games, whether checking their practice times on Info '98 or viewing the results of their competitions in the venues. When they weren't practicing or competing, many spent their time in the IBM Surf Shack in the Athletes Village, where they could read and respond to FanMail messages, create a personal home page, surf the Web or even read their hometown newspapers online. Through IBM's FanMail Web site, the athletes' friends, families and admirers around the world sent them more than 300,000 messages of encouragement and congratulations. Over 1,500 athletes and coaches also created personal home pages on the FanMail site.

IBM data solutions, such as the Commentator Information System (CIS), enlivened broadcast coverage from Nagano. This specialized management information and decision support solution, comprised of approximately 937 CIS systems, placed comprehensive statistics, athlete profiles and event histories literally at the commentators' fingertips. IBM's top-ranked messaging software, MQSeries, delivered the information from IBM DB2 databases on an IBM PC Server 330 running OS/2 Warp with an average response time of just one-third of a second. Similar real-time solutions are now implemented at health care organizations, securities and commodities firms, hotels, and travel and car rental agencies around the world.

The IBM Results System, a tightly integrated transaction-based solution that recorded,

reported and disseminated competition results, was designed for a PC server platform, allowing the system to run independently in small or large venues and interface seamlessly with the main S/390. The IBM DB2 database provided security tools, multimedia capabilities and the ability to handle the immense volumes of data and transactions generated by the events. Modeled after a highly efficient corporate network, the Results System was a real-time operational system similar to a manufacturing plant floor system, online banking system or stock market system.

Every Olympic Games represents a mammoth logistical challenge. In Nagano, a suite of interconnected applications, including Tivoli TME 10, enabled the complex operations surrounding the Games to be managed flawlessly from beginning to end. To coordinate the entire project, IBM created a complete plan, more than one year before the Games, using project management software. The plan had about 1,500 line items covering 10 major projects. The program simulated the ripple-through effect resulting when one piece falls behind, thereby helping IBM adjust to unforeseen challenges in an arena where there are no second chances.

Global services professionals

Launching and maintaining an e-business enterprise as ambitious as the one in Nagano requires a team of seasoned professionals. IBM Global Services assumed that role — as they have for e-businesses large and small around the world. More than 800 IBM specialists from more than 17 countries created a tightly integrated solution that met the exacting requirements of the Winter Games.

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Using the same software that is competing in the business world every day, IBM's e-business solutions in Nagano performed impeccably during the Games.

"IBM delivered on its promise at the Nagano Olympic Winter Games," said Chris Sherman, Software Development Manager, USA Today Information Network. "The timeliness and accuracy of its systems were fantastic, and IBM's work in Nagano was certainly a complete success."

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