



Wimbledon 2014: boosting engagement with social analytics

Building a Social Command Centre to listen and respond to social media trends in near real time

Overview

The need

Wimbledon wanted not only to fuel the social media buzz around the tournament, but also to adapt its coverage to focus on the hottest topics – increasing fan engagement.

The solution

IBM helped Wimbledon build a Social Command Centre that could automatically monitor, analyse and react to over 6 million tweets during The Championships in near real time.

The benefit

New insight into trending topics enabled the design of more compelling content for Wimbledon's digital platforms, boosting site visits by 17 percent and keeping tennis at the top of fans' sporting agenda.

How could The Championships, Wimbledon keep winning new fans during a sporting summer that looked set to be dominated by the FIFA World Cup?

Wimbledon realised that fan engagement was the key. By harnessing social media analytics, it would be able to understand fans' interests, and shape coverage accordingly.

Building the Social Command Centre

IBM created a Social Command Centre (SCC) for the tournament in just two months.

With IBM Watson Content Analytics, the SCC analysed over 6 million tweets during Wimbledon fortnight, and provided near-real-time insight into social trends via intuitive dashboards. This created a "virtuous circle" of content that drew fans back into the digital experience.

Using unique algorithms developed by IBM Customer Experience Labs, the SCC also analysed the social media influence of players and commentators, helping Wimbledon choose more effective ways to communicate with fans.

"The Social Command Centre was a key tool, not only for helping us understand what our fans wanted from The Championships in real time, but also for tailoring and providing content to help shape their experience," says Alexandra Willis, Content and Communications Manager at the AELTC



IBM developed the SCC on SoftLayer® cloud infrastructure using a virtual environment, then transferred it to bare metal – creating a flexible, secure production environment that could be scaled up during the tournament, and back during the rest of the year.

New levels of fan engagement

With the SCC at the heart of its holistic digital strategy, Wimbledon gained a new ability to interact with fans and shape the coverage of the tournament to raise engagement levels.

As a result, despite the influence of other summer sporting events, the tournament's digital platforms saw a 17 percent increase in site visits and a 9 percent increase in total page views – keeping tennis at the top of fans' agenda.

Meanwhile, running the SCC on SoftLayer kept the infrastructure cost low by scaling the system down to consume minimum resources as soon as the tournament finished.

Solution components

Software

- IBM® Watson® Content Analytics

Hardware

- SoftLayer®

Services

- IBM Global Business Services® – Customer Experience Lab
- IBM Emerging Technology Services®

About The Championships, Wimbledon

The Championships is the official name of the annual Grand Slam tennis tournament known to millions of fans around the world simply as Wimbledon. It is one of the world's highest-profile sporting events, and has been a cultural and sporting institution since its establishment in 1877.

To learn more about The Championships, please visit wimbledon.com

For more information

To find out how IBM can help your organisation harness social, analytics and cloud capabilities, please visit ibm.com/gbs/interactive



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