

CASE STUDY



Datapipe's Stratosphere® Elastic Cloud delivers scalability, security and flexibility to Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping Game

ORGANIZATION:

The Breeders' Cup World Championships, horse racing's premiere event that marks the end of the thoroughbred-racing season.

SOLUTION:

Datapipe Stratosphere Elastic Cloud infrastructure, MySQL, and other open source solutions running on the Linux platform

DATAPIPE

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FINDING THE PERFECT PARTNER

SNAPSHOT

The Breeders' Cup World Championships (www.breederscup.com) is horse racing's Super Bowl – an event that marks the end of the thoroughbred-racing season. Billed as a two-day, \$25 million extravaganza, the Breeders' Cup is the ultimate horse racing experience for fans who come to see the world's best horses, trainers and owners.

In 2012, the Breeders' Cup organization began work with a California-based gaming developer to design Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping (www.fantasycapping.com), an online, interactive game much like fantasy football and similar fantasy sports games, to attract a larger base of younger racing fans to the sport. The game would start in July and run throughout the 14-week racing season leading up to the Breeders' Cup in November.

"Major horse racing events like the Breeders' Cup tend to bring out the younger racing fans who are engaged by the overall entertainment, lifestyle, and fashion elements involved, in addition to world class racing," says Breeders' Cup Vice President, Marketing/ Digital Media, Justin McDonald. "We wanted to create a platform to reach this younger generation and get them more involved in the sport throughout the racing season, not just at the Breeders' Cup.

ENTERING DATAPIPE

McDonald and his marketing team were making their first entry into the fantasy gaming environment. They weren't sure how racing fans, both young and old, would respond to Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping.

Most of all, McDonald sought a cost-effective, cloud-based solution that would be highly flexible to scale quickly from virtually zero traffic to escalating levels of hits on the gaming site during the 14 weeks prior to the Breeders' Cup. Security and reliability were other key requirements to ensure that the supporting IT infrastructure and databases would not be compromised by spikes in traffic or cyber-attacks.

Based on past experience, the gaming developer working with Breeders' Cup recommended Datapipe as a prospective hosting vendor for the fantasy gaming site. After considering several other hosting vendors, Breeders' Cup chose Datapipe and its Stratosphere Elastic Cloud solution.

"No other vendor could match the level of flexibility and scalability that Datapipe offered us," McDonald says. "The others were not cloud-based and they were not as willing to work with us on this exploratory program. Datapipe understood what we needed and they were very willing to help us."

THE SOLUTION

The Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping Game website is hosted in the Datapipe Stratosphere Elastic Cloud, a globally available, high-performance managed cloud computing platform with the flexibility, scalability and security that Breeders' Cup required. Datapipe's technical consultants delivered a "white glove" level of service from initial consulting to solution delivery, becoming a valued technology partner instead of just another hosting vendor.

After consulting with McDonald and the project's development staff, Datapipe's technical team recommended the highly scalable Stratosphere rather than a traditional hosting model that could not scale to meet unexpected surges in traffic. Datapipe provisioned everything in the Stratosphere public cloud and communicated with McDonald's team daily to ensure that the fantasy game environment would sustain high spikes in traffic. For example, during game weeks starting in July, traffic can spike to 10,000 hits per day, then throttle back down to relatively minimal traffic in the off-season. The high-level of scalability eliminates the risk that databases, servers and other infrastructure elements will crash or lose data under heavy traffic loads.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

RESULTS & BENEFITS

- Reduced IT costs by 40 percent
- Scaled to support 7,000 new fantasy racing teams
- Maintained site performance, even under peak loads

After one year of the Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping game in the Datapipe Stratosphere Elastic Cloud environment, McDonald is extremely satisfied with the success of the site – and with Datapipe's service.

"Last year, Datapipe assured us that everything we discussed would happen as promised, and it did," McDonald says. "This was a pilot program, so we didn't know what to expect. But with 7,000 new teams signing up for Fantasy Capping in the first year, I would say we are off to a good start. Approximately 98 percent of the fans who responded to our post-game research said they would like to see the game continue in 2013. We're ready and able to support this growth thanks to the Datapipe cloud solution."

The Breeders' Cup organization gained the following benefits using the Datapipe Stratosphere Elastic Cloud:

- Cloud deployment reduced IT costs by 40 percent compared to traditional hosting
- Supported 7,000 new fantasy racing teams without web site performance issues
- On-demand processing power maintained peak performance of infrastructure elements, even under the heaviest traffic conditions

Keeping the IT budget under control was critical to the success of The Breeders' Cup Fantasy Capping game. "The Datapipe solution is the perfect fit because we pay for only the processing power we consume at any given time," McDonald says. "Our fantasy racing game is seasonal and with Datapipe's cloud it costs us virtually nothing to keep the site live during the off months. We are saving at least 40 percent over traditional hosting because we can easily scale our processing power to meet the volume of traffic. The other hosting options we looked at simply did not offer the level of scalability and cost savings that Datapipe can."

DATAPIPE

A next generation MSP, Datapipe is recognized as the pioneer of managed services for public cloud platforms. Datapipe has unique expertise in architecting, migrating, managing and securing public cloud, private cloud, hybrid IT and traditional IT. The world's most trusted brands partner with Datapipe to optimize mission-critical and day-to-day enterprise IT operations, enabling them to transform, innovate, and scale. Backed by a global team of experienced professionals and world-class interconnected data centers, Datapipe provides comprehensive cloud, compliance, security, governance, automation and DevOps solutions. Gartner named Datapipe a leader in the Magic Quadrant for Cloud-Enabled Managed Hosting.

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