BRIT Awards amplifies their Drupal website with Acquia Cloud

Acquia Cloud scales to meet 400% increase in site visitors

The BRIT Awards, organised by the British recorded music industry association (BPI), is the UK's biggest Music Awards ceremony. The BRIT Awards 2012 with MasterCard will be the 32nd BRIT Awards, which has raised more than £14 million for The BRIT Trust charity, whose main beneficiaries are the BRIT School for Performing Arts & Technology www.brit.croydon.sch.uk and Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk.

The BRIT Awards face the unique challenge of two cyclical peaks in website traffic each year coinciding with its two main events, the launch of the BRIT Awards nominations and the BRIT Awards show night. In 2011, the BRITs website crashed on the nominations launch night due to unexpected levels of user traffic on the site. With servers overwhelmed it took an entire day to fix the website and resume normal activity.

This year the BRITs team decided that it is vital to have a cost-effective, scalable cloud solution in place to handle the two peak traffic periods without disruption. Using Acquia Cloud and Acquia Support, the experience for fans was seamless and allowed for an up-close and more engaging experience than ever before.

Deeson Online, an Acquia Enterprise Select partner, originally built and specified the platform for the 2010 BRIT Awards and continue to provide consultancy to the BRIT Awards and their content partners. They identified that Acquia's 24/7 support and scalable cloud hosting represented an opportunity to overcome the challenges that huge, spiky traffic caused for traditional dedicated hosting.

"Acquia just seemed to tick a lot of the boxes from our point-of-view. It not only offered scalability, but the expert-level Drupal support and advice, which is unique."

*— Giuseppe de Cristofano,
IT Manager, BRIT Awards*

COMPANY INFORMATION

- BRIT Awards Limited
- brits.co.uk
- British Record Industry Trust music awards, UK's biggest Music Awards ceremony
- Drupal user since 2010
- Acquia Cloud customer since 2012

THE NUMBERS

- £14 million raised for The BRIT Trust charity in its 32 year history
- 400% increase in traffic to the BRIT awards website between 2011 and 2012
- Over 88,000 followers on Twitter and over 40,000 likes on Facebook

SUCCESS ENABLED WITH...

- Acquia Cloud
- Acquia Network with Support

Acquia™

BRIT Awards amplifies their Drupal website with Acquia Cloud

Acquia Support helps BRITs deliver performances of a lifetime

How they did it

Engaging with music fans using social media is core to the BRITs digital strategy. Channelling rich content to fans in the form of breaking news and interviews via Facebook, Twitter and a new BRITs iPhone application, was core in efforts to drive conversations and interactions online. As a result, traffic on the BRITs website quadrupled year-over-year.

"The digital and PR campaigns are working so well this year that there is a much greater buzz around the forthcoming awards ceremony, and we are anticipating a similar increase in traffic for the main show." – Giuseppe de Cristofano, IT Manager, BRIT Awards

The live awards ceremony finally arrived and the BRIT Awards' small IT team kept busy with time-sensitive onsite IT support including uploading live performances to the site. They relied on Acquia as their key partner to alleviate the operational burden of providing a stable environment for the website so they could focus on delivering the killer social experience for their followers.

The results

For the 2012 nominations launch event, even with measures in place to account for increased registration and voting activity, the increase in traffic was still much higher than projected. Acquia's Support team responded by upsizing the load balancers to handle the anonymous traffic and then they spun up an additional 12 servers to manage the authenticated traffic, allowing the BRIT Awards site to remain stable.

Throughout the project the BRITs relied on Acquia's Drupal expertise and partner tools to enhance the site. Not only did Acquia provide a scalable environment, Acquia's Client advisors identified a number of areas for performance improvement without compromising any of the functionality, including critical services such as voting for site visitors.

With the help of Acquia Cloud services and expert Drupal support the BRITs managed the spike in traffic, scaled to support the extra demand, and improved overall performance of the site. As a result, fans enjoyed red carpet treatment online as they celebrated an evening honouring the artists and their achievements over the past year.

"The Acquia package was attractive to us, because not only do we get a Acquia Cloud environment, but also expert Drupal support and advice on fine tuning our environment for performance, which modules to use and security updates."

- Giuseppe de Cristofano, IT Manager, BRIT Awards

FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF

- Learn more about Acquia's Solutions for Drupal at **http://acquia.com/products-services.**
- Contact info@acquia.com
- Or call 855.430.7700

ACQUIA™