

Bassmaster hooks new fishing site with Drupal and Acquia Cloud

CASE STUDY

Acquia and Phase2 increase functionality, migrate data and improve performance within six months

When new owners purchased the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S., LLC, a.k.a. BASS) from ESPN in 2010, one important task for the organization's new owners was to find a new home for Bassmaster.com. As part of the sale, ESPN would no longer run, host or maintain the website. The new owners had to re-launch the entire site on new publishing and hosting technology as well as migrate nearly ten years of content, all on a tight budget and in just six months. During these changes, it was critical for the team not to interfere with ongoing user access and to preserve the site's high Google Page Rank. And most importantly the site had to be ready within days of the re-launch for a high-user-demand weekend event.

And that's what they did. On schedule. And even slightly under budget—thanks to the combination of the OpenPublish distribution of Drupal as their new CMS; Phase2 Technology's design and development work; Acquia Cloud for hosting and an Acquia Network subscription for Drupal support; and a strong assist from ESPN IT in migrating the data.

"The players all came together," reports Jim Sexton, the new chief digital officer at B.A.S.S., brought in around when the new site was launched. "We are very pleased. It was a major undertaking to take a site from ESPN's infrastructure and start new, rebuilding some things and rethinking others."

How they did it

Ned Desmond, an independent technology consultant and President and Founder of Go Sportn, who had extensive experience in managing content-intensive web projects, was brought in by the new site owners to recommend the best technologies and technology partners.

Since ESPN's proprietary, homegrown content management system (CMS) could not work outside the ESPN technology framework, Desmond recommended open-source Drupal. "I looked at a number of websites, and it came down to a choice between Drupal and WordPress," says Desmond. "I picked Drupal, which had more of a track record with large publishers."



COMPANY INFORMATION

- Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S. LLC)
- <http://www.Bassmaster.com>
- B.A.S.S. is the worldwide authority on bass fishing.
- Media, Events
- Over 500,000 members
- Over 130,000 fans on Facebook
- Drupal user since: 2011
- Acquia client since: 2011

THE NUMBERS

- Complete site rebuilt in Drupal, migrated, and deployed within six months.
- New site handling tens of thousands of photos, videos and more
- 13+ million page views per month, tournament traffic spikes of several million in a weekend

SUCCESS ENABLED WITH...

- Acquia Cloud
- Acquia Network with Support
- OpenPublish Drupal Distribution
- Design and Development by Phase2 Technology

ACQUIA™

Drupal, OpenPublish, Acquia Cloud enables **BassMaster.com** owners to scale major fishing site

CASE STUDY

To develop the new site, Desmond selected Acquia enterprise select partner Phase2 Technology, which provides open-source-based web application development services, and specializing in enterprise-level content management system implementations. Experienced in Drupal, Phase2 recommended their OpenPublish "distro" (distribution version) of Drupal, which includes many function modules that publishers such as BASS typically want, like photo galleries, and integration with Facebook commenting.

To host the new Drupal-based Bassmaster site and support its operations, B.A.S.S. selected Acquia Cloud Hosting, a fully-managed cloud hosting platform from Acquia, tuned for Drupal performance and optimized for large enterprise Drupal websites.

"Bassmaster.com is a very high-traffic site," says Desmond. "It gets around 13+ million page views per month and during bass tournament weekends, the site can get several million hits over a few days. We've used Acquia's scaling service repeatedly, starting soon after the new site launched, and it worked well, the site kept running smoothly."

Acquia isn't just hosting Bassmaster.com's production site, but also provides the development environment for testing and staging code. BASS and Phase2 both take advantage of Acquia's Developer workflow management tool, which allows code to be moved at the click of a mouse among the development, test and production environments. "This lets them move from development to staging in real time, and provide demos of new work within minutes, not hours," says Bryan House, VP of Product Marketing, Acquia.

The results

On May 1, 2011, the new Bassmaster.com site went live, complete with the data migrated from ESPN and an enhanced set of features.

"I've been really pleased with how the site has performed," says Jim Sexton. "During the Bassmaster Classic this past February, we had a massive traffic spike with more than 27 million page views that month. Acquia was able to quickly upsize the hosting capacity, and we sailed right through. That was the biggest month we've had at Bassmaster.com so far."



"Acquia Cloud was a good fit for a business like B.A.S.S with affordable scaling requirements for performance spikes," says Desmond.



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