

CUSTOMER STORY

BETTING ON THE FUTURE

Paddy Power Betfair launches better products faster with private cloud datacenter platform

SERVICES

- Datacenter Network
- Enterprise Compute
- Strategy & Advisory
- Design & Build
- Supply Chain Services

USER EXPERIENCE

- Greater autonomy for developers
- Increased productivity

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Greater agility and scalability
- Lower operational costs
- Enhances customer experience
- Improves competitive advantage

OBJECTIVE

Operating in the highly competitive and heavily regulated sports betting and e-gaming industry, Paddy Power Betfair needs to be able to launch and adapt products and services quickly. The company needed to replace its existing datacenter platform, which was reaching end of life, to provide the level of agility needed going forward.

SOLUTION

Paddy Power Betfair turned to long-term partner Computacenter to design and deploy a private cloud solution featuring software-defined networking. A proof of concept environment was established in just six weeks. The company is currently migrating all its production systems to the new platform, including mobile gaming apps, websites and core services.

OUTCOME

With the flexible and scalable datacenter platform, Paddy Power Betfair can develop, test and launch new e-gaming products faster. It has also been able to reduce costs, maximise resources and improve productivity within its IT teams. All these factors contribute to a better customer experience and greater competitive advantage.



ABOUT PADDY POWER BETFAIR

Paddy Power Betfair plc is one of the leading sports betting and gaming groups in the world. Formed from the February 2016 merger of Paddy Power plc and Betfair Group plc, the business operates four of the world's major sports betting and entertainment brands; Paddy Power, Betfair, Sportsbet and TVG. It employs more than 7,000 people across fourteen locations in Europe, Australia and the US.



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Stephen Lowe
Head of Technology, Integration
Paddy Power Betfair



OBJECTIVE

Keeping up with the pace of change

When Paddy Power and Betfair merged in February 2016, the new company became the largest publicly listed online gaming company in the world. Combining traditional retail stores with sophisticated e-gaming products and services, Paddy Power Betfair is powered by technology.

"Our technology differentiates us from our competitors," explains Stephen Lowe, Head of Technology, Integration, at Paddy Power Betfair. "We employ more than 1,200 highly skilled IT professionals, including a large inhouse development team that's responsible for our unique e-gaming products."

The company's success depends heavily on its ability to launch exciting new games and services quickly and keep abreast of regulation. "Gaming is a fast-paced industry; we're subject to continuously changing customer demands, and new regulations that we have to comply with in order to continue serving our customer base," adds Stephen.

With its existing infrastructure no longer able to provide the level of flexibility Paddy Power Betfair needed, the company decided to completely overhaul its datacenter platform. "The infrastructure had become a bottleneck, especially for development teams who constantly need new environments," explains Stephen. "As the platform was reaching end of life anyway, we decided to take a new approach rather than simply upgrading."

SOLUTION

Private cloud platform with software-defined networking

To meet its needs for agility and flexibility, Paddy Power Betfair decided to implement a private cloud environment featuring software-defined networking (SDN), and selected long-term partner Computacenter to help. "Deploying an entirely new datacenter platform isn't something you do every day," comments Stephen. "We needed a partner that could advise on new technologies, particularly around SDN, and Computacenter was an excellent cultural fit."

Computacenter worked closely with the e-gaming company from the outset of the project to design and implement the solution. Following a thorough benchmarking exercise, Computacenter and Paddy Power Betfair developed a solution based on HPE compute, Arista switching, Citrix load balancing, KVM hypervisors and Nuage SDN technology.

The two companies established a proof of concept (POC) environment in August 2015 to ensure that the components worked seamlessly together. "Thanks to Computacenter's vendor relationships and expert advice on the SDN element, we were able to get a POC up and running in just six weeks," says Stephen.

In addition to providing advice and hardware, Computacenter helped Paddy Power Betfair with datacenter racking and wiring. As the project unfolded, Computacenter's experts helped the e-gaming company take advantage of newer technologies as they emerged on the market, while ensuring they still complied with the approved reference architecture.

The active-active solution sits across two datacenters to ensure continuous availability and maximise performance. "With software-defined networking, we can automate more," explains Stephen. "We can manage the flow of data from a central console without manually reconfiguring switches, enabling greater control with less effort."



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Stephen Lowe
Head of Technology, Integration
Paddy Power Betfair



We've established a datacenter platform that will provide the foundations we need going forward as our newly merged company continues to flourish.

Stephen Lowe
Head of Technology, Integration
Paddy Power Betfair



The company is currently migrating its production systems, including customer-facing e-gaming apps, websites and core services to the new environment, with the project due for completion by the end of 2017.

OUTCOME

A better customer experience, greater competitive advantage

The private cloud environment offers Paddy Power Betfair the flexibility and scalability it needs to develop, test and launch better e-gaming products in a shorter timeframe.

"Our developers have greater autonomy and can work faster, as they are no longer dependent on infrastructure teams to stand up new environments for them," explains Stephen. "This doesn't just improve developer productivity, but also frees up infrastructure and networking teams to focus on more strategic tasks."

With development, test and production environments all on identical platforms, there's also less risk of bugs and errors when new products go live.

The new solution also has a smaller datacenter footprint, which means lower power, cooling and management requirements. As capacity can be scaled up and down to meet peaks in demand or support load testing, Paddy Power Betfair can maximise resources, as well as minimise costs. "Previously, we had to invest in performance testing environments that were only used occasionally. Now we can spin up new capacity in minutes and simply delete it again when we're done."

The ability to easily move workloads between platforms and datacenters means that Paddy Power Betfair is well set to cope with change and growth, as Stephen explains: "Due to regulations, we're currently restricted to a private cloud infrastructure, but when this changes in the future, we'll easily be able to take advantage of public cloud services."

With greater agility, increased productivity and better sports betting and e-gaming products, Paddy Power Betfair will be able to improve the customer experience and competitive advantage. "With Computacenter's help and advice, we've established a datacenter platform that will provide the foundations we need going forward as our newly merged company continues to flourish," Stephen concludes.

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about our cloud services and read more customer case studies, log on to www.computacenter.com
