

FOXSports.com

“Anyone can write a program generating requests to throw at your site,” said Gannon. “But Keynote far exceeds that minimum level. Keynote realistically simulates user behavior and experience, and gives us the diagnostic detail to understand what we need to improve.”

Impact Highlights:

- FOXSports.com wanted to ensure their site was ready for a big televised contest or promotion.
- Keynote test results showed FOXSports.com the need for improvements including scaling up Web and database servers, and application level changes.

FOXSports.com: Testing is the Name of the Game

FOXSports.com Overview A television broadcaster has a powerful opportunity to promote crosschannel viewership and drive increased traffic between its Web and television platforms. FOX Broadcasting has very successfully implemented a cross-media strategy by tying its Web site tightly to its television programming. FOX’s strategy is aided by its innovative and very successful ‘Virtual Coach’, introduced during the network’s 2002 broadcast of Super Bowl XXXVI and used in subsequent sports events. Virtual Coach is an in-screen graphic appearing on your TV screen that encourages interaction by posing questions during the broadcast and sending viewers to the Web site at www.FOXSports.com to respond and vote. This cross-platform synergy builds traffic for both media.

The result online is an instant load spike on the site, and according to John Gannon, Infrastructure

Architect, is definitely a testament to the need for rigorous Web site load testing. “Integration with FOX television broadcasts puts greater emphasis and importance on

our site,” said Gannon. Given the strategic promotions between platforms, at stake is the brand reputation of both the television and the Web business of a major network. “As such, it is critical for us to know at all times just what our site will do and what our online users are experiencing. Performance testing of our site is essential at FOXSports.com.”

The Challenge: Both Planned and Unplanned Load Testing Requirements

FOXSports.com is faced with a couple of different circumstances in creating and posting content to the site, each of which calls for a different approach to testing. There is a schedule of predictable sports events the Super Bowl, NCAA tournaments, the World Series, etc. each occurring at about the same time every year—for which they can plan in advance and schedule a robust testing period. “We have a chance to plan and work with a robust testing period on these events,” says Gannon.



However, in addition to this planned, cyclical calendar, FOXSports.com has to respond to some events under very short notice because of the spontaneous nature of television. The FOXSports.com site has to be ready for a big televised contest or promotion, which means that they need to be able to test whenever necessary, sometimes at the last minute. Keynote gives FOXSports.com a family of testing services meet these different circumstances: for preplanned full service load testing through highly experienced consultants, and for immediate, day to day self provisioned testing.

Selecting the right load testing tools to meet these varied scenarios and provide accurate results was extremely important to FOXSports.com, particularly given the intrinsic ties with its broadcast parent. FOXSports.com found that Keynote's testing solutions met its needs.

FOXSports.com chose Keynote because its load testing services realistically simulate a variety of unconstrained use behaviors, accurately measure performance over the Internet and comprehensively test Web services and content delivered from multiple locations, providing a granular level of reporting and detail which allows for deep diagnostics. Unlike other solutions, Keynote's testing services are built from the ground up for the Web environment and its unique characteristics, testing the entire Web application infrastructure — both front and back ends from outside the firewall, thereby reflecting the effects of real user loads. Keynote's "wind tunnel" testing gives FOXSports.com highly accurate real world results with which to identify and diagnose end-to-end system performance bottlenecks, understand capacity

constraints and verify functionality.

The Solution: Keynote's Total Performance Approach to Load Testing

FOXSports.com originally used Keynote Test Perspective®, a completely self-service, self provisioned load and integrity test, to prove that a new site design would perform under expected user load when it was re-launched in September, 2001—after a major build-out of only three months, a very aggressive time frame.

FOXSports.com continues to use Keynote testing services to assure that they are ready for anything. Operations, Application Development and Quality Assurance use Test Perspective for acceptance testing, modeling and assurance that new functions and features can withstand loads before they go live. The Operations and Application Development use Keynote LoadPro™, a full service load testing solution, while an application is in production to simulate the impact of scheduled large events, particularly in conjunction with television broadcasts.

"Keynote Test Perspective fulfills our day to day load testing needs, and gives us an affordable way to do multiple iterations and QA testing," said Gannon. "We acceptance test all of our releases with a set of scripts— for access to the homepage, checking game scores, etc." According to Gannon, this has resulted in greater uptime for the site because they're able to catch performance issues before they get into production. For testing the major scheduled events, Keynote LoadPro gives FOXSports.com an accurate, real-life scenario of what the site can endure under load. Keynote's reports indicate user satisfaction while the site is under load,

including abandonment rate and lost revenue calculations. Gannon's group watches how the load affects its servers and network equipment, experiments with additional equipment to see how it affects performance, and based on the results may decide to add more resources to its network.

For over a decade, Keynote has been providing measurement data and testing capabilities that allow companies to understand and improve their customer's online and mobile experience. Keynote gives FOXSports.com the ability to benchmark and compare its site to the performance of its chief competitors' sites, in which FOXSports.com is keenly interested given the competitive nature of the online sports industry.

About Keynote

Keynote Systems (NASDAQ "KEYN") is the global test and measurement company for mobile communications and online business performance.

As an independent and trusted third-party, Keynote provides IT and marketing executives with an unbiased view into their Internet services from around the world. For over a decade, we have been providing measurement data and testing capabilities that allow companies to understand and improve their customer's online and mobile experience.

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