

CASE STUDY

**DRAFTFCB**

## Unpredictable hosting requirements: DraftFCB Digital depends on Web Drive



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### The challenge in brief:

- **High profile advertising campaign**
- **36 hours notice to design and build the hosting**
- **Global audience, sites released in Chinese, German and Japanese**
- **Global Viral coverage including front page coverage on mashable.com**
- **100,000 competition entries in 10 days**

When web hosting requirements are unpredictable, the choice of service provider is critical. Advertising agency DraftFCB's Digital team looks to Web Drive to provide flexible, rapid-response solutions capable of scaling to meet the rapidly escalating demand which comes from campaigns that go viral.

With offices in Auckland and Wellington, DraftFCB is among the country's top advertising agencies, with numerous awards behind its name, including the Communication Agencies Association of New Zealand (CAANZ) 'Most Effective Agency' prize in 2011. It's Digital team runs online campaigns for clients in the private and public sectors, leveraging the power of the internet to raise profiles and drive mindshare.

According to Kevin Akers, DraftFCB Digital Production head, it has relied on Web Drive for nearly two years. "The jobs with which Web Drive assists range from the small to the incredibly large. Some are hosted as shared services, others have dedicated resources allocated to them," he says.

One of the 'risks' which is ever-present for a digital agency is that a campaign goes viral. While that is obviously highly desirable – more is more, after all – it means resource allocation can go from 'sufficient' to 'woefully inadequate' in a matter of hours.

Akers explains what's at stake: "Depending on the job, if websites crash or perform badly, there can be financial implications. There are service level agreements that we adhere to; for example, if there is a TV campaign that directs viewers to a site and that site goes down, the media spend is lost and that can be expensive."

There is also the possibility of reputational damage, both for the client and for DraftFCB itself. Notoriously impatient web surfers have social media at their fingertips. If pages fail to load, websites are slow or what's promised isn't delivered, they can quickly turn a good campaign into a public relations nightmare.

Akers therefore confirms that its hosting services provider has to respond rapidly to requirements which are subject to rapid change. "We did an audit to see who could



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THE CHANGE AGENCY

**Kevin Akers**  
Head of Digital Production



provide what in terms of top level support. Uptime is a major factor, as is the ability to scale to deal with traffic which, even though you can estimate as high as you like, can still throw up surprises."

And with short lead times, he adds that a true 'on-demand' service is necessary to meet unpredictable capacity and performance parameters.

With Web Drive, Akers says DraftFCB gets a robust, guaranteed solution to underpin its digital campaigns. "These include government sites which are hosted with Web Drive and which have a somewhat predictable demand on resources, to the other end of the scale where competitions and other such campaigns can start small but often need to scale in terms of traffic."

### **From New Zealand to the world**

When international technology news site Mashable.com picked up on a campaign being run by DraftFCB for one of its private sector clients, an initial anticipation of 10 000 competition entries quickly escalated. Global exposure meant a cascade of interest could be expected (and indeed, eventuated).

Neil Webster, Web Drive sales manager, explains the challenge. "The first we heard about the campaign was 36 hours before go-live; not unusual. The competition was global, with a fairly substantial prize; however, when Mashable picked up the story, it was a safe bet that the competition might go nuts."

In response, DraftFCB quickly released several foreign language versions of the competition site, including Chinese, Japanese and German. That resulted in a very sudden change in specifications for the hosting; however, Web Drive drew on its resources to deploy a high traffic platform within 3 hours of the first phone call. "This included the use of our Content Delivery Network which has Points of Presence in key markets to serve traffic as close to visitors as possible," Webster explains.

The anticipated wave of traffic broke, surpassing 100 000 entries; Web Drive's servers performed without a hitch, delivering the promised experience to visitors around the world.

### **A professional interface**

As a digital agency, DraftFCB has its own software developers and systems administrators. Akers says this positions the company to appreciate the level of technical ability which is on offer from Web Drive. "The flexibility and standard of support has always met expectations. When we need to speak with someone to address technical issues or request additional services, the right people are available around the clock," he says.

Akers says the value DraftFCB sees in the relationship with Web Drive is quite simply assessed: "We wouldn't work with the company if it wasn't meeting our needs. Whatever our requirements for hosting, they always have a solution; if we run into trouble, they always have a backup plan. Issues are resolved promptly and the support is solid. In a word, 'professional' is the best way to describe Web Drive," he concludes.