

Atos Origin Delivers World Class IT and Helpdesk Support for the Olympic Games with Hornbill Systems.



Atos Origin, through the acquisition of SchlumbergerSema, signed the largest ever IT related contract for a sports event in December 1998, to become the Worldwide IT Partner for the Olympic Games. The contract, with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), covered four Games over eight years, Salt Lake City in 2002 (operated by SchlumbergerSema), Athens in 2004, Torino in 2006 and Beijing in 2008.

To help the IT systems run as efficiently as possible at the Salt Lake City Games a problem management system was used. Any incidents arising could be dealt with as soon as possible. However the product used lacked flexibility, as it was originally configured for a corporate environment and was proving expensive to customise to meet the requirements for Games-time operations.

At the next Games, to be held in Athens, the IT infrastructure would be huge, so a reliable, flexible problem resolution system was critical. The Technology Operations Centre (TOC) would be staffed 24 hours a day by 400 highly trained Atos Origin IT professionals. They would be managing a further 2,400 IT volunteers located at 62 competition and non competition venues. Atos Origin led a consortium of technology Partners which supplied a vast IT infrastructure of 10,500 PCs, 900 servers, 4,000 results systems terminals, 2,000 fax machines and copiers and 2,000 printers.

Why Change?

After the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games, Alan Crompton, Atos Origin Operations Manager, set about researching an alternative product. He built a business case to analyse why they should replace the existing system, and looked at systems that may be suitable for the job. He was keen to get a deep understanding of the type of functionality available, the ease with which a new solution could be customised and the cost implications. Alan explained, "We wanted a helpdesk system that would be flexible enough to meet the diverse requirements of our users, and that could grow and be modified in line with the different phases of the project. It was important for us to be able to customise the product ourselves so that we can customise the tool in line with changes within the project."

The Solution

After a detailed procurement process in which several systems were evaluated, Hornbill's Supportworks was selected. The system was installed in April 2003 at both the Athens and Torino Organising Committees. Due to the differing natures of summer and winter Games, and the widely different timescales the two implementations commenced, but have been run in very different ways.

Business Benefits:

- Pre-configured installation process drastically cut implementation times
- Highly scalable and robust under extreme pressure
- 745 concurrent users at 62 locations 24/7
- Unique Non-polling Architecture filtered over 97% of network traffic
- Proven versatility and easy to customise to meet changing and growing requirements

"Hornbill's Supportworks has provided Atos Origin with the best of all worlds. It was functionality rich enough to be used, with very little customisation, to provide an incident management system for the Athens Olympics."

Alan Crompton
Operations Manager
Atos Origin

Athens - Proven Scalability, Out of the Box Functionality

Due to year round warm weather in Athens, testing took place over a period of 12 months while supporting the Sport Events prior to the actual Games. This meant plenty of time for finding any glitches, but only left three months to install Supportworks and for Atos Origin IT staff to learn how to use it, and complete any customisation. As part of the tender process Hornbill had already done much of the preliminary work, so the delivered system was ready to run.

Alan explains, "Once the Sport Event period begins, it is difficult to modify any of the systems because every change means that there are corresponding changes to training documentation and procedures. The purpose of the testing is to find any problems and resolve them rather than looking for areas to add further functionality."

High Pressure Testing

In May 2004, the first phase of Olympic Games technical rehearsals took place. Seventy-six different scenarios were tested during one week by a team of almost 200 IT professionals. The scenarios ranged from IT security issues such as uncontrolled access to the IT systems, through to power outages, staff unable to turn up for work and sports events being rescheduled. A non-operational team set the scenarios and monitored the results to ensure that the reactions of the operational team were as true to a real life situation as possible.

In June 2004 (2 months prior to the Games) a second rehearsal took place, this time at several Olympic Games venues. The critical operational systems including the Games Management Systems (GMS), Information Diffusion Systems (IDS) and the supporting IT infrastructure were all thoroughly tested.

Supportworks Rises to the Challenge

In August 2004, the ATHENS Olympic Games took place with 10,500 athletes, 21,500 media representatives and 4 billion TV viewers. In preparation for and during the Games, Atos Origin distributed real-time results to more than 8,000 broadcasters, sustained 18 million queries on the 2,500 INFO terminals (the Games information intranet), and supplied 3 million KB of data held within 800,000 messages to the official Athens 2004 website, six world news press agencies and 13 other data feed clients.

Hornbill's Supportworks was used to track all incidents and provide instant visibility of any problems that arose during the Games. Over the course of the Games, Supportworks supplied a system for 745 concurrent users, with 1,000 individual users set up on the system. Of the 62 locations where Supportworks was installed, 40 were off-site venues, each with an average of 10 users per site. Venue IT staff were able to access the full featured Supportworks via a Windows client. Hornbill's unique Non-polling Architecture (NPA), which cuts network traffic significantly by clever synchronisation techniques whereby it only updates changes to data, ensured real-time performance with little network impact. NPA filters over 97% of the network traffic that would normally be expected from a conventional client/server application.

The Best of All Worlds

"Hornbill's Supportworks has provided Atos Origin with the best of all worlds. It was functionality rich enough to be used, with very little customisation, to provide an incident management system for the Athens Olympics".

"As you can see by the numbers of users, Supportworks is a truly scalable solution and yet is good value for money and is very light on network resources. It is now proving to be extremely flexible and easy to develop, enabling us to extend its use and to deliver a full IT Service Management system that Atos Origin will use for the future Olympic Games."



HORNBILL

Hornbill Systems Ltd.
Ares
Odyssey Business Park
West End Road
Ruislip
HA4 6QD
UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 8582 8282
Fax: +44 (0)20 8582 8288

Hornbill Systems, Inc.
245 Park Avenue
39th Floor
New York
NY 10167
USA

Tel: +1 212 803 8100
Fax: +1 212 792 4001

Email: info@hornbill.com
Web: www.hornbill.com



Assetworks

Supportworks