



## Case Study

# Harrah's Comes Up a Winner with Interwoven, IBM

TeamSite<sup>®</sup> Content Infrastructure system and WebSphere<sup>™</sup> enable entertainment leader to save thousands of dollars in Web development each month and protect corporate brand across 20 properties.

### Challenges

- Re-launch corporate Web site, migrate from static to dynamic content
- Protect corporate brand on 20 properties across the United States
- Enable content contribution by non-technical Web team
- Reduce dependency on external Web development resources
- Deliver responsibility for property-specific Web updates to appropriate personnel
- Ensure a uniform user experience on all Web properties

### Solution

- Content Infrastructure software includes TeamSite and OpenDeploy
- IBM WebSphere Application Server
- Verity Information Server & K2 Search Engine

### Benefits

- Corporation now has consistent look and feel, protects brand across all Web properties
- Customers enjoy a uniform navigation and Web experience
- TeamSite Templating facilitates Web contribution throughout distributed enterprise
- Company is saving thousands of dollars per property per month, has compressed time-to-Web from weeks to days
- Web solution will scale to support diverse, dynamic Web applications in the future

Harrah's Entertainment, Inc. is the best-recognized and most respected name in the casino entertainment industry. Headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada, Harrah's operates 20 casinos in 17 markets under the Harrah's, Rio, and Showboat brand names.

Harrah's maintains a commitment to building loyalty and value to its customers and other constituents by being the "most service-oriented, technology-driven, geographically diversified company in gaming." So, it was appropriate that Harrah's recently sought powerful, Content Infrastructure software from Interwoven to support the company's marketing initiatives, and protect its corporate brand.

With the help of Interwoven<sup>®</sup> TeamSite<sup>®</sup>, OpenDeploy<sup>®</sup>, and consulting from IBM Global Services, Harrah's has streamlined and internalized its Web development process, saving the company thousands of dollars each month at each of its 20 properties. At the same time, Harrah's now has complete control over the look and feel of its site, even while enabling employees nationwide to become Web contributors.

"We wanted to make sure that we could have consistency in the branding of our site, and provide an experience to our customers that was similar, based on whatever property they visited," says Anika Howard, Internet marketing manager for Harrah's Entertainment. "We also wanted to provide flexibility, in terms of content and messaging, to the contributors at all of our casino properties. TeamSite and TeamSite templates definitely allowed us to do that."

### IBM Global Services Recommends Interwoven

Harrah's engaged IBM Global Services to help with the redesign of the company's external Web site, [www.harrahs.com](http://www.harrahs.com). The previous corporate site offered mostly static content, and was targeted primarily to the investment community and the media. With an eye towards creating a jazzier, more compelling Internet presence, and to maintain control of its corporate brand, Harrah's brought IBM on board to guide them through the technology selection and implementation process. Fairly early in the proceedings, Interwoven is Content Infrastructure system, based on TeamSite and OpenDeploy, emerged as a must-have for Harrah's.

Says Howard: "We needed to reign in some of our individual casino properties, as we did not have a consistent branding message online. Several properties also had independent Web sites that were very different, and were externally hosted. To support those objectives, we looked for a content management solution that offered workflow and version control, and the reuse of our assets. And templating was certainly key, because we wanted to roll this out to a group of content contributors who did not have strong technical backgrounds. We also needed a very scalable solution, as we wanted to do things like personalization and dynamic page generation in the future. Interwoven fulfilled all of our requirements."

### Templates Make Web Contribution Ubiquitous

Following the TeamSite implementation, IBM Global Services helped Harrah's devise the first group of master data capture and presentation templates. The TeamSite templates enable Web contributors at Harrah's properties across the U.S. to make daily Web updates, ensuring that the site is constantly fresh and engaging. Even those who lack HTML skills, Howard confirms, can easily enter their information into the templates and publish to Harrah's site.

Howard reports that site-specific marketing personnel publishes data about each Harrah's property, while corporate communications staffers ensure that all company data—such as press releases and the site's "About Us" section—is up-to-date. Interwoven's content collaboration software, provides unique branching capability that enables the marketing and corporate teams to maintain their own sections of the site, while ensuring a consistent look and feel. All in all, Interwoven is making it possible for approximately 60 contributors throughout the Harrah's enterprise to contribute to the site.

"We structured our Web architecture in terms of branches," Howard says, "so we can make updates to specific parts of the site. In that way, we can kind of 'grow' the sections, and allow each of the individual properties to manage its own site, and grow at their own pace. Essentially, everyone is independent of each other, yet, we all have the same corporate brand."

## Best-of-Breed Solution

The Harrah's site currently leverages a full range of diverse Web content types, including Flash™, Java™, Macromedia® Director sequences, and more. Howard confirms that Interwoven's Content Infrastructure software is especially suited to Harrah's current and long-range Web strategy, as it will support such dynamic content as streaming video and audio in the future. She reveals that visitors to Harrah's Web site soon will be able to take "virtual tours" of all 20 properties, viewing video clips of hotels and restaurants, and upcoming entertainment attractions.

Also included in Harrah's Web architecture is IBM's WebSphere, which powers all of the site's non-NT-based applications. Harrah's eCommerce Product Manager Sam Dillard notes that through OpenDeploy, content is easily pushed to the IP addresses of the WebSphere Application Servers. Verity's search engine rounds out Harrah's Web solution.

"WebSphere is currently running all of our generic corporate pages," Dillard says. "That includes sections like 'About Us,' and the 'Our Casinos' section, which is where the huge success story is, related to Interwoven. That's where we've used TeamSite templates extensively to create content, which is then deployed via OpenDeploy to the WebSphere servers. OpenDeploy puts content out in a manner that is usable and organized, so that any application server we decide to use can find it."

Dillard says the selection of WebSphere was a natural progression of Harrah's prior association with IBM. The combination of WebSphere's robust performance and its scalability to support Harrah's future growth, seemed to offer the ideal fit for Harrah's needs.

"We did an extensive study between WebSphere and other application servers, and we believe that IBM is heading into a strategic direction with the product," Dillard says. "Our hardware, and most of our software solution was already IBM. We're now extending on the WebSphere platform—we'll be using multiple instances of WebSphere on the same machines, so that each Web product can have its own WebSphere instance."

## TeamSite Saves Thousands

Now that Harrah's no longer outsources its Web development vendor and hosting, Howard estimates that the company is saving an enormous amount of money each month. In addition, Harrah's has significantly compressed its time-to-Web.

"In the past, each property would have costs allocated specifically for a Web development vendor and hosting," Howard says. "Now, each of our properties has the ability to make the changes and updates themselves. That's helping us save thousands of dollars per property per month. It's also a process improvement, in that the people who are actually responsible and have the most knowledge about the content are the ones who are making the changes. We can now do in a day what used to take us a couple of weeks. Interwoven's Content Infrastructure system, based on TeamSite software, has given us a huge cost benefit, and a productivity benefit."

Harrah's is currently evaluating the feasibility of migrating several other Web initiatives into the Content Infrastructure system, including an HR intranet application, and an eProcurement initiative. Harrah's is also looking at making its Web properties available to consumers through multiple delivery channels in the future—an effort that will be greatly aided by the content reuse capabilities Interwoven software offers. With the lessons learned from the company's successful relaunch of its external site, it's a sure bet that Harrah's will continue to keep TeamSite as an integral part of the company's Web landscape.

"Interwoven has truly helped us present a unified brand image online," Howard finishes. "It's really helping us take the next step, in terms of our marketing. When you go through a vendor, you usually don't have that power to make those real-time changes. Now, each of our properties has a strong presence, but we still have the umbrella of Harrah's brand. With Interwoven software, now we can show what Harrah's has to offer. We're moving in the right direction, and we'll be able to grow with Interwoven."

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**—Anika Howard  
Internet Marketing Manager  
Harrah's Entertainment**

**For More Information,  
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