



“The biggest benefit of MIMIX is that if there is a problem, we can be up and running again within five minutes.”

George Gallant, System Manager
The All England Lawn Tennis Club

Business Profile

Organization name:
The All England Lawn Tennis Club
(host of Wimbledon)

Headquarters:
London, England

Profits:
Over £26 million (GBP)

Industry:
Sports

Employees:
114 full time, thousands
during the Championships

- Business Environment:
- Host of one of the world’s most prestigious and well-known tennis championships dating since 1877
 - The Championships start six weeks before the first Monday in August and last approximately two weeks
 - Attendance is regularly over 450,000
 - Proprietary ticket management system and other vital applications run on IBM System i

Implementation Team:
REAL Solutions

Vision Solutions Product:
MIMIX® HA for i5/OS®

Critical Issue

Data and applications play a vital role at Wimbledon in ticketing systems that directly impact customer service and revenue generation. The All England Lawn Tennis Club naturally wanted to make absolutely certain that its systems would be available during the annual two-weeks of Championships and the period leading up to them.

Results

- Ensures system availability to maximize customer service and optimize revenue.
- Flawless switchover tests provide assurance.
- Installation requires just one person and a very short period of time.
- Real-time reports can be run rapidly on the backup system without impacting performance of the primary system.

Technologies

- MIMIX® HA for i5/OS® from Vision Solutions
- Production system: IBM® System i Model 270
- Backup system: Model 170
- Geac accounting software
- Custom-built ticketing system

Business Challenge

Most of the year, the All England Lawn Tennis Club resembles a small- to medium-sized company. However, during The Championships, the Club assumes the mantle of a much larger organization. During Wimbledon, data and applications help the Club maximize customer service and optimize revenue.

The Club manages its activities using two IBM® System i servers. The production system is a Model 270 and a Model 170 server performs primarily as a backup. The Club runs Geac accounting software. In addition, its unique, custom-developed ticketing system manages ticket sales and provides services for people attending the matches.

The Club could lose access to its systems for even as long as a day without seriously impacting operations during most of the year. However, during The Championships and the period leading up to them, a loss of access to the ticketing system would be disastrous.

In addition to managing ticket sales, the Club’s System i servers also process tickets at the event. Tickets are bar-coded for tracking purposes. The bar-coding and scanning system allows Wimbledon to resell tickets turned in at the end of the day’s matches. The additional funds go to charity, and the worldwide broadcast audience always sees the stands packed with tennis aficionados.



Solution

With data and applications playing such an important role at Wimbledon, the Club wanted to make absolutely certain that they would be available during The Championships. The Club asked Wimbledon's technology partner and one of its major sponsors, IBM, for suggestions on how to best meet this objective.

IBM recommended MIMIX® HA for i5/OS® from Vision Solutions and Vision Solutions' business partner, REAL Solutions, headquartered in Chessington, England.

The All England Club is rather unique in that it only licenses MIMIX each year for The Championships. As a result, it reinstalls MIMIX and reinitiates the backup system every year. The annual installation, performed by REAL Solutions, requires just one person and a very short period of time.

"REAL Solutions manages the installation process," said George Gallant, System Manager for The All England Lawn Tennis Club. "I can't recommend them highly enough."

During the annual tournament, MIMIX maintains a real-time replica of the All England Club's production database on the backup system. If the primary system were to fail for any reason, MIMIX would detect the problem and automatically initiate a failover to the backup system. In such an event, downtime would be minimal.

The annual installation of MIMIX involves full replication of all data, objects and applications on the backup system. During the fortnight of Wimbledon, however, the All England Club freezes its application code and system objects. Consequently, while MIMIX could replicate changes to applications and other system objects, only changes to data are replicated.

To help guarantee that there will be no problems should the primary system fail during the tournament, the Club thoroughly tests MIMIX by switching over from the production to the backup system. The switchover has always worked flawlessly.

Wimbledon adopted MIMIX primarily as a high availability solution. However, it found that the solution also improved performance. Because MIMIX maintains a real-time replica of Wimbledon's data, the ticket-office manager can run up-to-the-minute reports on the backup system. Since the backup is not used for other tasks, the reports are generated more rapidly and this does not jeopardize production performance.

While the Club has not experienced any system failures during The Championships, it appreciates the peace of mind that MIMIX provides. With MIMIX at work, "I'm able to sleep better," concluded Gallant.



17911 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 500, Irvine, CA 92614
1-800-957-4511 ▪ 1-801-799-0300 ▪ visionsolutions.com



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