



Company

CBC

WebLOAD Benefits for CBC

- Test performance under largest load peaks
- Ensure that dynamic content performs reliably
- Generate peak load with fewer resources
- Powerful analysis and reporting rapidly revealed bottlenecks
- Overnight, unattended testing

CBC

The Canadian Broadcasting Association

CBC/Radio-Canada's national public broadcaster reaches Canadians through eight national radio and television networks, its full-service web sites, local stations and affiliates, as well as the digital television channel Country Canada and the Galaxie music network. In addition, CBC/Radio-Canada has forged partnerships with other broadcasters and is a partner in the specialty television services ARTV and The Documentary Channel.

The Challenge: Meeting Information Peaks

CBC.ca is the main English language site of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It handles approximately 70 million page views per month with peak hours ranging from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm daily. The site includes breaking national, international and local news, arts news, business and sports coverage, interactive features, weather, health and science reporting. CBC.ca's information is dynamically generated and delivered through text, radio and video. Like many news sites, the largest spikes occur during a large news event, an online function such as a broadcast concert, or a voting event. For example, during the Federal Election on June 28, 2004, this section of the site alone served over 700,000 page requests over the space of two days, through dynamically generated news stories.

Automating our load testing with WebLOAD has saved us up to 20% of our time and enabled us to do more testing with a smaller staff time investment."

Michael Douglas,
QA Team Lead, CBC.ca

Putting Dynamic Content to the Test

These substantial usage spikes require more careful testing, because the CBC.ca's stories are generated in real-time while users are searching the site and writers and editors are adding stories. The stress tests need to exercise the application directly. These tests are important for all major online events, such as the Olympics, the Election coverage, and other breaking news. In terms of testing the dynamic building of content, CBC.ca needed to see how fast they could render pages without having the infrastructure fail. It has been demonstrated for certain critical applications that the behavior under excessive loads is a slowdown but not a failure of the applications. Running a series of tests which slowly increased load indicated this weakness with a minimal amount of effort.

The Solution: Stress Testing with WebLOAD

Using RadView's WebLOAD, the testing team was able to determine what level of load could be sustained through endurance testing. Prior to using RadView's WebLOAD CBC.ca was using freeware products. These tools were labor intensive to use and didn't generate the load necessary for their tests.

"While these freeware tools got us started, we were looking for tools that included the ability to better organize testing and deliver more consistency in terms of test and reporting," added Michael Douglas, QA team lead for the website.

