

WEBSITE BOOSTS CHARITY FUNDRAISING



www.comicrelief.com has broken all world wide web records . The Red Nose Day 2001 campaign broke all records previously set by Comic Relief both in real and virtual worlds. To date, over £3 million has been donated online with the majority donated on the night of Red Nose Day during the television programme. The number of internet users on turned **www.comicrelief.com** into one of the world's busiest e-commerce sites.

Comic Relief's e-charity project was made possible through the involvement of title sponsor Cisco Systems, the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. The architecture was designed to take up to 200 donations per second. During the night of TV, a record breaking 96,000 transactions were processed. The peak period for donations between 9.30pm and 10.30pm with over 47,000 being registered in this hour, although the overall average number of online donations per second during the eight hour television show was 12,000 - equivalent to 3 donations per second.

Within the five week campaign, **www.comicrelief.com** registered more than 100 million page requests with over 80 million in the final week - making it one of the world's most visited sites between 6 Feb and 17 March. On Red Nose Day itself there were 20.9 million page requests using a bandwidth of up to 50 Mbit. One of the most popular sections of the site was Celebrity Big Brother receiving on average a 40% share of site traffic in the final week of the campaign. The Celebrity Big Brother section was the final addition to the site that had been unveiled in a phased approach from 6 February 2001. It featured innovative drop dial voting, real-time news updates and exclusive footage of the latest goings on in the house. Nearly 10,000 votes were registered online using the new technology generating over £1500 for Red Nose Day.

Says Amanda Horton-Mastin, Marketing Director 'We are overwhelmed with the public response via the web. It has exceeded all our expectations and all online records previously set last Red Nose Day. The most interesting aspect is that unlike phone donations, there was less correlation between the TV content and the pattern of donations made online. In fact, our analysis shows that the response to Red Nose Day online most matched the pattern of day to day life for the majority of people. There was a surge of

interest online just before people were leaving the office, again during News at Ten, and finally post 11pm when people were returning from an evening out.'

The success of the site is largely attributable to Cisco Systems and its ecosystem of partners, who helped build and design the site. Cisco Systems, BBC Internet Services, Compaq, Energis, Oracle, Retail Logic, Wheel and Zeus were instrumental in ensuring the site was technically robust and secure throughout the campaign and most importantly on Red Nose Day itself.

In terms of back end technology, **comicrelief.com** was built using some of the most developed and reliable technology available. Cisco Systems provided a significant number of technical support features from a huge and dedicated project management resource to switches, routers, load balancers and firewalls. The implementation of the technological features on the site, based around a Cisco/Oracle/EMC Ecostructure, proved to be a multipurpose high intensity e-commerce solution. Compaq provided the Alpha/Tru 64 platform environment for the site. The equipment ensured that even through the most intense traffic period between 9.30pm and 10.30pm, the hardware remained completely reliable. Energis who hosted the equipment for **www.comicrelief.com** provided the site with access to over 400 Mbit of bandwidth to avoid any instances of users not being able to connect and donate. All database elements and parallel server technology was supplied by Oracle. Their software reliably handled data for a diverse collection of functionality, from over 8,000 events registrations online, 14,000 user registrations and news about Celebrity Big Brother, to the core activity of managing the online donations. Retail Logic's software was used to manage the authentication and EFT of a record breaking number of online transactions to Comic Relief's merchant partner Streamline. The webserver software was also the fastest of its kind, developed and donated by Zeus. BBC Internet services hosted all streaming media including the exclusive footage on Celebrity Big Brother which appeared on the site.

As well as Cisco Systems tremendous support, new media agency Wheel was also instrumental in developing the two key factors of the online experience - look and feel and back end technology. As the main designer of the site and Comic Relief's digital strategy partner, Wheel, along with their technical team IDG, and the Cisco Alliance partners, built a site that delivered throughout the campaign and managed to exceed all of Comic Relief's wildest predictions.

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