



Betfred brings live sport to the high street



Betfred

Industry: Gambling

Location: Warrington, England

Profile: Betfred brings live sport to the high street



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Fast Facts

- BOSS to be implemented in 1660 Licensed Betting Offices
- Project BOSS was rolled out in 9 months
- x4 live events streamed simultaneously to each screen
- 1100 x 24-Port Gigabit Easy Smart Switch, SG1024D installed

About Betfred

The world’s largest independent bookmaker, Betfred, employs more than 10,000 people across the UK. As one of the leading betting brands it offers services across all channels; Licensed Betting Offices (LBO), Online, Mobile, Telephone and On Course, enabling customers to place bets via their preferred and most convenient channel. With the remote sector reaching 32% market share, Betfred has harnessed the UK’s highspeed broadband infrastructure to bring a new service to the market. Previously, access to live events was not possible on the high street. Thanks to a project, code name “BOSS”, a new initiative was devised and developed in-house.

Betfred now offers customers live access to every UK and Irish horse-race, plus virtual dog racing and the ability to bet on every major sporting event. This initiative brings new facilities to the world of high street betting by mimicking the pace of the remote market, in store. Taking this concept one step further, the new infrastructure also enables Betfred to personalise content to individual LBOs, so customers have access to their local matches and races as well as national events, all at the same time. One of project’s aims was to increase footfall and the average amount of time each customer stays in store.

Testing Times

To gauge the benefits and ROI of this project, Betfred ran a 3-month trail across 10 LBO. The trial gave the company the opportunity to assess the time and resources required to roll out BOSS to

each LBO, get employee feedback on the final solution, how it could be tweaked to improve the customer experience, and of course get feedback from customers themselves. During the 12-week trial, it became clear that BOSS was a winner. Customers valued the access to live events, especially local ones which are only available online with other brands.

Based on the trial’s positive results, Betfred has halved the time required for TP-Link Platinum Partner, AJ Technology Ltd to roll out BOSS to the rest of the estate (a total of 1660 LBO nationwide). Originally timetabled to take 18 months, the final deadline has been brought forward to Christmas, so all stores are ready for the peak period.

Market Leader

Unlike other LBO, BOSS gives customers the choice of 20 live sporting events and supporting marketing information in real time, in store. To provide this service, AJ Technology Ltd, Betfred’s AV supplier since 2006, needed to source suitable hardware to manage 4 live streams to each TV, simultaneously. Networking is critical to BOSS’ success. Without a stable and high-speed internet connection no matches, races or marketing information will show on the screens therefore preventing customers from following events and tracking the odds. As a result, AJ Technologies recommended the TP-Link SG1024D, 24-Port Gigabit Easy Smart Switch. After rigorous testing at AJ Technology’s office it was clear that the switch can handle the massive volume of data required, safely and securely without buffering or glitching during live streaming.



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- Duncan McDonald, Head of Retail Support, Betfred

“Having worked with AJ Technology Ltd for more than 10 years, I'm confident that when they make a product recommendation it will be exceptional quality and the team will have put it through it's paces”, said Duncan McDonald, Head of Retail Support at Betfred.

Technology overhaul

While each store has a different floor plan, Betfred has standardized its hardware throughout the estate. As part of the roll-out the previous 22” screens are being upgraded to 50” custom made, Betfred branded, multi-view screens and wall to wall technology to provide the same high level of service across their entire estate. To manage content, each screen has its own mini PC, which is then connected to the TP-Link SG1024D. With 24 gigabit ports, each switch is capable of connecting 24 screens in each LBO without compromising performance.

Standardization and ease of use is essential to Betfred's day to day operations. Blank screens cost each store money, therefore the business employs engineers, in 10 regions, to visit stores to fix any issues or replace faulty equipment. During the trial, it was clear that the SG1024D is a perfect fit for this business model, it is plug and play, out of the box, which means engineers do not require additional training, but also includes a simple web interface if any additional configuration is required. “Using TP-Link switching throughout means we have a high performance, secure network delivering live feeds, in some cases four different events at the same time to the same screen. They cope admirably with the demands we put on them,” commented Duncan McDonald, Head of Retail Support at Betfred.

Features, functionality and price were critical considerations in the decision-making process. Betfred had to factor in sufficient hardware for each store plus additional units for each engineer to carry as spares for hot-fixes to minimise store down time. “The project has proven itself to be a great success both in terms of implementation and business goals. It enables us to further differentiate Betfred from the other brands and build on our already loyal customer base. Our long-term relationship with AJ Technology Ltd means they appreciate our uncompromising standards for quality and service. As a result we are on target to roll out this new service to 1660 stores in record time,” commented Duncan McDonald, Head of Retail Support at Betfred.

