

Success Story – Chess Olympiad, Dresden 2008

PC-WARE

*World Class ICT Solution Provider and Main Sponsor
Touched and Moved.*



SCHACH
OLYMPIADE
DRESDEN
2008



Dr. Klaus Elsbacher, CEO of PC-WARE

“Chess is all about finding solutions.”



Chess is an unending source of fascination. There are more possible gameplay scenarios than atoms in the universe. Even the history of the computer is touched by the game of chess. Konrad Zuse specifically learnt chess to use it as a basis for developing one of the first high-level programming languages. In 2008, this sport celebrated its greatest festival in Dresden. Strategy, insight, courage and creativity are all requirements that must also apply to successful companies. In keeping with this idea, PC-WARE was the main sponsor of the International Chess Olympiad 2008 – conceptually, financially and in charge of the technical implementation of the entire IT infrastructure. The PC-WARE team showed itself to be favourably positioned to ensure that the chess world could make all the right moves in Dresden.



The sporting trials of strength in the international chess community and the status of the Chess Olympiad 2008 as a major event required the highest precision in IT and communications technology. As the main sponsor and ICT solution provider, PC-WARE was able to provide exactly the support required. The decisive factor in the outstanding collaboration was the solid performance of the entire PC-WARE team – from the opening gambit to the final move.

Dr. Matthias Kribben, Vice president of the German Chess Federation

Outstanding Chess – And a Capable Main Sponsor

Almost 2,200 participants from 141 countries attended the Chess Olympiad 2008 in Dresden. They included 1,270 chess players, 110 umpires, trainers and coordinators as well as officials of FIDE, the World Chess Federation. A total of 5,654 matches were played between 13 and 25 November 2008. There were also side-tournaments in which around 4,000 amateurs took their chances. The international press centre was attended by 453 accredited journalists. The 13,000 spectators included many VIPs. Most notably, the competitions were attended by two Presidents, a Federal minister, an Oscar winner, a boxing world champion and eleven chess world champions.

Opening, central positions, unexpected moves: As the main sponsor of the Chess Olympiad 2008, PC-WARE was always in the middle of the action. Its responsibilities ranged from the IT infrastructure to the website for the Olympiad. All matches were webcasted live – from 514 digitally networked chessboards, which were connected via interfaces to the data centre. There, five blade centres

with multiple servers and two hundred additional computers took care of all the extraordinary work. And the effort was worth it. Over 52 million people worldwide visited the Chess Olympiad on the Internet. In total, there were more than 126 million sessions – at peak times, approx. 7,500 requests per second! A Herculean task for the PC-WARE team!

Friedrich Dürrenmatt

*“At the opening, you’re free,
then the match takes on its own logic.”*

To experience the strategy and tactics of the grandmasters in real time on-site and via the web, a professional technical setup was required. PC-WARE’s main projects in the context of the Chess Olympiad therefore included: IT infrastructure for digital chessboards, infotainment and the back office. The challenge thereby: The Chess Olympiad took place at two venues simultaneously: at the International Congress Centre and at Dresden City Hall.

On-Stage: World-Famous Chessboards



In 2008, for the first time in the history of the Chess Olympiad, all of the moves made in Dresden could be followed live on the Internet without any problems. Real-time data was transmitted from the chessboards onto the Internet. Specially designed interfaces ensured the smooth transmission of the moves. All matches, for example Germany vs. Russia, could therefore be watched both live and after the event.

PC-WARE – The Most Powerful Piece

On each day of play, the data from over 500 boards had to be transmitted. To meet this challenge, the data centre of the City of Dresden ran, in addition to the three web servers of PC-WARE (HP ProLiant DL380), an IBM blade server environment which supported the technical back office of the Olympiad. Since personal commitment is a decisive factor as well, PC-WARE was present on site in Dresden with a large contingent of employees. They included project leader Ron Kundolf, senior consultant Gerald Hutter, web developer Karsten Jarmut and infrastructure expert Marco Gulde. Work rotation between the IT hot spots was a daily routine for the team.

Jacob Aagaard, Scottish Grandmaster

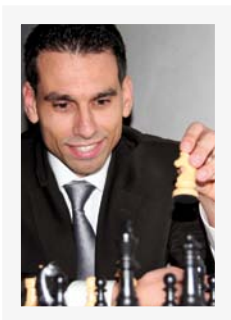
“Chess comprises technology.”

A Brilliant Move: Unified Communications by PC-WARE

Black versus white is anything but monochrome! Especially when you experience the moves of the grandmasters as though you were sitting right at the board. With the Unified Communications (UC) solution “Virtual Lounge”, PC-WARE made this experience possible worldwide for the first time at the Chess Olympiad 2008. A Microsoft RoundTable camera filmed the players at the top boards and displayed live 360° images on large video walls. At the same time, a “private lounge” for guests was set up on the Internet. In order to visit it, interested parties received an e-mail from PC-WARE containing the access data.

Exceptional in Sound and Vision

The technical basis of the Virtual Lounge consisted of Microsoft Office Communication Server 2007. On this basis, the PC-WARE on-site team prepared live meetings in which the sound and images of the Chess Olympiad matches were transmitted. Thanks to this comprehensive Unified Communications portfolio, PC-WARE was able to claim worldwide attention. Furthermore a positive statement about Saxony as a technology site could be made.



“The live transmission of the chess matches on the web was a world first for the Chess Olympiad. With our Unified Communications solution, we were able to show a high-level audience that anything is possible with today’s state-of-the-art ICT solutions.”

Ron Kundolf, PC-WARE Project Leader for the Chess Olympiad



Aljechin, Chess World Champion 1927–1935 and 1937–1946
“Combination is the heart of the game.”

Impressions For Millions



Beyond live webcasts, the website designed, programmed and hosted by PC-WARE offered chess fans many opportunities to learn more about the fascination of this game. Around one million visitors per day were expected on the website www.dresden2008.org – but there were significantly more than that! Worldwide, more than 10 million people peered over the shoulders of the players online as they made their moves.

www.dresden2008.org

A Strategic Web Presence

Chess Foundation GmbH decided to relaunch its websites to boost its web presence. The most important issue was the content management.

During the Chess Olympiad, the organisers and the editorial team had only minutes to upload the current news, multimedia elements, audio material and match reports – and everything in two languages. In addition, there were the live webcasts of the matches. PC-WARE supported the Chess Foundation in the design, programming, implementation and operation of the website www.dresden2008.org.

org with the PC-WARE Portal Solution and manpower. In addition, PC-WARE provided a dedicated evaluation of accesses to the website.

Checkmate? Never, Thanks to NLB.

The web presence of the Chess Olympiad was hosted by three HP ProLiant DL 380 servers running the Windows 2008 Server operating system. High availability was guaranteed by network load balancing (NLB). Content pages created by the editorial team were easily published on the website after approval.



“There has never been anything like this in chess: The worldwide chess community, whether in Germany, China or the Faroe Islands, could follow all of the moves and tricks of the grandmasters live from Dresden. Using digitally networked chessboards and Unified Communications, the PC-WARE team hit on the perfect solution. Chess lived in all dimensions – with sound, images and interactivity.”

Gerald Hutter, Senior Consultant at PC-WARE

Interview with Jörn-Torsten Verleger, Managing Director of Chess Foundation GmbH “The perfect solution for our IT.”



What was the verdict on the Chess Olympiad 2008 from the organiser's perspective?

National and international reporting greatly exceeded our expectations. For presentation and organisation, we were explicitly praised by the World Chess Federation, FIDE.

What technological challenges did you have to overcome?

The event took place not only in the Dresden Congress Centre, but also on the Internet. There, the chess matches and the events on the days of play needed to be presented to a wide audience. To connect the live events to the virtual world, we required an ICT professional at our side. PC-WARE was able to provide ideal technical solutions.

What were your impressions of the work of the PC-WARE team?

I must emphasise the great eagerness and flexibility of the PC-WARE employees. Even for requests at short notice, they always had a professional and functional solution to hand. In the run-up to the Olympiad and at the height of the tournament, PC-WARE supported us with manpower in every area – be it consulting, ICT infrastructure or web presence. The personal commitment of the consultants on site, in particular, will stay fresh in my memory.

PC-WARE supplied and implemented the ICT infrastructure for the Chess Olympiad. What feedback did you receive about this from your IT experts?

Thanks to the outstanding preparation by PC-WARE, the equipment worked with absolute stability and high performance, at all the sites, even under full load. My colleagues were impressed at how smoothly the servers integrated

into the data centre and the chessboards interacted with the infotainment area. The compatibility and scalability of the IT was so good as to allow a test scenario with a chess laboratory.

How did the participants and guests of the Chess Olympiad perceive PC-WARE?

PC-WARE was the efficient driving force in the background of gameplay. Thanks to the team, a quarter of all the matches could be watched on projectors and screens. All of the moves were able to be transmitted live on the Internet. That was a world first for the Chess Olympiad and made a lasting impression on the international chess community – from hobby players to grandmasters.

PC-WARE sponsored the Chess Olympiad in addition to designing, programming and running the Olympiad's central Internet portal dresden2008.org. What can you report about the performance of the PC-WARE Portal Solution?

After extensive consultation with PC-WARE, we decided to overhaul our old Internet presence. This was a good decision, as shown during the Chess Olympiad. With over 126 million sessions in total and around 450,000 match spectators, the figures speak for themselves. With the PC-WARE Portal Solution, we received an easy-to-use system with which our editorial team could publish web content in seconds.




How do you evaluate your collaboration with PC-WARE in the Chess Olympiad 2008?

We're pleased to have had such a high-performing solution partner and main sponsor at our side. PC-WARE is destined to manage the IT of other major events in an exceptional way.

Mr. Verleger, many thanks for talking with us.



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-  The chess hall in ICC Dresden, equipped with digitally networked boards. On 22 November 2008, a special "PC-WARE Action Day" took place. With a Unified Communications solution, interested parties were allowed access to the "Virtual Lounge".
-  The Lord Mayor of Dresden, Helma Orosz, was there live and played the opening move of white on board no. 1 of the Lékó versus Kramnik match. Helma Orosz: "I thank the sponsors of the Chess Olympiad 2008 for making it all possible."
-  The President of the World Chess Federation FIDE, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, was also enthusiastic about the performance of the players and PC-WARE.

At a Glance: Deployed ICT equipment

Sponsored equipment in the ICC Dresden

Tournament level:

- 38 PCs for 560 chessboards and their management
- Several network switches and 2 km of patch cables

Equipment in Dresden City Hall:

- 3 HP ProLiant DL380s
- 40 PCs and 2 printers
- Several network switches
- 1 km of patch cables

PC-WARE Internet café: In the World of Chess, the Internet café set up by PC-WARE was the starting point for thousands of players, officials and guests.

Umpires/Press/Organisation office:

- 49 PCs and 4 printers
- Network switches and 1 km of patch cables

Infotainment:

- 8 projectors, 10 x 42" LCD displays
- 18 PCs and several network switches and patch cables



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