European football rivalry goes digital

The long-time football rivalry between Germany and Holland doesn't just play out on the grassy football fields of Europe. Weeks before the anticipated live Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) EURO 2012 game between the two countries, rival fans took to their mobile devices and Facebook for an online competition. These social gamers engaged one-on-one in penalty shootouts using the enticing multiplayer Volkswagen game Das Interland. The stakes were high: a user from the winning country would be awarded a Volkswagen Up! in their nation's colors.

Volkswagen wanted to engage fans from different countries in an innovative way and went to ACHTUNG! for help. The ACHTUNG! creative agency, based in Amsterdam and assisted by developers from the Superhero Cheesecake digital production company, used Adobe Flash® Professional and Adobe AIR® for the game on iOS and Android™ devices and Adobe Flash Professional for the Facebook version. The team developed Dutch and German versions of all three applications, complete with national anthems to inspire winning penalty shots. For 12 days in June, more than 700,000 games were played and over one million penalty shots were taken on smartphones and Facebook, pushing Das Interland to the number two free mobile application and number one mobile game application downloaded in both the German and Dutch iOS app stores.
Engaging more users and scoring more points

ACHTUNG!, an Adobe agency partner, selected Adobe Gaming technologies to meet the tight development timeline set by Volkswagen Germany and Volkswagen Netherlands. After creating the iOS and Android platform versions, developers quickly adapted the application for Facebook. “Cross-platform development was essential to meeting our deadlines and delivering the application consistently to desktop and mobile device users,” says Noam Erlich, producer at ACHTUNG!.

Advanced manipulation of bitmap data and masks were also critical to project success. Native extensions enabled the team to easily integrate native capabilities and APIs into the Adobe AIR application. Developers note that creating separate Objective-C, Java™, and Flash versions for the mobile and Facebook campaigns would have increased development time by 700%, which wasn’t an option.

The agency promoted the application through German and Dutch Facebook pages, Volkswagen websites, mobile device ads, entertainment and sports blogs, big screens in train stations, and other channels to invite users to play while traveling. Once social gamers downloaded the game and found opposing German and Dutch football fans online, they took turns playing striker and goalie using a vibrant interface while the “crowd” cheered them on.

“Adobe Gaming technologies enabled us to deliver an unprecedented social experience to rival European football fans,” says Erlich.

Results

• Engaging interface sparked nearly 700,000 virtual football games played in 12 days
• Skyrocketed to number two free mobile application and number one mobile game in both the German and Dutch iOS app stores in the days before the German and Holland football faceoff during EURO 2012
• Accelerated development time by 700%, enabling on-time project delivery

Additional technology used: Robotlegs framework, TestFlight

For more information

www.adobe.com/go/gaming
Das Interland video: http://youtu.be/tdpuRmJtYPs