

AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS:
Digital marketing

CHALLENGE:
Planning for unexpected traffic for viral app

RACKSPACE SOLUTION:
Dedicated Servers; Cloud Files; Cloud Servers™; Cloudkick Monitoring; HA Configuration; RackConnect™

BUSINESS OUTCOME:
Successful marketing campaign for their client.



RACKSPACE® AND CLOUDKICK™ KEEP NICKELODEON'S KID'S CHOICE AWARDS VIRTUAL SLIME FLOWING

Nickelodeon's KCA 2011 "slime" app goes viral, and faces traffic with ease

AgencyNet, recognized as one of the "hottest digital agencies around," is a one-stop shop for digital marketing—from brand strategy, platform development, social media, to mobile apps and rich media. They specialize in leveraging the power of digital to create strategically focused and results-oriented marketing plans for clients who desire to affect a change in consumer behavior.

This year, AgencyNet was tapped to develop a Facebook app for the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards (KCA) 2011. The app wasn't just another digital ballot. In addition to casting votes, the application gave fans the power to virtually sling slime all over their friend's photos and their favorite websites. Fans earned slime by voting on the KCA's, interacting with polls and quizzes, campaigning for their favorite nominee, and watching videos. For every engagement, fans watched their "Slime Meter" grow as they accumulated more and more slime to sling, ultimately contributing to Nick's marketing

objectives of the initiative—increase voting for the KCAs.

With the high visibility of this app, AgencyNet knew they couldn't afford to let traffic spikes cause the app to go down. They turned to Rackspace.

"We've hosted several initiatives at Rackspace in the past, but Nickelodeon was, by far, the biggest one," explained Matias Penela, Director of Technology at AgencyNet. "To me, as the project's technical lead, it's like an insurance policy. As far as servers and reliability go, I don't know of anyone better. Rackspace also has a state of the art support system that we wanted to leverage in the event any unforeseen technical issues arose. When there are a lot of eyes on a project like this, we can't afford any mistakes."

PREPARING FOR UNEXPECTED TRAFFIC

The AgencyNet team had a rough estimate of how much traffic they could expect, based on last

year's traffic patterns for Nickelodeon's main website, nick.com. They estimated that about 20% of that traffic would come to their app. "But that was just an estimate," Penela added. "We needed an on-demand scalable solution that could handle more traffic in a seamless manner, if needed."

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Matias Penela,
Director of Technology at AgencyNet

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“We’ve been so impressed,
Rackspace is now our preferred
hosting provider.”

Matias Penela, Director of Technology at AgencyNet

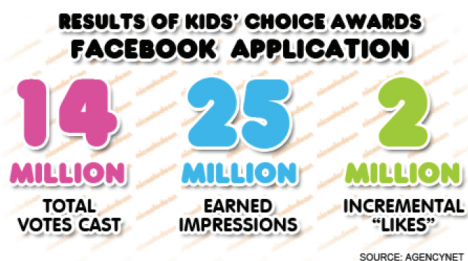
They shared their goals with the Rackspace team, as well as the details regarding the integration required and the expected traffic numbers. Rackspace engineers then customized several options for them to choose from, and they worked together to select the best choice, which included a combination of cloud and dedicated servers.

“We decided to start with eight Cloud Servers, some of which held the CSS and Flash files—basically, all the content that gets served to the users,” Penela explained. “We used redundant dedicated servers for our databases running MySQL, with dual firewalls and dual load balancers to ensure availability. The databases were important for tracking points that users would accumulate from participating in the KCA voting process, thus earning the ability to slime more of their Facebook friends. The third part of the configuration was a storage solution to hold all of that data.”

Since traffic monitoring was going to be vital, AgencyNet chose Cloudkick™, Rackspace’s newly acquired cloud monitoring and management service. With CloudKick, they could access all of their monitoring data, so they could respond by spinning up more Cloud Servers into action if they got more traffic than expected.

APP GOES VIRAL, AND FACES TRAFFIC WITH EASE

The app went live, and didn’t miss a beat, with 25 million earned impressions.



When the app went live, everything worked as expected. The load was evenly distributed throughout the 8 web cloud servers and the robust database servers did not even break a sweat. The site response times were still lightning fast even in periods of high traffic.

“Rackspace was able to turn this solution around very quickly,” Penela stated. “Due to the short turn around time, complexity and very tailored nature of the environment, there’s no way we could have set it up in-house with our own resources in that kind of time.”

“Working with Rackspace has been a pleasure since day one,” said Penela. “Whether it was with sales, engineering, or cloud, everyone was on the same page about what we were doing and they were helpful and proactive.”

Penela and his team were also impressed by Rackspace’s data centers. “They are reliable and the equipment is top-notch. The engineers are very knowledgeable and proactive. Sometimes, they educated me on potential problems and solutions I didn’t know existed. I know I can pick up the phone or, even better, I’ll get a call from my Rackspace team.”

“While we have in-house capabilities to plan/design hosting environments, we decided to work with the experts at Rackspace to implement a state-of-the-art environment for Nickelodeon, allowing us to focus on what we do best; developing and executing results-oriented digital campaigns” Penela concluded.

ABOUT AGENCYNET

AgencyNet is an award-winning digital agency that changes behavior through creativity. Born-digital in 1994, AgencyNet has been hailed by Advertising Age as one of the “Hottest Digital Agencies Around,” for its dynamic digital experiences across web, mobile and social platforms for notable clients such as Bacardi, Nickelodeon, Allure Magazine, Ruby Tuesday, Grey Goose, Island Def Jam and The Clinton Foundation. See how AgencyNet embraces the game-changing power of digital at www.agencynet.com.

¹ <http://adage.com/article/digital/hottest-digital-agencies/121406/>

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