IBM

Star East goes from show business to e-business with IBM.

Entertainment is a universal human need, and the 300 employees of Star East, based in Hong Kong, have mastered the art of dazzling people's eyes and ears. Along with its newspapers and restaurant chains,

Application	B2C interactive entertainment and e-commerce portal
Business Benefits	15% expected revenue from auctions and e-commerce; 25% increase in market share; 30% savings in development costs
Software	IBM WebSphere® Application Server, Version 3.5 IBM DB2® Universal Database™ IBM SecureWay® Directory IBM WebSphere Studio IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite
Servers	IBM Netfinity® IBM RS/6000®

Star East has grown to be a market-leading entertainment company that produces music videos, television shows and movies.

In Hong Kong, actors and musicians sign contracts with production companies and work on TV programs and films exclusively with that company for the duration of their contracts. With over 200 artists licensed to Star East, the company found itself in a good position to leverage these assets by adding another channel to its marketing arsenal — the Internet. According to Winston Wong, CTO, Star East, "We're trying to integrate the old economy and new economy by bringing our talent online and becoming the most popular Chinese entertainment and e-commerce portal."

"WebSphere Application Server and DB2 Universal Database handle the rich content superbly — we are confident that these products will keep us growing into the future."

— Winston Wong, CTO, Star East

Star East was now challenged with developing an infrastructure stable enough to handle large amounts of rich media and scalable enough to add content without risk to the network. The company also needed a robust, Java™ technology-based application server to

Star East brings its stars online with WebSphere Application Server and DB2 Universal Database.

e business

handle the interactive games and chat rooms it wanted to offer. Star East narrowed its search down to Sun Microsystems, Hewlett-Packard and IBM. Ultimately, the company chose IBM for its reputation as an e-business leader. According to Wong, "IBM simply has superior products, and the IBM Framework for e-business provided us with a roadmap for developing a complete solution — from the planning to the coding."

Star East now has a rich entertainment portal that includes Java technology-based games, interactive chat rooms and entertainment and style information. Along with this interactive content, Star East will soon provide an e-commerce mall and an auction module offering items from music stars, Star East-branded products and movie memorabilia. Star East hopes that the portal will serve as a marketing vehicle to drive traffic back to its other businesses.

IBM worked with Star East to develop the interactive entertainment portal, which runs on a series of IBM RS/6000 and IBM Netfinity servers using IBM WebSphere Application Server, IBM DB2 Universal Database, IBM SecureWay Directory, IBM WebSphere Studio and IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite.

Through its entertainment portal, Star East expects to increase its market share by 25 percent and reach an audience of at least 6 million. From e-commerce and auctions, Star East expects to generate an additional 15 percent in revenue.

Star East rises with IBM

Star East developed its portal's Web pages with WebSphere Studio and uses WebSphere Application Server to bring the Java technology-based, interactive content and video to any Web browser. Especially beneficial to Star East is the portability of WebSphere Application Server. "We are hosting our portal in five different locations around the world, on three different platforms," says Wong. "Because WebSphere Application Server is Java technology-based, we can implement it once and run it anywhere." This portability has saved Star East 30 percent in development costs.

Since users sign in by way of a free membership, Star East keeps all of its customer profiles — along with interactive applications and over 50,000 video clips — in DB2 Universal Database. "The success of our portal relies on speed and availability," states Wong. "WebSphere Application Server and DB2 Universal Database handle the rich content superbly — we are confident that these products will keep us growing into the future."

Reaching out to everyone

Star East will port all of its applications and multimedia content to other intelligent devices, such as PocketPCs and portable kiosks that will be placed throughout Hong Kong. "With the proliferation of pervasive devices, moving into the mobile commerce arena is a natural step. We are confident that our IBM e-business solution will allow this to happen seamlessly."

As Star East continues to build a membership base, the company will be leveraging the data analysis functions of DB2 Universal Database and SecureWay Directory to create customer profiles for direct marketing campaigns. Says Wong, "IBM has helped us to create one of the most popular portals on the Internet, and now we are poised to shine as leaders in online marketing."

For more information, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

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