



Communications, media & technology

SailGP gets more fans on board with intuition engineered

Integrating, analyzing and profiling fan data gives the global league actionable insight into what turns fan interest into excitement, engagement and loyalty.

The international, adrenaline-fueled SailGP brings together the sport's best athletes, and this unique championship has the potential to attract a wide variety of fans.

The world's most exciting race on water, it features national teams battling in short, intense races at iconic stadium-style venues across the globe, building to the grand final—and sailing's top prize of US\$1 million.

Its identical F50 race boats create a level playing field that many other events do not. SailGP has a nationality requirement for competing athletes with a minimum number of sailors required to be citizens of the countries they sail for, and the competition helps to inspire national pride and develop sailing as a sport in the territories it represents. Additionally, each boat is outfitted with technology that lets fans follow the races in new, interactive ways. Central to SailGP is a purpose to race for a better future, championing a world powered by nature.

As Official Digital Transformation Partner of SailGP, Cognizant saw an opportunity to help advance an organization with shared values in sustainability, inclusivity and competition. In turn, SailGP recognizes Cognizant's expertise in data enrichment using AI, software and cloud to help it understand the fans that are so essential to its success—and to push the boundaries of technological performance by engineering insight and speed into their marketing operations with new digital enhancements.

SailGP CEO Sir Russell Coutts says, "In Cognizant, we have a like-minded partner who shares our commitments and values and can help us bring sailing action to life for our fan base and our championship."

SAILGP

At a glance

SailGP is on a quest to build a world-class sports entertainment brand and increase the size of the audience for its cutting-edge international competition featuring high-performance F50 foiling catamarans. The global league has partnered with Cognizant to re-engineer its online spaces to deliver more intuitive customer experiences that attract, engage and retain new audiences. Business benefits gained from website enhancements to grow the fan base and invite investment into the championship include:

- Increased average monthly (email) community growth from 0.4% to 1.6%
- Improved view-to-submission rate on the newsletter sign-up form page
- Raised average session duration from 01:53 to 02:24
- Boosted average monthly share of returning visitors from 11% to 14%

The challenge

In just its second season, SailGP is keen to continue to build the robust revenue streams and commercial partnerships it needs to thrive. This will be achieved via a broad strategy of boosting revenues from ticket sales, merchandise sales and broadcast rights. These deals and sponsorship dollars hinge on the ability to acquire a diverse, global fan base in regions around the world. By anticipating changes in the sports marketing landscape, the league can take rapid, responsive action to inspire new engagement with fans and stay ahead of audience interests—as if on intuition.

We worked with SailGP to lay out priorities for reaching its goals:

- Build a single repository of fan data, integrating disconnected audiences from the eight international sailing teams in the league to enable a unified broadcast to the full fan community
- Enhance the SailGP website to attract investment and fans, localized to reach international audiences
- Build in marketing and automation capabilities that not only streamline email, social, mobile and web outreach and overcome personalization limitations, but enable the league to act with speed and insight

The approach

We began with a discovery phase to understand the needs of SailGP's fans and identified how technology could help determine the origin of interest of their fans. For instance, some fans may follow Olympic athletes, while others like to cheer for their country, and others are into speed or motorsports. With data-driven insights into fan interests and behaviors, SailGP can personalize their email, social and web interactions with fans, engaging with them more intuitively. Together, we designed and delivered:

- Integrated marketing, communications and digital content plans to present a cohesive view when communicating different topics across different channels
- Targeted marketing content by audience
- Aligned agency information and marketing tools for cohesive reporting
- Defined organization-wide KPIs to unify teams and their goals, and updated business

objectives to focus more on the right strategy versus the right numbers to hit

- Optimized Google Analytics to take advantage of all available data

Website optimizations for better engagement

With an optimized fan database in place, we proposed a customer-first, experience-driven website that better delivers on SailGP's brand promise of “adrenaline”. Informed by user testing insights, we updated the website's information architecture and site navigation to help audiences discover information in a way that senses their needs. We put emphasis on:

- Redesigning event pages to represent the customer journey, in a way that excites, engages and educates the audience
- Explaining SailGP's social and environmental purpose
- Explaining the “how it works” aspect for sports enthusiasts
- Improving the UI design to give customers the best format based on available data or device

Automated marketing for targeted engagement

Today, a new marketing technology stack, centered on Oracle Marketing Cloud, is enabling SailGP to increase awareness of the sport, acquire new customers and boost user engagement onsite.

We also defined and validated the new website concept in six weeks, tested designs with customers, confirmed the tech approach and delivered iterative site releases ready for the season two Bermuda race and beyond.

In support of its promise of “adrenaline”, the new website helps SailGP engage and excite non-sailing audiences with its championship to help grow the overall audience. We used approaches centered on intuitive capabilities that reach a wide variety of audiences with personalized content that drives the highest response. The new website design and functionality extends SailGP's presence and uses data to build the awareness needed to understand the needs and desires of its fanbase.

By engineering software and cloud into their business, we've helped the league cultivate an early awareness on how to attract customers—and the real-time insights needed to deliver the experiences that will make them lifelong fans.

“In Cognizant, we have a like-minded partner who shares our commitments and values and can help us bring sailing action to life for our fan base and our championship.”

Sir Russell Coutts, CEO, SailGP

Business outcomes

With the new 1.0 enhancements in place, SailGP is better equipped to attract and convert fans to its new championship. The new enhancements delivered include:

- Optimized fan database, making it ready to support automated social, mobile and web programs
- A redesigned homepage that communicates the excitement of the championship, with video banners, interactive standings and a clear showcasing of SailGP's international locations
- Improved site structure and navigation that lets audiences find and discover information based on their unique needs
- Localized website to reach international audiences in four countries
- Redesigned upcoming event pages that track the customer journey, and engage and educate visiting audiences

Warren Jones, Chief Technology Officer at SailGP says, "We're relying on Cognizant to bring their customer experience best practices to help us

build interest in SailGP, and we've already seen them take us in a new direction that we are excited about."

To date the website optimization has delivered:

- Increased average monthly (email) community growth from 0.4% to 1.6%
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We identified efficiencies within SailGP's digital transformation while working closely with Oracle to enable more effective fan engagement.

In the next phase, more initiatives are forthcoming for web, with the addition of Oracle CX Unity and Customer Data Platform, and a formal CRM system.

About intuition engineered™

Cognizant helps you immediately understand your work ahead by engineering your business to anticipate needs and act to meet them with the speed and insight of human intuition. We use software that learns, massive processing power unlocked by the cloud, the value inherent in huge amounts of data and design thinking applied to every experience. To learn how we can help you forecast better, analyze with an eye to the future and automate your business to think more on its own, visit us at www.cognizant.com or follow us @Cognizant.

Business metrics and outcomes provided by SailGP.

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