

EUREKA SOFTWARE LTD

**jetNEXUS Boosts Business at UK's  
Top Celebrations Site**

**Authorised jetNEXUS Reseller**

**Eureka Software Ltd**

Tel: 01225 840 022

Email: [info@eurekasoftware.co.uk](mailto:info@eurekasoftware.co.uk)

Web: [www.eurekasoftware.co.uk](http://www.eurekasoftware.co.uk)

**Eureka software**

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## A METAL MINDS CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



### jetNEXUS Boosts Business at UK's Top Celebrations Site

*Despite massive savings on bandwidth charges and infrastructure, the major benefit bestowed by jetNEXUS web compression on confetti.co.uk is pure "business acceleration."*

At the UK's top celebrations site confetti.co.uk, the immediate benefits of installing jetNEXUS web compression software were plain to see. It provided a massive reduction in the bandwidth requirement while also speeding customer transactions and browsing. Only later, however, did an even greater benefit become apparent. Improved customer experience led directly to a substantial increase in business. Here's the full story:

In the UK's weddings and celebrations sector, confetti.co.uk dominates the online market for information, products and services. It has acquired several related businesses and, at the time of first discovering jetNEXUS, operated two other sites in France and Germany. Since then, the number of sites has expanded to 10. While many online businesses made the mistake of being too optimistic about growth, confetti.co.uk

underestimated how popular its services would become -- and found its web infrastructure lacking in some important respects. Mainly at fault was the firewall that had originally been

designed for just three sites. In fact, it was a struggle for the whole installation to serve 250,000 page views per day, a figure that in February 2002 looked like being exceeded on the upcoming St. Valentine's Day.

#### Architectural concerns

The architecture of the site consisted of five Dell PowerEdge 2450 servers and two Nokia IP440s running the CheckPoint FW1 firewall. But already these otherwise excellent but under-specified

firewalls were beginning to drop connections to some of the users, adding significantly to the network's latency. As a result, the web servers were holding connections open to customers who were no longer there, further worsening the problem. Chief Technical Officer Paul Psaila was becoming increasingly concerned. "We knew from our measurements that we needed to do something fast," says Psaila, recalling the events of that

#### Challenge

To support an ever increasing number of users and seasonal spikes. Resolve Firewall bottleneck.

#### Strategy

Deploy jetNEXUS to compress the Web pages thereby reducing the amount of data flowing through the system.

#### Results

Firewall servers running at only 50%. Bandwidth usage reduced by 60%. Page downloads up by 170%

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period. "But we had not considered compression as a solution to our infrastructure problems."

### **An unexpected solution**

All this changed when Psaila and his colleagues met with one of Metal Minds' distributors. The jetNEXUS web compression software introduced at confetti.co.uk had already delivered huge benefits to bookmaker William Hill, where it was enabling millions more bets to be placed online during its first year of operation. Much the same could be achieved at Confetti, or at least, that was the message given to a somewhat sceptical Paul Psaila who nonetheless said he would try jetNEXUS on four production servers – and keep it if it worked as the developer promised.

Today, many months later, much has changed and Paul Psaila has become one of the IT industry's most enthusiastic advocates of jetNEXUS, even making presentations in its support. "Thank you for introducing us to this fantastic technology," he said in one email to the distributor.

His enthusiasm is understandable, because right from the start the "jetNEXing" of Confetti has been a success story with no downside whatsoever.

Installing the software was reassuringly easy. JetNEXUS runs directly on Microsoft IIS servers, posing as an ISAPI filter but in fact working at ultra-high speed within the processors, compressing data by up to 90 percent prior to encryption.

"It was the simplest installation I've ever made on a mission-critical box. It took less than two minutes per server," Psaila confirms. "The load on our firewalls dropped 50 percent as

soon as we rolled it out. This meant we could get a 50 percent increase in traffic without any additional expenditure on infrastructure. Additionally, we have also seen the Firewall Load / Traffic gradient decrease giving us more capacity than we first expected."

### **More benefits**

So far, so good. The immediate impact of jetNEXUS on any large e-commerce site running IIS is always spectacular, but it takes a few months to reap the real benefits of this highly engineered technology.

Paul Psaila believes that any organisation running a major web operation on IIS would benefit from jetNEXUS. He points out that the capital cost of the software is not a major factor.

"In my application it will pay for itself within 6 months. And that's just from the saving on bandwidth, not from the increased business we're getting as a result."

For less busy sites, bandwidth reduction is not always high on the agenda, although related savings on infrastructure could be very welcome. In Confetti's case, the proposed upgrade: clustering the firewalls, upgrading to Nokia IP650s and making other additions would have meant expenditure far in excess of the cost of jetNEXUS.

"We can put off upgrading the firewall, spending £50K, for another 6 months. We'll still have to upgrade eventually, but jetNEXUS has bought us a lot of time," says Psaila.

### **Expanding business**

Metal Minds and its distributors never promise that jetNEXUS is a substitute

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for infrastructure upgrade. On the contrary, by accelerating sites and ensuring that users on slow 56K modem connections can have speedy downloads, jetNEXUS is an active stimulant to online business.

Here is what happened at Confetti:

Objective measurement of download times at users' desktops by Porivo.com showed conclusively that the site's internal pages were loading much more quickly after the introduction of jetNEXUS. Before compression was added, pages took from **10-15 seconds** to load fully into the user's browser. After jetNEXUS was installed, the time was consistently under **5 seconds**.

The net result, for Confetti or any site that adds jetNEXUS, is not just "satisfied customers" -- but also MORE customers. This is the real, proven benefit of using industrial-strength compression that improves download speed. It must be added that not all compression systems work as efficiently as jetNEXUS, which places little or no extra burden on the processor.

jetNEXUS' high speed of operation ensures that the end user's experience of the site is greatly improved, leading to a corresponding increase in business.

Before installation of jetNEXUS, an average day at Confetti saw **150,000** page downloads. Two or three months later, after jetNEXUS compression accelerated the site, Confetti was serving **400,000** pages a day. Trading figures are confidential, but more pages browsed leads to a higher number of transactions successfully completed -- and a corresponding

increase in turnover.

### The way forward

"If everyone used this application the Internet would be a much nicer place to explore!" says Paul Psaila, referring to jetNEXUS. "What's more: over 50 percent saving in traffic is a big saving for any network infrastructure." He adds: "Every new web server we're going to deploy now will certainly have this software on it."

Although Paul Psaila purchased jetNEXUS to solve a technical problem, the product's beneficial impact on Confetti's business is clear. Initially sceptical, he now advises fellow CTOs that jetNEXUS really does work, really does cut costs and delivers substantial business benefits.