



**RadView Software
Case Study**

**Canadian Broadcasting Association
www.cbc.ca**

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Canadian Broadcasting Association

CBC/Radio-Canada is Canada's national public broadcaster and one of its largest cultural institutions. CBC/Radio-Canada reaches Canadians through eight national radio and television networks, its full-service Websites, local/regional stations and affiliates, as well as the digital television channel *Country Canada*, and the continuous music network *Galaxie*. In addition, CBC/Radio-Canada has forged partnerships with other broadcasters and is a partner in the specialty television services *ARTV* and *The Documentary Channel*.

The CBC/Radio-Canada Website:

CBC.ca (www.cbc.ca) is the main English language Website of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. CBC.ca handles approximately 70 million page views per month with peak hours ranging from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm daily. The Website includes breaking national, international and local news, arts news, business and sports coverage, interactive features, plus weather, health and science and feature reporting. CBC.ca's information is dynamically generated and delivered through text, radio and video.

Like many news sites, the largest spikes come during a large news event or an online function such as a broadcast concert or a voting event. For example, during the last Federal Election on June 28, 2004, this section of the site alone served over 700,000 page requests over the space of two days, through dynamically generated news stories.

Testing Requirements of a Dynamic Site

These substantial usage spikes require more careful testing, because the CBC.ca's stories are generated in real-time while users are searching the site and writers and editors are adding stories. The stress tests need to exercise this application directly. Such testing procedures are important for all major online events, such as the Olympics, the Election coverage, and other breaking news.

“With WebLOAD™ we were able to test the limits of the dynamic parts of the Federal Election site and verify the load with which our servers could keep up. By focusing on these elements and gaining a concrete understanding of what load we could handle, we achieved a level of confidence that we were properly equipped for this peak event,” said Ben Minbashian, manager of production and operations for CBC.ca.

In terms of testing the dynamic building of content CBC.ca needed to see how fast they could render pages without having the infrastructure fail. It has been demonstrated for certain critical applications that the behavior under excessive loads is a slowdown but not a failure of the applications. Running a series of tests, which slowly increased load, highlighted this point with a minimal amount of effort.

Using RadView's WebLOAD, the testing team was able to determine what level of load could be sustained through endurance testing. Prior to using RadView's WebLOAD CBC.ca was using freeware products. These tools were labor intensive to use and didn't generate the load necessary for their tests.

"While these freeware tools got us started, we were looking for tools which included the ability to better organize testing and deliver more consistency in terms of test and reporting," added Michael Douglas, QA team lead for the website. "One thing we particularly like about WebLOAD is its ability to generate our typical load with less than half the hardware that the freeware tools required. In addition, the automated recording of results and the ability to manipulate the test data also made it very easy to track and summarize tests," added Douglas.

Automating our load testing with RadView's WebLOAD has saved us time – up to 20% of our time previously was spent in the maintenance of testing reports. Plus, running a load test automatically means we can leave a test running overnight. "Using automated tools has enabled us to do more testing with a smaller staff time investment," said Douglas.

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