RBS 6 Nations 2016
Digital Innovation for Rugby's Greatest Championship

accenture digital

Strategy | Consulting | Digital | Technology | Operations
Digital technologies are enabling Six Nations Rugby Limited to appeal to its tech-savvy fans. Since first developing the official Championship mobile app for the RBS 6 Nations Championship in 2012, Accenture has continued to deliver innovative digital solutions putting rugby fans at the heart of the game.

To deepen engagement with fans for the 2016 Championship, Accenture worked with Six Nations Rugby Limited to provide more analytics-powered insights, enhance the official Championship mobile app, create an Apple Watch app and pilot a proof of concept Virtual Reality (VR) experience.
The Story

Client profile
The RBS 6 Nations Championship is an annual international rugby union competition between six European nations—England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales. Matches take place in each nation’s capital city, attracting more than 125 million television viewers and broadcast in more than 190 countries globally in 2016. Accenture has been Official Technology Partner to the Championship since 2012.

Opportunity
Digital native sports fans use an increasing number of mobile devices, platforms and social media to keep up to date. They demand instant access and want information and insight at their fingertips. As Official Technology Partner, Accenture set out to help transform the way in which fans interact with this world-class event delivering new digital concepts and features that leveraged the immense amount of data available for statistical analysis and decision-making in the sport.
Solution

Accenture designed and developed an integrated digital solution for the RBS 6 Nations Championship.

Mobile app. Deep analytics insights are delivered through features in the official Championship mobile app, allowing fans to #SeeBeyond the raw data, taking interaction with the tournament to another level. This year, Accenture refined the app’s appearance, integrated more match data and extended it to run on Apple Watch™.

The app provides play-by-play text from live data feeds and alerts and fans can share opinions and statistical facts through links to social media including integrated Twitter™ feeds. To ensure high performance and quick error resolution, Accenture provided application maintenance services and support. Through the app usage and performance analytics from alliance partner Apteligent, Accenture monitors and optimises the stability and responsiveness of the app to minimize the potential downtime due to heavy usage during peak times of the Championship. Apple Watch™ wearers are now able to enjoy access to insights at the flick of a wrist, with as-it-happens commentary for live games and easy access to team results, squads and fixtures.
Data analytics. Accenture invited rugby legends Nick Mallett, one of the world’s premier former national rugby Coaches; Ben Kay, former Rugby World Cup winner; and David Flatman, former England prop to join the Accenture Analysis team to complement the analytics expert’s statistical knowledge with extensive rugby insight. Together they worked to gauge the crucial dimensions of player and team performance.

The combination of the highest quality data, innovative analytics and commentary from some of the best minds in rugby has changed how fans view the Championship.

Analytics captures the “measures that matter” and an understanding of these key metrics has enabled Accenture to develop parameters for numerous algorithms. These algorithms generated analysis of the raw data feeds provided by Opta, one of the world’s largest suppliers of sports data. This analysis and up-to-the-minute statistics were fully integrated into the mobile app through features such as player head-to-head statistics and real-time match momentum trackers.

Insights were also shared via the Accenture Twitter feed @AccentureRugby, cascaded to the media and published on www.accenture-rugby.com.

The development of the VR proof of concept, the first of its kind in rugby, allowed Accenture to demonstrate how analytics can be applied to an interactive experience with the audience at the core. A virtual Ben Kay guides fans through a 3-D experience of a stadium and marks an early foray into the world of VR, showing how fans will be able to watch a rugby match from the touchline, without ever leaving their living room.
Results

The integration of analytics with mobile devices is proving to be a game changer in professional sports. The official RBS 6 Nations Championship mobile app has brought fans and media closer than ever before to Rugby's Greatest Championship by delivering rugby insights in real time.

During the course of the Championship, Accenture's analytics experts processed more than 28.5 million rows of data. Algorithms correlated data from live feeds with historical statistics going as far back as the 2006 RBS 6 Nations. The insights were delivered through the mobile app, wearable devices and social media channels, to enhance interaction with the Championship. Accenture also used its algorithms to help determine the 2016 RBS Player of the Championship.

The mobile app has achieved 764,895 downloads and updates during the last Championship, a total of 3.9 million downloads and updates, across 208 countries, since the launch of the original version.

The proof of concept VR experience on Oculus Rift demonstrated how wearable devices and immersive 3-D technology can take interaction with sport to the next level, and not only showcased the potential for the application of this technology outside the gaming environment, but also specifically for the needs of our clients' businesses.
“I look forward to more outstanding technology innovation from Accenture. Accenture has enhanced the experience for fans by using digital technologies to provide access, insight and an experience that has never been available historically”.

John Feehan
CEO, Six Nations Rugby Limited

“The level of data insight Accenture's analysis team produced for fans is normally available only to international coaches. I believe the combination of the smartest analysts, Accenture's analytics tools and indexes, and a layer of human insight gave RBS 6 Nations rugby fans a glimpse of the real reasons behind game-changing moments on the pitch”.

Nick Mallett
2016 commentator
Former South Africa rugby union player and head coach for Italy and Accenture Analysis Team member
About Accenture Digital

Accenture Digital, comprised of Accenture Analytics, Accenture Interactive and Accenture Mobility, offers a comprehensive portfolio of business and technology services across digital marketing, mobility and analytics. From developing digital strategies to implementing digital technologies and running digital processes on their behalf, Accenture Digital helps clients leverage connected and mobile devices; extract insights from data using analytics; and enrich end-customer experiences and interactions, delivering tangible results from the virtual world and driving growth. Learn more about Accenture Digital at www.accenture.com/digital.

About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world’s largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With more than 375,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

Copyright © 2016 Accenture
All rights reserved.

Accenture, its logo, and High Performance Delivered are trademarks of Accenture.

This document is produced by consultants at Accenture as general guidance. It is not intended to provide specific advice on your circumstances. If you require advice or further details on any matters referred to, please contact your Accenture representative.

This document makes descriptive reference to trademarks that may be owned by others. The use of such trademarks herein is not an assertion of ownership of such trademarks by Accenture and is not intended to represent or imply the existence of an association between Accenture and the lawful owners of such trademarks.