

# MUSIC TECHNOLOGY LIMITED

Music Entrepreneurs Launch Innovative Web Application with Confidence



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Andy Dean, Managing Director,  
Music Technology Ltd

## Key Facts

### Company

- Name: Music Technology Limited
- Location: London
- Industry: High technology - software providers
- Products and services: Expert recommendation products delivering personalised content and services
- Web site: [www.musictechnologyltd.com](http://www.musictechnologyltd.com)

### Challenges and Opportunities

- Deliver innovative web application targeting mass market
- Collate and analyse large sample of consumer information quickly and efficiently

### Objectives

- Load test web application with potential first day usage by tens of thousands
- Ensure uninterrupted transfer of large scale and varied information

## Why StarBase?

### StarBase Solutions and Services

- Performance testing of Web 2.0 applications
- HP LoadRunner

### The Right Choice

- StarBase offered cost-effective use of the testing software as part of the service provided
- StarBase’s lead consultant collaborated with Music Technology to innovate a creative solution for an unprecedented performance testing scenario
- StarBase’s ability to communicate effectively and clearly was key to the success of the project

### Benefits

- Delivering “Software as a Service” and working entirely off site, StarBase proved Music Technology’s web application and infrastructure could perform when subjected to the predicted traffic volume
- The results from StarBase’s thorough performance testing assured a trouble-free product launch for Music Technology’s partners: a major artist, recording company and national newspaper
- Deployment of the interactive music consumer web tool CompleteMyArtist passed without incident despite a significant exchange of data on day one

The Boilerhouse Boys – also known as Ben Wolff and Andy Dean – have been at the forefront of the British music scene for over twenty years. They recently founded Music Technology Limited, developing bespoke products and services for media partners, brands and content owners looking for innovative ways of engaging an audience. To provide assurance that its completemyartist.com site would be able to cope with tens of thousands of visitors on the day of launch, Music Technology Limited turned to StarBase to load test the site.

As Ivor Novello award-winning songwriters, multi-million-selling producers and re-mixers, influential DJs and innovative soundtrack composers, the Boilerhouse Boys' career combines proven commercial success with outstanding critical acclaim. Through Music Technology Ltd they have developed completemyartist.com – an application that reviews existing digital music collections and provides music consumers with an immersive and compelling way to engage with their favourite artists.

### Valuable Insight

The software was launched in a cover mount CD distributed with the Mail on Sunday. The CD contained ten songs by Robbie Williams and the software launched when the CD was inserted into a pc. Music Technology Limited gave the application a human touch. “As a consumer using completemyartist.com, you ought to feel that Robbie himself engages with you,” explains Andy Dean, managing director of Music Technology Limited. “Robbie shows you around your own music collection, based on what he thinks of it, and selects the records he would play. Then he recommends further music to fit with your collection.”



Engaging artists with their fans is not the only objective of completemyartist.com. Behind the consumer-friendly software is an analytics engine designed to provide record companies with valuable insights into the behaviour of their customers. “We estimated five hundred thousand people would buy the newspaper because Robbie Williams is on the front cover,” says Dean. “Conservatively, suppose ten percent put the CD in their computer. The ability to capture fifty thousand e-mail addresses and postcodes is of huge value to the record company.”

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Tim Parsons, Head of Software Development, Music Technology Ltd

Music Technology Ltd is also delivering valuable information to the newspaper about the demographics of its readership. “You can tell a lot about a person by looking through a record collection,” explains Dean. “It reveals tastes and thereby an insight into their lifestyle and behaviour. We can analyse their television shows, their applications and even children’s music in their collection, along with other cover mount CD’s they have loaded.”

Music Technology Ltd deployed an analytical engine powerful enough to distinguish between regular readers of the newspaper and Robbie Williams fans making a one-off purchase. The intelligence also enables further marketing opportunities by content providers, ticket sellers and associated merchandisers. “If we issued one CD per month, over the course of a year we would capture five hundred thousand music libraries,” enthuses Dean. “By a long way, that would be the biggest survey anybody has ever done of newspaper readers – especially as a sample is considered large if it contains 1200 people.”

### High Profile Launch

With such a large volume of traffic heading towards completemyartist.com on the launch day, Music Technology Ltd could take no chances that the site would be unable to handle the load. “We had to give

our partners an assurance that our infrastructure was robust and visitors would not experience any problems,” says Dean. “Potentially, fifty thousand visitors would exchange a vast amount of information during a very short period.”

Music Technology Ltd’s hosting company happens to be one of StarBase’s customers, and they recommended StarBase to Dean. Experts in performance testing, StarBase also keeps up to date with current technologies as a matter of course, so the leading edge web services driving completemyartist.com did not present a problem.



StarBase elected to use HP LoadRunner to manage the performance testing of Music Technology Ltd’s web 2.0 applications and Microsoft SQL server 2008 database.

There was no need for Music Technology Ltd to invest in the testing software, as StarBase worked on a “Software as a Service” basis. “StarBase included the performance testing software as part of the service – we saw that as one of the key benefits,” confirms Tim Parsons, head of software development at Music Technology Ltd.

### Unprecedented Scenario

Creating the test data was not as straightforward, however. The average iTunes library contains 3,000 songs, so this represented a huge data transfer even though only the track details (and not the actual music files) were being exchanged. This meant that each simulated upload not only had to contain a large

number of music track details, but also each one had to contain significantly different data, otherwise the test would not have been truly representative of the live environment.

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Andy Dean, Managing Director,  
Music Technology Ltd

Working together, albeit remotely, the StarBase expert and the technicians from Music Technology Ltd collaborated to develop a creative solution. Music Technology Ltd developed an application to generate random track listings. StarBase used the application to generate data to send to completemyartist.com during the performance test. “StarBase provided an efficient service with the minimum of fuss,” says Dean. “The scenario and the challenge we presented to them was unprecedented and they had to think outside the box to achieve a solution. The StarBase consultant was particularly good at communicating and providing clear feedback at all levels.”



Even though all the work was performed remotely, the teams built an excellent rapport based on phone calls and e-mails. From start to finish, the project took one month, involving one StarBase consultant for a total of six days. “StarBase demonstrated you don’t need face-to-face contact to do a great job and build trust,” confirms Dean.

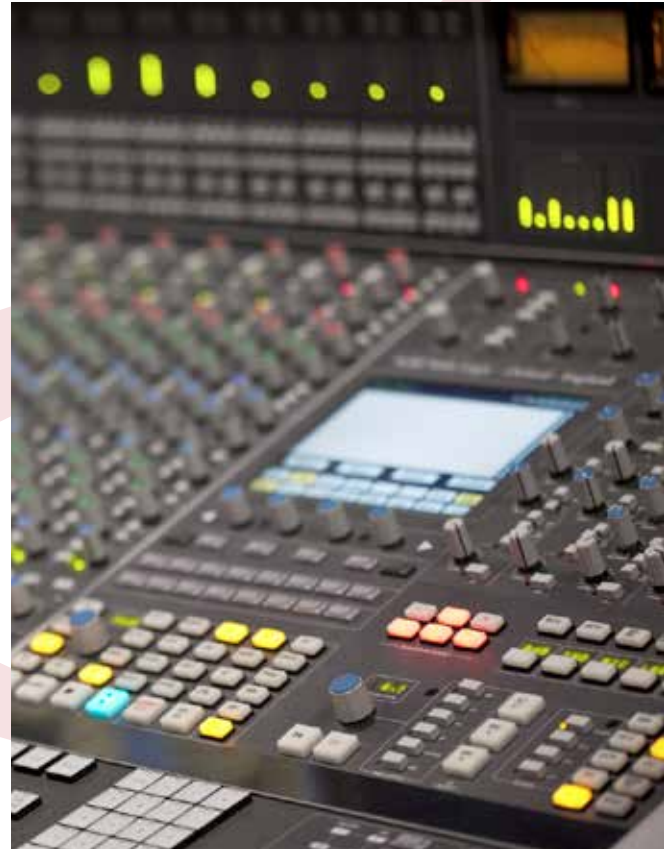


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## Smooth Launch

In the end, the traffic on launch day was a little lower than expected, but nevertheless significant. “The load was consistent throughout the day, with no real peaks,” confirms Dean. In fact, the first uploads started at 7a.m. and were running at a consistent level from mid-morning until late evening.

Out of more than 30,000 visitors to completemyartist.com, around 40% downloaded and installed the application. There were three calls to the help line, all of which were unrelated to the application or its performance. “Our servers didn’t break into a sweat, even though the average library contained 1000 to 1300 tracks, which we considered large for the readership,” says Dean. “The newspaper was so pleased with the results that we secured eight more cover mount promotions for the coming year.”



StarBase is the UK’s leading performance testing consultancy, trusted by major enterprises to mitigate IT systems risk since 1992. We ensure the consistent performance of our clients’ key systems. As specialists, we possess an unrivalled depth of experience, knowledge and insight, creating smart and value-adding solutions for complex situations.

### Performance Testing

Combining the best testing tools with effective processes can improve the bottom line

### Testing Tools

Guidance on testing tool selection - the right tools for your technology challenges and to improve productivity

### Functional Testing

Smarter processes and greater automation will reduce cost and duration of the project

### Managed Testing

Let us take responsibility for all your testing requirements

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