

Microsoft draws on F1 Consultancy's expertise to help deliver TechEd EMEA 2009 - Berlin



During the past 10 years F1 Consultancy has consistently exceeded Microsoft's expectations, and it is this dedication to excellence which distinguishes F1 from its competitors.

In 2009 Microsoft, the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions, appointed F1 Consultancy Limited to design, implement and support the entire IT network infrastructure at Microsoft's flagship technical education and networking event for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA).

Importantly, the IT infrastructure had to have the capacity to deliver for an event of this size and scale, and required a team of experts to plan and implement in the lead-up to the event as well as give support throughout the five day conference.

Background

Founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services, and solutions that help people and businesses realise their full potential. Microsoft is a global company with 96,000 permanent staff located in over 100 countries.

TechEd Europe is Microsoft's premier technical education and networking event for technology professionals interested in learning, connecting and exploring a broad set of current and soon to release Microsoft technologies, tools, platforms, and services. In 2009 Microsoft appointed F1 Consultancy Limited to design, implement and support the entire IT network infrastructure for one of the largest IT shows in Europe - TechEd EMEA 2009.

TechEd Europe plays an integral role in Microsoft's marketing strategy. As Microsoft has no retail outlets, a direct route to market needs to be created and this is achieved through its partners, seminars, and strategic events.

TechEd EMEA 2009 spanned over five days with 7000 visitors attending the event held in Berlin, enabling Microsoft to engage directly with existing and future clients, stakeholders, the media, and partners. Therefore, it was imperative that the supporting technology and IT infrastructure behind the running of such an important and tactical event be watertight.



“F1 Consultancy are worth their weight in Gold.”

Corey Hynes at Hynesite HOLDS

F1 Consultancy's experience and expertise in the delivery of IT network infrastructure at large events was called upon to help resolve three main issues for Microsoft. These were:

- The supply of an IT infrastructure capable of showcasing the entire Microsoft suite of products
- Specialist IT skills were needed to deploy the IT infrastructure itself, and these specialist skills were not part of Microsoft's core skills
- A lack of internal resource

Objectives

The challenge was to establish an IT network infrastructure capable of delivering one of Microsoft's flagship events in Europe. The IT requirements of an event of this magnitude meant that careful planning and preparation formed an integral part to F1 Consultancy's approach.

Also, factors such as Microsoft's brand reputation as a leader and innovator in IT software and services, and the unfamiliarity of the event location to many of the wider production team, also needed to be addressed by F1 Consultancy.

Meeting and exceeding Microsoft's and the wider production team's expectations became one of F1's main objectives at TechEd Europe 2009.

Solution

With a project of this size pre-planning, research, and tailoring the service to suit the physical location of the site and Microsoft's specific requirements, formed the initial phase of F1's implementation strategy.

Over a nine month period the F1 Consultancy project team meticulously planned every aspect and stage of the IT delivery process. A core component of this work included liaising with production team partners to guarantee a smooth delivery of services over the course of the five day event.

Sourcing and using highly skilled and trained staff to head-up F1 Consultancy's project team was an important part of F1's implementation strategy. Forming the heart of the delivery phase the expert project team provide the knowledge and experience required to design, implement, and support the entire IT network infrastructure at TechEd Europe 2009 which included:

- 800 desktop computers configured for specific tasks in numerous locations throughout the venue
- 300 high-end workstations supporting over 250 Hands-on-Labs
- Helpdesk
- Keynote speaker and press support
- 21 breakout rooms
- Expo and technical Learning Centre
- Over 5000 individual wireless connections daily
- Over 1000 CAT 5 network drops



F1 Consultancy helped Microsoft to deliver its European flagship event providing Microsoft with a direct route to market.

Importantly events such as TechEd EMEA 2009 ensure Microsoft remain one-step ahead of their competitors in a fierce marketplace.

Our IT infrastructure solution also had to cater for the needs of the 7000 attendees. Hence, throughout the entire event F1's on-site team were on hand to support VIPs, delegates, keynote speakers, members of the IT press and production staff with any IT issues or questions which arose.

This additional service proved priceless with the Speaker Coordinator, James Dent, saying:

"Top speaker support as always, big thanks from his team."

With a 9 month lead time F1 Consultancy was able to address any technical issues before the main event, ensuring the smooth running of the five day conference. F1 also worked closely with the wider production team before and during TechEd, building on existing relationships and creating new ones.

Our ability to work with all partners involved in a project means that the client, in this instance Microsoft, can focus on their business objectives i.e. to reach a captive audience and create a direct route to market in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Critical success factors included: meeting short turn around times and client expectations; providing state-of-the-art equipment to showcase Microsoft's current and soon to release technologies, tools, platforms and services; strategic planning and analysis to provide the physical deliverables of a project of this size; and the provision of an expert team at the conference.

Throughout the planning and delivery F1 Consultancy worked with the wider production team including Hynesite HOLS, Tri-Digital Session Encoding. Hilary Wynn at Tri-Digital Session Encoding said, "We were concerned about coming over to Europe using unfamiliar people and hardware, but working with F1 was a really great experience."

Kim Matlock at Microsoft said:

"F1 Consultancy's expertise and delivery of a robust IT infrastructure resulted in the smooth running of a tactically important event for Microsoft. During the past 10 years F1 Consultancy has consistently exceeded the expectations of Microsoft and the wider production team associated with TechEd. Put simply F1 proved they are worth their weight in gold."

