

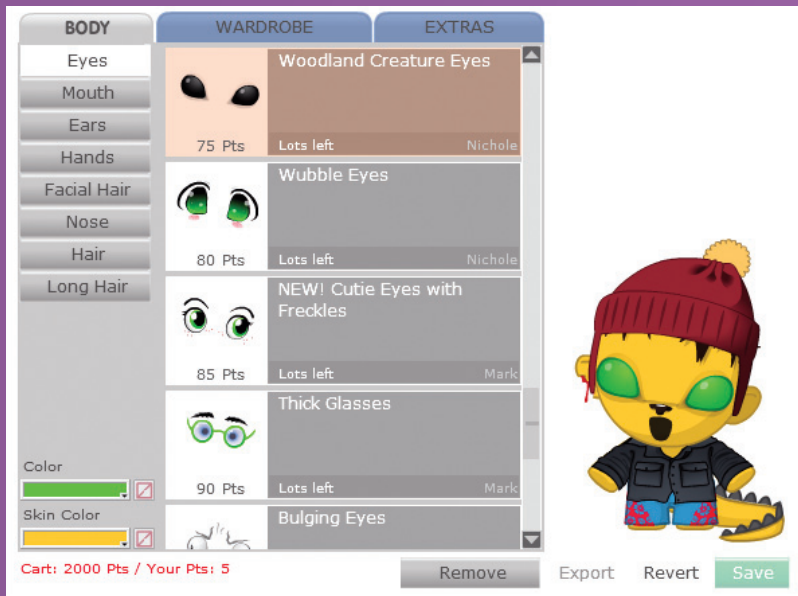


Engagement made real

Bunchball's Nitro web service, built on the Adobe® Flash® Platform, ignites online user engagement for big name customers



On the web, information and entertainment are commodities and visitors are fickle; the differentiating factor between one site and another is the degree to which visitors are engaged. That's where Bunchball comes in. The innovative company studied the best in games, social networks, and virtual worlds, and extracted the components that were being used to drive consumer behavior, based on the fundamental human desires for reward, achievement, status, competition, and self-expression. Then Bunchball dove deep into the field of behavioral economics, learning about the irrational yet predictable ways people make decisions. The company took everything it learned and built Nitro, a web service designed to help companies drive consumer behavior online.



The Nitro web service, which is seamlessly integrated with customers' websites, drives consumer behavior and online activity through game mechanics including point systems, levels, leaderboards, challenges, and virtual goods. The incentive- and rewards-based service is currently increasing online engagement and delivering returns for Bunchball's clients. Based on the Adobe Flash Platform, including Adobe Flash Media Server, Adobe Flex, and Adobe Flash Player software, Nitro dramatically enhances companies' ability to engage online consumers.



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Limitless possibilities

The Nitro web service, which is seamlessly integrated with customers' websites, drives consumer behavior and online activity through game mechanics including point systems, levels, leaderboards, challenges, and virtual goods. According to Bunchball, the incentive- and rewards-based service is currently increasing online engagement and delivering returns for big names such as NBC and Comcast.

Online visitors can, for instance, earn ten points upon making a forum post, and then win a virtual trophy after making 100 forum posts. They can compete for a position on a high-score table for the most forum posts, and can level up in the community after reaching certain milestones. They can then redeem their points for virtual goods that can be displayed in their online virtual spaces, for instance. Any kind of site activity can be tracked and incented with Nitro.

Adobe Flash Media Server, Flash Player, and Flex are integral to Nitro. All of the virtual goods and user-facing widgets are created using Adobe Flex. Adobe Flash Media Server—which offers a unique combination of powerful streaming with a flexible environment for creating and delivering rich, interactive, multi-way social media experiences—maintains security. Adobe Flash Player—available on more than 98% of Internet-connected PCs worldwide—enables seamless, instant, and reliable user interaction on customers' websites.

New ways to engage consumers online

Nitro customers find that their online visitors spend more time on their sites, come back more frequently, and are personally invested in the site experience. At DunderMifflinInfinity.com (DMI), for example, NBC's website for the popular television series *The Office*, fans can upload photos or videos or make comments to earn Schrut Bucks, and climb the corporate

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ladder as they do so. The DMI employee rewards program enables users to spend their SchruteBucks on virtual goods and gifts that can be used to customize a virtual desk. The interactive site builds brand loyalty, opens new opportunities for NBC to boost ad revenues, and also helps drive TV ratings skyward.

The virtual goods are all built using Adobe Flash technology, which enables them to be dynamic and interactive. One of the virtual goods is an interactive computer that is actually an RSS reader, making it appear as if users are receiving e-mails from characters in the show. The site has been so successful that sponsors such as Toyota and MasterCard have sponsored SchruteBuck gift cards for users and sold virtual goods—such as model Toyota Corolla cars to site users.

Comcast is another enthusiastic Nitro adopter. The Comcast.net portal, currently the 9th largest site in the United States, offers hundreds of trivia games supported by the Nitro platform. When trivia enthusiasts play on Comcast.net, they earn points, can compete for positions on daily and all-time leaderboards, and can spend their points to customize an avatar. Visitors can also earn collectible trophies by reaching certain goals, such as answering 100 sports trivia questions correctly, or submitting 50 new trivia questions. The popularity of the site opens new opportunities for Comcast to increase customer loyalty and earn advertising revenue.

Credit where credit is due

Among the most important features of Nitro is its tight security. Site visitors might, for example, try to outsmart the system to show that they correctly answered 100 sports trivia questions when, in fact, they did not. Adobe Flash Media Server provides the key. By using Flash Media Server as a secure proxy between customer content in FLV or SWF format and the Nitro server, Bunchball is able to help ensure that credit is only given when it is due.

Content delivered as SWF files, created in Adobe Flash Professional or Adobe Flex, loads the Nitro Flash Connector which connects to Flash Media Server via Adobe’s RTMPE protocol. Several authentication steps follow, including Flash Media Server SWF Verification, which verifies that the SWF content has not been altered in any manner. Nitro also performs a check against an approved list of content, and validates that the SWF file is being served from an approved location. If any of these checks fail, Flash Media Server rejects the connection and disables any communication with the Nitro server. If authentication is successful, then the Flash Connector enables secure communication with the Nitro server, and the application can credit users for their activities.

Says Paharia. “Once Flash Media Server 3 was introduced, with security features like SWF verification and encrypted transmission via Adobe RTMPE, we knew we had a way to address the security challenge.”

Company

Bunchball

San Jose, California

www.bunchball.com

Challenge

- Uncover the levers that drive consumer behavior online
- Build a web service that companies can tap into to engage users
- Develop a powerful, incentive- and rewards-based platform
- Ensure a seamless, reliable experience for users
- Enable customers to easily administer incentives and campaigns

Solution

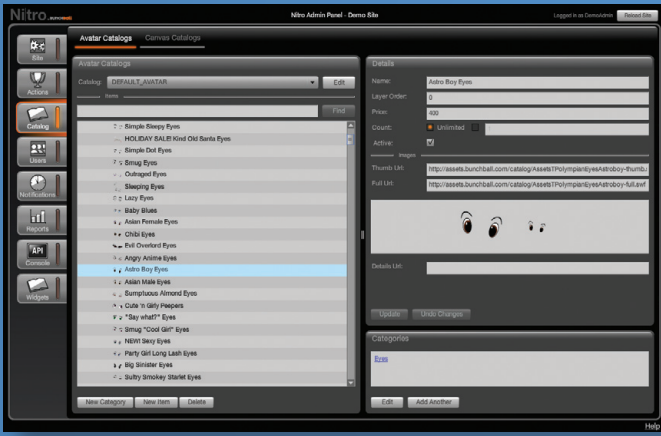
- Conduct research to discover what drives consumer behavior online
- Use Adobe Flex, Flash Media Server, and Flash Player to develop and deliver a highly effective incentive- and rewards-based web service
- Take advantage of support for SWF verification and Adobe RTMPE to help ensure security
- Create an administration console in Adobe Flex that helps customers manage incentives and campaigns

Benefits

- Successfully engaged users
- Drove revenue-generating behavior on sites that garner billions of page views annually
- Helped ensure reliable, seamless user experience
- Provided robust administration and management system for campaigns and incentives
- Opened new revenue-producing opportunities for Nitro customers
- Increased customer loyalty
- Boosted visits and TV viewership

Toolkit

- Adobe Flex
- Adobe Flash Media Server
- Adobe Flash Player



Nitro offers a full management, administration, and reporting console created using Adobe Flex that enables customers to manage all of the Nitro-related activity occurring on their sites. Bunchball customers can manage users, track task completion, manage point systems and virtual goods, trigger user notifications, configure security settings, and more.

Optimizing incentives and campaigns on the fly

Behind the scenes, Nitro offers a full management, administration, and reporting console created using Adobe Flex that enables customers to manage all of the Nitro-related activity occurring on their sites. Bunchball customers can manage users, track task completion, manage point systems, manage virtual goods, trigger user notifications, configure security settings, and more. The robust reporting capabilities built in Adobe Flex for the Nitro platform enable customers to see at a glance which campaigns or incentives are the most effective, and make rapid changes accordingly to maximize their results and keep users engaged.

“For creating deep involvement with users on the web, there’s really no substitute for the Adobe Flash Platform,” says Paharia. “Whether we are developing intuitive, interactive user interfaces with Flex, or delivering robust user interaction with Flash Media Server, Adobe solutions are at the heart of our Nitro service and our ability to help customers more effectively engage with their online visitors.”



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