

AKAMAI CUSTOMER STORY

Thrilling players with chances to win big

Microgame delivers speedy, secure online gambling and betting sites with Akamai and Criticalcase

50%

Shorter page load times for a better player experience

60%

Traffic offloaded to edge, accommodating traffic spikes

2x

Increase in traffic absorbed during the pandemic, avoiding downtime

The gateway to the game world

Partnering with Akamai and Criticalcase, Microgame drives revenue by helping game operators deliver fast, flawless online gambling experiences to players, even as traffic volumes rise.

Players are eager to roll the dice on a great gaming experience

Online gambling and sports betting are on the rise in Italy, especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. People have virtually endless options to stay entertained and test their luck – with everything from poker, bingo, and slot machines to betting on horse races and football matches. Microgame S.p.A. provides the technology platform behind many of Italy's top gaming sites, giving game operators everything they need to run, manage, and promote their games.

Most important to Microgame and its customers is the gaming experience. Players are looking for entertainment and excitement – and they expect the games to be fast, seamless, and safe. Slow load times can drive them away. And in a highly competitive market, that's something Microgame wants to avoid.

"It is very important to give our customers a great experience, on a secure and reliable site," says Francesco Lauro, CTO at Microgame. "That means we need to provide gaming features players can't find anywhere else, and make sure we can deliver them with speed and availability."



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Partner
Criticalcase
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Industry
Software, Gambling, and Gaming

Challenge
With increasing traffic to its customers' gaming sites, Microgame needed to reduce page load times while accommodating increasingly dynamic, image-rich content – helping game operators attract more players.

Solutions

- Edge DNS
- Dynamic Site Accelerator
- Web Application Protector
- Site Shield



Site performance sags under the weight of increasing traffic and platform innovation

Lauro and his team are constantly working to enhance the Microgame platform, making it more customizable with features such as pre-match and in-play betting, personal poker appointments, and the ability to set sports betting events and odds. Those capabilities enable operators to provide a more exciting, personalized betting experience for players. And Lauro's commitment to innovation has paid off – Microgame supports 650,000 user accounts and 160 million transactions every year, and its traffic has continued to grow.

However, the evolving platform and growing user base were putting increasing demands on the infrastructure, and slow page loads were starting to affect the player experience. That was especially true for image-heavy casino sites, which may have as many as 800 virtual slot machines on a single page, and sports betting sites, which are constantly being updated.

"We had oversized our infrastructure to handle increasing traffic, but we couldn't scale dynamically to handle unexpected spikes," says Pablo Alejandro Rostani, System Network Administrator at Microgame. "Plus, we needed to display static content faster – that's crucial for acquiring new players and gaining their loyalty so they keep coming back."

Double or nothing – 2x pandemic traffic raises the stakes for site performance

At first, Lauro and Rostani decided to work with Akamai to boost performance by accelerating DNS resolution and caching static content at the edge – and engaged cloud service provider Criticalcase to make the most of its technology investment.

"Akamai has a strong global presence and a reputation for being the best technology on the market," says Lauro. "This was an opportunity to show game operators that we are committed to delivering the best player experience possible, and together Akamai and Criticalcase delivered what we needed to succeed."

When the pandemic hit Italy, the implementation suddenly took on new urgency. With the country under lockdown, people were at home and looking for ways to stay entertained – and Microgame saw traffic to its customers' gaming sites double. If that traffic had hit the origin infrastructure, it might have caused sites to crash. But with help from technical experts at Criticalcase, the result was a different story.

"Criticalcase helped us move fast, integrating 50 customer sites into [Edge DNS](#) and [Dynamic Site Accelerator](#) and configuring the Akamai Control Center to make sure we were taking full advantage of the features available to us," says Rostani. That speed was critical. Within weeks, game operators using Microgame's full online gaming platform were seeing the results.

"Akamai was the key to absorbing the 2x spike in traffic without a problem," says Rostani. "We were able to offload 60% of the hits on our infrastructure and reduce page load times by 50% – which meant we could easily keep serving up rich, dynamic gaming sites."



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Francesco Lauro
CTO, Microgame

Though performance gains varied across sites, pages with lots of rich, static content benefited from 55% faster load times on average. That included casino sites, which can load hundreds of images rapidly and deliver a smoother experience to players. And, by offloading static content, sports betting sites have more bandwidth to stream in dynamic content such as betting odds from bookies. With a faster player experience and greater availability, Microgame can help its customers attract more players and keep them coming back.

“Our B2C customers have reported an impressive improvement in site speed, which makes an immediate impact on player acquisition and retention. Our search engine rankings also went up, which means greater visibility and more new customers streaming in,” says Lauro. “In addition, Microgame is seeing new revenue opportunities from game operators that are approaching us because they know we use Akamai.”

For Microgame, success is about preparation – not luck

Moving to the edge has changed the way Lauro and his team think about innovation. They can build new features for truly differentiated player experiences without worrying about whether the infrastructure can keep up. In fact, developers have already started designing applications to maximize the use of Akamai, knowing they can count on optimal performance without expanding the infrastructure.

Lauro and Rostani see this as just the beginning of its partnership with Akamai. They are currently working to strengthen security with [Web Application Protector](#) and [Site Shield](#). “Italian gaming regulations have strict security requirements, so Microgame already had a well-protected infrastructure,” says Rostani. “Akamai adds another layer of security outside the perimeter, keeping many attacks from even reaching our firewall.”

That security is bolstered by a great partnership. “The Criticalcase team is available anytime we need them, which is important because most of the activity in the gaming market happens on the weekend,” says Lauro. “Whenever we detect a security threat through the Akamai portal, we work together to determine how best to block any malicious traffic.”

And Criticalcase is eager to help as Microgame expands its use of Akamai. “It’s our pleasure as a provider and a partner to work with Microgame,” says Alessandro Zoncu, VP of Sales at Criticalcase. “Our goal is to help maximize their performance and security, and support their continuing growth as the leading online gaming platform in Italy. Microgame can rest assured we will dedicate all the resources they need, and then some.”

With Akamai and Criticalcase, Microgame is forging ahead with its end-to-end online gaming platform and staying focused on its goal – a competitive advantage for game operators and a great experience for players. Whether people want to compete in a poker tournament, join a fantasy sports league, or simply play the lottery, Microgame is the platform that makes it possible.



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Francesco Lauro
CTO, Microgame



Microgame S.p.A. is the leading gaming service provider in Italy. Thanks to the flexibility of our multi-channel offering – complete and competitive for both the online and land-based sector – today Microgame is the B2B entity with the highest and greatest reach throughout the territory and represents a rapid access point to the regulated national market. Products and services are designed according to the needs of all actors: the regulatory authority, gaming operators, distribution networks, affiliates, and players. Our success is based on strong partnerships with our clients for whom Microgame is not just an extraordinary service provider but a real strategic partner. Since 1999, our business model has been focused on the continuous development of solutions, particularly for the Italian gaming market.



Criticalcase has been in operation since 1999 as a high availability (H.A.) service provider specialized in tailor-made fully managed solutions. Our long-time experience turns into a complete knowledge of the IT market, which allows us to offer H.A. services in order to guarantee 100% uptime and the best performance. We provide highly customizable and flexible hosting, cloud computing, disaster recovery and business continuity solutions, management, and consulting services. Our mission is to design and realize tailor-made IT solutions for each client, in order to meet their requirements and improve business productivity. Our consulting vision allows us to identify the solution that best fits the clients' needs and supports the growth of the company. We always focus on customer satisfaction, providing advanced technological solutions thanks to a best-in-class infrastructure and highly qualified staff.



Akamai secures and delivers digital experiences for the world's largest companies. Akamai's intelligent edge platform surrounds everything, from the enterprise to the cloud, so customers and their businesses can be fast, smart, and secure. Top brands globally rely on Akamai to help them realize competitive advantage through agile solutions that extend the power of their multi-cloud architectures. Akamai keeps decisions, apps, and experiences closer to users than anyone – and attacks and threats far away. Akamai's portfolio of edge security, web and mobile performance, enterprise access, and video delivery solutions is supported by unmatched customer service, analytics, and 24/7/365 monitoring. To learn why the world's top brands trust Akamai, visit www.akamai.com, blogs.akamai.com, or [@Akamai](https://twitter.com/Akamai) on Twitter. You can find our global contact information at www.akamai.com/locations. Published 5/21.