

The online, social media and mobile hat-trick: Chelsea FC and InfoMedia Services

The client

Founded in 1905, [Chelsea Football Club](#) is one of the most successful professional football clubs in the Premier League. It has spent most of its history in the top tier of English football and been English champions three times, winning the FA Cup five times, the League Cup four times and the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup twice.

Chelsea regularly sells out its 41,841 capacity Stamford Bridge football stadium in Fulham, where they have played since their establishment. The club has sustained the fifth highest average all-time attendance in English football and the average home gate for the 2008–09 season was 41,464, the fifth highest in the Premier League.

The communication

Communicating with such a large and loyal fan base presents a wide array of challenges – especially as UK traffic makes up less than a quarter of all visitors to ChelseaFC.com. More than 2,400 sites link to the official Chelsea FC website. Over 10% of inbound traffic to the Chelsea FC site is driven by Facebook – more than five times as much as SkySports.com.

Professional football stirs many emotions in its fan base and there are hundreds of channels of communication and networks. As an official organisation, Chelsea must remain separated from the individual gossip and rumours that will inevitably surround it: even if it may be commercially lucrative to confirm or deny a given piece of speculation.

However Chelsea cannot remain aloof from the fans who are its commercial lifeblood – 'unofficial' sites such as The Shed are critical. Forum comments, Twitter feeds and links to / from Facebook pages have to be integrated.

Likewise, the immediacy of mobile communication is an area Chelsea looks to exploit in order to get the football action to every fan that wants it.

The InfoMedia angle

For Chelsea FC, [InfoMedia](#) designed, built and hosts the official iPhone application. InfoMedia manages the flow of real time editorial, imagery, match data and video.

Through InfoMedia's relationship with Apple the application continues to be promoted in the top sport and football sections on the app store. This saw it become the top grossing sport app for the first 2 months after launch.

InfoMedia worked with Chelsea's media department to devise a marketing plan for the app which saw InfoMedia produce creatives for promotion on the Chelsea Website, Chelsea TV, LED Screens in the stadium, programme and magazine adverts. The app was awarded five stars by leading magazine What Mobile in March 2010.

Social media and mobile combined to positive effect when Chelsea flagged its mobile app via Twitter, which was subsequently picked up by TV Presenter Tim Lovejoy. This led to an immediate 12% boost in the uptake of the application.