



High Profile Public Facing Website, Back-ended by Office 365

One of the largest mixed use real estate locations in downtown New York was undertaking a major relaunch. As part of this effort, they needed to have a great looking public facing site to market more than two million square feet of commercial and residential real estate in an area with some of the highest per-square-foot costs in the world.

Using Akumina, the customer is now delivering a personalized, adaptive and immersive experiences for their current and prospective tenants. The customer's digital intelligence is completely managed inside their Microsoft Office 365 instance and the use of the Akumina server-side framework allowed for their new online property to be built using MVC design patterns within Visual Studio, ultimately creating a three-tier delivery model to support a 'headless SharePoint Online' driven site.

The Challenge

In order to showcase a 14-acre property as the heartbeat of one of the most exclusive neighborhoods in the world—a home to nearly 100,000 residents, Akumina's customer had three specific goals for the project:

- Create a modern web site that could deliver relevant and personal experiences to each site visitor based on specific criteria and personas.
- Leverage the organization's technology eco-system standards; Office 365, Azure and Dynamics in order to deliver contextual intelligence to both internal users, broker members and public site visitors.
- Ensure scalability and security to support both significant traffic spikes as well as thwart security threats.

These goals introduced some very specific challenges. First, the design and development teams knew they could not use SharePoint Online to deliver the branded experiences the marketing team was demanding because Office 365 does not natively support public facing web properties. Second, the web property needed to be dynamic, but also needed to support both anticipated and unanticipated spikes of traffic that could jump north of 6 million requests per second. Last, they needed to ensure that there was no direct connection between the website and their critical backend data sources that stored more than just the content going on the website.

They needed to build a personalized, mobile-friendly site, with nearly all of the site's data living in Office 365 and Dynamics, which could securely scale.

The Solution

Akumina is designed for developers to create powerful and unique experiences on top of Microsoft cloud-based technologies. Akumina is the only solution available in the market that allows the organization to create a three-tier deliver model on top of Office 365 supporting their goals for a high traffic, secure and revenue generating web presence.

Akumina converts all disparate REST API's from the different Office 365 workloads into a single REST API that is centralized and delivers all the standard CRUD-based operations.

Through another set of REST consuming APIs (available in C# and JS), the Akumina technology creates a connection string between the server-side framework and your run-time experience without the need to ever communicate with Office365 directly.

Akumina ships with an object caching provider-model and the run-time can be anything, can live anywhere, ships with an output caching provider model and supports all of the leading CDN offerings in the market (Azure / Akamai etc).

The Results

When the site launched in 2016 the impact was immediate. Site traffic increased across the board, and the marketing team achieved its goals for return visits and time on site. The site now contains deep dive residential and commercial media assets, managed using Office Video, which gives a much better sense to the visitor of the specifics of the units for lease. By ensuring that specific personas are identified quickly and put on the shortest possible path to these assets as appropriate, return visits to the sit have gone up 90% year-over-year. Time on site has seen a three-fold increase and all of this activity is leading to five times as many online inquires.

Every fall and through the holidays this neighborhood is a key destination for residents and tourists alike. In 2014, site load times degraded by as much as 20% during these peak time periods. Now with their site built on InterChange, and hosted in Azure there was no measurable negative impact (<.0001) on site performance during peak fall promotional times in 2015.

No formal attacks have been lodged and the CIO has gone from being a skeptic about the idea of having a site which delivered content from internal business systems to an advocate. He has been sharing the solution with his peers who have similar marketing demands and therefore cannot ignore the need to use internal systems of record to create public facing digital experiences which drive bottom line results.

Akumina's customers are making use of more of their Office 365 license than ever before and doing so in a way that many did not think would be possible, including delivering world class public facing web site experiences, back ended by Office 365.

ABOUT AKUMINA

Akumina provides the leading digital engagement software solution delivering a contextual and personalized digital experience and transforms how employees work, collaborate and innovate. Akumina's customers are using the software platform to drive modern and global intranets, digital executive dashboards as well as extranets and portals. Akumina's customers include the Boston Red Sox, Walt Disney Corporation, iRobot, The World Trade Center and the Department of Defense to name a few.