

## Events.com

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### **Case Study: Custom Software Solves a Data-Matching Problem for Leading Race Organizer**

Timing is everything, especially when it comes to race results. So if there's a delay in managing and posting accurate results – and making them easy to view on any mobile device – that's a problem.

[Events.com](#) is a start-up based in San Diego that provides technology for race and event organizers to operate more efficiently, from registration to results. One of its clients runs a series of global races, and it needed a solution to replace its old technology fast.

Since Events.com is growing quickly, "it's been a challenge for us to grow our resources at the rate needed to be able to do everything that we want to do," said Jessica Brannam, the company's VP of Product Development.

So the company worked with ZurelSoft to create a custom software solution in three months that would tackle these primary issues for the client: simplify the process of matching race participants, improve the back-end workflow, and ensure the data was viewable by race participants on any mobile device.

## The Difficulty of Data Matching

The client runs its own races as well as other licensed races all over the world, according to Brannam. It was using a points tabulation system to track attendee participation for all of its events and attendees' scores to help identify who was eligible to move on to the championships and world competition.

One of the biggest pain points the client had with its previous system was managing the huge amounts of disparate data that was submitted by licensees from all over the world. The client needed a solution that would facilitate the import and upload of Excel/CSV files and then match each athlete's data to more efficiently calculate the standings and the points earned for each individual.

Of particular importance was establishing a process to "deduplicate" the data, so that the same participant in several races had only one entry for his or her name and associated scores, not several entries for one person.

"You can imagine when data's coming in from 10 different sources, one person might call me Jess and one person might call me Jessica," Brannam said.

To ensure these little nuances were recognized, ZurelSoft created a color-coded system of red, green and yellow "flags" to alert the client's staff of possible duplicates as they managed incoming data. Red was definitely a duplicate, yellow was a partial match, and green looked good, but it might warrant a second glance. The matching process had historically been time-intensive for the client, Brannam said, and the color coding made it easier and therefore faster to identify which areas needed more attention.

## Improved Workflow, Results on the Go

The client's workflow on the back-end also needed help. The previous technology wasn't user friendly for administrators on the back-end, so it took more time for a new user to learn it and come up to speed. ZurelSoft and Events.com took a look at the information architecture and interaction design and then "sat down to really analyze how the user would interact with the application and designed a workflow that would help to make the process more intuitive," Brannam said.

The client also wanted to ensure race participants could access their standings via any mobile device. Prior to the ZurelSoft solution, the data was displayed in an HTML table that was not responsive. The two teams designed pages to be mobile responsive and modified the way the content was displayed to make it mobile friendly.

## A True Partnership

"ZurelSoft really worked as an extension of our engineering and development team," Brannam said. "We're a start-up. We have a lot of great knowledge and industry expertise,

but we just can't seem to grow fast enough. Working with Prasanna Adhikari and the Zurelsoft team allowed us to continue offering a wider breadth of technology solutions to our clients. It also allowed us to expand some of our design work."

Of particular importance to Events.com was ensuring the quality and standards they set for themselves were followed by the ZurelSoft team, whose development team is in Nepal. This was never an issue, as Tressa Schultze, the product manager at Events.com, and Avi Sapkota at ZurelSoft worked closely together, holding weekly meetings with the team in Nepal and Avi liaisioning with the team the rest of the time. "Avi made that process much smoother since he was right here in San Diego and we could meet with him in our time zone and could meet in person with him as needed," Brannam said.

What matters in the end, of course, is whether the client is happy with the result. "The client was really pleased with the solution that we were able to deliver, which couldn't have been possible without Zurelsoft team," she said. "It was really great to be able to deliver something that the client was excited about and couldn't wait to start using."