

TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

Keeping Score: The Technology That Runs The Olympics

(NAPSA)—When Olympic free-style skiing champion Jonny Moseley—and a few thousand other athletes from countries large and small throughout the world—glance at the 2002 Winter Olympic Games scoreboard in Salt Lake City, they could find their fates sealed by two-tenths of a second, or less. Fractions of seconds—less time than it takes to blink—are what make medals.

Literally hundreds of millions of spectators and viewers will be glued to the events of the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. As athletes, judges, journalists and viewers around the globe watch, they will rely on the timely and accurate delivery of scores, times and rankings. Your average viewer at home in Helsinki, Finland, or Hell's Kitchen, won't ever know or care about the technology behind the scenes that provides them with this information. But they will certainly know if something goes wrong: After all, "scoring" isn't just the delivery of statistics; it's compiling, delivering, analyzing and distributing data from multiple venues and multiple sources into real-time information. No matter how complex it may sound, everyone can understand its importance.

SchlumbergerSema (Sema), the company providing the technology for the 2002 Olympic Games, created a consortium of 15 of the biggest names in technology to build a bulletproof system worthy

of this international event. Each consortium member was asked to provide a piece of the computer network with the goal of creating a fail-proof and cost-effective system.

IT PartsHouse, based in Dallas, Texas, was one of the companies recruited to help SchlumbergerSema. "We have a low-profile yet critical role, which is to ensure that all the different pieces of the technology puzzle work together," said Gregory Maisel, director of business strategy for IT PartsHouse. "Our task is to provide the underlying software glue that allows SchlumbergerSema to see and manage how the complete technology infrastructure is performing. These are the Olympic Games and we needed the best network management solution out there. That turns out to be a software product called HP OpenView from Hewlett-Packard."

"Like a cockpit in a jet, centralized information and control is vital to a successful flight. You can imagine reliability in an aircraft with no compass, no gauges indicating fuel status or loss of hydraulic pressure, and no controls for the pilot to manipulate. HP OpenView provides that same kind of information and control for the Olympic IT environment," he said.

The bottom line: Requirements are for absolute precision and accuracy; just as in the Olympics, in this game, there's no room for error. Just ask Jonny Moseley—or that guy in Helsinki, Finland. 