

SUCCESS STORY

Hutch uses Elastic Search on Elastic Cloud to bring search to its new in-game “Clubs” feature, enabling millions of players to find and share mobile gaming experiences

Region

United Kingdom

Industry

Software & Technology

Solution

Elasticsearch



More engaging player experience

- Hutch added an in-game search feature, powered by Elastic, which enables millions of players to join racing game clubs for a shared, competitive gaming experience.



Better search results

- Hutch can return fast and highly relevant results to millions of search queries in multiple languages with Elastic Enterprise Search.



Improved system performance

- Hutch achieved better scalability and easier management by deploying Elastic Enterprise Search on Elastic Cloud.

The mobile video gaming industry is booming. According to a 2022 analyst report, the market was worth more than \$9 billion in 2021 and is expected to reach a staggering \$139 billion by 2026. In such a high-stakes environment, successful companies must constantly innovate and deliver unique experiences to compete for the attention of billions of gamers worldwide.

Hutch is no exception. The company specializes in some of the most popular racing games for Apple and Android devices including Rebel Racing, F1® Clash, and Top Drives. These titles have been downloaded millions of times due to a mix of thrilling gameplay and original features that keep players coming back for more.

To keep its audience engaged and entertained, Hutch launched a feature called Clubs where players join together and compete against other racing teams. Instead of just vying for individual wins, players help their Club climb the leagues and earn team rewards.

Clubs tend to attract gamers with similar skills and who usually speak the same language. Finding a Club where the player feels at home is an important part of the user experience. “Gamers have incredibly high expectations when it comes to search capabilities,” says Martin Wong, Senior Engineer, Hutch. “We wanted our Clubs-related search results to be just as fast, accurate, and relevant as any search engine or shopping site.”



Elastic has helped us deliver an outstanding user experience that supports the growth of the business. To build on this success, we’re planning to add the Clubs feature to other racing games for more player engagement and retention. We’re also looking at adding Elastic Observability for monitoring and searching our server logs for optimal performance.

Martin Wong
Senior Engineer, Hutch

Supporting advanced search and business growth

Wong had other important criteria for Hutch's underlying database and search solution beyond user experience. The technology had to be flexible enough to work with a variety of data types generated by different racing games. He also wanted to be able to provide result rankings where certain matches are better than others.

The company closely manages spending and human resources. "We needed a database and search solution that would enable us to scale quickly, but not add to the day-to-day responsibilities of our engineers," he says.

All these factors led Wong to select Elastic Enterprise Search running on Elastic Cloud hosted on Microsoft Azure.

Using Elastic Cloud, Hutch can mirror its development, testing, and production environments in different parts of the world. In the case of F1 Clash, Hutch runs its services in five regions and has an Elastic Cloud deployment for each.

The popularity of games in different regions varies, and Wong can control the specifications of each deployment separately. In regions where a game experiences higher network traffic, he can allocate more RAM to the appropriate Elastic Enterprise Search instance for consistently reliable search performance.



When we looked at the market, similar solutions were quadrupled in cost and complicated to use. Elastic is much more cost effective and much easier to scale and manage. We can upgrade the stack at the press of a button and it's simpler to get engineers up to speed compared to more complex environments.

Martin Wong

Senior Engineer, Hutch



A shared racing experience for millions of players

Hutch has added the Clubs feature to two of its games, F1 Clash and Rebel Racing, with more planned for the future. Gamer engagement has increased significantly for both, with more than 2.5 million users joining Clubs while the in-game search tool has handled over seven million queries.



Our games are supported by passionate communities where inaccurate search results or latency issues can impact the success of a game. There is zero room for compromise in search quality, and Elastic delivers for us.

Martin Wong

Senior Engineer, Hutch

Wong also stresses the importance of Elastic language analyzers that enable Hutch to manage search queries in 13 languages. “With Elastic, we can deliver a consistent, high-quality search experience to players all over the world which helps ensure we can scale on a global level,” he says.

Continually optimizing the gamer experience is another important goal. Hutch’s analysts use Elastic dashboards to study Clubs data and share findings with developer teams so that they can make informed changes in response to gaming trends.

Deployment on Elastic Cloud, rather than on-premises, minimizes time spent maintaining the search infrastructure and fixing issues. Wong and his team only need to look at metrics on occasion or check if it’s time to upgrade the stack. This means they can focus more of their time on the player experience and the development of new games and features.

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