

British Heart Foundation: Keeping donations rolling in with a little help from Worldpay

The British Heart Foundation is the nation's heart charity, committed to eliminating premature death as a result of heart disease.



The challenge

For more than 35 years, the British Heart Foundation has organised an annual London to Brighton Bike Ride, a 54-mile bike ride from capital to coast with 27,000 participating each year to raise much needed funds for scientific research aimed at fighting the causes of heart disease.

With so many cyclists taking part, one of the key challenges for the British Heart Foundation is to ensure that registrations for the London to Brighton Bike Ride are as smooth as possible.

With each rider needing to enter their details and pay a registration fee when signing up for the ride, the British Heart Foundation faces the dual task of ensuring that both its website and payment portal can manage a high volume of traffic.

For the past five years, that challenge is one that the British Heart Foundation has addressed with the combined expertise and support of Worldpay and digital agency POP.

Keeping traffic flowing

The London to Brighton Bike Ride has limited places available. As a result, the charity's website sees a major spike in traffic as entrants complete their details and pay their entry fee.

In 2009, the British Heart Foundation team noted its website was beginning to struggle with the increased demand being placed upon it.

"While the registration and payment pages never actually failed, 90% of our registrations are made online and we noticed that the overall speed of completion for registration was beginning to suffer," explains Tom Barton, Senior Project Manager for the British Heart Foundation.

"It's very important to us that people signing up for the event are able to register and pay as quickly and simply as possible, so we needed to solve that."

With that in mind, the team needed a solution that could help them tackle both sides of the issue.

"We needed to make sure that we could guarantee the stability of both the website itself and the payment portal linked to it," continues Tom. "We wanted best-in-class partners that could make that a reality for us."

Two partners, one solution

Worldpay, a global leader in payment processing, operates in more than 40 countries and pioneered online payments for small and medium sized businesses. Worldpay processes millions of online payments around the world every day.

Worldpay has supported the British Heart Foundation for five years now, providing a 'payment gateway' that seamlessly processes and authorises all payments made by customers.

When the 2014 London to Brighton Bike Ride opened for registration on 18 January, the Worldpay payment gateway successfully processed more than 4,100 registration payments in just one day, totaling almost £233,000.



Over the course of the first week, that number grew to around £482,210 for in excess of 11,772 riders. Uptime throughout this period was 100%.

“As well as the reassurance that comes from working with a brand like Worldpay for payment processing, we also have a dedicated team for the duration of registration,” says Tom. “They’re on hand to respond immediately should anything go amiss with payments.”

This year, the registration process has also been aided by the expertise of global digital agency POP.

POP, which has a heritage in delivering ticketing and queuing systems for organizations like the Sydney Opera House, Royal Albert Hall, and Royal Opera House, has over a decade’s worth of experience dealing with major increases in website traffic based around specific events.

Using their platform called qCloud, POP helps organisations like the British Heart Foundation to deal with high traffic volumes by limiting the number of active or concurrent visitors’ onsite at any one time.

Results and reassurances

“One of the great things for us is that we know that the WorldPay payment gateway can cope with more capacity than it has to,” says Tom.

“I’d estimate that we currently only use around 10% of the additional processing capacity that we have with WorldPay, but it’s reassuring to know that the system can deal with whatever we need it to.”

“With both WorldPay and POP, we know that we have the right combination to make registration the smooth success that it should be” ended Tom.

Taking revenue and registrations is a massive part of the London to Brighton Bike Ride for us, and with WorldPay and POP we’re working with organisations that have the technological expertise, resources and dedication that we need.”

“Whether you are organising a high profile single event, or need on-going support, you need a payment provider you can trust absolutely,” concludes Emily Tait, Senior Assistant Manager at Worldpay.

“We take time to understand our customers needs to ensure we offer the right proposition, and are delighted we played such a crucial role in this important appeal.”