

Wimbledon & IBM Herald The Role of AI to Maintain a Competitive Advantage in Sports Landscape

London, UK - 13 Jun 2019: The All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) and IBM today continued the pledge of their partnership to leverage disruptive innovation to elevate and differentiate the iconic traditional tennis tournament.

Announcing a series of innovations for The Championships 2019 across AI and Cloud, maximising the opportunities presented by IBM's core strategic capabilities, the 30-year-old partners maintained the importance of challenging the status quo through technology.

For 30 years, IBM has worked in partnership with the AELTC year-round and during The Championships to deliver everything from IT operations to fan facing digital properties, including the latest apps and the award-winning Wimbledon website. IBM helps Wimbledon use AI to make processes more efficient, to make experiences more insightful, and ensure The Championships runs safely and securely for its critical three-week period.

New for 2019: Enhanced AI-powered automated video highlights for Wimbledon fans. Not all highlights during a tennis match are equal for example, a highly passionate crowd favourite could generate more excitement than a more reserved yet equally skilled opponent. As a learning system, Watson has been taught to better recognise acoustics and understand inadvertent bias increasing the quality of the output. With sound analysis from Watson Acoustics, the system can now recognise when the ball has been struck allowing a tighter cropping of highlight clips saving vital time and maximising every second of rights footage. Using Watson Open Scale, the system can now recognise levels of noise and excitement levels of players allowing it to remove bias when searching for highlights from players with a particularly vocal following or those who are particularly animated on court.

New for 2019, IBM and Wimbledon have developed a progressive web app to provide a service for Wimbledon audiences in territories with lower bandwidth and less developed mobile hardware. Acknowledging that over 900 million fans in India for example, express an interest in Wimbledon, the new progressive web app is designed to provide a lightweight experience to ensure that fans in those territories can make sure they don't miss out on the latest scores and results.

IBM works with the AELTC to deliver everything from design capability (via IBM iX), to building and integrating the latest systems and applications. IBM ensures the continuous availability and scalability of

Wimbledon's digital properties by securing Wimbledon to the core. For example, during the 2018 Championships IBM detected and blocked over 200 million suspicious security events. IBM has over 200 of its people dedicating their skills and expertise to helping Wimbledon in its pursuit of greatness; delivering award-winning solutions built on years of global sports, media and industry expertise.

“For 30 years we have been working with Wimbledon to introduce new technologies that enhance fan experience. For more than a century, IBM has responsibly ushered into the world revolutionary technologies, building enterprise solutions that are trusted as part of our DNA, and we are dedicated to delivering AI systems that are built responsibly. It seems fitting that to mark the 30th year of our partnership, one of the new innovations for The Championships, Wimbledon 2019 will be eliminating bias in creation of the video highlights package.” Sam Seddon IBM Wimbledon Client Executive.

“For 30 years, IBM’s technology innovations have been at the heart of our efforts to continuing our journey towards a great digital experience that ensures we connect with our fans globally wherever they may be watching and from whatever device that may be. Our partnership with IBM is critical to us in helping us to disrupt the traditional perceptions of Wimbledon through innovative, world class uses of technology, in particular, enabling us to place content with fans where they want to consume it and acknowledge the ever-increasing focus on video and new content formats.” Alexandra Willis, Head of Communications, Content and Digital, AELTC.

Notes to Editors:

To find out more about what Wimbledon, IBM and other sporting organisations believe to be the five strategic tenets for success in the sports industry visit <https://www.ibm.com/blogs/think/2019/06/the-next-competitive-edge-in-sport/>

Tennis in an [English Garden Video](#) showing the hidden technology behind The Championships, Wimbledon.

Contact(s) information

Emma Bennett

IBM External Communications +44 (0)7976 839109 Emma.Bennett@uk.ibm.com
