

## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

# HEAD and BLUETRADE create IBM Watson-enabled Tennis Racquet Finder

HEAD produces and sells high-quality sports gear based on athletes' demands. To help customers find the perfect tennis racquet for their preferences, HEAD started a pilot project with BLUETRADE for their homepage: The new IBM Watson-enabled web tool "HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder" generates an individual recommendation of performance racquets, based for example on the player's age, gender, experience or playing style. Customers can easily identify the most suitable racquet by using the artificial intelligence-powered tool's interface and make more informed purchase decisions.

### Initial situation:

HEAD offers a broad selection of high-quality sports equipment for athletes of every competitive level. Their in-house research department analyzes the individual needs of athletes and develops custom-fit gear. The company wants to provide their customers with ideal equipment that perfectly meets their individual requirements. The perfect match is quite essential to the company's definition of high-quality service. HEAD knows the importance of the right equipment to an athlete's success. To let customers easily and effortlessly find the ideal tennis racquet for their age, strength or playing style on their homepage, HEAD started a pilot project with BLUETRADE.

### Our solution:

HEAD developed an algorithm that generates an individual recommendation of racquets for an athlete. In 6 weeks, BLUETRADE combined the algorithm with collected product data and helped creating a new IBM Watson-enabled web tool named "HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder". The foundation was created using performant programming environment IBM Bluemix and IBM Dash DB. By tapping into this database, IBM Watson Tradeoff Analytics API searches multiple product options for the top three recommended racquets. BLUETRADE added a learning function that lets the tool memorize the most favored selections of certain client groups.

### Value for the customer:

The new IBM Watson-enabled HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder lets customers identify the performance racquet matching their individual needs. That increases the quality of service provided by

HEAD and boosts the customer's trust. They have the chance to make well-founded purchase decisions based on suitability rather than just the price. The new tool supports HEAD's goal to always provide excellent service and perfectly fitting equipment to their athletes.



### ABOUT HEAD TENNIS

HEAD TENNIS, a part of HEAD BV, is a global provider and marketer of premium branded tennis apparel, footwear, balls and equipment for athletes of all competitive levels. Since its launch in the late 1960s, when HEAD founder Howard Head first introduced the aluminum tennis racquet, the division's key products have attained leading market positions based on sales and reputation. Many of today's top ATP and WTA players, including Novak Djokovic, Andy Murray, Richard Gasquet, Tomas Berdych, Marin Cilic, Maria Sharapova and Sloane Stephens are part of the HEAD Tennis family.

HEAD BV is a global provider and marketer of high-quality sports equipment. Be it winter sports, ball sports and water sports – their rich portfolio reaches from a simple tennis ball to a complete snowboarding set. They provide athletes of all competitive levels with their products, so HEAD has only one thing in mind: the perfect match for their customer. Especially for individual sports such as tennis, using the right racquet can boost a player's performance immensely. To help athletes find the ideal tennis racquet quickly, HEAD Tennis started a pilot project together with BLUETRADE for their homepage:



HEAD's research department developed an algorithm that generates an individual recommendation of performance racquets for an athlete. The new IBM Watson-enabled web tool "HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder" selects the top three suitable racquets based on parameters like the player's age, strength, playing style and personal preferences out of 30 to 60 optional racquets of the same price category. Customers can choose each characteristic over the artificial intelligence powered-interface. By finding the most suitable racquet for each individual customer, HEAD offers an extraordinary level of service. But that requires a much deeper and wholesome understanding of who your customers are and what they need.

Over the course of six weeks, BLUETRADE combined HEAD's algorithm with the product data in the new HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder that relies on IBM Watson via IBM Bluemix. IBM Bluemix offers a performant and quickly available programming environment for complex applications. With IBM Bluemix, the collected data can be processed quickly and made available for evaluation. The cloud service IBM DashDB delivers almost instant responses to collected data and transforms it into statistics that can quickly be acted upon. By using the Watson Tradeoff Analytics API, the Racquet Finder sorts out multiple product options to recommend the optimum racquets to the customer. This selection is ranked based on the racquets overall suitability, including characteristics such as weight or balance. The process imitates the personal consulting service of a well-trained shop assistant.

The main aspect for a brand's success is the quality of service given, steps taken for the customer's well-being, the interest in their lasting satisfaction. By conviction that an athlete's success should not be hindered by poorly chosen equipment, HEAD wants to provide their customers with equipment that matches their individual needs. With their new IBM Watson-enabled web tool "HEAD Tennis Racquet Finder" customers have the chance to make more informed purchase decisions. Customers will be able to trust the system with individual preferences and get specific recommendations for the optimum racquet. On top of that, the Racquet Finder's ability to learn will steadily increase accuracy and quality of its service. Due to the thorough effort the company made in providing them with ideal products, athletes trusting in HEAD will always be able to deliver their full potential.



BLUETRADE is an e-commerce specialist. Focusing on IBM Commerce BLUETRADE provides a clear concept: e-commerce with the brand leader! As a company with more than a decade professional experience BLUETRADE integrates brisk vim and vigor with profound expertise. We as BLUETRADE improve the digital (shopping) experience for the customers of our clients covering the entire supply chain: We offer strategic consultation, digital optimization and support with technical design, delivery and optimizations.

Established in Cologne in 2009, BLUETRADE is a member of TIMETOACT GROUP. For more information on BLUETRADE visit [www.bluetrade.de](http://www.bluetrade.de).



**Ihr Ansprechpartner:**

Joubin Rahimi  
Managing Partner  
Tel.: +49 221 973 43-0  
Fax: +49 221 973 43-20  
[joubin.rahimi@bluetrade.de](mailto:joubin.rahimi@bluetrade.de)



[www.bluetrade.de](http://www.bluetrade.de)