

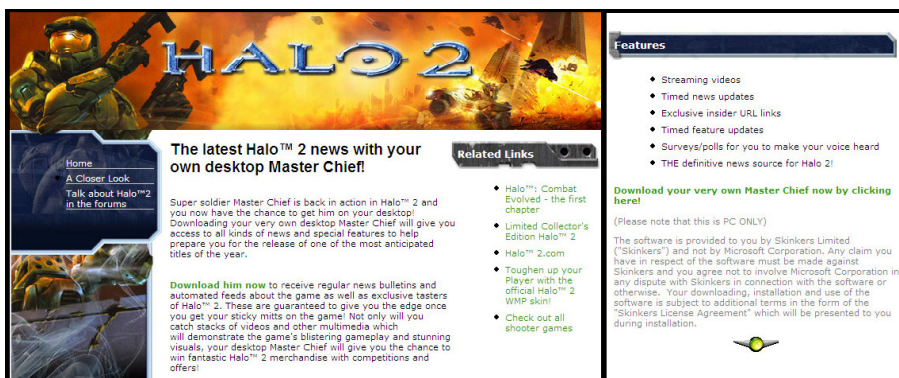


*“The most successful online campaign we have ever undertaken ... Skinkers delivered a very effective online media ROI.”*

*Robin Burrowes, Online, Microsoft Xbox – Home & Entertainment.*

Xbox is the video game system from Microsoft, for further information visit [www.xbox.com](http://www.xbox.com). The global launch of Halo 2 was seen as one of the biggest media launches in history. In the US alone pre-orders topped 1.5 million and first day sales were in excess of \$125 million. Halo 2 exceeded entertainment records generating more money on day one than any of the biggest movies in box office history.

**“We used Skinkers to add the WOW factor.”**



- Benefits**
- Over 35,000 downloads in just 10 weeks.
  - Website traffic increased by 32,000 visits.
  - Over 79% audience survey participation.
  - 15% CTR from Desktop Master Chief.
  - Helped to create an online gaming community.
  - “Software as a Service” gives the marketing department complete control of campaigns without the overhead of IT support and maintenance.

**The need**

Microsoft wanted an innovative communication channel that would act as the linchpin for their ten week online marketing campaign and help achieve the following objectives:

- Promote and raise awareness of Halo 2.
- Establish an authoritative channel for information about the game.
- Create an interest based community for both Halo 2 and Xbox.
- Drive pre-orders.
- Collect valuable marketing data from Halo 2 fans.
- Broaden the appeal of Halo 2 to the gaming community.

The ten week integrated campaign focused mainly on online channels, taking over a variety of website home pages. It also included large billboard advertising.

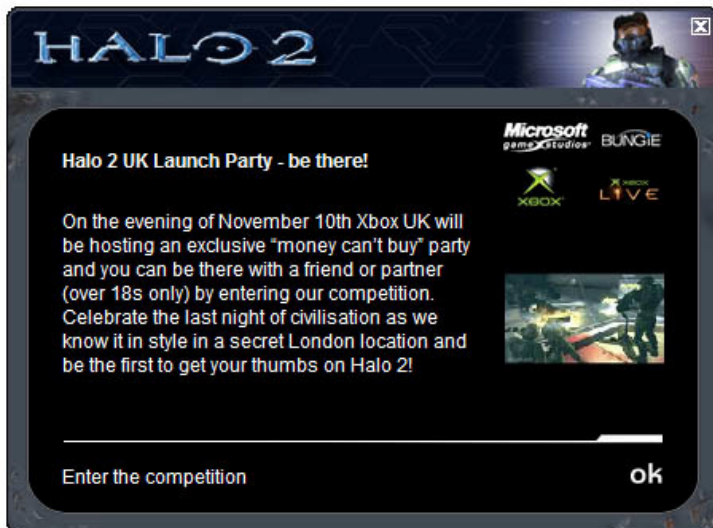
**The solution**

Skinkers provided Microsoft with a direct-to-desktop event notification and content delivery solution. Designed to deliver breaking news, competitions, examples of game play, video files and survey questions, **Desktop Master Chief** offered daily communication to the consumer climaxing with the release of Halo 2. Users downloaded a lightweight desktop application from a variety of websites. The Desktop Master Chief was actively promoted on xbox.com and MSN using a range of sources such as Newsletters, Games Radar and PR activity.



Skinkers delivered the technology through “Software as a Service”. This allowed the Microsoft marketing department to have control over the content and scheduling of the messages. The IT support and management for both Microsoft and its end users was handled by Skinkers on remote servers, reducing IT costs.

#### Example of a message sent through the Master Chief:



**“The Desktop Master Chief helped us to create a huge hype around the launch culminating in very high pre-orders of the game.”**

#### The results

Desktop Master Chief enabled Microsoft to communicate with thousands of users on a daily basis during the course of the campaign. The CTRs to websites were very high, showing that Desktop Master Chief increased web traffic by 32,000 additional visits and acted as a reminder to users to visit websites where they could pre-order copies of the game.

Desktop Master Chief also enabled Microsoft to survey fans. The results of these surveys provided new and highly valuable results and enabled Microsoft to profile their audience enhancing their gaming experience, in a highly cost effective way compared to other traditional surveying methods.

Clearly Desktop Master Chief has also provided great PR, promotional and profiling opportunities for Microsoft, and allowed them to interact with their consumers. CTRs to points of purchase showed that the campaign was a very effective means of encouraging users to purchase games online from Microsoft and their retail partners.

Skinkers advanced content delivery technology also enabled Microsoft to deliver large and exciting video to domestic users without worrying about slow download speeds. The ability to completely download large video files in the background while performing other tasks and then offer a seemingly instantaneous delivery means the user has very positive experience.

**“Skinkers provided us with an innovative communication channel that caught the undivided attention of our target audience.”**

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