

# AlertSite Speeds Up Online Ticket Sales

ARCLIGHT  
CINEMAS

## DEMAND PERFORMANCE

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### About ArcLight

Based in Southern California, ArcLight Cinemas builds and operates the type of theater "where movie lovers belong." The focal point of each theater is its unique, geodesic shape, designed to exceed THX certification and presentation standards. This means films are shown the way the filmmaker intended—every ArcLight patron has an unobstructed view of the screen from any seat in the auditorium.

Featuring blockbuster movies means night after night of sold-out showings at each ArcLight cinema. By enabling movie goers to buy tickets online for first-run shows, as well as for other performances, ArcLight can easily maintain a consistent amount of revenue, while experiencing smaller lines at the box office. Meanwhile, moviegoers have the convenience of knowing they have a reserved seat and are never panicked to get the perfect seat.

### The Problem

On several occasions ArcLight's Web site experienced intermittent slowdowns. The technical team at ArcLight was unable to pinpoint the source of the problem, its severity or how to fix it. Any type of reduced response time meant lost revenues. ArcLight needed to be sure that the site could handle the high volume of ticket sales and reserved seating for first-run movies, as well as the marketing of these movies.

Despite their new computer system, the ArcLight team knew they had to conduct Web load tests immediately. The entire system had to be stressed with real loads, not just functional tests. However, they had neither the staff resources nor the test or production hardware environment to conduct load tests.

The ArcLight team turned to Guidance Solutions, a 13-year-old Southern California systems integrator with vast experience in handling e-commerce applications. Because Guidance Solutions was familiar with this type of problem, they brought in AlertSite® to handle the Web load testing.

### The Solution

Under tight time frames, the Guidance Solutions team worked with ArcLight to prepare the test scripts. AlertSite minimized any impact to ArcLight's online customers by conducting the tests when the traffic volume was at its lowest. Jason Caldwell, AlertSite performance advisor said, "The first test maxed out much lower customer volumes than ArcLight expected. Together with ArcLight, we immediately rewrote the scripts, installed and adjusted load balancers, and performed a second test."

WELCOME TO ARCLIGHT, HOLLYWOOD  
Where movie lovers belong.

ARCLIGHT CINEMAS

NOW PLAYING COMING SOON ABOUT ARCLIGHT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTIONS & PARKING CONTACT US / HELP

Monday July 30, 2007

ON SALE NOW	IN THE SPOTLIGHT	PURCHASE GIFT CERTIFICATES
<p><b>ON SALE NOW</b></p> <p>ARCTIC TALE (G) HAIRSPRAY (PG) I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY (PG13) NO RESERVATIONS (PG) RESCUE DAWN (PG13) SICKO (PG13) SUNSHINE (R) TALK TO ME (R) THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM (PG13) THE SIMPSONS MOVIE (PG13) TRANSFORMERS (PG13)</p> <p>Special Programming 21+ SCREENINGS AFI AT ARCLIGHT AFI'S 100 YEARS... SERIES</p> <p>Current Exhibits Promotions &amp; Events Café Bar Menu</p>	<p><b>IN THE SPOTLIGHT</b></p> <p>Exclusive Engagement at ArcLight Hollywood Now Playing! <b>ARCTIC TALE (G)</b> The documentary from National Geographic follows a walrus and a polar bear through their life cycles amid an ever-vanishing arctic world. Narrated by Queen Latifah.</p> <p>Now Playing! <b>THE SIMPSONS MOVIE (PG-13)</b> This animated comedy is based on the long running TV series, "The Simpsons." Dan Castellaneta, Julie Kavner, Nancy Cartwright, Yeardley Smith, Hank Azaria, Harry Shearer.</p> <p>ArcLight's Unique "21+" Screenings Enjoy your martini, beer or other favorite libation while watching your movie. Admission restricted to those age 21 and over, ID required. <a href="#">More info...</a> <b>I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY (21 Plus)</b> Fri.-Sun. (7/27-7/29) and Thurs. (8/2)</p>	<p><b>ON SALE SOON</b></p> <p>BECOMING JANE (PG) EL CANTANTE (R) ROCKET SCIENCE (R) STARDUST (PG13) DEATH AT A FUNERAL (R) THE 11TH HOUR (PG) THE INVASION (PG13)</p>

AFI's "100 Years...100 Stars"  
Every Wednesday Night at 8:00pm  
Part of AFI's continuing celebration of 100 years of American movies.  
**IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (NR)** (1934)  
Wednesday, August 1, 8pm  
Stars Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert.  
**THE LONGEST DAY (G)**  
Wednesday, August 8, 8pm

The second test revealed the system would fail long before it reached customer peaks. “We had to look at root causes of limited network bandwidth in addition to determining if the system could handle a specific customer load,” added Caldwell. AlertSite® prepped two load-test servers and Guidance Solutions installed them behind the ArcLight firewall. With this extra level of effort, ArcLight’s systems could break down the relative impact of the network, hardware, software and configuration on the system failure under load.

“Guidance recommended changes to the .NET configuration and completed some fine tuning to the database. During the next test the results improved. However, the reports for the production system showed Web errors. We explained to ArcLight that they needed to make improvements to the network,” said David Hatcher, Guidance Solutions Director and Senior Project Manager.

The first AlertSite report showed a diagram of ArcLight’s complex Web infrastructure which consists of disparate servers for member-loyalty data and availability of movies and seating—the systems have numerous network hops and moving parts.

AlertSite’s major report, the Performance Profile™ Report, showed ArcLight’s end-to-end process and individual page response times over load and bandwidth utilization. The report represented this information in both written and graphical form. The report measured four key metrics: application scalability, system capacity (maximum load), bandwidth utilization and performance bottlenecks. ArcLight was able to access its AlertSite reports from anywhere via a Web browser.

## Conclusion

“After evaluating and testing ArcLight’s system, Guidance, using AlertSite reports, was able to identify the problems and make recommendations to fix them. Our reports found glitches in their server, database processing and shopping cart, the Java applet that displays the seating chart and the credit card processing contributed to the bottleneck,” said Caldwell.

ArcLight’s web load test experience illustrates the importance of conducting load and stress tests prior to major business events. A good best practice includes doing the tests regularly before a new business or a new system is rolled out to identify any disruptive influences.

ArcLight also learned that by-the-book methodologies will not work when testing disparate systems under tight timeframes. “AlertSite provided the flexibility and the commitment needed to solve ArcLight’s challenging requirements, including its lack of test machines, the need to test at odd hours, the need to compensate for limited bandwidth and the need to revise test plans and scripts,” Caldwell concluded.

“Ultimately, ArcLight took recommendations from Guidance and AlertSite and added indexes to streamline the reports on their server. They fine tuned their shopping cart. The company is now able to handle larger customer volumes and reports an increase in sales as a direct result of working with AlertSite,” said Caldwell.



DEMAND  
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*AlertSite® is a leading provider of Web performance measurement, systems monitoring and security vulnerability scanning products that ensure a customer’s critical Web-based services are always available and running at peak performance. AlertSite services benefit all types and sizes of businesses and organizations.*

 AlertSite®

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877.302.5378  
www.alertsite.com