



**HELPING SKY BELIEVE IN AND DELIVER BETTER**

A case study

## ONCE UPON A TIME

With customers demanding more in terms of the latest entertainment news, rich media content and other interactive features, Sky recognised the need to replace its existing Showbiz, TV and Movies websites.

Sky's vision for the online channel was ambitious - to become the number one place on the web for celebrity gossip and showbiz news, to deliver an exciting interactive experience around what's on TV and to use digital media to fully complement on-air movie channels.

Sky had begun to work with an offshore development partner to build a generic content management platform but after 12 months, nothing had been delivered and senior management was becoming increasingly frustrated by slow progress and a lack of clarity over key issues.

**ENERGIZED WORK ARE TRUE  
SOFTWARE CRAFTSMEN WHO WILL  
ENSURE THAT YOU GET EVERYTHING  
YOU NEED AND NOTHING YOU DONT.**

**PRICING PRODUCT MANAGER**

## AND SO IT BEGAN

Sky asked Energized Work to help make its vision a reality. We understood Sky's aims and the frustrations they were experiencing with traditional ways of delivering enterprise projects.

Our first step was to introduce a very different way of working. We paired up key individuals within Sky with Energized Workers, creating a self-sufficient team that could get the job done. This marked a radical departure from the normal way of working on projects across functional departments as this new product stream structure acted more like a start-up company.

The product team was made up of around 60 people, including Sky's Editorial Director, editorial staff, and a technical team of developers, testers, system administrators, and user-experience designers. Co-locating individuals from the business with a dedicated technical team, we created a highly focused unit capable of making quick decisions and

rapid delivery. Able to continuously refine its output, it focused exclusively on one product with a single-minded determination to deliver features that would excite users and consequently generate growth and profitability.

To build momentum, the team concentrated on delivering high-value releases every week. Everything from software development and hardware procurement to environment management and hosting to deployment, system optimization and operational support was undertaken within the product stream.

Working this way helped to reveal further dependencies and led to us removing constraints in a planned way. We bypassed existing operational challenges by setting up our own on-site server room during the first 6 weeks before procuring a production environment hosted in a remote data centre.

**ENERGIZED WORK WERE EXTREMELY  
EFFECTIVE AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
THEY MADE WERE RIGOROUS,  
INNOVATIVE AND LEADING EDGE.**

**INNOVATION DIRECTOR, BSKYB**

## THE STORY CONTINUED

We suggested an ambitious goal to Sky – to get a minimum but fully functioning version of the new Sky Living site live within 10 weeks. Once this was agreed, we immediately began delivering fully tested, usable features. Sky had an alpha version of the site live in 9 weeks, beating our deadline by a week.

A beta version was live after a further 9 weeks of iterative development, running in tandem with the old site. The new Sky Living site was launched after just 21 weeks.

This was no flash in the pan. Our success at delivering high-quality, technically demanding solutions within tight timeframes was repeated as we built and launched Sky's new TV and Movies sites within an additional 7 and 14 weeks respectively.

## THE HAPPY ENDING

The new Sky Living site quickly rose to the number one slot in Google searches for 'showbiz'. On average across the Entertainment suite, unique visits jumped by 190%, visitors rose by 150%, while page impressions increased by 400%. Online surveys showed a marked increase in user 'satisfaction'. The increased numbers of visitors particularly liked the photo galleries and enjoyed the browsing experience so much that they spent up to 28% longer on the sites.

Internally, Sky's editorial team were delighted with the new publishing system that enabled them to deliver richer content with a more engaging user experience with less effort. Across the suite of websites, new features could be released every week rather than every 6 months. What's more, releases could be done in less than an hour without any downtime.

The results were so encouraging that Sky has adopted Energized Work's approach in other projects. Sky is still building on this platform over 3 years later.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Meeting the challenge

Delivering an exciting user experience while streamlining operations and overcoming complex technical challenges.

### Introducing product streams

Taking a product-oriented, user-centred approach that avoided the inherent waste in project thinking and an organisation arranged in functional silos.

### Getting results

Working version of Sky Living site released within just 9 weeks. New site has significantly increased audience numbers while the internal editorial teams are delighted with the new, more efficient publishing system.

### Introducing long-term change

Energized Work has transformed Sky's thinking and approach to enterprise-scale software with our approach being copied and rolled out across the company.

## About Energized Work

Energized Work is a creative technology and product innovation lab making remarkable things out of the internet.

We help clients like British Gas, Cisco and Sky to turn ideas into disruptive business models, scalable technology platforms and uplifting user experiences that have a big impact.



[energizedwork.com](https://energizedwork.com)



+44 (0)56 03647481



[thelab@energizedwork.com](mailto:thelab@energizedwork.com)