

# Improved Performance and Availability Helps Leading Software Provider Achieve Rapid, Large-Scale Growth



## The Situation

Started in 1996 to provide online marketing and e-business software for the heavy equipment industry, Point2 Technologies—based in Saskatoon, Canada—quickly became a market leader. It built upon that success to expand into the real estate industry in 2003. Two of its solutions—Point2 Agent and Point2 Homes—offer a unique way to market homes over the Internet.

## The Challenge

Since 2003, Point2 Agent and Point2 Homes have realized tremendous growth, and now serve almost 70,000 real estate professionals in over 55 countries. “Our challenge is providing Internet-based software solutions on a global scale, to a customer base that is constantly growing. Offering any Web-centric solution is a challenge from an infrastructure and systems perspective. While Internet infrastructure in North America is robust, we discovered that members in Asia and Europe were quite likely to experience performance and availability issues, because these two regions are relatively poorly connected. Sluggishness and intermittent breaks in connectivity were common problems,” says Eron Wright, Point2’s Chief Architect.

## The Goal

Point2’s website and online marketing software platform, Point2 Agent, and the company’s real estate marketplace, www.Point2Homes.com, needed to meet four key requirements to support the brand and the company’s objectives:

- **Increased and Consistent 24/7 Site Performance for All Global Markets** to sustain and enhance customer experiences worldwide
- **Enhanced Reliability and Availability** of the Point2 Agent and Point2 Homes sites to support the core mission of being a trusted partner to real estate brokers and agents
- **Cost-Effective Global Scalability** without the need for infrastructure buildout
- **Support for Advanced Technologies** to enable the delivery of cutting-edge solutions to customers anywhere

## Why Akamai

### Choosing a Proven Solution

Point2’s decision to implement the Akamai solution was a pre-emptive one. “It’s one thing to grow until the point of pain and figure out how to solve the problem—it’s another to invest ahead of time to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support anticipated growth. We quickly realized that the Akamai network provided the online business solution we needed. As Akamai has proven the value of its technology not only to us but also to so many other premiere online businesses, we needed to be in on it,” explains Wright. “We knew that the solution could support both our current needs and our future vision.”

### Enhanced Worldwide Customer Experience

With growth straining its systems, Point2 needed to ensure that it could deliver the consistency customers expect. “We tested the Akamai solution and saw we’d have a significantly improved offering if we offloaded our infrastructure pressure to the Akamai network. I can now transfer software and infrastructure that would otherwise be my responsibility, to Akamai’s network of “edge” servers.

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*“The impact of the Akamai solution runs deeper than simply minimizing the stress on Point2’s origin infrastructure—it has infused our development culture. We want our developers to internalize that this is the era of ‘edge computing’ and that Akamai represents the future of online business.”*

—Eron Wright, Chief Architect, Point2 Technologies



## COMPANY

Point2 Technologies Inc.  
Saskatoon, Canada  
[www.point2.com](http://www.point2.com)  
[www.point2agent.com](http://www.point2agent.com)  
[www.point2homes.com](http://www.point2homes.com)

## INDUSTRY

Technology

## SOLUTION

Akamai EdgeSuite®  
Secure Content Delivery  
Content Targeting  
Dynamic Content Assembly  
NetStorage

## KEY IMPACTS

- Supports 150% increase in site traffic without expanding infrastructure
- Minimizes infrastructure burden and related expenses
- Ensures consistent user experience in all global markets
- Provides confidence in sites that support strategic growth objectives
- Delivers advanced technologies that differentiate the company from the competition

*“Our system is more efficient and scalable, and our customers benefit from greater site performance.”*

—Eron Wright, Chief Architect,  
Point2 Technologies

The screenshot shows the Point2 website interface. It features a navigation bar with the Point2 logo and several main sections: TECHNOLOGIES, REAL ESTATE, HEAVY EQUIPMENT, and USERIDIRON. Each section includes a brief description and a list of services or products. For example, the REAL ESTATE section lists Point2 Agent and Point2 Homes, while the HEAVY EQUIPMENT section lists various types of equipment like Agriculture - Tractor, Backhoes, etc.

## Why Akamai *(continued)*

Our system is more efficient and scalable, and our customers benefit from greater site performance," says Wright.

In working with Akamai, the company found a partner to provide much more than a caching solution. "Other caching solutions underperform when any single location has insufficient traffic to stock a cache. Akamai's hosted computing services allow us to move applications to the "edge" and therefore ensure a great customer experience regardless of cache performance and localization of content," emphasized Wright.

### Availability and Reliability from a Trusted Partner

According to Wright, "In providing Web sites for real estate professionals, we're taking others' businesses into our hands. In fact, we feel strongly that trust is central to the success of our business—we need to ensure that these sites are available and perform well. Akamai's services are uniquely suited to solving these problems and we can depend on Akamai as a partner to deliver the availability and reliability our customers demand, anywhere around the world."

### Affordable Scalability

Having Akamai's services in place has allowed Point2 to continue to grow at a phenomenal rate. Prior to implementing the Akamai solution, millions of unique monthly visitors logged

on to Point2's real estate sites. Since going live with Akamai, the company has been able to effectively accommodate a 150% increase in traffic to its sites, and expects to maintain reliable, consistent services as more traffic is generated.

Says Wright, "Akamai provides a solution that enables us to drive as much traffic as we want to our sites, satisfying not only customer demands but also our own strategic objectives. In addition, we have found the Akamai solution to be very affordable—we don't regard it as an additional cost but rather as a source of savings."

### Cutting-edge Capabilities

One of Point2's strategic goals is to provide cutting-edge solutions to the real estate industry worldwide. The company needed a partner that was able to deliver advanced, reliable technologies to a global audience.

"Akamai's content targeting feature enables us to create a single global Web site that feels local and relevant to the person visiting it. For instance, we have integrated both Google Maps and Google Earth into the Point2 Homes site. A site visitor can click on an icon and view real estate properties for his or her city, streamed to Google Earth via Akamai," explains Wright.

As Point2 has added advanced site features—such as Google Earth and RSS—the demands on its infrastructure have grown considerably.

But by adding these features to applications and sites on the edge of the Akamai network, instead of on their own infrastructure, the burden is minimized.

"The impact of the Akamai solution runs deeper than simply minimizing the stress on Point2's origin infrastructure—it has infused our development culture. We want our developers to internalize that this is the era of 'edge computing' and that Akamai represents the future of online business," explains Wright.

### Staying at the Forefront of Technology

Going forward, Point2 intends to combine Akamai's content targeting capabilities with satellite images, other maps, its database of real estate data, and the insight of its neighborhood experts. "We'll use content targeting to choose a neighborhood expert relevant to the site visitor's location, enabling a potential home buyer to see additional photos of a neighborhood and learn interesting facts such as who lived in a certain home," explains Wright.

"Realtors® are among the first to take advantage of new technologies and recognize the Internet as a great platform for business. We are in lockstep with them and are committed to staying at the forefront of technology—with Akamai, we can easily scale our capabilities into the future," concludes Wright.

## About Point2 Technologies

Point2 Technologies develops and markets online marketing and e-business software for the real estate and heavy equipment industries.

Point2 Agent, the industry's leading Web site and online marketing platform for real estate professionals, has a subscriber base of over 70,000 members in more than 55 countries. Point2 also owns and operates [www.Point2Homes.com](http://www.Point2Homes.com), the world's first unified real estate search Web site fully controlled by Realtors®.

In heavy equipment, Point2 Technologies provides critical e-business software solutions and support to national and international dealers and manufacturers, including Caterpillar Inc. (NYSE: CAT). Point2 technology is also deployed by Caterpillar under license to power its global e-business system, CATUsed.

Point2 also owns and operates [www.UsedIron.com](http://www.UsedIron.com), one the world's largest online heavy equipment exchanges. The Exchange supports over 300 equipment dealers worldwide. Recipient of the No.1 e-business designation in Canada by Bain & Company and The Globe and Mail, and named one of the top 200 B2B companies in the world by Forbes Magazine, Point2 Technologies was founded in 1996 and employs a staff of 100 at its headquarters in Saskatoon, SK and its Vancouver, BC offices. More information can be obtained at [www.point2.com](http://www.point2.com).

## About Akamai

Akamai is the leading global service for distributing online content and business processes. More than 1,700 organizations have formed trusted relationships with Akamai, improving revenue and reducing costs by maximizing their online business performance. Leveraging the Akamai EdgePlatform, these organizations gain business advantage today, while building a foundation for the emerging Web solutions of tomorrow. Akamai is "The Trusted Choice for Online Business." For more information, visit [www.akamai.com](http://www.akamai.com).



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