



Telegraph Media Group improves visitor engagement and increases time on website with the Google Search Appliance.

telegraphmediagroup

At a Glance

What they wanted to do:

- Enhance the experience of *Telegraph.co.uk* readers by improving the search function.

What they did:

- Implemented the Google Search Appliance to improve the quality of search and the related links appearing alongside news articles.

What they accomplished:

- Increased page usage on the website and generated 40,000 page views per day through more accurate search results.
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Business

Telegraph Media Group (TMG) is a leading newspaper publisher based in the United Kingdom. It publishes *Telegraph.co.uk*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Telegraph* and its weekly subscription newspaper for the overseas audience, *The Telegraph*. Founded in 1855, *The Daily Telegraph* is the UK's biggest selling quality newspaper with a daily circulation of 835,419 (ABC audited figures: June 2009). *The Daily Telegraph* was the first British national newspaper to put its content online in 1994 and *Telegraph.co.uk* was named UK Consumer Website of the Year in 2007 and 2009 by the Association of Online Publishers.

Challenge

Telegraph Media Group has always been a forward-looking organisation. In the mid-1990s it was the first national newspaper to establish a web presence, and more recently it made the move into cloud computing by implementing Google Apps Premier Edition across the entire organisation.

While *Telegraph.co.uk* is one of the UK's fastest growing newspaper websites, news publishing is now at its most competitive and one of the biggest challenges faced by media organisations is tackling the decline in advertising revenues. In order to maintain and build on visitor traffic to its website, TMG needed to offer the best customer search experience possible. This meant ensuring accurate search results and relevant related links.

For *Telegraph.co.uk*, the number of pages viewed per month on the site is a crucial factor in determining its advertising revenue. The more users rely on its search function to find everything they need, rather than just searching a topic and going to another website, the more time the average user will spend on the website.

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—Toby Wright, Head of Application and Product Development

"We have a very ambitious digital strategy and we want our readers to be able to get the most out of our vast online resources. This is only possible if they are easily accessible," says Toby Wright, Head of Applications and Development at TMG. "With our old product, we were happy with the way related links were presented alongside an article, but the quality of search results needed to improve and we had to address this to continue to attract and retain online readers."

More than just a news site, *Telegraph.co.uk* is used by its staff as a research tool for which search functionality is crucial. "The structure of our organisation is quite different to most and much of our activity focuses on publishing content that goes into the public domain," Toby continues. "That is why most of our content is on our website, rather than being stored internally on a file server. The website is therefore an important resource for our journalists as they research stories."

About the Google Search Appliance

The Google Search Appliance (GSA) is an integrated hardware and software search solution that extends Google's award-winning search technology to websites of all kinds, including corporate sites and intranets.

Organisations can use the Google Search Appliance to make data on servers, content management systems, databases and business applications instantly and securely available from a single familiar search box. More than 20,000 companies worldwide use Google Enterprise search solutions.

For more information visit:
www.google.co.uk/gsa

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Solution

A year ago, TMG's IT team started looking for a product that could dramatically improve the quality of its search. The search engine optimisation (SEO) team recommended the Google Search Appliance (GSA), as they were aware of its powerful search capabilities.

"The GSA was incredibly easy to set up and we had great support from Google during the implementation process," says Toby. "One thing that was important for us during set up was to get the search parameters right. We use the GSA's intelligent biasing features, such as date biasing, to tweak the balance between results that are most current and those that are most relevant. Being a news outlet, this is a really important aspect of our search capabilities. Alongside this, the ease of use, related links displayed, recognition of spelling mistakes and suggested synonyms are all great features which help us to enhance our users' search experience."

Results

Since the GSA's deployment, page usage generated via search has gone up considerably; an increase of 23% of the pages viewed each day on the site are now generated by search results.

The improvements the GSA has brought to *Telegraph.co.uk*'s search function have had a direct effect on the site's profitability. It has measurably increased the amount of time people spend on the site, and this has helped with the engagement process once visitors arrive.

"Everybody knows how to use a Google search bar and so users are on familiar ground when they visit our website," Wright says. "People also appreciate how the search function takes into account spelling mistakes and the way it relates to search queries. For example, if you type in soccer, there will be a line on top of the results page asking: 'Did you mean football?'"

"We have had some very positive feedback from our users since the GSA was deployed. This is unusual, as background technologies like search are normally only noticed when they are not working."

The GSA is set up to search a diverse range of content so TMG is using it across a number of its web services, including its blogging platform, and is planning to extend it into other areas. As Wright sees it: "We are looking at indexing videos at the moment and are considering rolling it out for internal use on our Intranet. We're also considering using it to give people the opportunity to see the "top 10" articles on a particular topic. We have a lot of search projects on the horizon and the GSA is a great, versatile tool to help us with these. It will play a huge part in fuelling our future development."

