

The Discovery Channel discovers the Google Search Appliance – and boosts search queries by 70%



At a Glance

What they wanted to do

- Improve search experience
- Minimize the need to maintain the search experience

What they did

- Index three data libraries (collections) into the GSA, so that a single search returns an integrated set of relevant results

What they accomplished

- Increased number of daily searches by 70%
- Reduced the amount of time needed to maintain the search solution

Business

Discovery Communications, Inc. (DCI) is a leading media and entertainment company. From the launch of Discovery Channel in the U.S. in 1985, DCI now has operations in 152 countries with 180 million total subscribers. DCI's 33 networks of distinctive programming represent 14 entertainment brands, including TLC, Animal Planet, Travel Channel, Discovery Health Channel, Discovery Kids, and a family of digital channels. Other DCI properties include Discovery.com and 165 Discovery Channel retail stores. DCI also distributes BBC America in the United States.

Challenge

Discovery hosts sites for each of its 14 channels featuring schedules and information for each series and program. These information-packed sites are comprised of some 60,000 files, which garner 120,000 search queries a day.

A previous search product was difficult for the Discovery web team to maintain because it required extensive resources in order to update relevancy algorithms when new content was added to the network. Even with significant optimization, the search results were not effective, and it was widely believed that Discovery users limited their page views as a result. This third-party solution also made it difficult to add new content in order to insure its freshness on the site.

Things got to a point where the Discovery web team needed to make a change in order to get simplified search maintenance, more useful search results, and better control of the site's content.

"More people are finding information they need, which means they stay longer to read, search further, and shop." —Mark Irwin, VP Operations

Solution

"The Google Search Appliance is easier to set up than your home PC," says IT Department Representative Patrick Gardella.

Adds Carl Lewin, Web Developer, "Deployment was straightforward – there was nothing to it." He says that the GSA easily incorporates three data libraries (collections) into one, so that a single search returns an integrated set of relevant results. For example, Discovery.com can now deliver results based on the user's path - Animal Planet viewers see Animal Planet results on top, in addition to TV program listings and Discovery Store product links.

Discovery also uses the GSA's KeyMatch feature to suggest "Editor's Picks," search results reflecting the most popular search queries. Lewin also appreciates the spellcheck feature. "No matter how someone spells 'hippopotamus,' we can recommend the correct spelling and appropriate links to information," he says.

Perhaps best of all, says Gardella, "the Google Search Appliance requires very little maintenance. It's so easy to use and manage, we sometimes can't believe it."

About Google Search Appliance

With the Google Search Appliance (GSA), the search experience shared by millions across the globe can be harnessed by your individual company with specific enterprise enhancements that make searching easier, intuitive, and customizable. Ready to index most enterprise content right “out of the box,” the GSA turns your company’s intranet or website search engine into a system that is as relevant and reliable as Google’s - with the same ease of use.

For more information visit:

www.google.com/enterprise/search

Benefits

Not only have pageviews increased, says Mark Irwin, VP Operations, but the number of daily searches has grown 70 percent based on the value of searching with Google. “More people are finding information they need, which means they stay longer to read, search further, and shop.”

“Users are familiar with how to use Google,” says Gardella. Adding the Google logo to the bottom of our pages “gives people more confidence in search results,” says Lewin.

“We’ve been very happy with Google,” says Irwin. “It’s reliable, has lived up to its promise, and works very well in our environment.”

