



IBM web analytics helps improve user experience at Yellow Pages Group

The need

Yellow Pages Group was suffering due to limited visibility into digital usage, challenges in demonstrating tangible value to advertisers, web analytics data that was only available to a few analysts, and cumbersome and time-consuming analytics processes that hindered productivity.

The solution

With IBM web analytics, Yellow Pages Group gained a unified web analytics solution for its family of sites. The new solution allowed for easy tracking and measurement of user activity and search terms.

The benefit

The solution contributed to an 8.1 percent increase in total visits and a ten percent increase in clickthrough, while also broadening web analytics access from two analysts to 200 marketers.

Yellow Pages Group, Canada's leading Internet company, chose IBM as its web analytics provider. Dedicated to helping small and midsize businesses improve their online presence, Yellow Pages Group's properties, including [YellowPages.ca](#), [Canada411.ca](#) and [RedFlagDeals.com](#), reach over nine million unique visitors monthly. [YellowPages.ca](#) is Yellow Pages Group's flagship site, reaching 8.7 million unique visitors.

In the context of the company's digital transformation, improving user experience by constantly tracking and understanding search activity is critical to its success.

Since Yellow Pages Group implemented IBM web analytics in 2010, the company has been able to optimize the structure, content and search results of its sites, and deliver those search results quickly and precisely. The outcome is an enhanced user experience, increased user satisfaction and stronger consumer engagement with advertisers. Just as importantly, web analytics provides the company's sales and marketing teams with useful information on usage and market penetration for their clients, giving them tangible data to demonstrate advertising effectiveness. The IBM solution has also helped Yellow Pages Group quickly ramp up its support for mobile devices, which skyrocketed to account for 30 percent of all Yellow Pages business searches in 2011.

Optimizing site searches for 8.7 million users in 2011

Thirty-six percent of all Internet users in Canada visit [YellowPages.ca](#) each month. By providing key insights, IBM web analytics supports the increase of metrics such as unique visitors, up 5.8 percent year over year, and total visits, up 8.1 percent. With increased traffic, searches have risen to more than 17 million per month.



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— Francois Salvert
Senior Web Analyst
Yellow Pages Canada

User satisfaction as recorded in surveys has increased 44 percent in a year (from 2010 to 2011), while click-through rate to merchant pages grew to 19.3 percent, up nearly four points. “The more clicks we have for each merchant page displayed, the more value we return for our advertisers,” said Francois Salvert, Yellow Pages Group’s senior web analyst. “By monitoring usability through web analytics and optimizing content, we’ve been able to grow this key metric.”

With deeper insights into search terms and user activity across three main sets of pages—the home page, search results pages and merchant listings reached after clickthrough—Yellow Pages Group has been able to decrease the amount of time users spend on the site by limiting the number of clicks and browsing required to access the needed information, positioning YellowPages.ca as an efficient tool for smart local shopping.

With greater visibility into user behavior, Yellow Pages Group has been able to develop better products for its advertisers. For instance, users looking to buy a recreational vehicle are willing to travel farther from their local area than users shopping for a restaurant. By analyzing the different searches, Yellow Pages Group is able to offer different placements to its advertisers to maximize their ROI. The company is also fine-tuning headings and directories on its sites, improving the experience for both users and advertisers.

The company has cut the number of no-result searches in half and identified other opportunities for improvement, such as including a number of results for public service and governmental agencies. These unpaid listings were expanded, improving customer satisfaction and prompting return visits.

Delivering quantified data to support sales and marketing

With the IBM solution, Yellow Pages Group has increased data access from two web analysts to about 200 marketing and sales support personnel, allowing them to easily track and query data themselves. This output enables them to identify additional advertising opportunities, support pricing decisions and increase lead generation.

“It’s a huge benefit to make web analytics data easily available across the business to support sales, marketing and site optimization,” Salvert said. “Using IBM web analytics makes the marketing team more aware of performance and metrics they can act on quickly, rather than having the bottleneck of asking a web analyst to run a query for them.” As a result, web analysts can focus on developing insights, recommendations and innovative capabilities, instead of just producing data-heavy Excel spreadsheets.

Solution Components:

Software

- IBM web analytics

Meeting the demands of a 300 percent surge in mobile usage

Among those innovations is Yellow Pages Group's focus on mobile usage, which has surged 300 percent in 2011 to reach 30 percent of all searches. The company has recorded more than 2.5 million downloads of its mobile apps for iPhone, BlackBerry, Android and Windows 7 devices. Using IBM web analytics, analysts and marketers can track usage by device type and operating system, searches and times of peak usage to optimize usability for small screen devices, determine what mobile users want and generate the data that is vital to mobile sales and marketing.

"With our mobile apps, we're seeing usage pick up after 5 p.m. when people are on the go, looking for a restaurant or other things to do. That is a huge value for our business since, traditionally, we had most of our traffic during weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.," Salvert said. "We can use that information to tell our advertisers, 'Make sure you advertise your business on the first results page because we've got X million searches, including mobile, in your category.'"

With IBM web analytics successfully deployed on its main [YellowPages.ca](#) and [Canada411.ca](#) websites, Yellow Pages Group is broadening its use of the solution across subsidiary sites such as [RedFlagDeals.com](#), [Restaurantica.com](#) and even on its company intranet. Once complete, IBM web analytics will enable the company to track user behavior across all of its web properties and gain additional insights. For instance, it will be able to identify the same user searching for a restaurant on [YellowPages.ca](#) before that user moves on to [Restaurantica.com](#), helping the company improve conversion.

Ultimately, improved web analytics allows for constant adjustments that translate to a superior website experience that users remember and will be more likely to repeat the next time they need information. "Twice a year, we run a user satisfaction survey and we're seeing our scores increase," Salvert said. "That's because we're transforming users into more satisfied customers, which in turn transforms advertisers into more satisfied clients."

For more information

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