



IMPROVED USER EXPERIENCE INCREASES ADVERTISING INVENTORY

CUSTOMER

CarPoint (carpoint.com.au) is a leading online automotive directory in Australia with hundreds of thousands of used and new car listings, reviews, and valuations. CarPoint is owned by carsales.com.au Ltd, Australia's number one automotive Web site and a division of Publishing and Broadcasting Limited, one of Australia's largest diversified media and entertainment groups.

CHALLENGE

CarPoint sought to create a differentiated user experience by improving the information access functionality, driving users deeper into the Web site and increasing the amount of valuable advertising real estate and revenues.

SOLUTION

Endeca for Directories, including Content Spotlighting, reporting, and incremental updates. Bridges five data sources: new and used car ads and listings, car valuations, car reviews, new car specifications, and car dealer listings.

KEY BENEFITS

- 20% increase in page views
- 15% increase in average session duration
- Increase in successful searches
- Increase in revenue with additional advertising inventory
- 33% decrease in search response time

CarPoint, a leading online automotive directory in Australia, was not satisfied with its Web site performance and nor were its customers. The company was in the process of building contextual advertisement functionality internally when Endeca's Content Spotlighting capability caught its eye. CarPoint also realized that Endeca's Guided Summarization™ experience could dramatically improve the usability of the site, promising improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. Abandoning internal development efforts, CarPoint implemented Endeca and realized unprecedented results.

Restricted revenue, unsatisfied customers

CarPoint regularly sold out advertising inventory on its most popular pages and advertising revenue dragged on site pages with less traffic. Advertisers didn't have a creative and effective way to target qualified leads. The company experienced disappointing performance and excessive load times during peak traffic periods. Customers noticed; feedback indicated users preferred competitors' sites.

Quick, supportive and efficient implementation

CarPoint implemented Endeca for Directories, which proved to be the most effective way for users to quickly sift through thousands of classified listings to find the car that they need. Endeca's unique Guided Summarization experience helps visitors search and navigate through listings by using key attributes of the listing itself, while giving publishers Content Spotlighting functionality to promote results and

advertisements in context. Endeca's Information Transformation Layer bridged CarPoint's five unique data sources — new and used car ads and listings, car evaluations, car reviews, new-car specifications, and car dealer listings.

For example, a user searching on "sedan" would find price information on more than 16,000 sedans (navigable by make, year, transmission type, etc.) and car reviews for over 550 cars (navigable by article type, car make, car type, author, publication, publication date, year published, and more). Advertisements for used sedans and new sedans also appear with similar options for refining and navigating through the results, along with specifications for new sedans.

"Endeca defines a point of differentiation for CarPoint over competitive products."
— CarPoint Team

“CarPoint had its biggest month ever in terms of visitors to the site in February, thanks in part to the great performance we are getting from the Endeca engine.”

— Wayne George, CIO, CarPoint

In switching to Endeca, CarPoint opted to keep the parametric search functionality to which users were accustomed, alongside Endeca's Guided Summarization experience. The parametric search was greatly enhanced by the capabilities of Endeca's MDEX Engine™ technology, which populates the drop-down menus typical to parametric search with valid options only. While customers continued to use the familiar parametric search option the first time they visited CarPoint, repeat users preferred Endeca and went directly to the one-box search option and the Guided Summarization experience to conduct their searches.

CarPoint found that Endeca excels at the infrastructure level as well. Endeca scaled on a small hardware footprint, offering improved efficiency. Database servers were phased out, replacing large servers with small ones. Endeca allowed CarPoint to scale over a number of smaller, commodity servers. Moreover, “The Endeca team helped define requirements for a very successful launch. “We were well-supported by Endeca throughout,” says Wayne George, CIO of Car-sales.com and former director of IT at CarPoint.

Thrilling results

CarPoint is thrilled with the results. Business managers have seen a significant return on their investment through increased revenue, and IT savings continue to mount. Revenue has improved as site

activity increases drive additional advertising inventory for CarPoint to sell. In addition, CarPoint now has the ability to create new advertising opportunities for advertisers through Endeca's Content Spotting functionality. Endeca's dynamic business rules give advertisers targeted inventory and better qualified leads as a result. Endeca's reporting application also provides CarPoint with new insight on how the classifieds site is used, opening up revenue streams as CarPoint markets site information to new and existing advertisers.

Users are also delighted with the new site. Increased numbers of unique visitors, page views per unique visitor, and length of each visit has helped CarPoint enhance page view levels. Site activity on applications powered by Endeca for Directories improves because the MDEX Engine reveals relationships between CarPoint data that encourages customer exploration and discovery.

Feedback from customers was overwhelmingly positive and CarPoint has been lauded as the best online automotive directory in Australia. With a 33% decrease in search response time, a 15% increase in average session duration, and successful searches on the rise, the customer compliments were well-deserved.

“With Endeca we now offer a user experience unmatched by our competitors — customer feedback indi-

cates that our visitors love the new features,” said CIO Wayne George.

CarPoint now offers a superior user experience through improved search, navigation, and dynamic business rules that present relevant content to users. This top-shelf experience has led to increased revenue and improved customer satisfaction.

According to Wayne George, “Not only are people more easily finding desirable cars, they are also discovering new, favorable ways to compare options, read reviews, and understand valuations. This has contributed to a 20 percent increase in page views per session in one month — a significant increase in comparison to the historical growth of the CarPoint site.”

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