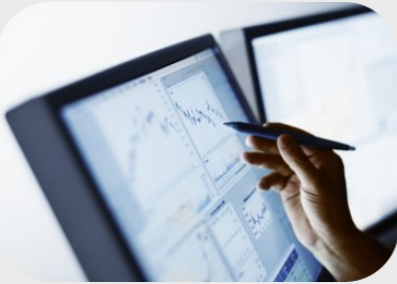


Volvo Cars Optimizes Web Analytics



Client: Volvo Car Corporation (VCC)

Key facts:

- Operates in 70+ markets
- 90 websites in 36 languages

Challenge: Provide VCC’s web team with the actionable intelligence needed to meet their website objectives and improve decision making.

Solution: Design and implement a KPI framework and scorecard that integrates with Google Analytics.

Results: Highly actionable reporting that allows the web team to:

- Better target their online buying group
- Optimize the user experience to improve conversions
- Use conversion data to help forecast sales

Volvo Car Corporation is one of the premier automotive brands and is highly regarded for quality and safety worldwide. Their online presence is extensive and has become integral to the company’s global operations. Volvo Cars’ website platform comprises 90 different sites in 36 languages spanning 70 geographical markets.

All of the company’s websites are centrally managed by the Interactive Marketing Department under the direction of Sofia Heddson Fransén, Interactive Marketing Development Manager. Sofia runs a lean team and relies on Melbourne IT DBS to provide specialized expertise for online brand management.

Since 2005, Melbourne IT’s Web Traffic Services team has been helping Volvo Cars to enhance its web performance with a robust Search Engine Optimization (SEO) initiative. The on-going project has resulted in improved search engine rankings in numerous key markets and is continuing to increase qualified traffic to their sites. Following this success the team has also enabled Volvo Cars to better measure overall website performance and capture the right information to increase visitor conversion rates and more effectively link website performance to sales.

By designing and implementing a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Framework for Volvo Cars, Melbourne IT was able to provide the web team with the actionable intelligence they needed.

Too much data, not enough insight

With such an extensive global web presence, effectively measuring website performance was a complex issue involving multiple stakeholders with varying informational needs at the brand, product and market level. While the Volvo Cars web team had access to a vast amount of web traffic data via Google Analytics, the reports were of limited use for their unique business needs and website objectives. It was a case of ample data but a lack of actionable intelligence. This is where Melbourne IT was able to provide the insight to enable Sofia’s team to make better decisions utilizing customer and website intelligence.

“Previously, it had been all about visits,” explained Sofia. “But visits are really just one piece of the picture. Consequently, it was difficult to get top management to relate to the reports and to understand how the data ultimately impacted the business.”

The team decided that they needed to completely revisit the way they measured their website in order to provide meaningful information to their stakeholders and also make smarter decisions around site optimization. They engaged Melbourne IT to develop the parameters and ultimately take over the management of their website reporting.

“**We’ve become much more data-driven. We now have the metrics we need and, most importantly, we can act upon them.**”

Sofia Heddson Fransén,
Interactive Marketing Development
Manager,
Volvo Cars Corporation

“For us the challenge was having the right metrics, having top management understand them and being able to act upon them on an ongoing basis,” said Sofia. “To make it effective, we knew we had to keep it to a small number of metrics in order to avoid data overload.”

The Volvo Cars website incorporates a series of banner messages. The banners direct users towards specific content designed to engage them in a process whereby they configure their ideal car and ultimately book a test drive or contact a local dealer for pricing and availability. The banner messages vary across regions, brands and products to appeal to specific market segments. The web team needed a way to easily evaluate and compare banner performance in order to continually optimize the site’s effectiveness at converting visitors.

Identifying the right metrics

To kick off the project, Melbourne IT conducted an in-depth analysis of the current site and user behaviour to help Volvo Cars understand what was working well and what areas to focus on. This was followed up with an interactive workshop focused on defining the Key Performance Indicators needed by Sofia’s group as well as the other organizational stakeholders such as sales, IT and the CRM team.

Key questions that the group needed to address were:

- Which are most important end goals in the user experience and how successful is the site at converting users (goal conversion rates).
- Which banners/messages are most effective in driving website users to take certain steps and reach the identified goals (banner performance).
- What are the exit rates/bounce rates of specific sections, particularly the Car Configurator (goal conversion and drop-out rates).
- Which search terms and traffic sources are the most valuable in terms of both driving and converting visitors.
- Which datapoints would be most important for broader business planning.

“ Our stakeholders now have a solid understanding of other key metrics besides just website traffic. In fact our visitor conversion data, particularly for the Car Configurator, is now seen as an important sales indicator within the organization. ”

After several iterations, the team identified approximately 30 key metrics to drive future reporting needs. These were broken down and mapped to individual stakeholder groups so corresponding scorecards could be then developed for each group.

Once the objectives and KPIs were agreed upon, the Melbourne IT team got to work on making the vision a reality. An Application Programming Interface (API) was set up to map data from multiple profiles within Google Analytics into a custom database from which the appropriate scorecards could be generated. Once tested and refined, Melbourne IT was then able to provide scorecards on a monthly basis to the various Volvo Cars’ stakeholders and also take over the day-to-day management of their Google Analytics account.

Data-driven decisions

A key component of the site is the Car Configurator that allows users to design their ideal car from a wide range of features and style options. The Car Configurator has proven to be an important sales tool for Volvo Cars. Through the new scorecard reporting, the number of completed configurations was found to be a reliable correlation factor to overall model and feature forecasting. Consequently, the improvements provided greater understanding of the user experience through analysis.

With Melbourne IT’s assistance Volvo Cars’ 90 different sites now target the company’s ideal buying group and Sofia’s team is able to collect the detailed intelligence that allows the company to operate more efficiently and maximize their online potential.

“We’ve become much more data-driven. We now have the metrics we need and, most importantly, we can act upon them,” said Sofia. “And our stakeholders now have a solid understanding of other key metrics besides just website traffic. In fact our visitor conversion data, particularly for the Car Configurator, is now seen as an important sales indicator within the organization.”