

Leading provider of online travel services

The online leader in discount travel

Overview

The need

With its data sources dis-integrated, the online travel services provider's prior optimization approach of analyzing web logs and using in-house log parsers only helped with after-the-fact analysis. This failed to deliver the real-time insights needed to significantly improve customer conversion and drive deeper customer loyalty.

The solution

The online travel services provider turned to IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions because they provide the reporting capabilities of a web analytics solution coupled with the ability to drill-down into the qualitative insights of real customer experiences. The company can now make more effective site optimization decisions based on actual customer behavior.

The benefit

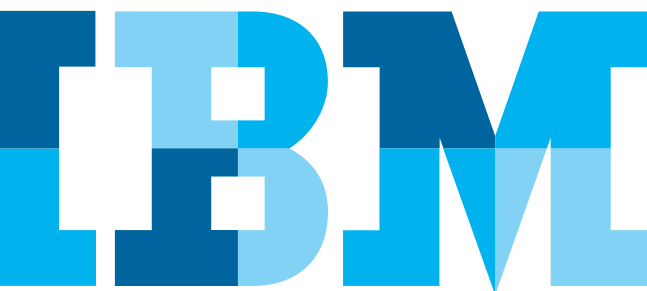
With the help of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the online travel services provider has experienced significant improvements in customer conversion and retention across the enterprise, and improved reporting and analysis for customer and robot traffic.

This online travel provider's group of companies provide online travel services in over 180 countries and territories in Europe, North America, South America, the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East and Africa.

With over 11 million unique visitors per month¹ this online travel services provider is using IBM Tealeaf Customer Experience Management (CEM) solutions to glean behavior-based insights from actual user activity in order to improve the online customer experience.

The battle for customer loyalty continues to be fought tooth and nail by online travel companies. As web consumers become increasingly cost-conscious and shrewdly willing to shop around, providing a better online customer experience has become a key differentiator for many travel companies. This online travel services provider recognized these consumer trends early on and developed an approach to provide an incrementally better website experience, keep customers coming back and drive online revenue.

Due to their high volume of traffic and robust product inventory which includes hundreds of thousands of flight itineraries, hotels, rental cars, vacation packages and cruises, the travel services provider's website is extremely complex to monitor and optimize. Despite previous investments in other website optimization tools, the online travel services provider deployed IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions because of their ability to provide real-time context for complex customer behavior on an enterprise-class scale.



Solution components

- IBM® Tealeaf® CX
 - IBM® Tealeaf® cxImpact
 - IBM® Tealeaf® cxView
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“IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions help us ‘see’ what our customers see when they use our online services. This allows us to correct site, design and system issues in a timely manner”

– CIO North America, leading online travel services provider

Challenges

Historically, the online travel services provider’s customer traffic data was dispersed across the enterprise and processed nightly. Multiple data sources housed various pieces of customer traffic data and this meant that there was no central solution to tie-together all of the critical components of the online customer experience. The online travel services provider’s prior optimization approach of analyzing web logs and using in-house log parsers only helped with after-the-fact analysis. Unfortunately, this post facto information failed to deliver the realtime insights that the company needed to significantly improve customer conversion and drive deeper customer loyalty.

A better approach

To address these challenges, the online travel services provider turned to IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions because they offer the reporting capabilities of a web analytics solution while also providing the ability to drill-down and gain qualitative insights into its customers’ experiences on their website. The unique replay ability of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, a page-by-page, browser-level recording of the actual customer experience, enables the online travel services provider to make more effective site optimization decisions based on actual customer behavior and outcomes.

With IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the online travel services provider is able to respond to customer issues more quickly and be more proactive in their site optimization approach. The company has experienced significant improvements in customer conversion and retention via its use of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions across the enterprise.

Win 1 – IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions help identify a problem missed by the online travel services provider’s software.

Problem

The online travel services provider saves a customer’s previous trip searches (departure and arrival airports and dates) for quick access on return visits to its home page. The company’s software allows for a 500-millisecond delay for previous searches to populate once the home page is accessed. Recently during a server expansion, one of the servers was not able to return the saved-search data fast enough, causing the home page to render without this feature being populated.

Solution

Since “saved search” was an optional service, it did not throw a hard error, just a warning that was not received in large enough volume to be noticed. IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions highlighted the problem by tracking the events in both usage and display counts.

Benefit

Through visibility provided by IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the online travel services provider was able to correct the problem and provide customers once again with quick access to saved search data for a more convenient online experience.

Win 2 – Real-time visibility helps the online travel services provider resolve a flight availability problem.

Problem

The online travel services provider relies on data provided by its suppliers in real-time. On occasion, some of this data is not available when requested. Quickly identifying what is missing and exactly when the errors started is very helpful in identifying the root cause of the problem. During one early morning over the summer, an unusual increase in “no flights available” errors for the online travel services provider’s airline customers was observed.

Solution

IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions help the online travel provider identify common elements of site issues in real-time. Based on data gathered from thousands of customer sessions, IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions enable the online travel provider to efficiently resolve unforeseen issues. In this case, the common event was a set of flight destinations that were improperly loaded by the supplier. Once the supplier was made aware of the details of the issue, they were able to quickly fix the data feed.

Benefit

Using the detailed customer session analysis capabilities of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the online travel services provider was able to determine that the problem was limited to a specific subset of destinations. The problem was subsequently traced back to the supplier so they could promptly fix the issue.

Win 3 – IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions help the online travel services provider distinguish customer behavior from robot traffic, improving the accuracy of reporting and analysis.

Problem

Most transactional websites are open-access platforms. Simply put, if you have a browser, you can use the website. This is good for customers but unfortunately, it is also good for machines, or rather the people developing website crawlers, commonly known as spiders, or robot traffic. The online travel services provider's website contains a significant amount of valuable content, like hotel images, prices, descriptions and reviews. Recognizing customer behavior patterns is hard enough without a small number of hyperactive IPs skewing average session lengths and page request counts. However, separating customer data from robot traffic is not always a simple task.

Solution

The online travel services provider uses IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions to feed specific events into a complex event processing engine that scores the traffic and enables them to distinguish customers from robots. This approach also enables them to store the data for enhanced reporting and analysis.

Benefit

The online travel services provider is now able to effectively monitor customer behavior without the effects of spiders or other robots affecting their analysis. This enables the company to make better site optimization decisions and improve the online customer experience.

About IBM Enterprise Marketing Management

The IBM Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM) Suite is an end-to-end, integrated set of capabilities designed exclusively for the needs of marketing organizations. Integrating and streamlining all aspects of marketing, IBM's EMM Suite empowers organizations and individuals to turn their passion for marketing into valuable customer relationships and more profitable, efficient, timely, and measurable business outcomes.

Delivered on premises or in the Cloud, the IBM EMM Suite of software solutions gives marketers the tools and insight they need to create individual customer value at every touch. The IBM EMM Suite helps marketers to understand customer wants and needs and leverage that understanding to engage buyers in highly relevant, interactive dialogs across digital, social, and traditional marketing channels.

Designed to address the specific needs of particular marketing and merchandising users, the IBM EMM Suite is comprised of five individual solutions. Digital Marketing Optimization enables digital marketers to orchestrate relevant digital interactions to attract and retain new visitors and grow revenue throughout the customer's lifecycle. With Customer Experience Optimization eCommerce professionals can turn visitors into repeat customers and loyal advocates by improving the digital experience of every customer. With Cross-Channel Marketing Optimization customer relationship marketers can engage customers in a one-to-one dialogue across channels to grow revenue throughout the customer's lifecycle. Price, Promotion and Product Mix Optimization allows merchandisers and sales planners to make price, promotion and product mix decisions that maximize profit and inventory utilization. And with Marketing Performance Optimization, marketing leaders, planners and decision-makers can model and assess mix, and manage marketing operations to maximize ROI.

Over 2,500 organizations around the world use IBM EMM solutions to help manage the pressures of increasing marketing complexity while delivering improved revenue and measurable results. IBM's time-tested and comprehensive offerings are giving companies such as Dannon, E*TRADE, ING, Orvis, PETCO, Telefonica | Vivo, United Airlines and wehkamp.nl the power and flexibility required to provide their customers and prospects with what they expect today – a more consistent and relevant experience across all channels.



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1 According to Compete® 2010 statistics.



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