Kärcher operates uniform, professional SEO actions – successful usage of the Searchmetrics Suite™ for all of the cleaning specialist’s websites and online shops

Searchmetrics case study with

Kärcher
Kärcher recently faced the major challenge of harmonizing all of its different international SEO measures to make their performance transparent and reviewable at the global level. In 2013, Kärcher opted for Searchmetrics Suite™, an intelligent software solution that makes daily SEO work more efficient and organizes data to enable comparable analyses across all relevant markets. Thanks to the continuous improvements being made to the Searchmetrics Suite™, Kärcher has also ensured that it will be ready to seize new opportunities for sustainable SEO strategy as well.

Kärcher is a multinational corporation represented by 100 companies in 60 countries, with roughly 50,000 service points around the globe providing gapless care for customers. The product palate at Kärcher is growing constantly, with more than 120 new products launched to market in 2014 alone. Naturally a corporation of this size uses online channels for its sales efforts – with 22 national subsidiaries at present operating their own online shops and additional shops planned.

Kärcher is thus pursuing two important goals in the online area. First: the visibility of the brand must be increased and its positioning more clearly established so that Kärcher is perceived globally as a leading provider of cleaning solutions online as well as offline. Search engine results related to Kärcher’s websites and online shops should receive top positioning to guide potential customers quickly to the company’s products and information. Another commonly accepted goal was solid search engine optimization for large international as well as key local search engines.

Second: the SEO work for the national subsidiaries needed to be designed to allow for comparison between the different national subsidiaries and, where possible, observable from a central office. While several countries are already engaged in comprehensive SEO measures, other countries lack the manpower for professional SEO. The task was thus to establish a uniform basis for the national subsidiaries.
In addition, the comparability of the results of all subsidiaries was essential, which is why a unified SEO software that provides reliable and comparable results was needed group-wide.

“The flexibility of the system was very important to us, as we needed to use it not just with existing national websites, but with future ones as well. In particular, the expansion to additional local search engines needed to be ensured. The data should also be centralized to allow for all SEO measures to be evaluated and controlled internally,” explains Julia Treitz, SEO specialist at Kärcher. “In addition, the manual overhead needed to be kept as low as possible so that SEO could be implemented for all foreign subsidiaries as quickly and easily as possible. Support was needed beyond the launch phase training as well, meaning quick and reliable access to the Support team for the long run.”

Once the assessment process had run its course, the decision went in favor of Searchmetrics Suite™ – the powerful enterprise solution that is the flagship of the market leader in the area of search and content performance.

The Solution:

Searchmetrics Suite™ is oriented toward international SEO, allowing for optimization with popular search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, Yandex, Baidu, Naver and Seznam) in over 130 countries. It can furthermore be expanded to include as many local search engines as desired. This is very useful as Google results vary depending on user location. Google recognizes location based on IP address and puts local results at the top of its search pages. The websites for all national companies can be optimized using Content Optimization and Site Structure Optimization to get more relevant for users and at the same time also for search engines. Beyond this, the software takes advantage of the Searchmetrics keyword database, the only one of its kind, to find and analyze relevant search terms. Keyword rankings and a list of recommended terms and phrases are available at a click.
“From the start, we felt confidence in the clear interface of the Searchmetrics Suite™. It provides a clear platform for presenting routine analyses and reports. This keeps it quick and easy to learn to use the comprehensive SEO solution,” Treitz says.

Following comprehensive training by Searchmetrics, the new system was then rolled out in the national subsidiaries by Kärcher’s own central online department. All managers received both personal and subsequent webinar training in the Searchmetrics Suite™ application. Because the flexible system is constantly expanding, documentation is composed on a regular basis to present the new functions to the marketing managers.

“The usage process showed very clearly: Any initial resistance to engaging with the Searchmetrics Suite™ – not least because a variety of other tools were in use, as well as skepticism towards an all-in-one solution – withered once the system was actually launched!” This also reflects the strong support from Searchmetrics. “We decided to have queries forwarded centrally from the Kärcher online department to the support team. We were pleased with the processing times of no more than one or two days – at which point the Searchmetrics team delivered a solution,” Treitz explains. The path to expansion to further markets has also been laid: “The training routines help with the usage in additional countries – and the founding of new foreign subsidiaries is a constant part of Kärcher’s expansion and internationalization efforts,” she adds.

“Since the implementation of the Searchmetrics Suite™, SEO work has been optimized for all national subsidiaries that have been integrated.” In particular, the uniformity of SEO data makes the results of measurable at the international level, a key factor for corporate headquarters. Because the Searchmetrics Suite™ can be connected to existing web analysis tools, it is also possible to observe actual traffic data.

The Benefits:

Professional SEO actions group-wide thanks to transparent analyses and centralized workflows.
This represents two-fold significant time savings: first, monthly reporting submitted to management at both the national and international levels provides a quick overview; second, the Searchmetrics Suite™ allows for easy SEO monitoring even in countries where this was previously considered too time-intensive for the marketing team there.

While management at foreign subsidiaries primarily uses the modules content optimization and keyword ranking reports, other data of interest are available for the central Online department: Searchmetrics Suite™ includes analysis data that provides a quick and convenient overview of performance on the individual markets. This can for example be highly useful for monitoring a website relaunch. The data allows reliable analyses of the actual state prior to relaunch, an essential component for accurate follow-on ranking, traffic and visibility review.

"In the past, all SEO measures and results had to be queried from the individual national subsidiaries – a process that was both cumbersome and didn’t ultimately provide a comparable picture of performance since the databases were built differently. Searchmetrics thus made a decisive first step toward the centralization of our SEO measures. The suite is also being constantly updated, ensuring that we’re always state-of-the-art here and know we’re implementing a rigorous SEO strategy. And that at the global level."

"To sum it all up: Searchmetrics Suite™ helped Kärcher professionalize its international SEO."

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