ebay™ supports global SEO tracking with Searchmetrics Suite™
Businesses looking to grow their online visibility can face several challenges. As a marketer, having actionable insights can make the difference between increased traffic that results in conversions or not. For eBay, they faced the challenge of delivering a unified solution for global SEO tracking and insights across their teams. This case study looks at how eBay handled their challenge and the benefits they received from the solution they put in place.

eBay Inc. is one of the world’s leading ecommerce company with a global portfolio of businesses that enables hundreds of millions of people to buy, sell and pay online. In 2012 the company enabled more than $175 Billion of commerce globally through eBay Marketplaces, PayPal and retail solutions provider GSI.

As an online company, having a strong, visible search presence is important for eBay. Its marketing department needs to monitor search visibility and performance globally as well as to monitor competitor activity and search trends.

“Search is an important driver of traffic which can translate to sales. So we need to have an accurate picture of how we are doing in search and how our natural search activity is working. How do we compare against others in our market and what are the latest developments in search? We need to be able to answer these questions,” explained Maxime Rauer, Manager Natural Search from eBay.

In the past eBay’s marketing team had relied on a variety of separate, regionally focused tools and data sources to monitor and provide insights about search. But the company recognized that a global solution, which delivered a unified view, would make it easier to compare performance across markets.

In addition to providing comprehensive global data, the chosen tool had to be easy to use and be able to provide strong reporting functionality that would enable eBay’s marketing team to provide clear concise reports on search activity to senior management, while minimizing effort.

After running evaluations and pilot trials with a number of solutions, eBay chose the Searchmetrics Suite™ – an Enterprise Search and Content Performance Platform.
An enterprise level product, Searchmetrics Suite™ automates many aspects of SEO analysis, monitoring and reporting for in-house search marketers and agencies. It allows users to track SEO performance across all major search engines in over 130 countries using clear KPIs, providing the ability to monitor keywords and sub-pages, evaluate links, and analyze and compare domains and identify competitor strategies.

“We use Searchmetrics to monitor rankings for our chosen keywords in the various regions and search engines and to benchmark against competitors,” explained Maxime.

As well as rankings, the company is using two important Searchmetrics KPIs to benchmark its organic search success. Firstly, the SEO visibility score, an index score based on an analysis of millions of keyword results, which is used to benchmark and track search engine performance.

Secondly, the Searchmetrics’ SEO Market Share, a unique way for digital marketers to estimate the percentage market share of search engine visibility they are generating for their target keywords and comparing it with the share achieved by competitors. They can set market share targets for their domains and benchmark against key competitors to track the progress of their SEO.

The Searchmetrics Keyword Research tool enables eBay to analyze keyword search volumes and trends. While the software’s backlink database provides an analysis of the links generated by individual campaigns, including data about individual links, such as the source URL, link type (e.g. image or text link), geographic origin and page strength of the linked domain, together with the total number of links.
“Searchmetrics provides great insights to help us understand how the search investments we are making are resonating against our competition,” said Maxime. By enabling all eBay’s search analytics data to be found in one easy-to-use, unified solution, Searchmetrics delivers savings in time and effort to eBay’s marketing team as they no longer have to go to a variety of fragmented sources to access data and insights about their search performance in different markets.

Efficiency gains have also been realized through Searchmetrics’ fast, comprehensive reporting capabilities. “Searchmetrics provides a very wide range of charts and visuals which are ready to be incorporated into reports that we can ship to senior executives to make it easy to show them what we are doing and what’s working in search,” said Maxime.

Rauer also notes that Searchmetrics is the only way eBay has found to accurately track and analyze the backlinks generated for specific sub domains. The software is being used in this way to collate data about backlinks generated in campaigns to support the eBay deals pages.

To sum up the impact of Searchmetrics, Maxime stated that eBay often uses third party data and tools as a validation source – to validate its own understanding of the market, as well as its plans and decisions.

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