HELSINGIN SANOMAT

Partnership

Google has worked closely with Sanoma, the publisher of Helsingin Sanomat, since 2017 to help promote innovation within the news media business, and help monetise digital journalism. Over the past few years, Helsingin Sanomat has built a subscription base of over 400,000, in a country of a population of 5.5 million inhabitants. Today, they are defined as the largest daily subscription newspaper in Finland and the Nordic countries.

Overview

As Finland's most read daily newspaper, Helsingin Sanomat is regarded as a national institution and treasure. Its own history reflects that of Finland's independence, seeking to promote and strengthen democracy, social justice and freedom of opinion, fulfilling its mission primarily through fair, fast and reliable news coverage. Helsingin Sanomat is a significant pillar in Finnish society and public opinion.

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Sanoma: Serving Subscriptions With the Help of Technology

Sanoma, the publishing company of Helsingin Sanomat, grew paid subscriptions to over 400,000 by matching customer segments with online revenue streams.

The Project

Sanoma and Google set out to develop smart customer analysis in a machine learning based personalisation engine. Machine learning is the study of computer algorithms that improve automatically through experience. A personalization engine is a tool used to collect and analyze customer behavior and data to create a customized user experience, in this instance on the digital front-page of Helsingin Sanomat. The aim of implementing these tools was to improve the subscription income of existing subscription channels. The expectation was that more detailed information on customer groups would help to define the likelihood to pay as each customer group has different sales potential and a reader is more likely to subscribe if the content is relevant to them.
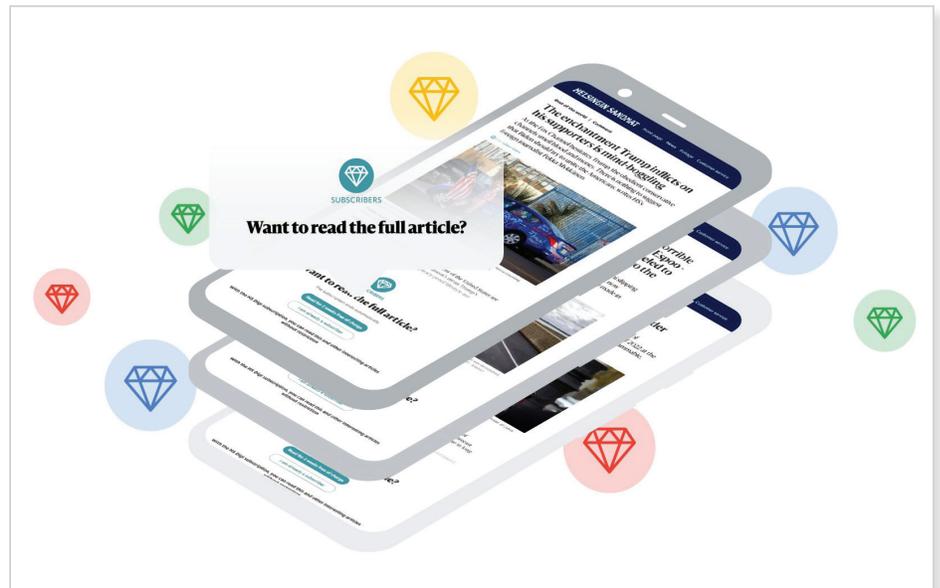
Experimental paid content program function for the front-page personalization engine.

Sanoma developed an experimental paid content program function for their front-page personalization engine. The project was conducted partly by implementing a custom model in Google Big Query and Google Analytics that predicts the probability of paid behaviour. In the last phase of the project, Sanoma developed a propensity-to-pay model for Helsingin Sanomat by utilizing information about customers previous content usage and customer behaviour data from Google Analytics. This model is still in use and continues to be developed as part of the ongoing partnership between Google and Sanoma.

The Results

Since implementing its personalization engine and propensity-to-pay model, Helsingin Sanomat has increased its subscriber base to 400,000, growing subscriptions from 23% of sales to 60% in 2020.

"Our understanding is that we are now one of the leading players within the news media industry in utilizing content serving algorithms on our front page," adds Vesa Lindqvist from Sanoma. "The complexity and data utilized in Helsingin Sanomat's front page algorithms surpass the level of many media companies' work that we have benchmarked against. Moreover, our algorithms have many different problem solving solutions. Helsingin Sanomat's uplift in engagement proves the point in practice."

RESULTS

400K

Subscriber count at the end of 2020.

2017
SUBSCRIBERS MADE 23% OF SALES

2020
SUBSCRIBERS MADE 60% OF SALES

66 The partnership between Sanoma's news media business and Google News Initiative has been really positive, and has helped us to achieve beyond what we could have achieved alone. When you look at the news business of today, below the surface it's almost exactly the same type of technology business as Google, the biggest players such as Helsingin Sanomat utilize and implement technology within their business. 99

VESA LINDQVIST, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER, SANOMA

HELSINGIN SANOMAT   front page   News   Foliage   Customer service

Rest of the world | Comment

The infection curve shattered Anders Tegnell's estimates, and criticism in Sweden rises - the forecast for Finland also went wrong

In Sweden, the state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell is now criticized for his past predictions, writes HS Stockholm correspondent Jussi Sippola in his comment.

For subscribers

According to Swedish state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell, the infection situation in Sweden has deteriorated rapidly. PHOTO: ANDERS WIKLUND / TT

Jussi Sippola HS
13:42

Stockholm

WHAT DID state **epidemiologist Anders Tegnell** say?

It is now remembered in Sweden, where there is a second wave of the coronavirus epidemic.

PERSONALIZED USER EXPERIENCE

...eden has achieved a high level of ...likely to be quite low, "Tegnell ...ancial Times in May.

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