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Dr. Mehdi Khosrow-Pour

D.B.A., President and Publisher of IGI



ABOUT GOOGLE BOOK SEARCH

Google Book Search enables publishers to promote their books on Google. Google scans the full text of participating publishers’ titles so that Google users can see books that match the topics they are searching on. When users click on a book search result, they’re taken to a Google-hosted web page displaying a scanned image of the relevant page from the book. Each page also contains multiple “Buy this Book” links, which enable users to purchase the book from online retailers. Users may also see contextually targeted Google AdWords ads on these pages. Publishers receive a share of the revenue generated from ads appearing on their content.

For more information, visit
<http://books.google.com>

Idea Group Inc. gains exposure, increases web traffic and quadruples ad revenue

After partnering with Google in both Google Scholar and Google Book Search, technology publisher Idea Group Inc. sees a fourfold increase in page views and ad revenue.

About Idea Group Inc.

Founded in 1987, Idea Group Inc. (IGI) is an international publishing company specializing in research and academic publications in the fields of information science, technology and management. IGI is located in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and publishes innovative books, encyclopedias, journals, conference proceedings and teaching cases. IGI releases hundreds of new titles under five imprints each year.

Challenge

As a small publisher of unique, high-quality publications covering a wide range of specialized technology and business topics, IGI’s primary challenge is increasing exposure for all of its titles and expanding its readership of researchers and professionals.

“What we want is more exposure,” explains Dr. Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, D.B.A., President and Publisher of IGI. “We’re not a big publisher like Elsevier or John Wiley, but we can compete with the best of them with the quality of our content, and that quality speaks for itself.”

IGI takes an active approach to meeting the challenges of publishing in the digital age. It has committed to serving the diverse needs of its customers by offering publications in a variety of print and digital formats, and all of its journals, encyclopedias and books are available in electronic format. In addition, IGI has created InfoSci-Online, a searchable, aggregated database of all of its titles, which enables readers to access the full-text contents of their publications online. However, the company’s online marketing has so far been limited.

“In September and October of 2005, IGI saw an additional sharp spike in traffic. The reason: Google linked Google Scholar to Google Book Search, multiplying the opportunities for users to discover IGI publications. As a result, our ad revenue quadrupled.”

“Before now, we haven’t done anything specifically to drive traffic to our site,” says Dr. Khosrow-Pour. “We have strong word-of-mouth, and our customers typically come to our site to learn about our titles before they decide to buy. The challenge is making sure they find us and get familiar with the titles that might interest them.”

Solution

Already a partner in the Google Scholar program, IGI decided to join Google Book Search “within ten or fifteen minutes” of hearing about the program. “We’re a technology publisher, so we support innovative approaches to marketing. We’re not afraid of the changes happening right now in publishing; we want to be part of it,” explains Dr. Khosrow-Pour. “Google offered us the opportunity to gain exposure in the best search engine.”

IGI closely monitors its web traffic, and after joining Google Book Search in July 2004, the company saw immediate gains. In September and October of 2005, IGI saw an additional sharp spike in traffic. The reason: Google linked Google Scholar to Google Book Search, multiplying the opportunities for users to discover IGI publications. “As a result, our ad revenue quadrupled,” reports Dr. Khosrow-Pour.

“Currently, 35 percent of the traffic we get originates from Google, versus 3.5 percent from Yahoo. That’s more than we anticipated,” adds Dr. Khosrow-Pour. “To take advantage of the qualified traffic, we’ve added links so visitors can ‘Recommend this Book to a Library.’ Seventy percent of our customers are libraries, so it’s a great way to capitalize on interest in a particular title and spread positive word-of-mouth.”

To date, IGI has submitted 461 titles in Google Book Search, and plans to continue to expand its growing partnership with Google.

“We’ve been talking to Google for years, and we noticed that they don’t lecture; they ask what functionality we’re looking for. We appreciate that they’re proactive about reaching out to us and offering solutions,” says Dr. Khosrow-Pour. “We’ve been consulted and approached, and we feel like this is the payoff.”

