

Crossway Books gained significant exposure for its catalog using Google Print.



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Randy Jahns
Vice President of Marketing



ABOUT GOOGLE PRINT

Google Print 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 will receive a share of the revenue generated from ads appearing on their content.

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

Based in Wheaton, Illinois, Crossway Books is the book division of Good News Publishers, a not-for-profit Christian ministry. Good News publishes Gospel tracts and the English Standard Version Bible, and Crossway's catalog contains some 400 active titles in fiction, nonfiction, gift and children's books. Crossway produces about 60 new books a year. Fifty people work for Good News/Crossway.

Challenge

Crossway's online marketing consisted of keyword advertising through Google AdWords®. This drove qualified traffic to their website, but when Google Print launched in October 2004, Crossway's director of operations realized the value in enabling customers to search the full content of Crossway titles. Google Print offered another way to raise visibility for its titles as well as drive additional traffic to the website. “We thought Google Print could help us get our information out there for people to discover,” says Crossway Webmaster Stephen Smith.

Solution

“Our objective was to instantly connect readers and potential readers with the content of our books, right down to the word level,” says Crossway Vice President of Marketing Randy Jahns. “We strongly believe that letting people browse our books improves sales through all channels,” he adds. “Google Print makes them available to people who might not otherwise encounter them – in homes, libraries, and businesses around the world.”

At present, more than 350 of Crossway's 400+ title catalog are live on Google Print. On the Crossway site, each title features a link to that specific book on Google Print. “Anyone can instantly browse or search the book to see if they're interested in it,” says Smith, noting, “we also display a special promotion letting everyone know which books are on Google Print.”

Some Crossway authors have specifically requested that the publisher make their titles available through Google Print. “It provides them with unparalleled exposure,” says Smith. What's more, “We gain added value for our backlist. We have a tremendous amount of content that was not accessible online until now. We can increase the return on investments we've already made.”

In addition, it was “very easy” to get started: “It was just a matter of collecting ISBNs and titles and sending them in.” Smith adds that “we've even received email from customers thanking us for making the full text of our books available. This shows that demand is there, and that people appreciate the option of browsing a book before deciding to buy it.”

As for ROI, Smith says, “Our primary currency on Google Print isn't dollars – it's exposure.” He adds that “Google AdWords is about driving traffic to our site, and Google Print is really about getting our books out there.” In a larger sense, Smith says, “Google Print allows us to take our marketing to the next level. We definitely plan to use the program for as many of our titles as possible.”