CASE STUDY #11: JEFF'S WEATHER BLOG TRAFFIC INCREASED BY 500%

About Jeffsweather.com:

Jeffsweather.com (http://www.jeffsweather.com), a website developed by Jeff Ragovin, provides visitors with daily weather forecasts for the New York Metropolitan area and several major US cities using an Accuweather feed. Jeff frequently updates the website with newsworthy weather stories from around the globe and hi-res photos from his travels.

The Jeff's Weather Challenge:

The main objective upon the website's initial launch was to form a strategy to drive traffic to the site. Jeff also needed to devise a way to keep visitors engaged once they arrived at his website, and quickly update the website on a daily basis with as little hassle as possible. Jeff found that most of the technologies available were too rigid and time-consuming for his busy schedule.

The SitePal Solution

Jeff chose to add a SitePal custom character to his website in July of 2006. SitePal custom-designed the avatar to resemble Jeff, and equipped the character with the technology to deliver daily forecasts through his virtual-self in his very own voice. **The use of the custom character was not only a unique and fun way for his visitors to get the weather, but it also made it very easy to update the website on a daily basis.** In most cases, Jeff uses the record-by-phone feature that is offered by SitePal, so updating his website is as easy as leaving a voice message. He just calls in and records his forecast for the day.

"Updating content for my SitePal is so simple. I usually make the call from my mobile phone as I'm on my way out the door. Sometimes I make the call from the backseat of a cab, which gets me some really funny looks from the cabbies. If the forecast changes quickly, as is often the case with severe weather alerts, I can update it on the fly, from any phone."

The Results

Since adding the custom character, the feedback Jeff has received from his visitors has been extraordinary. As word of mouth spread about the unique character-istics of the website and the daily updated content, traffic increased from 500,000 to 2.5 million page views per month. Jeff believes the custom character lends credibility to his website as well.

CLIENT RESULTS

Traffic increased from 500,000 to 2.5 million page views per month.

"The custom character uses my actual voice stream, which lets people know it's really me doing all the updates. My readers trust Jeff's weather and enjoy the specific, non-traditional forecasting I provide to everyone in the New York area."

Jeff Ragovin and his speaking character have also gained notoriety worldwide. For example, when Tropical Cyclone Gonu approached Oman, residents of Saudi Arabia and neighboring Middle Eastern countries logged on to learn more about the Category 5 storm (data on IP address locations allows Jeff to track this informa-tion). When major storm news hits, Jeff often sees a dramatic spike in the amount of traffic visiting his website. He attributes this to his consistently accurate weather reporting and SitePal's innovative and personalized avatar.