



Partnership

RCS Media Group has a long history of collaboration with Google, so being involved in the Google News Initiative partnership was a natural evolution of this.

The media group is focused on the digital transformation and digital evolution across all areas of their business, and “this partnership is helping us to accelerate this process”, explains Fabio Napoli, Head of Digital Business News.

Throughout the project, RCS reviewed progress with their Google counterpart every week. During these reviews, every step of the project development was shared and discussed in detail in order to monitor and support the project evolution.

Overview

RCS is one of the world’s leading multimedia publishing groups based in Milan. “Strengthened by independent and strong leadership, RCS has always acted respecting the principles of freedom, honesty and pluralism.” comments Napoli.

The media group is active in all publishing sectors from newspapers and magazines, to TV and new digital media. In Italy, RCS publishes Corriere della Sera, one of the country’s oldest and most read daily newspapers. RCS also publishes the leading daily newspaper El Mundo in Spain, and has representation in Portugal, the United States and China.

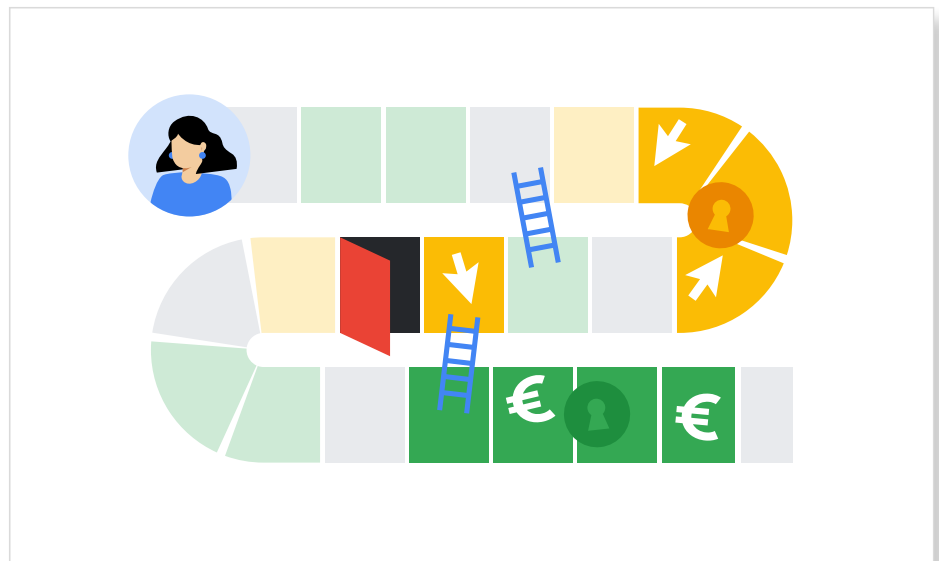
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RCS: Optimizing reader journey and engagement with technology

How one of the world’s leading multimedia publishing groups used a newly developed platform to achieve their greatest goal

The Project



Enabling the creation of sophisticated audience journeys and dynamic paywall experiences so that each potential subscriber is exposed to a tailored subscription offer

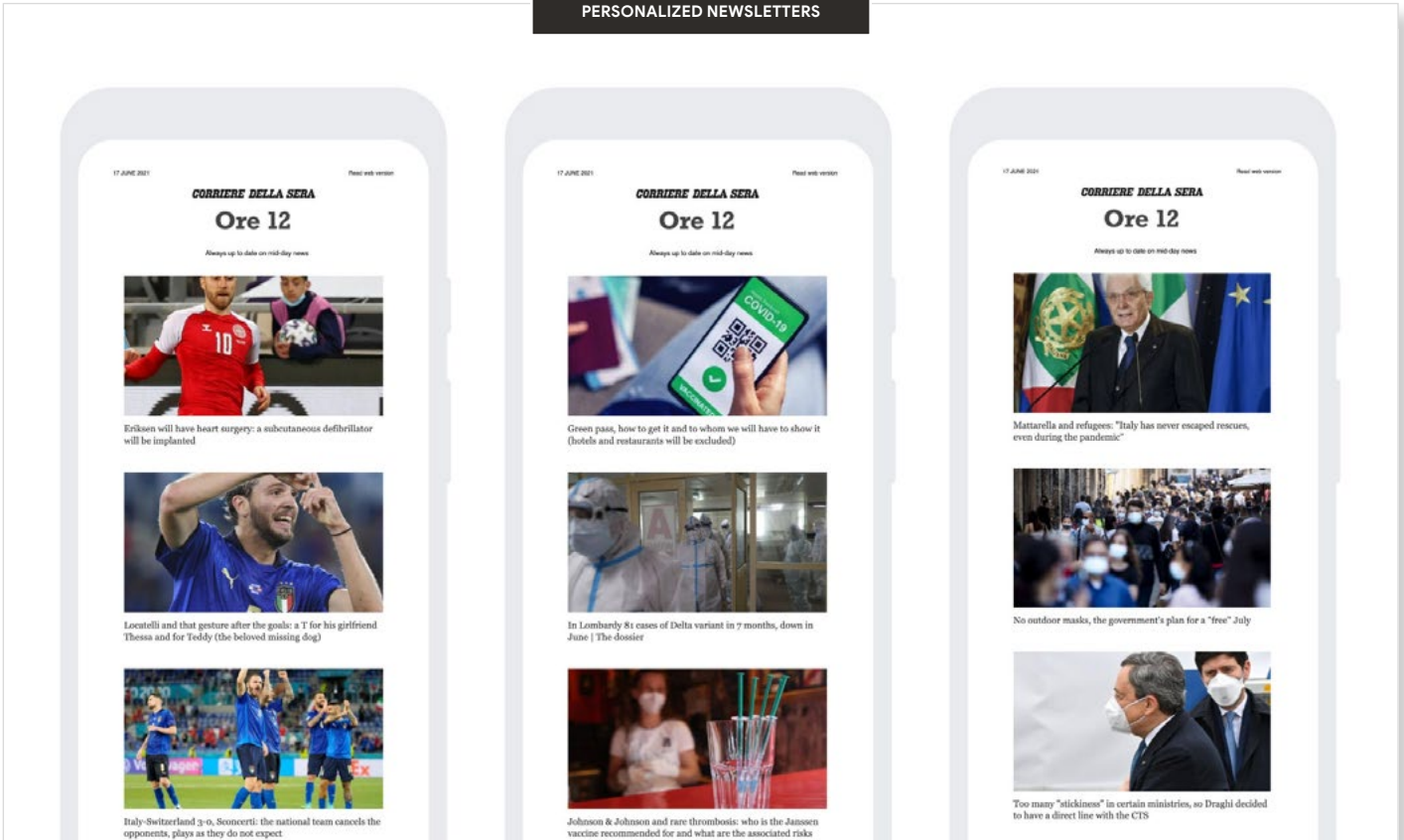
The primary goal of RCS is to become a digital subscription-first company, to increase their digital revenues and continue publishing high quality, trusted content. RCS set out to achieve these objectives through its partnership with the Google News Initiative by implementing a cloud-based service that aims to orchestrate, measure and optimize the entire customer experience all within a single platform. RCS applied the same strategy to Corriere della Sera and El Mundo as part of this partnership, with the goal of Corriere della Sera becoming a digital subscription first company within three years.

Before this project RCS didn’t use any form of content personalization tools. “We had a static paywall solution with no possibility to make it dynamic. We were also not segmenting customers into groups in order to personalize the paywall experience”, says Maria Sgromo, Head of Digital Subscription of their challenge.

This newly developed platform has different modules that work to enhance the online customer experience by:

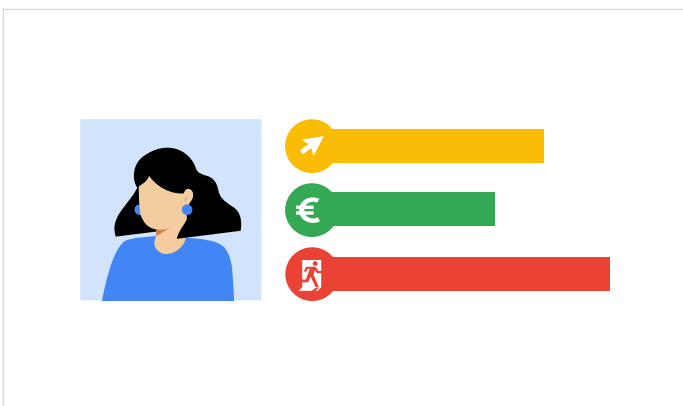
- Enabling the creation of sophisticated audience journeys and dynamic paywall experiences, so that each potential subscriber is exposed to a tailored subscription offer;
- Managing a thoroughly personalized newsletter to increase the subscriber interaction with the site content;
- Providing real time data and segmentation to better understand the reader profile.

PERSONALIZED NEWSLETTERS



Managing a thoroughly personalized newsletter in order to increase the subscriber interaction with the site content

The data management platform creates segments of customers based on their content consumption, the likelihood to subscribe and rate at which they unsubscribe, or churn. These segments are used to create tailored reader experiences based on variables such as likelihood to subscribe, propensity to churn, segment interest, user behavior and content recommendation based on AI analysis.



The data management platform creates segments of customers based on their content consumption and on the propensity to subscribe and to churn.

“ This new solution was a true revolution for us. It makes it possible to easily schedule newsletters, choose the target subscribers, optimize the content based on the reader profile and also optimize the delivery process in order to increase the open rate. ”

MARIA SGROMO, HEAD OF DIGITAL BUSINESS NEWS

The Results

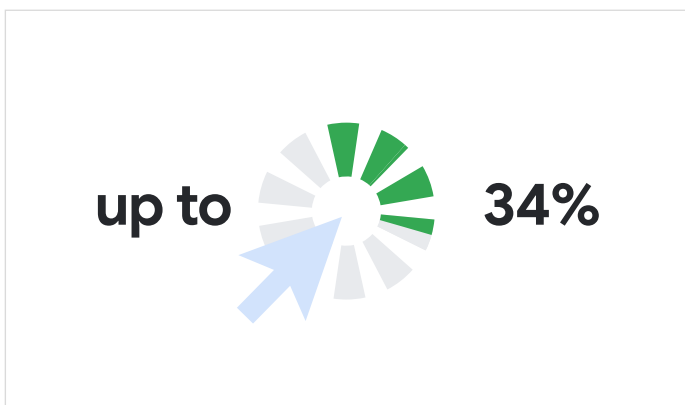


The paywall conversion rate on desktop increased by 200%

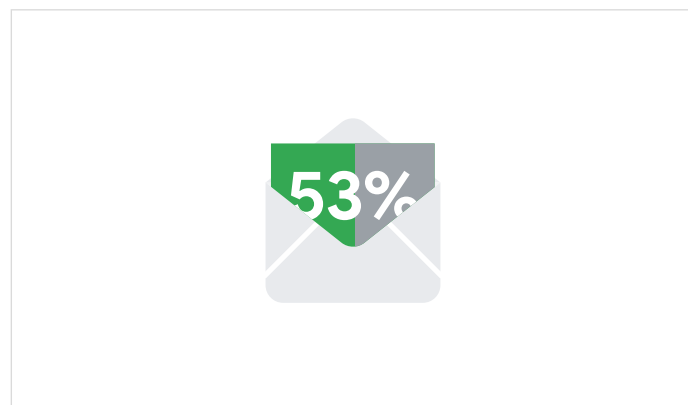
RCS chose a platform that has an end-to-end solution, but also one that is used by other international publishers. This enables RCS to track how they benchmark against the digital publishing industry.

After five months of implementation, RCS saw positive results from the content personalization program, newsletter development and from the setup of a dynamic paywall. Customer engagement was significantly higher compared to other international publishers: RCS is in the 95th percentile among the benchmark data.

Napoli comments on the ongoing partnership between RCS and Google News Initiative, “We will continue working to optimize our contact strategy for acquisition and retention (churn management), developing new AI models based on content and consumer behavior in order to personalize our reader experiences.”



The visible click through rate (CTR) on content recommendation modules increased from a range of 0.8% to up 34% on some formats dedicated to subscribers



The overall email open rate (EOR) increased by 53%

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