

HEROLD Business Data GmbH Generates New Revenue with MarkLogic Database

Austrian Directory Publisher Creates Tools so Customers' Users Can Quickly and Easily Find and Purchase Goods and Services



HEROLD.at

CUSTOMER

HEROLD Business Data GmbH

INDUSTRY

Information Delivery and
Marketing Services

CHALLENGES

Data complexity,
Disparate data sources,
Inflexible architecture

FEATURES

Search, Semantics, Flexible data
model, Replication

CUSTOMER USE CASE

Centralized Repository of
Information

BENEFITS

New revenue opportunities,
Faster time to value,
Scalability

Company Overview

HEROLD Business Data GmbH is one of the most successful media companies in Austria, offering a marketplace for buyers and sellers through online and print phone directories. The company produces dozens of print products, including more than 70 regional telephone directories and more than 20 special issues and guides, as well as several online products, including HEROLD.at, mobile applications, data for direct marketing, search marketing and online advertising services. HEROLD Business Data collects data for about 360,000 businesses, including addresses and phone numbers, user reviews and recommendations, ratings, photos, and text descriptions, as well as a directory of 3.6 million phone numbers. HEROLD.at is one of the biggest sites in Austria, reaching more than 23 percent of active Internet users in the country.

Challenges

HEROLD's initial challenge was to quickly monetize enormous amounts of addresses, household and corporate data that it acquired from purchasing a directory business. The company was seeking a better way to connect its customers — the businesses that advertise with it — with users of its digital properties. Therefore HEROLD needed to create new digital products that could summarize and structure HEROLD's data assets so it could be productized and resold. Additional challenges included:

Integrating and Managing Complex and High Volumes of Data

Integrating, accessing and searching the massive amounts of acquired personalized and address data could not be accomplished with HEROLD's existing relational database technology. Much of HEROLD's company data resided in as many as 15 separate systems and included records on more than 360,000 businesses, comprising of unstructured pieces such as product information, user reviews and recommendations, ratings, photos and text descriptions, which came from product feeds and manual entries.

Aggressive Timeline to Demonstrate Return on Investment

HEROLD needed to integrate the newly acquired structured and unstructured data into its systems to quickly create and introduce new products that would help the company stay ahead of the competition while demonstrating return on investment to management.



“With MarkLogic, we were able to consolidate more than 15 sources of data into a single database. This was not possible with a relational database management system — it would take too big of an effort. MarkLogic’s flexibility allowed us to quickly and easily build and deliver valuable products to our customers and users, while providing HEROLD and our customers new revenue opportunities.”

— Martin Kersch, CIO,
HEROLD Business Data GmbH

The Solution

With the help of MarkLogic partner EBCONT Enterprise Technologies, HEROLD used the SmartLogic™ Ontology Manager to organize its data and import it into the MarkLogic® Enterprise NoSQL database platform. The company relies on MarkLogic with its built-in search and semantics features to power three applications: a targeting and direct marketing product, a customer statistics and analytics product for internal use, and a hosted product search, maintenance and fulfillment solution.

Why MarkLogic?

Using MarkLogic, HEROLD was able to consolidate all of its data into one single source to quickly build new data-based products that would become powerful revenue streams for HEROLD and its customers. HEROLD realized the following benefits:

Faster Time to Value

HEROLD built its first product with MarkLogic in six months, crediting MarkLogic’s out-of-the-box features as reducing development time.

Reduced Infrastructure Complexity and Cost

Using MarkLogic, HEROLD created a central repository for information that consolidated as many as 15 separate systems onto one MarkLogic database platform. The MarkLogic system quickly ingested large amounts of structured and unstructured data from HEROLD’s data sales and address marketing businesses, its customer statistic data, and the data that came along with its acquisition. With fewer systems, HEROLD greatly reduced the complexity and cost while increasing the value of its existing infrastructure.

New Revenue Opportunities

The three new products HEROLD built using MarkLogic let the company monetize its data in several different ways. It opened new sales channels by making products searchable across its directory portal, as well as turning those product directories into widgets that customers could incorporate into their own web properties to help drive sales. Additionally, the company created a maintenance and fulfillment business out of its new product search. This allows customers to search, find and buy products, as well as get them shipped or marked for pickup in a brick and mortar store. HEROLD also turned directory data into a search engine marketing and segmentation product, and improved data quality by 20 percent.

Improved Customer Experience

Customer products and services are searchable and displayed on HEROLD.at so consumers looking for a specific product can easily find a merchant that sells it and buy it without leaving the site. Because some of HEROLD’s customers use its products on their own public-facing websites to help consumers search for and buy products, any downtime would lead to a loss of revenue. MarkLogic’s around-the-clock reliability is a crucial requirement in preventing downtime and therefore the loss of customers.

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