



By improving site layout with Google Analytics, and adopting IAB standard ad format, Lbo.Ik (Lanka Business Online) drives revenue growth 2.5X



About LBO.Ik (Lanka Business Online)

- www.lbo.lk
- Headquartered in Kotte, Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka's English-language business and economy portal

Goals

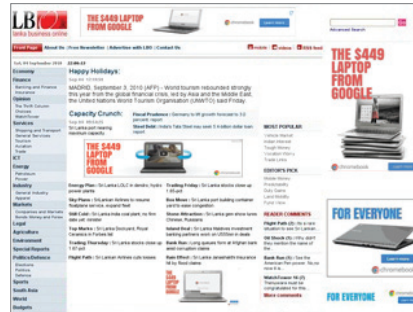
- Accelerate AdSense performance
- Invigorate revenue growth across channels

Approach

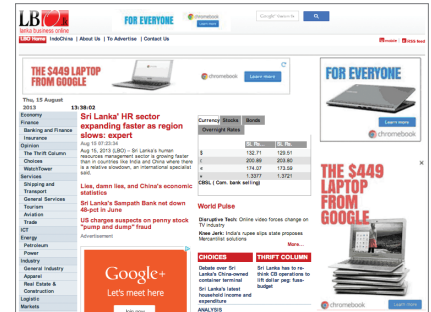
- Collaborate with Google to optimize industry ad formats, site design
- Use Google Analytics insights to inform site layout decisions
- Replaced low-performing ad units with global standard formats

Results

- AdSense revenue grew 2.5X
- Pageviews increased 3.4X
- Clicks increased 2X
- AdSense share of total revenue steadily growing
- Improved team morale



Before



After

Inspired by the digital revolution spreading from the Silicon Valley to the rest of the world, Lakshaman Bandaranayake founded LBO.Ik (Lanka Business Online) in 2000. Today, LBO forges ahead in its mission to provide insightful news and analysis to a worldwide audience tuned into Sri Lanka. “We educate the business community, policy makers and general public on the implications of the monetary and fiscal policy and economic challenges” says Lakshaman. “LBO also creates an online dialogue and positively influences public policy making in Sri Lanka.”

“If we didn't use AdSense, we would be losing out on revenue.”
 —Lakshaman Bandaranayake, founder, LBO.Ik

Refreshing site layout, ad formats to invigorate global performance

As one of the leading business news sites in English, LBO monetizes their site with direct sales to local advertisers and with Google AdSense, which they have used since 2006. In early 2013, looking to accelerate AdSense performance and invigorate revenue growth across channels, LBO decided to update their content and design strategy.

While known for producing “high-quality, timely and fiercely independent editorial content,” Lakshaman says LBO is also keen to maintain positive user experience. Making sure their readership stays loyal despite a refresh in design strategy was important to Lakshaman.

Our website readers look to us for “ease of navigation and content discovery, as well as simplicity in design.” Working closely with the Google, LBO set out to refresh its site content and layout, and optimize ad formats to global standard.

“Our teams worked together to develop a 360-degree plan based on Google’s recommendations,” says Lakshaman. With a focus on growing user engagement, and guided by insights from Google Analytics’s In-Page Analytics report, Lakshaman and his team tweaked the layout to be more user-friendly. They also replaced lower-performing ad units with globally popular IAB standard ad formats like the leaderboard and wide skyscraper units, that befitted their global website’s reach.

Simple changes result in increased revenue, more user engagement

Since implementing these changes to ad units and layout, LBO has seen increased user engagement: In the 14 weeks following the redesign, pageviews increased by 3.4X and clicks increased 2X. Because they decided to place the right globally popular ad format in the optimal location near their content, LBO was able to scalably monetize their users. AdSense earnings grew 2.5X driving more business growth.

While AdSense previously accounted for 10% of LBO's revenue share, Lakshaman says that part is steadily increasing. "We expect AdSense's share of revenue to be at 50% within a year, while overall revenue is expected to multiply," he says. Additionally, Lakshaman notes that these positive outcomes have boosted morale and enthusiasm, resulting in a more motivated team.

"If we didn't use AdSense, we would be losing out on revenue," he says. "Without the redesign, revenue opportunities would have continued to go unexploited, and business potential would have been seriously compromised. Our team would have been less energized," he adds.

"Our partnership with Google is characterized by equality, trust and mutual respect."

—Lakshaman Bandaranayake, founder, LBO.lk

Growing together with Google for Publishers

Building on the success of these initial changes, LBO has set new business goals for the coming year, including more substantial site modifications. "The next 12 months will see critical developments and aggressive marketing of LBO and related sites," says Lakshaman. LBO teams are currently optimizing the mobile site and are working toward integrating social media and video content on the desktop site. And with the additional revenue earned, LBO plans to expand its editorial staff.

Lakshaman says a strong relationship with Google is key to achieve their growth strategy. "Our partnership with Google is characterized by equality, trust and mutual respect." His advice to other publishers? "Develop an honest, transparent and sincere integrated partnership with Google."

