

Global Surfari

Site and SEO Optimization Case Study

Overview

Global Surfari provides seven days surf, weather and tide forecasts for any ocean facing location in the world.

It downloads wave forecast models from NOAA, analyses this data and makes it simple for surfers to access the information.

The site is available online at <http://globalsurfari.com>.

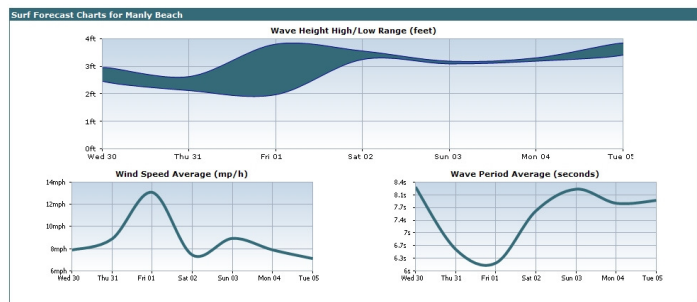
Today's Forecast - Friday, 1st February

Average wave height for today is 3.09ft, with moderate winds and average wave periods. It is going to be showers with top temperatures of 70°F / 21°C and a 50% chance of rain. Sunset is approximately 8:03 PM.

Tomorrow's Forecast - Saturday, 2nd February

Average wave height for tomorrow is 3.36ft, with light winds and average wave periods. It is going to be showers with top temperatures of 73°F / 23°C and a 40% chance of rain. Sunrise is approximately 6:17 AM and sunset is approximately 8:03 PM.

Checkout the [Global Surfari Surf Store](#) for the latest DVDs, Apparel and Surf Equipment.



History


Global Surfari was initially developed in the Northern Hemisphere's summer of 2005. It was developed in PHP.

In mid-2007 Global Surfari was re-built using C# ASP.NET. The sites growth increased dramatically at this time. The rest of this document looks at how this was achieved.



Previous Version

Visitors to GlobalSurfari.com were asked to select an 'area' from multiple drop-downs which covered a majority of locations around the globe. The list was hand edited and was always being modified to add regions that users would request from time to time.



Welcome to Global Surfari!
 Last updated 19-01-06 00:18 UTC
 Data from [NOAA](#). Graphics by [Anhdres](#).

You are currently logged in as gary (alpha). [Logout.](#)

AUS. and NZ	Europe	North America	Pacifica	Favourites
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The regional report covered a large surfing area and provided basic charting functionality. The user could create an account and make this their 'default' report, so on subsequent visits this would be shown. The user could also add it to their 'Favourites' – accessible from the dropdown area.

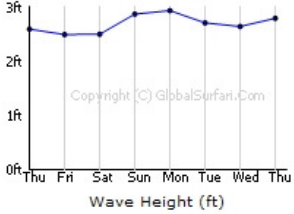
Surf Forecast for AUS - NSW Sydney.

This data was collected from NOAA NWW3 models by the Global Surfari Robot at robot code #13010617. [Add this entry to your Favourites](#) or [Set this entry as your Default.](#)

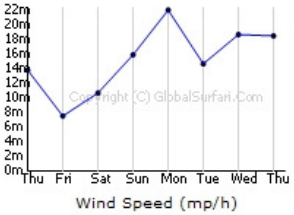
Outlook for AUS - NSW Sydney between Friday 13th January 2006 - Friday 20th January 2006

Forecast Info

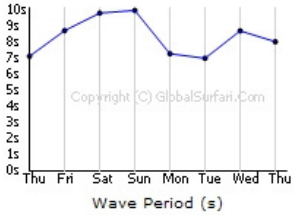
The waves are set to increase over the forecast period. With the best height coming in on Wednesday 18th and the worse on Tuesday 17th. We recommend you give it a look at there should be some good waves for this period.



Day	Wave Height (ft)
Thu	25
Fri	25
Sat	25
Sun	28
Mon	28
Tue	25
Wed	25
Thu	28



Day	Wind Speed (mp/h)
Thu	10
Fri	8
Sat	10
Sun	15
Mon	22
Tue	14
Wed	18
Thu	18



Day	Wave Period (s)
Thu	75
Fri	85
Sat	95
Sun	95
Mon	75
Tue	75
Wed	85
Thu	85

Main Site Issues...

1. The regional based surf forecast predictions was too general, it covered too large an area and didn't give the user the satisfaction of knowing the surf forecast for their home surf break.
2. The charts were too precise and looked tacky in comparison to the artwork of the site.
3. Site penetration was minimal, finding the website was a difficult task because it had yet to gain any reputation in the community.
4. Search engine results were small and for non-generic terms as other surfing websites with higher search rankings covered the top spots for terms such as 'surf forecast'.
5. Work hours had to be put into adding region areas when users requested their region be covered.

...Resolutions

1. Surf report locations could be picked by the user from a map.
2. A cleaner chart, gradient colours, using curved lines and a high/low range option for the wave height made the charts simpler to read as well as provide a richer set of information. Using range charts a surfer could tell if a weather change was occurring on any given day.
3. With the advent of modern day social networking sites, Global Surfari integrated with iGoogle, Facebook and iPhone devices to provide surf forecasts in many different formats whilst keeping its brand image.
4. By giving users the opportunity to pick a surf location themselves, they could also give it a name. These saved locations were then made public. Once indexed by search engines, Global Surfari started to appear on the front page for search results such as "surf forecast manly beach". Thanks to a previous user creating a surf report for the location "manly beach".
5. Users created their own surf reports, administration of regions is no longer necessary.

New Version

The homepage of Global Surfari gives the user step-by-step instructions on how to create their own surf forecast.

Surf Forecasts and Reports

Welcome to Global Surfari, providing free surf forecasts, reports, predictions, weather forecasts and surf accomodation for global surfing locations. Use the map below to select a location for a surf report or [login to access your saved locations](#).

Register

Register Step 1: Use the map to the right to find your home break, drag the pointer as close to the wave as possible (example shown below).



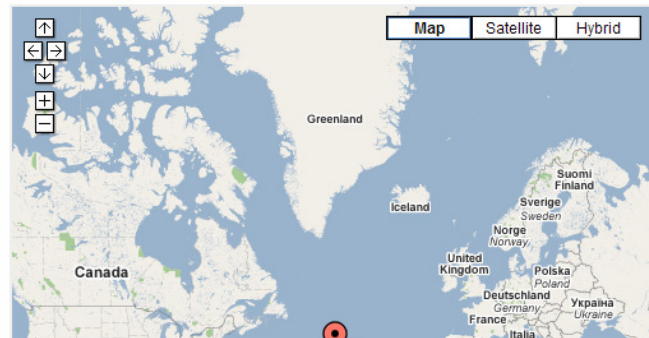
If you have **already done this process** then [login to access your saved locations](#).

Wave Locator

Search the map: e.g. Half Moon Bay, Cocoa Beach, Bondi Beach

Bondi Beach

Search



The page defaults to the users surf forecast, providing they are logged in.

Surf Forecast for Manly Beach

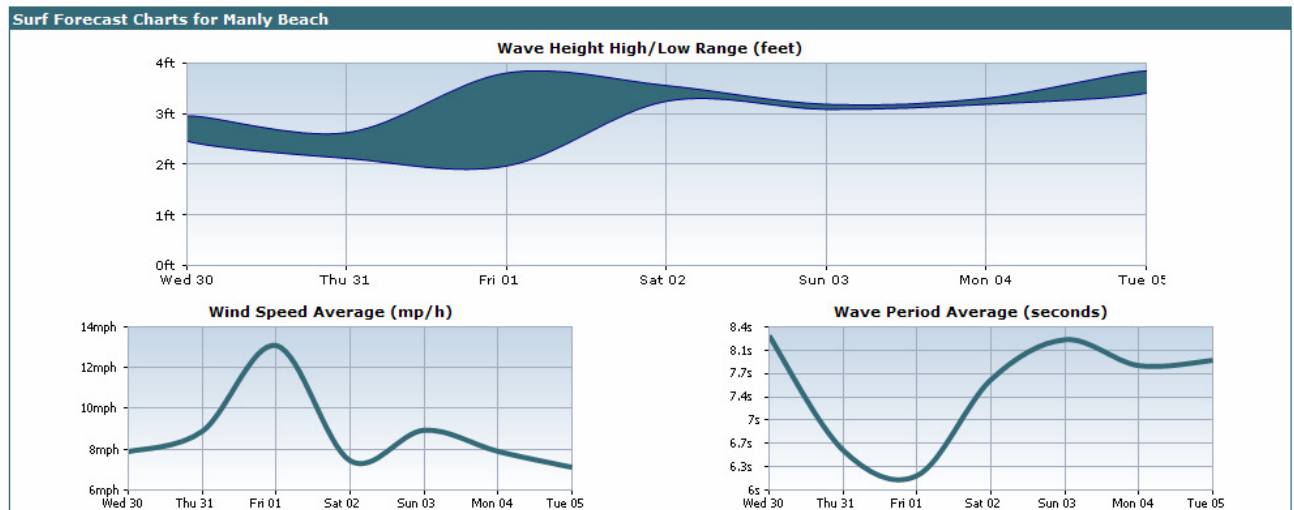
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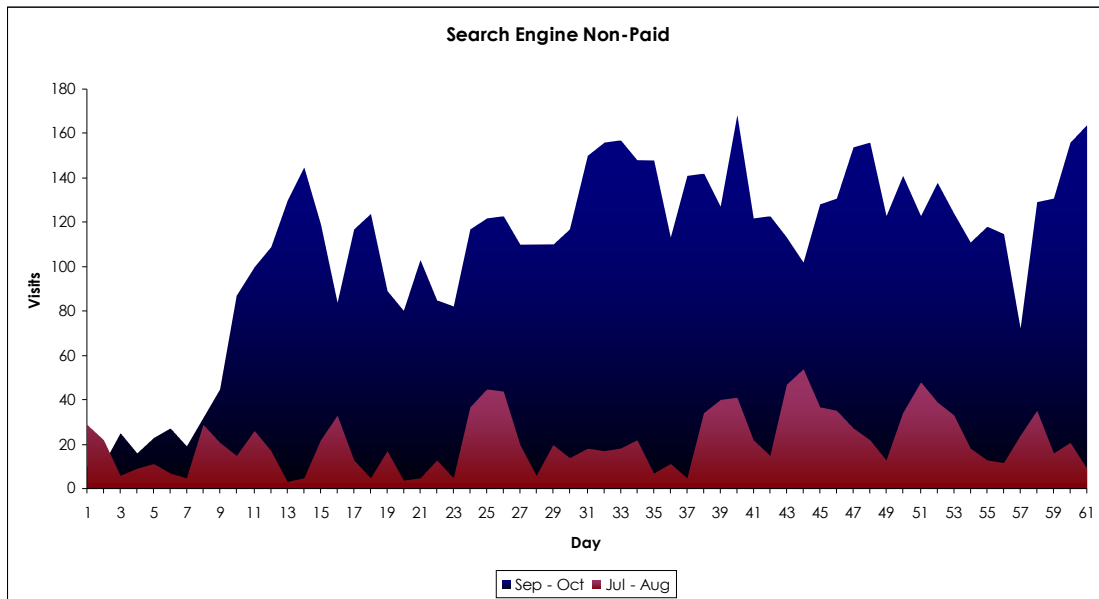


Results

The new site was launched mid-2007, in September of 2007 the SEO and site improvements started to show results.

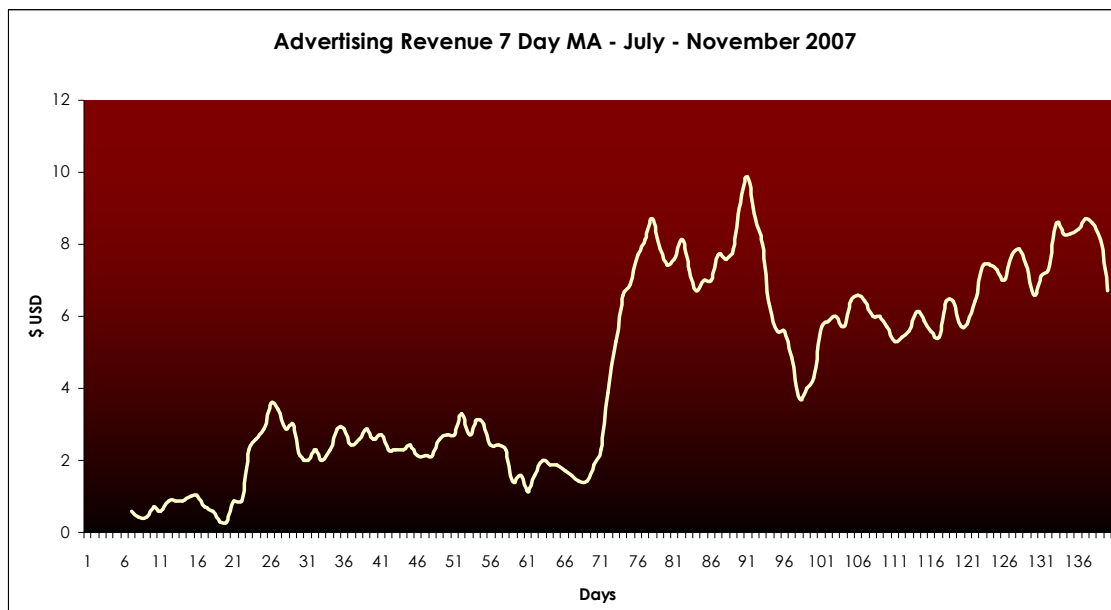
Search

The graph below shows the organic (non-paid) search results comparison for September-October 2007 (blue) and July-August 2007 (red).



Revenue

Global Surfari is supported by Google AdSense advertising revenue. The follow graph shows a seven day moving average daily return for the website, before and after (day 70) optimization was complete.



Conclusion

Global Surfari made its site easier to use and more profitable whilst at the same time reduced the amount of administration hours required to run the site.

All of this was carried by resolving the 5 major issues the site had.

Global Surfari also implemented many of the techniques listed in the technology and site/SEO optimization reports available from <http://builtwith.com>.

