



CASE STUDY

myfitnesspal

Industry

Application: fitness and nutrition

Site

<http://blog.myfitnesspal.com/>

Challenge

Inability to scale, downtime

Results

Improved scalability and uptime, better user engagement

“It just doesn’t go down anymore.”

- Tara-Nicholle Nelson,

VP Marketing, MyFitnessPal

MyFitnessPal Keeps WordPress Blog In Shape With WP Engine

MANAGED WORDPRESS HOSTING HELPS PREMIER NUTRITION TRACKER BECOME A PUBLISHER WHILE GROWING TRAFFIC AND IMPROVING SCALABILITY AND UPTIME

The Company

MyFitnessPal (owned by Under Armor) is a free and easy nutrition and fitness system that helps anyone achieve good health. It is the world’s most popular fitness app and the largest food database. Its goal is to provide powerful tools get you fit...and keep you there.

The Site

MyFitnessPal hosts its “Hello Healthy” blog (<http://blog.myfitnesspal.com>) on the WP Engine platform.



The Challenge

MyFitnessPal found fast success and quickly grew to be the world’s largest nutrition tracker with the world’s largest food database, featuring more than 5 million foods. It now boasts roughly 80 million users in 72 countries, and averages 12 million views per month on its blog (<http://blog.myfitnesspal.com/>). Available online and via mobile app, people use MyFitnessPal to lose weight, set fitness goals, and track what they eat. MyFitnessPal integrates with 80 percent of all mobile devices.

Early on, the company’s blog was the founder’s blog, and it was only available within the app itself. But as the company grew, the blog couldn’t scale to accommodate the company’s swelling number of users. If the company sent an email to its user base, the rush of traffic would cause the blog to crash.

“Every time we would send an email, the blog would go down,” said Tara-Nicholle Nelson, MyFitnessPal’s vice president of marketing.

Nelson said digital health companies all face the challenge of keeping users engaged. MyFitnessPal was no exception. A blog that collapses under the weight of traffic is an ineffective tool to boost engagement. MyFitnessPal needed a solution that would help it scale to accommodate growth, and a reliable blog platform that would bring readers to the site, and keep them coming back.



The Solution

Nelson and her team built out a full-fledged content marketing program designed to engage and reengage its users. The first order of business was to find a platform and an infrastructure separate from the app and re-launch the MyFitnessPal blog. To do so, MyFitnessPal brought in a team of writers to create engaging content. Essentially, MyFitnessPal put a plan in place to become a world-class publisher.

MyFitnessPal chose WordPress, a CMS platform Nelson said was known for being able to drive scale and volume. Then it was time to find a hosting service. Nelson and her team engaged WP Engine, a managed WordPress hosting platform known for the ability to scale to astounding levels. WP Engine offers its proprietary caching technology called EverCache®, which injects massive scalability into WordPress sites and fortifies them to withstand traffic spikes of up to 100 million requests in less than 12 hours.

“I can’t afford for the blog to go down at all,” Nelson said. “I don’t want to think about it.”

Along with a site that’s scalable, speedy, and secure, MyFitnessPal has access to a Support Team comprising more than 100 rigorously-trained WordPress specialists available 24/7 for consultation and advice. And because MyFitnessPal is on an Enterprise plan, the company has a dedicated account manager and premium consultative support to help it grow and plan its infrastructure, and which acts as an extension of MyFitnessPal’s team to help it scale.



The Results

As of January 2015, this new content marketing plan helped transform MyFitnessPal into a dominant online publisher. The company was able to drive 17 million views to the blog in January 2015—which is typically the busiest month due to New Year’s resolutions and diets. Its monthly traffic has ballooned to an average of 12 million views per month. MyFitnessPal went from sending two to three customer emails a year to sending about 20 different newsletter campaigns to its users in January alone. This new blog and email push fueled a 22 percent increase in weekly active users over last year.

Previously, this level of activity and spikiness of traffic would have caused the MyFitnessPal blog to crumble. Now, Nelson said, WP Engine’s managed WordPress hosting platform empowers the MyFitnessPal blog to withstand whatever comes its way, whether a new crock pot recipe goes viral or a hot fitness tip opens the traffic floodgates.

The blog is now quick and responsive. Nelson said traffic is roughly three to four times what it was before migrating to WP Engine, and there are no issues. Working with WP Engine also enables MyFitnessPal to offer its users three ways to get its great blog content. It went from being 100 percent through the app, to a mix of 70 percent via email, 10 percent via social, and 20 percent via app.

The MyFitnessPal team can now post multiple times per day, and send roughly 10 million unique visitors to the blog per month and not worry about downtime or lack of scalability. And the blog maintains lightning fast speeds with no lag, even when thousands of readers simultaneously storm the site.

This success helped make the MyFitnessPal blog a critical engagement site for its users and elevated the brand’s status as a publisher.

About WP Engine

WP Engine is a leading SaaS content management platform for websites and applications built on WordPress. Founded in 2010, the company is headquartered in Austin, Texas and has offices in San Francisco, California, San Antonio, Texas, and London, England.