



SpotMedia.ro: A Content Strategy for Mastering Search Engines

Between September 2023 and August 2024, the [Prague Civil Society Centre](#) supported [Romanian SpotMedia.ro](#) through its [Central Europe Media Resilience Programme](#) with a €50,000 grant. SpotMedia.ro used the grant to optimise its website management, produce evergreen content generating traffic over time, strengthen its social media presence, and explore new revenue streams.

Results of the new strategy:

7.2 million

Monthly page views

35%

Increase in website visits

37%

Increase in social media traffic

66%

Revenue growth

Successful Newcomer to the Media Market

Launched in 2020, SpotMedia.ro quickly established itself as a Romanian media outlet trusted by audiences to provide relevant, accurate, and timely news coverage. It addresses various topics of public interest, from social issues to business and the environment. In addition to hard news, SpotMedia.ro features op-eds and analysis from respected journalists and columnists.

Optimising Content for Search Engines

Among the objectives of the growth strategy adopted with the Prague Civil Society Centre's support were improvements in website management for more efficient internal linking systems and an adjusted layout that allows for better page loading and content visibility, ultimately improving user engagement.

To grow its audience, SpotMedia.ro also focused on identifying the specific requirements of the Google Discover and Google Search platforms, and search trends and preferences of Romanian audiences consuming content through these services. Concerning that, SpotMedia.ro dedicated efforts to improving its search engine optimisation (SEO) by researching Google keywords and testing content writing techniques favoured by Google's Discover.

SpotMedia.ro profile:

- News portal
- Location: Bucharest, Romania
- 15+ employees
- 4.6 million unique monthly visitors of <https://spotmedia.ro/>

Google Discover is a service that automatically displays personalised content to users without requiring them to actively search for it, based on their preferences and online behaviour.

Leveraging this data allowed SpotMedia.ro to develop a well-grounded content strategy to attract diverse audiences and continue growing its reach. Among others, evergreen articles have been integrated into the website, introducing content that remains attractive over time and generates consistent traffic. Between September 2023 and August 2024, journalists wrote more than 500 such articles to reflect the topics of interest and keywords frequently searched by Romanians on Google, as identified through reports from Google Trends and the SEO software Ahrefs, ranging from legal advice to popular tourist destinations.

At the same time, SpotMedia.ro launched an [English version of the website](#) and increased the number of articles they produced. Also, topics for the English website were carefully curated to resonate with potential international audiences, covering, for example, the most important political developments in Romania or performances of Romania's elite athletes (e.g., those of tennis player Simona Halep, footballer Ianis Hagi, swimmer David Popovici, and others). The editorial team produced nearly 50% more English articles than initially planned and focused on enhancing the content quality. This paid off in the form of a surge in citations by prominent international outlets, ultimately leading to an increased score on the website's Domain Authority (59 to 62 on a 100-point scale) over the period from March to August 2024. This metric evaluates the quality, reliability, and search engine ranking potential of a website.

SpotMedia.ro team:

Front row from left to right:

Alexandra Șandru (Coordinator Editor),
Camelia Sîsea (Collaborating Editor),
Oana Dimitriu (Collaborating Editor),
Toni Dumitru (Editor), Cristian Șoitu
(Coordinator Editor), Andrei Pal
(Editor), Alexandru Dan (Collaborating
Editor)

Back row from left to right:

Bogdana Boga (Editor-in-Chief),
Serinela Spătăreanu (Coordinator Editor
& Founder), Irina Olteanu (Coordinator
Editor), Anca Petrache (Collaborating
Editor), Emilian Isailă (Senior Editor),
Magda Grădinaru (Senior Editor),
Gabriel Kolbay (Special Reporter)



Photo: Alexandru Nistor (Photojournalist), SpotMedia.ro

Growing Audience and User Engagement

While the development of evergreen content was initially time-demanding, it ultimately generated solid long-term results once it was indexed by search engines. Key performance indicators (KPIs) include a 35% increase in page views between September 2023 and August 2024, a 20% rise in the number of unique visitors, a 25% increase in average session duration, and a 15% reduction in bounce

POLITICS



Călin Georgescu, in first place in the presidential election race according to latest survey



The Government has modified the voting program abroad: All polling stations will close at 9 PM, Romania time

REDACȚIA
SPOTMEDIA.RO



Romanian Prime Minister announces new rules for the presidential campaign and fines up to 5% of the turnover for platforms that do not comply with them (Video)

REDACȚIA
SPOTMEDIA.RO



Tudorel Toader: I believe that Călin Georgescu should be able to run for president again

HOT ON SPOT

1. Ion Țiriac, a new verdict regarding Simona Halep
2. At the end of his contract with Rangers, Ianis Hagi makes an important decision
3. The press in Italy announces Dennis Man's transfer to Fiorentina
4. Ange Postecoglou reveals why he substituted Radu Drăgușin at halftime

rate, which refers to visitors who enter the site and then leave. All these indicators indicate improved user engagement and stronger reader retention.

At the same time, their social media presence was expanded through an automated system for publishing articles on X and improved performance metrics analysis. Thanks to this, the number of social media followers on the platform grew from 37,357 to 51,171 within a year. In addition, the automated system significantly reduced the editors' workload, allowing them to focus on social media campaigns instead.

SpotMedia.ro is now working to extend this automated system for publishing articles to other social media. The team also continues to explore what additional instruments can be implemented to bolster the outlet's position on these platforms.

Boosting Organisational Efficiency

As part of the optimised procedures, SpotMedia.ro introduced a systematic performance monitoring of the new content and internal reporting, enabling more informed decision-making regarding content prioritisation and ultimately better resource management.

Moreover, among the adjusted internal mechanisms was a reorganisation of the management's roles and overall organisational structure, streamlining some operations. The team producing evergreen content received a designated editor to oversee the production of their articles. Later on, thanks to positive results in the form of revenue growth, SpotMedia.ro was able to hire a new sales manager and a marketing manager.

Increasing and Diversifying Revenues

The introduction of new workflows and editorial guidelines aligned with Google Discover and Google Search requirements supported SpotMedia.ro in securing its position within the Romanian media market and ultimately in reaching financial sustainability.

An indicator of success was a 66% increase in revenue during the project period, along with income diversification through initiatives like the donation campaign, which raised over €15,000. During the campaign running between December 2023 and January 2024, readers could send one-off donations, redirect a portion of their income, or a portion of their business profit.

As part of the Prague Civil Society Centre's support, SpotMedia.ro also received information on new funding opportunities and how to strengthen its fundraising capacities, enabling the outlet to secure additional institutional funding.



Azi în 15'
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 fost anul trecut principala
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 A reușit, cu doar 50.000
 de euro, să treacă pragul
 pentru PE: în stradă, am
 descoperit o Românie...

New Ideas and Improved Public Image

As part of the Prague Civil Society Centre's support, SpotMedia.ro staff participated in several international events, offering development and networking opportunities that enhanced the media's operations. According to project manager Nicoleta Gruia, some of the ideas and strategies behind the success of SpotMedia.ro's donation campaign in December 2023, that raised over €15,000 date back to attending events such as the CEMedia Trends conference in Budapest. In addition to workshops exploring different types of business models and monetisation of content, the event also offered sessions on digital journalism innovations, user needs, and expert-led clinics for personalised solutions to streamline processes within the organisation.

The visibility and brand recognition of the organisation were also boosted by SpotMedia.ro's staff participation in high-profile public events, for example as members of juries at the Gala of Civil Society, and the Romanian PR Award, where the representatives of the outlet promoted civic engagement, and media professional standards and ethics. In addition, SpotMedia.ro's columnist Magda Gradinaru received the U.S. State Department's scholarship for combating disinformation, confirming the trust in the outlet as a respected and independent media organisation. Brand recognition was also positively impacted by the donation campaigns described earlier.

Broader Impact on Society

Through its investigations and editorial initiative, SpotMedia.ro triggered an important public debate that influenced policymakers' decisions and resulted in the adoption of more transparent policies. Among other things, the outlet's reporting pushed local authorities to address campaign financing concerns related to the Bucharest mayor and to adopt more open public communication on the national cloud project.

Moreover, some of the reports brought a broader societal impact. Such as when the Romanian authorities adopted a new Forestry Code that enhances environmental protection in Bucharest. Similarly, when travel conditions in Bucharest public transport and at the Otopeni International Airport were improved following reports on their shortcomings. Similarly, SpotMedia.ro's investigation into fake artworks displayed in the National Art Museum led to the removal of the respective pieces and an official inquiry.



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