KEY TAKEAWAYS

90%

of retail shopping still done in physical stores

"It's difficult shopping right now in physical stores, and one of the reasons why is the data issues — product detail and in-stock information are inaccurate, incomplete or altogether missing. To solve this, we thought it was important to create an online marketplace tool for those physical retail stores, and that's what we are doing with Haystack."
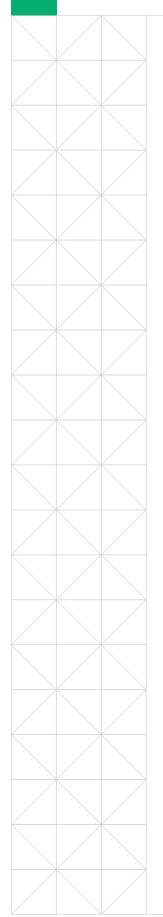
– Rohit Gupta,
Co-creator of Haystack

HAYSTACK

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

How Do Brick and Mortar Stores Compete in an Online World?

Haystack is helping consumers find the things they need, when they need it most, from local brick and mortar stores.

Neustar is pleased to spotlight another of our amazing distribution partners that is disrupting the world of local search for brick and mortar retailers and their customers. You know what it`s like when you need something immediately – that one special tool to finish putting together your new bookcase, the one spice missing from your pantry to complete the new recipe you are making for tonight's dinner, or that time you just moved into a new house and needed a shower curtain? We've all experienced situations like these, where missing these things was a real big problem at that moment. Solving these type of problems is just what two analytics experts are aiming to do with Haystack.

Haystack is a location-based product search engine geared for the 90% of retail shopping still done in physical stores. It makes store shelves easy for users to search for the items they need to buy, and helps merchants reach those customers with an immediate need. People are busier than ever and no one has the time or patience to visit multiple stores to find what they need. With Haystack, you can search for your product, confirm it is available, and visit that location to purchase. It's really a simple but brilliant idea, especially in today's fast-paced world when we expect, and need, shopping to be that easy.

Whether you're looking for a bow tie, baking soda or AA batteries, go to www.searchhaystack.com and type in the item you're looking for. Haystack gives you a list of stores in your area that carry that specific product. No more wasting time calling or driving around to find exactly what you need. After you've found what you were looking for, you can contribute your own review by upvoting or downvoting it on the list. That way, consumers from local communities are working together to improve the quality of product data for their neighborhood.

Using Data to Save Time

Rohit Gupta, a former analyst and trader for Citadel, created Haystack along with Ben Dean, who previously worked as Chief Analyst in the Office of Data Analytics for New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Together, they want to solve a big issue that brick and mortar retailers face today and make it easier for consumers to shop by browsing store shelves remotely.
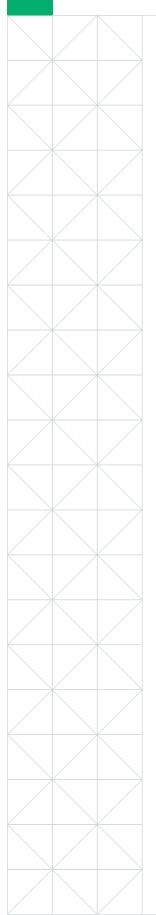
"It's difficult shopping right now in physical stores, and one of the reasons why is the data issues — product detail and in-stock information are inaccurate, incomplete or altogether missing," said Gupta. "To solve this, we thought it was important to create an online marketplace tool for those physical retail stores, and that's what we are doing with Haystack."

Focus on Where It Matters the Most

To date, Haystack has primarily been focused in New York City, but Gupta and Dean are working on expanding into many other major cities soon. Urban areas are very important to them due to the density of brick and mortar retailers and the number of consumers that live in these areas.

Traditional marketing, email marketing and partnership opportunities with small-business associations and local business-improvement districts are some of the ways they have spread the news about Haystack. Gupta and Dean are also looking at partnering with delivery services.

"As many are aware, the last-mile delivery market is very active, and we're hoping to harness that with a data engine for the back end that allows for last-mile delivery from local stores," said Gupta. "This will help those local brick and mortar retailers keep up with online retailers by bringing the ease of doorstep delivery."

The Value of Insight

The way Gupta and Dean have incorporated social contribution and influence into their service really fits well into the social narrative of today's consumers. People rely on and trust reviews more than ever, so bringing that word-of-mouth recommendation online is a true advantage.

There is also a section on Haystack for store owners to sign up to have their business listed on the Haystack site. This gives the store owners the opportunity to enter their inventory, drive traffic to their locations, and stock what customers want. Even more valuable is the consumer behavior insights store owners get about their geographical area by using Haystacks analytics. Haystack provides benefits for both sides of the retail equation, opening a line of communication between consumers and local businesses.

The Importance of Accurate Data

The main concern for the Haystack creators has been ensuring that the data is correct. They can't stress enough the importance of having information that's as accurate as possible.

"It is worse (for us) if a place shows up that doesn't exist, than for us to be missing a place that does exist," said Gupta. "It causes major frustration if you look up Nike shorts and you don't see the Nike store down the street in our search results, but it's still better than showing a place that has closed."

The creators are focused on getting the business and product data right, which will create a trusted, positive experience for their users.

"The Neustar Localeze data is really the backbone of our brick and mortar retailer data," said Gupta. "Local data is very difficult, so we need to make sure a store really exists and that the basic data is correct, including name, website, phone number, etc."

The Localeze data is their primary source for store-level data. Haystack performs some predictive analytics around products they think a store carries to target relationships with new stores. They want to understand in as much detail as possible what kind of store they are. All of the other associated data available through Neustar Localeze is very important, especially the categorization and enhanced attributes.

Neustar Localeze provides the most trusted business identity management service that powers the top search platforms, social networking sites, mobile apps and navigation systems. Our proprietary, continuous optimization process includes rigorous data cleansing, verification, normalization, organization, and synonym mapping to provide accurate, timely, and relevant business information that is distributed to the largest local search platform network in the industry. As the leader in Connection Science, Neustar helps clients grow and guard their businesses with the most complete understanding of how to connect people, places, and things.

We are looking forward to seeing much more from Haystack and are excited to see the next cities available for searching. Learn more by downloading Haystack's iOS App.

For more information, visit   **www.communications.neustar**

About Neustar.

Every day, the world generates roughly 2.5 quadrillion bits of data. Neustar (NYSE: NSR) isolates certain elements and analyzes, simplifies and edits them to make precise and valuable decisions that drive results. As one of the few companies capable of knowing with certainty who is on the other end of every interaction, we're trusted by the world's great brands to make critical decisions some 20 billion times a day. We help marketers send timely and relevant messages to the right people. Because we can authoritatively tell a client exactly who is calling or connecting with them, we make critical real-time responses possible. And the same comprehensive information that enables our clients to direct and manage orders also stops attackers. We know when someone isn't who they claim to be, which helps stop fraud and denial of service before they're a problem. Because we're also an experienced manager of some of the world's most complex databases, we help clients control their online identity, registering and protecting their domain name, and routing traffic to the correct network address. By linking the most essential information with the people who depend on it, we provide more than 11,000 clients worldwide with decisions—not just data.

More information is available at

www.home.neustar

CS-LOC-87381-07.26.2017