

# Case Study

April 2017

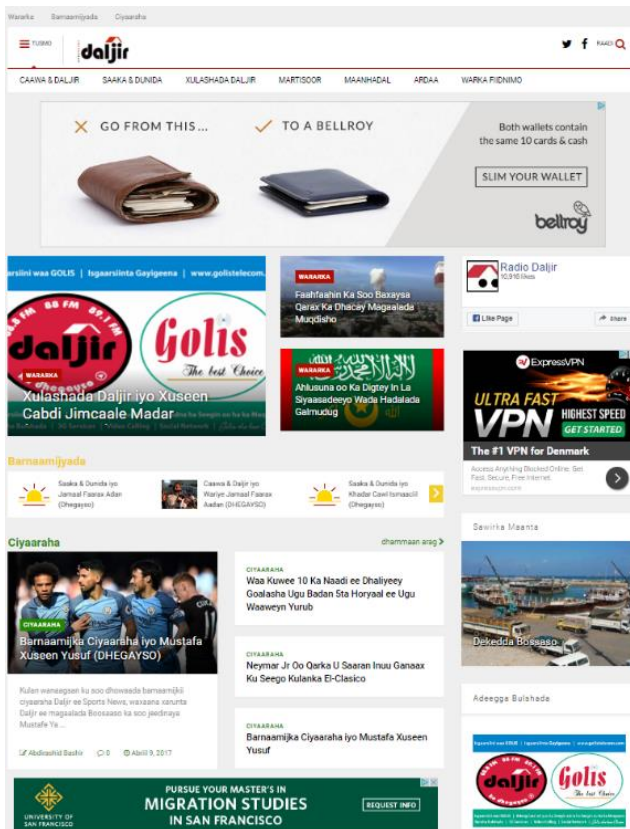
Based in Somalia's self-declared autonomous state of Puntland, and with increasing reach across the country, Radio Daljir has 100-strong team in its seven regional stations and reaches an estimated 4.5m listeners among Somalia's population of approximately 10.5m.



After advising the team in 2015-16 under a media development program led by Fojo Media Institute and International Media Support, Newsgain was asked to assist in the group's digital transformation from 2017.

## A radio station website for growth

On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017, the new Radio Daljir website was launched at <https://daljir.com>, with:



- ✓ Fully responsive pages and ads
- ✓ Audio served by third party
- ✓ Fast page loads
- ✓ Enhanced security
- ✓ Increase in traffic
- ✓ Ongoing optimisations

Senior management at Radio Daljir was strongly engaged in the process, which enabled a great result.

In its first week, **visitor numbers were 37% up** on the previous week and ad revenue started to increase.

Radio Daljir shared some positive listener feedback with Newsgain on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017:

*"The best Somali website ever, design and content-wise"*  
(Radio Daljir listener)

## Tuning into the market

In 2015, Michelle J. Foster - now *Partner, Media Development* at Newsgain - authored a report for Fojo Media Institute on *The Business Environment for Independent News Media* in Somalia. It revealed that more than 70% of the country's population were below 30 years of age and an estimated 38% were literate. Somalia's strong oral culture, coupled with its accelerated access to mobile content and payment services, made it more important than ever for news media to embrace a **mobile-first approach**, with easy access to audio delivery.

With a website based on a custom-built content management system, Radio Daljir had become entirely dependent upon a single web developer for maintenance and ongoing development. The

website generated no income, and traffic levels had not grown since tracking started in 2012. It contained numerous broken links and heavy pages with long load times, under-performing its radio presence and leaving Radio Daljir behind digitally. The website had become fragile, hard to maintain and was seen a source of frustration rather than an opportunity for growth.

In consultation with Newsgain, Radio Daljir decided a WordPress-based website would better enable audience growth, ease of use and maintenance, ongoing adaptation and – of course – monetisation.

## Challenges

During our review of the website's Google Analytics data and other performance reports we found that, because audio programs were playing as MP3 files served directly from the website, they were



slowing down the website considerably and, further, there was no easily-accessible data about their usage. We parsed raw server logs to learn how each program should be prioritised within the new website's navigational structure and page layouts.

Next came the challenge of migrating eight years of content into a WordPress MySQL database format. Broken links were fixed and the content was mapped to the new database.

Web page speed is important globally, but especially so in developing countries. **Users count their kilobytes** of expensive mobile data. Compressing the website's archived images and guiding the team on compressing new images was a focus area.

### *Broken links, poor user experience*

## Creating the new website

Understanding how visitors interacted with the existing website, we proposed several WordPress themes on which to base the new website. Our focus was on sharp coding, great responsive behaviour that worked well on mobile devices, fast page loads and great ad positions.

Starting work in February 2017, by the beginning of March, the website was largely ready. We just needed access to the existing website's hosting, so we could migrate the database and files. On 28<sup>th</sup> March, we gained that access and **within three days** all content was in place.

## A trouble-free launch

A benefit of WordPress is the number of online tutorials available online. Fortunately, key members of the Radio Daljir team already had experience editing in WordPress, so our guidance was limited to content management techniques for an efficient user experience.

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*"It is the first time in the long history of Radio Daljir that we have a knowledgeable and reliable partner in our digital transformation. Thank you, Newsgain!" (Jama Abshir, Managing Director of Radio Daljir)*

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