elastic | rightmove

SUCCESS STORY

UNITED KINGDOM | PROFESSIONAL SERVICES | ELASTICSEARCH, ELASTIC OBSERVABILITY

Elastic is the key to helping Rightmove customers find and buy their dream home

UK's top property platform builds on Elasticsearch foundations to deliver fast, accurate search results to millions of daily visitors.

Watch video

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10x faster query speed
Rightmove customers can now find properties ten times faster than the next best solution.

Five times faster indexing
Rightmove can index property stock five times faster when compared to competitive alternatives.

36 millisecond average query time
The average property enquiry on Rightmove returns results in just 36 milliseconds with Elastic.

If you've ever purchased a home or rented a property in the UK, then you've probably used Rightmove. Rightmove has the largest choice of homes in the UK, and last year 16.4 billion minutes were spent on the platform by visitors who use advanced search tools, powered by Elastic, to find their dream home.

"Our primary goal is to provide the most effective search tools for users and grow this audience," says Andrei Nicusan, Principal Engineer, Rightmove. "A larger user base, in turn, benefits estate and lettings agents, and new home developers who advertise on our platform."

Unlocking extensive search capabilities and features

Elastic has been a key technology partner for Rightmove since 2014, replacing a proprietary search platform, which was complex and hindered the addition of new features. The migration focused on three search priorities, says Nicusan.

Firstly, Rightmove wanted to implement instant property alerts, made possible by Elasticsearch's percolators, which support real-time matching and action triggers. Secondly, it needed comprehensive full-text search, another Elastic strength. Finally, it prioritized geographical search functionality. Elastic streamlines the delivery of rich, map-centric results, a crucial feature given the widespread use of mapping applications for location-based searches like shops, cafes, and hotels.

Rightmove also conducted a benchmarking exercise when evaluating Elastic and other solutions. These included search speed (how quickly properties could be located), indexing speed (how long it took to index a complete property inventory), and cost.

> With our platform hosted on Elastic Cloud and Google Cloud Platform, we're able to leverage a fully managed Elasticsearch as a service solution. This approach has dramatically simplified our deployment, management, and scaling processes.
>
> **Andrei Nicusan**
> Principal Engineer, Rightmove

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Elasticsearch excelled across all these categories, offering ten times faster query speed than the second-best option and requiring five times less time to index Rightmove's entire property stock.

Beyond quantifiable metrics, Rightmove also considered the ease with which developers could implement new features for property searches. Operational simplicity was another key consideration. Nicusan says, "The Rightmove operations team found Elastic straightforward to manage compared with the alternatives, meaning less time spent administering the search platform." When originally considering options Nicusan challenged his team to test various technologies. He says: "We asked several of our engineers to experiment with all the potential search platforms. Their feedback on Elastic was overwhelmingly positive."

With the platform hosted on Elastic Cloud and Google Cloud, Rightmove can take advantage of a managed Elasticsearch as a service solution, simplifying deployment, management, and scaling, allowing the Rightmove team to focus on their data and applications rather than infrastructure. "With our platform hosted on Elastic Cloud and Google Cloud Platform, we're able to leverage a fully managed Elasticsearch as a service solution," says Nicusan. "This approach has dramatically simplified our deployment, management, and scaling processes. As a result, our team can now focus on what matters most—our data and applications—without the burden of managing infrastructure."

Most recently, Rightmove has implemented Elastic's vector database technology, using it to enhance search functionality by making suggestions that users may have overlooked when using the Rightmove app. "It's an important first step," says Nicusan. "We can see plenty of opportunities to expand its use in the organization."

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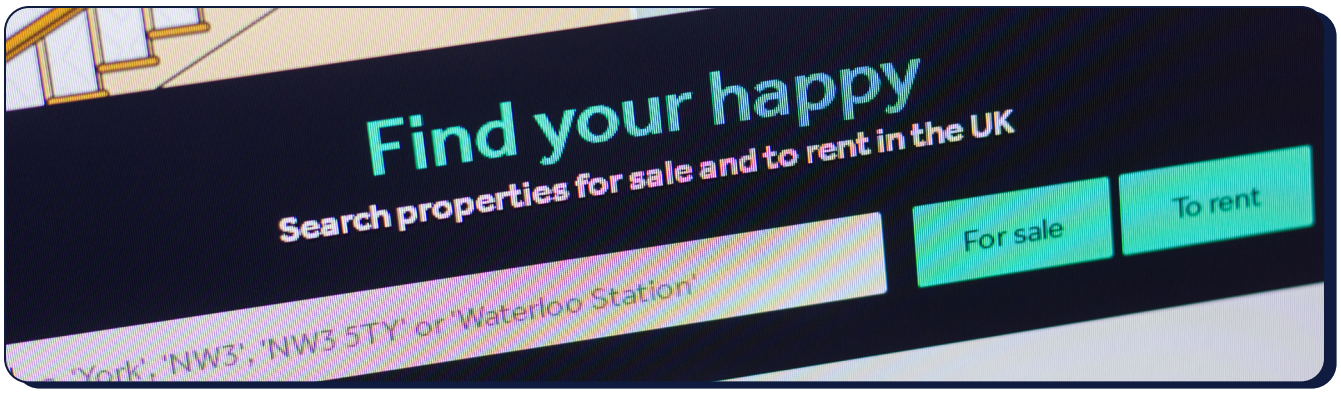

Elastic Observability, keeping the lights on at all times

While Elasticsearch is critical to the success of Rightmove, Nicusan also calls out Elastic Observability, which is used for monitoring and alerting on critical production applications. These applications are based on a microservices architecture, comprising of numerous interconnected application components. Comprehensive visibility across logs and events with Elastic allows Rightmove to track every HTTP interaction between these microservices, resulting in approximately one billion access log entries daily, in addition to application logs.

Along with comprehensive visibility across their complex application infrastructure, Elastic Observability helps Rightmove accelerate problem resolution through proactive anomaly detection and root cause analysis of issues with AI-powered analytics.

“Elastic Observability provides invaluable support for maintaining our live applications, which require 24/7 availability. It means we can streamline root cause analysis and incident response, enabling us to minimize resolution times and deliver a top-notch customer experience,” says Nicusan.

Rightmove customers find dream homes faster

All of these features add up to a first-class experience for end-users searching for properties and for advertisers targeting this audience. The average property enquiry with Elasticsearch returns results in 36 milliseconds, including the round trip. Excluding the round trip, the processing time is reduced to 15 milliseconds even at peak times.

Nicusan highlights the comprehensive support offered by the Elastic team, which includes two dedicated account managers.

“The support we receive is exceptional. The support team understands our business and requirements, so we always get prompt advice and answers,” says Nicusan. He adds: “Even though Elastic is a large organization, the support is high-touch - we know the team by name and always receive swift advice and answers to our queries.”

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Building the future with generative AI

Rightmove is now looking to deploy generative AI features in Elastic to further enhance the user experience. One area is the ability to generate listings information derived from property photographs stored in an archive that dates back to 2000.

"When partners provide property descriptions, the corresponding images often depict textures, objects, and colors that are overlooked in those written overviews," he says. These details can make the critical difference when finding the ideal home. For instance, many users search for properties with kitchen islands or built-in storage, which may be absent from the text. Nicusan says, "Hybrid search, powered by Elastic, can help retrieve properties based on photographic content, returning ever more accurate and useful results to home buyers and renters."

> For more than 11 years, Elastic has been integral to our business. Its speed and advanced search features are fundamental to Rightmove's market-leading platform, the top choice for UK property hunters.
>
> **Andrei Nicusan**
> Principal Engineer, Rightmove

Start your free trial

See for yourself how your business can benefit from Elastic in the Cloud, with a free 14 day trial.

Get started

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