

Objective

Achieve an uplift in online revenue per site visitor.

Solution

Autonomy Optimost Website Optimisation.

Test Subject

The 'choose accommodations', 'guest detail' and 'payment detail' of the Butlins website.

Results

An overall increase in average revenue per customer of 3%.

About Butlins

Butlins, the UK's favourite holiday company, was the forerunner of the holiday centre concept with the first resort opening in Skegness in April 1936. Butlins today has three resorts, Bognor Regis, Minehead and Skegness and opened its first ever resort hotel, Shoreline, at Bognor Regis in 2005 with a second £20m hotel opening at the resort in 2009. The BlueSkies Timeshare complex was launched at Minehead in 2007. Famous for live entertainment, stars such as Girls Aloud, McFly and Ronan Keating have all performed live on stage at the resorts and this November Sugababes and Shayne Ward will be entertaining guests with their live shows.

"Go back" button helped customers increase online bookings



Tests also revealed that it was prudent to include a 'go back' button within the booking funnel at the search stage, but better to remove it at the commitment stages to encourage people to move forward with their booking. Kelton explains, "What we did here was run a test where we found the winner did not have the go back button. Then out of interest and a concern for the user journey as a whole, we ran an A/B test of 'the winner' vs. 'the winner WITH the go back button' and found even further lifts in revenue per visitor and bookings were achieved by including the go back button."

About Autonomy Optimost

Autonomy Optimost helps companies with one of their biggest challenges: creating a compelling, engaging and relevant online experience that delivers measurable business results.

The Autonomy Optimost solution optimises virtually every online marketing element, including landing pages, registration pages, shopping carts, credit card pages, banner ads, email creatives and Web applications as well as every content type within them, including headlines, copy, forms, images and rich media.

Testing with Autonomy Optimost increased average revenue per visitor by 3%

In the ever-competitive holiday market, Butlins is still at the forefront of the holiday industry more than 70 years after Sir Billy Butlin opened his first centre at Skegness. In excess of 1.5m visitors per year visit Butlins with many returning year after year and this summer has seen a boom in bookings as consumers prefer to stay in the UK for their holidays.

Approximately 40% of booking are made online. Butlins is keen to see both overall bookings and the percentage made online continue to increase, while at the same time raising the revenue per customer. Multivariable testing seemed to be key to helping drive continued success.

While many people visit the Butlins site, not all complete a holiday booking. Butlins was aware that the main drop-off points for potential customers were the 'choose accommodation' and 'holiday quote' stages of the site's booking funnel.

Butlins turned to Autonomy Optimost to conduct multivariable testing on this area of the site: specifically on the choose accommodation, guest details and payment details stages. In the past, it had only conducted A/B testing so this was its first foray into multivariable testing.

"We are a very tactical business," says Louise Linder, Head of Web, Butlins, who takes overall responsibility for testing at the company. "We do a lot of sales promotions and prefer to test one offer against another and optimise our campaigns based on live performance rather than purely on experience and gut instinct. We're also focusing on longer term improvements in the booking engine by driving small increases in conversion at each step of the funnel. At the same time, as we hadn't used multivariable testing before we were looking for a high level of service, consultancy if you like, based on experience."

Multivariable testing achieved an increase in progression from the choose your accommodation page to the next one of 7.4%, and an overall 3% increase in average revenue per customer.

Linder is pleased with the results, and impressed by Autonomy Optimost's performance. "Ultimately, it is all encouraging more people to book whilst providing the best possible customer experience. We have made several small improvements that have added to our ROI," she says. "This is a company that can turn things round quickly, is very proactive, and has lots of experience."

Greg Kelton, Autonomy Optimost Managing Director adds, "In a very tactical market like the holiday sector with multiple offers changing weekly, multi-variable testing is fantastic insurance that the ultimate offer will be delivered in the optimum way to every potential new customer."

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