

## **Checking In On Checking Out: easyJet takes a Flight of Discovery with WebTrends**

*“WebTrends are great when it comes to looking forward; they are very flexible in terms of what we want to do. In a very fast paced industry, every time we launch a new piece of software we think how are we going to get the best of it and how are we going to report against it. WebTrends can do more or less what you want to do although it might take time to figure out specifics.”*

**Andrew Berks, head of marketing services, easyJet**

### **BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY**

Andrew Berks, brand communications manager at easyJet, joined the leading low-cost flight operator 18 months ago with a primary objective to ensure the health of its most vital channel – easyJet.com. To ensure that the site remained in good health in the highly competitive online travel environment, easyJet had to gain complete visibility of the exact number of users logging on and in turn how efficient the business had been at ‘converting’ those people from ‘lookers to bookers’.

Berks comments, “More than 95% of easyJet’s business comes through its global websites. It’s just such a massive channel for us.”

### **BUSINESS CHALLENGE**

Berks states, “Our history of web analytics has always been based around web Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and measuring the basic success of marketing activity in attracting visitors to our site. The next stage was to then optimise our site’s performance, so that we actually converted those people as they arrive.”

The WebTrends analytics solutions were therefore brought in, after a round of rigorous testing against other vendors’ offerings, to monitor user behaviour within easyJet.com, the main site for easyJet’s core business, and also the recently launched holidays.easyJet.com, a site that packages hotels and flights together. There are 18 language versions of easyJet .com, and an additional 6 language versions of holidays.easyJet.com, and each of those 24 different sites are now reported on through WebTrends.

### **RESULTS**

Once easyJet had gone through the implementation of the WebTrends solution, the first immediate benefit it recognised was in evaluating the efficiency of the ‘booking funnel’; a

series of individual web pages beginning with identifying a flight and culminating in completing payment. Berks comments, "Once people have hit the landing page, we wanted to help them move from a flight search, to actually booking their tickets."

For example, while promoting ancillary products such as easyJet car rental and hotel products alongside a flight purchase, Berks and his team were able to look at the manner in which offers were presented. "We noticed that the 'dwell time' per step went up significantly on the promotion-heavy pages within the booking process and quickly realised that we needed to be very careful about inundating users with offers." So easyJet redesigned the display of its secondary products to ensure that it was presented more clearly and simply to the consumer. As a result easyJet not only observed an increase in conversions for those products (specifically a 38% increase in the take up of the car rental offering), but also a decrease in dwell time within the booking funnel, vindicating the fine tuning of the pages and revealing that people were now moving through the site more efficiently. "Something that just wouldn't have been possible without bringing in this tool," comments Berks.

The key for Berks and easyJet is constant improvement in the online space. "The market generally perceives that easyJet has a good booking process. It's interesting because as a business we look at it with a far more critical eye than anyone else does. But when you actually talk to consumers and to our peers in the online travel space, the easyJet site is recognised as a good example of booking best practice." In this respect easyJet was keen to constantly develop and continually optimise the performance of the site and working with the WebTrends analytics platform enabled this on a regular, even hourly basis. Berks comments; "Although the five steps that make up the booking funnel probably didn't change significantly, it was absolutely crucial that we constantly monitored and in turn subtly improved the success of those pages, and WebTrends is instrumental in measuring that."

Understanding user behaviour is at the forefront of the relationship between easyJet and WebTrends. easyJet already knew that traffic peaks in January and remains high for the first few months of the year, before slowing down as summer approaches. There are also peaks again in September as people come back from their summer holidays and feel the immediate draw of the places they have left behind. Berks comments, "These are all things that we already knew before adopting the WebTrends solution, but now we can drill down to the next level of detail." This allowed easyJet to see what was happening in regard to traffic on individual days and even at different times of the day, and observe patterns in the way people not only logged onto the site, but also exactly when the bookings were occurring. In easyJet's case lunchtime was revealed to be a significant traffic period, as people sit at their desks and research how to escape the UK for a week or two. However in terms of actual bookings, the majority seemed to occur in the evenings, revealing that users were searching at work and then taking home ideas, talking them through with their partners, and then returning to the site

to actually book. Berks says, "We can now reveal not only the traffic peaks but also what the individual behaviour is. This is invaluable information in developing the site to accommodate the behaviours identified by the analytics reports."

Once the preserve of backroom IT staff, web analytics reports are now of interest to a broad variety of people within an organisation, and a targeted set of reports are sent regularly throughout easyJet's wider business. Berks explains, "There is a monthly KPI report which gets sent through to the commercial director and his management team. Beyond that individual marketing managers are looking at the performance of the site they manage in their region. So the UK marketing manager is responsible for the English language site and activity within that, as well as considering how to drive people through the site to conversion. The revenue and web management team on the other hand receive reports on what people are actually searching for, right down to specific departure dates. These teams are trying to understand the relationship between pricing and demand in terms of how many bookings easyJet actually sell in a day, and if they are tweaking pricing how that will affect conversion on certain routes."

In Berks' opinion the sky really is the limit when it comes to how far the WebTrends solution can permeate throughout easyJet's online business. So although his original brief for the analytics solution of general KPIs and measuring traffic overall is still key, he has come to realise there is real power to be harnessed in the campaign management tool. "We are starting to look at some of our online display campaigns and how we can get those 'tagged up' to enable tracking. It's very early days for us in that space but we can see it as a real opportunity to start understanding what levers those campaigns are pulling."