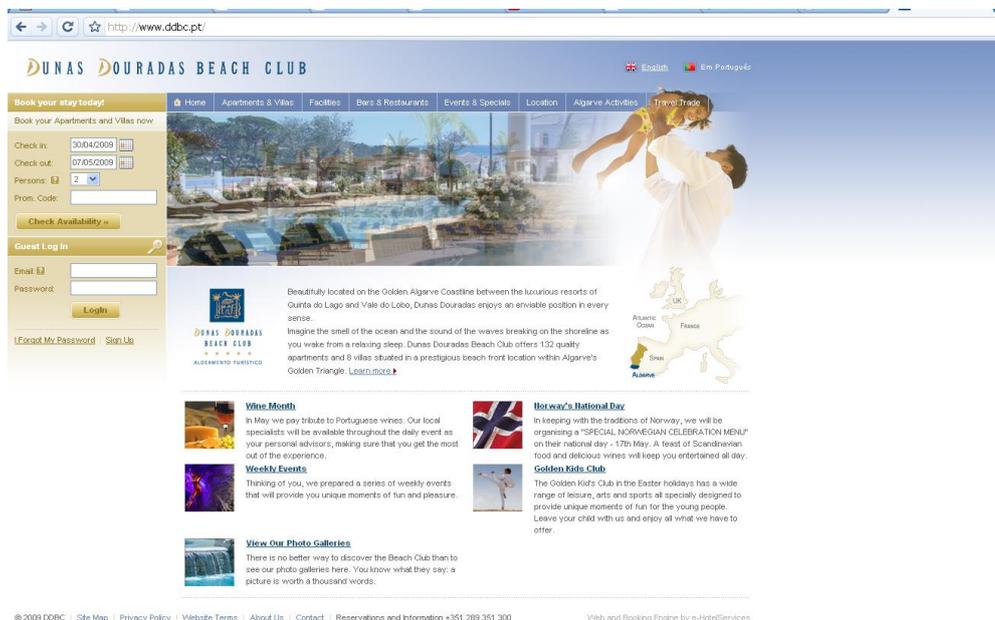


CASE STUDY: HOW TO MARKET A NEW ENTRANT TO THE MARKETPLACE?

CLIENT:

Dunas Douradas Beach Club is a 5-star luxury resort in the Algarve on the Southern Coast of Portugal. The resort has 132 apartments and 8 villas. The resort also has 2 restaurants, 2 bars, a fitness centre, aqua spa with steam rooms, sauna, Jacuzzi, indoor and outdoor infinity pools and full hotel services. Its official opening was at the end of September 2008, though work on the website started in May 2008.



THE CHALLENGE:

When starting our contract in 2008 this is what we were up against:

- The resort was a new entrant to the marketplace.
- There was no pre-launch or opening marketing.
- It had a new website and URL with no online visibility or history.
- Dunas Douradas Beach Club faced tough competition.
- There was little to no off-season demand for the Algarve.
- The economic downturn had negatively affected demand.

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THE SOLUTION:

Our first step was to go to the Algarve to see the resort and its facilities. We also spent time speaking with the resort's management and staff to understand their vision and strategies for the new resort. This way we could make sure that the online marketing would be an extension of the resort's desired image and service levels and ensure that we mimic and ameliorate their strategies into the online sphere. Our team also:

- Analysed the marketplace and competitors' activities.
- Analysed target markets for the Beach Club and made sure the website would address each market individually.
- Clarified objectives for e-marketing, online sales and web management.
- Built the website on SEO and Search engine Best Practices.
- Implemented other e-Marketing activities (detailed below).
- Additionally our team of experts were in charge of creating and implementing a fully-integrated resorts property management system (PMS) with an online booking engine which would integrate with their website.

The team worked on creating both short and long term activities, which would positively affect the DDBC online ranking and revenue-generating potential. Implementation included:

SEO Activities:

- We identified the most relevant keywords.
- Implemented meta data and tags to the html code of all pages.
- Added unique and fresh content in a timeline to help organic ranking.
- Created and implemented a linking strategy.
- Created a blog and updated this periodically.
- Implemented SEO best practices.

PPC Activities:

- Completed comprehensive keyword research.
- Analyzed and periodically monitored competitors' keyword activities.
- Monitored visitors' behavior and created campaigns and ad groups according to each market segment.
- Began paid search on several search engines.

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Social Media Marketing:

- Created a blog for the resort.
- Made a Facebook group and Twitter profile which both now have a wide following.
- Used YouTube to distribute videos.
- Monitored all online reviews and ensured responses were issued.
- Created a “Social Dunas” page on the resort’s website to integrate all social media activities.

THE RESULTS:

The following is a review of results over the course of a year (from when the website went live in May 2008 to May 2009):

- More than 40% of all bookings are generated via the resort’s website.
- Website traffic has increased over 30% month-on-month since the start of 2009.
- Traffic increased by over 350% since last year and continues to increase.
- Over 75% of all website traffic is organic (as a result of the SEO strategies and measures implemented).
- The implementation of search engine optimisation has increased traffic ranking and PageRank to 6 within one year.
- Pay per click conversion and click-through-rates (CTR) are above industry average even compared to the major online travel agents.
- Social Media channels and the blog have created a buzz, driven traffic and increased conversions to the resort’s website.
- We have maintained a PPC conversion rate of between 1.6% and 4.1% depending on the month
- The return-on-advertising spend (ROAS) for 2008 in off-season was over 1,300% and for the first quarter of 2009 this nearly doubled to 2,442%.

As this case study proves, when all areas of e-Marketing work together over time combining paid-for and organic activities, returns are great not only in terms of cost savings and revenue increase, but also in terms of customer ownership, customer relationship management, and inventory & price control.

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