

Visitcalifornia.co.uk Developments

December 2009

Program Description

Visitcalifornia.co.uk is the official Web site serving visitors to California from the U.K. and Ireland. Launched in December 2007, the Web site has been the call to action for CTTC's trade, consumer and marketing initiatives in these countries.

To allow greater content and resource sharing, CTTC migrated the visitcalifornia.co.uk site over to the platform used for the domestic site, visitcalifornia.com. This process allowed CTTC to refresh the U.K. site, adding new features and upgrading the consumer experience.

Target Audience

The target audience for visitcalifornia.co.uk are U.K. and Irish consumers planning a vacation to California or exploring California as a potential travel destination.

Objectives & Reach

The following are key highlights of the migration process.

Content localization

A comprehensive and structured localization exercise was carried out to identify content that required changing to suit the local audience and alter it appropriately. All sections and items were individually reviewed, with copy and layout changes implemented thereafter.

Maps & Guides order form

A new ordering form was created to integrate with CTTC's dispatch agency's order processing system. The system has been tested and found to work well. A new "Sign up for our newsletter and special offers" section in the form allows consumers to receive information on the latest California deals and offers.

Newsletter sign-up mechanism

Consumers can sign up to receive a newsletter through the home page of the new site, like in the older version, and will be automatically added to CTTC's consumer database. A confirmed opt-in mechanism was also added to make the database clean and usable for carrying out future consumer campaigns. Further, this is in accordance with local data protection laws, which state that all mailing lists must be double opted in.

Deals page

The deals page is a great asset to help convert inspired and informed consumers into actual sales as quickly as possible and to show our support for the U.K. and Irish travel industry. Strong offers are presented in an attractive manner clearly highlighting booking links and hotline numbers. Moving forward, a dynamic deals page will be developed, which will offer the ability to randomize the presentation of deals and enhance the search function.

Ad Server and Trade Advertising

CTTC's existing ad server will be used to deliver ad banners to the new U.K. site. Existing ads on various pages will be replaced by banners from approved travel trade partners and airlines in return for an agreed increase in their promotion of California product.

Analytics

Google Analytics has been employed to record visitation statistics and analyze search trends. Tracking codes have been installed and configured so as to have continuous and consistent reports on site traffic and visitations. This will also allow CTTC to compare stats and review performance during the post-migration phase and to assess any SEO implications of the move.

Search Engine Optimization

We will continue with our SEO initiatives, which include adding metadata to all pages and submitting links to online directories such as DMOZ, Thomson Local, 192.com and yell.com.

Redirects

Any broken inbound links will now be directed to the home page of the new site instead of a "Page Not Found" error message, increasing time on site, convenience, and consumer satisfaction.

Social bookmarking

CTTC is working with its interactive agency, Sapient, on placement of social media bookmarking buttons on the U.K. site. This will allow us to harness social media to increase organic traffic to the site, and also will allow consumers to easily share the content they like or think is useful.

Results & Accomplishments

The migration has significantly enhanced the content and look and feel of the VCA UK site and facilitated use of the entire gamut of resources that have been already developed and will be developed in future. This will lead to greater brand uniformity across all sites and VCA UK will continue to serve as an information repository.

Reports on site visitation will be provided when adequate stats post the migration are available. Initial figures have been very promising and if the trend continues, we will be able to make significant savings on our PPC spend.

Program Contact(s)

Leona Reed
Senior International Marketing Director
916.319.5434
lreed@visitcalifornia.com

