

Developing a winning search strategy for your travel agency



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www.simplyclicks.com/Travel.html

Travel Agent SEO



Experience

- Stena Line, Cosmos, Carlsberg
- Created the Somewhere2stay.com brand
- 9+ years specialist involvement in search
- 300+ search engine marketing projects
- Travel SEO for hotels and niche tour operators
- SEO & PPC training for SMEs to Multinationals
- Working in highly aggressive search categories
- Most importantly, spoke here last year

Objectives

- Re-cap where we left-off last year
- Highlight some of the issues that came up in discussion post-presentation.
- Update you on developments in the search space over the past 12 months.
- Provide guidance on how you can best use your *time and resources* to **generate value**.

No Cost Recommendations

1. Register your website with DMOZ - £0
2. Secure your Google Place page - £0
3. Optimise it - £0
4. Generate reviews - £0
5. Create a Blogspot blog - £0
6. Create a Wordpress blog - £0
7. Put analytics in place - £0
8. Join a link exchange scheme - £0
9. Join LinkedIn - £0
10. Set-up a Facebook wall page - £0
11. Join Twitter - £0



Parting thought

- Turn search engines into revenue engines



Feedback 2011

- ***David, Thanks. But I:***
 1. Can't compete with the big boys.
 2. Haven't got the time for search marketing.
 3. Don't have the budget for a serious online presence.

1. Competition

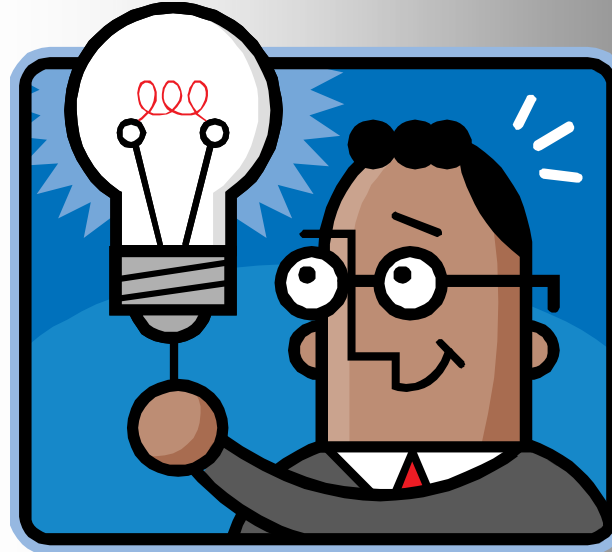
- You are not competing directly with Thomson or Thomas Cook.
- You are not competing directly with principals or the big travel brand owners.
- You are not competing with a travel agent 200 miles away.
- You shouldn't be competing.....

Differentiating

- You should be differentiating!
- Differentiation means **deviation** from the **norm** in a way that **customers value**.
- In the context of today, we are talking about **differentiating** your online presence *as a provider* of *travel services* to your *chosen markets*.
- How do we do this with search?

Differentiating

1. Think local
2. Be smarter
3. Act quicker
4. Personalise
5. Become a ***travel brand*** in the markets you ***choose to serve.***



Smarter Marketing

- Marketing isn't a linear process
 - An assumption that the conversion process is singular, continuous and one way.
- Multiple touchpoints – Online and offline
- Multiple interactions – Repeat visitor value
- Think value activities and value networks rather than value chains.
- Search can put your website at the centre of a value network.

Search Marketing

- More than rankings on Google
- More than volumes of visitors on your website.
- Not a stand alone activity
- Search should integrate with all other aspects of your online and offline marketing activity.

More Search Opportunities

- Since I last spoke here. Search has become more:
 - Local
 - Mobile (3 to 25%)
 - Real time
 - Interactive
 - Personalised

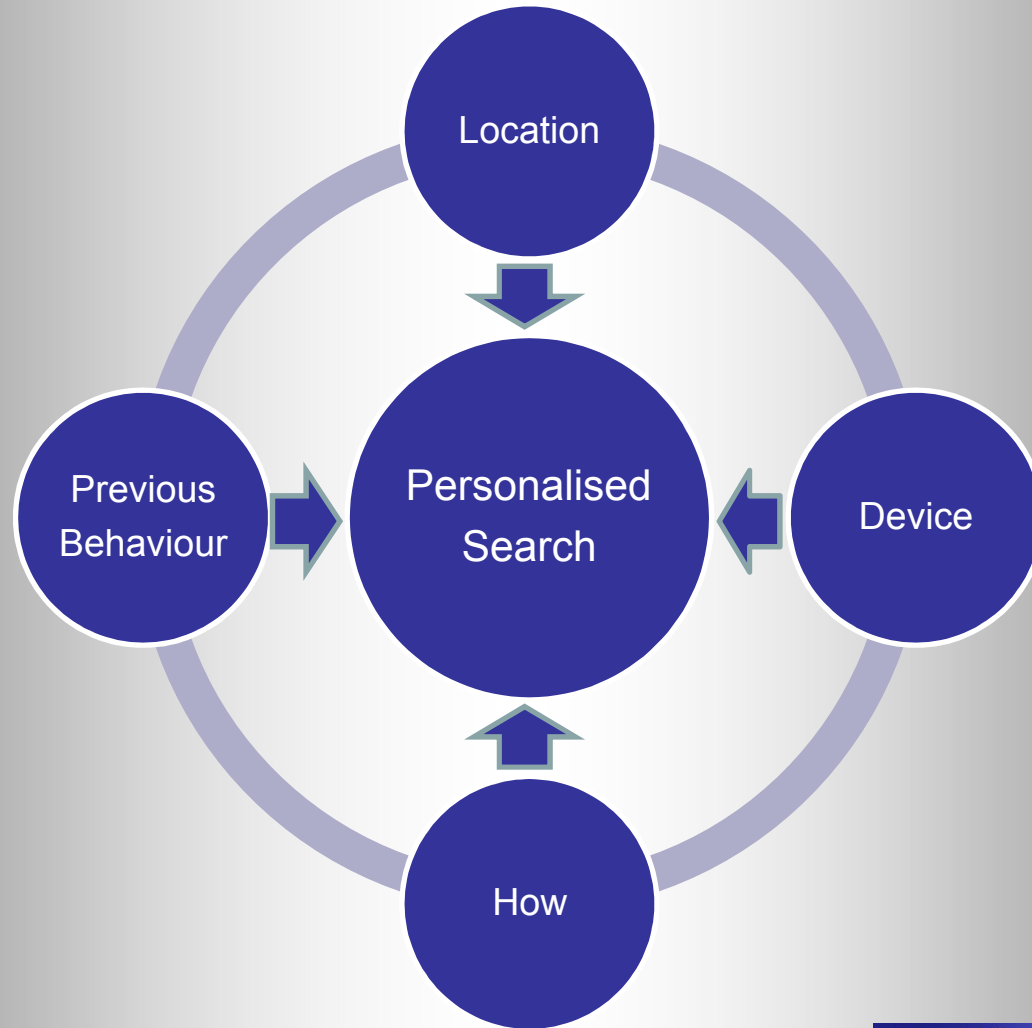


Search is Changing

- Personalisation
 - Previous behaviour determines the search (and advertising) results you are shown.
- Mobile
 - Always on, always with you
- Local
 - Where you are, what you are doing, the device you are using.



Personalised Search



2. I Don't have Time for SEO

- You're an entrepreneur not an employee.
- Free choice over time usage
- Mental bandwidth is finite
- Whilst you're wasting time you're not creating value.
- Focus time on those activities most likely to yield business improvement.



Finding and Generating Value

- Specific searches
 - The more specific the search, the more *likely* it is to convert.
- Brand searches
- Quantity searches
- Budget searches
- Time related searches



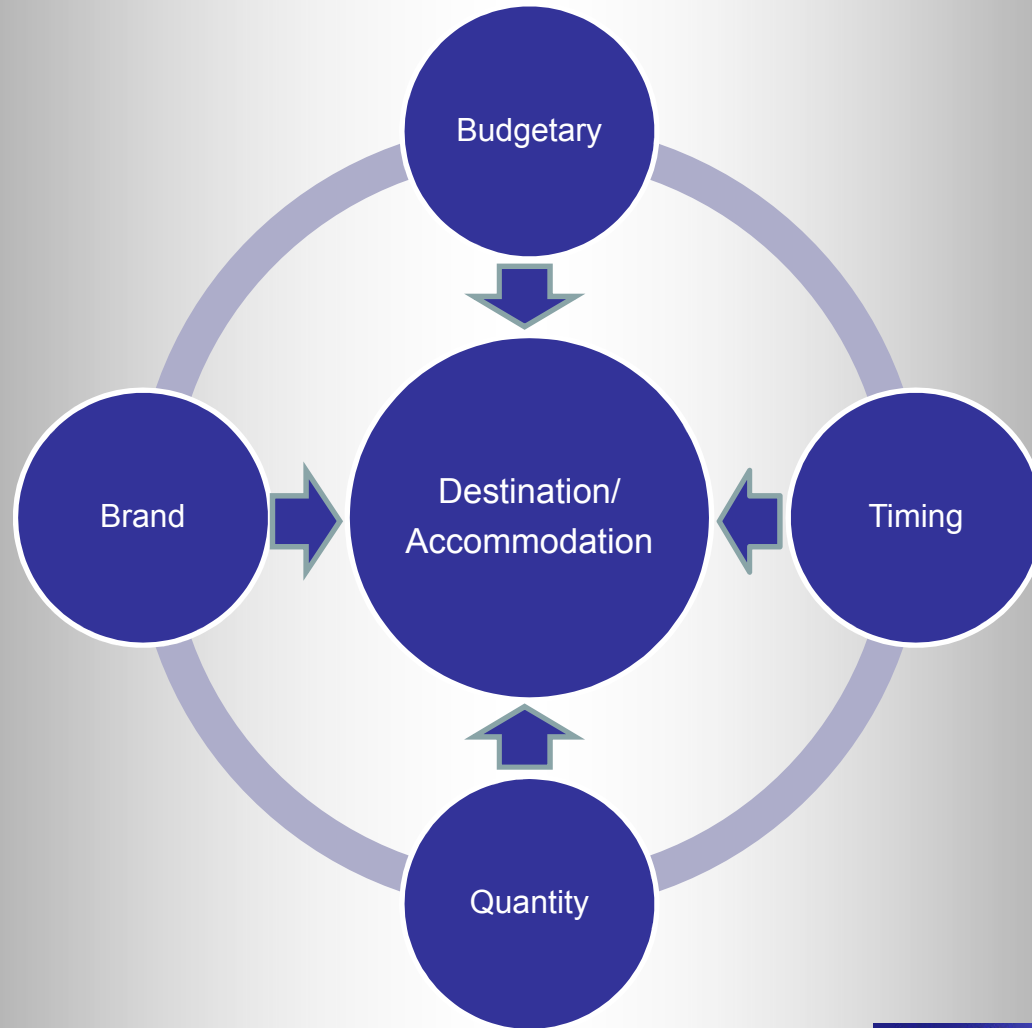
Measuring Value

- Almost all online activity is trackable and measurable.
- Limitations in the measurement system – Be pragmatic.
- Analytics tends to measure the behaviour of machines rather than people.
- Conversion takes place in the mind of the prospect not on the screen.

Search Intent

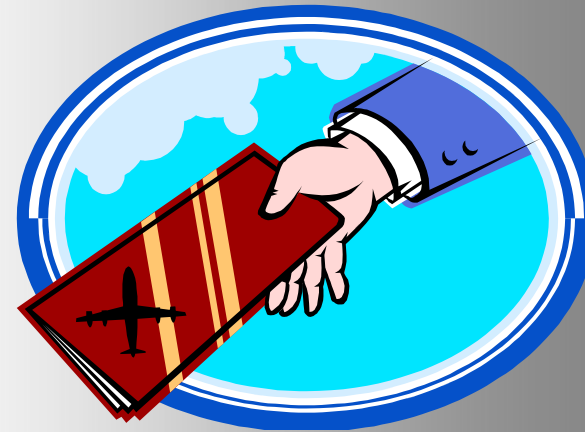
- Each search term provides information content about the searcher.
- Most importantly, the search term conveys the *intent* of the searcher.
- Not just what, when, where and how but also the *likelihood* or *readiness* of the searcher to **buy** or make a **serious enquiry**.

Search Information Content



A Search Need

- I want a holiday for n people
- In n months time
- To go to x destination
- With x brand
- And costing £n



Conversion

- The more specific the search the smaller the volume. But:
 1. Conversion improves
 - All Croatia searches 2.11%
 - Dubrovnik searches 3.24%
 - Brand searches 3.68%
 2. It's better to rank no.1 for a smaller term than no.10 for a bigger term.

Brand Related Searches

- Searches for your business name
- Searches for the products you market
- Searches for the products someone else has branded.
- Searches where people have already mentally started the buying process.

3. Money

- I can't afford to develop a search presence



Beds on Legs

- An independent bed retailer based in Yorkshire.
- In 2011, generated £73 in additional revenue for each £1 spent on SEO.
- Average search = £5 revenue
- “Silentnight” search = £8
- “Oberon” search = £12
- “Beds on Legs” search = £16

Completely Croatia

- Specialist tour operator owned by Alison Jago.
- < February 2011, dependant almost exclusively on paid search.
- March 2012, majority of new customers generated by organic search.
- Savings, after fees, worth £35k per annum

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Recommendations 2012

- Set-up a Blogspot Blog
 - Free. But domain. £8 for 2 years
 - Learn how to use and optimise
 - Create and link content to main site
- Set-up a WordPress Blog
 - Buy own domain £8 for 2 years
 - Arrange own hosting From £25/year
 - Learn how to use and optimise
 - Create and link content to main site

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