



About Twiddy

- Vacation rental site
- Outer Banks of North Carolina
- www.twiddy.com

Goals

- Communicate to users a sense of urgency based on market demands
- Translate urgency into higher revenue

Approach

- Used real time API to query the number of active users on key pages in the search funnel
- Displayed the number of active searchers
- Updated data every 10 seconds

Results

- Increased revenue by 18.6%
- Increased average value of order by 11%
- Increased conversion rate by 7.9%

Vacation firm used number of active visitors to create a sense of urgency.

Overview:

Twiddy & Company is in the experience business, furthering the great American tradition of family vacations. They're a family owned vacation rental company that manages 982 privately owned homes on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, primarily dedicated to renting vacations to families in the summer.

A tradition in Southern Hospitality since 1978, Twiddy & Co. represents close to a billion dollars in real estate investments.

Challenge:

Twiddy & Co. want to keep visitors on the page for as long as possible, to show guests that they are competing with other visitors for these homes. If visitors wait too long to book, they may not get their first-choice rental. Twiddy & Co. has used Google Analytics for a long time as their web analytics solution, and have always been impressed with its capabilities.

Vacation rentals represent a supply of a perishable product. Over the years, the transparency of supply through the website put all the leverage into the guests' hands. The closer we get to the time of occupancy, the more the guests can negotiate. Twiddy's owners were sacrificing revenue by not always filling rentals. Using Google Analytics allowed the company to revisit this model. Displaying the number of visitors in real-time showed others what the competition was for that week. The Real Time API produced this sense of urgency and more listings started booking sooner and at higher amounts.

"Before Google Analytics, our web site was based on the two principles of marketing: booze and guessing. It worked for Don Draper, but we weren't that smooth. We could never figure out what was working or failing. Google Analytics was easy to install and easy to understand. Our learning curve accelerated immediately. We quickly started re-allocating resources to improve our guest experience. "

- Ross Twiddy



Solution:

Twiddy & Co. used the Google Analytics Real Time API to query the number of active visitors. They identified the pages where they thought this would have the most impact, and then designed a widget that would display this in a visible, but unobtrusive manner on the website. The Real Time API was queried server-side, using the DotNet client library to access the data, caching and refreshing every 10 seconds. For tracking purposes, a customized Google Content Experiment was set up to segment the visitors into two groups; one group would be eligible to see the real-time data on the page, and the other group would not.

The Google Analytics package allowed Twiddy to control what metrics dictated success. The owners of Twiddy know their business better than anyone else, and Google Analytics provided the tools needed to fully unlock the use of data to improve it. The ensuing results were clear. Twiddy & Co. were able to quickly look at the test results and identify what was working and by how much, creating an executive report that anyone in the company could comprehend.

Results:

National chains have a call to action or incentive, and using the Real Time API allowed Twiddy to have the capabilities to compete. They were able to capitalize on the traffic to the website, since showing how many other folks are looking at a similar search shows the demand stream. This creates a sense of urgency, similar to an online auction.

In the slowest booking period of the season and also during the slowest demand period of the year, Twiddy saw a positive reaction from the market. Not only did revenue increase 18.6%, but the average order value increased 11.9% and the conversion rate increased 7.9%.

About Google Analytics

Google Analytics is the enterprise-class analytics solution that gives companies rich insights into their digital audiences and marketing effectiveness. With features that are powerful, flexible, and easy-to-use, companies large and small can measure engagement to create more effective marketing initiatives, improve user experience, and optimize their digital strategies. Sophisticated conversion attribution and experimentation tools help savvy marketers determine the best allocation of media and resources to drive results. For more information, visit google.com/analytics