B2B Marketing AWARDS 2012 FINALIST

Creating Online Success

Best Website

“Life is Local”

Agency: 9xb.com

Client: Cityvisitor

URL or microsite: www.cityvisitor.co.uk

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Summary

Renowned UK business directory Cityvisitor has led the field in online business marketing for 13 years but increased competition saw it rapidly falling behind other providers.

9xb was commissioned to reinvent the brand and website and return it to its position as the number one choice for businesses wanting to promote themselves to potential customers in local online searches.

Competitor analysis and research involving business and consumer users led to an informed strategy incorporating design, functionality, search and social techniques.

Central to the initiative was a design that incorporated a microsite for each city giving users easy access to local services and offers. A new strapline *Life is Local* was used to support the shift to localised marketing and branding.

Increased visibility, online marketing and an easy to use content management system for business users has already driven up business to business sales by more than a third.

Engagement tools and data collection have increased the number of registered consumer users twelvefold, a factor that has further enhanced the appeal of the site to business users.

About the client company

Cityvisitor is an established online business directory owned by Infoserve and already enjoyed a strong presence within search engines with both home page and internal content commanding high value and over 11 million first page Google results delivering 25 million unique visits a year.

Strategy – broader business issues the company is facing

The site started to lose market share prompting a rethink of its entire online and B2B marketing strategy.

9xb set out to develop a framework that evolves the organic search presence of the Cityvisitor brand by moving into a local context. A shift was made towards providing online marketing services to users and businesses at a local level, providing more information based on user locality.

The strategy focussed on delivering a brand that was more appealing to consumers and businesses, positioning the Cityvisitor website as a leading resource for online marketing.

Objectives of the campaign

- Engage with individuals and encourage interaction and word of mouth recommendation.
- Understand SMEs and communicate with them in easy to understand business language.
- Strengthen the visibility of the site at a local level.
- Raise the national visibility of the brand on two fronts. Online to improve brand representation across all searches and drive more interaction with the website from users. Offline to be simple enough to share and explain.

The target audience

The campaign was designed to appeal to SMEs who would use the site as a marketing tool and a way of improving online visibility and customer engagement. The solution needed to complement their own online marketing and add a new dimension that they couldn't easily achieve themselves. We had to find a way to take away the science of online success and provide solutions that they could easily identify as being useful to their business. This involved gaining an in depth understanding of the secondary audience, consumer users of the site, and what techniques would draw them to search and contact the businesses listed on the site.

Media, channels or techniques used

Techniques used included:

- Developing a simple to use content management system enabling business users to edit their listing, upload offers and images, manage quote requests and easily engage with social media.
- Website creation tool for business users to set up a free-standing website with all the benefits of their own visibility yet hosted by Cityvisitor. This provides a cost effective website design package and gives Cityvisitor membership added value.
- A business review feature to give businesses greater visibility and authority. A selection of reviews appears on the home page for each city.
- Request a quote facility for public to gain quotes from advertisers on the Cityvisitor database which also acts as a data collection tool for future marketing.
- Registration element for consumers for data collection purposes giving access to exclusive local offers and discounts.
- Localisation tool enabling businesses to pick the areas where their services will be shown in searches, enabling them to target or widen the reach of their marketing.
- Online marketing via the Cityvisitor website with clear calls to action encouraging businesses to find out more about using the site with details of features such as facility to add offers.
- User reviews from existing businesses demonstrating how the Cityvisitor site has helped them increase sales.
- Free listing facility engaging email prompts to upgrade, encouraging risk free try before you buy.

Timescales of the campaign

Data gathered by Citvisitor about their consumer and business users over 12 years was analysed and a white paper on the state of the UK online directory market created noting trends, opportunities and future considerations for search and social. The research highlighted a need for more regionally focussed targeting, in the form of local offers for consumers and value based services for local businesses. Website development began and design was strategically focussed on creating a local hub with national presence. Once the design work was complete, branding work created a 'one-touch' concept reinforced with the tag line 'Life is Local'. National roll out of the website involved creating localised landing pages for all major UK cities and towns. Marketing to existing, former and new business clients began in earnest. Performance and figures for each area were analysed month by month to monitor business take up. The timescale was 6 months from data collection to completion of national roll out. An additional facility enabling businesses to upload video content is currently under development.

Budgets

These details were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.

Results

- Bounce rate is down from 93% to 28% with on-site time increased from 28 seconds to an average of 2.30 minutes.
- Tools such as 'Request a Quote' have increased registered consumer users from 1.5K to over 18K. This data is being used to evolve end user interaction through local voucher codes and promotions.
- Business to business sales have increased by 35% year on year.
- Local presence has moved from 11 million to an average 15 million first page results across varied business related terms.
- A localised approach has increased market penetration and is now a 'ranking factor' as the data contained within the database is queried against places listings for Google.

Client Testimonial

Derek Oliver
Infoserve Managing Director

"Through great insight and their experience 9xb provided a blueprint to take our website to the next level. 9xb developed a strategy that would create better engagement without affecting our performance. Understanding that the internet was becoming more locally focussed at an SME level we have lead the way in providing businesses with the tools they need to have local online presence.

A great bunch of people to work with and excellent consultancy, we're continuing to enjoy working with the 9xb team."