

Thomson Holidays:



The UK's most popular leisure travel retailer.

With a philosophy to “Be Number One,” Thomson Holidays relies on Tealeaf to help better understand online customer behavior and convert more of its one million weekly site visitors from ‘lookers’ to ‘bookers.’

The holiday industry has changed vastly over the past ten years. Booking holidays is no longer restricted to going into a local travel agent or calling a tour operator, now the majority of people go online. As a result, the online travel industry has become extremely competitive and complex. In the UK alone, there are more than 9,000 travel websites. This gives customers a vast array of choices, but also means that visitors will simply switch to another site if an online experience is not satisfactory. In order to retain its market leadership position and to maximize revenue from this extremely important sales channel, Thomson is constantly looking for new and innovative ways to deliver top class service to its customers.

CHALLENGES

In 2007, Thomson launched a new website to provide enhanced functionality for its one million visitors per week. The new site featured an updated user interface and a new search engine called Powersearch. Booking holidays online is complicated—there are changing variables like arrival and departure dates, and changing components like flights, cars and hotels. Usability of the site is critical; and, the goal of Powersearch is to keep the steps of the online purchase process as simple as possible.

In light of its increased investment, Thomson wanted to be confident the new site was working properly and delivering the best possible experience for its visitors. However, the company knew it was virtually impossible to test every potential query a visitor might make within Powersearch. Beyond User Acceptance Testing, which merely analyzes the expected steps in the purchase process, Thomson needed a solution that would help it see exactly how the site would work with real visitors.

A NEW APPROACH

After researching a variety of solutions, Thomson selected Tealeaf to help it solve the problem. Tealeaf's suite of Customer Experience Management solutions empowers Thomson with visibility into real customer behavior online.

CUSTOMER PROFILE



Thomson Holidays is a division of TUI Travel PLC, a new company formed by the merger of First Choice Holidays PLC and the Tourism Division of TUI AG, the largest tourism and services group in the world. For more than 30 years, Thomson Holidays has been the leader in the UK holiday market selling 5 million holidays and flights a year through its 650 retail outlets, call centers and website (www.thomson.co.uk).

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- > Tealeaf has delivered a 3 month ROI for Thomson.
- > Thomson has improved their conversion rate by 20% since deploying Tealeaf.
- > Thomson has increased top line revenue. Just one site obstacle, identified by Tealeaf, enabled the company to recoup 1.5 million pounds in otherwise lost revenue per year.
- > Tealeaf has reduced the time Thomson spends on problem resolution by 50%.

Tealeaf captures every action each visitor makes on the website—a very powerful and complex set of data. Tealeaf then alerts Thomson when the site is preventing customers from completing a booking. Once alerted, Thomson can then leverage Tealeaf's unique replay ability—a page-by-page, browser-level recording of the actual customer experience—to observe and analyze behavior and take the necessary actions to improve site usability and remove site obstacles. With Tealeaf in place, Thomson has eliminated the “cannot reproduce” issue. Furthermore, with the unprecedented insight into customer behavior that Tealeaf gives, Thomson is continually finding areas of its site to tweak and improve with incredible business benefits.



We spend a lot of time, effort and resources driving people to our website—we don't want to lose them because of a poor experience. Tealeaf offers unparalleled, real-time insight into our site, allowing us to constantly improve the customer experience and deliver a top class service

Graham Donoghue | New Media Director, TUI Travel PLC

WIN 1 - BELIEVING TEALEAF SAVES THOMSON AT LEAST 1.5 MILLION POUNDS PER YEAR

Problem

As soon as Tealeaf was deployed, Thomson was alerted to the fact that a significant number of bookings were failing. Immediately, Thomson thought Tealeaf must be wrong. According to Thomson's web analytics and performance management systems there was a slight increase in failures, but nothing as big as Tealeaf was reporting. Thomson was about to enter peak booking season so it needed to know what was going on quickly.

Solution

Thomson's other tools provide only aggregate level reporting. But, because Tealeaf captures all the data associated with every site visitor, it was the natural choice for Thomson to use to further investigate this issue.

With Tealeaf, Thomson quickly discovered they had a larger problem than they first realized. The town field on the address form was not accepting hyphens and dashes (e.g., Weston-super-Mare). All visitors trying to book online from a town or city with these characters were getting a "town invalid" message, with the majority abandoning the purchase as a result. With Tealeaf, Thomson was able to quickly identify and resolve the problem.

Benefit

The visual evidence Tealeaf afforded Thomson Holidays proved invaluable. Had Thomson not believed what Tealeaf was reporting, it would not have analyzed the failed bookings and been able to act swiftly to fix the problem. In addition, because Tealeaf allowed Thomson to quantify the business impact of this one customer experience flaw, they would not have realized they were losing at least 30,000 pounds per week in lost bookings. Now, by setting up real-time alerts within Tealeaf, Thomson can ensure that they know about similar problems instantly.

WIN 2 - TEALEAF HELPS THOMSON INCREASE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND AVOID BRAND DAMAGE

Problem

After the new site went live, Thomson began receiving emails and calls from customers reporting that the confirmation screen and email they received included strange data instead of their personal information. For example, instead of saying, "Dear John" the email would say, "Dear First Name." When Thomson's IT team tried to reproduce the problem they were unable to isolate the issue.

Solution

Thomson turned to Tealeaf to conduct further analysis of the problem. Because the call center had the names of people reporting the issue, it was easy to pick a few examples, and then use Tealeaf to replay those visits. Tealeaf enabled Thomson to discover that, occasionally, the site would malfunction between the "enter personal details" and "payment" steps in the booking process. When this happened the customer's information would be replaced with the "Dear First Name" data rather than the actual details. With Tealeaf, Thomson was able to quantify the magnitude of the problem, fix it and stop it from happening again.

Benefit

The visibility Tealeaf provided allowed Thomson Holidays to halt a customer experience flaw that was increasing inquiries to the call center and eroding customer satisfaction. Furthermore, because Tealeaf allowed Thomson to view and replay affected sessions, Thomson's IT team no longer had to try and reproduce the problem, and could instead focus on higher-value enhancements to the site.

ABOUT TEALEAF TECHNOLOGY

Tealeaf is the leading provider of online customer experience management solutions. Tealeaf's CX family of solutions provides unprecedented enterprise-wide visibility into every user's unique online interactions. This "360-degree view" of the online customer experience enables a clear and consistent understanding of the customer for Ebusiness, IT, customer service and legal and compliance executives and their organizations across a wide range of vertical industries including retail, banking, travel, insurance, telecommunications, pharmaceutical and transportation. Founded in 1999, Tealeaf is headquartered in San Francisco, California, and is privately-held. For more information, visit www.tealeaf.com.