

Google Analytics 360 boosts website engagement by 30%

Wyndham Vacation Rentals wins with improved user experience



About

- Wyndham Vacation Rentals helps families find the ideal professionally managed vacation rental for their travel needs, with more than 9,000 North American properties.
- Headquarters: Parsippany, New Jersey
- www.wyndhamvacationrentals.com

Goals

- Improve website user experience and increase rental bookings
- Align length-of-stay rental restrictions with customer preferences
- Improve marketing return on investment at peak vacation times

Approach

- Implemented the Google Analytics 360 Suite with Google Tag Manager 360
- Created Custom Dimensions to examine customer behavior
- Captured search data on rental dates, length of stay, and property attributes to align inventory to demand

Results

- Improved customer satisfaction by adjusting length-of-stay rules to match preferences
- Increased conversion rates by surfacing properties with the most popular attributes
- Allocated marketing budget to match vacation search lead time
- 30% increase in property search click through rates (CTR)

Wyndham Vacation Rentals helps families find the vacation spot of their dreams. Vacationers visiting the site can choose from more than 9,000 professionally managed rental properties in 19 different North American locations. But with a dizzying number of properties and destination options, Wyndham faced challenges.

First, given the seasonal nature of the travel industry, it's essential that customers see all available and relevant properties appear in customers' property search results, otherwise the hospitality giant would be left with remnant inventory. In addition, with so many options to choose from, some customers were having difficulty finding the property that best met their needs. Wyndham recognized that the site's user experience needed improvement, fast.

Meanwhile, the company wanted to better understand how seasonality affected vacation search lead time. This insight would help the marketing team better align marketing programs and spend with peaks in consumer demand.

To make these improvements, Wyndham needed data. To understand who its customers were, what influenced their purchasing decisions, and when they planned their vacations, the company turned to Google Analytics 360 and Google Tag Manager 360 in the Google Analytics 360 Suite.

Meeting vacationer expectations

Wyndham needs all properties to be occupied as often as possible to increase profits. This means all available and relevant properties needed to appear in customers' search results. Naturally, the company wanted the properties' length-of-stay restrictions to align with a customer's desired vacation length. However, its backend system was set up so that the length of stay restrictions did not align with the number of nights a customer wanted to spend in a vacation rental. This misalignment was decreasing bookings.

“Google Analytics 360 is helping us connect the dots. As a data-driven organization, we strive to approach each business challenge objectively and back our assumptions with data. Analytics 360 gives us the flexibility to customize the data we collect in a manner that makes it easy to answer our business questions. These questions even go beyond the scope of the digital channel. Analytics 360 is allowing our team to discover and create a center of excellence ... insights gathered about our customers’ behaviors and preferences bring meaningful changes to our digital campaign and customer engagement strategies.”

—Nadir Ali
Director of eCommerce Analytics,
Wyndham Vacation Rentals

To solve the problem, Wyndham used Tag Manager 360 to implement Analytics 360 custom dimensions (non-standard dimensions created by Wyndham that are specifically relevant to its business) to capture consumers’ searched date ranges. This way, the team could learn the typical desired length of stay for each rental property. With Tag Manager 360, Wyndham easily collected this information without even having to change the page code.

During analysis of the data, Wyndham discovered powerful insights. For example, the backend system was set so properties in the state of Delaware only appeared in search results if customers searched for seven-night stays. Customers interested in visiting Delaware often searched for three-night stays, but the seven-night stay restriction prevented available inventory from appearing. As a result, Wyndham was showing fewer rental options and booking fewer rental properties.

Once Wyndham understood this key insight, the team acted quickly to adjust backend rules. Satisfying demand improved both customer satisfaction and the bottom line.

Making search more profitable

Wyndham also wanted to ensure that the online property search tool converted searchers into renters. To do this, it needed to better align search parameters to display properties most likely to lead to bookings. With a wide array of property attributes and amenities, Wyndham needed to determine which attributes customers searched for the most and what combinations produced the best conversion rates.

The company implemented custom dimensions for each property attribute and amenity. This allowed Wyndham to collect the information in Analytics 360, and analyze the data for insights. Wyndham found that while a “scenic view” was one of the top attributes customers included in their searches, it had a lower conversion rate compared to other features offered inside a suite.

Wyndham redesigned the search results page so properties with the most profitable mix of attributes appeared on the first page. It also shared the information about the most profitable attributes with the business development team to help them look for the right attributes when researching new properties to add to the Wyndham family.

Budgeting with confidence

Finally, Wyndham wanted to make the best possible use of marketing budgets. The company needed to understand how vacationer's lead time varied by property to better align marketing campaign timelines and spend with demand.

Once again, the team turned to custom dimensions in Analytics 360. To determine the lead time, Wyndham gathered the estimated check-in date from customer searches, then calculated the difference between the check-in date and the date on which customers searched. Analytics 360 allowed the team to break out resulting data by rental location.

The company found that some properties' lead times were 36 to 42 days, while others were only 8 to 14 days. Monitoring the data on a regular basis helped Wyndham distinguish patterns, predict customer demand, and forecast how marketing budgets should be allocated throughout the year. For example, Wyndham used lead time information to identify search trends for holiday getaways, such as Labor Day weekend excursions, and adjusted marketing plans accordingly.

Boosting engagement and bookings

With the Google Analytics 360 Suite, Wyndham Vacation Rentals was able to see a broader picture of behavior and preferences. The company achieved measureable improvements in the booking path by streamlining the online experience and optimizing search results pages. These improvements helped customers maintain interest through all stages of the funnel, resulting in a 30% surge in property search click through rates.

About the Google Analytics 360 Suite

The Google Analytics 360 Suite offers powerful and integrated analytics solutions for today's biggest enterprises. Measure, see, and improve the impact of your marketing across every screen, channel and moment in today's customer journey. It's easy to use, and makes data accessible for everyone so the "aha" moments are simple to discover and share. Move from insight to impact faster with the Google Analytics 360 Suite, and as a result, make the most of every consumer connection. For more information, visit google.com/analytics/360-suite