Google

Dubai resort's mobile site encourages customers to interact with its business – and its dolphins

ATLANTIS
THE PALM, DUBAI

About Atlantis, The Palm
- Luxury resort
- Dubai

Goals
- Replicate desktop site as closely as possible
- Facilitate multi-platform access

Approach
- Created mobile site using a transcoding solution
- Used Google Mobile Ads and app to drive site traffic

Results
- Mobile site now attracts 22% of total visits
- Cost-effective mobile CPCs: 43% less on mobile

With its enviable location atop the crescent of The Palm, the opening of Atlantis was a landmark event, redefining tourism in Dubai as the first truly integrated entertainment destination resort. Reflecting Chairman Sol Kerzner's vision to transport guests into a dazzling, imaginative world, the resort encompasses a 46-hectare site with 17 hectares of water-themed amusement at Aquaventure Waterpark, extensive fresh and salt-water pools and lagoon exhibits, an open-aired marine habitat second only to Mother Nature, a seemingly endless stretch of beach, luxury boutiques, numerous dining choices including three world renowned chef restaurants, an exciting nightlife experience, ShuiQi Spa & Fitness, and 5,600 square metres of meeting and function space.

Mobile site with responsive design for users on the go
The resort decided to develop a specific mobile presence alongside its desktop site in response to increasing numbers of consumers using smartphones and other mobile devices to browse the Internet. "It's important for the brand to be seen on mobile," explains Euan Mitchell, Director of Online Marketing for Atlantis. "People often do their research using mobile while they're on the go, and then carry out the booking later using a desktop, tablet or other device."

The resort launched its mobile website in April 2011. This is essentially a replica of its main desktop-oriented site, using a scrolling menu and offering all of the same services, but with a different booking process, and incorporating "Click to Call" functionality and a dedicated phone number. The site is available in English, Arabic and Russian.

Mitchell continues: "There's a lot of information on our website, and moving from full-screen to mobile was a challenge. The new site had to offer the same easy access to information and simple booking process, and update automatically as soon as we updated the main website."

The mobile site uses a dedicated design for mobiles and can be viewed across different mobile screen sizes for an optimal viewing experience.

> "It's important for the brand to be seen on mobile as this is the future for the web."
> — *Euan Mitchell, Director of Online Marketing.*

Driving traffic through cost-effective Mobile Ads
"Responsive design is definitely a solution for consideration for web development," says Mitchell. "It meets the needs of consumers who access the web using different platforms and/or multiple devices, and it also reduces development costs and provides a reliable, complete solution for brands."

The company uses a wide variety of Google services, including paid search, remarketing, Google Display Network, YouTube, Google Maps, and most notably, Google Mobile Ads. "We use Mobile Ads to extend our overall online brand-visibility strategy through search and display," Mitchell says. "It's increased awareness of the mobile site and its online booking capability, and the click-through rate has been better than expected – based on our strategy, the click-through rate for mobile has been better than for desktop."

"Mobile provides a reliable, complete solution for our brands, giving visitors access to our product and services while on the go."
— Euan Mitchell, Director of Online Marketing.

"Mobile Ads are straightforward to use, they allow us to run multiple campaigns simultaneously, and have helped us to achieve our goal of increasing interactions and transactions," Mitchell adds. "Driving traffic through such a cost-effective channel has resulted in mobile CPCs that are 43% less than on desktop. We're very happy with the results, but there's still work to be done: much like desktop pay-per-click, it's a learning process with different user behaviour."

Twenty-two per cent of the resort's total traffic now comes via mobile devices, and some ten per cent of its pay-per-click budget is spent on mobile marketing. The mobile site has had a particularly big impact on the number of local people booking day visits to amenities such as the Aquaventure waterpark, The Lost Chambers aquarium and Dolphin Bay. It also allows customers to book restaurants and entertainment online.

The resort also recently launched a mobile app, which is compatible with iPhone, iPad, Windows 8 and Android, and offers a wide variety of services, including room bookings and day interactions. It directs the customer to the mobile site to carry out the transaction itself. Restaurants can now be booked online via the app while on the go.

"We use one booking system for both our mobile and desktop websites, but we can track mobile and non-mobile transactions," Mitchell says. "We're continuing to work with Google on new developments, and we increase our investment in the mobile platform proportionately as it attracts a growing volume of business. We concentrate our mobile advertising on our English-speaking markets and will increase this to cover Russian and Arabic."

Atlantis the Palm Mobile website was voted Best Mobile site in Middle East at the Mobies Awards – May 2013