

The logo for Directline Holidays, featuring the word "directline" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background, followed by "holidays" in orange lowercase letters.

THE CHALLENGES

1. More web sites and pages require testing
2. Risk of web sites not being fully tested could result in missed revenue
3. Key development staff being sidetracked into testing duties

BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

- Over 200 issues identified in one month
- More testing conducted for the same budget
- Quality of web sites improved
- DLH staff able to focus on their core skills

Directline Holidays (DLH) is one of the UK's leading online travel agents. It was set up in 1993 and initially functioned with just one website. Now they have sites dedicated to city breaks, ski holidays, UK breaks, flight and hotel only sales as well as package holidays. It is a fast moving business, and therefore they need partners who can react quickly.

Issue

Key to Directline Holidays success is having user friendly websites that function correctly. However as the size of individual websites and the number of different sites increased, more demands were being placed on the DLH team conducting website testing. This led to a bottleneck in the release of website updates. In addition, DLH wanted to quickly release one website where visual designs had been changed but where the functionality of the site needed thoroughly testing. DLH also had a limited budget for carrying out web site testing. For these reasons they called upon Open Destinations to help them with their web site testing.


Approach

Open Destinations Ltd (ODL) initially agreed with DLH the overall work requirements and priorities. This included the different browsers required to be used, the key entry points to the site, the key booking pages, and the key functionality to be tested. Regular communication was scheduled to ensure work was prioritised to the wishes of DLH.

Working initially on scripts provided by DLH, ODL then commenced testing searching and booking journeys. Links were also tested and dummy payments made where bookings were successful. After a short time, DLH entrusted ODL with writing their own testing scripts, testing page layout enhancements, performing live website testing and testing the main DLH site as well as other sites such as Flights and Citybreaks.

Results

Over 200 issues were identified in one month and provided back to DLH with commentary where appropriate. This enabled DLH to focus on bug-fixing rather than testing, and enabled them to develop and improve the quality of their web sites more quickly than would otherwise have been the case. DLH also benefitted from the competitive pricing offered by ODL, meaning that more testing could be done for the same budget. DLH and ODL are now looking towards a longer term relationship involving other tasks where ODL can conduct repetitive time consuming tasks at low cost, enabling DLH to focus on delivering quality web sites and increasing revenues.

A graphic showing a portion of a URL "http://www" in a blue, stylized font, with a mouse cursor arrow pointing at it.

"ODL were a perfect partner for Directline Holidays because of their combined experience in travel technology and in outsourcing. They are finding more issues than our team would have had the time to identify, which is having a positive impact on the quality of our sites and levels of bookings. Their work has helped us deliver our web site development strategy to time and to budget."

Maria Whiteman, Chief Executive Officer at DirectLine Holidays