Embedded expandable Search Component with Integration to multiple Providers

A new embedded expandable search component with integration to even more suppliers in the travel industry makes it possible for FolkeFerie.dk to offer faster and better search options to their customers. Martin Ebmark, Chief Operating Officer (COO) of FolkeFerie.dk, explains in this example how Softinventor's solution has solved their challenge in the development of a new and more competitive search engine for their customers.

The Challenge

"Being a leading Danish leisure travel agency, FolkeFerie.dk must be able to offer their customers a wide range of travel options from several external suppliers as well as from our own internal database.

Along with the variety and volume, it is essential that the customers have a simple and fast way to find the kind of holiday package they are looking for", states Martin Ebmark, COO of FolkeFerie.dk.

The search is done through FolkeFerie.dk's website. To maximize sales, it is crucial for FolkeFerie.dk that the search function is fast and that customers are retained on their website for as long as possible during the sales process. The customers should not be redirected to external supplier's sites until it is absolutely necessary.

Martin Ebmark continues: *"Before Softinventor's search component was introduced, FolkeFerie.dk's customers were redirected to the external supplier already in the early stages of the search process. Customers would fill in their search criteria and hit "search". They were then redirected to external suppliers' websites, where the search results would be displayed."*

Once a customer was redirected from FolkeFerie.dk's website, FolkeFerie.dk was no longer in control of the sales process. The

selection, booking and payment would happen on the external supplier's site. Another downside of redirecting customers to external suppliers was the confusion about the brand and which company the customer was actually buying from. This could lead to loss of sales as the customers would be distracted in the process.

The Solution

Softinventor developed an embedded expandable search component, which integrates more external suppliers with FolkeFerie.dk's internal database of travel offers.

The solution has also improved the speed of the search process, and results are shown on FolkeFerie.dk's website instead of the external supplier's site. The customer is not redirected to the external supplier's site before he has made up his mind and clicked on the "book" button.

"The new solution means that FolkeFerie.dk now has a lot more control of the sales process, because the customers are retained on our website until the purchase decision has been made. The customer is not distracted by other sites and offers, and is not potentially lost in the process", Martin Ebmark says.

There are still a few cases, where the external supplier does not allow the results to be shown on FolkeFerie.dk's website. In these cases, the

customer is redirected to a FolkeFerie.dk branded landing page on the external supplier's website. This is to avoid brand confusion as it creates the experience for the customers that they are still at FolkeFerie.dk's website. This way, they are not confused by the supplier's brand and know that they're buying their holiday package from FolkeFerie.dk.

The Advantages of the new Search Component

The advantages of the new expandable search component are many:
- Increased selection of travel options due to integration of more suppliers.
- Faster search process and with more results.
- Improved usability.
- Increased control of the sales process
- Possibly increase in sales due to increased customer retention at FolkeFerie.dk's website.
- Increased brand awareness due to retention at the FolkeFerie.dk website and designed landing pages, where bookings are made.
- Increased ROI due to more effective processes at FolkeFerie.dk's internal IT department.
- Expandable solution, which can integrate more suppliers and booking systems in the future to match the expansion of FolkeFerie.dk's activities.

"Softinventor is one of the best companies in their field to take responsibility for the entire solution that they are working on. Even if they have delivered only one component of the solution and their component works perfectly, they are able to make the entire solution work through efficient communication with the other providers that are involved in the development process. As a customer, this is extremely important, as I know *that the solution will work as promised, so we can continue our business activities without any interruptions.*

Another important aspect is that Softinventor delivers on time and on budget. It is essential for us as a customer that we are able to work with a trustworthy software development company, which do not present unexpected development expenses to us, when they are working on our business critical IT systems.

Our return on investment has improved, and we are very pleased with their services and the way Softinventor has solved our challenge", Martin Ebmark states.

The Technology

The solution is developed in Microsoft Visual Studio with the latest .NET technology and written in Visual Basic.

FolkeFerie.dk

About FolkeFerie.dk

FolkeFerie.dk is a leading Danish travel agency founded 75 years ago. FolkeFerie.dk operates mainly on the B2C market and offers a variety of travel options in Denmark and abroad such as charter holidays, rental of summer holiday homes in Denmark, cruises, guided tours as well as theme travels. FolkeFerie.dk is owned by the DFF Foundation, which was founded in 1938 with the main purpose of organising holidays for people, who were not able to afford a holiday break. The foundation is still based on this principle, which means that it is also part of FolkeFerie.dk's business concept.