

BOOKIT.COM

“Instart Logic has made our switch to Responsive Web Design much easier. They have improved our time-to-first-byte and our page load times. And they provide excellent technical support. The platform is stable and fast. We're very happy we made the move to Instart Logic.”

Iain Sexton
CIO, BookIt.com

The Challenge



For BookIt, the company's Content Delivery Network had become a major bottleneck and pain point. “We are selling vacations and vacations are about dreaming. People need to see exactly what the beach looks like at their resort or the ocean view from the room they are booking,” says BookIt CIO Iain Sexton. “Images are essential to fulfilling those dreams, and for helping people to book the best travel experience possible. That's key to our brand.”

BookIt also was in the process of revamping its website to include more and larger images. Even with fewer and smaller images, managing and updating multiple image sizes to cache in the CDN in order to serve appropriate content for different device and display types was time consuming. “It's a pain managing six different image sizes. We wanted a better way to do this, particularly as we put higher quality images on our site.” Additionally, the company was moving towards a Responsive Web Design (RWD) that would have required highly flexible image sizes and qualities to accommodate for myriad screen sizes and device types. Another key problem was his legacy CDN's poor usability. “Their dashboards were very hard to use. Any changes we wanted to make to our cached content took far too long – 20 minutes or more,” says Sexton.



Company:

BookIt

Location:

Panama City Beach, Florida

Description:

BookIt is one of the world's largest online travel sites. BookIt sought to give travelers the most intuitive online booking experience along with highly relevant information and helpful reviews. The company, in particular, leads the industry in vacation package bookings with its proprietary recommendation technology that generates on-the-fly vacation packages for travelers based on their location and recommendation data.



The Challenge (cont.)



"That is potentially 20 minutes the site is down if we had a corrupt code push. It was totally unacceptable." Beyond this, the traditional CDN delivered BookIt decent content delivery performance but not enough to help the company stand out to shoppers in the extremely competitive online travel field.

As BookIt sought to rev up its web offerings and launch RWD site redesigns along with optimized code to improve site performance, Sexton grew concerned that the big CDN was not behaving like a partner. "Our relationship with them was non-existent. They never called us. I didn't even know our account reps' name. I had no idea what their feature roadmap was," explains Sexton. As BookIt moved to improve its infrastructure and design, the decision was made to ditch the old CDN and search for a responsive partner with better technology. To improve their business and meet KPIs, BookIt needed:

- Better image optimization to reduce overhead, improve performance and enable RWD
- Usable dashboards to enhance self-service and organizational capabilities
- Fast flushing of caches and ability to refresh content
- A true collaborative relationship with its content delivery partner



The Solution



After Sexton and his colleagues heard about Instart Logic, they spoke to the team about the product. “The Instart Logic sales engineers were very good. They knew what they were talking about and provided us with detailed, and more importantly, fast, solutions,” says Sexton. He also liked the image resizing capabilities of Instart Logic that automatically scaled images to fit RWD requirements on any device.

On Instart Logic, too, cache flushing, was 10x to 20x faster, giving Sexton a greater sense of security that he could quickly correct any errors in code or content pushed into live web applications. Lastly, he was excited to use Instart Logic’s Software-Defined Application Delivery (SDAD) with HTML and image streaming to accelerate web application delivery and give BookIt a noticeable bump in web performance. Benchmark tests run against the Instart Logic SDAD platform returned a 30% to 40% performance improvement. A proof-of-concept run head-to-head against the big CDN’s network also showed improvement. This made the decision academic.

The Result



Switching over to Instart Logic was quick and painless for BookIt, requiring only a few DNS configuration changes. Once running on Instart Logic, Sexton's team felt they were finally back in control of their own web content and application delivery. "The Instart Logic dashboard is so much easier to use. The cache flushing is much better, too. We had a customer push content that was a mistake and we were able to pull it down within a minute or two," says Sexton.

The automated image resizing that Instart Logic provided allowed Sexton's team to reimagine their designs in a completely different light. "We can just upload one very high resolution image to Instart and it does the resizing automatically. This has freed us to redesign without the UI guys worrying about how many sizes of images they are storing," says Sexton. The automatic resizing has reduced infrastructure requirements, technical complexity and operational management overhead due to the 6x reduction in the number of images stored. Explains Sexton, "Because the responsive mode allows us to automatically change the variables of the Instart Logic-served images, it's allowed us to go to RWD much more easily."

After switching over to Instart Logic, Sexton saw key performance indicators improve. Time-to-first-byte, a key metric for Google SEO and for site performance, improved for BookIt and the site appeared to load faster due to Instart Logic's ability to stream HTML with its Software-Defined Application Delivery platform. Conversions increased, due in part to BookIt's own site performance improvements but "...at least in part due to Instart Logic," says Sexton.

Equally important, the faster image delivery has allowed BookIt to redesign with far larger images. "Our new design has very large images on the home page. Those really help draw users into our site," says Sexton. "We are comfortable that Instart Logic can easily handle these high-quality images and give people landing on our site a great experience with fast responses and loads." When the BookIt team does have questions, "We get very good support. When we put a ticket in the response is great. The platform is stable and fast. We're happy we made the move to Instart Logic."



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