

DIGITAL USER EXPERIENCE RESEARCH

**Sogeti's expert research provides
recommendations to help the client
achieve a world-class website**

Summary

Following the decentralisation of BAA (now Heathrow Airport Holdings) **Aberdeen International Airport** needed to make the move to a new, locally managed web solution as part of its individual e-commerce and digital strategy.

After transferring the content to a new CMS, ensuring the site was mobile responsive and adding new functionality, the airport identified the need for a research project to support the redesign of the site and improve its user experience and key online journeys.

Sogeti Studio's research and recommendations have helped Aberdeen International airport to make informed decisions on the new design that have led to positive improvements in year-on-year core site metrics.

The Client

Aberdeen International Airport was first opened in 1934 and is a key entry point to Scotland's 3rd largest city. During 2014 the airport served 3.76 million travellers, its busiest year on record, establishing its position as one of the UK's top 15 busiest airports¹.

The airport places a high priority on the satisfaction of its customers, demonstrated by the launch of their Customer Charter² in 2013 highlighting its commitments in this area, which led to Aberdeen International being the first airport in the UK to be awarded the 'Customer First' accreditation.

The Challenge

Following the decentralisation of the BAA Brand (now Heathrow Airport Holdings), a decision was made towards the end of 2013 to close the shared group CMS between all former BAA airports. Aberdeen International Airport was tasked to launch its own web solution, ensuring the new site provided a first-rate user experience.

E-Commerce Manager, Jason Stewart, decided to split the web project into three phases over 13 months. Phase one focused on transferring the existing content to a new CMS whilst introducing much-needed mobile responsive technology, and phase two built on the existing site, adding new functionality in preparation for phase three. Sogeti carried out the successful testing effort for both of

Aberdeen International Airport



"I would definitely recommend Sogeti. They provided complete qualitative and quantitative research that reflected our brief requirements and helped shape the final phase of our website project. Their work has helped us to measurably improve the web and mobile experience for our users."

Jason Stewart, E-Commerce Manager

these phases. The website was now perfectly functional; however more work needed to be done to bring the airport's web experience in line with others in the same industry and to achieve its vision of having a world-class airport website. This was the basis of phase three.

Stewart and his team wanted to understand the most important customer journeys across the website, and how these compared with other airports and leading e-commerce sites across desktop and mobile devices. They decided to undertake a research project to help to determine the new design of the site.

With a lack of in-house resources, lack of professional research facilities and little time to complete the project, Aberdeen International Airport chose to look to an external provider with specialist knowledge to support them. As a testing specialist with deep knowledge in web and mobile, Sogeti could provide expert industry knowledge that would deliver helpful recommendations.

Selecting Sogeti

Sogeti had already completed the testing for phases one and two of Aberdeen International Airport's web project (transferring to the new CMS and ensuring the site was mobile responsive), so a relationship had been built up and the airport knew what that the Sogeti Studio team could deliver.

Sogeti Studio's wide range of mobile devices and specialist digital testers, coupled with the seamless collaboration that had previously taken place between Sogeti and the airport's development agency, allowed Stewart's team to focus on wider aspects of the web project. These were all key factors in his decision to grant Sogeti the third phase of the project, too.

1. http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport_data/2014Annual/Table_09_Terminal_and_Transit_Pax_2014.csv
2. <http://www.aberdeenairport.com/about-us/customer-charter/>

The Solution

The research undertaken needed to provide clear recommendations to support the complete redesign of the airport's website.

Sogeti Studio split this research into three sections:

1. An online survey on the overall impressions of the site (from poor to excellent), including ease of use, how it made users feel and the navigation of 'red routes' – the important online journeys users or businesses would take across the site. Red routes included finding destinations, flight arrivals and departures, booking parking and signing up for the airport newsletter.
2. An online survey on comparisons of the above with 20 other websites, including other airports and leading travel e-commerce sites with similar functionality such as NCP Parking and Hertz car rental.
3. The user experience testing of the Aberdeen International Airport site itself by Sogeti Studio across a range of devices and browsers to mirror the airport's website analytics.

The above was carried out over 5 days, and included both qualitative and quantitative research. This was collated to produce a detailed report, including recommendations, which Sogeti then presented back to Jason Stewart and the Aberdeen International Airport team to help them make their decisions on how the site should look. Sogeti Studio also provided consultancy around the testing of the new site, which helped in defining what the website should look like with the development agency.

The qualitative feedback on the overall design of the site was considered particularly useful by Stewart and his team. *"The research project uncovered multiple areas that we just didn't know how we compared like-for-like with other airport websites. This gave us a basis for pushing on with the third and final phase of our web project including discussions with other stakeholders,"* stated Stewart. This gave Aberdeen International Airport the evidence-based knowledge to be able to direct development to the sections that were identified as a risk in the report.

Aberdeen International Airport launched its new website in February 2015. All of the research that Sogeti provided was considered prior to development. This enabled Aberdeen International Airport the ability to identify which areas of the site required the most focus and investment for redevelopment.

The Benefits

Jason Stewart and his team are very pleased with the final result which is considered a vast improvement and can now be recognised on an international level as a leading example of an airport website. An initial analysis indicates an impressive positive impact across multiple core metrics year on year:

- **Sessions - up 10.1%**
- **Unique visitors - up 5.9%**
- **Page views - up 15%**
- **Pages per session - up 22.7%**
- **Average user duration - up 49.6%**
- **Bounce rate - down 26.7%**

Sogeti's research helped Aberdeen International Airport to form new KPIs for the performance of its site, related to how easy it is to find information and complete important actions or 'red routes'. *"We now have metrics and KPI's that we have implemented, as we look to continually improve our website. The ultimate result is that the site is delivering more success on the identified 'red routes' in terms of income than they did previously, with all major metrics seeing an increase since launch,"* stated Stewart.

By conducting the research on their behalf, Sogeti's work has provided specialist knowledge and allowed the Aberdeen International team to work on the wider web project as well as other assignments.

Conclusion

Aberdeen International Airport now has the recommendations and knowledge to deliver a first-rate website user experience. Jason Stewart concluded: "I am completely satisfied with my decision to choose Sogeti; the research has provided us with key analytics that reflect our users' experience on the site, helping us to prioritise which areas of the site required the most innovation and development, and helping us to meet our aim of becoming a world-class website."

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