

The Battel For Direct Bookings Is Hand-to-Hand Combat, Not Aerial Strafing



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1

Most Efforts Have Focused On “Digital” Solutions:

- S.E.O. (Organic and paid)
- Website design
- Email campaigns
- “Destination/tourism” site (micro-site)
- Listing sites (Resortsandlodges.com, RentABeach, Condoworld)
- Third party OTA’s.



2

Most Efforts Have Focused On “Digital” Solutions:

Aerial Strafing:

- The “ammo” has little chance of hitting the intended target.



3

History Buffs Know:

- ✓ Wars are won one battle at a time.
- ✓ Battles are ultimately won in “hand-to-hand” combat.



4

The Best Opportunities To Encourage Direct Bookings Occur Through Human Interaction

Whether by phone, chat, text, email, or in-person...

...it's your team of humans that can make the biggest difference!



5

Why Has The Lodging Industry Over-Valued “Digital” Distribution To Its Own Detriment?

- Digital marketing is easier to measure and benchmark, whereas data on human interaction is more anecdotal.



6

More Recently, Communications Between Humans Can Be Measured

- Cloud-based call recording.
- Chat logs.
- Reviewing in-app messaging.



7

Winning The Battel For Direct Bookings By Means Of Hand-to-Hand Combat

Here are 5 action steps to help your team win the battle for more direct bookings.



8



9

1) Train ALL Staff How Direct Bookings Benefit BOTH Parties

The company:

- Reduce distribution costs.
- Direct communication during booking process clarifies expectations.
- Ability to retarget guests with future promos.



10

1) Train ALL Staff How Direct Bookings Benefit BOTH Parties

The guest:

- Often, the booking fees are less.
- More flexible booking terms?
- Allows us to serve them directly without a “middle-man.”



11

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

Seek out opportunities to ensure that guests know us as a “locally branded” business.



12

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

- ✓ When guests stop by the office.
- ✓ When in the homes for a repair, recheck, or delivery.
- ✓ EVERY phone call or email.



13

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

Ask questions such as:

- How did you hear about us?
- Is this your first visit?
- What brings you to the area?



14

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

When they call: ask questions such as:

- What website are you looking at?



15

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

When the call: ask questions such as:

- Are you familiar with our vacation rental company?



16

2) Train ALL Staff To Engage ALL Guests Whenever Possible

Always “grab” an email address:

- While I have you on the line, may I just grab your email to add to your record so we can reach you directly?



17

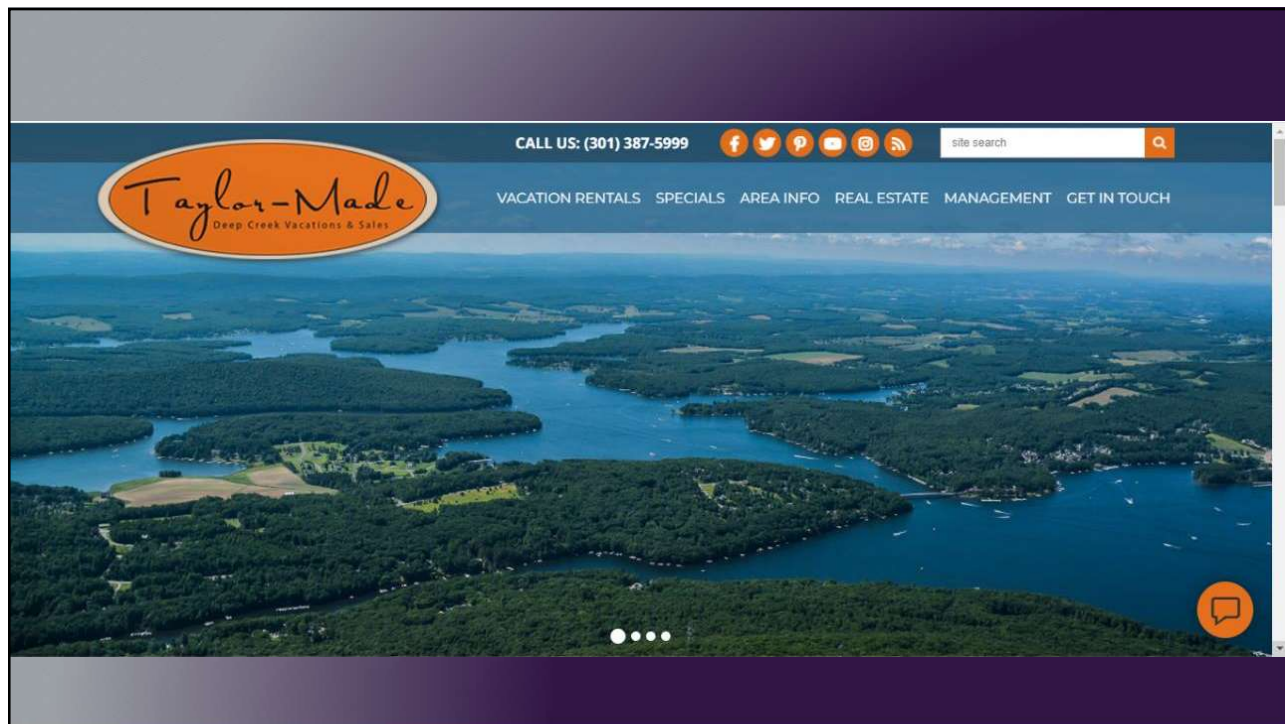
3) Encourage Website Visitors To Call And Email Directly

Post your phone number and email option prominently.

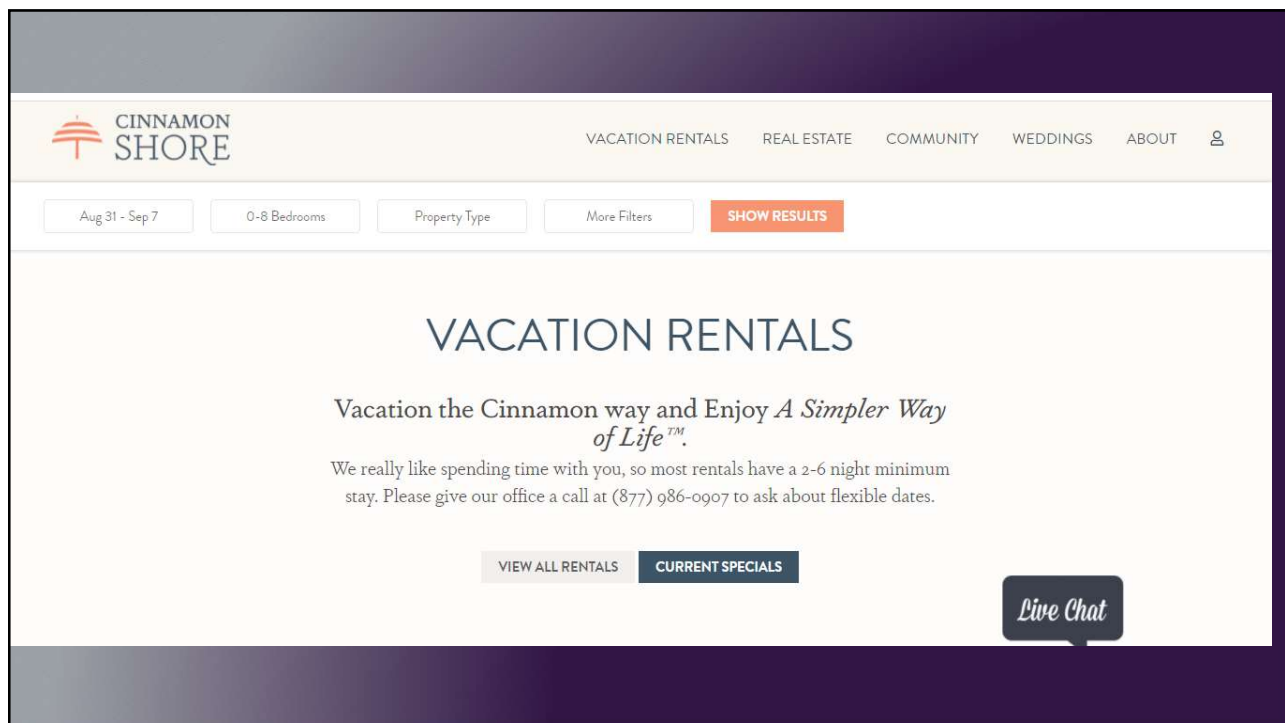
- Consider a local area code vs. 800.
- Add text saying “Call us directly.”



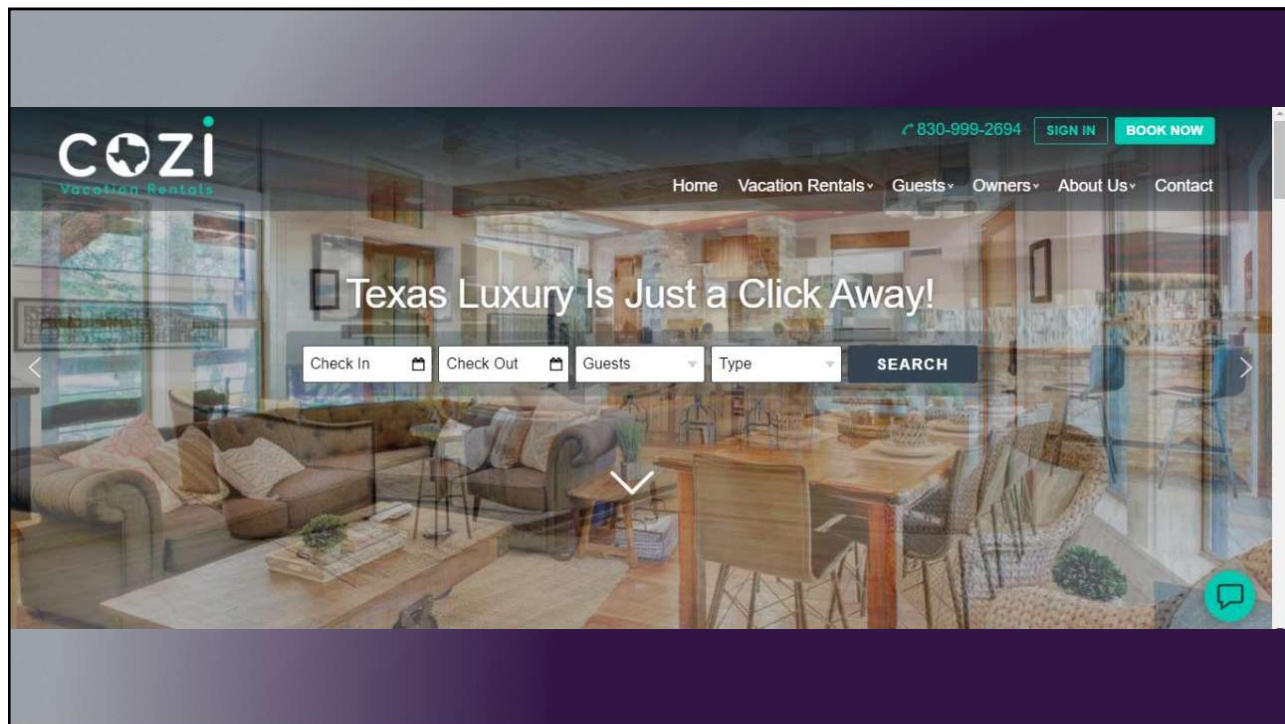
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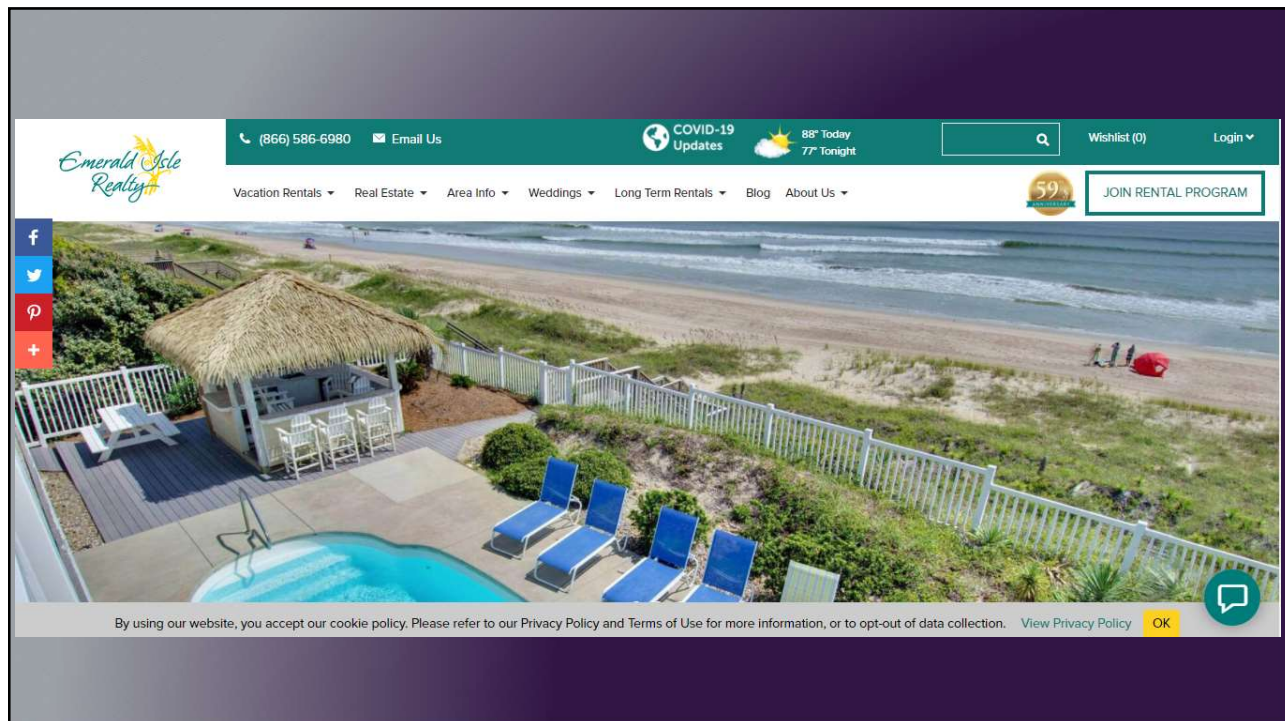
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23

4) Train Your Team That "Quick Questions" Are Actually Booking Opportunities

Whether coming in by phone, email or webchat, **always** ask:

"Now that I've answered your questions, may I ask what dates (or homes) you are looking at?"



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24

4) Train Your Team That “Quick Questions” Are Actually Booking Opportunities

Oftentimes, the questions are about homes they know are sold-out.

- Train your team to offer to offer alternative homes and dates.
- At minimum, grab an email.



25

When The Requested Home Is Booked...

- Quote higher rated homes with confidence.
- Down-sell to lower priced homes by positioning them as “still being desirable.”



26

When The Requested Home Is Booked...

Do NOT Say:

✓ “All I Have Left Is...”

Instead say:

✓ “**Fortunately**, what I still have open is...”



27

4) Train Your Team That “Quick Questions” Are Actually Booking Opportunities

Retarget ALL voice leads!

- Follow-up by email immediately after the call.
- Reach out by phone in 1-3 days.
- Send a final email in 1-2 days.



28

4) Train Your Team That “Quick Questions” Are Actually Booking Opportunities

Likewise, retarget OTA leads too!

- Put a note on your lead stream.
- Check to see if the person booked.
- If not, send them a new in-app message.



29

5) Use “Tech” Innovations to “Touch” Guests

- Use scheduling apps (Calendly) to set times to speak with prospective guests.
- Offer to meet via Zoom and do screen-shares.



30

5) Use “Tech” Innovations to “Touch” Guests

Use personalized video email:

- ✓ To follow-up on voice and email inquiries that have not converted.
- ✓ To personally welcome guests upon arrival so they will remember you.
(Especially if using remote check-in)

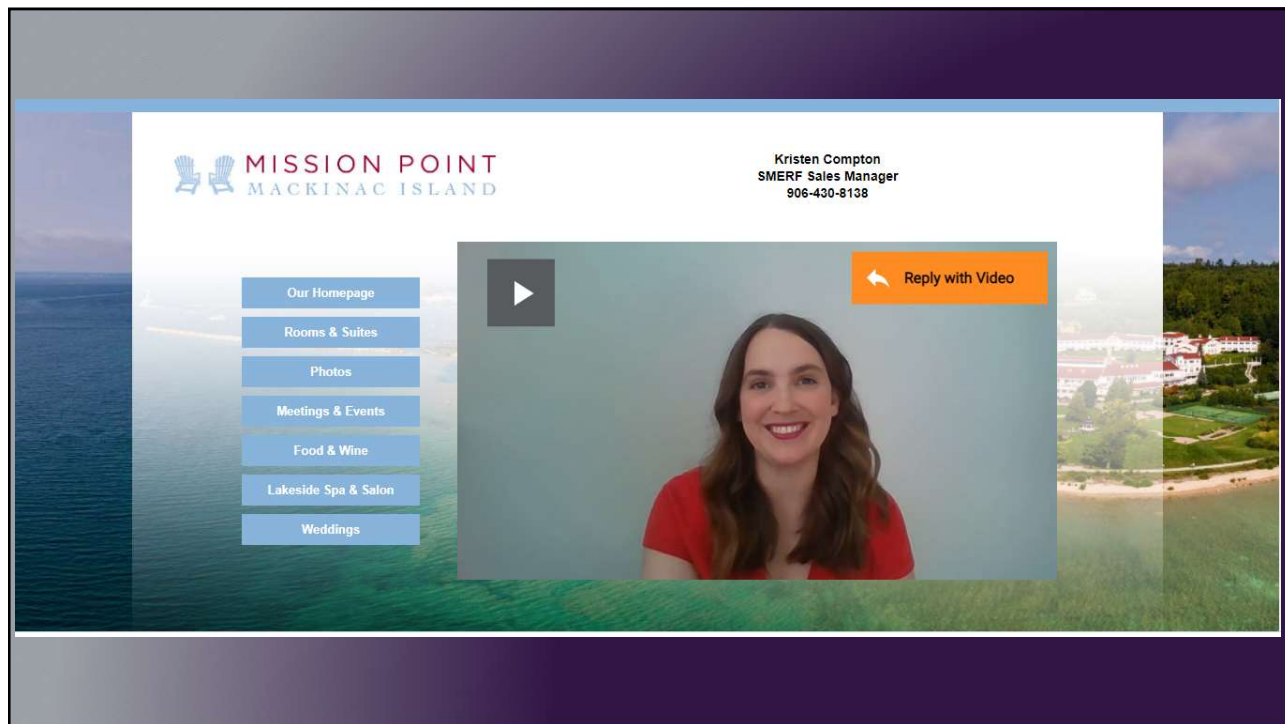


31

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32



33

Thank You!

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34