

# UTILISING GOOGLE ANALYTICS TO IDENTIFY A SITE ISSUE

In order to improve your site performance and enhance conversion rates it's crucial that you understand how visitors navigate through your website and how they interact with your content.

By analysing the behaviour report in Google Analytics we were able to do just that for the New Forest Tourist Association and ascertain how users engage with the site.

With this information in hand we identified which pages of the site converted the most effectively, and also determined potential stumbling blocks for users.

## Case Study

The New Forest Tourism Association was formed in 1989 to work in partnership with New Forest District Council to promote the New Forest as a quality year-round holiday and business destination.

The New Forest Tourist Association works very closely with both New Forest District Council, the National Park Authority and Forestry and recognises the need to preserve and protect the natural beauty of this sensitive and unique area of England.

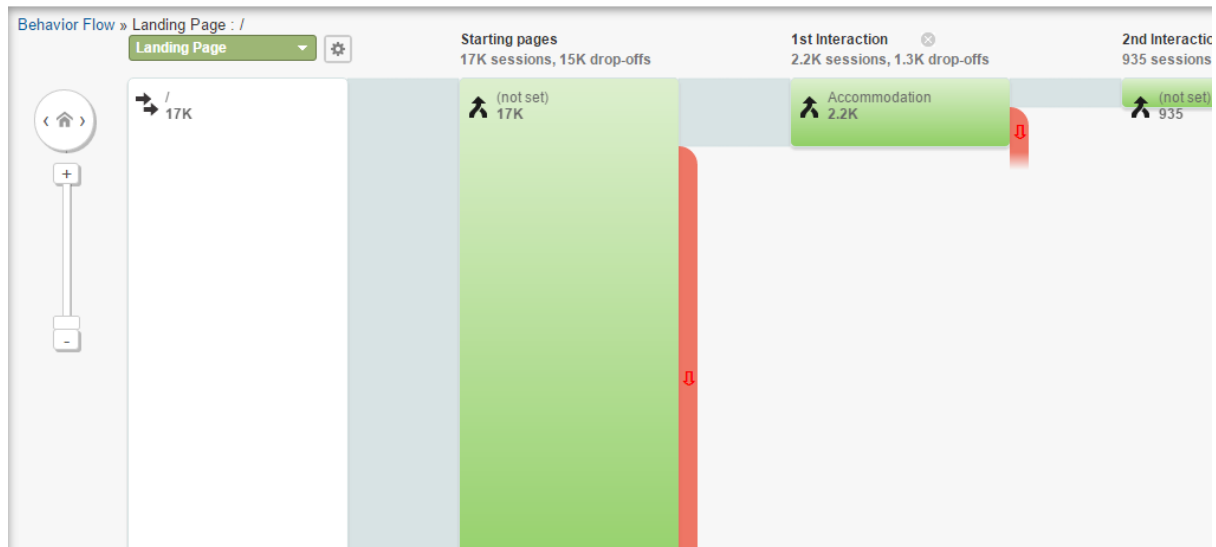
### **Challenge Identified by Google Analytics: Lack of Progression after a 1<sup>st</sup> interaction (Fair Booking)**

The Fair Booking promotion on the New Forest site guarantees users the best possible online rates with no booking fees. It also offers users savings on food & drink, activities and other services during their stay.

After looking at behaviour flow reports, we identified that many new users were landing on the home page, and progressing to the Fair Booking page as their next step.

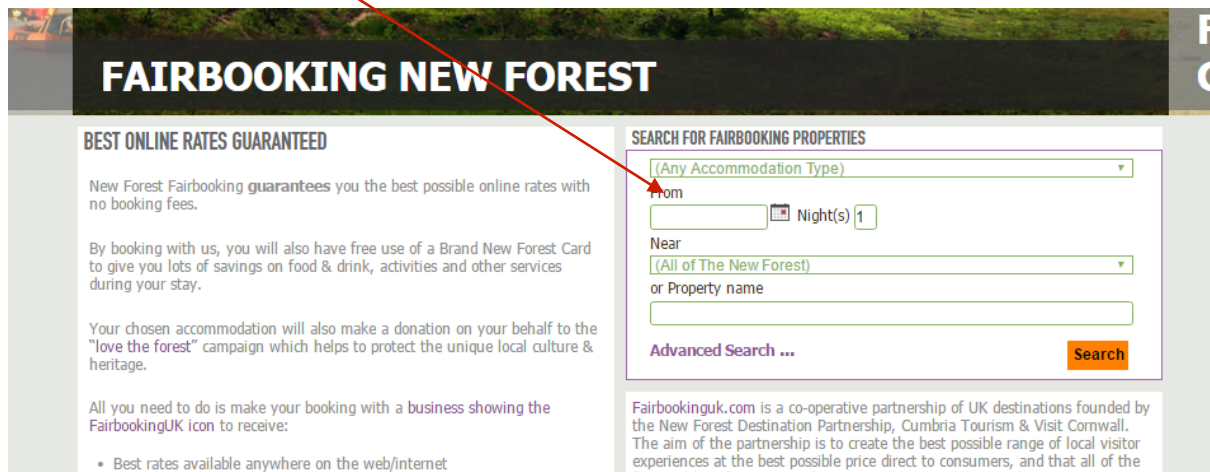
We then noticed that some users would then 'dead end', and we saw the majority exit on this stage of the behaviour flow reports. We assumed that they didn't know where

to go next, or what to do and hence conversion rates suffered accordingly. This was worrying news for the New Forest Tourist Association who had hoped that this was a crucial component of their website.



We conducted usability tests to investigate why this was happening, which confirmed that users became confused by this Fair Booking page, and wanted to carry on looking for accommodation from it.

**Our Solution:** We suggested including a search widget to facilitate this conversion. By including a search box next to the Fair Booking reference we sought to provide easier navigation and enable users to move to a desired location quicker, hence providing an overall more effective user experience.

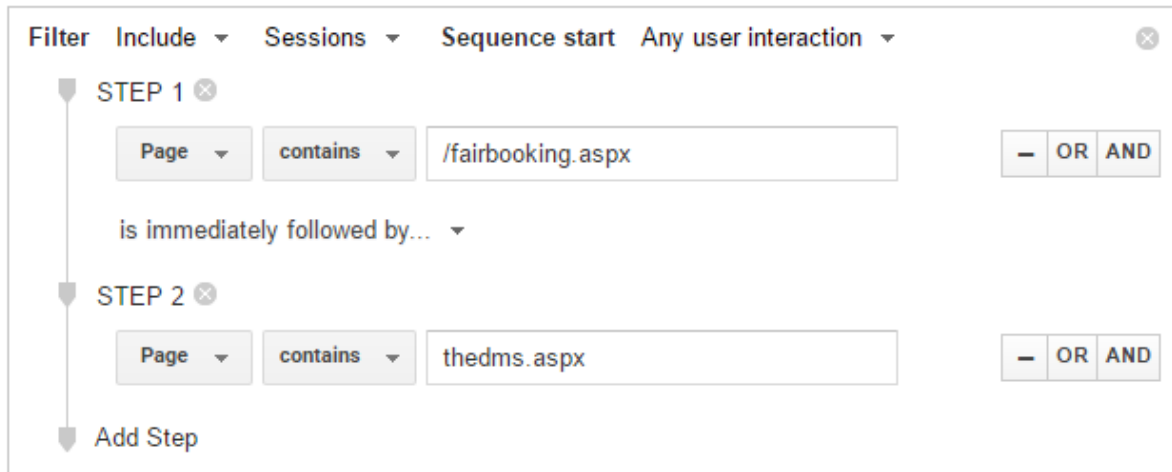


**Execution and Results:** We closely monitored the results (and continue to do so) in our behaviour reports to ascertain the effectiveness of this change and understand the flow through rates. To do this we utilised a sequential segment which can be seen below, firstly to ascertain how many users landed on the Fair Booking page within our

designated time period, and then how many of these users progressed to the accommodation pages.

## Sequences

Segment your users and/or their sessions according to sequential conditions.



The screenshot shows a sequence builder interface with the following elements:

- Top navigation: Filter, Include (dropdown), Sessions (dropdown), Sequence start, Any user interaction (dropdown), and a close button (X).
- STEP 1 (with a close button X):
  - Field: Page (dropdown)
  - Operator: contains (dropdown)
  - Value: /fairbooking.aspx
  - Logic: - OR AND
- Relationship: is immediately followed by... (dropdown)
- STEP 2 (with a close button X):
  - Field: Page (dropdown)
  - Operator: contains (dropdown)
  - Value: thedms.aspx
  - Logic: - OR AND
- Bottom: Add Step button.


Implementing this search widget helped this page to send 66% more users to accommodation pages from this Fair Booking page within the first 6 week period. Showing that one small change can have a huge impact on conversion rates and subsequent profitability.

## Issue 2 identified by Google Analytics: Lack of Carousel Interaction.

Clicks on image carousels on the New Forest site weren't being tracked. We needed to rectify this fairly quickly as all interaction data is crucial to observe and record. Consequently we utilised Google Tag Manager to capture and send new data into Event Reports.

Our initial concern was that some users may actually want to scroll through the hero images and interact with them, but may not sure how to do this. Often the problems associated with low click-through rates are not to do with the pattern or implementation of the carousel itself, but rather more the navigation function. The current New Forest Tourist Association site did not utilise arrow icons to indicate scroll.

After tagging carousel scrolls as Events through Google Tag Manager, and reviewing the Event reports we saw that interaction levels were low.

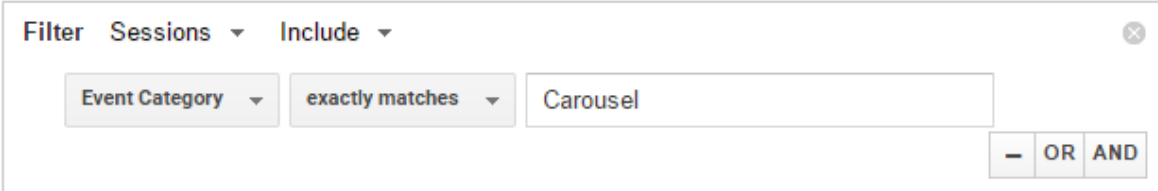


Event Category ?	Total Events ?	Unique Events ?
	<b>191,208</b> % of Total: 100.00% (191,208)	<b>62,698</b> % of Total: 47.46% (132,117)
1. <a href="#">Accommodation Search Widget</a>	<b>87,041</b> (45.52%)	<b>19,132</b> (10.45%)
2. <a href="#">Outbound link</a>	<b>32,132</b> (16.80%)	<b>19,641</b> (10.73%)
3. <a href="#">Carousel</a>	<b>31,400</b> (16.42%)	<b>5,016</b> (2.74%)
4. <a href="#">Outbound Link - 'Website' button</a>	<b>11,601</b> (6.07%)	<b>7,926</b> (4.33%)

In order to analyse interaction rates, we used conditional segments (illustrated below) to identify how many users during the same period engaged with the image carousel. One segment showed us users viewing a specific page. And another segment to show us users viewing a specific page AND triggering our 'Carousel' event. This is how we were able to get interaction rates for carousels on specific pages:

### Conditions

Segment your users and/or their sessions according to single or multi-session conditions.



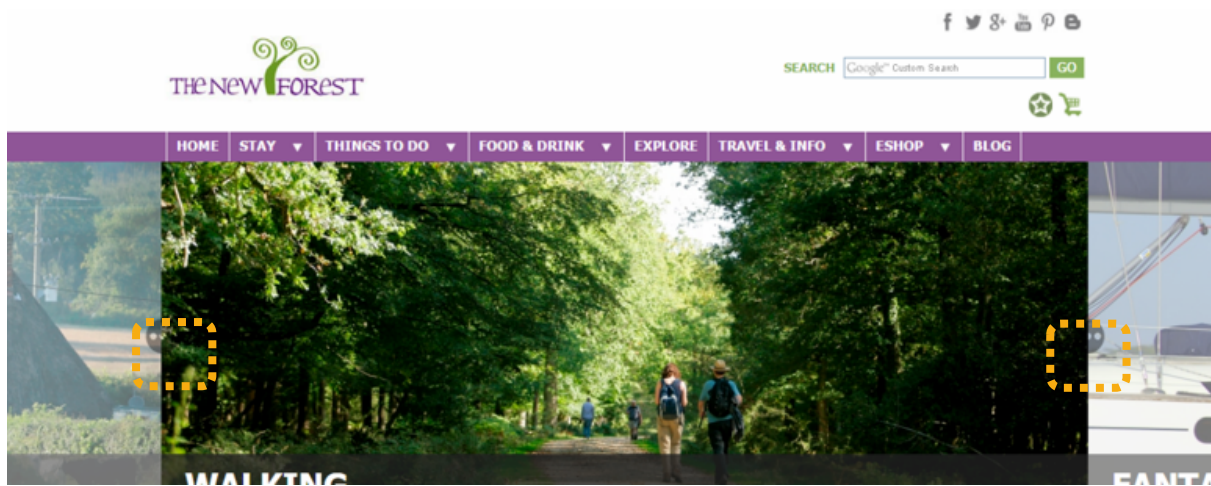
The screenshot shows a configuration box for a conditional segment. At the top, it says "Filter Sessions" with a dropdown arrow and "Include" with a dropdown arrow. Below this, there is a dropdown menu for "Event Category" set to "Carousel". To its right is a dropdown for "exactly matches". Further right is a text input field containing the word "Carousel". At the bottom right of the box are three buttons: a minus sign "-", "OR", and "AND". A close button (X) is in the top right corner.

Subsequent usability testing reinforced our analytical findings; users wanted to scroll through and review the hero images but didn't seem sure of how to achieve this.

## Our Solution

We felt that we needed to incorporate more obvious arrow icons to make this function clear and to indicate the scrolling capabilities. As the icons will inevitably be superimposed over the images, we also need to ensure that they are visible by having sufficient contrast to obviously be part of the carousel rather than the image itself. We believed that the introduction of these arrows should make the carousel feature more user friendly.

Before:



After:



## **Execution and Results**

We closely monitored the levels of interaction with the carousel and it became evident fairly quickly that the arrows were a definite aid to conversion. We noted a 123% higher interaction rate within the first 5 weeks of deployment. This suggested to us that the carousel was now a dynamic and key part of the homepage, and more significantly, was accessible to users.

## **Learnings**

Through the combination of Google Analytics and usability testing we observed how small, and seemingly insignificant implementations can elevate a potentially damaging or underutilised user journey to a more satisfying and ultimately profitable one.