CENTRAL RESERVATION SERVICE

VERISIGN EV BRINGS 30% MORE CONVERSIONS FOR CENTRAL RESERVATION SERVICE

VeriSign®

CENTRAL RESERVATION SERVICE

Central Reservation Service (CRS) provides a free hotel reservation service that offers attractive rates and special deals on hotels and resorts, with no prepayment and no booking, change, or cancellation fees. The firm specializes in working with independently owned and managed hotels in its preferred destinations— particularly boutique and specialty hotels—as well as selected familiar brand hotels. The service is designed primarily for vacationers and business travelers from small to medium-sized businesses.

CRS was founded in 1987 as a telephone-based service, but it was among the first to begin doing business over the Internet in 1994. The company's Web site, CRSHotels. com, grew steadily as a revenue source to the point that it now receives 50,000 visitors a month and accounts for 90% of the company's sales.

INTERNET RESEARCH CONVINCES CRS TO CHANGE TO VERISIGN SSL

CRS began securing its customers' data in motion using another vendor's SSL. Due to high cart abandonment rates, however, the firm began to see the importance of security to online customers and the advantages of VeriSign. "We spend a lot of time monitoring what's happening on the Internet, especially the Web sites of leading E-commerce companies, and we kept seeing the VeriSign seal," explained Hakan Ogun, IT Manager. "The reason, we learned, is that safety-conscious customers know and trust the VeriSign name much more than any other SSL provider, so we decided to make the switch and prominently display the VeriSign seal."

The presence of the VeriSign seal delivered the uplift in conversions that CRS had been hoping for, but cart abandonment continued to be a problem. Recently, with its VeriSign license almost due for renewal, the company conducted a survey to find out why so many potential customers failed to complete the purchase procedure. 27% reported concern about the security of their credit card numbers and personal information.

EV CONSISTENTLY DELIVERS 30% MORE CONVERSIONS

"VeriSign had just released EV certificates, and we could see their potential to address these security concerns, so when we renewed with VeriSign we went with EV," said Ogun. "Sales jumped immediately, and so we ran a 'bookers versus lookers' test to find out how much of it was due to EV."

In this test, CRS used Google analytics to compare conversion rates of users of Internet Explorer 7 (IE7)–which displays the EV green address bar–with those from users whose browsers do not yet have this capability. Since there were no other material differences from browser to browser, this was a valid way to measure EV's impact.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Central Reservation Service, an online hotel booking service, implemented VeriSign® Extended Validation (EV) SSL certificates to contend with high abandonment rates. Tests showed that customers who saw EV's green bar converted to purchase 30% more often than those who didn't see the green bar, far exceeding the company's expectations.*

Industry
- E-commerce

Key Challenges
- Allay customers' security fears
- Improve conversion rates

Solution
- VeriSign seal
- VeriSign® Secure Site Pro with Extended Validation (EV) SSL Certificates

Results
- 30% higher conversions to sales for users who saw the EV green bar
- Substantially reduced abandonment rates

*Your company's results could vary. VeriSign, Inc. and its subsidiaries make no warranties of any kind (whether or express, implied or statutory) with respect to the services described or information contained herein.
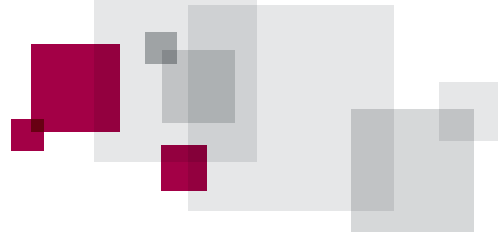
"We were expecting just a few percent improvement, but we were very surprised to learn that IE7 users converted a full 30% more often than the others. To make sure it was no anomaly we continued testing for several months and consistently saw a 30% difference," reported Ogun. "And now that Firefox 3 is out, which also displays the green bar, we're looking forward to even more conversions."

FAQS HIGHLIGHT BENEFITS OF VERISIGN EV SSL CERTIFICATES

"On the Web site we take great care to describe why EV protects credit card and personal information so well," Ogun continued. "Our FAQs explain that EV SSL is the highest standard in the Internet security industry for Web site authenticity, and that it signifies that we have passed VeriSign's rigorous identity authentication procedure. People who are especially concerned about security read the certificate and can confirm that they are visiting our legitimate Web site and not an imposter site. But many people are sufficiently reassured just by seeing the address bar turn green."

"It's important to take every opportunity to show customers that we employ the best in state of the art technology to keep their information safe," Ogun concluded. "Our use of the VeriSign seal and EV SSL provides that reassurance."

ABOUT VERISIGN

VeriSign is the trusted provider of Internet infrastructure services for the digital world. Billions of times each day, companies and consumers rely on our Internet infrastructure to communicate and conduct commerce with confidence.

Visit us at www.VeriSign.com for more information.

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Hakan Ogun
IT Manager
Central Reservation Service