

Digital Marketing Case Study



Future-Proofing a Travel Agent During Global Travel Restrictions with **Search Engine Optimisation**

Results sneak peek:

87%

Increase in Average
Keyword Position

62%

Increase in
Impressions Over Time

443k +

Organic
Impressions

About Bhutan & Beyond

Industry: Travel Agents

Location: Gold Coast (for Independent & Group Travel to Bhutan & Beyond).

Together, owners of Bhutan & Beyond, James and Nicola Irving, have more than 50 years of experience in the travel industry. In fact, their business is an official Australasian representative for Bhutan Tourism Corporation Limited (BTCL), Target Tours India and Intertours-Nepal.

This close relationship with BTCL, as well as James and Nicola's own travels to Bhutan and surrounds mean travellers can get the most from their trip with a well-designed and researched itinerary. They can plan private and small group tours, as well as luxury experiences.

As experts in travelling to Bhutan, James and Nicola can help you organise everything from flights and hotels to activities and tour guides. With recent travel restrictions, they also know any and all requirements you may need to complete before you can safely enter Bhutan, India or Nepal.

It's these restrictions that further strengthened James and Nicola's relationship with Localsearch.

James & Nicola Irving
Owners of



The Challenge of Being a Travel Agency During a Global Pandemic

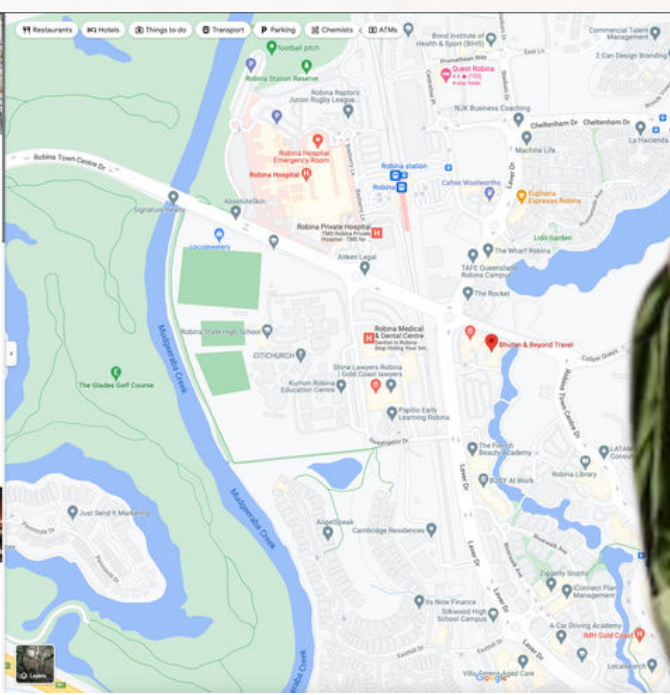
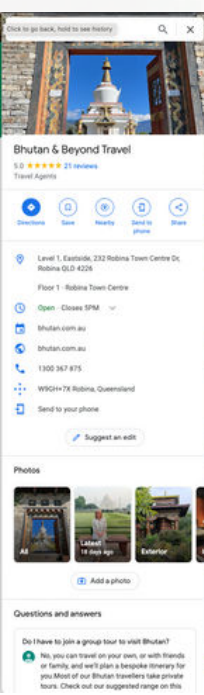
In March 2020, Bhutan & Beyond received a sudden 85% decrease in website users from the month previous, following global travel restrictions.

Like any business owners, James and Nicola felt a sense of panic, with the instinct to pull their marketing budget.

Under the guidance of Localsearch's search engine optimisation (SEO) experts, we recommended a strategy to not only increase their website traffic and brand presence, but also future-proof themselves against the unknown.

Travel restriction timeline:

- International travel bans and restrictions began in Australia from 20 March 2020.
- Travel precautions were lowered for trips from Australia to Bhutan (and return) in September 2022.



The Strategy

The natural instinct for most businesses owners when the pandemic hit was to save every dollar, including pulling their marketing. However, this is counterproductive if you're still attempting to be found and continue operating.

So, step one of our strategy for Bhutan & Beyond was to re-align their strategy to meet new consumer queries to get them in front of people online.

Strategy realignment included:

- Keyword analysis to find high-volume searches being performed relevant to Bhutan, international travel, etc.
- Creation of new pages and content specific to above researched keywords.
- Identifying content gaps competitors were not meeting.
- Diversify content to meet consumers however they're searching.
- Update the business's Google Business Profile with updates and news.



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Step 2: The content strategy.

As part of Bhutan & Beyond's COVID-future-proofing campaign, we utilised blogs and embedded YouTube videos answering the most frequently asked questions about travel during restrictions, particularly regarding Bhutan, Nepal and India (see below example).



The Latest On Travel To Bhutan, Nepal & India

James & Nicola Irving, south Asia travel experts from Bhutan & Beyond, have recently returned from a brief SE Asia trip. James quotes "It was very interesting to be flying internationally again. Be prepared for less on board services but do pick your airline to avoid unnecessary stops in a COVID world".

Bangkok, a major hub city for travel from Australia to Bhutan, Nepal and India, is looking surprisingly fresh after 2 years of COVID. Less traffic has really bought up the air quality. And its such a cost-effective stopover destination, well worthy of a few nights stay.



India & Nepal - What's Happening?

INDIA:

In addition to our [current range of India private tours](#), Bhutan & Beyond are soon to launch a new combo tour featuring highlights of India, Nepal and Bhutan in one private tour. We'll keep you posted.

Other new India product ventures, coming soon, will be:

- Walking & hiking modules in Sikkim, West Bengal and Kerala
- A Kerala private tour incl Cochin, Alleppey houseboats, hill station hikes & more.
- High-altitude trekking in Ladakh area of northern India.
- Luxury options incl celebrated Aman Resorts fabulous properties of Amanbagh, in the Rajasthan desert and Aman-i-Khas, a luxury

NEPAL:

Similarly, our soon to be released, 'south Asia combo tour' will feature highlights of Nepal in conjunction with India & Bhutan. Coming Soon.

Meanwhile our current range of Nepal tours features both ['private tours'](#) and [small group tours'](#).

We are working on new Nepal tours as follows:

- Ayurvedic wellness & yoga next to beautiful Begnas Lake.
- A luxury Nepal experience featuring Dwarika's Resorts in Dhulikhel & Kathmandu; Barahi Lodge at Chitwan National Park (one of the best for wildlife) & Kavya Resort & Spa at Nargakot.

Step 3: Securing the website against future Google updates.

Google was set to release several big algorithm updates in 2020 and 2021. Many were delayed, however, part of successful SEO is to always be prepared. This was a crucial part of the campaign.



Protecting Bhutan & Beyond against future Google updates included:

- Improving the speed of the website.
- Ensuring the website backend and plug-ins are kept up-to-date.
- Removing any pop-ups.
- Optimising images, content and page elements with relevant schema.
- Implementing a strong heading structure.
- Continuing to publish content on the website regularly, regardless of whether bookings could be made at the time.
- Utilising forms to be able to notify interesting consumers when they can look at booking trips.
- Keeping the business's Google Business Profile up to date to let Google know the business is open, operating and ready to help consumers.

And more.



The Results

With the change in keyword and content direction, Bhutan & Beyond were not only able to recoup their drop in website visitors experienced in March 2022, but increase their results. The work performed in 2020 and 2021 while their competitors took a break in their marketing meant a strong performance in 2022. Ultimately, this meant, despite a global travel shutdown, Bhutan & Beyond was able to come out of the pandemic stronger than before.



"Having Localsearch work on my website and get me seen on Google meant one last thing to worry about during stressful times."

– James Irving, Bhutan & Beyond

From November 2021 to November 2022:

443k +

Organic Google
Impressions

5.5k +

Organic Website
Users

5.4k +

Google Business
Profile Views

1st Position

on Search Results for
Tours to Bhutan from
Australia

52%

of all Website Traffic
Generated Via
Organic Search



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