

Best Western Builds Its Business on Progress Sitefinity

CASE STUDY



Challenge



INDUSTRY
Travel & Tourism

PRODUCT
Progress Sitefinity

SUMMARY
When Best Western GB needed a fresh brand and backbone for its Digital Experience Platform, it chose Progress Sitefinity.

Founded in 1967, and owned by Interchange and Consort Hotels, Best Western GB is the British arm of the global Best Western brand. All Best Western hotels are independently owned and run, giving each guest a stay unique from any other. And though independent, each property holds true to the Best Western GB commitment of offering quality accommodations with a warm local smile. A Progress® Sitefinity® customer for five years, Best Western GB needed a website refresh to better appeal to its growing audience of younger travelers.

“We’re seen as a very mid-market brand catering to slightly older travelers, and that isn’t true anymore,” said Chris Bowling, Senior Digital Manager, Best Western Hotels GB. “We wanted a fresh look to appeal to a younger audience as we now have a whole suite of Best Western brands that cover lodging from economy all the way up to 5-star.”

Best Western GB also had updated business requirements, stemming from its matrixed organizational structure and integrated network of 250 properties across Great Britain. This meant a heavy integration load with third-party systems, but it all had to be accomplished in a way that delivered a seamless hotel booking journey.

Travel industry competition made the upgrades even more essential, as Chris remarked, “They have huge budgets and are moving incredibly fast. If we’re not moving forward, they’ll get ahead of us.”

Solutions

Working with implementing partner, Spinbox, the Best Western team pursued an unusual approach. Rather than view Sitefinity as simply a content management system (CMS), Best Western used it as a platform to build a very complex Digital Experience Platform (DXP). Rehan Butt, Managing Director, Spinbox, put it best, “Sitefinity is a framework to build off of to create an application well above what the CMS is. Best Western’s implementation of Sitefinity is not just a CMS. It’s a full-blown DXP, mastering internal processes, managing data and connecting multiple critical systems.”

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Rehan Butt,
Managing Director, Spinbox

The team had three key integration areas, first its international booking system connected to the main Best Western International platform to automate the booking process. Then, it had to connect to the database managing the company’s loyalty program, Best Western Rewards, to sync the program’s discounts and benefits to Reward members’ booking experience. Finally, it had a team dedicated to data integrity for all 250 Best Western GB hotels that synced data nightly to the website, ensuring offerings and hotel information were always up to date. Beyond integrations, it had an FTP sync done once per week to connect to the other 3,000 global hotels and synchronize seven to eight million images for all global properties.

“A hotel has well-over 100 data points, and each hotel is a content item inside Sitefinity. Sitefinity has such depth, we were able to piggyback some of the core architecture, and then enhance it for speed to be able to manage that volume of content,” said Rehan, “We used the Sitefinity Module Builder significantly throughout the whole project.”

The Best Western GB development team also took advantage of the MVC framework compatibilities in Sitefinity to redevelop widgets and achieve some key wins, “Performance-wise, it’s been huge. From the speed of the website, to the responsiveness to the users. We saw SEO benefits, as a result of that speed. The cleaner markup that you end up with on the front end, became aiding SEO points as well. Leads have been huge factors,” said Rehan.

Results

Feedback on the site has been overwhelmingly positive, “I appreciate having a CMS that can handle all those complex integrations seamlessly and perfectly whilst having the ability for me and my team to go in and make changes on the fly. That’s a tremendous benefit,” said Chris.

Business results have been strong as well, “When we redeveloped the checkout process, we had an improvement of 30% in conversions from redoing the UX. That is a huge change.” said Rehan.

The refreshed brand and elegant user experience was also getting noticed, “We’re starting to see an influx of hotels wanting to join the brand,” said Chris. “We’ve crossed 300 so far, which is massive for us. And we’re starting to see more investor groups bringing 10 hotels at a time, 30 hotels at a time and that’s just something we could never done with our old brand image. This has the potential to really help grow the company.”

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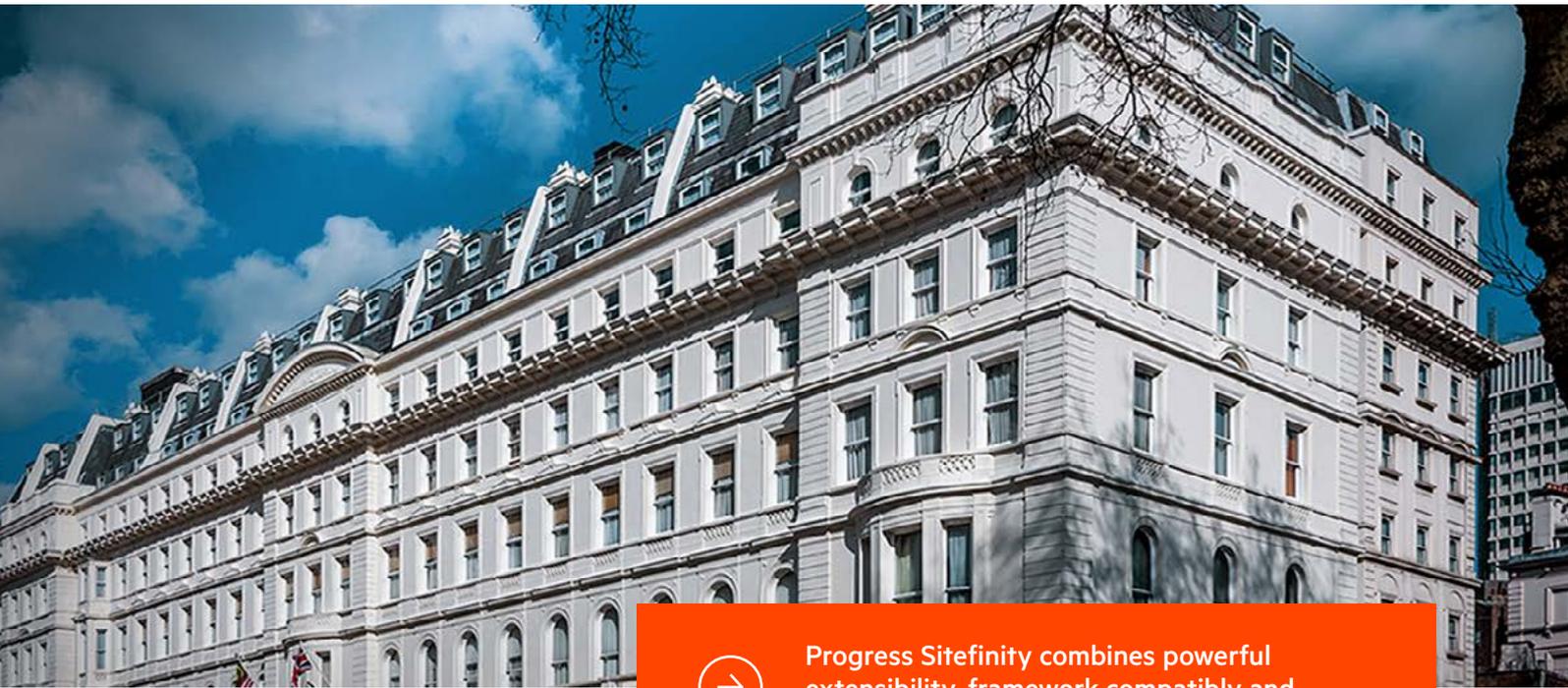
Chris Bowling,
Senior Digital Manager, Best Western Hotels GB

About Best Western

Best Western GB is part of Best Western International, and for over 30 years Best Western GB has pooled its talents to deliver a personal level of service that combines a warm, local smile with quality accommodations. Every Best Western hotel is individual and crammed full of its own personality giving customers a whole host of choices from castles to coaching inns, sea views to mountain views, modern to listed buildings. The only thing that is the same is each host's commitment to the quality, value and standards of service every guest receives.

About Spinbox

Spinbox is an independent .NET specialist web application development agency with a proven process and industry expertise that brings success to all its web projects and amazing clients. From strategy through to web design, web development, support and digital marketing, its team of specialists provides clients with meticulous customer service and amazing websites. As a web application specialist, Spinbox builds websites that make a difference to a businesses using enterprise platforms like Sitefinity.



Progress Sitefinity combines powerful extensibility, framework compatibly and an intuitive UX in one elegant package.

About Progress

Progress creates leading platforms for developing high-impact business applications. Progress offers powerful tools for building adaptive user experiences across any touchpoint, leading data connectivity technology, web content management, business rules, secure file transfer and network monitoring. Over 1,700 independent software vendors, 100,000 enterprise customers and two million developers rely on Progress. Learn about Progress at www.progress.com or +1-800-477-6473.

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