

# NORGESBOOKING GROWS DIRECT BOOKINGS

ELINA DIGITAL MARKETING CASE STUDY

# Contents

About Our Customer	03
The Situation	04
The Problem	05
The Solution	05-14
The Outcome	15-16

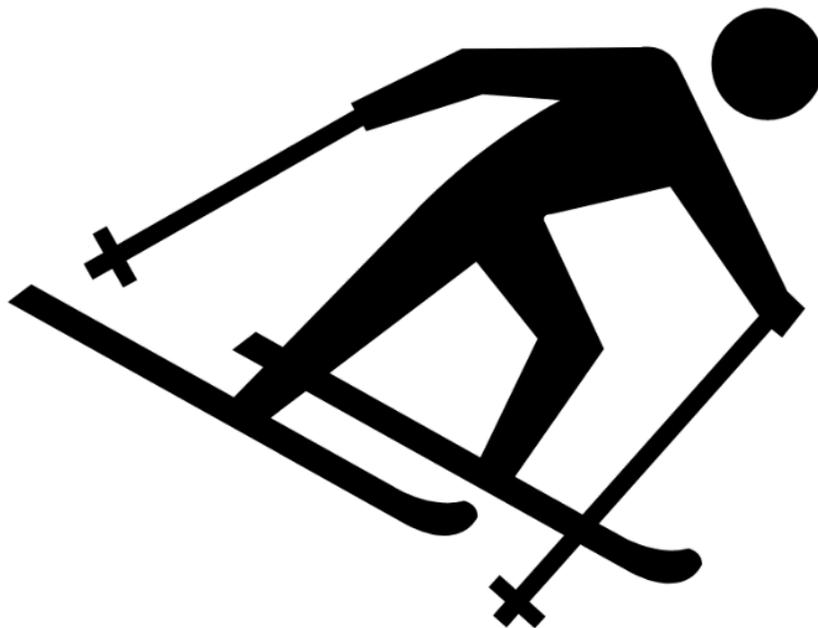
# About Our Customer



## Who are Norgesbooking?

Norgesbooking is a Norwegian owned and run company, trading for 15 years - cabins to rent for short to long stays across Norway.

They was among the very first rental agents that started a business platform based solely on the Internet. In 2002 they launched their website with approximately 30 rental cabins, and are now they are have to offer over 400 holiday homes distributed throughout Norway!



# The Situation

We went back to the story and got both teams to focus on it. The owners were walking in the woods in 2001 and they realised as they walked past all these beautiful cabins, they were empty. This seemed very sad. People could be enjoying them. They decided to start a business helping to connect supply with demand, but also encouraging demand – Norgesbooking was born. This is very telling because only 10% of cabins in Norway are occupied. This in part is due to there being more cabins than people in Norway it seems, but variety is the spice of life!

We helped create the phrase **“find your perfect cabin”** & **“by location or activity in Norway”**. It's informative, clear is explaining exactly what they have to offer and gives guidance.



# The Problem

Norgesbooking traffic and reservations were in decline, so they recognized an overhaul was needed. A fresh look at how to market, with a view to retaining market share and growing both domestic and international bookers, whilst also adding to supply.

The focus was on delivering a reservations platform that converted better, was faster and better suited to Google's most recent specs for search and that could be used for paid search marketing through accurate tracking of spend to conversion.

# The Solution

We undertook a project with **web design, web development** and **digital marketing**, including content creation and analytics set up to achieve these goals.

Norgesbooking was indeed of updating and improving their overall website, in order for this to lead to an increase in online reservations as well as a much 'trendy' looking website in order to stay dated with trend.

They was a need to work on engaging more with owners, attracting them to sign up more supply. As Norway being a strong market for cabin rentals, Norgesbooking needed help with retaining and strengthening their business position in Norway, whilst expanding into international markets, such as rest of Scandinavia, Germany and UK.

## Research and Planning

We went back to square one and looked at customers, product, messaging and the story. This led to us focusing on:

- The only Norwegian owned cabin business with a super story
- Study of brilliant vacation rental platforms and websites Norwegians are fond of, that sell brilliantly or are used a lot
- Customers love honesty and transparency (Norwegians, Danish, Germans and yes, British too!) - the detail of the stay
- People book cabins for a reason - to do something! Let's help them in finding a cabin for a purpose (very Norwegian)
- A review of the metrics to see what to expect and where we could find wins in improvement.

## How we approached this?

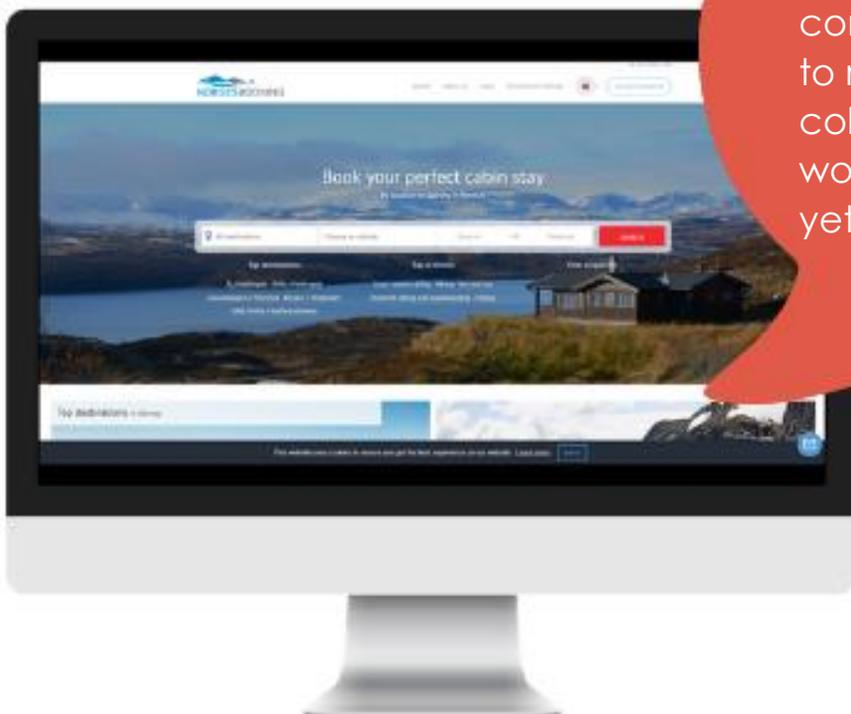


### Website design & development

Looking into very successful vacation rental platforms, enabled us to review what worked for the brand and what didn't, finding a unique approach and combining learning from multiple OTA style websites, remembering that Norgesbooking is local and will have less choice overall than the global players.

We also studied the design that appeals to Norwegians and colour carefully, a lot of use of white, red and blue, careful spacing, icons and less words. Keep things simple and clean – which is often said, is the requirement for top class design in Norway. A country which values superb design highly.

The approach of using the Elina PMS booking engine within the website, means that we are able to show the choice of cabins with key info on price, bedrooms, lead image, sleepers, bathrooms and actual price for the stay. Making comparing easier and quicker when booking a cabin stay.

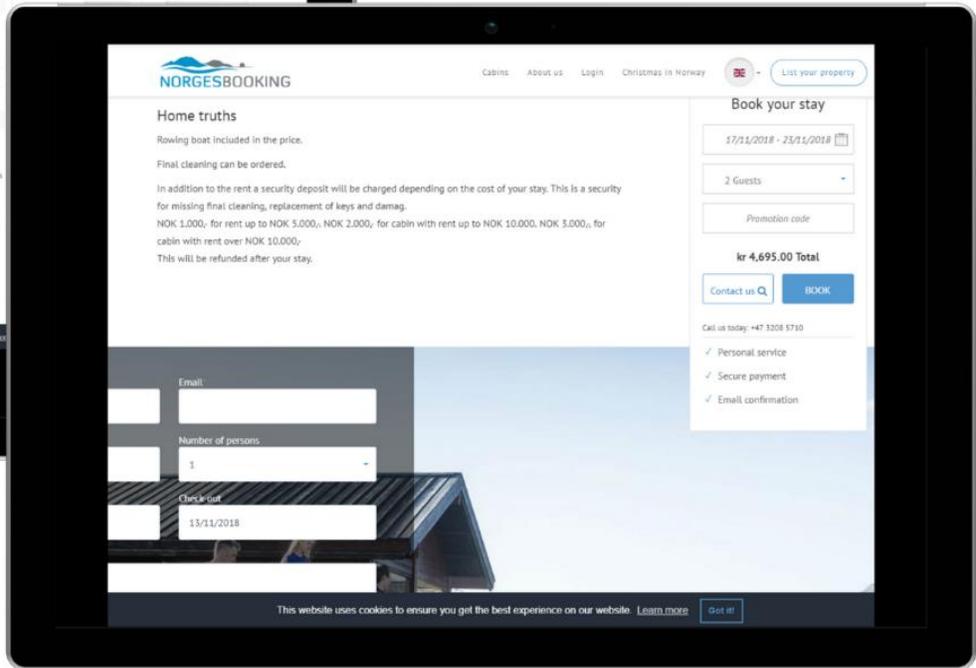
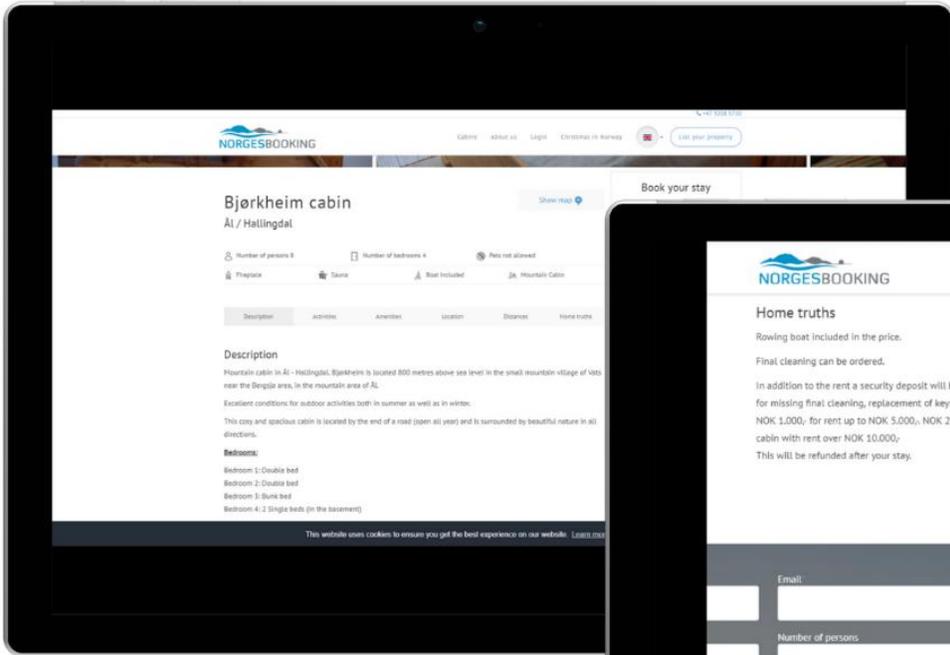


Careful use of the colours white, red and blue kept consistently through website, to represent the national colours of Norway. Use of less words with a simple, clear yet effective design.

Honesty and transparency:

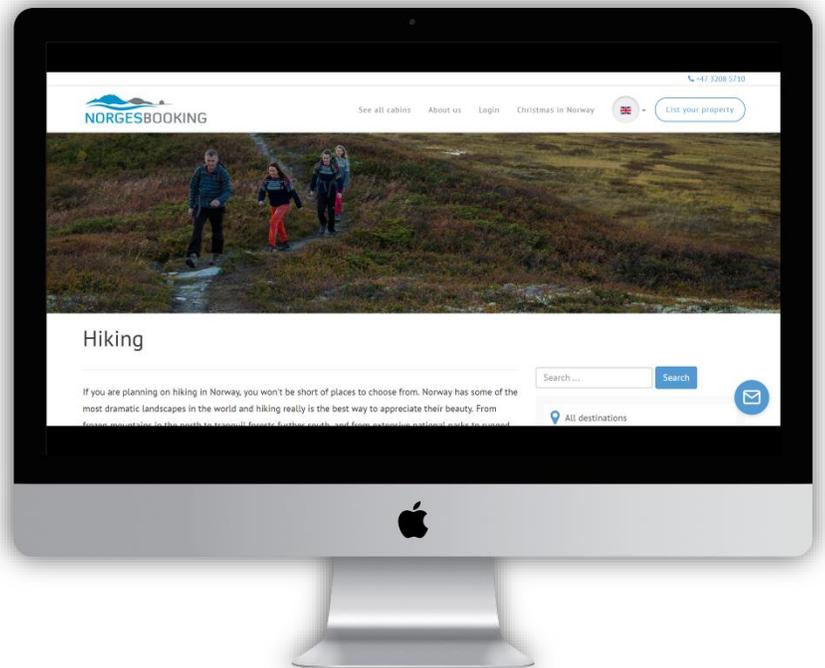
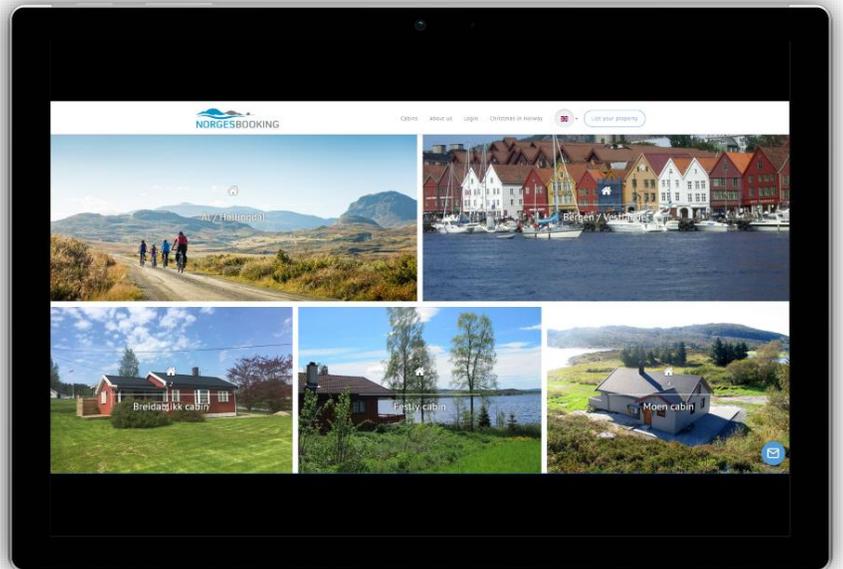
We worked with the team to understand the culture, one of total honesty and where any attempt to not be clear is frowned upon. Also one, where with a population of 4 million, if you get it wrong, people remember.

This led us to go back to basics, reviewing all the main reasons someone books a cabin, all the key information people need to know, such as distances to transport, or shops, what essentials including firewood, electricity and final cleaning are included and communicating the inclusions per room type. This was a lengthy process, but at the end we had a complete understanding of how to market the cabins in a way no one else is doing and to make sure bookers have really helpful information. This included large images, mapping and a section called home truths, which details any small print, in a not small way – honest and clear.



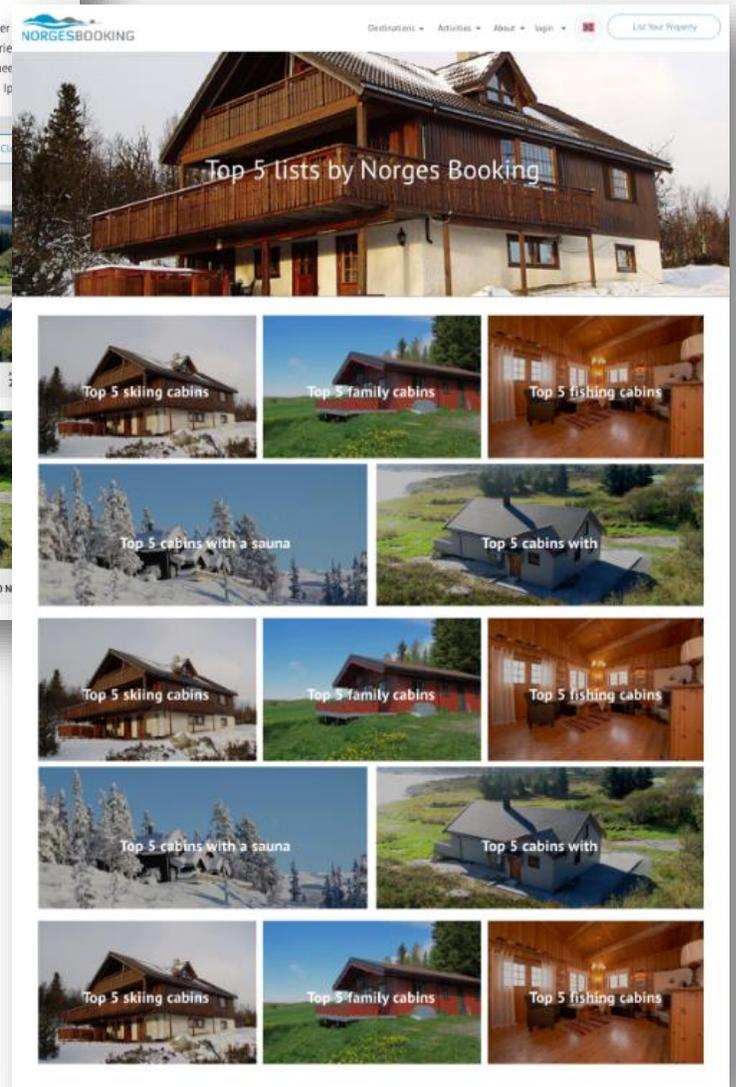
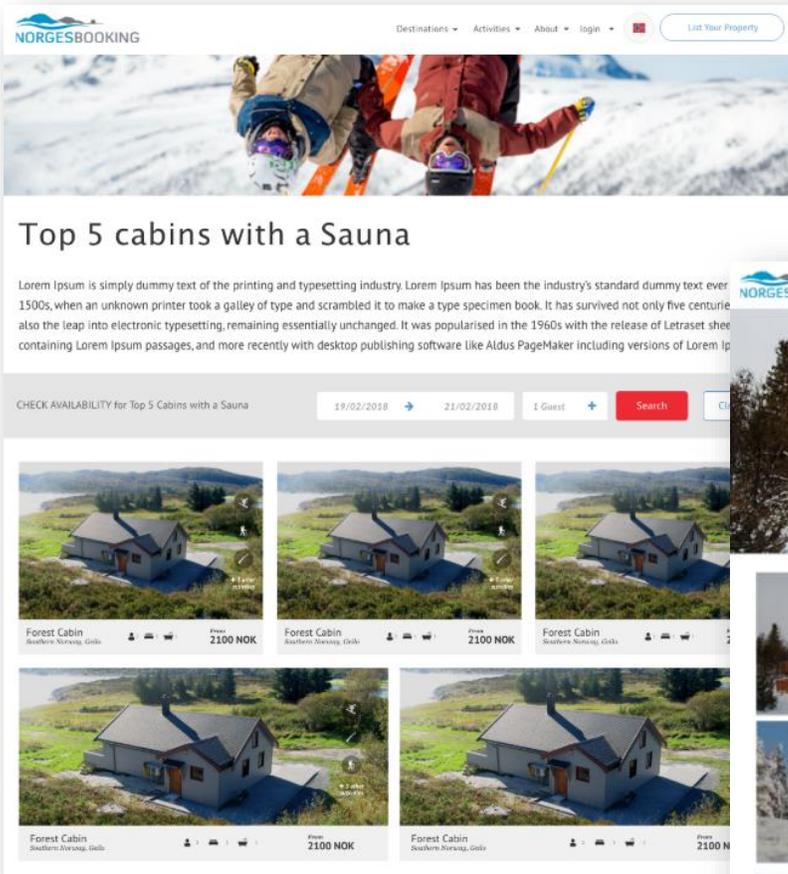
Reasons for booking:

We wanted to add value. These cabins are not in cities, but in country locations mostly. People go to these places for a reason. In Norway this is to do something with friends, family or their partner. It could be skiing, fishing, hiking, amongst others. We reviewed all activities cabins are suitable for and using Umbraco, the content management system, tagged them all. Now website users can find a cabin by location, activity or both. You can find a cabin in AI which is perfect for cross country skiing.



List pages:

The idea of creating list pages for Norgesbooking is so that it would drive a lot more traffic to their website, as well as helping doubtful bookers to make direct bookings. This is encouraged by highlighting even further what cabins are suitable for bookers according to their preferences.



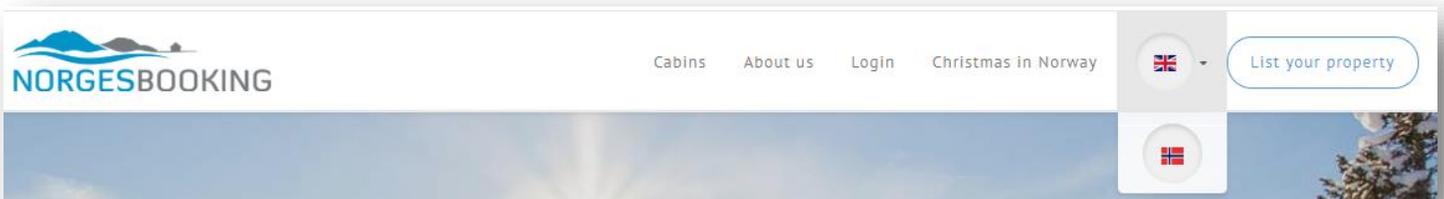
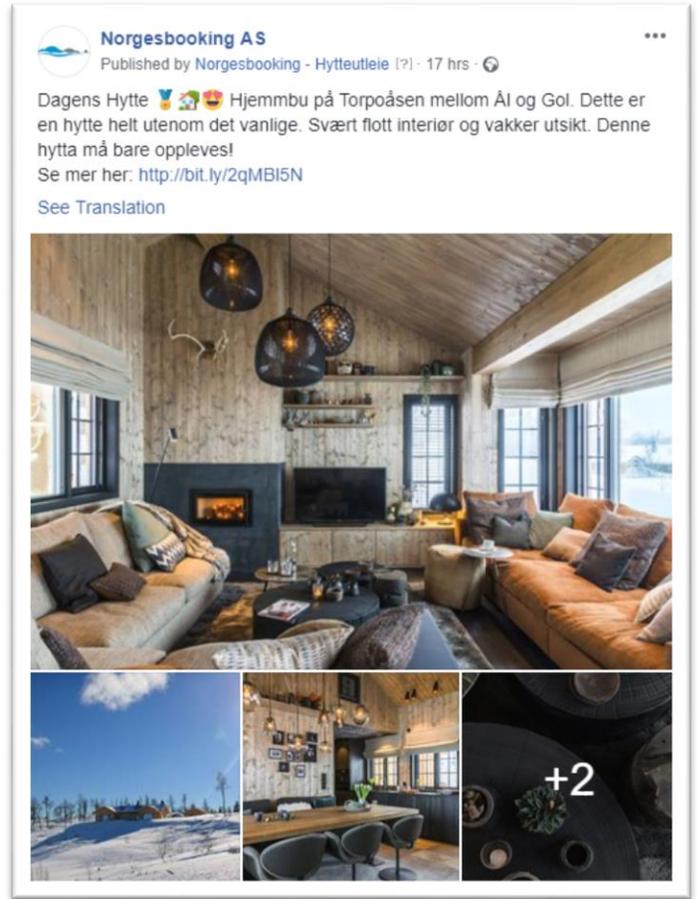
## Digital Marketing

Social media – popular Facebook posts:

As Norgesbooking receives a significant amount of direct bookings through their Facebook page, it is important to post frequently on here, showcasing Norgesbookings cabins, activities in all their locations. The reason for this is to encourage web-traffic through social media to get more direct bookings, and getting owners to sign up with supply.

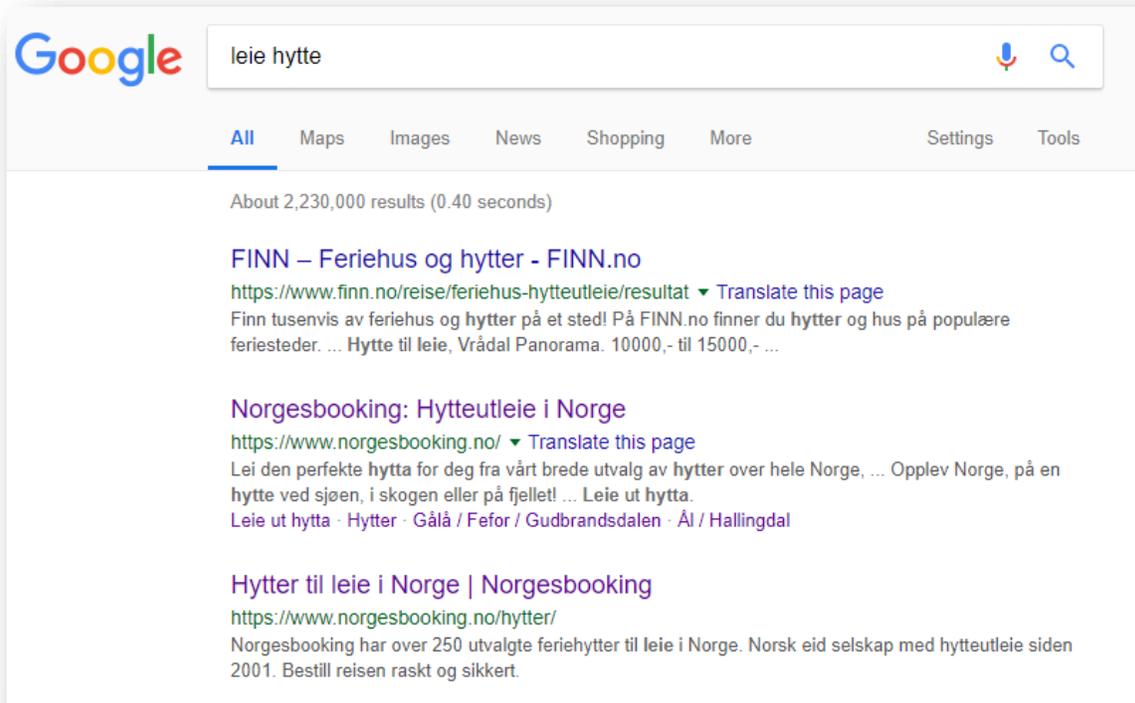
Language translation planning and research:

Evidently Norgesbooking being as Norwegian company, we planned and carried out language translation into the English language as they wanted to expand their recognition and market into the UK. On the homepage, it is easily noticeable to change the website language in English or Norwegian on the homepage tab.



## Google performance:

In terms of SEO, Norgesbooking have gained an average position of 19.6 since the last 6 months, with an average CTR of 4.9%. All Norgesbooking website pages are valid in google, and is kept as well as maintained top 3 for all the main terms.



## PPC management:

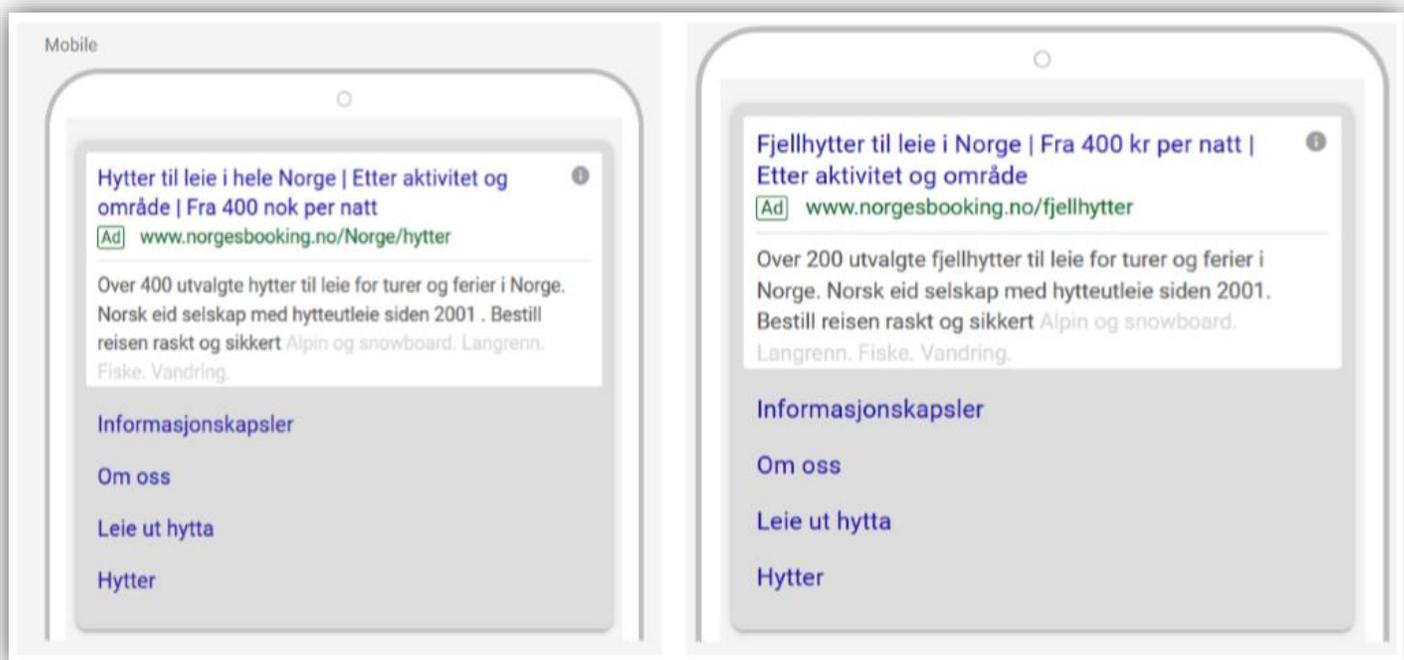
We set up PPC through Google for Norgesbooking in order to generate more paid traffic, and tracking analytics to see what is and is not working. PPC through Google recently for the company have gained high CTR on mountain cabins. We have also set up goals in Google Analytics, in order to track specific user interactions on the website, recording conversions.

We started of PPC just for the Norwegian market, and did demographics in Norway to find that the ages between 24-65 tend to book cabins more. We set up negative keywords on Google Analytics such as the terms 'cheap' and 'free' so that we don't misrepresent Norgesbooking when people search for them. If someone was to search for these terms associated with Norgesbooking, they would not appear on Google.

Research was carried out on popular terms, which in this case was 'cabins to rent' in the Norway market. From knowing this, we used a range of keywords around using google recommendations, which is where we identified another popular term: mountain cabins to rent. We follow and carry out google recommendations to improve.

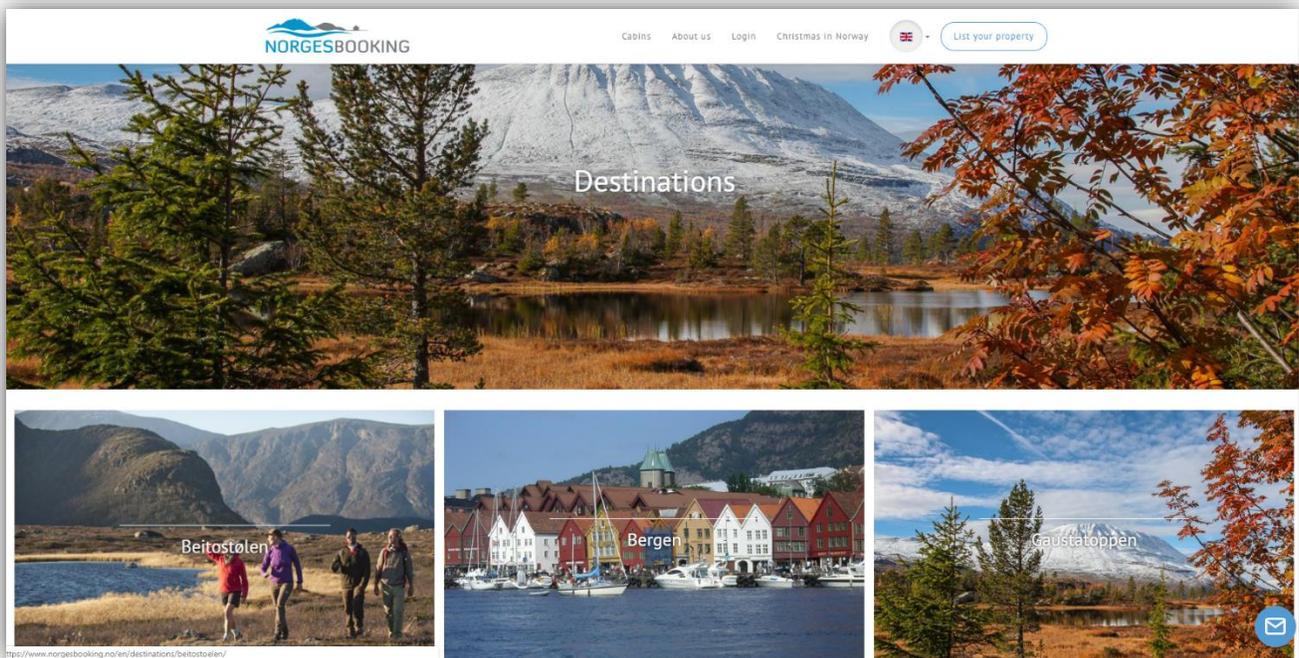
End to end testing was carried out of booking tracking in google analytics. We carried out three versions of ad testing for each ad including call outs and extensions, in order to see which ad is performing better and attracting traffic.

Feedback is key – based on google feedback, we changed the final landing page link in order to improve the google ad relevance score.



## Destination content writing:

We wanted to attract more traffic to the Norgesbooking website, which is why we created a 'Destinations' page, listing all destinations in Norway. This consists of 9 destination pages, all explaining in depth about its cabins in the surrounding location. Keyword research and SEO mapping in Norway was carried out, to see what the most popular searched terms were in regards to this. The idea behind this was to have more information for people, encouraging them to make bookings and bringing in more web traffic in the Norway and UK market in particular.



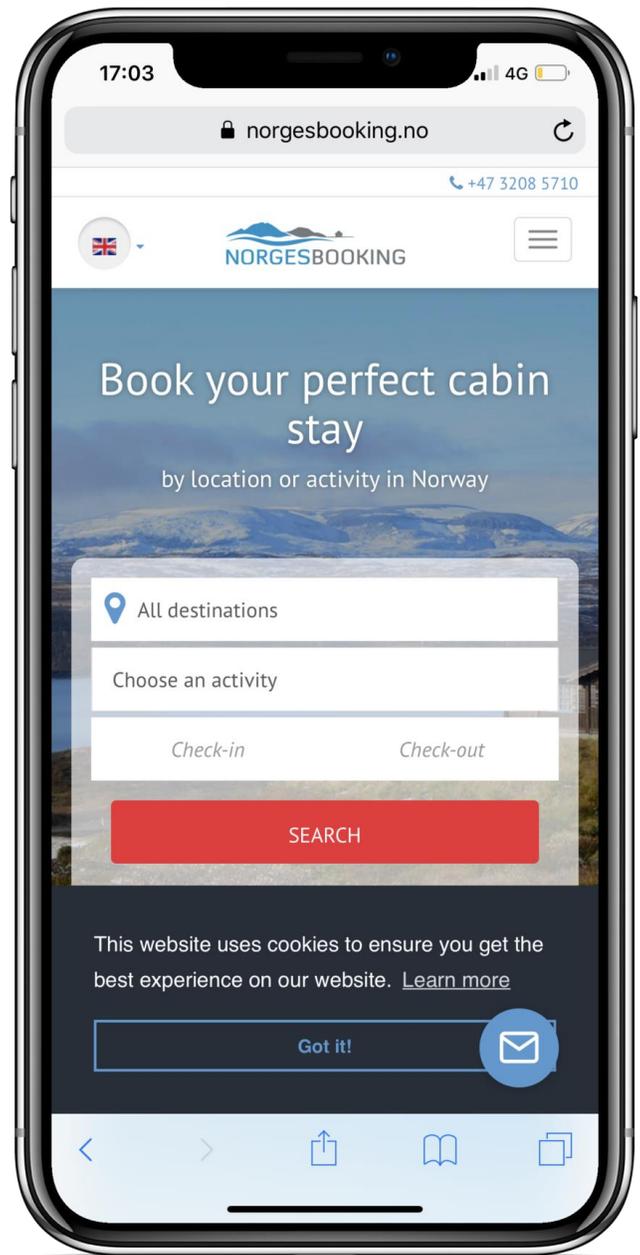
# The Outcome

We looked at past performance for up to 2 years and have used running averages from the past 6 months and the first 30 days of September post going live to give an indication of the steps forwards made in the project.

The *average page loading time* was slow but resulted in a 45% speed reduction, so pages load faster than before. This improves the users experience and how Google views the website. Speed is more important than ever. Initial review supports that the website and booking engine is more mobile and tablet friendly.

The *conversion rate* could be improved. We used a 6 month running average from March to August to compare with the go live months, which showed that paid transaction conversions jumped up by 76%. A significant increase initially and a better base for paid marketing.

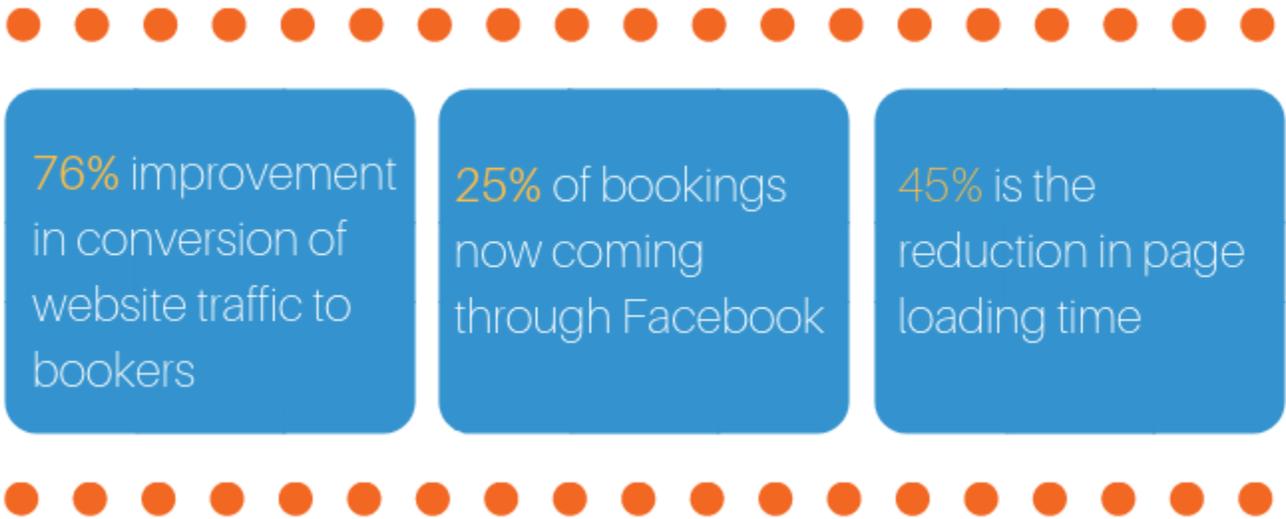
Enquiries or contact form completions have increased. Year on year we can see leads or enquiries from prospective guests are up 36%. This confirms that it is now easier to enquire and equally that Norgesbooking are getting useful info from the enquirer and still getting more leads, when people choose not to book there and then.



During the process, we created a project schedule, held creative sessions with stakeholders, problem solved on use of systems together and in moving from current to new tech, held workshops with the team, formed marketing statements and direction, reviewed the cabins and tagged and categorized all for content marketing, designed and coded the new website ecommerce platform including APIs to the booking engine to make it seamless, created and curated over 500 pages of content with site map and SEO in English and Norwegian, over 2,000 + re-directs, managed the go live, pre and post live testing, set up of Google Analytics tracking and goals.

Since going live we have made further improvements, including moving the see on map button and extra filters option to the left side of page, closer to where the eye is looking, adding filters such as number of guests and mountain cabins, to improve user experience. We have also added event pages, such as Christmas and Winter Holidays, and organised a blog and lists section for engaging marketing.

**Highlights:**



**The start of the new journey...** We are working with Norgesbooking on digital marketing and have big plans! Watch this space. It's a brilliant brand with a fantastic team and we are excited about getting more people to become guests.



# elina

