



## Bookt Case Study

**Brand:** GoToParkCity.com  
**Product type:** Vacation Rentals  
**Agency:** Bookt  
**Client:** Intermountain Lodging

### Overview

As home to one of the nation's largest independent film festivals (Sundance), headquarters to the US Ski Team, and one of the more memorable venues during the last US Winter Olympics (the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games), Park City, Utah has established itself as one of America's premier vacation playgrounds. In fact, the scenic mountain town of around 8,000<sup>1</sup> often has many more tourists than residents – in the ski season and throughout the summer. And for those who don't know, Park City is a year-round destination.

But none of this is news to one vacation rental property management company, Intermountain Lodging, which set up shop in downtown Park City way back in 1979. The company, better known as **GoToParkCity (GTPC)** and widely recognized for creating a personalized vacation experience from its extensive inventory of rental units under management, rode the crest of Park City's tourism wave through three decades, and in the process became a regional leader in leisure travel services in the *Wasatch Back* North Central Utah area. The company has maintained its excellence and distinction by adapting to the times: when the town began to swell with an influx of new condos (and new condo owners), the company increased its inventory of rental units. As off-piste attractions like golf and mountain biking became more popular, GoToParkCity encouraged summer rentals. And when the traveling public began to discover internet booking in the late 1990's, GoToParkCity developed a state-of-the-art website – [GoToParkCity.com](http://GoToParkCity.com).



However, post- winter Olympics and by the end of the first decade of the new millennium, GTPC's website was due for a major rethink and overhaul. Intermountain Lodging wanted to maintain its reputation as a forward-thinking company, staying well ahead of the technological and cultural curves, but avoiding a cookie-cutter image of template driven sites and the burden of a full-time webmaster. The company wanted to implement a new website with an uncomplicated back-end interface that would engage visitors and increase the purchase consideration within that all-important 30 second window. They wanted increased web presence, next-generation search engine optimization, and higher exposure that would translate to more bookings. For all of this, they turned to Bookt. Bookt develops powerful, customized websites that address the needs of vacation unit owners and management companies, exactly like GoToParkCity, and combines these with increased online visibility tools – vital for success in today's, and indeed tomorrow's marketplace.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.parkcity.org/index.html>

## The Players

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Bookt, a comprehensive web services provider to the global vacation rental industry, provided GTPC with innovative online solutions to help them realize their web presence needs. The Miami, FL-based company specializes in Vacation Rental Websites and Portals - delivering sophisticated website development, online marketing services, search engine optimization and CRM strategies to domestic and international property managers and owners. Important parts of Bookt's solution are the **Bookt Control Panel**, **Bookt Connect** and the **Bookt Site Widgets**; together, these allow for a much greater degree of flexibility in website design, content management and business rules than is currently available with other providers.

Founded in 2007 by travel industry, e-commerce and tech professionals steeped in the nuances of the real estate marketplace, Bookt was able to develop strategies and solutions tailored to the unique dynamics of GTPC's business model.

GTPC, for its part, has enjoyed a pioneering reputation within the vacation rental industry and throughout the central Utah region.

Right about the time that Park City Mountain Resort was installing its first triple-chair lift and about two years before Deer Valley would complete the ski resort triumvirate in the area, GTPC had identified the region as a leisure travel Mecca, complete with a booming inventory of seasonal, independently owned condominiums that continues to constitute the backbone of their vacation rental business.

As tourism flourished and became a lifeline in the region, GTPC cultivated a great presence in the vacation rental industry, serving as the Housing Administrator for American Airlines' "Ski the American West" program in 1986, being ranked 12<sup>th</sup> among Utah's 100 best companies in 1997, and earning a US Treasury Department commendation for housing over 2000 Secret Service agents in its capacity as the 2002 Summit County Housing Bureau<sup>2</sup>. With these accolades and track record of consistent success, the fact that GTPC sought Bookt as an accomplished partner for the development of their new website, is no surprise.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gotoparkcity.com/>

## The Concept

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The GTPC website project had the explicit goal of stimulating bookings, with additional goals [aims] of optimizing GTPC's reservation generation systems, improving customer interaction points, improving GTPC's online presence and exposure, and streamlining back-end procedures. Bookt set out to produce a website for GTPC that would allow users to i) search for vacation rental properties, ii) get information about the 120+ properties under management and their amenities, iii) learn about the surrounding area attractions (which include the three main ski resorts, Park City Mountain, Deer Valley, and The Canyons), and iv) ultimately, initiate a booking through an availability inquiry form.

### **More specifically, Bookt's approach to the GTPC project addressed three main aspects of the company's online presence:**

- The presentation of individual properties to potential vacationers. Three factors are considered as primary drivers of consumer perception during the booking process: engaging and accurate property photos and descriptions, appropriate and useful property groupings, and an accessible and effective property search function. For the GTPC project, these three aspects would be Bookt's primary focus of the site design.
- Make the website attractive to GTPC's target audience. GTPC's core audience is made up of young people, families, skiers and golfers looking for vacation rental properties in and around Park City. This broad demographic values trust, expertise and professionalism from their vacation rental providers, particularly when compared to a hotel or other lodging booking sites. So in order to best target this market segment, the website would highlight GTPC's reputation and experience as a licensed vacation rental unit broker.
- The ultimate increase in the overall number of bookings through an increased conversion rate, which is achieved by improved capture tools associated with the website. The bottom line of any online efforts must be measured in increased conversion ratio, so Bookt aimed to streamline existing

electronic inquiry forms and develop new capture strategies and tools for the GTPC website. Bookt also optimized ancillary revenue generators on the website (GTPC's 'Concierge Services', which currently account for about 5% of their annual revenue) to increase the overall revenue contribution of GTPC's web services.

## The Expedia Effect

While the above three goals were the central force of the project, GoToParkCity.com wanted to differentiate itself with a Bookt-powered website. In an age of third-party-booking dominance (see: Orbitz, Expedia), this also meant making a conscious choice to move away from a readymade *plug-n-play* online presence, for greater control and individual expression.

The larger third-party portals, particularly Expedia, display properties from only one property management group in a given region, effectively limiting the diversity and quantity of vacation rental units available to the public. Beyond the single-vendor representation, Expedia also makes distinguishing between vacation rental units (usually condos and houses) and traditional hotel and motel rooms virtually impossible for the end user. By utilizing one of the Bookt's solutions, *Bookt Connect*, GTPC would be able to aggregate all its inventory (property) listings into other portals with just a click of the mouse. Previously, the company needed to do extensive data entry and other tedious objectives to make this same possible.

By contracting with Bookt and maintaining control over its web presence, GoToParkCity.com has distinguished itself and all of the unique properties it manages in a very effective, manageable way.

## The Implementation

Bookt and GTPC embarked on the website project in March 2008, beginning with the planning and design phases. The first two phases of the project relied heavily upon an effective partnership and dialogue between Bookt's chief designer and GoToParkCity.com's executive team, and took about a month to move from initial planning stages to prelaunch. The website was constructed over the next few months- longer than Bookt's typical four-week development window- but a timeframe that allowed for extensive new software development. The new website, finalized and fully operational, was launched on August 12, 2008.

### Blog

**Sundance Film Festival | Taking Reservations Today**  
The Sundance Film Festival is the largest independent cinema festival in the United States. Although originating in Salt Lake City in 1978, the event ... [Read rest of posting](#)

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**Newcomers | About Park City**  
Park City and Moab make up the two largest resort towns in Utah! Park City is considered a tourist town due to its limited year-round residents. It li... [Read rest of posting](#)

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GoToParkCity.com and Bookt overhauled everything from the masthead to the color palette of the website. The new site featured compelling photos in striking color as well as a newsletter layout, integrated blog, and a featured property section. The search function was brought to the forefront for emphasis and

### POPULAR SPOTS

[See All Properties](#)



**Walk to Lift**      **Private Spa**      **Golf Course**      **Walk to Meeting**

facilitated location and touchpoints. Properties were grouped into key search categories 'walk to lift', 'private spa', and 'golf' [see website screenshot]. Points of interest were integrated along with the properties, and an interactive mapping application was added to support the geo-coded location. Other useful widgets, including current and typical weather alerts, and flight information were included. Crucial structural details were also implemented, including search engine optimized site structure, currency and language translation for international guests, and the Bookt Control Panel – part of the Bookt Platform - which provides for quick efficacy assessments, lead source tracking and integration with future property management systems.

## The Results

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Like with any new business process or marketing initiative, results do not happen overnight. It takes a period of time to gain presence within the search engines, however in the case of GTPC, Bookt took exhausting steps to expedite the re-indexing process. Although GTPC has only been live for a few weeks, they have already achieved some very impressive improvements in traffic metrics. One of the most Important - page views per visit - has increased 300%. So what does this mean? Site visitors are becoming more engaged, clicking through 3 times as many pages, and staying on GoToParkCity.com for longer. This will almost certainly translate to increased bookings, and of course, increased revenues. Conversions are also about 10% higher year-over-year, with Bookt's redesigned website as the major contributing fac-

tor. GoToParkCity.com's *extras* or ancillary revenues, which form a considerable part of the company's profit center (from ski tickets, rentals, transportation- their 'Concierge Services'), are also expected to significantly increase as a result.

Importantly, GTPC is enjoying considerably higher online exposure in a highly competitive and rapidly growing vacation rental market. Bookt's search engine optimization services coupled with the website redesign have contributed to an immediate rise in visibility, which was one of the GoToParkCity's chief goals for the new site. This increase will contribute to the company's continued success and allow it to compete in a new era of travel distribution technology and consumer choice and demand.

## Conclusion

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With new and competitive advantages of a Bookt-powered website and online services, GoToParkCity.com is looking forward to another decade of tremendous growth and regional prominence. In a crowded (and growing) vacation rental market, GoToParkCity.com has succeeded in establishing a significant online presence while maintaining control and individuality over its offerings. Through its partnership with Bookt, GoToParkCity.com has developed an attractive and effective presentation vehicle for its product, an improved revenue generation system, a deeper penetration into its target audience, and controllable, measurable back-end tools. In short, GoToParkCity.com - with the help of web services provider Bookt - has positioned itself for online success well into the future.



### For more information, please contact:

Sam Marks  
Success Manager, Bookt  
305-760-4576 Ext. 904  
[Sam@Bookt.com](mailto:Sam@Bookt.com)  
[www.bookt.com](http://www.bookt.com)

Vanessa Horwell  
Media Contact, ThinkInk PR  
786.206.7883  
[Vanessa@thinkinkpr.com](mailto:Vanessa@thinkinkpr.com)