

CASE STUDY



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How Pixeo Consulting Helped XO Tours Refine Its Traffic Using Targeted Backlinking and Blogging

104

% INCREASE IN
HOMEPAGE TRAFFIC

29

% INCREASE
IN NEW USERS

94

% INCREASE
IN BOOKINGS



PIXEO
CONSULTING

Challenges:

- Poor-quality backlinking
- Lack of targeted blog content
- Too much dependence on direct (Tripadvisor) traffic

Solutions:

- Disavow requests and manual backlinking
- Keyword research and information-rich blog content
- Backend SEO optimization

Results:

- 104% homepage traffic increase
- 238% increase in food tour traffic
- 94% more completed bookings
- Greatly increased percentage of organic traffic

XO Before Pixeo

When Pixeo began work with XO, the tour company had already built an impressive name for itself. It had a long track record with visitors and was known far and wide as a great option for in-depth city tours.

The thing is, it was losing market share, fast.

It was no longer the only major player in the Ho Chi Minh City tours market; many tours offering similarly-structured services had appeared over the previous few years.

Since the competitors had more effective SEO, they were stealing XO's business.

BACKLINK OPTIMIZATION



Pixeo's primary strategy for boosting XO's SEO is establishing quality backlinking sources. It has five ways of going about that task. Those five ways are:

- Direct links from strong sites
- Social media shares
- Internal backlinking
(Must be relevant and honest)
- Unlinked mentions help
- Manual backlinking on Quora and other forums

Each of these methods requires thorough understanding of what backlinking is in addition to stellar content creation skills.

The Problem

The main reason XO was suffering had nothing to do with a decline in service. Rather, it was all about the poor quality of the website's *traffic acquisition channels*. Many of the site's backlinks were either no longer maintained or were chock-full of black-hat SEO tactics. By associating themselves to XO via links, they were killing its search rankings.

The Solution

Pixeo made an effort to *weed out the poor-quality pages* linking to XO Tours. To do so, they have had to go through the sites manually, noting the "quality rating" of each one as determined by various databases. They have had to submit to Google *disavow requests* for the most undesirable sites found.

TARGETED BLOG ENTRIES



As anyone familiar with SEO knows, a well-optimized blog full of targeted, well-written content is invaluable for attracting first-time visitors to a site. Those visitors can then be turned into customers by using a funnel built between posts and ending at a product page.



The Problem

Another issue XO was experiencing when they joined forces with Pixeo was *its traffic was not targeted enough*. The sites that referred it were often too general, failing to capture the specific audience in which XO was interested. Its highest ranking keywords tended to appeal more to expats in Vietnam or to business travelers, when its target audience was casual first-time Vietnam tourists. This was resulting in a high amount of traffic, but an equally high bounce rate on the blog.

The Solution

Because the blog should be the nexus point of a site's SEO, Pixeo began its revitalization efforts with the XO blog. The first issue they addressed was that of making the blog more appealing to its target audience. This involved copious amounts of *keyword research* and even more reformatting of the blog posts, both the frontend and the backend.

SITE TRAFFIC

ORGANIC VS DIRECT



"Direct traffic": Traffic a site acquires by being linked to directly from another page. If Tripadvisor has an article on "the 10 best food tours in Ho Chi Minh City" and links to XO in the article, for example, that is direct traffic.

"Organic traffic": Traffic acquired by the user finding the page in a Google search. A site's pages need to be easy for users to find if the site hopes to capture organic traffic.

The Problem

In its early years, XO Tours built up a huge following on Tripadvisor. Due to changes Tripadvisor made to its business plan several years ago, however, many of the links found on Tripadvisor to XO's site were deleted. This resulted in a sudden drop in the amount of direct traffic XO received.

The Solution

In order to make up for this lost Tripadvisor traffic, XO's site had to focus on attracting more visitors via organic search. This is where Pixeo came in. Through SEO optimization and quality content production, Pixeo immediately began to increase the number of people who found the site organically. Although a large portion of XO's visitors still come from Tripadvisor, there is now an almost equally large contingent coming through search engines.

And the percentage of organically acquired traffic that ended up purchasing a tour?

100%

Pixeo also worked with XO to give the site a general overhaul, from the blog posts to the product pages themselves.

The overhaul included revisions to site metadata and formatting that made the pages more “appealing” to Google. The SEO professionals XO had worked with in the past utilized tactics that were outdated, even at the time.

Because of this, there was (and still is) a lot of unneeded “junk” for Pixeo to clear out.

The site's traffic increased across the board, with total site traffic up **127.87%**

What's more, the traffic became more targeted. XO previously received a huge amount of direct traffic, and now the percentage of its traffic that is acquired organically has increased. In other words, whereas XO was previously receiving a lot of traffic from people simply clicking on a Tripadvisor link to its homepage, it now receives a good amount of traffic from people searching for specific topics related to XO on Google.

The figures below look at XO's site activity during a month last year compared to activity during the same month this year.

Traffic on XO's home page has increased by **104%**

Traffic on the sales page for XO's street food tour, its most popular tour, has increased by **238%**

Traffic on the booking form for all tours increased by 72% and completed bookings increased by **94%**

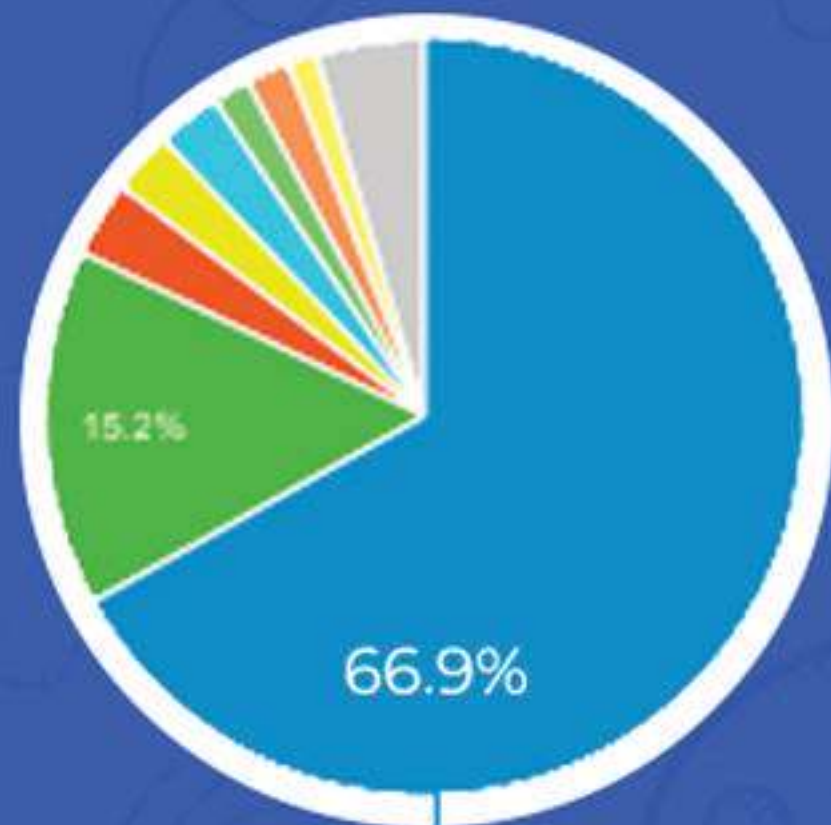
In the chart below, you can see the sudden rise in lost referring domains XO experienced last year, especially the second half. This is a visual representation of Pixeo's efforts in cleaning up reference links from disreputable domains. The chart also demonstrates that Pixeo acquired for XO many new references from more reputable domains.

New and **lost** referring domains



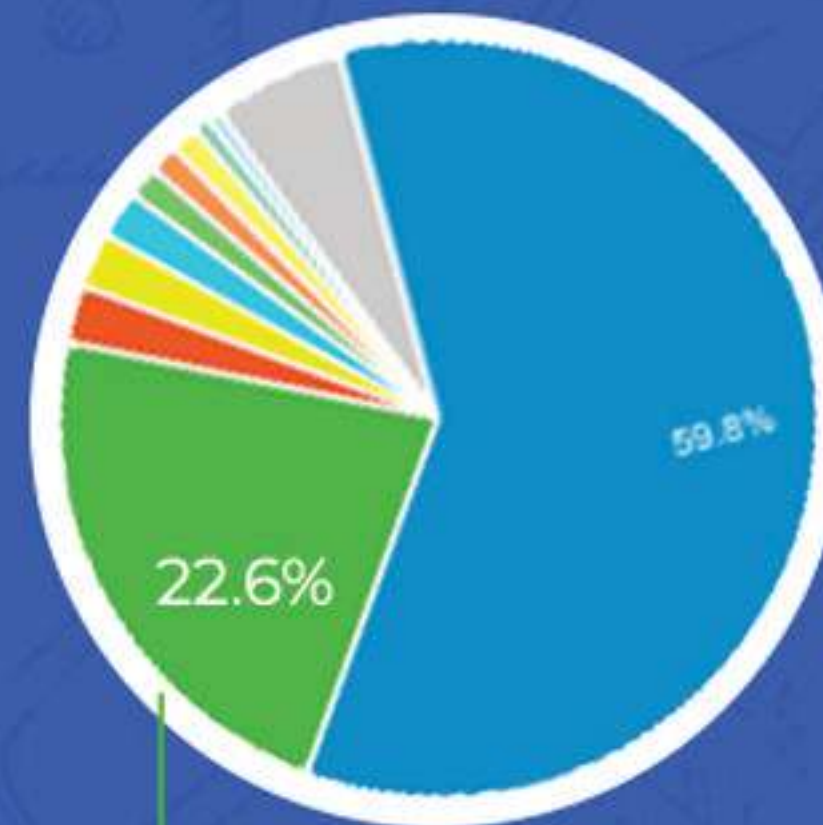
As you can see from the charts below, the type of traffic the site receives is shifting substantially. Pixeo's efforts to ween XO off its reliance on direct Tripadvisor traffic are paying off. The direct traffic is being replaced by organic traffic, which by nature is more targeted and will lead to more sales.

MARCH 2018



DIRECT

MARCH 2019



ORGANIC