



Andy Walters: Marketing Master

How Andy made Petrock Holiday Cottages' website reflect his passion.

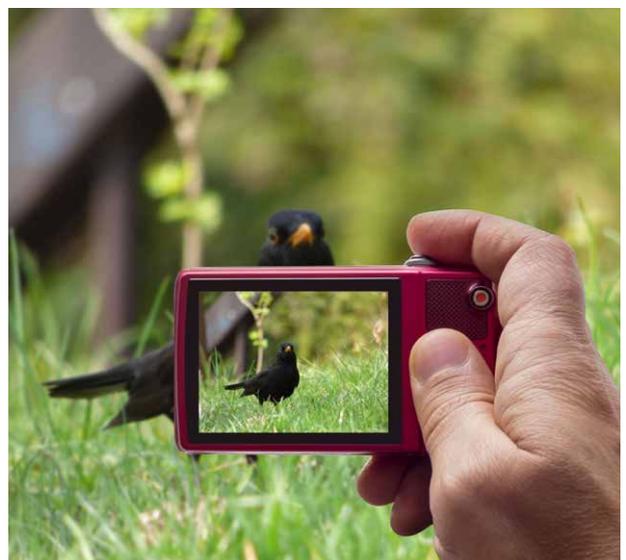
After a career in PR and local tourism, Andy Walters just wasn't ready to retire. Instead, he has spent the past four years putting his expertise to good use by promoting Petrock Holiday Cottages, two self-catering properties set in a converted barn in Devon, England.

It's an idyllic location that attracts surfers, cyclists and anyone looking to escape city life, and Andy takes pride in presenting guests with the perfect rural retreat. "It's always pleasing if you can provide guests with a great holiday experience. Our score is 9.7 on Booking.com, so we mostly get it right," he says, modestly.

However, Andy's own website couldn't keep up with his passion for promoting Petrock. "Our old website didn't have a diary attached, so we didn't get any bookings through it. It was very crude," he explains. "I also realised that it wasn't working at all on mobile devices."

Andy had tons of ideas for unique content that would set him apart from competitors. But he needed a website that would let him add his own pages, something that looked professional on any device.

He found such a platform in WebDirect. "I had a look around, but this seemed to present a very good website for a minimal cost. It pulls across info from Booking.com, and from there you can modify it," says Andy. After a quick set-up, Andy gradually added his own customised content, from local landmarks and area photos, to video tours of the cottages. He's had great feedback from guests.





"I try to provide as much information as possible, so there are no surprises. That results in happy guests because they know exactly what they're going to get," offers Andy. "Having control of my own content is brilliant. It makes life so much easier."

Since his new multi-language, SEO-optimised site went live on his custom web address Andy has noticed a number of positive outcomes. The property tops the rankings for unpaid search results on Google, is receiving direct bookings and attracting more continental Europeans, "the kind of customer we wouldn't have been able to reach before," says Andy. The website also presents information superbly well on tablets and phones.

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"You can create a website that works for you, with the information you need. It's very easy to use."

Andy Walters, Property Owner

An integrated booking engine has a large impact as it saves staff a lot of time. "I don't have to rush around and look at, or update, any other diaries. Reservations from Booking.com and our own site come through on the same platform. So it's also easy to change rates and availability in one go," explains Andy.

The biggest change, though, is the increased online presence and competitive edge that Petrock Holiday Cottages now enjoys. When it comes to marketing his property, Andy's modern website helps him punch far above his weight.

"We're a micro-business. It's put us almost on a par with the big boys because our website looks as good as their website," he says. "I'm more than happy with that."



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