

Real Estate Digital Commerce

Overview

Estate Spain wanted to build an online real estate site to serve an unmet need in providing digital commerce to a specific Russian-speaking audience. When this project started in 2016, no other websites in this market provided a comprehensive site for searching, viewing, and purchasing property. The market was ripe for ecommerce disruption to provide a premium user experience.

Estate-Spain.com started with a basic site builder and quickly outgrew it. They found Virto Commerce in their search for a replacement ecommerce solution that could scale with its explosive growth, offer better functionality, and provide a cleaner user experience.

Today Estate-Spain.com is the only niche portal that specializes in the sale of real estate in Spain to Russian-speaking clients in Russia, CIS, Baltic states, Europe and the USA. Foreign buyers make up about 16% of real estate transactions in Spain.

With Virto Commerce, we were able to launch an optimal real estate ecommerce site that uniquely positioned us in the market to serve our audience – with a premium user experience that our brand required and our users deserve.” – Olga Lomko, CEO Estate-Spain.com

Challenge

Before finding Virto Commerce, the team initially built the site in a basic website builder called Tilda, and immediately saw its limitations upon launch. The main disadvantage was that they could not create a catalog online with search or filter functionality.

Despite its challenges, the site kept growing, so they knew it was important to develop the site infrastructure further. In the first year, they collected 840 purchase applications, grew a newsletter list of 1,322 contacts, sold 29 properties for a total of €4.2 million, and hosted 2,300 webpages.

The team decided to transfer the project to Virto Commerce and use its scalable and flexible platform to build the features and functionality needed to continue their growth.

Solution

The team transferred the current version of the Estate-Spain.com front end to a new Virto Commerce platform in three months, within budget, and on time. The solution also included a robust administrator panel. The team collaborated to tackle a lengthy list of technical requirements, business requirements, and desired features.

Technical Requirements:

- Improved page performance, with faster load times on any device
- 24/7 website availability
- Mobile-friendly
- Scalable – can expand catalogue quickly
- Multilingual, multicurrency
- Multi-user system – over 100 different sources populate the property catalog
- Timely updates of property status – can mark as sold, pending, or in escrow and update all systems quickly

Front End Features

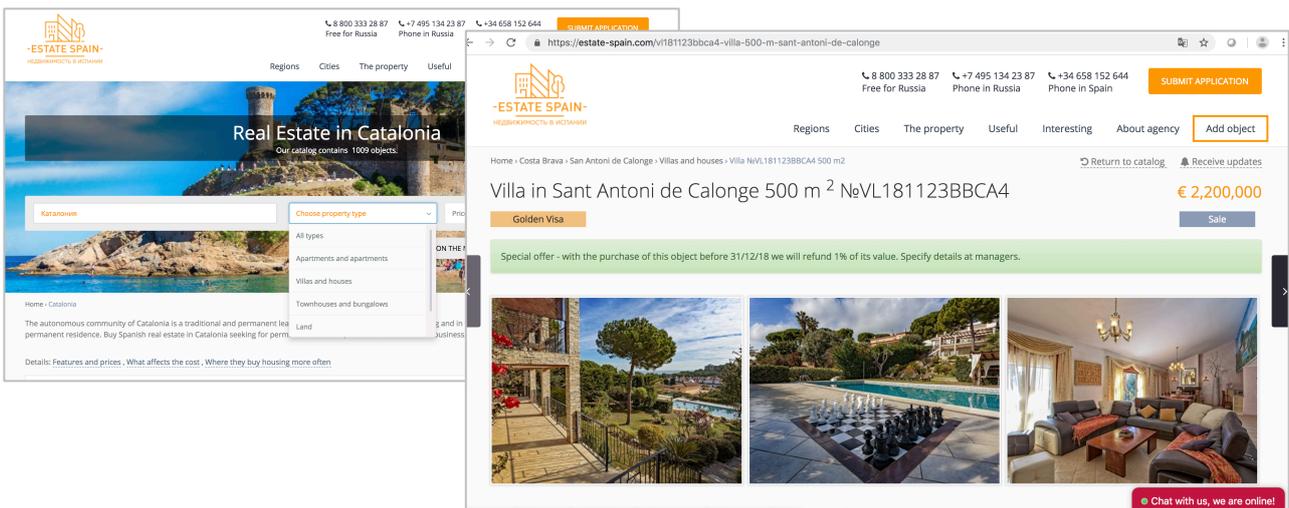
- Catalog view
- Filters include: property types, location/region, beds, baths, promo tags ex: cheap, luxury, seaside, oceanfront, etc
- Multi-feature selection: location+type+tag
- Map display and map search
- “Quick view” features
- Promotions: new, hot, sale and others
- Favorites: add to favorites; social sharing
- Notifications: subscribe to properties
- Property page details: ease-to-build with price, details, map, video, contact form

SEO-optimized website structure

- Landing page creation -- ex: home search, home value, buyers guide, etc.
- Up to 200,000 SEO landing pages
- Availability to create longtail pages
- Wise internal SEO cross linking
- Silo Structure for SEO;
- SEO-friendly URLs, H1 and H2

Additional services

- Mortgage calculator
- Buyers guide
- Moving cost estimation
- Average price per square meter
- Location rating and Points of Interest
- Property Price Evaluation for Sellers



Implementation

In mid 2017, the Estate-Spain.com team launched a new version of the website with a full catalog, property search, and other robust features.

Technical Integrations

- CRM -- AMO CRM
- Google Analytics and Tag Manager
- Live chat software (Chatra)
- Location data service (Mapbox)
- Email service: "GetResponse"
- Geolocation Service: Idealista API
- POIs Service: TopPlaces TM
- Home Valuation Service

Back End Solution Requirements

- Complex data modeling with 1:Many relationships. 1 partner has many accounts
- Multilingual and Multicurrency
- Setting configurations: where to display/not, promo properties
- Data import from different sources: including xml /json, data formats of different portals - kyero, idealista, thinkspain, etc.

The implementation of the project on the new Virto Commerce platform, including the migration and debugging, was completed in just 3 months.

"We selected Virto Commerce to replace our ecommerce solution because of its ability to scale quickly to other countries and languages – and for its ability to create and maintain a large property catalog. Virto allowed us to maintain 24/7 availability, which is critical to our international business," said Olga Lomko, CEO of Estate-Spain.com.

Result

The Estate-Spain.com site is live and has been operating since 2017. This solution improved Estate Spain's position in Google search results by 700%. The partner network has more than 130 active agencies and property developers throughout Spain, including the Canaries and the Balearic Islands.

The Estate Spain catalog contains over 13,000 properties that are updated daily. The website has monthly visits around 56,000 people and more than 300 applications for home purchase in various regions of Spain. The website ranks first in all searches related to real estate in Spain (in Yandex and Google).