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PRESS RELEASE

BOOST FOR MANX BUSINESSES ONLINE

Small and medium-sized businesses in the Isle of Man are being boosted as more and more people are booking services online, and all without any significant investment in web presence.

Some people think the Island is behind the times when it comes to shopping and booking local services online, however the latest statistics from online booking service MiQuando, based on Prospect Hill in Douglas, show that customers are becoming increasingly more confident making purchases and booking appointments on the web. That means local companies that don't have a strong online presence and don't have the ability to receive online bookings are losing out on business.

Website statistics from 2015 show that the number of people making bookings online has increased by over 650% compared to 2014. Visitors to the MiQuando platform increased by 273%, in the same period. Online booking continues to grow rapidly, with almost 2,000 bookings made with over 70 local businesses recorded in the first 3 months of 2016. These figures and the number of businesses listed is growing every week.

MiQuando Director Nigel Jones said: 'Online can no longer be something on the wish list or the "to do" list for any business. Businesses in the Island, which haven't already done so, need to embrace new technologies or they will lose custom. We've seen how the local community is changing their online habits and now they expect to be able to do business online with companies here in the Island, whether that be making a booking for a restaurant or arranging an appointment with an Advocate. Research shows that this will only continue to increase rapidly, so businesses which don't have this capability will likely be missing out.'

Another key finding from the web statistics is the importance of mobile compatibility and, with the growth in smart phones and technological developments, this is going to become even more prominent. MiQuando's mobile site, designed to be extremely user-friendly, quick to use and simple to navigate, was launched in 2015 and by February 2016 the number of website visitors using mobile



devices overtook non-mobile visitors. This highlights how important it is that customers can easily interact with a business on their smart phone or tablet. However, for businesses without a big budget this can be difficult. MiQuando's low-cost options ensure the business can still engage with mobile web users by having a presence on miquando.com so they can be booked straight from the smart phone or tablet 24 hours a day, every day.

Not only does the MiQuando platform provide an online booking facility but has many added benefits for both the business and user. Importantly, the business doesn't need to invest significant sums in their own booking system, as MiQuando provides simple booking widgets for use on their own website and booking links for social media, as well as making online booking available through miquando.com.

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Photograph caption: Nigel Jones from MiQuando

Issued by:

Roxanna Langstaff, Isle of Man Advertising & PR
roxanna@isleofmanadvertising.com

+44 (0) 1624 620440