Hurb makes booking travel easy – and safe

International business takes off, powered by performance and security from Akamai

20M
Registered travelers and growing

35K+
Travel destinations, including hotels and cruises

70%
Reduction in page loading times

Dream destinations in minutes

As a fast-growing, online travel business, Hurb's success depends on the speed and security of its website. Slow loading times or transaction delays can frustrate customers. The company relies on Akamai to deliver a consistent and safe experience for all their customers, including those in areas with poor internet speed.

Customer experiences power growth at Hurb

Hurb takes travelers to their dream destinations. The business, formerly known as Hotel Urbano, was founded in 2011 and has seen remarkable growth during a decade of disruption in the travel industry. Initially serving customers in its home country of Brazil, Hurb has successfully expanded its international operations and now has a global audience of 20 million registered customers who can choose from more than 35,000 destinations worldwide.

One of the main reasons for Hurb's success is the loyalty of its customers. Although many competitors struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hurb saw some of its busiest months thanks to a generous refund policy that protected clients affected by national and international travel restrictions. Now, the company is using that momentum to expand internationally into countries such as the United States, Canada, Spain, Portugal, and Chile.

The cornerstone of Hurb's online travel business is its website — where customers go to browse destinations, check availability and pricing, and make their reservations. Here, page loading time is an important factor, especially in Brazil where many hotels — and customers — in more remote areas may not have access to a high-speed connection. Research shows that every 100-millisecond delay in website load time can reduce conversion rates by 7 percent, while a 2-second delay in web page load time increases bounce rates by 103 percent.

Carlos Rios, CTO at Hurb, is responsible for making sure customers can browse hotel and reservation information quickly and without interruption. "The longer a customer has to wait for pictures and other details about their destination to load, the greater the chance they will give up without completing a booking," he says.

hurb

Hurb
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
www.hurb.com

Industry
Hotel & Travel

Solutions
- Web Application Protector
- Dynamic Site Accelerator
- NetStorage
- mPulse
- Site Shield

Akamai

Hurb needs to provide a seamless experience whether travelers are booking their next getaway from a laptop with a strong connection or from a smartphone on a beach. "Imagine the frustration if you want to change your booking but your mobile phone is 10 times slower than the laptop at home where you originally made the booking — and paid the deposit," says Rios.

Performance and security at the heart of the business

This relentless focus on the customer experience led Rios and his team to Akamai: "We saw very quickly that Akamai had the technology and the skills to optimize the performance of our website and protect it from hackers and other security threats."

Rios was initially attracted by Akamai's infrastructure presence in Brazil, which helps ensure a fast and consistent experience for customers even in remote locations. Hurb now relies on Akamai servers to resolve DNS queries at the edge and uses Dynamic Site Accelerator to cache 99% of its website content. That frees up the infrastructure to process real-time data for faster reservations and to easily handle peak web traffic.

"Akamai's technology enables us to focus on the fundamentals," says Rios. "Customers today expect an instantaneous response as they browse destinations or book their next getaway. Akamai gives us peace of mind that our customers will enjoy their experience from any location or device."

With Akamai NetStorage, the network dynamically selects the highest-performing region to serve content and rapidly delivers it to the customer. "By combining all the performance solutions from Akamai, we can deliver a streamlined service to customers that takes them effortlessly from browsing on a smartphone to lounging on the beach at their dream destination," says Rios.

Protecting customers from external threats

When it comes to security, Hurb uses Akamai Web Application Protector and Site Shield to protect its systems from external attacks. This helps Hurb deliver peace of mind to customers so they can trust that their payment and personal details are protected when they make a reservation.

Leandro Souza, DevOps Engineer and IT Manager at Hurb, says, "If a customer pauses, even for a split-second, to reflect on the security of a transaction, it may result in a lost booking. Akamai helps us ensure that our systems are never compromised and there is nothing in the back of a customer's mind that distracts them from making a reservation."

Akamai security technology also protects the business from software vulnerabilities. "It's a daily battle keeping the business secure from online security breaches, such as SQL injection," says Souza. "With Akamai we have confidence that our systems and our customers are protected. This means we can refocus our resources on activities that add value to the business."

Understanding the customer journey

As well as improving speed and security, Akamai helps Hurb to better understand the end-user experience and react to this information through its mPulse monitoring software. "With mPulse, we identify trends and get answers to conversion questions without sifting through vast amounts of data," says Souza. "We can understand how elements such as images or entire pages affect user experience and make changes where necessary to improve the experience."

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>
> **Carlos Rios**
> CTO, Hurb

With this information, Rios can show how the website supports overall company goals and can demonstrate the wider value of their IT investment. "We've seen page load times shrink by as much as 70%, which is very important because a user can be on a trip in a remote area using roaming data," he says. "At the same time, we have a future-proof security infrastructure that can evolve to stay one step ahead of external threats."

Rios compares the customers' experience on the website to the journeys they make in real life. "When you're traveling, you want to go from your front door, to the airport, to the resort without interruption. It's the same when you book a trip. A slow loading page can be just as annoying as a delay to your flight."

Hurb customers need not worry. "Akamai helps us provide a five-star online experience," says Rios. "We now have the confidence to expand internationally, continue to grow our business and provide our customers with the best experience when booking a vacation. The only concern they should ever have is remembering to pack enough sunscreen and their phone chargers."

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