

# Build vs. Buy – HotelsCombined

## Leverages PerimeterX Bot Defender to Stop Scraping Attacks

### Problem

A main competitive advantage for HotelsCombined is their content. The attraction and retention of customers lies heavily from their investment in their image algorithms, geography and other intellectual property for accumulating proprietary information. However, an infiltration of scraping bots started to impact their web traffic to the point that any analysis of their traffic data was deemed unreliable for making business decisions. They were vulnerable in their ability to negotiate good rates with their suppliers without reliable data. And ultimately, they ran the risk of losing their customers without the ability to offer the best pricing from suppliers.

As a tech company, HotelsCombined attempted to build their own solution to solve their scraping bot problem but quickly realized the dimensionality of bot issues changed every day. The development of the homegrown solution was a massive undertaking in time and resources to analyze traffic statistics and tune the algorithms reactively, let alone proactively. They contemplated utilizing a blanket filter over the traffic as a solution. However, the solution did not enable the ability to distinguish the good bots from the bad bots, or controlling various regions of identified bad traffic problems.

### Solution

HotelsCombined knew they needed to buy a solution versus continuing to drain development resources in the attempt of building a home grown solution. PerimeterX addressed a very stringent set of requirements that HotelsCombined had defined for their decision to buy a solution to mitigate scraping bots.

**Comprehensive coverage:** PerimeterX Bot Defender was able to provide HotelsCombined protection from competitive scraping attacks across the multiple channels they needed to support: web, mobile and APIs.

**No infrastructure change required:** HotelsCombined did not want to add any more layers to their infrastructure and needed a system that could handle their extensive list of languages. Bot Defender could be deployed anywhere within the existing infrastructure with no changes required.

**Accurate detection:** PerimeterX Bot Defender was able to facilitate and recognize their white label affiliates in addition to protecting them from malicious scraping attacks. HotelsCombined has over 10,000 domains pointed to their infrastructure, allowing multiple points of entry for bot attacks.

#### Company

#### HotelsCombined

HotelsCombined is an online hotel metasearch engine founded in 2005, headquartered in Sydney, Australia. The site operates in over 42 languages and handles 130 different currencies, aggregating more than 2 million deals through partnerships with numerous online travel agencies and hotel chains. HotelsCombined allows users to search and compare hotel rates in one search and provides a conglomerate summary of hotel reviews and ratings from external sites.

**Security expertise and support:** PerimeterX Bot Defender provided proactive support for scraping attacks with ongoing development, support and expertise. PerimeterX offers best-in-class service and 24/7/365 responsiveness with its team of experts.

## Results

The decision by HotelsCombined to integrate Bot Defender into their infrastructure proved to provide multiple beneficial results.

**Increased look-to-book sales:** HotelsCombined increased look-to-book ratio by 20% with the implementation of PerimeterX Bot Defender. Conversion rates increased through better negotiation and pricing utilizing reliable and trusted web traffic data.

**Increased business intelligence for better business decision-making:** Bot Defender mitigated scraping bots from tarnishing web traffic data. The ability to recognize good bot traffic versus malicious bot traffic enabled reliable data for business decision-making.

**Increased Marketing ROI:** In one incident, leveraging the PerimeterX team, HotelsCombined was able to quickly identify a spike in the user traffic versus assuming a malicious attack. A regional team had done a television promotion that gave the team a 700% increase in leads, which ultimately generated a 360% increase in bookings that day. Without PerimeterX, HotelsCombined would have reacted with a volume metric or rate-limiting maneuver, ultimately losing the new business the regional team had generated from their promotion efforts.

**Reduced infrastructure costs:** HotelsCombined saw a 20% reduction in server usage, enabling two more years of growth without additional costs. Additionally, time and resources spent on building and maintaining an internal system were eliminated.

"[With PerimeterX] our conversion rate of look-to-book search to booking went up about 20% like that..."

"We have the support of the PerimeterX team behind us. Any problem I have with bots now, I can just send them the data and they'll take care of it for me. And that's so valuable. [I'm] so very happy with all that."

**Dan Gordon**, Head of DevOps at HotelsCombined

## About Us

PerimeterX is the leading provider of application security solutions that keep your business safe in the digital world. Delivered as a service, the company's Bot Defender, Code Defender, and Page Defender solutions detect risks to your web applications and proactively manage them, freeing you to focus on growth and innovation. The world's largest and most reputable websites and mobile applications count on PerimeterX to safeguard their consumers' digital experience. PerimeterX is headquartered in San Mateo, California and at [www.perimeterx.com](http://www.perimeterx.com).