



Reviewing London

Fast facts

Company: Zomato.com

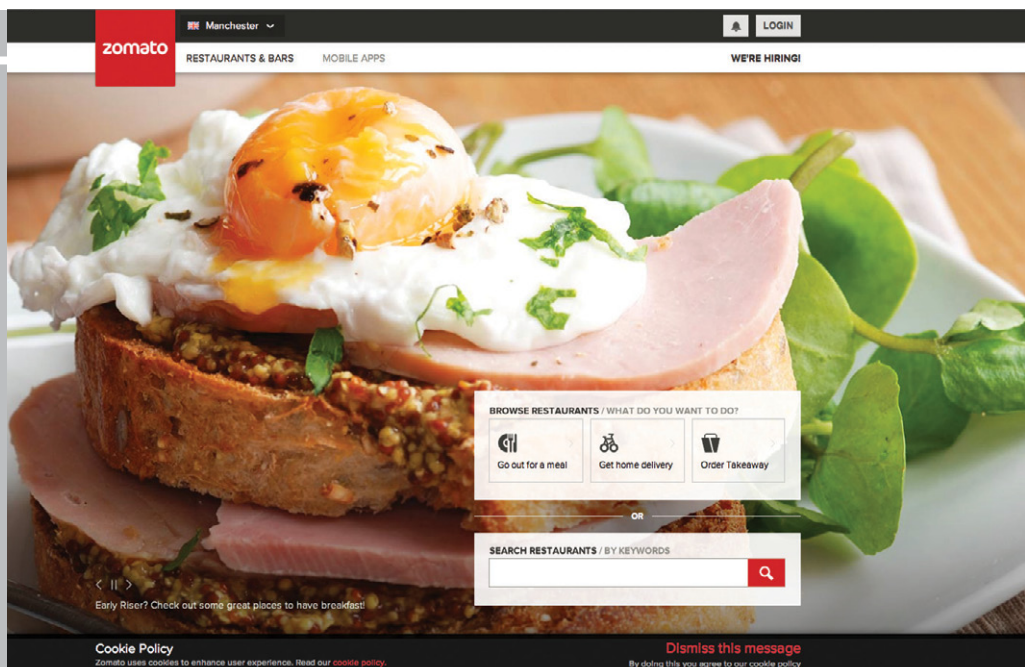
Country: India

Industry: Food

Target Market: UK

UKTI Services: Sector research, introductions
and networking

www.zomato.com



UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) helped Indian start-up Zomato.com launch its first UK site with key introductions to professional services providers. In just three months, the company has attracted hundreds of thousands of users.

When the founders of Zomato.com were working as consultants at Bain & Company's New Delhi office, they noticed how their colleagues would waste precious minutes of their lunch break waiting for a chance to check out a binder filled with menus from nearby restaurants. Aiming to make the process more efficient, the founders scanned menus and put them up on the office intranet. Their colleague's positive response sparked the idea to develop a website offering users a comprehensive, city-wide database of restaurants.

Zomato.com was founded in 2008, and listed the contact details and menus for around 1,200 restaurants in the Delhi/NCR region. The site took off and quickly attracted thousands of users looking for a good meal. Four-and-a-half years later, Zomato.com has complete

listings for nearly 100,000 restaurants in 21 cities around the world. It generates revenue through hyper-local restaurant advertising targeted to users based on their location.

"We have a content-first approach that differentiates us from our competition," says Albinder Dhindsa, Head of International Operations at Zomato.com. "Our teams collect local information the old fashioned way, on foot. Given the high turnover in the restaurant sector, we aim to update our listings every 90 days. We pride ourselves on the fact that we have every restaurant in the neighbourhoods we cover and often run contests offering a free tablet for users who can find a restaurant that we don't cover."

International expansion

After four years of growth in India, Zomato.com decided to expand overseas. India's close relationship with the United Arab Emirates made Dubai and its lively restaurant scene a natural choice, and Zomato.com launched there in September 2012. The site took off and seven months on, advertising

from Dubai now accounts for 15 per cent of the company's revenue. The response was so positive that the company expanded further in the UAE and launched sites in Sharjah and Abu Dhabi. It also targeted other overseas markets, including Qatar, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and the Philippines.

Zomato.com's reputation grew and the company started to notice tweets from Indian expatriates in London, speculating as to when it would launch listings for the English capital.

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Initial research into the market showed that there was no single leading restaurant site, so Zomato.com started a more in-depth investigation. The company learned about UKTI on the website of the British High Commission, and got in touch with the New Delhi team for advice on how to set up in the UK. In November 2012, UKTI sent Zomato.com detailed information about the restaurant sector in the UK, and also introduced the company to lawyers, accountants, immigration consultants and real estate agents.

“UKTI connected us to so many different people in the UK that we were able to get started more quickly than we ever imagined possible,” says Albinder. “From the outset, UKTI made a concerted effort to get us the information we needed and helped set us on the right path to successfully enter the UK market. Their introductions to lawyers and accountants helped us take care of the practical side of setting up locally. They also put us in touch with restaurant associations who have helped spread the word about our site. In addition, the UK Government has an incredible amount of information available online for foreign companies looking to open in the UK. It’s easy to find and very streamlined, which makes a huge difference.”

Up and running

In January 2013, the company officially launched Zomato.com London with two employees at its office in Bermondsey. The company quickly hired seven other staff members and plans to hire another seven in the next two months to cope with its growing workload. In just three months, Zomato.com London has attracted over 250,000 users a month and hosts listings for nearly 17,000 restaurants. It’s been so successful that Zomato.com is developing sites that cover Birmingham and Manchester and is set to launch in those cities this summer.

Zomato.com’s presence in the UK has also given it the opportunity to further research other markets in the region. As a result the company intends to launch Zomato.com in Istanbul in 2014.

“UKTI’s advice played a big role in us carrying out on-the-ground research prior to our UK launch, allowing us to discover the unique qualities of the market,” says Albinder. “Our entry into the UK has been seamless, with thanks in part to UKTI. Over the coming months and years we look forward to working closely with them as we expand further around the UK, and into mainland Europe.”

London calling

London is a leader for foreign direct investment in Europe. It attracts companies from around the world, which come to take advantage of the city’s pool of highly-skilled labour, easy access to European markets and top regional and international transport links.

London is continuing to grow and it is estimated that an additional 800,000 people will be living in the capital and its suburbs by 2016. This makes it an excellent long term prospect for businesses setting up in the capital.

Helping you to do business abroad

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

Through our Investment Services programme we offer new and inexperienced exporters:

- Free capability assessments
- Support in visiting potential markets
- Mentoring from a local export professional
- Free action plans
- Customised and subsidised training
- Ongoing support once you’re up and running

UKTI was delighted to support Zomato.com in its business overseas.



To find an adviser in your chosen market and begin your own success story now, scan this code with your smart phone, visit www.ukti.gov.uk/trade or email enquiries@ukti.gsi.gov.uk

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