

CRISIS: OPPORTUNITY FOR TRAVEL DESTINATIONS



Travel companies more frequently turn to online promotion campaigns for efficient advertising at lower cost.

In the time of economic recession and crisis many **tourism and hospitality stakeholders** are confused asking 'Is it time to reduce marketing budget and to reduce the staff?'

For DMC (Destination Management Companies) and tourism authorities an important saving option is the shift from offline to online promotion and public relations. Since potential travelers spend online a significant part of their day and search for travel information in online resources, **destination promotion** should reflect this trend.

There are three issues related to online promotion that should be considered. First of all, do you wish your destination online promo to be global, geo-targeted or international and multilingual? Secondly, it is important to ask what part of the budget will be allocated for the online campaign. The last question is what form of **online promotion** is the most efficient for the given destination.

Geo-targeting, global or international?

Without doubts local online targeting is the best possibility. At the same time, with growing local internet communities searching in non-English languages the local online promotion becomes as difficult as it is good. This is the reason, why many online marketing companies provide their tourism customers only the global online promo while ignoring local market. However it should be emphasized, while in 1996, 75% of the web information was in English, nowadays English accounts only for 25% of the web users. A global internet campaign in English thus omits about 75% of potential customers worldwide.

"How much" of online?

For the most travel and hospitality businesses the best marketing concept would integrate both online and offline marketing campaigns in order to achieve greater results at lower cost. For example, at ecommercepartners.net, they can provide a strategy for all your online marketing campaigns." Generally a simple rule works for travel industry companies - the smaller the size of the business, the greater share of online promotion should be applied.

Furthermore online ad spending has been growing significantly. Internet became the major promo channel for travel and tourism industry. According to e-marketers, the total ad spending on the U.S. market will double in 5 years and account for USD 50 billion in the States alone. Interestingly enough, both segments, searching and displaying of online ads, are expected to grow at the same rate and take about 40% of the market for each segment.

The best online promotion format?

Online marketing experts suggest the right mix of online advertising, [online public relations](#), and viral/[social marketing in tourism](#). Again, according to e-marketers in the coming years about 40% of online ad spending will be devoted to branding. It includes banner ads, rich media advertising, sponsorships and internet video. Therefore for the travel and tourism industry it is extremely important to turn the “crisis” to opportunity of attracting new customers and partners from the new markets through effective online promotion.

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