

STUDY: PEOPLE MOSTLY TALK ABOUT AIR FRANCE AND BRAND USA



A recent study reveals that in real world discussions in Western Europe concerning desirable travel destinations, US topped the list at 45%, Australia was second with 25% while Canada was third with 20%.

Air France was the leading brand among airlines. It was discussed in the last four weeks among 38% of those who responded. **British Airways and Lufthansa came second and third at 36% and 35% respectively.**

Those discussions centered on positive things concerning these brands. The conversations taught social circles a number of new things about these airlines. They reassured family members and friends that they should expect to enjoy a good flight when they fly with the given companies. Nearly 18% of the respondents said that they successfully persuaded another person to try out a certain airline.

This recent study surveyed 1,600 people online. The respondents were divided equally between Germany, France, the UK, Spain and Italy. The study was conducted by Insites Consulting for a group of 9 global TV channels known as inTV. The group comprises of CNBC, BBC World News, France 24, Sky News and EuroSport.

The research pointed out that "connectors" are the key influencers to focus on. These people talk to several people and about 16% of these influencers are champions of airlines and destinations.

The study suggests that the champions of destinations will more likely be ladies rather than men. **Therefore the recommendations and suggestions of ladies have a greater impact on friends and family members.**

About 60% of the respondents in the survey disclosed that they speak about travel destinations once in a month while 40% indicated that they do so once in a week. In both cases they spoke mostly with friends and family members.

Furthermore, the study states that an important group to focus on is the audience for international television stations. Those who watch these stations are about three times more likely to discuss travel destinations frequently among friends offline than those who seldom watch these TV channels.

For direct marketing organizations (DMOs), what is important is whether the discussions people are having concerning travel destinations can translate into conversion of their family members, co-workers and friends into visitors.

The first media marketing campaign of Brand USA was launched in May 2012 in the UK with a whopping sum of 2.3 million pounds. Brand USA states that the proportion of those who desire to travel to the US increased by 14% in the months following the marketing campaign. Although the threat of a devastating UK recession seems to have held up many travel plans.

In a media chat with MarketingWeek, the senior vice-president of the Canadian Tourism Commission, Greg Klassen, indicated that: Travel is unique in that it has high value and high risk but it is not possible to try it out and see how it looks in a store.

It is wonderful to see Canada come third in the discussions of people concerning travel destinations. But the question to ask is how can we work at translating these discussions about Canada into a flight booking?

According to Klassen they endeavor to follow a "route to purchase" system and discover that the major challenge is converting the discussions and good will into real visits. In this case, they discovered that direct paid media advertising seemed to work best.

Marketing campaigns on digital media can greatly influence the offline discussions and turn them into moments of actual conversion.

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