

SOCIAL NETWORKS DO NOT WORK AS TRAVEL AGENCIES



Surprisingly latest research revealed that social networks are not a good place to advertise anything, including deals within the tourism industry. Despite having a huge user base, very few consumers use social networks for business purposes. Despite the masses of articles and reports in the media recommending social networks such as Twitter or Facebook as a perfect place for product marketing, it seems the real profits are somewhere else. Social networks have turned out to be precisely what their name suggests –

purely for social purposes. Indeed, people do not turn to these pages for advice about where to spend their holiday. Instead, they just wish to communicate electronically with old or new friends. In a study carried out by Knowledge Network, it was discovered that 83% of the people interviewed actually use social networks. Of this number, 47% visit such sites on a weekly basis. It seems like an ideal platform for tourist organisations to place advertisements as people may look for advice on where to go on holiday and where to stay. Apparently not. According to the authors: "Almost two thirds (63%) of social media users agree that ads are a "fair price to pay" for use of these sites and features, but a much smaller proportion (16%) say they are more likely to buy from advertising brands. "Staying connected" – to friends and family, as well as meeting new people – is by far what is "most liked" (54%) about participating in social media." In fact, people tend to not even take notice of any advice given by people about people and certainly do not log into such sites with the aim of looking for advice. Indeed, **fewer than 5% of the social media users admitted to looking for guidance about travel** and these people claimed that it was only by pure coincidence that they happened to have touched upon the topic of holidays. Although the sites seem like a very inexpensive way of advertising, which they actually are, as marketing opportunities they seem to be quite useless. This revelation could change the way Internet marketing is viewed in the future, as it seems that large amounts of traffic do not guarantee any success in any field.

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