

ONLINE BOOKING: IMAGES, DESCRIPTION AND MAPS ESSENTIAL



A survey conducted by eDigitalResearch for Frommers in March and April 2009 brings surprising information. What are travelers actually looking for when searching online? What influences them when choosing their destination and booking hotel?

Frommers recently announced the results of a survey conducted among 1,324 online travel consumers. The researchers found out that customers' requirements of information are changing during the process of picking their holiday destination and consequently just before and after booking.

In the planning stage, most people's decisions of their vacation are influenced by the price. **Vast majority of respondents (85 per cent) claim price is the most "influential" factor.** Most people chose their destination based on information they found online (78 per cent). **The second most influential factor were friend's recommendations,** which were especially important for people aged between 18-35 years - 78 per cent of them stated friend's recommendations were important. On the other hand, only 47 per cent of older people (over 55) considered the recommendations as important for their deciding. **Interestingly the carbon footprint has some influence on decisions of 47% respondents** but it is the least influential of all the other factors.

The majority of the respondents claimed that images (76 per cent), written description of the destination (71 per cent) and maps (69 per cent) were the most important information they were looking for when planning a holiday. Information about weather and the time zone, currency and visa were also considered important.

Videos on the other hand had an important influence only on a bit over 25 per cent of the respondents. When booking a holiday, airport and transportation information are the most important information for 71 per cent of respondents. Pictures remain important and a guide to the city or resort is required by 70 per cent of the people. After booking, customers consider a map of the destination the most important thing (70 per cent).

What bothers the online customers the most is a confusing site (52 per cent) and the second worst thing is according to the respondents insufficient pictures (51 per cent).

Exactly 1,324 online travel consumers were asked what influences their travel decisions. The majority of the respondents were from the UK (52 per cent) and from North America (27 per cent). The remaining 21 per cent of respondents were from other parts of the world.

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