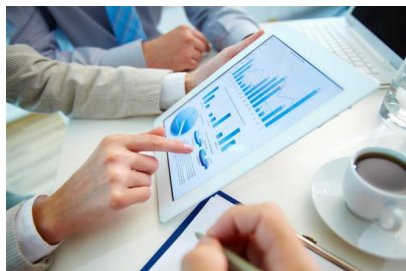


NEW GOOGLE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS TRENDS IN THE CONSUMER JOURNEY



More and more of us are dealing with the travel industry online, in one way or another, with online bookings and web-based purchases becoming more common. Now a study by Google has shown that our interactions with these travel agents and other business may be more complex than first thought as we deal with them through multiple platforms and channels with different purposes.

It all comes down to the difference between assisting interactions and the last interaction.

It is easy to focus on that final point of call - the booking form of the company website where that all-important transaction takes place - but there are many other factors that help businesses attract these customers and essentially start the customers journey, such as social media channels and marketing tools like emails. These initial, assisting interactions highlight deals and reasons to buy and are just as important for the overall journey. Data from this Google study shows that it is even more important for tourism businesses to appreciate this wider journey and the differentiation between channels because the customer journey in the travel industry is longer than on average. Another interesting feature from this Google study is the data on national differences in consumer habits: just because email marketing is highly successful for getting the ball rolling with many customers, notably Brazil where is a strong awareness channel, the Japanese seem to take no interest in it at all and other countries respond well to other factors, for example the British connect well with display click advertisements.

There is a lot to consider with travel, it is seen as a high involvement product, and this means people take their time and need the prompts of email marketing and other tools to guide them gently towards this last interaction. Understanding this Google data and using assisting interactions to their advantage could help tourism businesses manage this journey better in the future.

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