

ITALY: ONLINE AND OFFLINE TRAVEL SALES SEEM TO BE BALANCED



Since the end of the summer, several indicators point to a change in the balance between online and offline travel bookings in Italy.

The distribution world has changed significantly in recent years, the number of travel agents was reduced and booking websites grew immensely in amount. **But the changes of recent years have given way to a more stable situation, where both online and offline booking companies can count on an established client base.**

In other words: those who preferred to buy on the internet have already made their choice. And travel agents are still there, with their transacted and loyal customers.

This trend was revealed in Rimini at TTG Incontri by the School of Management of Politecnico di Milano. The Observatory of Digital Innovation of Tourism has shown that about half of the Italian travel agents expect stable sales next year and 27 percent even await an increase.

More data came from the Polytechnic of Milan, this time with the numbers from Netcomm. **Their data reveal that the amount of tours booked online is decreasing.**

Also, a number of low cost airlines were present at TTG Incontri declaring that in the current market the development of any project must go through offline travel agencies. Francesca Benati, CEO of Amadeus, said that: "No tour operator can compete with local travel agencies to customize the services." The web, of course, continues to hold its position. But it is now clear that it will not bury the travel agents.

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