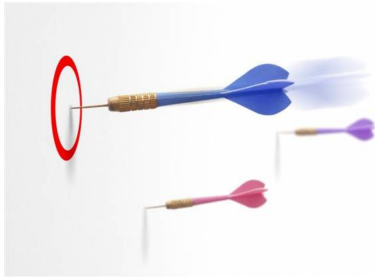


DESTINATION MARKETING: GOOGLE MAPS TO OFFER PROMOTED PINS



The giant search engine, Google, will roll out a new advertising program, which will help to offer more local adverts to consumers using the popular GPS-based Google Maps app. Under the new program, various adverts of relevant companies that are nearby a user will be provided at the bottom of the app's navigation interface on the user's smartphone. Destination marketing businesses are likely to welcome the new feature.

The new advertisement program is expected to bring consumers with ads which will include businesses such as hotels, restaurants, cafes, tour companies etc. **The tool is designed to provide local businesses with more exposure to potential customers by providing localized adverts to the consumers based on the location.** However, it is also expected to have a huge positive impact on travel and tourism-related businesses, and destination marketing sector, given the fact that a huge portion of location queries using Google Maps are related to travel and tourism.

In addition to providing localized search based on the location of the user's smartphone, Google also intends to personalize the adverts based on the user's preferences and interests, which will have been acquired from past search requests using the service, as well as online behavior of the user. This will be of a great benefit to travel related brands, as the personalized advertising will help to target potential customers who have a higher chance of paying for the service being offered.

Google has already started testing the advertising program on some of the Google Maps users. People wishing to advertise their businesses will be able to highlight their locations on Google Maps, which will then be shown to the users through what is being referred to as "promoted pins". **The pins will highlight the exact location of the business, and will also include other details such as company logos to help in easier identification of the brand.** As such it is likely that destination marketing companies will make use of the tool extensively.

In addition to the localized ads using Google Maps, the search engine will also extend the reach of the Google Display Network Remarketing campaigns. This will offer businesses advertising on Google with a broader reach to a more valuable target market, which will help to increase the chances of lead conversion, thus increasing the revenues.

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