

# TOURISM INDUSTRY FOR SENIORS?



According to Xerfi Research, the senior market is not fully exploited. In such business, the research firm emphasizes the important role that travel agents have to play in physical distribution.

According to Xerfi's study, **the use of tourism related services by households with an average age reaching over 55 will represent nearly 40% of the total market by 2012.** The potential is important, and tourism professionals who wish to appeal to this segment of the population must take into account several parameters.

The research firm report reveals an increase in the income of seniors in the short term. In the longer term, however, their purchasing power is weakened under the impact of cyclical factors (crisis) as well as structural factors (evolution of the pension system).

Although the number of elderly tourists is increasing, the research **shows there are no offers especially dedicated to this clientele.** Generally, the senior specialists operate locally, further claims the study. As for the distribution of products for seniors, the travel agency has a real role to play: "the older the customer is, the more he appreciates physical contact in an agency."

However, it is clear that the figures for online agencies will be penalized. If Internet and especially e-commerce has gained more and more followers of new technologies aged over 55 years, **only 18% of the 70 years and over have a connection at home.**

Xerfi Research recommends two solutions: Ally with a physical network (like Lastminute and Selectour) or develop your own network, like Promovacances. And one last piece of advice for tourism professionals: Sign more partnerships contracts with brands "related" to the elderly.

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