

# ONLINE TOURISM MARKETING IS ESSENTIAL IN THE TIMES OF ISOLATION



After an understandable panic about whether or not to stop web-marketing campaigns immediately following the confinement announcements, new strategies of online tourism marketing are emerging in the times of isolation for most of the users.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is at the center of all concern and speculation as the epidemic has tragically spread across the globe. **All sectors of activity are heavily impacted, and advertisers are trying to maintain their growth in an equally disrupted digital ecosystem.**

## Some Industries Are Better Off

While some companies are feeling the pinch after the closure of stores, others are seeing their conversion rate explode with Internet users - reduced to confinement - who are very active. Without a doubt, strategies for web marketing campaigns need to be rethought. Indeed, the challenge now lies in the setting up of new devices and experiences to offer to consumers in order to stand out and remain visible on the market, while preparing the post-crisis recovery strategy.

## Tourism Hit the Hardest

Following the closure of borders and the confinement of populations in several countries, the most impacted industry is tourism, with the most significant drop in purchases at tourism sites.

According to the eStudio34 marketing agency study the industries with the highest losses are: Tourism (47%); Construction (18%); Advertising (17%); Manufacturing (16%); Transport (15%); and Real Estate (15%).

Unsurprisingly, companies had to adopt a reduction of -50% to -90% in their overall advertising budget. Online tourism marketing, however, is still highly important, and several companies adopted new innovative methods to maintain the travel enthusiasm of future clients. While it is true that the conversion rate has fallen for certain sectors, CTRs are rather stable, because Internet users still visit the sites and therefore remain potential future buyers.

## Is Waiting for the Right Decision?

For some industries, waiting with marketing is a better decision than for others. The aviation industry is a particularly illustrative example here. Extremely high expenses due to expensive operating materials, gigantic loans that have to be repaid on time. Perhaps it makes sense to reduce all expenses to zero where possible. However, this does not mean that all sectors of tourism have to behave similarly. After all, there is still a group of potential customers who want to know when and where they can finally travel again.

## The Right Attitude Decides on Future Success

It is essential to maintain a connection with current and future customers. It is thus recommended to keep in touch with Internet users in the times of isolation by pushing a benevolent communication, specific contents (new products, promotions, corporate) and by reinforcing visibility on social networks, in order to favor interaction, and in the end, maybe generate a purchase, even in this period of crisis.

To re-evaluate the customer experience, it is preferable for advertisers to work on visibility in a qualitative way. This involves simplifying the buying process and creating dedicated content (videos, banners or landing pages).

Marketing through SEO is a very good option right now. Since the search engine optimization has a lead time of a few months, anyone investing in SEO, content and links will only see the results in two to three months at the earliest - in time for the first wave of the Corona crisis to subside.

It is recommended that advertisers with digital marketing campaigns be vigilant in their choice of stopping or postponing budgets. Indeed, if this dynamic were to become widespread, it could generate strong competition and CPCs that would explode during the recovery, making their presence felt long after the end of the virus.

[Online tourism marketing](#) strategies should also start preparing an action plan to anticipate future growth: re-evaluate advertising budgets, rethink creative assets, anticipate the reactivation of drive-to-store campaigns, optimize product flows, work on the audience and remarketing lists to attract the attention of Internet users.

### **Online Tourism Marketing Tips for the Hard Times**

The business opportunities in this new digital ecosystem are endless. More and more users are learning how to use online tools, and companies are forced to look for alternatives to traditional advertising, so this opens a door for renewing online marketing tools:

Display Ads: due to the need to know the latest updates, ads in digital newspapers and outlets offer much more visibility than before.

- Self-promotion in social media: since the lockdowns began, social media usage has been on the rise, so now more than ever we must take advantage of them.
- Develop more video content and use YouTube: whether it is because of someone's own initiative or because it became viral, curious videos usually trend fast. If you take a minimalistic approach, you can ensure great visibility and momentum.
- Analyze your site's performance to understand how users behave during this time and update forecasts and reports.
- Study and evaluate the paid (Search Engine Marketing, or SEM) and organic (Search Engine Optimization, or SEO) coverage over the next few months to understand how the two can be balanced as part of an overall marketing strategy in response to the impact of coronavirus on your business.
- Take advantage of the long-term nature of SEO to ensure that a website ranks well for high-volume, high-competition keywords expected to peak in the fourth quarter for the holiday period of 2020.
- Consider the possibility of having a dedicated site or section to COVID-19. If your business is

essential or the pandemic affects it in a major way, seriously evaluate having space and time to capture all the traffic regarding this topic and thus effectively link it to key areas of your website.

What is clear is that, while some of the most affected industries (such as tourism) expect at least a partial recovery in early summer, the reality is that no one knows how long this crisis will force countries to remain on lockdowns and self-isolation measures. No matter what kind of business you run, doing nothing is not an option, while data agree that exploring opportunities in the digital market can have great results.

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