

# WHAT SKILLS DO THE TRAVEL AGENTS NEED NOW?



As world travel resumes, travelers may find that planning their next trip is a little more complex and difficult. New regulations around restrictions, requirements, quarantine and travelling, flight availability... It takes time, knowledge and experience. Travel agents have a key role to play in winning back travelers.

This observation, made by Amadeus in its new study on the skills of tomorrow's travel agents, is clear. In order to successfully win back travelers, tourism professionals, and more particularly travel agents, will have to rely on several essential skills.

## Empathy

**"Empathy plays an important role in the memorable construction of trips - whether for business or leisure,"** stated Amadeus. Nothing is more important than putting oneself in the traveler's shoes, especially at a time when doubts and fears multiply before or during a trip. With ever-changing border controls, travel policies and health restrictions, human contact and understanding become paramount.

## A Solid Team

Within the travel industry, 50% of the executives that were able to talk said that their team was their strongest success factor. This figure is even higher in Europe, where 63% of travel agency executives say it is the main success factor. Managing a crisis or delicate situations, relaunching the industry and preparing for the future cannot be done alone! The best travel agents are in fact surrounded by colleagues who can guide, advise, support and help at any time.

## Numerical Ease

Digital skills are also proving to be indispensable today. The demand for these skills has increased for all jobs and industries, including travelling. "From our conversations with more than 35 travel agency leaders around the world, many said they are struggling to fulfil the roles required to manage new technologies. Finding the right skills was one of the top three concerns highlighted in our survey," noted in the study. To help companies with technology, the management company specializing in the distribution and sale of travel services has implemented Travel-19, an interface that provides frequently updated travel advice from various official sources.

## Presence on Social Networks

Social networks - which go hand in hand with the technological development mentioned above - are also necessary for the smooth running of tourism businesses. "While many millennials choose their next trip based on how the destination is "Instagrammable" and since word to mouth is the most reliable form of recommendation, travel agents should be active on social media today," say researchers. Social networking skills should be acquired by all teams in contact with customers, and not only by the marketing department. Regularly sharing content on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Tik Tok will both build customer loyalty and reach new audiences.

## Reactivity

Finally, **travel agents will need to be able to adapt to ever-changing workplaces and be able to react quickly.** Specifically, they will need to continually update and refresh their skills. "In a difficult market, the ability to think differently and react faster will be key," says the research team. An agency's ability to communicate in real-time, provide solid information, and be available at all times - in short, to be as responsive as possible - will enable it to strengthen the trust relationship with its clients.

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