



IDENTIFYING THE NEW TRAVELER

Capturing More Interest with Targeted Marketing



THE LOST YEAR OF TRAVEL

With how the coronavirus spread across the world in 2020, many hospitality experts refer to the year as “travel’s lost year.” Between Stay in Place orders, global travel restrictions, and economic fallout, anyone with plans to travel had to cancel, moving them back to the dreaming phase. Being left to scroll online and think about future vacation plans sowed the seeds for a big desire to travel once conditions improved, leading travel industry experts to feel optimistic about spring and summer 2021 and beyond.

As vaccines roll out and daily case numbers drop worldwide, travelers are beginning to act on their dreams of traveling again. However, the pandemic the world is emerging from brought with it new consumer behaviors. Learning where a traveler’s interests lie in 2021 will be crucial when developing a marketing plan to get guests to make the decision to book.

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EMERGING TRAVELER TYPES

According to Forbes, there are two major categories of emerging traveler types. First, there are travelers seeking a replacement vacation. Their travel plans were likely disrupted by COVID-19 restrictions or related circumstances, and that itch to get away hasn't faded. Second, there will be travelers looking for an escape from growing cabin fever. These travelers were stuck indoors during lockdowns, unable to visit bars or restaurants for space to breathe outside of work, leading to a pent-up desire to get out of the house for a time.

While these two categories make for a great start when determining the best method to market a hotel, marketing efforts are most successful when hoteliers can very specifically target an audience. [We previously discussed](#) five additional traveler types that were discerned by Booking.com.

Understanding each of the five types and ideas for the type of content to make across social media platforms will further encourage guests to reserve a room.



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Solo Travelers are hesitant to travel in groups because they're still keeping an eye out for their safety. They value socially-distanced activities. To entice them to visit, share high-resolution images of nearby outdoor activities or food from restaurants that offer delivery to the hotel. Depending on the property's location, it may be helpful to share information about local parks that these travelers can take advantage of visiting during their time in the area.

It's important to note that, among all these traveler types, the industry research from Expedia indicates that **Gen Z** is leading the consumer population when it comes to recovery, with **Millennials** following close behind. Aiming online marketing toward these generations will help ensure that posts are memorable and enticing.

"Relaxury" Travelers are seeking nothing more than a comfortable space to escape their day-to-day. They consider the act of relaxing to be the luxury. The hotel's amenities and the comfort of each style of room will be the star of posts targeting these travelers.

Weekend Travelers are primarily seeking drive-to destinations where they can kick back and do something interesting to diversify their brief time away. Off-the-wall attractions and unique, local activities are most likely to pique these travelers' interest.

Family Bubbles are exactly as they sound – small family groups that want high-energy activities to keep everyone entertained. Again, highlighting local parks or outdoor activities is an ideal place to start when catching the attention of a small family group. On-site amenities like a pool can also be very attractive as an easy solution to have fun while staying on-site.

Local Food Fanatics are all about special cuisine. They want to try everything they can that gives them an individual experience they can't get at home. High-resolution food photos will get these travelers drooling with excitement to try the local favorites. Tag featured restaurants if they have a LinkedIn or Facebook page to help establish a connection. Try to feature a new restaurant with each post; diversifying social media content will help boost engagement no matter the platform.the area.

THE BENEFIT OF IDENTIFYING TRAVELERS

Precisely identifying traveler types may seem like hoteliers are narrowing their field of vision to be too small. However, this is a common marketing practice called segmentation. Consumers online are constantly met with targeted advertisements that feel tailor-made to their interests. Creating generalized, wide-sweeping content is not always enough to truly capture potential guests' attention. Knowing exactly what type of experience the hotel has to offer, and matching that with an emerging traveler type, rewards hoteliers with better, more meaningful consumer interactions.



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MATCHING HOTEL EXPERIENCE TO TRAVELERS



Marketing to a specific audience is sometimes easier said than done, but getting creative is the first step toward success. Travel Media Group works closely with a hotel in Vermont – a state where COVID-19 restrictions are high – whose owner was frustrated by the drop in occupancy. A client success representative from Travel Media Group worked closely with the hotelier to discover ways to capitalize on travelers that could come to their hotel.

The solution was surprisingly simple: the hotelier shared social media posts advertising special in-state and long-term stay rates to travelers needing a place in the area. It worked, bringing more occupancy and revenue to the hotel. The hotel owner was so satisfied with the results, that the hotel planned to advertise those rates for an extra month.

This is just one example of how understanding what experience a hotel has to offer now can help influence the style of marketing and who hotel owners can aim their messaging at. Travel Media Group's client success team was able to turn a frustrating moment into a marketing opportunity. Marketing a hotel experience to specific travelers is not limited to sharing special rates – what may work for a different hotel could be advertising specific amenities and boosting social media engagement.

Knowing what potential travelers may be expecting from a hotel experience affords hoteliers the ability to deliver precise information whenever necessary. Hoteliers may need to utilize social listening practices to get a more clear understanding of what guests want and need from hotels. Getting ahead of the feedback means hoteliers can prepare updates for their websites efficiently.

When hoteliers know what information to deliver to potential guests, it boosts traveler confidence and encourages more positive communication. Hoteliers can even identify guest interests based on the feedback they receive from online reviews.

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GET ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS & REPORTS WITH TMG ONEVIEW®

Aggregating a hotel's review data is not easy to do by hand, but when hoteliers use TMG OneView® and Travel Media Group's Reputation Management program, the necessary data is made easily available for any date range. Having the opportunity to review guest sentiment at a glance for any date range – the last 30 days, three months over the summer, or even the last 5 years – helps hoteliers have a full, clear understanding of what their guests value from their hotel stay.

In addition to comprehensive data reporting, Travel Media Group's Reputation Management program allows hoteliers to send post-stay emails that encourage guests to leave feedback, overall boosting review flow and leading to better, more accurate data for hotels.

To better identify potential travelers and engage with future guests online, having a robust [social media](#) program is a must. Travel Media Group assists hundreds of hoteliers by creating content schedules that keep an audience of potential guests engaged and informed.

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Sources:

Christopher Elliott (Forbes), [If 2021 Becomes The Year Of Travel, This Is What Will Happen](#)

Destination Analysis, [Tourism Market Research Blog](#)

Travel Media Group, [Catering Social Content to the 5 Emerging Travel Types Post-COVID](#)

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