Get to grips with bold adventurers

There are three types of adventurous holidaymaker — and knowing their needs helps agents market to them effectively, says Richard Pustie, chief executive at Kantar Media UK

After a brutal winter, summer is particularly eagerly awaited this year and will bring with it the annual surge of holiday bookings.

But competition in the travel industry is increasingly fierce. With more channels of communication available than ever and a wealth of information at their fingertips, today’s holidaymakers are spoilt for choice.

This means travel agents need to spend more time identifying the holidaymakers that best fit the holiday options they offer, understanding their specific needs and interests and engaging with them in the right way.

Consultancy group Kantar Media has conducted research exploring the preferences, demographics and behaviours of travellers at the more adventurous end of the spectrum to find out what makes them tick.

Here are my three top tips to help agents to engage with consumers in a meaningful, targeted and fruitful manner.

Understand your audience

Our research uncovered three diverse subgroups within the larger group of pioneering holidaymakers, each made up of very different people with set intentions and expectations. 

“Independents” range from young parents to adults without children at home. They are 75% more likely than the average Traveler to have a keen sense of adventure, and like to pursue a life of novelty and change. 

“Experiencers” are 62% more likely to be younger and have a robust family income. Ambitious in their careers, these travellers describe themselves as risk takers. “Motivateds” are at the youngest end of the age spectrum and, like Experiencers, have an upmarket profile. They are also 30% more likely to be parents of young children. Outside appearances are crucial to this group – they are 97% more likely to say it’s important that their family thinks they’re doing well and they like to look perfect.

Get to know their interests and preferences

Experiencers spend on average £842 on their main holiday, and like to visit far-flung destinations including Malaysia, Singapore and Australia. 

Motivateds also have a high budget, spending around £753 on travel to trendy destinations such as Menorca, Ibiza and Majorca. This group wants a slice of the high life and enjoys spa breaks, all-inclusive beach resorts and luxury hotels that will look good on their Instagram feed. They’re also particularly likely to enjoy adventure activities and clubbing on holiday.

Independents seek a truly immersive experience, preferring to take off-the-beaten track or backpacking holidays. They like to visit a mix of eclectic destinations – from the Channel Islands and Germany to Australia.

Be part of their conversation

Our research shows that review sites, advice from friends and family, and local maps top the list of sources when looking for holiday ideas for all three groups.

Experiencers are also likely to visit travel blogs (video blogs) and discussion forums, whereas independents ask locals for tips when travelling.

So how can travel agents today make sure that they’re part of the conversations that consumers are already having?

My tips would be to take a more holistic approach to marketing, reaching potential customers by engaging with them on a variety of platforms and channels, creating content they like rather than resorting to traditional advertising.

These groups tend to seek out a more personal account when looking for inspiration for their next holiday and researching a destination.

Creating blogs and vlogs that explore destinations and packages from the client’s perspective can be a great way for travel agents to engage with these holidaymakers.

These groups, particularly the younger Motivateds and Experiencers are digitally savvy, so agents must make sure they are too.

Those who are active on platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter stand a much better chance of being part of customers’ conversations, and this allows them to understand what makes their customers tick.