



Online Travel Marketing

Creating a digital marketing strategy that works.

In a world of rapid online development, speaking directly to travellers is the only way to go when marketing your products. And getting a leg up on your competitors is key in an industry that is quickly evolving. But when it comes to digital marketing in the travel industry, simply having a website or Facebook page just doesn't cut it anymore. You can't do digital without doing integrated.

Here are the four most important channels you should be focusing on, plus how we can help in your campaigns.

1. SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION

SEO, or search engine optimisation, is still the most affordable and highest converting digital channel. It is a very important aspect of marketing online, and in the travel industry optimising your site for search is a definite must. As far as traffic acquisition goes, search is still the most effective channel, averaging a combined traffic share of 45% for the categories of tourism, airlines and airports, and accommodation and hotels.

UNDERSTANDING SEO

SEO can be a difficult beast to wrap your head around, but essentially there are two main aspects to focus on:

Onsite SEO: This means that you optimise your site for the people searching for what you have to offer. Do you provide bespoke safaris in Botswana? Then, for example, you had better have that phrase, and ones like it, featured on your site so that Google, and users, can find you. This is especially important in the travel industry, where the search environment is extremely competitive!

Offsite SEO: Now this is something that we can help you with. A website will not rank highly on Google with just great onsite SEO, you need to have 'backlinks' from reputable sources (*like us!*). This tells Google that you too are reputable and that other people and sites trust you. Quality backlinks are generated by a company or organisation creating relevant content that other websites want to feature. Once a website picks your content up, they will cite you in the article, linking back to your website.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

If your website is on page 11 of Google for the search terms you're trying to rank for, no one is going to find you.

2. CONTENT MARKETING

Did you know that content marketing is becoming one of the most widely adopted forms of advertising online? This is because nowadays Google, social media platforms and users are using quality content as one of the most important ways to judge the value of a brand.

The mistake that a lot of marketers make is that they create amazing content and place it on their own blog and social media pages, or a website with very few followers, meaning that it doesn't get a whole lot of traction. This is like printing attractive brochures and leaving them at home - not only wasted potential, but a waste of time and money. Forward thinking digital marketers are creating content and getting it placed on large publications with engaged audiences ([like us!](#)) in order to give their content wings. This way you are able to:

Improve offsite SEO

Get those all-important backlinks that we were talking about. Using terms such as 'Botswana safari' in content on our site and linking that term to your website will help your website rank for that search phrase on Google. Link juice is also passed from high domain websites like ours to yours, boosting your SEO in general.

Improve brand visibility

This is a crucial part of marketing successfully online. It is important to focus your content marketing efforts on platforms that speak directly to your audience. By creating regular content that reaches a large audience, you are able to increase your brand visibility to the people who matter most. Branding is becoming increasingly important for travellers besieged with advertising messages in so many forms and on so many platforms.

Build leads

Because your content is relevant and links back to your site, you are much more likely to get people clicking through, generating leads. Do you have a special deal on a safari in Namibia? Why not write an article on five things to do and see in the area? This content is relevant and speaks directly to people who are already interested in the region - meaning that people who come to your site are more likely to convert.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Getting content featured on large, reputable platforms builds brand visibility and speaks to a targeted group of people while building your leads and improving your SEO.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

Part and parcel of content marketing is social media. The old adage 'build it and they will come' doesn't apply to digital. An amazing piece of content still needs to be promoted in places where people are spending most of their time – social media. Social platforms like Facebook, Instagram and even Pinterest are perfect for the travel industry.

There are few industries where social media is more influential than travel. A recent study found that 52% of travellers said that social media influenced a change in their travel plans, while 80% are more likely to book a trip from a company 'liked' by a friend than a normal Facebook ad.

What better place to post your travel photos than on Facebook, right? Travel is inspirational, meaning that it is the perfect fit to be marketed on social media.

It also gives you the chance to be able to showcase your special offers and promotions directly to your audience. Be sure to mix it up though, as people aren't going to engage if you publish only promotional posts, and algorithms such as Facebook's are likely to reduce your reach to next to nothing if your content does not generate a reaction. Create exciting, engaging content and the fans will follow.

Social media is also an important platform for you to be able to communicate with your followers and for them to be able to communicate with you – it's the new front desk. Digital is a two-way stream and no one trusts a company without a Facebook page anymore.

And again, partnering with large social media brands (**like us!**) gives you a higher visibility, accreditation (like 'social SEO') and access to a larger audience.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Social media lets you engage with your audience in a way that is real and up to date, meaning that you are front of mind next time they are looking to take a trip!

4. PAID ADVERTISING

Travel is an extremely competitive online sector. In order to be seen and distinguished from the rest, it's necessary to invest in paid advertising. Two types of paid advertising are especially effective in the travel industry:

Google Text Ads

Google Text Ads show up in search results for travellers actively searching for what you have to offer. They are generally high converting because people are already in the mindset to spend money. This said, it is also very expensive because a lot of search terms in travel are highly competitive, meaning they cost more. And there is low or no brand-building benefit to this resource.

Banner advertising

Banner advertising is generally more affordable and features evocative, image-led banners featured on relevant publications that drive people to a specific page on your site.

These are usually campaign-based, and are ideal for establishments looking to get the word out about a special promotion. The advantage of banners is that they are highly targeted to a certain publication's audience. This is why it is super important to choose a publication that speaks to the kind of users that you want to market to ([like us!](#)).

Banner advertising also helps to improve that all-important brand visibility with people who are actually likely to buy with you on their next trip. Being visible means that your brand will be top of mind when travellers plan their safaris.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

The online space is very competitive. Paid advertising means that you are able to be seen above the rest and show travellers why your offering is special.

What Africa Geographic can offer you

CONTENT MARKETING

Africa Geographic offers marketers a Content Marketing Kit that empowers you to create content that is personable and targeted, and gives you an opportunity to engage with our audience in a genuine way through blogs and social media. We're all about getting good content (**YOURS**) to a large, relevant and engaged audience (**OURS**).

This is your opportunity to reach thousands of Africa travellers. Content marketing is an affordable way to generate travel leads and build your brand in the eyes of travellers by getting your content to our worldwide community.

You provide content for blog posts or social media posts in the form of stories, useful information, pictures, and video and we publish it on our media platforms (with backlinks to your website) and market it via our social media platforms, delivering it to the right people (travellers to Africa) in a form that suits their habits, needs and expectations as they gather travel inspiration and information. We provide detailed advice and assistance to you if you don't have writing or blogging experience and in addition, we provide a regular newsletter with examples and advice. In other words we show you how to make the most of your content and we give your content wings! And if you don't have the time to write the blogs yourself, we can even write them for you - for an additional fee.

Our audience is large, very engaged and passionate about travel – a great resource for your campaigns.

BANNER ADVERTISING

Africa Geographic offers advertisers a network of banners across our online media channels to access and engage with a community that is passionate about Africa's wildlife, people and travel. An online banner campaign means that you can have your display advertising featured on our blog, newsletter, online magazine or all of the above!

Want to create a bespoke digital marketing campaign with us? Just send us an email at advertising@africageographic.com and we can work together to get your brand noticed by travellers!