

Marketing Strategies for Travel Club



Introduction

A travel club is a membership-based program that provides bespoke travel benefits, exclusive travel deals and other travel-related assistance to its members. Consumers today want everything under one roof. “Time is money”, as Benjamin Franklin puts it, and for travelers, time and money hold high value. A travel club is a perfect platform to cater to various needs of the travelers and to provide them an assortment of lifestyle offerings.

To see the projected results getting realized, appropriate marketing of a travel club is very important. An effective & integrated marketing plan helps in taking the word out about the travel club to existing and potential customers.

Undoubtedly, the success of a travel club lies in its marketing, which covers various arena such as promotions, advertising, sales, public relations, campaigns etc.

1. Build an Authority Blog

If you want to cement your online travel club presence, you need a blog. But not just any old blog; you want to create what's known as an 'authority blog.' An authority blog is a platform where you provide valuable content to your audience on a regular basis and thus build up trust with them, so they begin to recognize you as the go-to authority within the travel industry. There are additional pay-offs in the form of enhanced recognition and higher rankings from Google in the search listings. Focus on keywords which visitors are using to find your post and travel club product. Make sure to post blogs using those keywords and keep the momentum of blogs going. **Try to post at least 2 blogs every week. Content upgrades typically convert at 12%-20%.**

1. Video Marketing

Video marketing is expected to be a HUGE deal in 2017. All the web's authority players are telling us so. Perhaps you think that having a professional video made for your business will prove a budget-buster and that doing it yourself is too tricky and time-consuming. But you know what? Your video doesn't have to be perfect; it just has to be authentic. Authenticity wins out over pretentiousness every time. Create meaningful content about various travel club benefits and how it's going to benefit your members.

Here are some conversion rates for Video Marketing:

- Video in an email leads to **200-300% increase** in click-through rate.
- Including video on a landing page can increase **conversion by 80%**.
- Combining video with full page ads boost **engagement by 22%**.
- YouTube reports mobile video consumption **rises 100% every year**.
- **50% of people** look for more information after seeing a product/service in a video.
- After watching a video, **64% users are more likely** to buy a product/service online.

2. E-mail Marketing

Measurable, shareable, and highly cost-effective, there is no denying the fact that your travel club business can't benefit from the superior pulling-power of email marketing.

When should you start your email campaign? As soon as possible – there's no such thing as being too early. Having a direct link between you and your customers, wherever they happen to be in the world is a truly powerful prospect. You can launch your first email campaign today with a company like MailChimp. Their 'Forever Free' plan allows you to send 12,000 emails a month to your list, (up to 2,000 subscribers).

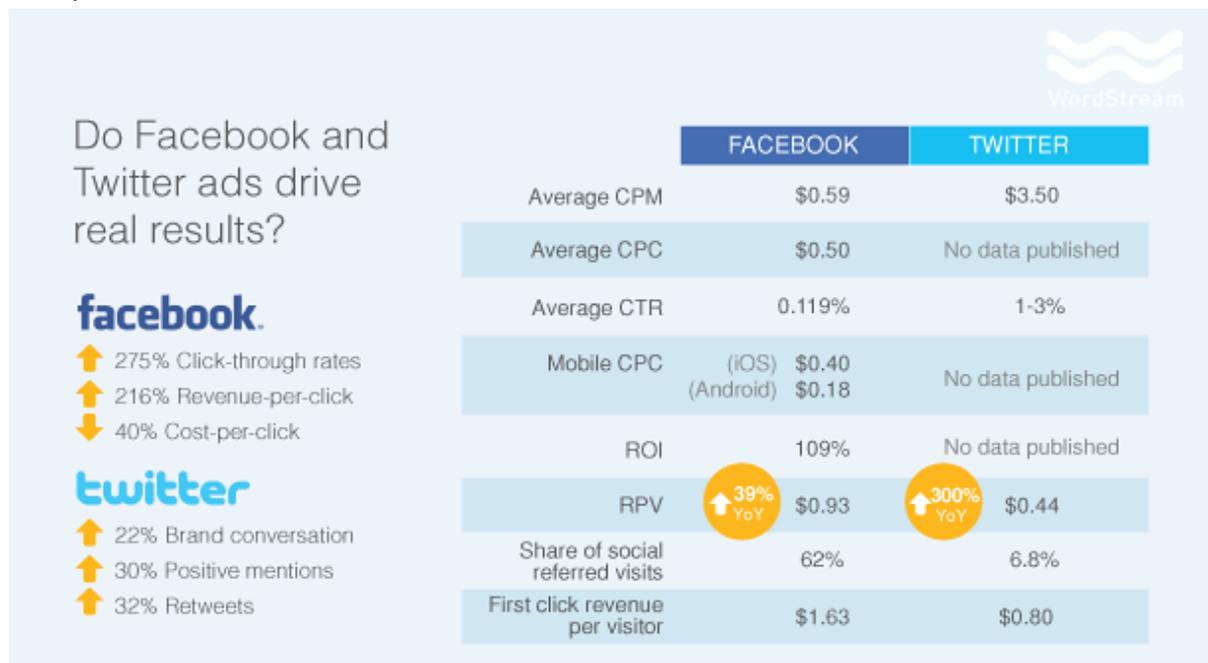
McKinsey recently estimated that email is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook or Twitter. And among top-performing B2B marketers, Forrester found that email marketing was reported as the most effective tactic for lead nurturing.

Travel Club companies often see an average of 7–12 percent conversion rate if they have a good content strategy tied up with email marketing.

3. Paid Advertising on Social Media

SEO (search engine optimisation) is a medium-long-term strategy, so if you want to see immediate results from your efforts, then a paid ads option is the way to go. The beauty of Native Advertising is that your ad is designed to blend in (almost seamlessly) with the platform or publication it is delivered on. All the top social media sites now offer this kind of integrated advertising, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. When it comes to planning where to spend your marketing budget effectively, advertising on social media is one of the most sound investments you can make.

In fact, social media recently became the most effective digital advertising channel for driving impressions, clicks, and conversions. These days, businesses are allocating on average 28% of their spend towards it. While your social media strategy may be focused on educating your market, increasing awareness and nurturing prospects, ads are there to catch those who are ready to convert today.



4. Contests and Sweepstakes

The age-old marketing trick of attracting people to your brand and products by giving something away works amazingly. Contests are a proven way of increasing your community, sales and drive revenue.

In an article by marketing experts, Hubspot, they reported on some interesting facts about the power of running online contests:

- New campaigns acquire a 34% audience increase on average
- 1/3 of contest entrants sign up to receive email updates from brands and partners
- Running a mobile contest increases the number of entrants by eight times
- Statistically the best duration for a contest campaign is 25-60 days

These statistics show that the use of online and social media contests is one of the leading strategies to actively boost your online audience reach to get new sign-ups for your travel club membership.

Contests are a Rich Source of Data: With the lure of a prize, many people are prepared to share information with you as part of the entry process. You don't want to introduce too many barriers, but don't miss the opportunity to learn a bit more about your consumers (i.e., how they heard about your promotion, what their favorite product of yours is, etc.). In addition to collecting data as part of the entry process, you can also learn a great deal from the interaction and conversation that takes place around your contest, so be sure to listen in.

Contests Empower Consumers to Do Your Marketing for You: It is important to have a promotional plan that encompasses multiple marketing channels, but thanks to sharing via social media, contests today enable an amplification of your marketing message that was not previously possible.

5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES FROM ONLINE CONTESTS



1

Significantly grow your fan base



Online contests can increase your audience and draw an entirely new segment of fans and followers to your website or social media page.

Generate targeted leads for follow-up marketing

A properly structured contest entry form will provide your business with new and valuable leads for follow-up marketing.

2



3

Improve Audience Engagement



Proper planning and execution can help your contest increase the interest, engagement and brand investment of your current customers.

Encourage sharing and conversation

By utilizing familiar social platforms, online contests provide your audience with the opportunity to drive viral traffic, enabling them to market on your behalf.

4



5

Provide a rich source of data



Post-contest analysis of key metrics can provide your business with valuable data that can inform future marketing efforts and strategy.

5. Exploit Relevant Long-Tail Keywords for SEO Success!

What phrases might your travel club customer use in a Google search to find information about?

What are your potential travel club customers' most pressing pain points?

Look for long-tail keywords for your travel club business and optimize your website with these long tail keywords to be easily found by your potential customers.

Long tail keywords are those three and four keyword phrases which are very, very specific to what customers are looking for in a travel club. Whenever a customer uses a highly specific search phrase, they tend to be looking for exactly what they are actually going to buy. In virtually every case, such very specific searches are far more likely to convert to sales than general generic searches that tend to be geared more toward the type of research that consumers typically do prior to making a buying decision.

To help illustrate this phenomenon, let's take a look at the typical step-by-step buying path that a prospective travel club customer treads on the way to a making a purchase:

- Consumer becomes aware of your travel club.
- Consumer seeks information about your travel club in preparation for possible membership.
- Consumer evaluates alternatives to your travel club (features, pricing, etc...).
- Consumer makes their decision whether to sign-up for your travel club membership.
- Consumer pulls out their credit card and completes the transaction.
- Consumer then evaluates the travel club after taking the membership and decides if they want to keep it or cancel.

Using the above six step path to a purchase as our model, you can probably already see that you want to target the consumer who is somewhere around step four...

Consumer makes their purchase decision.

...because once they have made their decision to buy something, that's when they start using very specific search phrases to seek out their target purchase.

Now for the GOOD news...

Highly specific multi-word phrases tend to be far easier to rank well for than the more generic single keyword or double keyword phrases.

6. Get Featured in a Local Newspaper or Magazine

This could be as simple as crafting a press release, or a more in-depth, piece such as an interview or feature. Remember that all journalists need an endless supply of good content, so if you can provide content which will engage their readership, then so much the better. Cultivating relationships with journalists whose publications are relevant to travel industry can pay long-term dividends.

Here are 3 benefits of Print Advertising:

Print has tangibility: Being interviewed for a major newspaper or magazine's website is a big deal, but it's an even bigger deal for that interview to appear in print. Print – whether promotional or editorial in nature – has a tangibility that the web doesn't.

Influentials Are Swayed by Print: According to AS Advertising, the MRI Survey of the American Consumer found that so-called "influentials," who sway other consumers, are influenced by print, with 61% reporting being influenced by magazines and 53% being influenced by newspapers. Magazine giant Condé Nast has found other encouraging numbers for print, specifically that travel industry now attract around 40% more young (18- to 24-year-old) readers than in 2007.

Print Readers Are Focused: This only makes sense. If you're browsing the web with six tabs open and the television on in the background, you may not be that receptive to all the advertising going on around you. But if you're reading a newspaper or magazine, you're generally focused on just that. Folio Magazine reports that a Ball State University study showed that when magazines are used by consumers, they are the primary or exclusive medium 85% of the time. In other words, most of the time someone is reading a magazine, they're not multitasking.

7. Run a Webinar

Webinars are perfect for giving people a taster of what your travel club business offers – and by recording your webinars you can share the same content multiple times to attract a larger audience.

Here are 4 benefits of holding a webinar:

- **Holding webinars raise brand awareness:** Webinars allow you to easily promote your travel club business – especially when you are delivering high quality content during the webinar and not simply using it as a sales pitch presentation. With virtually no additional overhead to factor in, the business promotion afforded by hosting a webinar is also incredibly cost-effective. You can skyrocket your travel club business exposure by holding a webinar.
- **Hosting webinars are affordable:** Conventional meetings, seminars and conferences have one thing in common – they're expensive to arrange. Thankfully, your webinar benefits from

the low-costs associated with internet broadcast – requiring little more than a broadband connection, microphone and webcam to get started.

- **Interactive webinars help you understand your target travel club audience:** Through your interactive question and answer segment webinars allow your travel club business to get to know your target audience, their needs and their greatest challenges. In doing so, you can develop a real understanding of what motivates your audience, allowing you to tailor your travel club products to match.
- **Hosting webinars develops authority and trust:** Your webinar also benefits from the human element – allowing you to put a real face to your travel club business, helping your audience to engage with and even become emotionally invested in you.

8. Guest Posting

Guest posting is an immense, (and much under-rated), strategy for extending your reach into other communities, as well as getting more traffic to your site. It's well worth doing some advance planning to target blogs in travel club arena that have a good level of engagement or a high number of followers, before making an approach. Also check that the blog owner is active on social media, which indicates that your post may well enjoy greater leverage.

Here are 4 benefits of guest posting:

- **Exposure:** Great, high quality content has become even more important as more readers are getting the majority of their news and information online instead of nightly television news programs or newspapers. This means that there is a flood of content being published each day, and the more websites a person or company is mentioned on, the better (not only from a human perspective, but also a search engine perspective). Not only do authors with published guest posts on a wide variety of websites get more exposure, they get more opportunities to craft a positive association in readers' minds.
- **Credibility:** Positive association with brand names drives credibility for individual authors and the companies for which they write. Guest blogging on popular industry sites can also lead to greater opportunities that go beyond writing posts for additional websites and blogs. They lead to actual sales of products and services, and increased website traffic for both the company.
- **Social Media Growth:** Besides growing a following, great articles will also get shared via social media channels, leading to improved visibility for brands that are constantly writing and

publishing great content. These shares will further speed up the growth of your following in social media channels while also driving traffic to your articles and establishing social proof for the legitimacy of your content, which strengthens your Author Rank and allows your content to rank higher in search engine results pages.

- **Inbound Links:** Increased website traffic is one of the main reasons why many brands choose to begin guest blogging in the first place. Most websites allow brands to submit a bio and/or their social media profile URLs to be published at the end of the post. These links drive referral traffic and boost organic search rankings, resulting in better search visibility for the author's website.