

working together



A Word from the Chairman

The Autumn Conference at the Holiday Inn signalled the changing of seasons and with the tragic demise of Thomas Cook it issued a reminder that nothing is for certain. In my days as a Sales Representative for TWA in the seventies, Thomas Cook was one of my first calls and was not only a great name but a great company. Anyone who was Thomas Cook trained was certainly a very capable travel employee. Very sad news.

The Conference itself was a great success with over 70 people attending, the title of the Conference was Digital Travel 4.0. This was basically regarding the continued rise of online bookings coupled with personalisation and artificial intelligence making the move away from offline booking even more speedy. I remember at the height of the dot com travel boom a friend telling me this was just the start of the switch to online and he has really turned out to be correct!

For me the highlight of the conference was Paul Rodgers from Vendorcom talking about the new regulations covering strong customer authentication. Basically a booking is not a booking if payment cannot be taken. This new legislation can really affect our businesses.

Pleasingly I got a wonderful comment from a member who said this new information really highlighted the benefit of being a TTI member!

The next stop on the travel calendar is World Travel Market and I am delighted that TTI will have a stand (TT355) at the show in the Travel Forward area. Please come over to the TTI stand and say Hello.

We have also decided to have a TTI hub evening on the first night of the show. The event will be held at Balls Brothers, Adam's Court which is a 5 minute walk from Bank Station which you can go directly to via the Dockland Light Railway which is right outside the Excel Exhibition Centre. Entrance and drinks will be free of charge on the night. Please do register to attend for what should be a great evening.

TTI Places is now launched and Stay Global is our very first customer. They are fully operational.

We are also launching a new referral initiative to hopefully interest new companies to become full TTI members. Therefore if a member comes to our conference and brings a guest and they then decide to join TTI then

both the member and the guest will get a 30% discount on the annual fee for the next 2 years.

We are also doing a big initiative to try and get more hotel companies involved with TTI and have decided to run a seminar on 21 November from 1100 to 1500 at the Holiday Inn Gloucester Road. TTI and GIATA will host the seminar and try to increase the awareness of both TTI Codes, Places and Rooms while GIATA will focus on My GIATA and Drive Pro. Anybody interested in attending should contact Pete Hazel of TTI.

Finally many thanks for all your ongoing support and cooperation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any suggestions or questions

Very Warm Wishes,
Tim Wright, Chairman TTI



Tim Wright, Chairman

TTIhub @ WTM

Monday 4 November - 18:00 to 20:30
Balls Brothers Adam's Court, Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1DX

Come and join us for a drink and a chat at the end of Day One of World Travel Market and Travel Forward

TTIhubs are about networking; bringing travel and technology people together to chat and drink in a convivial atmosphere. We have organised this Autumn's TTIhub to coincide with World Travel Market and Travel Forward. At the end of Day One, jump on the Docklands Light Railway to Bank. Balls Brothers is just a 5 minute from Bank Station. Join us for free drinks and lively conversation.

During the course of the evening Sesui Cloud Communications will give a short presentation of its latest research on personalising corporate travel communications to gain efficiencies of scale, leverage your trusted customer advisor and help your staff achieve a better work/life balance.

Kindly sponsored by:



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Autumn Conference Report

It is vital that every travel company embraces digital travel, but there is no universal approach to this. So for its 2019 Autumn Conference, TTI assembled a group of expert speakers at the Holiday Inn Kensington offering a plethora of 'Digital Travel 4.0' strategies to deal with this shift from offline to online.



by Justyn Barnes

The global online travel market is growing exponentially. Its value is projected to reach almost \$818bn by 2020, up from \$629bn in 2017 (source: Statista, 2018). Online travel is set to become the new norm with search and book capabilities that are intuitive and easy to use. Aided by Artificial Intelligence-driven personalisation, consumers will be able to quickly home in on the products they want rather than spending hours and hours, trawling websites.

Travellers will continue to want real holiday experiences, whether that means lounging on the beach or hiking through a rainforest. However, through the latest developments in virtual reality they will be able to sample their preferred holidays before committing their time and money.

Inbound tourism's digital future

The opening session of the day focused on the topic of Digital Tourism. First up was Joss Croft, CEO of UKinbound who reeled off figures highlighting the importance of inbound tourism to the UK economy (worth £127bn, equivalent to 9% of GDP; employs 2.6m people, 9% of all employment, etc...). 'Our industry is a fragmented one,' he said, 'but together we generate as much revenue for the UK economy as the pharmaceutical and also the automotive industry – something which we are always reminding our ministerial colleagues.'

To help understand the customer in the pre-trip phase, he recommended the use of Google Trends' new functionality that allows you to overlay one insight over another. As an example of the need to target people with the right information at the right time, he showed a graph mapping the peak times of Google

searches for 'rum', 'hangovers' and 'hotels near me' over a weekend!

Croft cited UKinbound research showing that 83% of millennial travellers agree to let travel brands track their digital patterns if it helps them receive a more personalised travel experience. 'Programmatic video', a way of buying advertising space automated to hit your customer at right time, helps to deliver this experience – it is expected to account for 83% of all US video ad spend by 2020, representing a 171% rise from two years prior.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR)/ Augmented Reality (AR) and chatbots are also becoming more and more important tools to improve pre-trip communications. Croft hailed Qantas for their 360-degree virtual tour videos on YouTube about fantastic places around Australia 'making you immediately want to visit'. Meanwhile, 'Expedia skill' for Amazon Alexa provides customers with all details on their flight reservations and can help them rent a car. 'Right now, customers

can't book a flight or a hotel room using Alexa, but the developers promise to add this functionality soon,' he said. Then there's KLM's voice-controlled smart pack assistant for Google Home that tells travellers the weather at their destination and helps them to pack.

Booking touchpoints also need to be considered. Travellers spend an average of 53 days visiting 28 different websites over a period of 76 online sessions, with more than 50% of travellers checking social media for travel tips.

All that said, Croft added: 'But remember offline!' He noted that long-haul visitors to Britain, with the exception of Australia and

New Zealand, are more likely to book their trip as a package (58%), and that certain markets are much more likely to book a package rather than separate elements – for example, UAE (76%), China (71%) and USA (70%). In this context, he listed various advantages the travel trade delivers, from off-peak volume and revenue to repeat business.

On trip, recognition technology is changing the game. 'You may not realise it, but already being used at JFK and Heathrow Terminal Five,' said Croft. Fifty-three biometric systems are used by the industry for everything from airline boarding to hotel check-in and it can help to provide better customer service and security. 'The problem at the moment is that none of the biometric systems speak to each other, but that will change soon.'

Croft was less optimistic about the future of apps. '5G is going to revolutionise how people can consume, and will mean people don't need apps,' he predicted. 'The problem with apps is that they are very expensive to maintain, upgrade and market, and many brands are finding that mobile applications are not delivering the level of adoption and customer engagement they expected. Brands are now investing to build presence in consumer messaging apps, such as Facebook Messenger and WeChat, to reach customers where they spend a high percentage of their time.'

AR and VR are increasingly becoming part of the on-trip experience. For instance, hotels can boost upselling by providing customers with a virtual experience of local attractions, and VR headsets can be used in hotels for entertainment. The technology can also be used to ensure accessibility, as at Warwick Castle which provides AR/VR for people with disabilities who can't access the upper floors.

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Joss Croft, UKinbound

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Automation is also becoming more important. TTI conference stalwarts will know all about Edward, Edwardian Hotels' amazing AI concierge bot. Croft highlighted an even more extreme example, the Henn-na Hotel in Japan, the world's first robot-staffed hotel, with robots being used as front desk staff, customer information tools and even as luggage porters. 'But personal engagement is key to experiential travel,' he added.

Post-trip, it's time for digitally sharing and reviewing the experience. The Huffington Post reported that over 95% of leisure travellers read at least seven reviews before booking holidays, so it's important to encourage customers (hopefully, satisfied ones) to leave a review – according to Croft 80% of customers who received a request for a review did so, but just 22% wrote a review without being asked.

'Travellers are now digital travellers across all demographics,' he summarised. 'Digital allows personalisation pre, during and post visit, so it's important to know your customers. Most are happy to share personal data, but only if there is a real benefit.'

The digital visitor economy

Barrie Kelly, Chief Executive of Visit Greenwich, began with a self-deprecating disclaimer: 'I'm not a digital expert... I should have tagged this talk "Digital 1.0!"' He then proceeded to give many interesting insights on how this Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO), one of 190 in the UK, is leveraging digital to portray the old and new of Greenwich.

Visit Greenwich is a voluntary organisation that has been in existence for just five years. It has representatives on its board from the likes of The O2, Royal Museums Greenwich and City Cruises, and has 140 commercial partners. 'The reason we exist is growth,' said Kelly, 'Working with a unified brand has generated £40 million of added value and 3,300 new jobs in five years. Our aim is to be the best destination for Heritage, Culture and Entertainment by 2023. This isn't a marketing campaign, it's a mind-set – how we want our digital and non-digital partners to think.'

This aspiration involves becoming a 'smart destination' to enhance the customer experience at every touchpoint through the use of technology. To achieve this Visit Greenwich has partnered with Digital Greenwich, the University of Greenwich and

Ravensbourne University London where it now has an office.

Kelly described the role of Greenwich's DMO as 'hovering above the chaos' and helping to address four key market failures in the visitor economy: information; coordination; intelligence and leadership. Digital can help with the first three, he said, but the personal touch is still important: 'In spite of all the tech, we still talk to half a million people face to face. And the most common question is 'What can we do?'

Instagram and Twitter are the social channels that have proven most effective for Visit Greenwich – 'Twitter for events and news, Instagram for inspiration,' said Kelly. He admitted that Google is king in many areas of customer's digital journey, but it can't do everything well. 'As a DMO, we think we can have biggest impact in the inspiration stage by providing rich, inspirational content ... with Google and even Trip Advisor, the content for destinations really isn't that good.'

Visit Greenwich have found that millennials want the stories behind the places they go to delivered in a 'short, funky way' and technology can do that. For instance the Cutty Sark has a variety of tech-driven exhibits including Pepper's Ghost, a hologram of a sailor writing in his diary and talking about life on board the ship.

Kelly sees User Generated Content (UGC) becoming more important in destination marketing, and notes that increasingly destinations are diverting their spend to bloggers. When it comes to voice search for information, Alexa currently has pretty thin content on Greenwich, but, he said, 'From next year, Alexa's content on Greenwich will come from my team – so there is still a role for DMOs to provide better content.'

Other Visit Greenwich technology initiatives are focused on improving digital infrastructure at gateways ('WIFI is currently very patchy...'), real-time packaging and distribution, and 'final mile' solutions – 100,000 people per year visit Greenwich aren't able to walk up the steep hill to get to

the Royal Observatory, so Kelly's team would like to introduce driverless vehicles that visitors can call from their app. Trials are ongoing to make sure such vehicles are safe, he envisages that implementing the scheme would mean that people stay longer and spend more money.

Where he feels they are behind the curve is 'experiential overlays' using augmented and virtual reality to present the same destination in lots of different ways tailored the interests of the visitors. 'You bring your son or daughter to see Greenwich as a pirate or a princess? This can be done, but the question is whether it can be done in a way that is commercially viable and whether people want it? Just because you can does not mean there will be demand!

'Digital can enhance the value of the visitor economy at every touchpoint, but we are a people industry,' he reminded the audience. 'You still need the basics – a great product, great content and great partnerships.'

During the panel Q&A that followed, conference moderator Paul Richer asked Croft and Kelly whether the rise of UGC and influencers could make destinations feel like they are losing control of their brand?

'The moment you let go of the content, you just have to trust people,' replied Croft. 'Tourism board content can be a bit bland anyway; you need to allow a bit of criticism.'

'If you've got a great product, you have nothing to worry about,' said Kelly. 'Hand Luggage Only [the travel, food and home blog] present their content in a much better way than we could.'

'And if you give Influencers free accommodation, a boat trip and a few free beers, they tend to write nice things about you,' he added drily.

From paper to screen

After the coffee break, attention turned to the publishing revolution, beginning with a fascinating presentation by René Frey. Frey is the owner and CEO of APA Group and back

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Barrie Kelly, Visit Greenwich

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in 2014, he made the bold decision to buy the failing Insight Guides book publishing business from German group Langenscheidt. Hard-hit by the 2008 financial crisis, Insight Guides had been loss-making from 2009 to 2014, and Langenscheidt had decided to liquidate the company or get the best deal on the table.

So why did Frey purchase 'a failing business with no future' (as he described it)? He might have wondered the same thing when the management team walked out within three hours of him taking over! But he had a vision to reinvent the traditional travel booking model for the digital age, targeted at travellers who are seeking a unique and qualitative travel experience.

He transformed the business by leveraging the rich content and brand heritage of Insight Guides, a long-established series of over 500 travel guides, to create insightguides.com, an online marketplace for planning, customizing and booking authentic, bespoke holidays. By breaking up the traditional value chain and connecting travellers directly with local Destination Management Companies (DMCs), travellers benefit from a convenient and secure online travel booking experience with itineraries tailor-made by local experts. Meanwhile, DMCs benefit from direct liaison with consumers, an increase in margins, and consumer recommendations.

'We believed the well-known brand Insight Guides would help us to position our offering as trustworthy and knowledgeable,' he said. 'We believed in the possibility of re-utilising the travel guide content for marketing purposes to avoid a pure SEM (Search Engine Marketing) battle. We used the assets we had as publishing business to support a completely new model.'

APA has experimented with several measures to convert traditional Insight Guides readers into customers, from QR codes on the books to access the travel marketplace, retail campaigns and promotions and an app with free eBooks to generate data.

In November 2017, APA acquired Rough

Guides from Dorling Kindersley with the plan to take roughguides.com in a similar direction as Insight Guides. Adding an iconic British brand doubled APA's business and was full integrated, restructured and made profitable within five months.



Rene Frey, Insight Guides

'Today, about halfway through the 10-year journey we envisaged,' said Frey. 'The main working hypothesis is to transform the current publishing business model based on paid content into a transactional business model based on lead generation by 2024.'

The key selling point of the APA marketplace is 'saving time,' he said. 'It's all about saving time. Nothing

else.'

Frey admits it has been 'a rough ride to get where we are today'. The acquisition of Rough Guides caused serious disruption to the company's internal processes and finding the right online team proved very challenging. 'We knew we had the right strategy, we knew we were developing the right product,' he said. 'We knew that the global market for tailor-made holidays is worth around \$40bn and this market is still predominantly offline. But we had the wrong people. Since early 2018 we have a solid team to achieve what we really want to.'

'So my job is very simple, but without talented, able and motivated people to do the work, it's all bollocks!'

Original pirate material

On that bombshell, Frey took a seat and Nick Cooper, Head of Market UK for HolidayPirates, took up the baton. Cooper revealed how this travel deals business have leveraged social media to grow their market.

'Social media was an opportunity for us to subvert the traditional channels,' he said. 'It has a democratising effect, allowing us to

access people that larger brands were missing out on. Even though we only pay for 8% of our traffic, we are able to compete with the global giants.'

Success on social media is about 'fishing where the fish are' according to Cooper and appreciating that social is not a homogenous mass – how you communicate with people on different channels is important.

'Posting stuff is not a strategy; neither is throwing money at it,' he said. 'If you come across as a company selling something, millennials won't engage. We try to create brand ambassadors – people who love your brand so much they tell their family and friends about it, leading to content going viral so traffic and revenue almost comes by itself.'

He outlined his 'recipe for virality' with four main ingredients. One, an entertaining, authentic tone of voice: 'You can't just say, here's a cruise, buy it.' People want to see the personality behind the brand, which comes through in the way you interact with customers on social. Two, transparency – 'If you are not transparent on social media,

people will let you know and very publicly.' Three, relevance/immediacy – for instance, when Donald Trump's visit to London was cancelled, HolidayPirates responded within an hour with a Facebook post saying: 'TRUMP ISN'T COMING – LONDON IS GO!' Four, the call to action – 'Be creative and controversial to foster engagement.'

Sometimes on social it's good to just share stuff you like to inspire the audience and build brand awareness, even if you don't sell the product. Cooper showed a

mini-video HolidayPirates shared of a cool Airbnb in France where you can jump from rooftop straight into a pool running the length of the building. That post reached nearly 20 million people.

'In a nutshell, stay fresh and inspire day after day,' he concluded.

Cooper noted that the big four messaging apps surpassed the big four social networks in number of global active users in 2015. It's

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Nick Cooper, Holiday Pirates

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a trend to keep an eye on, but fraught with uncertainty as HolidayPirates have found with WhatsApp. The company started using WhatsApp as way of communicating deals in 2015 and already have over 800,000 WhatsApp subscribers, but next year that number will go down to zero because WhatsApp are changing their terms of use. 'Being involved in social messaging apps is very important, but, contrary to what Joss said earlier on, we believe that having our own HolidayPirates app where people can be inspired, look, book and even transact is going to be increasingly important for us, so we've developed our own proprietary app technology alongside our social media use.

He finished with takeaway advice to surf early on the right wave. This is why HolidayPirates have started experimenting with voice in 2019. 'My five year old already talks to Alexa a lot. By the time he reaches my age, he will find tapping on a keyboard as anachronistic as I find writing with a quill and ink.'

Before breaking for lunch, Cooper was joined by Frey for a lively Q&A session. The subject of fake online reviews which had been in the news that week came up and Frey said he felt people were coming back to 'solid information'.

'I was a user of TripAdvisor until I gave up a couple of years ago. I was in San Francisco and wanted to find two or three restaurants where my wife will be happy. How the fuck are you going to find that on TripAdvisor? We have people on the ground taking a stand, making recommendations. I very much believe in curated content; it's more trustworthy than UGC.'

The two speakers were also asked to give a five-year forecast. 'The large part of travel is still offline, but the shift to online is going to accelerate,' said Frey. Meanwhile, Cooper predicted 'voice will be more prevalent – we'll be talking to the fridge asking it to deliver groceries.' Crikey.

Next-level retail

The afternoon session carried the rather alarming title of 'Weaponising Digital'. First to shoot was Emily Andrews, Direct & Digital Marketing Specialist for The Advantage Travel Partnership, the UK's largest independent travel agent group.

Andrews outlined the many ways in which tech is shaping the travel industry, from automated self-service options for hotel guests to the potential for cloud passports that would eliminate the need to carry an actual passport. However, she noted, there is only a 4% year-on-year increase in spending on travel technology, the lowest across all UK industries.



Emily Andrews, Advantage; Tony Bean, Vamoos; Paul Rodgers, Vendorcom

The challenges facing travel agencies today are many, including dealing with economic and political insecurity, more demanding travellers, issues of cyber security and data privacy and squeezed margins. Equally, there are lots of opportunities. UK consumers spend £32bn per year on international travel and this is projected to rise to £63.4bn by 2025, and by combining technology with the human resources, travel agents can provide a personalised customer experience.

Andrews cited research indicating that viewer retain 95% of a message when viewed on a video, compared to 10% when reading text, and 80% of people prefer to watch a video than read text. Videos also receive twelve times as many shares on social media than everything else. Those using video are growing revenue 49% faster year on year. 'That's why we encourage our travel agent members to use video content as much as possible,' she said.

Andrews is also a fan of using Facebook Live to amplify brand messages, announcements, special offers and forthcoming events. 'Other than having a decent smartphone, with a good internet connection, there's no costs to get started,' she said. 'It's a great way to

increase real-time engagement, post-video engagement, showcase the real personality of the travel agent and provides opportunities to expand reach.'

Fifty of its members have signed up to Advantage's direct marketing programme which aims to offer a more personalised experience through direct mail and email, with features such as tailored offers dependent on customer spend and generating the closest customer airport. QR codes also bring text to life. 'It's the biggest craze in China,' said Andrews. 'People there go round with QR codes round their neck – even homeless people have them to get money.'

She also talked about Advantage Connect, an exclusive online booking and quote platform for members that allows agents and customers to communicate in real-time, online. It is a secure place for all travel documents: passport, boarding passes, booking confirmations, has

analytics available for agents and senior staff to increase conversions, and inspirational content can easily be fed through to customers.

So digital technology equips travel agents to provide a more personalised service outside of face-to-face contact and convenience to time-poor customers, but Andrews echoed the sentiments of previous speakers, saying: 'You must embrace technology to stay in the game, but tech is an enabler and shouldn't replace a real person.'

Keeping customers Appy

How can technology be used to generate customer loyalty? Tony Bean, founder and director of Vamoos, gave a preview of soon-to-be published results of his company's survey of UK travel companies and travellers focusing on loyalty before, during and after trips. 'It explodes some myths,' he claimed.

Myth one: after booking, clients will be content if they get all the information about their trip as soon as possible. Yes, clients want logistical information like what time their flight is and where they are going, but many also want support on the smaller things that cause the biggest stress such as

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Digital Travel 4.0 (continued)

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making sure everything (44%) is packed and getting to the airport (35%). 'If they receive that info, it builds their excitement about the trip,' he said.

Myth two: travel companies should place a lot of importance on providing support throughout the holiday. 'But what clients actually want is for everything to be so well planned in advance that it reduces the chance of things going wrong,' he said. What do customers want more of? Information about the area (44%), details about the accommodation amenities (41%) and local points of interest (35%).

Myth three: after a client has come back from their trip, they are relaxed and happy. In fact 24% of travellers feel stressed after returning home from a holiday, which is only 1% less than the number of people who feel stressed right before a holiday ('so it's a good time to get them to book another one!').

'They key finding of our research was that travel companies seriously overestimated how loyal their customers are,' he said. Indeed, 51% of customers say they are loyal versus 81% of travel companies believing they have loyal customers. Forty-three per

cent travellers are neither loyal nor disloyal to a single travel company, but only 11% of travel companies are aware of this. 'So there is a big number you can scoop up using technology,' he concluded.

Why do customers rebook with a travel company? Good organisation and planning (49%), being easy to contact (38%) and providing inspirational information (37%) seem to be important factors.

Bean identified three key takeaways. First, you need to understand the emotional journey that customers go on through the whole process of a trip. Then you need to provide appropriate communications at the right time in the journey which will nurture loyalty. Third, detail is key – focus on the smaller details which your clients stress about, and inspire them on their return home.

To this end, the Vamoos app is designed to make travel simpler by keeping all important information in one place, including daily schedules, weather forecasts, essential document, flight alerts and more. In 2018, one of the travel operators that implemented Vamoos reported a 50% uplift in rebooking rates.

'Our research shows, if you use tech well, your loyalty rates will increase,' said Bean. 'There are technology companies out there that will provide you with the technology you need out of the box to manage the pre-, during and post-trip stuff. Inserting existing tech at the pain points for your consumers will increase rebookings.'

GDPR on steroids!

The last speaker of the day, Paul Rodgers, chairman and founder of European payments community Vendorcom, gave a detailed analysis of future online payment legislation and the botched introduction of the 'RTS for SCA' European Regulation. He described it as 'GDPR on steroids', because unlike GDPR where you can cross your fingers and hope you don't get caught, with this you have to be compliant. Suffice to say, it's mind-bogglingly complicated subject (well, for the mind of your correspondent anyway), so if you weren't at the conference (and why weren't you? Come next time!), I suggest following the #SCAday hashtag on LinkedIn and contacting Rodgers direct to discuss what it means for your business!

TTI @ Travel Forward/WTM, 4-6 November



TTI will once again have a stand at Travel Forward - World Travel Market. Come and say hello to us on Stand TT355. TTI members will be able to register to attend WTM/Travel Forward on the opening day, Monday 4 November. [Click this link to register for all three days.](#)

TTI @ Travel Technology Europe, 26-27 Feb

TTI will be at Olympia for Travel Technology Europe next February. We will have a stand and may be involved in some of the seminars. Registration is now open, so [click this link for details of the event and to register.](#)



Online Marketing



A regular column by online marketing guru, Frank Orman,
Managing Director, LeadGeneratorsDigital

Today, no business can expect to thrive in the online market without a solid and ever-growing Content Mountain on their website. In this post, I explore the role of the business blog in achieving the critical mass of content that makes a website pull its weight in sales.

Do I still need to blog?

With the online world awash with large amounts of Facebook posts, Twitter feeds, Pinterest, Google+ and countless other exposure points and communication platforms, this is, now more than ever, a very good and valid question that I get asked by my clients all the time.

And in today's world of budget restrictions where many of my clients, who believe in Social Media Marketing as the way forwards and who are already stretching themselves to engage us to connect with their target audience on their behalf, create great content for them and build communities all over the internet, this is a question that I have asked myself too on more than one occasion.

Well, the short answer has to be a resounding yes: blog posts are still important for your business and a vital part of your content mix.

The Content Mountain Concept

The first reason comes back to my concept of the "content mountain" that I use to explain our rather different approach to Content Marketing that we offer to our clients.

The idea is that, once we have decided on the content themes with the client (in terms of what we believe their readers need and want to read), and once we have all decided what the client wants and needs to be telling their customers (and they do not have to be the same), then it makes a lot of sense for us to think first in terms of researching and writing and creating a mountain of content. And once this mountain of content has been created, we use that content in lots of genres and formats across a range of platforms.

By working this way, we are able to produce much more content of a higher quality, yet at a much lower cost (read: happy client and happy customers!).

The basic thought behind this content

distribution strategy is that, while readership is everywhere, not all readers are everywhere.

On the contrary, most readers spend their time on just a limited number of online or social platforms and these are primarily the only places where they will find and engage with content. Some love Facebook and spend most of their time there. Some love Twitter and this is where we need to find them and talk to them. Some spend lots of time on blogs or LinkedIn and for this group of readers, we need to produce content for them to find and consume.

Thus, in order to engage with a larger readership, one must think of placing your content across multiple online platforms. The onsite blog is one of the key platforms in this mix that we can use for content, especially as many businesses find that their blog already has some readership in its own right, and that some individual blog posts are already starting to rank for important search phrases.

And for this reason, your blog is still an important piece of real estate in your online marketing mix.

More In-Depth Content

In the same way that some offline media (such as television and radio) are more suited to the broadcast of quicker, shorter sound bites of information, while others (such as newspapers, magazines or journals) are better suited to longer, more in-depth analyses or discussions, the same is true with online content platforms.

When it comes to the likes of Facebook and in the extreme case, Twitter, the messaging has to be quick and sharp and to the point with little option (or desire from readers) for anything more than a headline, a sound bite and maybe an image.

However, while we tend to broadcast headlines and sound bites on these platforms, we have found that it can be a very good tactic to give readers the option to "read more" and point them to the client's blog

where we then provide more in-depth content on the subject matter. Many readers like to discover "signposts" for good content in their social feeds and then want and expect to be taken to the full version elsewhere – your blog.

Blog Posts Boost your Rankings

Coming back to the idea of blog posts sitting on your own website (www.yourwebsite.com/blog), we are seeing that this actually represents a huge opportunity to boost the SEO assets of our clients' websites as a whole.

In today's world of ongoing Panda & Penguin penalties on the one hand and the vast opportunities of Hummingbird on the other hand, where ongoing content expansion on your site is paramount to search engines, we are seeing time and time again that when we have an ongoing programme of ever growing content creation and every expanding new pages for our clients' websites, we observe two amazing results. The first is that more pages are being indexed and ranked in Google (which is great for generating more relevant and quality traffic) and, very interestingly, these rankings are holding for very long periods of time without any further SEO activity required.

You can imagine how happy this makes our clients.

And you can imagine how much extra traffic this is generating to their sites.

This is surely the point and the objective of blogging in the first place?

If you would like to find out more about our "Content Mountain" approach to Content Marketing and how we can help you turn your blog into an effective [corporate blogging programme](#) for your business, why not give us a call. It's what we love and do best.



by Frank Orman

News from our Associations

TTI is associated with a number of trade organisations. Here is a round-up of their news



Advantage Conference registration launched

The Advantage Conference 2020 is heading to the Portuguese Atlantic island of Madeira on 15-18 May 2020 for what is set to be one you won't want to miss! Attending the Advantage Conference is a great opportunity for everyone to learn, whether you are a travel consultant, a manager or a business owner. The educational aspect of a conference will expose you to a

variety of points of view and will provide you with inspiration for new ideas as well as catching up on industry trends. Registration has now opened to Advantage members and business partners. Visit <http://advantageconference.co.uk/> to find out more and register today. Plans are already underway to make 2020 an event to remember!

Advantage Business Travel Symposium – agenda announced

The theme of the hotly anticipated Advantage Business Travel Symposium this year is 'Game Changers' and the agenda has just been announced! Some key highlights of the day include the return of The Buyer Bootcamp – an interactive session, where we will build upon the

success of last year's session with a real focus on collaborative discussion and working between the three key parties in travel: The Buyers, The Suppliers and the TMCs. The 'Get Your Global Game On' session will look how can doing business globally change the game and what can we learn from other markets, and finally our sustainability session 'What Does it Mean to be Green?' will look at what can TMCs and travel suppliers do to reduce their own environmental impact and how can we offer conscious travellers and corporates the options that that they can feel good about, whilst continuing to provide a great experience. Find out more and register here - <https://web.cvent.com/event/e78cd2aa-dae8-4313-9a58-d0c3508f4471/summary?>



In recent weeks the Business Travel Association (BTA) has had a strong focus on support and wellbeing

for those working across the travel industry. One such demonstration of this support is its latest partnership with wellbeing specialist Simpila Healthy Solutions. The goal is to highlight the importance of developing positive workplaces where individuals feel they are able to thrive. With this partnership, BTA members will have access to the range of training and support services, plus online resources, to invest in staff mental health.

Also on a practical level and following the announcement of the collapse of Thomas Cook,

the BTA launched a Job Board on its website to provide support for the travel agent's former members of staff. The BTA Job Board is now live at: <https://www.thebta.org.uk/bta-job-board>. Designed to showcase employment opportunities across its network of travel industry members and partners, the Job Board offers details and links to a host of roles currently available including Branch Managers, Product Managers and Account Managers. Roles are available from number of leading operators including Eurostar, Lufthansa and Marriott Hotels as well as a high volume of TMCs who have also pledged their support.

Clive Wratten, CEO, BTA commented:

"There is a strong level of knowledge and expertise within the now ex-Thomas Cook staff community. It is important that across business

and leisure travel we work together to ensure this isn't lost and those members of staff who have sadly lost their jobs are given every opportunity to continue to build their career and flourish within the travel industry."

Representing a diverse range of travel management companies – from global companies to small independent specialists and top regional agencies – and their clients, partners and industry associates, BTA is the authority on business travel. Originally founded in 1967, it acts to lobby those who have an impact on the business travel community, together with promoting the activities of its members as the best in quality and value to the business traveller.



OpenTravel members have been diligently working on creating the 2.0 Object Model for Hotel Descriptive Content which is a very robust message allowing for all the details pertaining to a hospitality product (hotel, hostel, time share, etc.) to be described. These messages are

generated in both XML and JSON as is true with all the 2.0 messaging. These new messages will go out for member and public review and then will be published for all to use! OpenTravel has also been involved with a potential workgroup for Availability, Rates and Inventory (ARI) which is being considered as a joint workgroup between OpenTravel, HTNG and HEDNA. This team will look at new requirements in the hospitality industry around ARI, such as attribute based selling, to determine if existing specifications can handle these needs or if

updates to existing messaging or new messaging is required. Once the team identifies the specific needs, a workgroup charter will be created, and an official workgroup will be kicked off. While in this pre-charter phase, all are welcome to join and participate on the calls. Once the project is chartered, participation is limited to OpenTravel, HTNG and HEDNA members. If you are interested in joining these pre-charter calls, please contact sandy.angel@opentavel.org.

Project Management Committee Discussions

Our last project meeting took place by conference call on 12 June

Welcome - John Forgan, the incoming Company Secretary, attended his first project meeting.

Goodbye - Tim Wright noted his regret at the collapse of one of our shareholders, Thomas Cook.

Membership – Another membership year comes to a close and 2018/19 has gone pretty well. We lost some members and gained others but overall 2018/19 TTI membership numbers stood at 92 and we have several new members in the pipeline for 2019/20. All of the 2019/20 membership invoices have now gone out and we would like to thank you in advance for your early renewal, it will help us plan for next year's exciting programme. We will be introducing a New Member "Referral" scheme very soon. The plan is to offer all TTI Members a 30% discount on their membership when they introduce a new member and the new member will also be offered a 30% discount on their membership for the first 2 years.

Autumn Conference – The Autumn Conference was a great success. Sixty-one people attended, including several delegates from Berg-Hansen in

Norway. TTI is all about Education so we were delighted to hear from one delegate about how amazed she was that TTI, with the help of Vendercom, is out there trying to educate members about the new financial obligations for the industry.

Next Event – The TTIhub which takes place at the end of day one of World Travel market. Please join us at Balls Brothers, Adam's Court, Old Broad Street, London, EC2N 1DX on Monday 4th of November 18:00 – 20:30 for a chat and a Free drink. Just jump on the Docklands Light Railway to Bank. Balls Brothers is just a 5 minute from Bank station.

Next Meeting – Combined Board and Project meeting, by conference call, at 10am on Thursday 12th of December.



by Phippa Barrett



International Federation
for IT and Travel & Tourism

ENTER2020

International eTourism Conference

This eTourism conference is organised annually by the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism (IFITT). It will be held at University of Surrey in Guildford, UK on 8-10 January 2020. Renowned for its topical debates, inspiring keynotes, and highly practical workshops, ENTER has brought together leading academics and industry professionals in travel and technology since 1994. Over the years the conference has firmly established its place as a platform

showcasing cutting-edge research in eTourism and shedding light on current developments as well as future challenges in the area.

With the theme "Responsible eTourism" ENTER2020 Conference will focus on exploring ways technology can be used to ensure a positive impact of tourism on society, environment, and economy. The conference will be organised into three tracks: Research, Industry, and Destination tracks.

The conference will discuss major topics that contribute to our capabilities in developing more responsible information and communication technology (ICT) in travel and tourism, covering

the following areas:

- Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- Big Data and Large-scale Systems
- Smart Destinations
- Augmented and Virtual Reality
- Platform Economy
- Privacy and Internet Security
- Legal, Ethical and Social Aspects of ICT
- And more.

[REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!](#) Register by 8 November 2019 to take advantage of early bird rates.

TTI Events 2018/19

Project Management Meetings

(All members welcome, contact Phippa if you would like to take part)
Thursday 12 December - by conference call

Conferences & Forums

Monday 4 November - TTIhub

Thursday 19 March 2020 - Spring Conference

Thursday 18 June 2020 - Summer Forum

Thursday 24 September 2020 - Autumn Conference

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