

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL DISTRIBUTION

II Edition



SYNTHESIS

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What role will intermediation play in tourism?

AIGO, marketing and communications agency that has specialised in tourism, travel and hospitality, and the **Pangaea Network**, made of 8 independents agencies covering over 15 markets worldwide, present the findings of the survey dedicated to Travel Distribution.

After the first edition in 2011, the survey was carried out a second time in the last quarter of 2015 to better understand the evolution of professional's perception over the past 4 years. The panel was composed of 167 travel experts from across five European countries: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Key points:

Fifty per cent of those interviewed think that travel intermediaries have a key role to play within the travel and tourism industry.

With a nearly unanimous response (**85%**), **trade professionals believe they still influence their customers' choices** in regard to destination or product. This appears to be a growing data: in 2011 just 81% thought the same. Today, only 11% of those interviewed are in conflict with this thinking.



The study stands up which are **crucial factors in making a successful sale**, and so: **quality and originality of product (35%)** and **customer care (26%)**. Online reputation has chosen by just 6%. According to the responses of the individual markets, France (43%) and Germany (40%) put customer care in first place. The UK bet on the brand (25%) as well as on the product (25%). Also the majority of Italians (46%) and Spanish people (33%) put the quality of the product in top position, followed by added value in Italy (19%) and customer care in Spain (16%).

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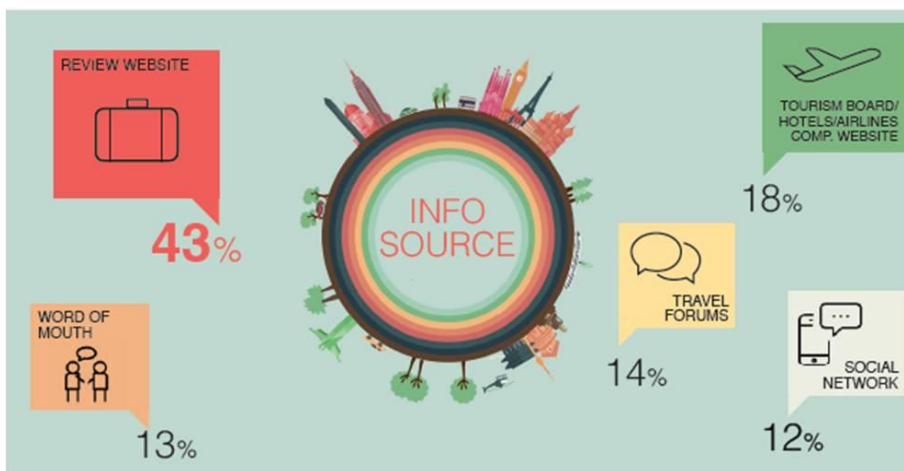
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According to 54% of respondents, a well-structured website is the best way to promote sales.

26% find newsletters to be effective; 12% think that social media profiles are helpful and 2% cite mobile apps as the best tools to bolster sales. Finally, 6% believe that relations with customers rather than specific tools is the factor that has the most impact on sales. As a countertrend, the majority of French professionals (67%) find newsletters to be the most beneficial tool. The British and the Italians (both 17%) find social media profiles to be the most effective.

66% of those interviewed say that customers are willing to book and pay online. On the other hand, 18% say that customers are reluctant to complete their booking online.



Internet has become the primary source of information: 43% of respondents state that customers mainly consult review websites. 18% cite product/brand websites as the most widespread sources of information. Travel forums and social networks account for the preferences of customers cited by 14% and 12% of

interviewees respectively, while 13% believe that most people turn to family and friends for advice (word of mouth).

European travel trade envisage an incoming evolution of the intermediary's profession, who itself should be always more technologically-addicted, competent and multichannel-oriented to satisfy his clients, who, in turn, has become well-informed and really active through the online. The intermediary would better establish a continuous relationship with the traveller, being perceived as an expert who can offer a unique experiences that marches every customer's need.

AIGO is a founding member of Pangaea network, made up of 8 independent agencies specialising in tourism that provide its customers with a global vision and local resources that can support them in their communication activities and development of new markets. Pangaea network currently covers over 15 markets : Latin America, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom, Czech Republic and Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, Spain and Switzerland.

<http://www.aigo.eu>

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