



## Recent Industry Research Findings & News

### How Travellers Book Holidays

A global survey involving 1,200 people by [Frommers' Unlimited](#) reveals how travellers book trips.

The report says that travel consumers remain primarily influenced by an old-timer: price. However, they also have additional information needs that change at each stage of the booking cycle.

Other findings of the report indicate that:

- During planning, destinations that have been written about in Frommers or other travel guides is the most important factor.
- This is closely followed by information on activities, events and maps.
- When booking, three pieces of information are ranked as almost equally important; airport and transportation information, pictures of a hotel room and a guide to the city or resort.
- Finally, **post-booking** a map of the destination was the essential item of content, with travel, weather, events and activities information and local dining also ranked as important.

Half of all travellers have struggled with poorly constructed, confusing and inaccurate websites where information was hard to find, there was insufficient pictures or insufficient information about the destination.

A third of travellers said they were frustrated by a lack of response to email enquiries and sites which weren't bookable online, while 40% also reported finding inaccurate or misleading information and not enough information about things to do. Just 10% said they got the right tailored material when searching online.

The survey also showed that consumers were frustrated by out-of-date information, hidden fees and misleading descriptions, as well as technology-related issues such as slow downloads and broken links.

(Source: [Travelmole](#), September 2009)



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Online research is considered a critically important planning tool with more than **80%** of people saying this is by far the most important tool for their research, compared to only 18% ranking travel agents most highly. The survey also found clear signals about the importance of providing online descriptions of the destination, images and maps because more than two thirds of respondents wanted this when planning.

### Smartphones: Their Importance

Smartphones are becoming a traveller's preferred tool for managing post booking activities and finding relevant information, according to a survey by the Sabre Travel Network.

The Sabre Travel Network indicates that this trend has seemingly penetrated all ages across all continents, highlighting the tremendous opportunity for travel agencies and suppliers to leverage mobile solutions to demonstrate value to their customers and creatively reach target audiences.

The findings of the survey show that:

- The majority of travellers surveyed has a Smartphone (more than 2/3), with North American travellers most likely to own one (78%) and APAC travellers least likely (46%).
- Daily usages is highest for e-mail at 63% with the internet not far behind at almost half.
- Nearly half of all travellers are 40 years old or older, demonstrating that the exploding use of mobile services is not strictly the domain of younger travellers.
- All travellers surveyed are willing to accept advertising with free use of travel applications.

(Source: **Travelmole, November 2009**)



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### 20 Best Practices For Destination Marketing

European online marketing company Xotels have listed their top 20 best practices for destination marketing organisation (DMO) websites and destination marketers. The relevant ones for Autopilot are

**3. Map Mash-ups:** This is a very effective way to spice up your website and give it a user friendly experience. Map mash-ups with filters depending on what you are looking for.

**4. Event Calendar:** What is going on in your destination? When is it going on? Is your website showing all upcoming events like races, concerts, festivals, local holiday's traditional festivities, expositions.

**13. How to get there?** You should not only promote what you do in your destination but also make it easier to get there. You should provide more information about close airports, train stations and motorway exits.

(Source: **Xotel**)

According to HotelMarketing.com tourism is one of the highest involvement industries, which means potential tourists want to get as much knowledge as they can to reduce risk. Sufficient information and up-to-date content might help the online travel community to attract internet users, including potential tourists, and allow community users to make a repeat visit.

(Source: **Hotelmarketing.com, June 2009**)

### [Great service by concierges can set hotels apart from rest](#)

(Source: **US Today, July 2010**)



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When booking a holiday travellers say the following items are important or very important to them.

Online pictures of accommodation and facilities	76%
A written description of the destination (travel guides)	72%
Destination map	70%
Destination activities and events	67%
Weather information	65%
Travel information such as time zone, currency, visa requirements	60%
Local dining information	51%
Local sports and leisure information	33%
Video of accommodation	30%
Video of destination	25%
Details of family and children's activities	20%

(Source: [Travelmole](#), April 2009)



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### iPhone use surged by 85pc in second Q

<http://www.fxcentre.com/news.asp?2640185>

Wednesday, 28th July 2010

In advance of the launch of the iPhone 4 in Ireland, figures released by Irish mobile internet services company Digital Reach Group (DRG) show an 85pc surge in traffic from iPhone handsets in Q2 of this year, compared to the previous quarter.

The figures come from activity on DRG's mobile web advertising network, Adforce, and traffic from its apps.

Amongst others the network includes the RTE mobile website and the highly popular RTE News Now iPhone app.

As well as indicating a significant growth in the number of iPhones in Ireland, the increase shows that users are browsing the web more often on their handsets.

The figures also show a 53pc increase in advertisements served over its network to mobile apps and websites, from a monthly average of 19 million in Q1 to 29 million in Q2. This indicates both increasing interest in online advertising tailored to mobile phones, as well as a marked increase in traffic to mobile websites.

Gavan Drohan, Operations Director of DRG, says: "The huge growth in mobile traffic shows that users are increasingly browsing on devices other than their PCs. Smartphones have encouraged day-long internet snacking instead of lengthy evening sessions in front of a PC."

Due to the live nature and incredible popularity of social media websites smartphones are becoming the consumers choice for leisure internet browsing.

"Facebook and Twitter are services that are best enjoyed on smartphones. This is recognised by mobile operators offering free usage of these services for marketing and phone manufacturers bundling social media apps with handsets," added Drohan. The iPhone isn't the only Apple media device making an appearance on the Adforce network; 12.7pc of all iPhone OS traffic came from the popular media player, the iPod Touch. Ahead of its launch in Ireland last week, the figures also revealed that many early adopters had already purchased iPads, with 0.3pc of all traffic coming from the tablet device. "With iPhone 4, Nokia's N8 and more Android handsets about to become available and with the iPad already proving quite popular here, our next quarter figures should paint an interesting picture on how the public are working online," said Drohan.