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The Internet Advantage For Local Travel Agents

By Madison Lockwood

Travel and the Skeptical Public

There is no question that the internet has changed the travel business. Online airplane reservations and electronic tickets combined with the loss of the commission structure has taken a primary travel function away from traditional travel agents and automated the service. People can shop for hotel and car reservations on their own, on the web. Consumers can book vacation arrangements and cruises with a mouse and a keyboard.

And they can also get badly burned. It seems that the anonymity of the web has spawned unscrupulous business operators in every industry and the travel business is no exception. Travel has had its share of stories about unfulfilled promises due to airline strikes and cruise line bankruptcies. In fact, insurance companies now routinely offer travel insurance that covers a consumer's loss if a trip that has been paid for fails to materialize. Add fraudulent travel websites to the mix and the result is an entire industry that is suspect in the public's eye.

An Opportunity for the Independent Travel Agent

All of this can work to an honest travel agent's advantage. Oddly enough, the way that a travel agent can capitalize on public use of the internet for travel and public distrust of travel businesses in general is to utilize – the internet.

The web is a made-to-order medium for advertising vacation packages. Photos of beautiful, historic and exotic locales combined with visual or audio descriptions are tremendous sales tools; there is no reason why an independent travel agent can't use the same tools that Carnival Cruises or Expedia uses. The technology is simple, the software well established. An independent agent can apply all of the sales technique found in the enormous, faceless travel sites.

The additional service that an independent agent can supply is personal service. It is fair to speculate that with the advent of "help lines" for websites functioning around the clock with overseas operators, perhaps a customer shopping for travel arrangements will place more faith in a travel service that has phone availability during business hours only. Certainly an 800 number is desirable, but a number with

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the agent's local area code will lend an air of credibility to the transaction. Real personal contact has become important in the faceless, nameless world of the web – an independent travel agent can provide that.

The Independent Travel Agent – Guaranteed to be Genuine

The problem is so widespread that there is an entire website devoted to travel fraud at

<http://www.fraud.org/tips/internet/travelfraud.htm>

. Many of the situations for which this site provides

warnings can be put to rest by an independent travel agent offering personal service. Someone who books an expensive vacation is going to want confirmation on reservations, reassurance on bookings and details on the destination site. An independent agent can provide those things; perhaps most importantly an independent travel agent can have the same voice provide additional information every time a customer calls.

The net result, so to speak, is a travel site that provides the sizzle of online advertising, the convenience of online contact and the reassurance of personal customer support. An independent agent doesn't necessarily have to compete with the "online specials" and other gimmicks found on major travel sites. The security provided by personal service will make the price worthwhile. An independent travel agent can make the internet an extension of the traditional personal service, rather than a replacement for it.

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clients understand how a website may benefit them both personally and professionally. Apollo Hosting provides website hosting, ecommerce hosting, & VPS hosting to a wide range of customers.

Getting To Know The Work Of A Travel Agent

By Stanley Emerson

For people who are fond of traveling to different places, visiting marvelous beaches, and taking a trip to the most exotic island paradise, the job of a travel agent seems to be a far better job than anything else.

However, some people contend that the viability of a travel agent being a lucrative work has lessened due to the emergence of the Internet.

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Nowadays, people can easily plan their vacation trips, acquire their tickets, and make their own plans and reservation through the Internet.

That is why some financial analysts have concluded that as the need for travel agents fall off, their wages deteriorates as well, considering the fact that it is already low. The median yearly salary of travel agents amount to \$26,630, that was in 2002. The top 10% of the travel agents in the US were reported to have a salary of \$41,660 or more. While the remaining half of the travel agents is currently earning between \$20,800 and \$33,580. All of these were bases on the U.S. Department Labor reports.

The bottom line is that travel agents are really not earning much. The only benefits they get are the discounts and special privileges on travel. Funny thing is, with their present salaries, travel agents may not even use these benefits because they cannot even afford to travel.

However, there are still those who want to become a travel agent in spite of everything. So, for those who really insist on becoming a travel agent, here's how to do it.

1. A second language is a must for those who want to become a travel agent. Travel agents deal with different nationalities and a second language may just be handy in the future.
2. It is a must for every would-be travel agent to undergo 6–12 week training on how to become a travel agent. This includes all the basics of the job.
3. Computer literacy is also important because all of the transaction, invoices, and reports are done through computer utilization.
4. Knowledge on up-to-date information about the trends in the business. Also, it is a must for every travel agent to know the best places to go.
5. It would be better for those who want to become a travel agent to have their certification as a Certified Travel Counselor. This is an added value to their work.

Becoming a travel agent is entirely dependent on the person's interest. So, whether the salary is low or high, as long as the person is happy with the job, then, there wouldn't be any qualms for it.

Destination Found! Visit the Travel Resources Blog

<http://www.push-button-online-income.com/travel-guide>



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