

# TRAVEL TRENDS

## SHAPING VTC MARKETING



- **TRAVEL = AN IMPORTANT PART OF QUALITY OF LIFE.** More than half of all Americans say they are saving specifically for travel, with Millennials leading the charge. In fact, spending money on travel experiences increase happiness according to a 20-year study conducted by Dr. Thomas Gilovich at Cornell University.
- **TRAVEL = DISCONNECT TO CONNECT.** Travel means rest, relaxation and recharging.
- **TRAVEL = TOGETHERNESS.** Travel means making time for yourself and loved ones. It is about making memories.
- **TRAVEL = GAINING NEW PERSPECTIVE.** Travel opens up our hearts and minds to new possibilities and places.
- **EMOTION OF EXPERIENCE:** Destinations are experience-makers in a high-tech world. It is crucial to understand intrinsic forces driving travelers and embed these efforts in ongoing destination marketing through technology. As Steve Jobs once said, "You've got to start with the customer experience and work back toward the technology-not the other way around."
- **LOCAL LOVE:** Today's consumers are seeking authentic travel experiences. Travelers desire one-of-a-kind, niche, and local experiences.
- **PERSONIFICATION OF THE BRAND:** As today's savvy consumers look for convenience, crafting memorable, authentic, easy-to-share experiences will be fundamental for strengthening relationships between brands and consumers. Destinations need to fill this gap by building communities of trust and inspiration through modern destination marketing.
- **POST-DEMOGRAPHIC CONSUMERISM:** A term coined by TrendWatching, this trend continues to be the new normal. Traditional, demographic factors no longer define how consumers should behave, travel, or choose brands. Stereotypes in marketing simply lead to misguided thinking. Society is fluid and ever-changing. As a result, brands need to cater to consumers based on their aspirations, passion, and interests.
- **HEALTH & WELLNESS:** Workism, a phenomenon where professionals are working more than ever, has taken a toll on consumers with stress, distraction, and anxiety. As a result, consumers are becoming more enthusiastic in taking care of their mind and body. Indeed, the definition of health and wellness is about the state of well-being physically, emotionally and mentally; and it is even infused with consumers' everyday life at home, work, community and travel. According to Euromonitor International, the \$639 billion wellness tourism industry is a fast-growing segment of global tourism with projected growth of 7.5% in the next five years.

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- **MEANING OF FAMILY:** The traditional notions of family life has taken a new meaning. "Family" is no longer defined by two parents and children. Family life is transforming – family members are no longer bonded through genetic kinship but voluntary kinship such as close friends, pets or networks.
- **PERSONALIZATION:** According to key industry sources Adobe and Skift, 57% of U.S. travelers feel that brands should tailor their information based on personal preferences or past behaviors. With technology and data-centric marketing, customized interactions need to empower travelers in real time. Data should unlock consumers' needs and preferences to delight and engage them through hyper-focused messaging. However, personalization is only meaningful if travelers are empowered.
- **CONTENT TRIFECTA:** In the era of content contextualization, brands diversify content through branded/owned content, influencer content, and user-generated content. The psychology of following and sharing on social media requires a deeper understanding of travelers. By using the right combination of content, brands can enhance consumer journey along with search and share culture.
- **TRUST IN THE DIGITAL AGE:** 57% of vacationers trust personal recommendations from their social circle and rely on online sources such as travel websites and online travel reviewers and trusted sources. Approximately 80% of travelers read 6-12 reviews prior to booking, and 53% won't commit to a booking until they read reviews. 65% of consumers want to see more experiences – tours, excursions, unique events, etc. – offered from online travel agents like Expedia and TripAdvisor. 40% of U.S. respondents have used travel review sites when planning their most recent trip. TripAdvisor – a VTC media partner – is the top rated travel site among U.S. internet users.
- **DIGITAL IS TAKING OVER THE WORLD:** Pew Research Center recently revealed interesting facts about American adults' online connectivity. Not surprisingly, consumers are constantly connected. 77% of Americans go online on a daily basis; 26% almost constantly and 43% several times a day. Only 11% of adults say they don't use the internet.
- **VIDEO:** 75 million people in the U.S. watch online videos every day. Video continues to be an effective marketing content according to IMPACT. As micro-videos gain popularity and videos make inroads into the mobile world, online video traffic will continue to accelerate, reaching 82% of all internet traffic by 2021.
- **TV:** The line between linear and non-linear TV continues to blur. TV business is no longer simple. TV channels want to play in all markets and on all platforms. Smart, connected devices along with changing media habits will continue to influence new, dynamic marketing models.

