

# TRAVEL, UPGRADED



By understanding customers, travel brands can 'surprise and delight' and achieve true traveler loyalty

Smart travel brands recognize that every traveler is different, and so are their needs. Our Google+ Advertiser Insights Travel Habits Study focused on dual income no kids (DINK) travelers to understand how and why they choose their trip.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PLANNING PROCESS

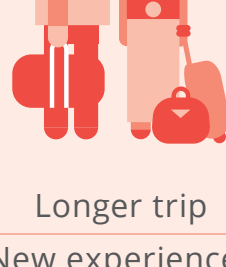
### STEP 1 – WHO SHOULD I GO WITH?

#### SOLO



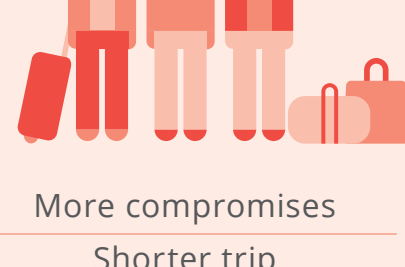
- Tight itinerary
- Expect to learn something
- Read guidebooks
- Focus on safety
- Heavily planned to maximize time

#### WITH PARTNER



- Longer trip
- New experiences
- Mix of relaxation and adventure
- Reconnect with each other
- Plan less in order to discover and explore

#### WITH FRIENDS



- More compromises
- Shorter trip
- Less frequent
- Heavily scheduled to accommodate tastes

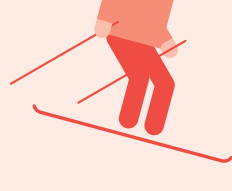
### STEP 2 – WHY AM I GOING?



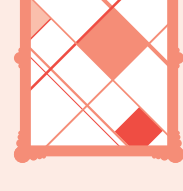
ESCAPE



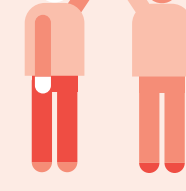
RELAXATION



ADVENTURE



CULTURE



QUALITY TIME

“Traveling allows me to remove myself from the everyday, work, tasks and errands, and allows me to enjoy life, be present and enjoy the people I'm with.”

### STEP 3 – WHAT DO I WANT FROM MY TRIP?



FOOD AND DRINK



CONVENIENCE



LUXURY



HISTORY

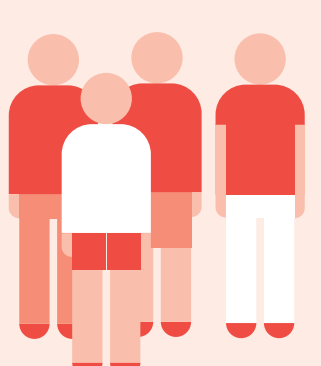


MULTIPLE STOPS

“I like these sites because they give me a better overall picture of the cost and feel of the destination I am considering”

Sites mentioned: [Google](#) [Expedia](#) [travelocity](#) [VRBO](#)

### STEP 4 – WHAT DO OTHERS SAY?



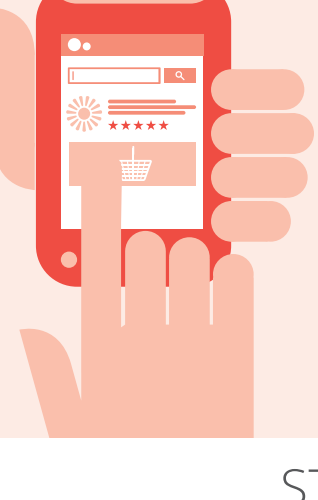
“

I trust the people who take the time to go and review the places they've been and things they've done. I value their opinions, thoughts, details and photographs so I see the big picture before confirming my travel accommodations.”

”

Sites mentioned: [tripadvisor](#) [CRUISE CRITIC](#) [Pinterest](#) [lonely planet](#) [Fodor's](#) [facebook](#)

### STEP 5 – WHAT'S THE BEST DEAL?



“

Once I know the destination I begin to piece my trip together, starting with flight then hotel and get into details later.”

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Sites mentioned: [Travel Agent](#) [TRAVELZOO](#) [Expedia](#) [travelocity](#)

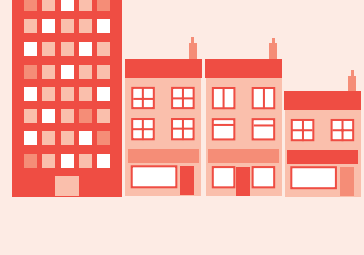
### STEP 6 – WHO SHOULD I BOOK WITH?

#### AIRLINE



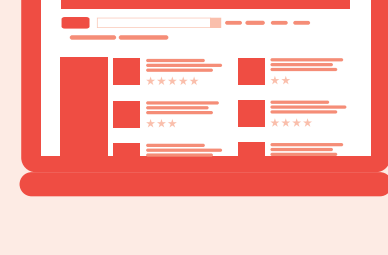
“As far as airlines go it's whichever has the best rate for the time we want. We will pay a small premium to fly non-stop, or at least not to switch planes.”

#### HOTEL



“We've come to expect a preferred experience from **Marriott** and **Hilton** and to some extent, **Starwood**. So we stick to them.”

#### AGGREGATOR



“I often book hotels through **hotels.com** due to the Rewards Program and ease of searching, booking, mapping, etc.”

Sites mentioned: [airline website](#) [TRAVELZOO](#) [KAYAK](#) [priceline.com](#) [travelocity](#) [hotels.com](#)

### STEP 7 – AND WHAT ABOUT NEXT TIME?

“Loyalty in travel is different because they've built it up around getting free stuff and rewards, not around the feeling.”

But it doesn't have to be like that – go beyond rewards-based loyalty with customer connection.



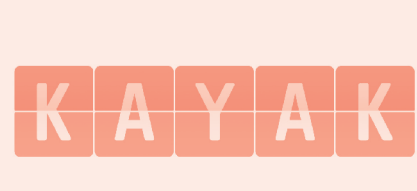
CONTINENTAL AIRLINES

“They were great in person and online – they smiled, they were responsive, they gave customized meals, they gave like they knew you.”



EXPEDIA

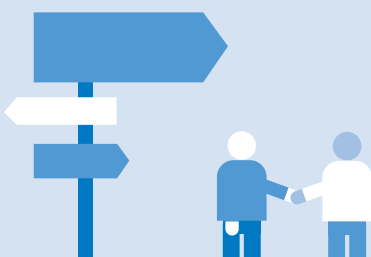
“Expedia is a great source for planning to booking, start to finish. We called them when something went wrong during our trip and they upgraded our hotel immediately.”



KAYAK

“We recently went to Rome and our hotel fell through. We called Kayak and they found us another, fancier hotel immediately, and it was on them. This was the turning point that made me loyal to Kayak.”

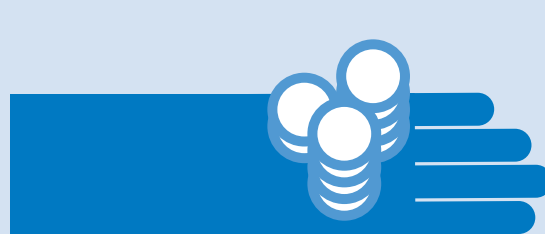
## THE ROAD TO TRUE LOYALTY



### GOOD TRANSPARENCY

#### ATTRIBUTES

- Demonstrate value
- An absence of negatives
- Immediate gratification
- Willing to compromise



#### ACTIONS

- Highlight real costs
- Be transparent and direct about options

“Tell me why my money should be spent with your company. **Southwest** tells me in every ad that I get free luggage.”



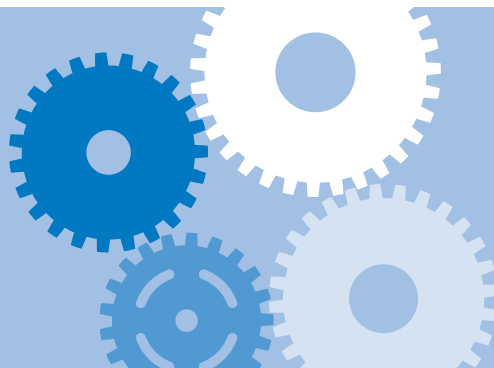
“The best time to reach me is at the point of planning – that's when I want to hear about upgrading my experience.”



### BETTER CONSISTENCY

#### ATTRIBUTES

- Perks / points
- Attitude
- Fix a problem
- Everything goes according to plan



#### ACTIONS

- Express your brand personality so I can connect
- Help me mitigate risk

“Personal touches are big to me. I enjoy when a hotel leaves me a handwritten note or when airlines go the extra mile to help me out if I miss a flight.”



“I stay loyal to airlines because of perks. I am willing to pay more for better service and better loyalty programs.”



### BEST SURPRISE AND DELIGHT

#### ATTRIBUTES

- Exclusive / personalized perks
- More points
- Recognize me
- Show me you value my business



#### ACTIONS

- Get to know me
- Anticipate my wants / needs
- Use my data to deliver benefits

“A personalized touch goes a long way. If I am loyal to a hotel chain they should acknowledge me at check-in, or a personalized card in the room is appreciated.”



“Proactively reach out to me about what I'm searching for. Tie your site to making my trip better. Build a source of experiences, places and integrate into an email campaign.”



#### METHODOLOGY

**Source:** Google+ Advertiser Insights Travel Habits Study Qualitative Research of Travelers (Google / Sterling 2013)  
**Panel:** Custom recruited research panel. Double income no kids (25 respondents)  
**Duration:** Four research events performed on Google+