2022 Travel Digital Experience Benchmark Report

1 Online traffic to travel websites is low and steady.

Online traffic to the travel industry was low and slowly compared to other industries due to lockdowns and travel restrictions still in place throughout the year. Unlike before the pandemic, our data shows no spike in the fourth quarter of the year (usual travel season). However, we do see a slight uptick in traffic during the summer months when many restrictions were lifted for a short period.

What this means: The number of sessions per month is a great indicator of how well your marketing efforts are translating into visitor traffic. Due to ongoing travel restrictions, the travel industry can expect less traffic and lower bounce rates.

2 60% of traffic in the travel industry comes from mobile.

The travel and hospitality sector was dominated by mobile traffic last year, with 60% of all traffic coming from mobile devices. This suggests that technology continues to play a crucial role in the travel industry.

What this means: It’s now more important for travel brands to ensure their mobile website and apps are optimized and that they understand mobile user behavior.

3 80% of traffic in the travel industry comes from unpaid sources.

Earned (or unpaid) traffic was a huge driver of site traffic last year, with 80% of traffic coming from earned sources across the travel and hospitality industry.

What this means: Unlike before the pandemic, our data shows no spike in traffic to travel websites. It appears users prefer to book holidays on larger devices but could be put off by having to finish on desktop. Users love to browse quickly on mobile devices but could be put off by having to finish on desktop. Travel brands need to make sure to emulate this across their digital properties.

4 46% of visits are returning users across the travel industry.

Across the travel and hospitality industry, we found that 46% of users came back to the same travel websites more than once. This suggests that travel brands need to understand exactly why customers pick one destination over another.

What this means: Competitors in the travel industry need to focus on building lasting customer relationships and provide value to encourage repeat visits.

5 Visitors prefer to browse for bookings on desktop.

For the travel industry, we found that users are more likely to spend longer browsing on desktop, at 8 minutes and 59 seconds compared with just 3 minutes and 30 seconds on mobile.

What this means: This statistic shows the median time for conversion and indicates how much time customers spend interacting with your website. For travel, it appears mobile users prefer a short and snappy white desktop. Users are willing to spend more time browsing on desktop because they are looking to make sure they get the most out of their desktop properties.

6 42% of travel visitors bounce after viewing just one page.

One-page sessions constitute the majority of the traffic this year. This means that a significant portion of visitors are not engaging with your website.

What this means: With just under half of users bouncing after viewing just one page, there’s still plenty of work to be done to meet or exceed visitor expectations. Visitors want results and they want them fast. Travel brands need to understand exactly why customers pick one destination over another.

7 The travel industry average conversion rate is 3.9%.

Comparing the industry-wide conversion rate of 2.4% in 2020 to 3.9% in 2021, it’s clear that travel brands need to focus on optimizing their conversion rate to turn visitors into customers.

What this means: The data suggests that travel brands have spent more optimizing their user experience to increase the number of people taking the desired action on their sites. Although this big year-over-year increase in conversions comes as no surprise given the many people were traveling around the world in 2020.

8 The probability of bounce increases by 32% when page load time goes from 1 to 3 seconds.

Travel brands don’t have much time to make a second impression. Visitors want results and they want them fast. If the load time is too long, customers are likely to change their collective digital fatigue thanks to the pandemic.

What this means: Speed is one of the biggest factors for visitor experience perception. Customers often expect the website to load as quickly as possible, so it’s really crucial to make sure turnaround is fast.

9 Travel brands need to improve their SEO.

It appears users prefer to book holidays on larger screens, with a conversion rate of 4.6% on desktop compared to just 3.9% on mobile.

What this means: This suggests that users find desktop sites more appealing and they’re more likely to convert on desktop. This could mean that users find navigating desktop easier (and perhaps less fiddly) than mobile. So for travel brands, it’s worth offering a more comprehensive option on desktop.

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For even more data and insights on the travel and hospitality industry, check out the 2022 Travel Digital Experience Benchmark Report.