AT-A-GLANCE

Digital Advertising Tactics Guide for Travel Marketers

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INTRODUCTION

The travel category is commoditized and highly competitive, with aggressive marketers for brands, OTAs, and third party booking sites spending hundreds of millions of dollars in media.

Brands like Trivago, JetBlue, and Hyatt are spending as much as $65 million a year in advertising. eMarketer reports that in 2019 travel marketers are expected to spend over $10 Billion across digital channels alone. Travel brands focus heavily on on the category's transactional dimensions — price, reviews, loyalty perks — leaving no white space for brands who can't or don't want to outspend the competition.

So how can travel brands cut through the clutter in a category where you can't simply buy your way to success? Our approach is to help travel brands connect with customers begins with a proven formula that combines a data-driven planning discipline with flawless execution across programmatic, search, social, and beyond.

The following pages are a guide to must-try digital advertising tactics and a snapshot into some use-case examples from actual campaigns. We're hoping this guide can be a useful starting point for a conversation about how you can strengthen your brand's customer engagement and acquisition in today's ever-more-competitive landscape.

Only 9% of U.S. travelers "always" know which brand they want to book with prior to researching.
Source: Google/Phocuswright Travel Study 2017

CRM/LAL AUDIENCE TARGETING

// Onboard first-party CRM data to target and customize ads to travelers.

// Utilize Look-a-Like (LAL) targeting to find new prospects that look & behave more like your most valuable customers (from CRM data and/or pixel data).

benefits

Personalized advertising experience
Customize ads using real-time behavior and data points drives over 50% higher engagement.

Higher engagement
Send users to the right pages and actions by pinpointing user intent helps boost engagement and conversions.

Uncover new customers
Extend reach and increase performance with "look-a-like" audiences.

Use Cases

Retargeting high value purchasers

Issuing sequential messaging

Dynamic Creative Optimization (DCO)

Cross-selling/selling

Behavioral targeting

LOCATION-BASED TARGETING

// Create custom location-based audiences by setting a specific radius that can be targeted on display or mobile devices. This gives marketers the ability to target people who are currently at or have previously traveled to a specific destination.

benefits

Connect with consumers throughout customer journey
Use custom geo-fences to target consumers before they arrive at a location, while they're at a location, and after they leave a location

Convert impulse buyers
Location-based targeting removes barriers to sales. When a prospect is physically close to your location, you have a much better chance of persuading them to purchase from you.

Outsmart the competition
Utilize location data to identify consumers who have previously traveled to a similar resort, hotel, or city to pursued them to book with you for their next trip.

Use Cases

Real-time location targeting at airports, hotels, visitor centers, restaurants and beyond

Event and conference targeting

Issuing sequential messaging

Contextual targeting

Competitive conquesting

ADAPTIVE SEGMENTATION

// Develop custom segments based on observed behaviors to reach the most qualified audience segment(s). Segment consumers who have visited your booking site(s) multiple times, and/or abandoned the booking cart to reach mid and bottom funnel prospective customers. In a similar way, you can segment consumers who have clicked on ads but not yet converted.

benefits

Create precise audiences
Define and size granular segments using historical data.

Be there when it counts
Activate audiences quickly and benefit from audience real-time updates as your consumers interact with your brand.

Make smarter decisions
Fuel campaigns with customer insights and with campaign performance data to optimize performance.

Use Cases

Retargeting cart abandoners, high value purchasers, historical brand browsers

Issuing sequential Messaging

Cross-selling/upselling

Reducing time to conversion

To exclude exhausted users

TIP: With Digilant no pixel placement required to target past ad clickers.

SITE RETARGETING

// Use pixel-based retargeting to reach consumers who have previously visited or engaged with your website, researched booking, and/or requested information as they're continuing their travel planning.

benefits

Engage lower funnel consumers
Reach and convert previous site visitors and shopping cart abandoners.

Improve cost effectiveness
With retargeting, you are reaching consumers who have already been to your website at least once, and are that much closer to taking action.

Drive brand awareness
Promote brand familiarity and trust by keeping your brand in front of consumers who have previously engaged with your brand.

Use Cases

Coverting previous site visitors, cart abandoners, and historical brand browsers

Issuing sequential messaging

Reducing time to conversion

Increasing brand recall and familiarity

BEHAVIORAL TARGETING

// Leverage web search, purchase history, mobile app ownership, and web visit data to create deliver brand messaging to consumers who have shown the most interest in your brand.

benefits

Convert more
Customizing ads using real-time behavior and data points drives over 50% higher engagement.

Drive higher engagement
Sending users to the right pages and actions by pinpointing user intent helps boost conversions by 6X.

Help uncover new customers
Identifying "behave-a-likes" helps to increase performance lift over 150%.

Use Cases

Demographic targeting by age, HHI, and gender
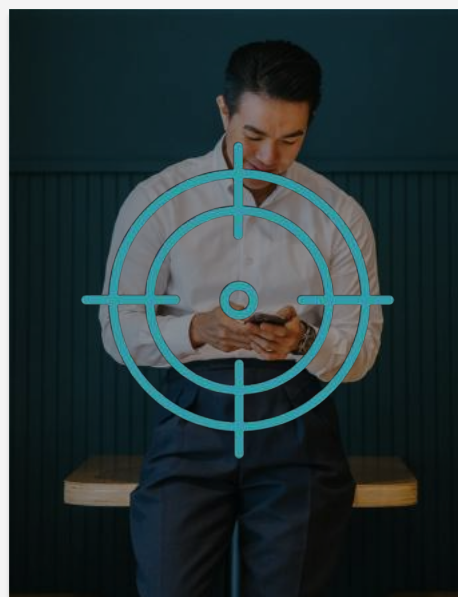
Loyalty targeting

Frequent flyer targeting

Family travel targeting

Business travel targeting

Seasonal audience targeting

App-ownership targeting

PRIVATE MARKETPLACES (PMP)

// As the focus on quality of ad placement rises, PMPs have become more desirable. PMPs give advertisers access to inventory before it becomes available in the open marketplace. Advertisers can partner directly with publishers to create a program meets their exact needs, without forgoing the power of programmatic.

benefits

Increased control
Negotiate CPMs and buy a specific type or amount of impressions across a pre-defined set of publishers.

More safeguards
Pick and choose publishers that meet our brand safety and contextual guidelines.

Better efficiency
Reach your audience across publishers that have driven proven ROI.

Use Cases

Behavioral Targeting

Contextual Targeting

Frequent flyer targeting

Family travel targeting

Business travel targeting

Seasonal audience targeting

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DYNAMIC CREATIVE OPTIMIZATION

// Dynamic creative optimization (DCO) is a technology that creates personalized ads based on data about the viewer at the moment of ad serving. Because the creative is continually tested it is often outperforms static display ads.

benefits

Dynamic content
Feature top selling offers and personalize content based on geographic location and weather data.

A/B testing
Dynamic Creative allows necessary creative testing and revamping in ways that traditional A/B testing cannot deliver.
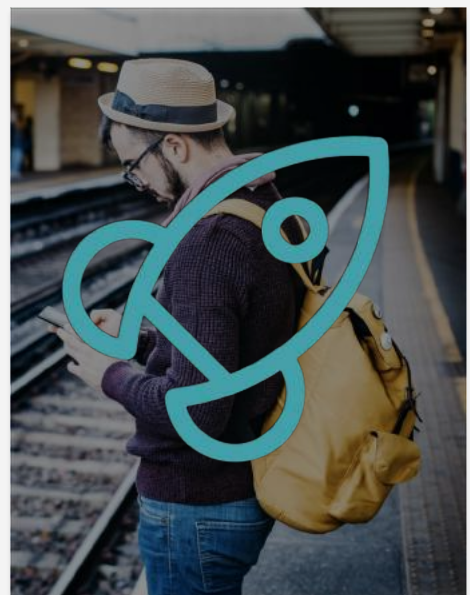
Creative process efficiency
The creative process is much more efficient with DCO build technology.

Use Cases

Product and offer retargeting

Retargeting based on previous site behavior

Prospecting based on location, intent, or weather data

BROAD MATCH

// Broad Match is the keyword match type that allows you to reach the widest audience via search. When using Broad Match, your ads are eligible to appear whenever a user searches any word in your key phrase, in any order.

benefits

Keyword discovery
Broad Match keywords help you find new keywords to add to your campaigns. In particular, Broad Match can inform Exact Match keywords when you are first starting out.

Cost savings
Broad Match will optimize campaigns to avoid wasted ad spend. Non- or low-performing keywords will be paused so that you can that you can focus your time and budget on the keywords that are performing.

Amplify other digital efforts
Capture mid and bottom funnel consumers who have been warmed up programmatic, social, and more in the moments they are most likely to convert.

Use Cases

Keyword discovery

Geo-targeting

Selling a broad set of products/offers to a large group of consumers

THE PATH FORWARD
FOR TRAVEL MARKETERS

At the end of the day, it's not how many tactics you are running; it's that you have the right mix of tactics that drive measurable results.

As illustrated in the pages above, a successful digital advertising strategy for travel brands requires much more than a single executional tactic. You need a thorough strategy - a set goal, and a plan to achieve it. For travel marketing, that means getting creative with data solutions by looking beyond out-of-the-box audience segments, marrying tactics that complement each other, and selecting partners that understand your business.

Another critical component is knowing which tactics are working and which aren't. Finding the best mix of digital tactics can be overwhelming and it may mean you need to rethink how you are reaching travelers online. The good news: digital marketing reporting tools and attribution models make it easy to get a clear measure of marketing effectiveness tactic by tactic and campaign by campaign. Digilant can help.

If you're looking for a partner to help you get started with a multi-tactic approach to digital advertising, we're only an email or a phone call away.

Email: info@digilant.com
Phone: (844) 344 4526

CASE STUDY EXAMPLES

How can a luxury hotel in Orlando target theme park goers who had booked flights to Orlando, but not yet hotels?

Digilant worked with the hotel to develop custom audiences of resort-intenders that could be reach on desktop and mobile.

To reach "first-time visitors" to Orlando, we utilized purchase data segments from Visa. To reach repeat visitors we layered location targeting on top of Visa data segments to target visitors who have previously stayed at other luxury resorts in Orlando or theme-park properties in the past 13 months.

RESULTS

Visa Custom Segment Targeting

0.26% CTR
More than 3x the programmatic industry benchmark

Competitive Conquesting

0.39% CTR
Nearly 5x the programmatic industry benchmark

INSIGHTS

- The competitive conquesting tactic generated the best CTR out of all the tactics on the plan.

TACTICS

- Visa custom segment targeting
- competitive conquesting
- ceo-location targeting

How can a resort near Disney World theme parks increase bookings during the summer months?

Digilant partnered with a resort near Disney World theme parks to increase bookings among people living within a day's drive to the parks.

To accomplish this goal, Digilant utilized a variety of tactics to drive site traffic. Campaign-generated site traffic drove consumers to two different actions – to receive a quote and to book a stay at the resort.

TACTICS

- algorithmic optimizer
- behavioral targeting
- contextual targeting
- custom whitelist
- search retargeting
- location targeting
- app ownership targeting
- app targeting
- lookalike
- purchase data
- site retargeting
- adaptive segments
- PMP

RESULTS

791 "Confirm and Pay" conversions

2,318 "Get a Quote" conversions

20 conversions resulting in $57k in revenue

INSIGHTS

- Laptop/desktop generated most conversions

- Adults aged 50-59 were 55x more likely to convert

- "Mommy bloggers" were also 51x more likely to convert

How can a major cruise line utilize native and display to increase booking?

A major cruise line worked with Digilant to implement a variety of programmatic tactics to increase their bookings.

We built a multi-tactic campaign with the intention of optimizing performance as the campaign progressed. To do this we used Consumer Persona, our propriety audience insights technology, to identify the highest performing audiences early on in the campaign.

Consumer Persona revealed that Spanish-speakers and radio-listeners were more likely engage with the campaign. This resulted in refined campaign targeting and campaign amplification through radio ads on Spanish radio stations.

RESULTS

1,500 Conversion

0.11% CTR
Surpassing 0.08% industry benchmark

$139 CPA

INSIGHTS

- Most conversions happened from Florida, followed. By New York and Georgia.

- Desktop and Web brought the most conversions.

- Top domains included Travel, Sports, Deals and Home websites.

TACTICS

- site retargeting
- adaptive segments
- behavioral targeting
- app ownership
- look-a-like targeting
- contextual targeting
- page index

How can a tourism authority for a popular island destination increase air arrivals?

Despite a high volume of visitors to the island, the tourism authority was looking to increase air arrivals on the island. Visitors who arrive by air have a tendency to stay longer, to book hotel accommodations, and to spend more on entertainment when compared to those that arrive by cruise lines. As a result, air arrivals can play an important role in supporting economic growth for the island.

To support the goal of the tourism authority, Digilant built a custom audience of consumers who reside in major cities, have previously visited luxury travel destinations, and have an interest in culture, history, and outdoor activities. This custom audience was included in a cross-channel campaign that led consumers to landing pages that included a promotional video and a call-to-action to book now.

TACTICS

- behavioral targeting
- contextual targeting
- app ownership
- retargeting
- whitelisting
- PMP

RESULTS

3.2 million Impressions

$2.74 CPA

INSIGHTS

- Display produced the best CPI with $1.91

- Lowest CPI for 300x250($1.60) and 728x90 ($2.16)

How can a major airline increase flight bookings to two specific destinations?

A major airline came to Digilant in hopes of increasing bookings to the Oklahoma City and San Diego airports, two new destinations that had recently been added to their flight routes. The airline had a specific goal of fulfilling a 8:1 return on investment.

To reach the airline's target ROI, Digilant developed a campaign that employed four different tactics: contextual targeting, site retargeting, behavioral targeting and travel whitelisting.

The top performing tactics were behavioral targeting and travel whitelisting, which resulted in an ROI that beat the airline's goal.
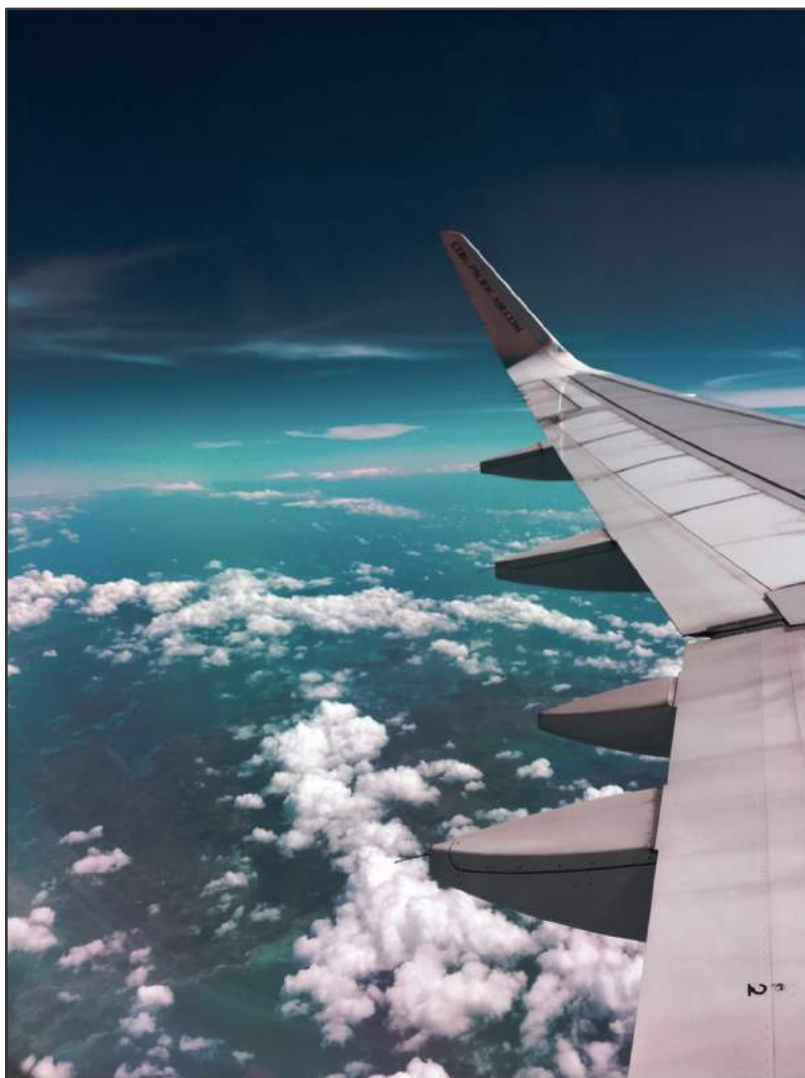
RESULTS

0.21% CTR

8.4:1 ROI

INSIGHTS

- Music Lovers were the top audience segments – they were 3.8x more likely to convert

- Frequent Restaurant Guests were also 2.6x more likely to convert

- 320x50 creative produced the highest CTR

TACTICS

- behavioral targeting
- contextual targeting
- whitelisting
- PMP
- app ownership targeting
- mobile location history

How can a ride share company gain more awareness in a specific region?

A major ride share company wanted to gain more awareness of their offerings, specially in one US state.

The restricted geographically request posed a challenge for Digilant, however the tactical campaign that the team created resulted in success.

The team utilized relevant behavioral targets - age, household income – along with contextual IAB Categories, on top of hyper-localized geographical targeting and day-part targeting to not only exceed the client's goal but also give them great insight into their audiences.

These insights prompted strategic changes to future campaigns that led to even more success.

RESULTS

0.28% CTR

1.978,653 Impressions

INSIGHTS

Highest CTR's came from:

- Site Retargeting: 0.63%

CTR's for millennials and older generations were the same (0.29%) which indicated that this particular ride share company was at a stage in which all ages used its service.

TACTICS

- behavioral targeting
- hyperlocal targeting
- site retargeting
- consumer persona
- app targeting

CONTACT

Digilant is a full-service digital media solutions provider built for the modern marketing era. We have a proven formula that combines a robust planning discipline with flawless execution across digital channels including programmatic, search, and social.

Visit us at digilant.com/contact or contact us at info@digilant.com to start a conversation.