



## Responding to Coronavirus: Increase in Road Trips

The novel coronavirus outbreak, also known as COVID-19, has severely affected the tourism industry due to flight cancellations, travel restrictions and a drop in demand for travel as people seek to reduce the risk of infection. Managing expectations of current and future customers has become even more important during this period of uncertainty. Digilant is committed to closely monitoring the impact of coronavirus on consumer behavior in order to provide the best digital advertising recommendations to advertisers during this time of uncertainty.

In this guide, you'll find four things you should consider to stay connected to customers and to prepare for economic recovery during this challenging time.



# 01. KEEP THE TRAVEL DREAM ALIVE

As travel restrictions from the virus have spread across the world, fewer and fewer travel and tourism brands have been carrying out their promotional campaigns as usual. That's probably a good thing.

However, it doesn't mean that advertisers are riding out the Coronavirus crisis by doing nothing. The biggest challenge going forward is identifying precisely when it is time to inspire travelers to book trips again — and striking the right tone in the meantime.

Instead of encouraging travelers to book a flight, cruise, hotel room, or rental car, today, the smart move is to build awareness and affinity so that your brand is top of mind for future trips. Some brands doing this well are SPG & Travelzoo, by promoting discounted trips with discounted "pay now, book later" offers; and Discover Puerto Rico is using aspirational ad copy and imagery to capture the attention of would-be travelers.

## QUICK STAT

58% of consumers are planning travel between May-September 2020 if their destinations aren't quarantined.

*source: LuggageHero Survey*

## QUICK STAT

21% of consumers who plan to travel in 2020 will choose domestic travel.

*source: LuggageHero Survey*



## 02. ROAD TRIPS ARE EXPECTED TO BE BACK IN STYLE

No one can predict the future as to when this will all be over. Slowly, states are reopening, and people are trying to understand this “new normal” (we know, we’re tired of hearing that term too!). In doing so, in an effort to social distance, but still get out of the house, more people than usual are expected to road trip places instead of flying. In an interview with Vox, Jessica Nabongo, founder of the travel firm Jet Black stated, “I think road trips are going to become a huge thing, especially in the summer.” With gas prices hitting an all-time low in modern history, along with individuals straying away from taking commercial airlines, those with the post-COVID travel itch will most likely be the pioneers of this era of road tripping.

### QUICK STAT

Oil prices have dropped to a record low of -\$39/barrel.

*source: Fortune*

### QUICK TIP

With deals like this, even though many are still social distancing, still are willing to travel. So by going dark, you may lose important consumers.



## 03. DOMESTIC TRAVEL WILL BE THE FIRST TO SEE INCREASE

With international borders closed across the globe and international travel being halted in many parts of the world, those that have been cooped up in their homes over the past two months are planning domestic trips as early as the summer. With uncertainty as to when states will open again, many are taking the "wait and see" attempt of planning a summer trip. It's common knowledge that the best flight price are usually found when booking early, however, during these uncertain times, its nearly impossible to plan in advance. As a result, many consumers are opting to road trip to destinations which gets them out of their houses while still saving money.



## 04. LEVERAGE SOCIAL LISTENING & ANALYTICS

While waiting for the current situation to pick up, consider refocusing your efforts to better understand your customers and the channels that have historically been best to engage them. For example, how are consumers talking about this crisis? Your brand? Your competitors? Where are they researching for future trips? Having answers to these questions will keep your brand story fresh.

Social listening and marketing analytics tools can help simplify this process. Digilant's real-time social listening reports and analytics dashboards allow you to understand what's happening on social media, your website, and in your advertising campaigns (both running and historic). With these insights, you can react to what's happening quickly and adapt your marketing so that you're able to return from this crisis stronger than before.







## Questions?

There's a lot going on right now. Social distancing is impacting how we all do business and we know there is concern over the days ahead. Not only do you have to worry about your health and the health of your family, but you have to find the best path forward for pursuing your company's objectives for the year.

We are (and have always been) optimists and believe that we will get through this together.

We are with you for the long haul and will continue to provide relevant insights and guidance as you navigate this new normal. You can reach us with any questions or concerns at [digilant.com/contact](https://digilant.com/contact) or [info@digilant.com](mailto:info@digilant.com).

