

# Breakthrough Search Advice for Tourism Operators in an Age of Artificial Intelligence



Getting the online basics right with Google will go a long way to creating a successful tourism marketing website, says Bronwyn White, co-founder and travel futurist at MyTravelResearch.com

While tourism is still about enjoying visceral real world experiences, its modern marketing is not. Tourism marketing is increasingly dominated by the relentless science of artificial intelligence, specifically semantic search.

This means if you want your destination to earn market share or better, Google has to love you. And you can't fool Google. Its AI-driven semantic search is exponentially more capable than historical search algorithms of delivering, fast, meaningful results tailored to each user's search query. When a person conducts online travel search today, Google takes into account information such as his or her geographical location, previous search history, and interests, as reflected by social media interactions.

Now all this is a boon to tourism businesses because it helps you connect with your customers in a targeted, relevant manner. Do your job right and your product, service or destination will be presented in search results that fully match the user's intent and delivers you customers who will love your product.

It's fair to say that Google is becoming more like a personal assistant than a search engine. To accomplish this Google has embedded its machine learning algorithms in a suite of products, apps and tools that are free, easy to use, and fully integrated.

For example, today, the Google 'suite' includes Google Maps, Chrome, Plus, Home, My Business, Now, Calendars, Voice, YouTube, and more. The more you love Google, the more it loves you back.

I therefore strongly recommend travel organisations to embrace these tools in order to keep their marketing programs on track and their content working for them.

This means tourism bodies need to create content that is relevant to the user by answering specific user questions, solving problems, and providing useful information in a variety of formats.

## Get the Basics Right

But before you post your great content - words, photos, videos, blogs, surveys - make sure your online fundamentals are in place. Namely:

- Check Your Website Structure - Google cannot help you unless your site is easily navigated. Your site needs headings, titles and descriptions that Google can index (And don't be fooled. You still need a website!)
- Mobile Compatible - Google is designed primarily for mobile users (bring in an expert if you're unsure about your site's compatibility with mobile devices)
- Don't be caught NAPping. Check Your Business NAP - Make sure your name, address and phone numbers (NAP) are consistent in listings
- Sign up for Google My Business - Claim and list your business on Google Places, and populate it

with relevant information. Local Google listings always feature prominently on mobile search queries, especially voice queries. Be sure to include videos and photos

- Create Google Plus Profiles – Create your Google + Page for your business and your Google + profile for yourself. You can then link your business website and all your online activity
- Post on Google + – Google indexes these posts exactly like blog posts, so include text, compelling images, videos, events and customer testimonials
- Include other social media – Create accurate profiles and include other social media accounts you use
- Get a YouTube account – YouTube is part of Google and is the 2nd largest search engine in the world. With a YouTube account, embed the video on your own website and blog and include the link in your social media posts
- Post often! – Try and add something relevant to your Google + and other social media accounts daily. From Google's perspective, these activity patterns show that you are expanding and increase the probability that you have interesting content to offer. It's often easier to do this than many tourism businesses think. There are simple things you can do that help with this.

Summarising, David Amerland, a leader in semantic search analysis for business, gives the following four tips: develop a clear distinctive brand voice, deliver content in multiple channels in a personable, accessible way, deliver content that has real value for the end user, and embrace the free platforms and tools made by Google.

In-depth insights on artificial intelligence, semantic search, building online trust, reputation and authority, and the primacy of content, are the topics of premium membership in March 2018 by MyTravelResearch.com. DMOs and tourism marketers will learn HOW to build trust, reputation and authority in the world of semantic search.

Find out more from

[https://mytravelresearch.com/?ct=t%28Destination%20Marketing%20Organisations%29&mc\\_cid=3ec4ad055e&mc\\_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D](https://mytravelresearch.com/?ct=t%28Destination%20Marketing%20Organisations%29&mc_cid=3ec4ad055e&mc_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D).

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About MyTravelResearch.com

MyTravelResearch.com is a market research and marketing firm specializing in the travel, tourism and aviation industries. Its specialty is providing insights that are actionable.

Founded by principals with lifetime careers in travel, tourism and aviation, MyTravelResearch.com exists to build the visitor economy and successful tourism businesses. It does this by putting the voice of the customer and best practice business thinking into an easy to implement, hands-on approach via an innovative membership model. MyTravelResearch.com can help:

- \* National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) meet the expectations of their industry by acting as an extension of their research and marketing resources.
- \* Businesses make more informed decisions. (It is like having your own research and/or marketing team)

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