



Top 4 Ways Travel Agents Can Increase Sales

You may not have ever thought of this, but there are only 3 ways to increase sales. You can get more customers, get your customers to pay you more money each time they buy, or you can get your customers to buy more often. Those are the only three ways to increase sales in any business. The good news is that if you can do all three, you can double your sales pretty easily.

We have put together the four top ways travel agents can increase their sales from our knowledge of the travel industry. We provide this report free as a service to our travel agent partners in our commitment to help you achieve greater success in your entire enterprise. Naturally, we'd be happy to serve you and your clients along the way, too.

1) Get more customers - Use the Internet



Are you marketing on the Internet? You absolutely have to if you want to keep a stream of customers coming to you. Here is a quick plan: (a) set up an account with Google Adwords; (b) set up an AdGroup for a particular destination you specialize in promoting; (c) create an ad that says something about how you can help people have a better time on their trip; (d) set your ad group settings so that your ads only run for users in your home

city when they search about destinations. For example, if you live in Houston and specialize in trips to New York City, you want your Ad to run every time someone from Houston searches for keywords such as "new york city travel" or "new york city attractions." That is about the most targeted advertising you will ever find. Ask us to set up a webinar to help you learn how to get new customers through Internet marketing. In this area, our internet marketing team has achieved a very high level of success – and we enjoy sharing the keys to success with our partners.

2) Convince your customers to come back and buy from you more often

Why do your customers come back and buy from you again? It's because you provided them a great service that enhanced their experience. Either you saved them time, saved them money, or told them about great places to visit they never would have found without you. For your customers today, it probably means that you can give them better advice than what they can find in the "Do-It-Yourself Internet nightmare." 47% of travelers who tried to plan their own trip had a negative experience.¹ Travelers who use your services to plan their trip save money, save stress, and have a better time. You can tell them about great restaurants, food carts and local hole-in-the-wall places, photo opportunities, and unknown attractions most visitors miss. They can find most of that on the Internet,

¹ Source: Travelers' Use of the Internet, US Travel Association, 2009 Edition; Study refers to poor customer service across travel websites, eTravel, 7/19/10



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but finding it in the more than 500 billion online writings that users put up each year² is almost impossible. Your clients have you.

You are probably thinking, that's great, but I already know that. How can I get my customers to use me more often? Two things you can do: First, every time you speak to a customer or potential customer, think about what your strategic goals are. Do you want the customer to respect you? Would you like the customer to think of you as an expert? Would you like the customer to be so impressed with you that they tell their friends about you? Do you want the customer looking to you as a source of information about travel in general? Do you want the customer to learn all of the destinations you have experience marketing? Just thinking about your strategic goals will change your interactions with your customers. Focus on educating them and serving them. That way, they will refer you to friends and rely on your expertise every time they travel. The second thing you can do is to effectively and regularly communicate with them. If you plan a great trip for a customer, call them to follow up. Then, email them every month or so with ideas for another trip you can plan for them. Top of mind recall, and a continuation of your educational information will help.

3) More Money Per Sale: Add commissionable items to every trip

If you are like most travel agents, you fulfill your customers' orders in an efficient and helpful manner. You might even make a suggestion as to a hotel or restaurant to consider. Most agents, though, don't have a strategic plan of how to add additional products onto every trip. When you book airfare, transfers, and hotel rooms for your clients, make sure you add on a day tour, a night tour, a show ticket, an attraction entry ticket, a boat cruise, and a helicopter tour. If you focus on maximizing the revenues you receive for each guest, you will not only make more money in commissions or bonuses, but you will also make sure your client has a trip they won't forget, which will ensure they come back to you for their next trip. The easiest way to accomplish this is to connect with a quality sightseeing tour company in each city you promote. The local tour company can create packages of attractions and tours with other suppliers that maximize your commissions and bonuses without creating more work for you. Ask your OnBoard rep about how to set up packages like these in the cities you serve.



4) More Money Per Sale: Negotiate higher rates with frequent suppliers

Many of our travel agent clients are not aware that suppliers will negotiate commission rates with their resellers and travel agents. If you promote one company's products strongly and drive lots of sales to that supplier, you can ask that they provide you with a bonus or an increased commission to

² Source: Web Users Spread Billions of Product Opinions, Harvard Business Review, 9/16/10; Online Booking Woes Turn Many Travelers Off, NPR, 4/15/09.



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compensate for the higher volume of guests. Keeping this approach in mind, make sure you focus your referrals and recommendations on a few suppliers so that you can exercise your “volume buying power” with the suppliers you promote highly.

OnBoard Tours was founded in 2004, and has served nearly 1 million travelers to New York City, Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Las Vegas. We have been the highest rated bus tour provider for three years running on TripAdvisor.com and Viator.com for NYC and DC. We have been successful because we create life-enriching experiences for our clients with a higher level of service. Find out more [About OnBoard Tours](#) here.

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