

Travel, Tweets & Trends

Social Media Usage Patterns Among Travel Tour Operators



Executive Summary

September 23, 2010



*With observations and commentary from Jay Baer,
social media strategist from Convince & Convert*



Established in 1990, the Seattle-based ATTA (www.adventuretravel.biz) is a global membership organization dedicated to unifying, networking, professionalizing, promoting and responsibly growing the adventure travel market.

ATTA members include tour operators, destination marketing organizations, tourism boards, specialty travel agents, guides, accommodations, media and service providers.

Host of the annual Adventure Travel World Summit trade conferences (www.adventuretravelworldsummit.com), the ATTA also makes possible www.Adventure.Travel, the traveler's hub of physical, cultural and nature-based adventure travel and guide to trusted tour operators from around the globe.

ATTA uses Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and runs its own social network called "The HUB" via a Ning online community site.



Founded in 2005, Resmark Systems offers comprehensive tour operator software created by tour operators with years of experience.

Resmark Systems software is designed to manage all functions of the tour operator business from online reservations and marketing to finances and accounting. Resmark provides proven cost savings, comprehensive tracking and reporting, plus unparalleled lead conversion.

In addition, Resmark Systems is one of the only solutions seriously focused on helping tour operators save time and labor costs by automating social media engagement via email, blogs, facebook and twitter.

Resmark clients range from 2 to 50+ users and include companies such as Nantahala Outdoor Center, Long Point Eco Adventures, Sandals & Beaches Resorts, and Western River Expeditions.

Visit www.resmarksystems.com to view complimentary webinars, read client success stories and request a live demonstration.



Convince & Convert is a social media strategy consultancy that works with corporate clients and public relations firms on maximizing the impact of social media participation.

The firm is led by Jay Baer, one of the world's most popular social media authors and speakers. He is the co-author of the book *The Now Revolution*, to be published in early 2011 by John Wiley & Sons.

A founder of five companies, Baer has worked with more than 700 businesses on digital marketing and social media strategy, including Nike, Proctor & Gamble, Cadbury, Arizona Cardinals, Marriott, and more than 25 of the Fortune 1000.

His Convince & Convert blog (www.convinceandconvert.com) is ranked as one of the Top 25 marketing blogs in the world by *AdAge Magazine*. He can be found on Twitter at @jaybaer .

Review Panel:

This group of tour operator marketing professionals assisted in the design of this research survey and the determination of optimal questions:

- Kevin Johnson- Deluxe Digital Media
- Alexia Nestora- Lasso Communications
- Kathy Dragon- TravelDragon
- Jason Reckers- Adventure Travel Trade Association
- Christina Heyniger- Xola Consulting
- Chris Noble- World Nomads

Introduction



of North American travel tour operators participate in social media on a daily basis, and 77% participate in social media at least weekly.

The pervasiveness of social media is a major finding of this survey of 225 companies, commissioned by tour operator software company RESMARK Systems and the Adventure Travel Trade Association.

The research was conducted by Convince & Convert, a social media consultancy led by Jay Baer; one of the world's most accomplished social media experts.

Responses from the 23-question online survey were gathered from five continents, and from small businesses to global organizations with tours in multiple locations.

This research represents the most current and comprehensive study yet conducted on the how, ways and whys of social media usage within the travel and tour operator community.

Study participants represented a wide swath of the tour operator industry in terms of location and size.

51% of respondents were located in North America (35% in the United States). All corners of the globe were represented, with the exception of Antarctica.

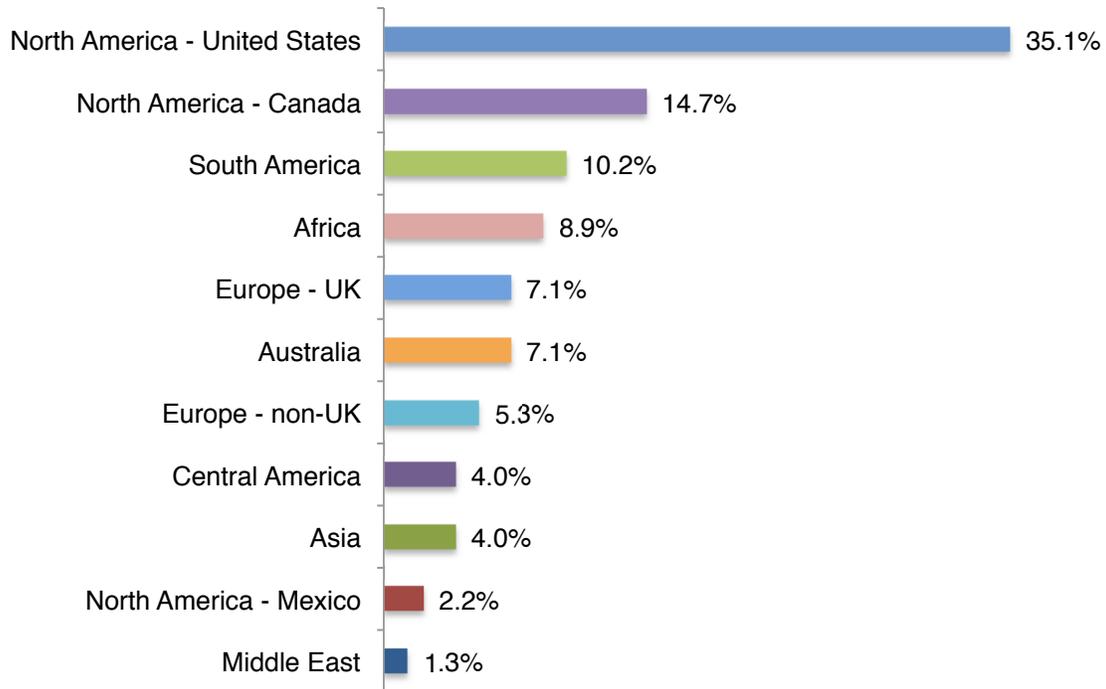


Figure 1 – Location of Respondents (“Where is your company based?”)

Companies of all sizes participated, with 58% of all respondents having 10 or fewer employees, and 28% of respondents having 25 or more employees.

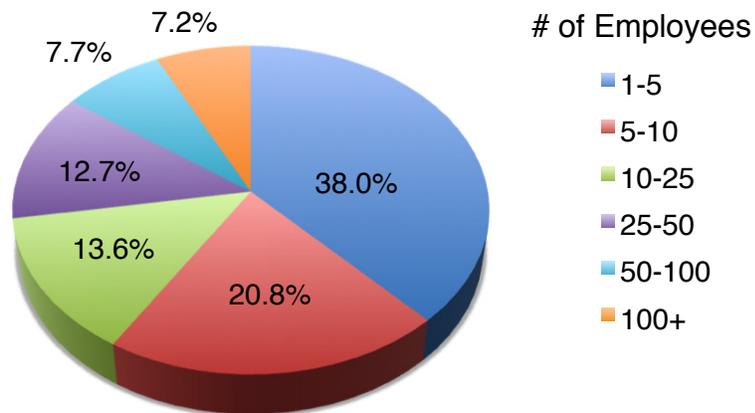


Figure 2 – Number of Employees

9 Key Questions

In this 41-page Whitepaper, Jay Baer, one of the world's most accomplished social media experts uncovers the answers to 9 Key Questions that every tour operator should be asking about social media.

1. What is the appropriate role of Facebook in a social media strategy?
2. What other social media outposts beyond Facebook should be considered?
3. Is a blog a worthwhile social media endeavor?
4. Is social media's impact being measured appropriately?
5. How much are tour operators spending on social media efforts?
6. Is social media more effective than other online tactics like email marketing?
7. What are the key objectives of social media participation?
8. How important is video and YouTube?
9. How many people in a company should be involved with social media?

The Full Report

The complete *Travel, Tweets & Trends* report finds the answers to the 9 Key Questions. It includes case studies of successful social media programs and data that will help you better define your social media strategy and determine how to spend your time and resources on this important marketing element.

Travel, Tweets & Trends includes:

Current Practices:

Read case studies that provide examples of how tour operators are using Facebook and alternative social media channels.

- Facebook
- Blogging

Beyond the Basics:

How are tour operators moving beyond using social media as only a “headline news” distribution vehicle?

- Social Media Automation
- Special Offers and Twitter
- Social Media & Customer Service
- Social Media Listening
- Social Media & Marketing Research

Business Impact:

How important are social media efforts to the success of tour operator businesses, and how do various social media channels attribute to this perception? Plus: YouTube and Review Sites

Effectiveness:

With the exception of email, tour operators are not convinced that specific tactics are effective. How do tour operators rate the effectiveness of different social media tools?

Cost & Budget:

On the whole, personnel and budgetary commitment to social media is modest at this time. How much time are tour operators spending on social media?

9 Key Answers:

Jay Baer uncovers the answers to 9 key questions that every tour operator should be considering when crafting their social media strategy.

Don't miss out on the valuable insights you'll find in the full report!

Purchase “[Whitepaper: Travel, Tweets & Trends](http://www.adventuretravel.biz/research/adventure-tour-operator-social-media-study/)” today at the Adventure Travel Trade Association Web site.

(<http://www.adventuretravel.biz/research/adventure-tour-operator-social-media-study/>)