

The Traveler's Path to Purchase

Understanding the Relationship Between Online Travel Agencies and Destination Marketing Organizations



Study Details:

Qualifications for Inclusion in Segment:

In order to be included in the analysis, consumers had to have met both of the following criteria:

- Booked a vacation package at one of the following online travel agencies (OTAs) between October 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013



- Visited a destination marketing organization (DMO) website during the 45 days leading up to the time of booking

DMO Site List:

- Using a variety of online and offline resources, Compete compiled a list of nearly 1,000 Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) websites, promoting leisure destinations at the city, region, state and national level

Methodology:

- Compete segmented and evaluated the actions of OTA package bookers who visited a known Destination Marketing Organization website at some point during the 45 days prior to booking. Specifically, Compete evaluated the frequency and timing of category and site-specific visitation, same-session cross visitation, billboard effect of DMO visitation, and sample paths to purchase.
- The results were evaluated to understand consumer usage of different sites and site categories throughout the vacation package shopping cycle.



Package Bookers Consume a Lot of Travel Content, Especially the Week of Booking

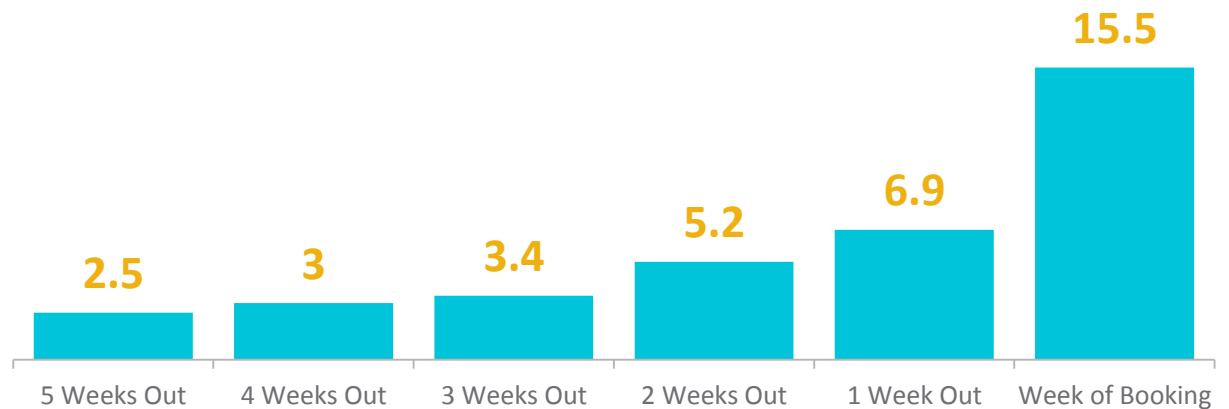
Travel content consumption the week of a package booking more than doubles the prior week's volume

Number of visits to travel sites
made by package bookers
45 days before booking

38

Average Travel Site Visits per Week

(Number of travel sites visited per week by the average segment member, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: The average segment member makes 15.5 visits to travel sites in the week leading up to the package booking

*Same sites counted only once per session in visits figure; visitation to same site during a different session will be counted as a separate visit

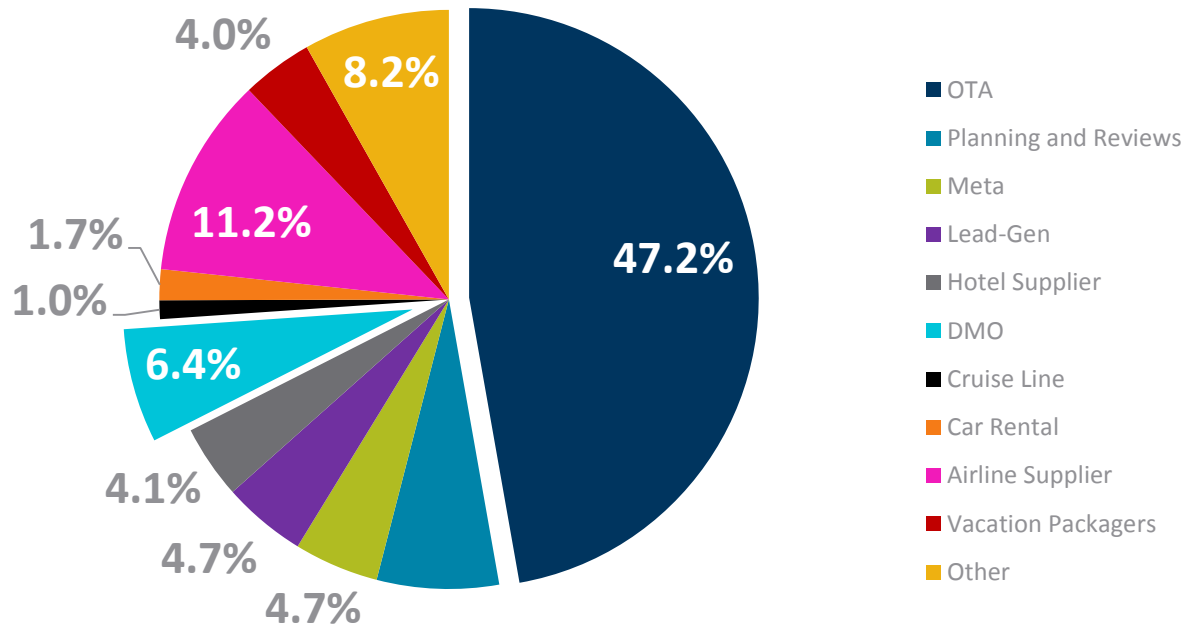


Package Bookers Visit OTAs More Often than Other Travel Sites

While OTAs dominate the pre-booking research landscape, DMO share of travel visits has jumped 30% since 2010 (to 6.4% in recent months)

Share of Visits by Travel Category

(Share of segment's total travel visits claimed by each travel category, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: 47% of all visits to Travel Sites made by segment members were attributed to OTAs



OTAs Are Used for More than Just Last Minute Price Comparison

Only 35% of all visits to OTAs the week of a package booking occur the same day as the booking

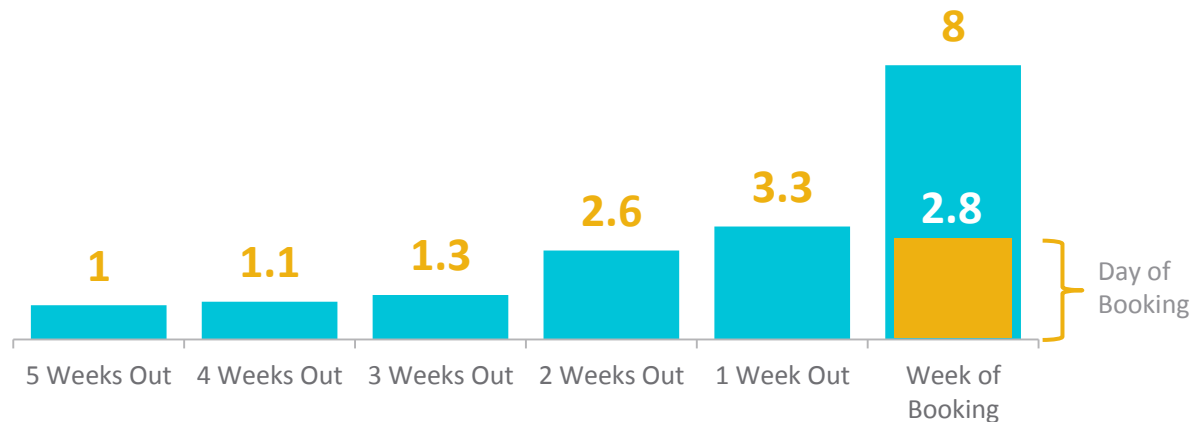
This implies a lot of additional research is being conducted on these sites

Number of visits to OTAs
made by package bookers
45 days before booking

18

Average OTA Visits per Week

(Number of visits to OTAs per week by the average segment member, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



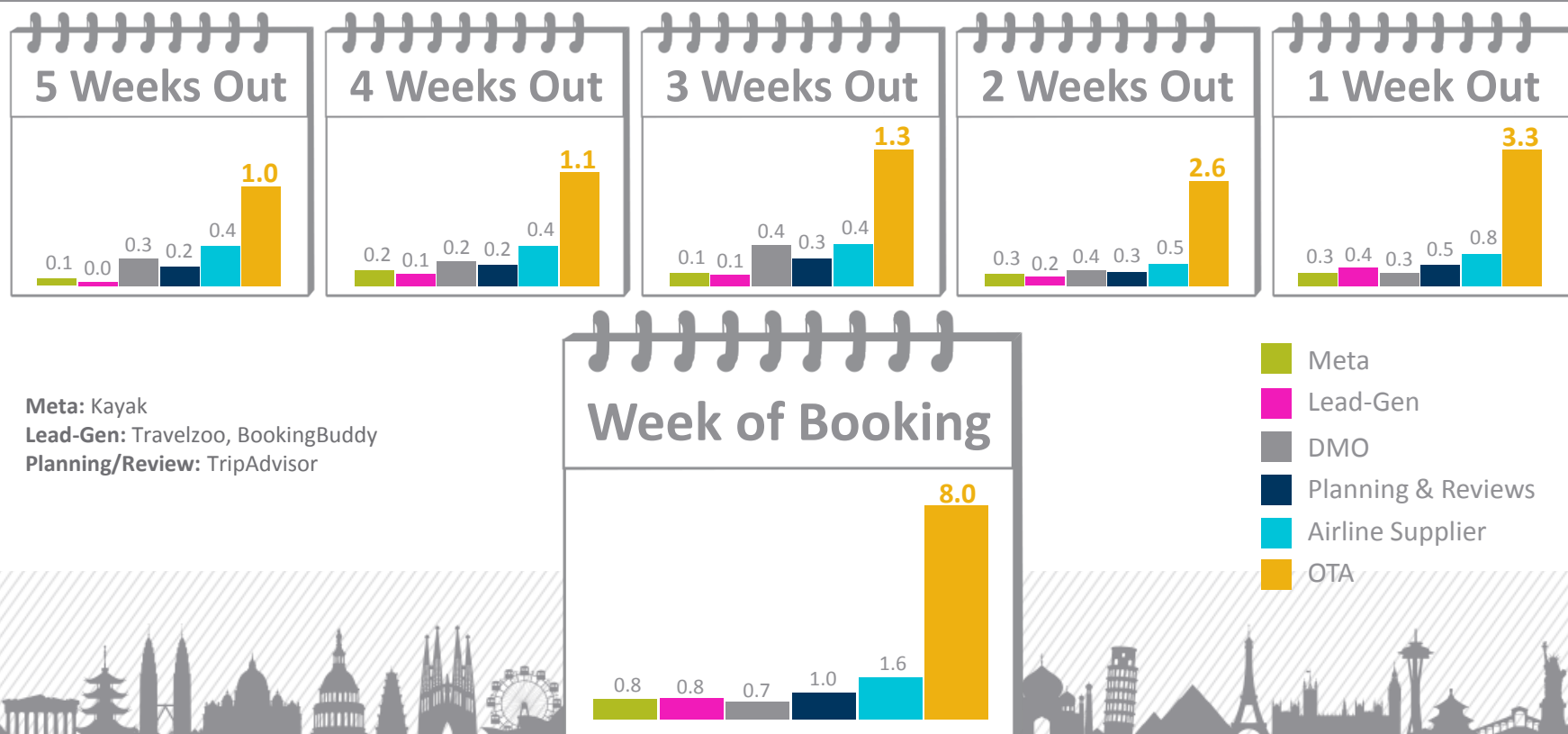
Read as: average segment member visited OTA sites 8x in the week leading up to booking, with a 1/3rd on the same day

In Travel Content Consumption the OTA Category is Still the Clear Leader

The gap between OTA & other Travel categories exists from the beginning, but increases significantly the closer you get to the booking

Average Visits to Travel Categories per Week

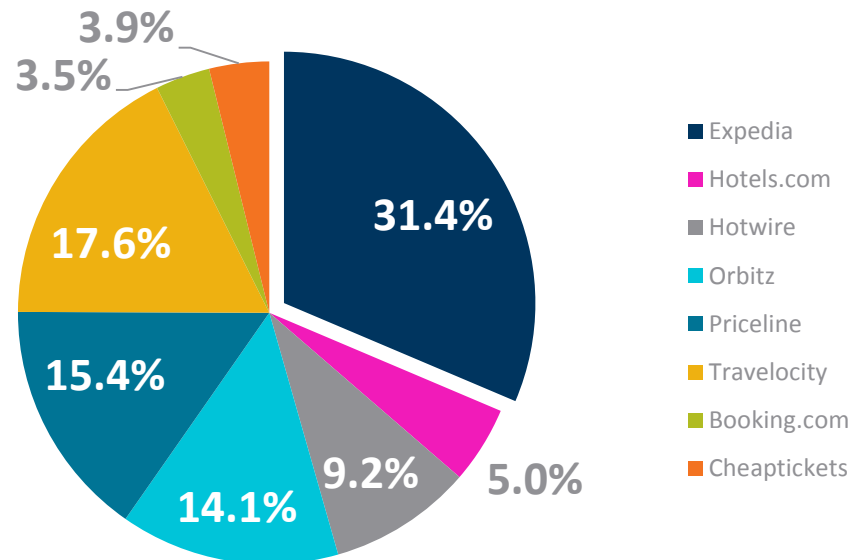
(Average visits per visitor to sites within each category, by week, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Expedia Continues to Lead the OTA Set in Share of Visits

Share of OTA Visits by Brand

(Within competitive set, share of segment's OTA visits captured by each brand, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



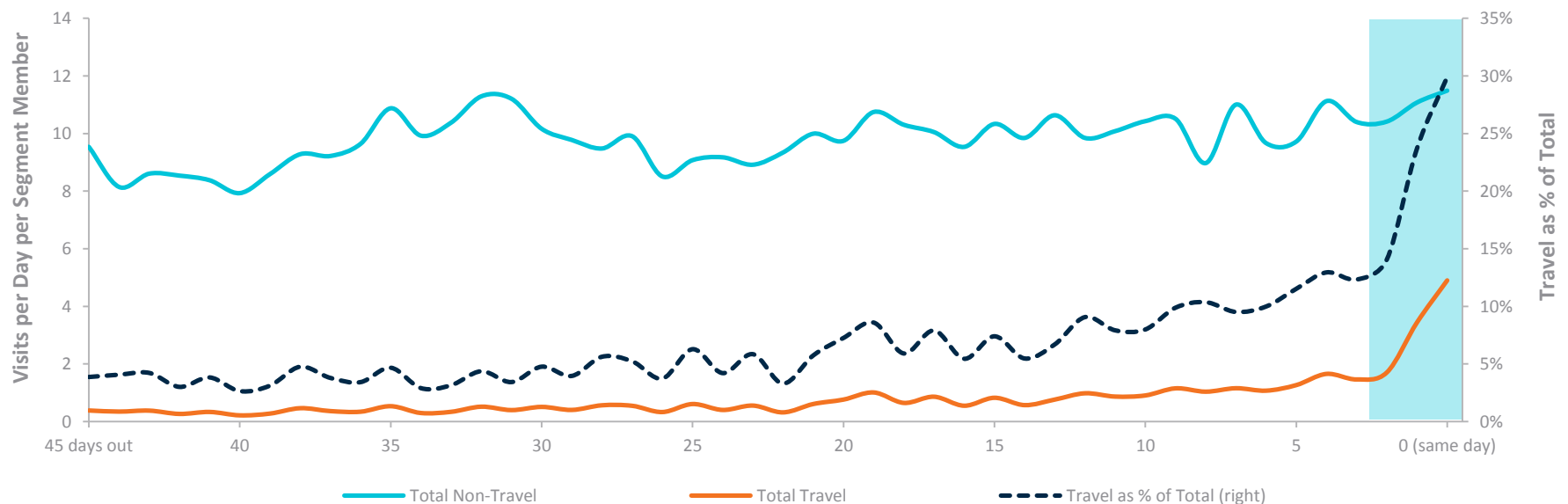
Read as: 31.4% of the segment's visits to major OTA brand sites were to Expedia.com

Travel Content Consumption Drives Growth in Overall Internet Usage for Segment Members

In general, as people get closer to booking their package, their overall internet usage increases slightly, but nowhere near as much as their Travel content consumption

Non-Travel Site Visitation Per Day

(Website visits per day by average segment member to travel sites, non-travel sites, total, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: On the day of the booking, segment members made an average 16.4 website visits, 30% of which were to travel sites

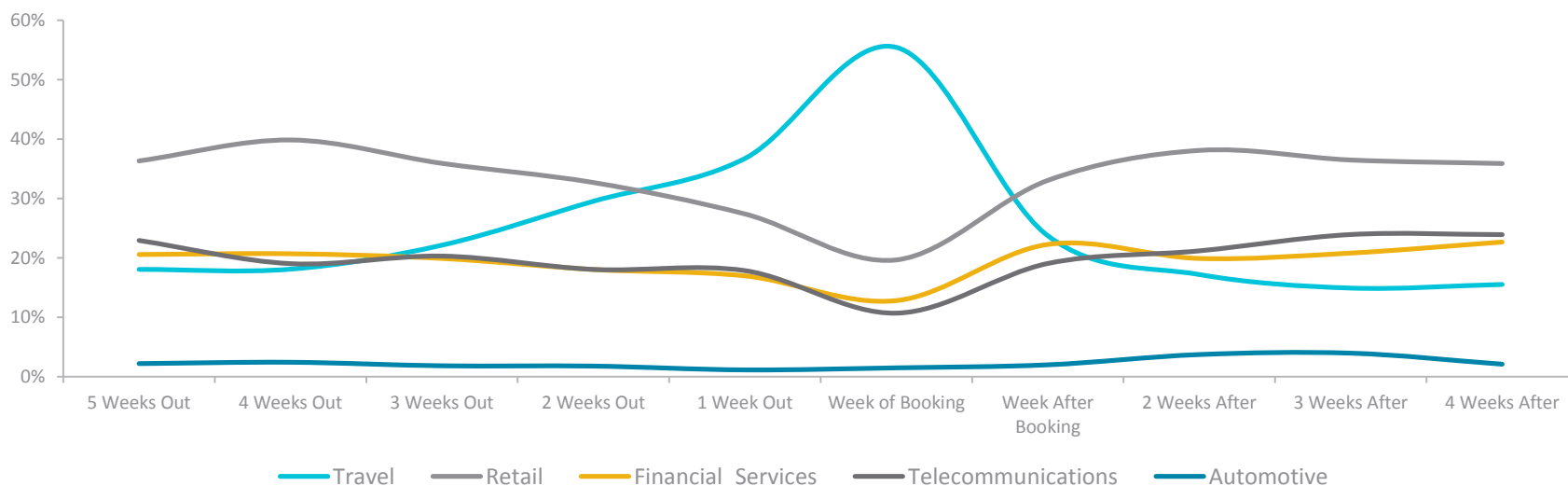


Despite Consistently Strong Retail Visitation, No Category Touches Travel in the Days Leading Up to the Booking

Amongst the monitored categories, Retail dominates the set up to about 3 weeks prior to booking
Travel consumption spikes at the same time and doesn't let up

Category Visit Intensity Over Time

(Share of visits made to each category of websites , Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: In the week leading up to the package booking, Travel sites account for 55% of visits to the list of comparison site categories

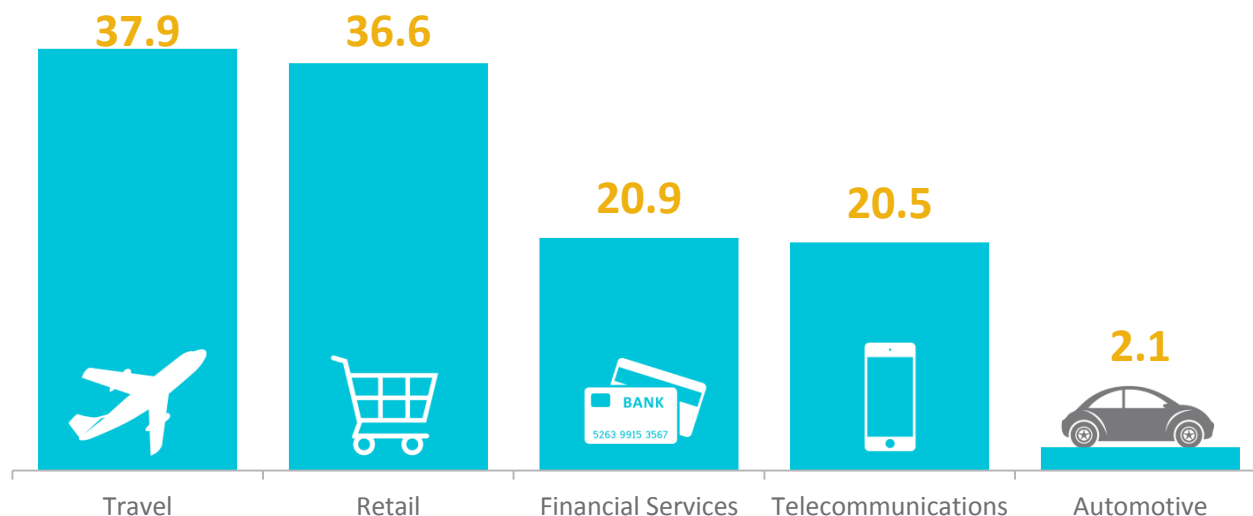


In the 45 Days Leading Up to a Package Booking, Retail Sites are Visited Almost as Frequently as Travel Sites

As segment members research their vacations, retail sites become common hangouts, even more so than banking or cell carrier sites

Average Category Visits per Booker in Aggregate

(Number of visits made to each category of websites by the average segment member, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: the average segment member visited a retail website 36.6 times in the 45 days leading up to their package booking



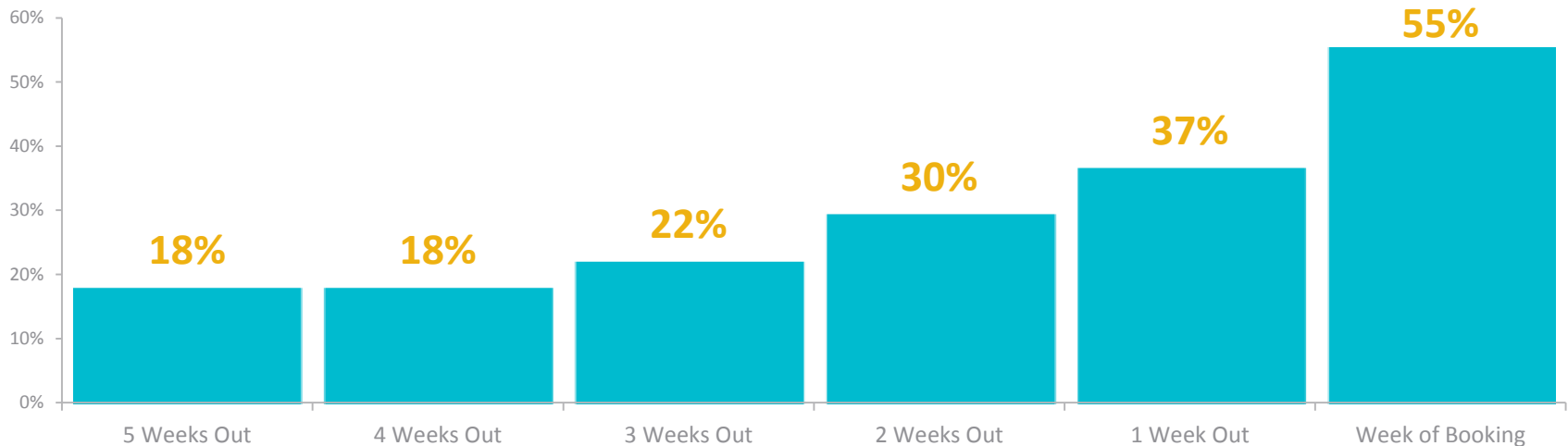
However, No Category Touches Travel in the Days Leading Up to the Booking

Amongst the monitored categories, Retail dominates the set up to about 3 weeks prior to booking
Travel consumption spikes at the same time and doesn't let up



Travel Visit Intensity Over Time

(Share of visits made to travel websites , Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)



Read as: In the week leading up to the package booking, Travel sites account for 55% of visits to the list of comparison site categories



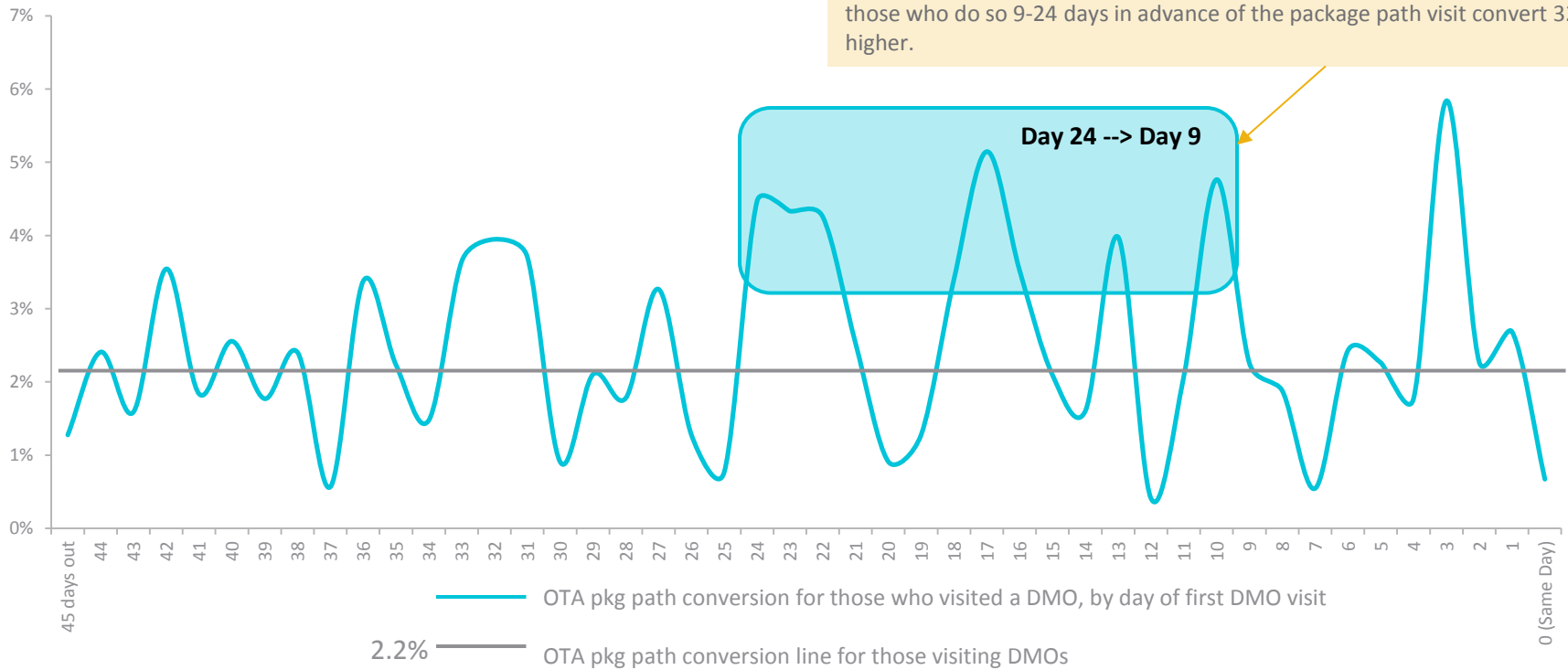
Billboard Effect of DMO Visitation

There are periods within the 45 path to purchase where DMO visitation seems to positively impact conversion.

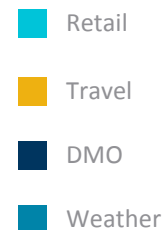
Billboard Effect of DMO Visitation

(Conversion calculated by the day the DMO was first visited, Oct'12-Mar'13 aggregate)

Read as: Of people who check DMO sites prior to visiting an OTA package path, those who do so 9-24 days in advance of the package path visit convert 32% higher.



Actual purchase path of a travel package booker



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 41

- ontariotravel.net
- niagarafallstourism.com (11 pages)
- viator.com
- kayak.com
- expedia.com
- aaa.com
- rodewayinn.com
- choicehotels.com
- mapquest.com
- frommers.com
- marinelandcanada.com
- cliftonhill.com
- marineland.ca
- secure-res.com

DAY 28

- google.com
- youtube.com (11 pages)
- makemytrip.com (16 pages)
- google.com
- britishairways.com
- google.com
- ypmate.com

DAY 27

- google.com
- expedia.com (18 pages)
- tripadvisor.com
- go.com
- go.com



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase *(continued)*

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 26

- google.com
- garmin.com (75 pages)
- google.com
- nbcsports.com
- garmin.com (10 pages)
- google.com
- nbc.com
- nbcsports.com

DAY 25

- google.com
- expedia.com (14 pages)
- garmin.com (10 pages)
- google.com
- expedia.com (11 pages)
- fling.com
- aaa.com
- google.com (13 pages)
- expedia.com
- orbitz.com
- hotels.com
- hotwire.com
- sheratonfourpointsniagarafalls.com
- guestserve.com
- aaa.com

DAY 22

- google.com (21 pages)
- expedia.ca
- expedia.com (24 pages)
- hotelsone.com
- oakeshotel.com
- tripadvisor.com
- fourpoints.com
- guestserve.com
- sheratonfourpointsniagarafalls.com
- starwoodhotels.com
- northshore-bank.com
- secureinternetbank.com
- patientgateway.org



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase *(continued)*

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 21

- google.com
- live.com
- easternbank.com
- msn.com
- travelconfidently.com
- google.com
- google.com (12 pages)
- easternbank.com
- facebook.com (49 pages)
- tripadvisor.com
- distancebetweencities.net
- travelmath.com
- igougo.com
- mapquest.com (10 pages)
- live.com
- aaa.com
- verizon.net
- tribalfusion.com
- msn.com
- squidoo.com
- →

DAY 21 (continued)

- →
- google.com (10 pages)
- frommers.com
- bing.com
- hotwire.com
- senecaniagaracasino.com
- kayak.com
- ihotelier.com
- hotelclub.com
- microsoft.com
- canadianhotelguide.com
- radisson.com
- expedia.com
- hotwire.com
- google.com
- travelmath.com
- radisson.com
- hotelclub.com
- hotwire.com
- google.com
- yahoo.com
- mapquest.com
- buffalonaivalpark.org

DAY 20

- google.com
- quibids.com
- youtube.com
- google.com (17 pages)
- mapquest.com (41 pages)
- frommers.com
- yahoo.com
- lonelyplanet.com
- yelp.com
- roadtripamerica.com
- visitniagaracanada.com (10 pages)
- buffalonaivalpark.org



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase (Continued)

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 18

- google.com
- youtube.com
- google.com
- expedia.com (16 pages)
- google.com (11 pages)
- hotelclub.com (13 pages)
- tripadvisor.com
- guestserve.com
- sheratonfourpointsniagarafalls.com
- daysinnfallsviewhotel.com
- easytobook.com
- priceline.com

DAY 17

- mapquest.com (37 pages)
- google.com
- daysinnfallsviewhotel.com
- live.com (11 pages)

DAY 16

- google.com
- timeanddate.com
- daysinnfallsviewhotel.com
- garmin.com (28 pages)
- startec.com
- garmincdn.com
- google.com
- garmin.com (43 pages)



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase *(continued)*

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 14

- google.ca
- facebook.com
- google.ca
- marinelandcanada.com
- maidofthemist.com

DAY 12

- google.ca (18 pages)
- casaniagara.com

DAY 10

- google.com
- facebook.com (36 pages)
- redbullstratos.com



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase *(continued)*

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 4

- google.com
- expedia.com (17 pages)
- jetblue.com
- travelocity.com (13 pages)
- tripadvisor.com

DAY 3

- google.com (17 pages)
- expedia.com (53 pages)
- vacationstogo.com (15 pages)
- tripadvisor.com
- royalcaribbean.com (24 pages)
- tampacruiseguide.com
- shoreexcursionsgroup.com

DAY 2

- google.com (16 pages)
- cheapcaribbean.com
- libertytravel.com
- orbitz.com
- allinclusiveexperts.com
- bahamas.com
- expedia.com (19 pages)
- travelpn.com
- breezes.com
- resortvacationstogo.com
- bookit.com
- youtube.com
- sandals.com
- cheapcaribbean.com
- beachvacationstoday.com (9 pages)
- paradiseislandbahama.com
- ihotelier.com
- orbitz.com
- libertytravel.com
- allinclusiveexperts.com
- orbitz.com
- google.com (28 pages)
- live.com (43 pages)
- →



Sample 45 Day Path to Purchase *(continued)*

Actual purchase path of a travel package booker

DAY 2 (continued)

- →
- northshore-bank.com
- adp.com
- diplomaguide.com
- northshore-bank.com
- paradiseislandriu.com
- riu.com
- Vaxvacationaccess.com
- orbitz.com (19 pages)
- paradiseislandbahama.com
- ihotelier.com
- expedia.com (11 pages)
- bookit.com (17 pages)
- livingsocial.com
- beaches.com
- yahoo.com
- sandals.com
- all-inclusiveresort.com (23 pages)
- familyvacationcritic.com
- jetblue.com (10 pages)
- livingsocial.com
- cheapcaribbean.com
- orbitz.com
- expedia.com

DAY 1

- google.com
- live.com
- msn.com (11 pages)
- google.com
- calculator-converter.com
- escapeartist.com
- metricamerica.com
- facebook.com (31 pages)
- google.com
- walgreens.com (20 pages)
- live.com (33 pages)
- msn.com
- facebook.com (43 pages)
- google.com (20 pages)
- youtube.com (15 pages)
- grandvelas.com
- verizon.net
- cancuncasa.com
- cancun.travel
- live.com
- dolphindiscovery.com
- tripadvisor.com

SAME DAY

- google.com
- nassauparadiseisland.com
- sheraton.com
- sheratonnassau.com
- cheapcaribbean.com (27 pages)
- yahoo.com
- live.com
- cancun.travel
- rivieramaya.com
- live.com (12 pages)
- cheapcaribbean.com (13 pages)
- google.com (12 pages)
- tripadvisor.com
- msn.com
- vrxstudios.com
- rivieramaya.com
- yahoo.com
- scubaplaya.com
- expedia.com
- cheapcaribbean.com (29 pages)
- google.com
- tripadvisor.com
- yahoo.com
- expedia.com (14 pages)
- yahoo.com
- google.com (19 pages)
- expedia.com (106 pages, then booked a Cancun Pkg)

