

Vacation Packages 'R' Us (VPRU) Case Study

VPRU started as **SBRU** Travel Service with the following background information taken from page 66 of the SADCW 7e textbook:

Spring Breaks 'R' Us (**SBRU**) is an online travel service that books spring break trips to resorts for college students. Students have booked spring break trips for decades, but changes in technology have transformed the travel business in recent years. SBRU moved away from having campus reps with posted fliers and moved to the Web early on. The basic idea is to get a group of students to book a room at a resort for one of the traditional spring break weeks. SBRU contracts with dozens of resorts in key spring break destinations like Florida, Texas, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Its Web site shows information on each resort and includes prices, available rooms, and special features. Students can research and book a room, enter contract information, and pay deposits and final payments through the system. SBRU provides updated booking information, resort information updates, and travel information for booked students when they log in to the site.

The resorts also need access to information from SBRU. They need to know about their bookings for each week, the room types that are booked, and so forth. Before the spring break booking season starts, they need to enter information on their resorts, including prices and special features. Resorts need to be paid by SBRU for the bookings, and they need to be able to report and collect for damages caused by spring breakers during their stay.

SBRU has recently decided to upgrade its system to provide social networking features for students. It is currently researching possibilities and collecting information from prospective customers about desirable features and functions. From the business standpoint, the idea is to increase bookings by enhancing the experience before, during, and after the trip.

Appendix A: VPRU Requirement Gathering Interviews

A1. Interview with the VPRU Marketing Manager

| | |
|------------|---|
| Question 1 | What is your role in VPRU? |
| | I am the Marketing Manager of VPRU. |
| Question 2 | What is the main objective of your department? |
| | Our main objective is to understand the trend in college student vacations and find ways to increase our sales by 50% year over year. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have seen a sharp decline in the 2021 Spring Break vacations. However, we have a plan to turn this around starting in 2022. |
| Question 3 | What is the overall strategy of your department? |
| | To increase our annual sales, we need to expand our discounted vacation offerings to college students beyond the Spring Break period, which occurs once a year. This is the reason why we are rebranding our company name from Spring Breaks' R Us (SBRU) to Vacation Packages R Us (VPRU). Due to the pandemic, many resorts have high vacancy rates. This is our opportunity to collaborate with resorts and offer discounted vacation packages all year round. We want to double our efforts to find new partnership with resorts and give incentive (such as higher resort margins) for our partners to provide more discounted vacation packages to our customers. We make sure these resorts have good solid internet connections in order for some college students to take a vacation and attend their online classes at the same time. |
| Question 4 | How do you acquire new Vacation Package (VP) providers? |
| | Since we are now switching to offer discounted vacation package VP bookings, we will no longer allow bookings for a room with a free-range of dates. We need to replace the previous agreements with our existing resort partners because we will only offer discounted vacation packages. First, I will identify a prospect from a list of resorts (existing and new). Then, I will arrange a meeting with the Resort Manager. I will conduct the meeting while the Resort Manager joins the meeting. When the meeting is complete, I prepare a new agreement, sign it and send it to the Resort Manager. If the Resort Manager does not agree to the terms and conditions of the agreement, they notify me and I will prepare a new agreement again. If the Resort Manager agree to the terms and conditions, they sign it and notify me. Then, I will request our VPRU Operations Manager to add a new resort account to our VPRU system. I expect our Operations Manager to send the newly generated resort account number and a new set of credentials to the Resort Manager. Usually, the Resort Manager will ask their own resort staff to add their resort details to our VPRU system. They also view their newly added resort details using our VPRU system to ensure that they look good to our VPRU customers. |
| Question 5 | It looks like you trust your resort partners to enter their own resort details. Is this the original intent? |
| | Yes. The new VPRU system will require the resorts to be responsible for their own content. This will allow us to concentrate on acquiring new VP providers. |
| | Thanks for taking the time to answer my questions. |

A2. Interview with a Resort Manager

| | |
|------------|--|
| Question 1 | What is your role and how is your resort related to VPRU? |
| | I am the Resort Manager of Sanctuary at Grand Memories (SGM) and we are a partner resort of VPRU. We have signed our agreement with VPRU and we are happy to have our VPRU system account established. |
| Question 2 | What do you expect out of your partnership with VPRU? |
| | We have agreed to provide discounted vacation packages to VPRU customers. We expect VPRU as a strategic partner to promote our resort to college students. This will help increase our occupancy rates in 2021 and beyond. |
| Question 3 | How do you keep track of which rooms and dates are available to VPRU? |
| | We issue vacation package (VP) vouchers. Each VP voucher has a specific room and specific date range. This will ensure that we avoid double booking of our rooms. |
| Question 4 | How do you provide a Vacation Package (VP) voucher to VPRU? What are your expectations of the VPRU system? |
| | As a resort manager, I review the sales trend for the past year and make projections for the next 6 months. Then, I review the room availability forecast. After I know how much more sales I need to generate from VPRU customers, and which of our resort rooms are available, I assemble a vacation package voucher(s). Then, I ask one of our resort staff to add a draft voucher to the VPRU system, which generates a unique voucher number. Our resort staff keeps a manual record of all the VP vouchers added to VPRU. After adding a draft VP voucher to VPRU system, our resort staff notifies me that there is a draft VP voucher for me to approve. I personally review the draft VP voucher for approval. If I find errors, I edit the draft VP voucher myself. When I am satisfied with the draft VP voucher, I publish the draft VP voucher using the VPRU system. This will automatically send a confirmation to me and to VPRU Marketing Manager. Eventually, the VPRU Marketing Manager will receive the newly published VP voucher notification. At this point, VPRU customers can reserve the published VP voucher. |
| Question 5 | What happens if you have many VP vouchers to provide to VPRU? |
| | If we have multiple VP vouchers, we repeat the same procedure for publishing a single VP voucher. We plan to request a VPRU "batch" feature in the future. |
| | Thanks for taking the time to answer my questions. |

Appendix B: VPRU Additional Background Information

In addition to the SBRU background information provided in Page 66 (Chapter 2) and **Appendix A** above, the VPRU operations manager provided additional background information as follows:

- Before the spring break booking season starts, the partner resort staff (e.g., **SGM-Varadero**) enters their resort information such as the resort name (e.g., **Sanctuary at Grand Memories**), town/city (e.g., **Varadero**), resort prefix (e.g., **SGMV**) and country (e.g., **Cuba**). You can find more sample data details in **Appendix C** below.
- The partner resort's marketing manager publishes the approved vacation packages in the VPRU system. A vacation package has a generated voucher number (e.g., **SGMV-21-0001**), pre-assigned room number (e.g., **B24**), start date (e.g., **Mar. 6, 2021**), end date (e.g., **Mar. 11, 2021**), room type (e.g., **Sanctuary Deluxe Suite**), required room deposit (e.g., **\$100**), all-inclusive package price (e.g., **\$500**) and package promotion amount (e.g., **\$50**).
- The room type (e.g., **Sanctuary Deluxe Suite**) determines the maximum adult occupancy (e.g., **3**). Each resort have their own set of resort room types. A resort room type has a resort room type ID, room type name and maximum occupancy. Note that VPRU only caters to all-inclusive plans (standard food and services are included) with all-in pricing (i.e., tax is always included in the price; the price is for all the adult occupants per room) and occasional package promotions provided by the resort.
- Each resort have a list of facilities. Each resort facility has a facility ID (e.g., **MSV01**), name (e.g., **spa**), description (e.g., **El Embelesso**), and map location (e.g., **Location 21**). A resort facility has a maximum capacity and can be used either for indoor or outdoor. A resort facility can host multiple resort activities. Each resort activity has an activity code, description, start date/time and end date / time. During the spring break, a featured activity can be scheduled in one or more facilities. You can find sample partial screenshots in **Appendix C** below.
- Each time a new Vacation Package (VP) is booked, a new VP Booking is created with exactly one "primary guest" and the VP booking status is set to "**on hold**" with an expiry of the "next day". This allows the "primary guest" to confirm the booking with fellow college students and be ready to pay the initial deposit before the "**on hold**" status expires.
- When a VP Booking is created, a new VP Booking Number is generated (e.g., **123456789**), along with a generated Web ID (e.g., **WX12R6YZ**). The primary guest will receive both the VP Booking Number and Web ID, which are both needed to view the details of a VP booking without a need to sign in to the VPRU system.
- Up until the VP booking is finalized or fully paid, additional guests (up to a maximum occupancy of the room type of the VP) can be added. Every student guest (either primary guest or additional guest) must have a first name, last name, date of birth, home address, home phone number and a valid email address.

- To make an initial deposit to VPRU, the “primary guest” must have a customer account that is associated to the VP booking. The customer account must have an account number, cardholder name, card expiry, billing phone number and billing address.
- A VP booking is associated to one vacation package and the vacation package is replaceable (up until the VP booking is finalized or fully paid). In order for the primary guest to replace the VP of the existing VP booking, a lookup of Vacation Package is required (e.g., you can see a “lookup vacation package” sample in Appendix C). The VP booking’s actual price (e.g., \$450) will be charged to the customer account and it may be less than or equal to the vacation package’s all-inclusive package price (e.g., \$500) since additional VPRU promotion (e.g., \$50) may be applied at the time of purchase.
- The primary guest can reserve a vacation package for one day without paying an initial deposit and the VP Booking status is set to “**on hold**”. When the initial deposit is paid, the VP booking status is set to “**deposit received**”.
- If the primary guest does not pay the deposit on or before the “**on hold**” expiry date, the VP booking will no longer be associated to the vacation package and the VP booking status is set to “**expired**”.
- To make changes to the VP booking and its additional guests, the primary guest must login to the VPRU system first. If the same group of students want to reserve another Vacation Package, a new VP Booking and its set of guests must be created separately.
- The customer account can have two kinds of transactions:
 - (a) A **charge** transaction has an amount, transaction date/time, description and charge type (e.g., package sales, damage claim, etc.)
 - (b) Every time the primary guest makes a deposit or additional payment or receives a refund, a customer account transaction along with the transaction date/time is recorded in the VPRU system. All payments and refunds are made via credit card transactions with cardholder name, credit card number, card expiry, and security code. For privacy reasons, the security code is used only at the time of credit card authorization approval and it is not saved in the VPRU system. Note that a refund is a **payment** transaction with a “refund” payment type with a negative payment amount.
- Six weeks before the trip starts, the VPRU system will send a reminder to the primary guest. When the primary guest pay the remaining balance on or before the cut-off date (i.e., 30 days before trip start date), the VP booking status is set to “**fully paid**”. The primary guest will receive a full refund if the VP booking is cancelled on or before the cut-off date. Once the initial deposit refund is processed, the VP booking status is set to “**refunded**”. If the VP booking is cancelled after the cut-off date, there is no refund and the VP booking status is set to “**cancelled**”. If the owner of the group failed to act on the reminder after the cut-off date, VPRU system will change the VP booking status from “**deposit received**” to “**expired**” and the primary guest will not get a refund. VPRU system will remove the previously assigned

vacation packages (i.e., along with their resort rooms) from all VP bookings that are **“refunded”**, **“cancelled”** and **“expired”**, and these VP bookings will no longer be associated with a vacation package. Any of these unassigned vacation packages will be available for other VPRU customer to book. A vacation package that is already assigned to a VP booking cannot be assigned to another VP booking (i.e., no double-booking allowed).

- For last-minute VP bookings (i.e., trip that will start in 30 days or less), the VP booking must be paid in full immediately. The primary guest can make changes to the VP booking’s additional guests and must not exceed the maximum occupants of the room type of the vacation package. Once the VP booking status is set to **“fully paid”** (i.e., finalized), the resort vacation package along with the room number and additional guests are final. The VPRU system sends an email with the **“fully paid”** VP booking details to the primary guest and all the additional guests and no further changes are allowed.
- When one of the VP booking guests arrive at the resort, they present their **“fully paid”** VP booking details to the resort staff. The resort staff will sign in to the VPRU system and the VP booking status is set to **“checked in”**. When the primary guest leaves the resort, the resort staff will sign in to the VPRU system and the VP booking status is set to **“checked out”**.
- Within two weeks (14 days) after the trip end date, the resort can claim damages and request VPRU to collect from the primary guest. VPRU will enter the claim as a new customer account “charge” with the amount and the reason for the “charge”. The customer account must maintain an account balance (i.e., sum of all the charges amount minus sum of all the payment amounts). The VP booking status changes from **“checked out”** to **“damage claimed”** and sends an email to the primary guest. When the primary guest pay the damage claim “charge” in full, the VP booking status is set to **“closed”**.
- Fifteen (15) days or more after the trip end date, the VPRU system will change the VP booking status from **“checked out”** to **“closed”** and no further damage claims will be allowed.

Appendix C: Sample Vacation Package Screenshots

Note: The sample screenshots below is for reference use only. They do not represent “real” vacation packages. The VPRU system does not exactly follow the sample screenshots below.

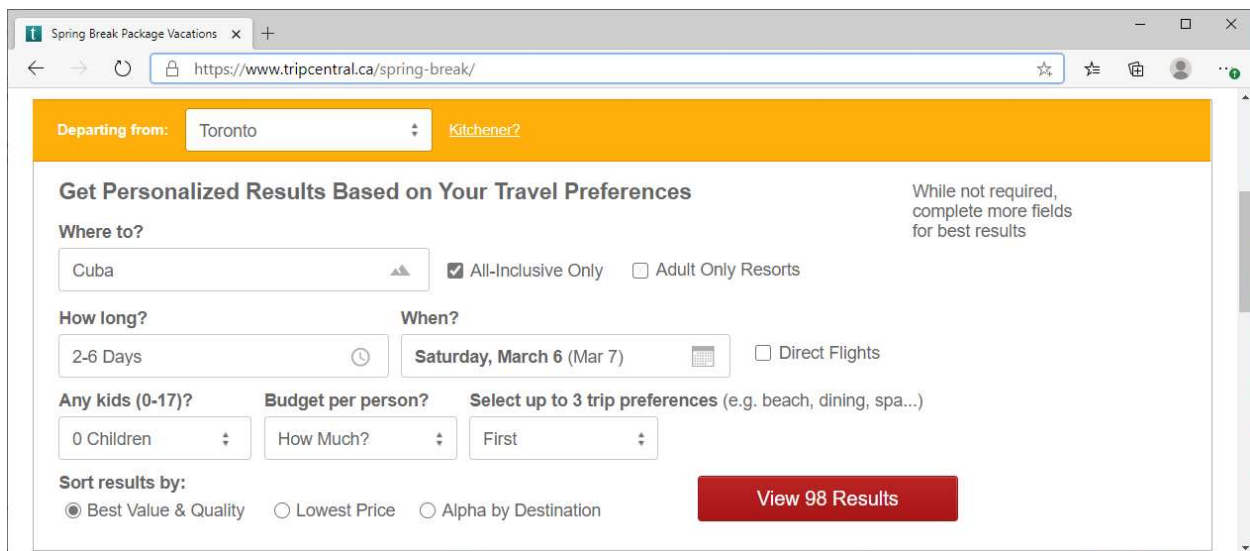
Reference URL: <https://www.tripcentral.ca/>

- Under “**Vacation Packages**” tab, select “**Spring Break**”

or

Direct URL: <https://www.tripcentral.ca/spring-break/>

Sample Filter Values: **Toronto** to **Cuba**, **2-6 Days**, **All-Inclusive**, Starting **Mar 6 or 7, 2021**



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.tripcentral.ca/spring-break/>. The page features a search form titled "Get Personalized Results Based on Your Travel Preferences". The form includes the following fields and options:

- Departing from:** A dropdown menu set to "Toronto".
- Where to?** A dropdown menu set to "Cuba".
- How long?** A dropdown menu set to "2-6 Days".
- When?** A date picker set to "Saturday, March 6 (Mar 7)".
- Any kids (0-17)?** A dropdown menu set to "0 Children".
- Budget per person?** A dropdown menu set to "How Much?".
- Select up to 3 trip preferences (e.g. beach, dining, spa...)** A dropdown menu set to "First".
- Sort results by:** Radio buttons for "Best Value & Quality" (selected), "Lowest Price", and "Alpha by Destination".
- View 98 Results** button.

Additional options include ☒ All-Inclusive Only, ☐ Adult Only Resorts, and ☐ Direct Flights. A note on the right states: "While not required, complete more fields for best results".

Click “**View 98 Results**”

Vacation Pricing Grid - tripcentre x

https://www.tripcentral.ca/vacationgrid/index.php?params=0,57,19943-2313-2300-2298-2316,0,1,1,0,20210306,7005,11101,...

tripcentral.ca 1-800-665-4981 Phones are closed Français Call In Code

Start Over | All Destinations > Cuba > Multiple Destinations

Vacation Pricing Grid Taxes & surcharges included in all prices.

Departing from: **Toronto** Where To? **Cuba**

Sort by: **Best Value & Quality** When? **Sat, Mar 06 (07)**

9 Matches Found
Sort your results by up to 3 more preferences:

Select One Select One Select One

Duration
☐ All durations
☒ 2-6 days
☐ 7-8 days
☐ 9-13 days
☐ 14+ days

Star Rating
☒ All star ratings
☐ 3 stars or more
☐ 4 stars or more
☐ 5 stars or more

Additional Options
☒ All-inclusive only
☐ Direct Flight
☐ Adult Only
Memories Resorts

Airline
☒ All Airlines
☐ Air Canada
☐ Air Transat
☐ Sunwing
☐ WestJet

Children? (0-17)
☐ No Children

Budget per person
☐ Max Price

Save My Results

| March (All Months) | | Wed Mar 03 | Thu Mar 04 | Fri Mar 05 | Sat Mar 06 | Sun Mar 07 | Mon Mar 08 | Tue Mar 09 |
|------------------------|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Varadero, Cuba | Sanctuary at Grand Memories Varadero (4+) | 1055 | 1075 | 1195 | 1075 | 1025 | 1095 | 1095 |
| Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba | Grand Memories Santa Maria (4) | 945 | 965 | 945 | 965 | 915 | 915 | 945 |
| Cayo Coco, Cuba | Memories Flamenco Beach Resort (4) | 985 | 985 | 1035 | 1035 | 985 | 925 | 925 |
| Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba | Sanctuary at Grand Memories Santa Maria (4+) | 965 | 985 | 965 | 985 | 945 | 945 | 965 |
| Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba | Memories Paraíso (4) | 905 | 925 | 905 | 925 | 875 | 875 | 905 |
| Varadero, Cuba | Grand Memories Varadero (4) | 955 | 975 | 1095 | 975 | 925 | 995 | 995 |
| Varadero, Cuba | Memories Jibacoa (4) | 1065 | 1095 | 1159 | 1095 | 1045 | 1115 | 1115 |
| Varadero, Cuba | Memories Varadero (3+) | 895 | 925 | 1045 | 925 | 875 | 945 | 945 |
| Cayo Coco, Cuba | Memories Caribe Beach Resort (4) | 985 | 985 | 1025 | 1025 | 985 | 915 | 915 |

Showing 1-9 of 9

You are viewing Memories Resorts - [View All Hotels Chains](#)

Additional Options:

- Hotel: **Memories Resorts**
- Only show vacation packages with exactly **5 days**
- Click **Varadero, Cuba: Sanctuary at Grand Memories** (first row)

Vacation Pricing Grid - tripcentre x

https://www.tripcentral.ca/vacationgrid/index.php?params=0,57,19943-2313-2300-2298-2316,65189,1,1,0,20210306,7005,...

8 Packages Found
NEW! Select exactly how many days you'd like to travel:
☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☒ 5 [Select / Unselect All](#)

NEW! Filter by specific room type:
☒ Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite ☒ Sanctuary Deluxe Suite
[Select / Unselect All](#)

| March (All Months) | | March 06 (All Weeks) | | Sat Mar 06 | Sun Mar 07 | | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|-------|--------------|
| Departing | Days | Price | Room Type | Meal Plan | Airline | Notes | Pay Monthly |
| Sat, Mar 6, 21 | 5 | 1275 | Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 114 /mo |
| Sun, Mar 7, 21 | 5 | 1325 | Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 119 /mo |
| Sat, Mar 6, 21 | 5 | 1425 | Sanctuary Deluxe Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 128 /mo |
| Sun, Mar 7, 21 | 5 | 1465 | Sanctuary Deluxe Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 131 /mo |
| Sat, Mar 6, 21 | 5 | 1599 | Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 143 /mo |
| Sun, Mar 7, 21 | 5 | 1599 | Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 143 /mo |
| Sat, Mar 6, 21 | 5 | 1849 | Sanctuary Deluxe Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 165 /mo |
| Sun, Mar 7, 21 | 5 | 1849 | Sanctuary Deluxe Suite | All Inclusive | *Direct | | from 165 /mo |

Click **Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite** (first row)

tripcentral.ca | Package Details

https://www.tripcentral.ca/package-details/packageDeta...


Sanctuary at Grand Memories Varadero

★★★★★ Varadero, Cuba 🏆 [Top Seller](#)

5 days, All Inclusive, Sanctuary Deluxe Junior Suite

[Package Inclusions](#) | [Booking Bonus](#)

[Health & Safety](#)



Price Summary

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Base Price: | \$875 |
| Taxes/Charges: | \$400 |
| Per Adult: | C\$1,275 |
| Pay Monthly: | From \$114/mo |
| Pay Deposit: | \$100 - \$250 per person |

Flight Summary

Sat, Mar 06 : Toronto - Varadero

✈️ Depart: 06:15 PM ➔ Arrive: 09:45 PM

Thu, Mar 11 : Varadero - Toronto

✈️ Depart: 10:55 AM ➔ Arrive: 02:20 PM

👤 2 Adults, 0 Children, 1 Room

[change](#)

Book Now

Watch This Price

Click **Package Inclusions**


tripcentral.ca | Package Details | X

← → ↺ https://www.tripcentral.ca/package-details/packageDetailsPublic.php?packageID=0299e4d7d9f103ff7de7... ☆ ★ 📦 👤 ⋮

Package Inclusions


Health & Safety

Booking Bonus

tripadvisor

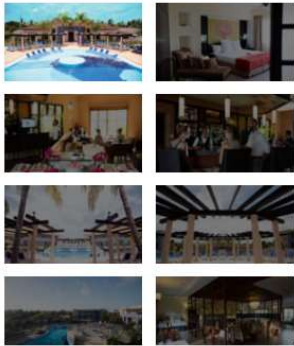

Travel Advisory


Read 165 Customer Reviews



Sanctuary at Grand Memories Varadero ★★★★★

Varadero, Cuba | Superior 4/5 Adults only (18+)








- Top-rated adult resorts with a high repeat guest rate
- Exclusively for adults, with elevated evening entertainment
- Exquisite à la carte restaurants and unrivalled spa facilities

Sample Room Type: Sanctuary Deluxe Suite

tripcentral.ca | Package Details | x

Not secure | https://www.tripcentral.ca/package-details/packageDetailsPubl...




Sanctuary Deluxe Suite 3  0 

Maximum occupancy: 3

Maximum Number of Adults: 3

Room features: All of the standard room features + more ([view all](#))


Back to top

Sample list of facilities:

