

ELLIPSIS REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

To gain its first 10-100 users, we believe that Ellipses should target college students studying abroad and those traveling internationally for spring break. We have researched the travel industry, demographics, and other factors (such as technology use, consumers' budget constraints, and travel demand) to pinpoint these key areas, with a focus on identifying a consumer base in need of a simplified planning process and one that can build customer loyalty. Through targeted campaigns and ambassador programs, Ellipses can attract these users and differentiate itself in the travel industry.

Industry

Ellipsis is in the travel services industry, focusing on a market for consumers seeking convenient and efficient travel planning tools. The industry is marked by the strong presence of well-established trip planning websites such as Trip Advisor and Booking.com. These competitors play a large role in the industry with extensive listings and a loyal clientele. The travel services industry, recovering from post-pandemic conditions, is experiencing increasing reliance on digital platforms for vacation and travel planning. Ellipsis's competitive advantage against similar companies comes from its unique platform that handles hotels, flights, events, and budgeting with a user-friendly app and a social networking element, which is needed to attract travelers seeking both convenience and connectivity in their travel planning experiences.

Audience Profile

After reviewing Ellipsis's mission as well as their goals for expansion, we have identified college students studying abroad and students traveling for spring break as ideal demographics to target. Ellipsis is a fully customizable itinerary tool that focuses on improving the quality of trips to ensure that you are maximizing the potential of any vacation. As a result, we knew that when determining which demographics to target, it was important that they were well-versed in technology and are easily able to adapt to new technology. Additionally, since Ellipsis focuses on helping trip planners organize their vacations, it is important to address a demographic that is already traveling frequently. According to the Association of International Educators, 188,753 students in the 2021-2022 academic year studied abroad and this number is expected to increase. Additionally, 1.5 million college students travel internationally for spring break each year and spend an average of \$1,0800 per person (Best Colleges).

More importantly, college students have limited time to spend planning trips, often have safety concerns and are budget conscious. This means that they would value a system that shortens the time it takes to plan a trip, provides information on must see locations, and allows them to view different price options all in one place. By targeting these audiences, we plan to create customer loyalty and appropriately segment the market. Through focusing on college students, we would hope that they would continue to use the services long into their adult years as they continue to plan trips. Focusing our marketing strategy on a specific demographics as opposed to marketing to the masses is also a way to differentiate from Kayak and Priceline. Thus, considering the demographics, psychographics, motivators, and deterrents of our potential target market, our decision to recommend targeting college students will not only increase Ellipsis's user base, but also provide college students with much-needed simplification of the trip planning process.

Communication Strategy

Ellipsis's current goal is to attract its initial userbase. Our primary audience we wish to reach is college students studying abroad and going on spring break trips. We call for tailoring the marketing of the service to address these students' key motivations and pain points. These students value exploration and new experiences but are highly cost conscious. Ellipsis must leverage its modern UI and comprehensive planning tools that include a wide array of events. Ellipsis must communicate that this app is new and different from traditional ways to plan travel. Ellipsis is coming to be a feature-rich that meets the explorative nature and diverse needs of this audience.

We intend to communicate this feature richness through our "Never Ending Spring Break Challenge" -- a video contest where users showcase their planning, the in-app and website features, and, ultimately, their incredible experiences. The winning video in this competition will win their dream vacation, sponsored by Ellipsis. The winner's trip will be featured on Ellipsis's website and app, and the winner will also earn a 2% commission on every trip that uses their template. This strategy will reach a large group of travelers through social media, whilst showing off the amazing features of the app. This competition will highlight how Ellipsis gives planners both freedom and structure in their planning process. We also plan to reach these college students on a personal level with the "Ellipsis Abroad Ambassador" program. Students travelling abroad can apply to be an abroad ambassador and promote the app to their peers while abroad. For every 10 users they bring to the platform, ambassadors will earn a 10% commission on the referred users' trips that exceed \$1000. Through this targeted marketing strategy, we believe Ellipsis can acquire its initial userbase that will grow exponentially.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe Ellipsis is poised to take the next step in company development by targeting college students studying abroad and those traveling for spring break. Ellipsis should aim to capture the attention of tech-savvy consumers who seek comprehensive travel planning tools integrated into their user-friendly platform. By focusing on this specific demographic, Ellipsis can leverage the high growth potential with the highest possible commission rates. The platform's customizable itinerary tool addresses the time constraints, safety concerns, and budget consciousness of college students, offering a solution that streamlines the trip-planning process while providing essential information and options all in one place.

Furthermore, by fostering customer loyalty through targeted marketing campaigns and strategic partnerships, Ellipsis can establish itself as a leader in the online travel planning industry. This focused approach not only sets Ellipsis apart from competitors like Kayak and Priceline but also creates long-term relationships with users who are likely to spread brand awareness and continue using the platform beyond their college years. By embracing the unique needs and behaviors of college students, Ellipsis can solidify its footprint in the market by garnering its first 10-100 users. This will get the proverbial wheels rolling and win capital commitments from investors, giving life to the next stage of company development and establishing brand awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Ellipsis is a travel planning company that aims to help customers “craft extraordinary journeys with confidence.”¹ The goal of this report is to describe our process in analyzing Ellipsis and inventing a marketing strategy to help the company achieve 10-100 users on their flagship app and website as a proof of concept for early level seed stage and angel investor capital raising.

Purpose

Our role as consultants is to advise Ellipsis on an in-depth strategy for accessing their first 10-100 users. While helping collect initial users will be helpful for short-term capital raising, our insights will also serve as a reference for relevant target demographics down the road and provide a strategy for marketing to those audiences. Our research and ultimate recommendation will not just impact the company and its future shareholders through increasing the quantity of users, but also delivering access to quality consumers that average high commission profits.

Agenda and Methodology

Our method for arriving at a strategic recommendation is twofold:

- (1) find our target audience,
- (2) Understand the context of the company and its overall operating environment.

To achieve these two main objectives, we researched potential target audiences, gaining not just qualitative comprehension, but harnessing quantitative insights through data sourced from databases such as Statista and IBISWorld. Using more data focused approaches, we were able to learn more about who, when, and why certain travelers act the way they do.

Through understanding Ellipsis’s mission and sourcing comparable public data from competitors, we were able to dive into various demographics, psychographics, motivations, and any deterrents of potential consumers. Using public market data, we were then able to grasp an understanding of current and historical.



¹ "Ellipsis Travel." Accessed April 14, 2024. <https://www.ellipsistravel.com/>.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Demographics

Our focus is college students, ages 18-25, who are travelling abroad. This includes students spending a semester abroad, as well as those studying in the U.S. but travelling abroad during breaks.

Trends in Travel Abroad: Bookings of US travelers between the ages 18-25 to Europe have grown 61% year on year. These young travelers are increasingly using apps to plan their trips abroad. Along with using the apps, young travelers have been booking earlier and planning, rather than booking last minute; people booking flights within two weeks has declined by 40%, while those booking over four months away rose by 85%.²

Semester Abroad: Though the number of students studying abroad plummeted during the pandemic, the figure skyrocketed to 188,753 students in the 2021-2022 academic year. As more COVID-19 restrictions continue to be lifted, this number is expected to increase further in coming years.³

Spring Break: Currently, an estimated 1.5 million U.S. college students travel internationally for spring break each year, spending an average of \$1,080 per person.⁴

Gender: Importantly, 68% of frequent travelers are male.⁵ However, 68.7% of students who study abroad are female, suggesting that the primary audience for spring breakers and student-abroad students is different.⁶

Race: Caucasian students are more likely to travel internationally and spend a semester abroad than their peers. According to the Pew Research Center, 75% of white students have traveled abroad or are planning to, compared to 73% of Hispanic Americans and 49% of Black Americans.⁷ Furthermore, 68.6% of students who spend a semester abroad are Caucasian, though Caucasians only represent 50.9% of college enrollment. African American, Hispanic, and Asian students account for 12.5%, 19.6%, and 7.5% of U.S. college students, respectively, but only 5.3%, 11.9%, and 8.6% of students studying abroad.⁸

Household Income: 55% of international travelers have “high income” (\$95 K+ annually) while low-income individuals make up 21% of travelers. Students who study abroad are also more likely to be from high income families.⁹

² Businesswire. "New Data Reveals Students and Youth Are Favoring Overseas Adventures Over Domestic." December 6, 2022. Accessed April 14, 2024. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221206005649/en/New-Data-Reveals-Students-and-Youth-Are-Favoring-Overseas-Adventures-Over-Domestic>.

³ Trends in U.S. Study Abroad," NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

⁴ Jane Nam, "College Study Abroad Statistics," Best Colleges, 1 September 2023, <https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-study-abroad-statistics>.

⁵ "Target Audience: Frequent Travelers in the U.S." Statista, January 2024. Accessed 24 March 2024.

⁶ Institute of International Education. "Percentage of U.S. study abroad students in 2021/2022, by gender." Chart. November 15, 2023. Statista. Accessed March 24, 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/297198/us-study-abroad-students-by-gender/>

⁷ Laura Silver, "Most Americans Have Traveled Abroad, Although Differences among Demographic Groups Are Large," Pew Research Center, August 12, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/08/12/most-americans-have-traveled-abroad-although-differences-among-demographic-groups-are-large>

⁸ Trends in U.S. Study Abroad," NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Accessed 24 March 2024.

⁹ "Target Audience: Frequent Travelers in the United States," Statista, January 2024, <https://www.statista.com/study/118682/frequent-travelers-in-the-united-states>.

Psychographics

Interests: international travelers express greater interest in health and fitness, international politics, the world economy, and science compared to the national average. Many are also interested in professional sports, both in the United States and internationally – primarily basketball and football. Importantly, global travelers tend to be early adopters of new technology; 23% identify as “innovators” or “early adopters of new technologies” compared to 13% of non-travelers.¹⁰

Consumer lifestyle: students who travel abroad report more desire for success and career advancement in comparison to their peers. They also tend to be adventurous, outdoorsy, and social.¹¹ These students also commonly play sports – for example, 20% reported playing basketball and 19% play football, compared to 12% and 9%, respectively, of the general population. These students spend less time baking and caring for pets compared to non-international travelers.¹²

Motivations

Exploration: Desire for new experience is the primary motivation for travel. This includes experiencing a variety of cultures, places, and ways of life, and seeing how others interact with the world. Frequent travelers report a desire to expand their comfort zones and try new things. According to a Chiang and Jogaratnam study about traveling abroad, experience was the primary driver for student travel, ranking above socialization, ego-enhancement, and relaxation.¹³

Socialization: Travelers wish to socialize on their trips by meeting new people with similar interests. They also enjoy sharing stories of their trips when they get back. In fact, one study found that sometimes individuals do not explicitly want to travel do so to “be able to tell others about their personal traveling stories.”¹⁴

Relaxation: Relaxation is also a strong motivator for spring break getaways, with university students indicating a need for “rest, excitement and thrill.”¹⁵ College students of all ages experience this need – freshmen have stress related to adjustment to college life, while sophomores, juniors, and seniors face the stress of funding internships and jobs. A 2009 study found that the primary motivations for spring break travel included: “get away” (45%), “visit family” (13%), “sun, surf, sand” (12%), and the “need to relax” (10%). Notably, relaxation was less prominent of a factor for spending a semester abroad.¹⁶

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ “Consumer Behavior In Travel, Tourism, And Hospitality,” McClatchy, 28 November 2022, Accessed 24 March, 2024.

¹² Ibid

¹³ Kacie R. Lorenson, “Traveling Abroad: Motivations and Factors,” *Concordia Journal of Communication Research* 2, vol. 6 (2019): 3, accessed March 24, 2024.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Cheng Wang, “University Students’ Travel Motivation, Memorable Tourism Experience and Destination Loyalty for Spring Break Vacation,” *Auburn University*, 7 May 2016,

<https://etd.auburn.edu/bitstream/handle/10415/5059/Cheng%20Wang,%20Thesis.pdf;sequence=2>

¹⁶ Nuno F. Ribeiro, “I Just Wanted To Get Away”: An Analysis of Spring Breakers’ Travel Motivations, Pennsylvania State University, Accessed 24 March 2024.

Deterrents

Cost: cost is the largest deterrent to international travel. Though the cost of a semester abroad varies across universities and geographical areas, it may cost between \$18,000 and \$50,000 per academic semester.¹⁷ Spring break travel can also be expensive. 45% of spring break travelers prioritize their budget, an increase from 23% in 2023. 84% of 2023 spring travelers have shifted their plans to be more budget conscious.¹⁸

Time: Most universities have one week off for spring break, so students' trips usually remain within this period. Though winter and summer breaks are much longer, winter includes holidays where students are more likely to be with their families; in the summer, students are often restricted by in-person summer internships.

AUDIENCE PERSONAS



Lauren

- 21 years old
- Currently studying in Madrid, Spain for the semester
- Almost every weekend, she travels with friends to a different country in Europe
- When in a new city, she loves exploring famous attractions and trying new activities. She and her friends enjoy spending time outdoors and hike on every trip
- As a college student, Lauren has limited funds and budgets every trip in advance



Mark

- 19 years old
- Sophomore at Washington University in St. Louis
- Member of Delta Sigma Pi (DSP) business fraternity
- Enjoys playing and watching basketball
- Working in Washington D.C. this summer as a legal intern
- Hopes to become a foreign ambassador to the United Nations
- Travelling to Athens, Greece over spring break with friends from DSP

¹⁷ Dominic Fusco, "How Much Does It Cost to Study Abroad?," GoAbroad.com, February 24, 2024, <https://www.goabroad.com/articles/study-abroad/how-much-does-it-cost-to-study-abroad>.

¹⁸ Turner, Matt. "Spring Travel Down in 2024 Compared to Past Years: Stats." Travel Agent Central, March 6, 2024. <https://www.travelagentcentral.com/your-business/spring-travel-down-2024-compared-past-years-stats>.

CONTEXT

Firm Overview

Ellipsis is a tech startup with less than ten employees focused on building out a one-stop software for travel planning. Their app and website differentiate from competitors with social networking framework and map scrolling capabilities.

Competitors

Dedicated Trip Planning Websites:

There exist somewhat similar travel planning sites within the US market. Such sites include TripCase, Tripl, Google Trips, AirTreks and Rome2Rio. None of these competing sites are the main revenue streams of massive corporations; they are generally smaller or small cogs in a bigger machine, like the way Google trips is for Alphabet. Since similar products also exist, a question arises: How is Ellipsis differentiated from these other websites? First off, Ellipsis offers a modern UI, which is more appealing than older websites such as TripCase. Ellipsis includes everything in one app, hotels, flights events and budgeting, whilst the rest of the sites are generally focused on one thing. Ellipsis' main differentiator, however, is the app's social aspect. This feature needs time and a user base to build out, but it is the one thing that all the other apps and sites lack.

Online Travel Agencies:

Online travel agencies such as Expedia, Booking.com, Priceline, Travelocity, and Orbitz also fulfill a need like Ellipsis. These online agencies are made up of much bigger firms that are much more profitable than the other services. Booking.com has by far the most usage out of all online travel agencies. They are the biggest player in the online travel space and have a market cap of 122.97 billion. (See figure 1).

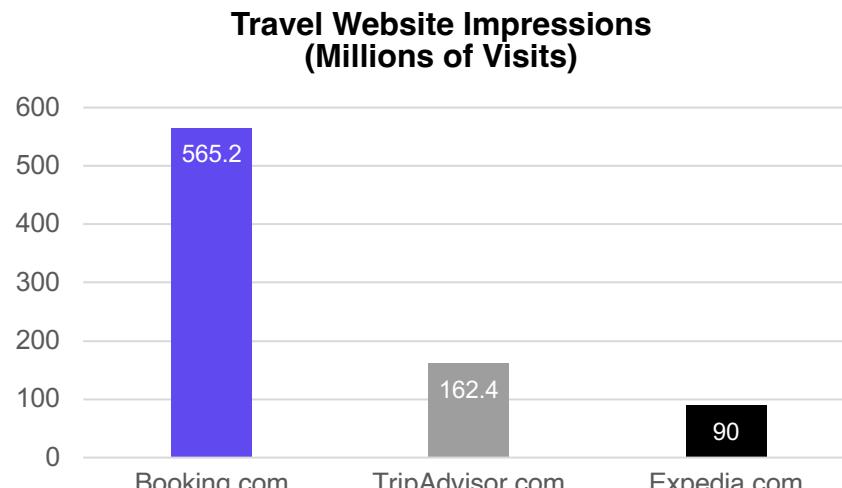


Figure 2 Travel Website Visits in the Month of January 2024, Data from Similarweb

Metasearch Engines:

The biggest metasearch engine is TripAdvisor, with 162.40 million visits in January of 2024.¹⁹ TripAdvisor has a market cap of 3.93 billion and is the second biggest online travel website. Other metasearch engines include Kayak, Skyscanner, and Trivago, which all offer specialized searches in the field of travel.

¹⁹ "Top Travel and Tourism Websites Ranking in February 2024." Similarweb, 2023. www.similarweb.com/top-websites/travel-and-tourism

Substitutes:

Along with websites made for travel planning, other tools, including search engines and word processors, are commonly used to organize travel plans. With this, someone can use any of the other metasearch engines, event websites, and any sort of travel agency and organize it in a tool that is familiar to them like Google Docs or Microsoft Word. This offers a lot more versatility for the person planning the trip. They could add information from events not listed on Ellipsis, such as events from tourism websites such as explorestlouis.com or concert information from sites like bandsintown.com. Ellipsis is a feature rich website, but the app will never have as much versatility as writing the travel plans down somewhere. The technologically unsavvy would also be unlikely to use a website like Ellipsis. People still use pens and paper, books, and physical travel agencies to plan their trips. Many group trips and tours use established and specialized travel agencies and planners that provide certain trips. These services are numerous and specialized and have established relationships with many schools and organizations.

Operating Environment

In the long term, the success of Ellipsis will rely on the success of the travel industry. The international travel industry is still rebounding from pre-pandemic levels. In 2020 travel declined by 73.6% and is recovering at different rates in different countries. In 2024, the estimated number of trips by U.S. residents is 254 million and expected to grow at a compound annual rate of 0.94%.²⁰ When compared to other counties with high tourism, the post-pandemic recovery of the US tourism industry has been sluggish. Visitation levels by the end of 2023 reached only 84% of the pre-pandemic levels observed in 2019.²¹ This pace of recovery positions the United States as the second slowest among the top tourism destinations, outpacing only China's post pandemic tourism rebound. Ellipsis will get more use in places, that people visit, and they should target their advertising towards consumers in countries that travel. These emerging markets can be explained by macroeconomic trends.

Global Economic Trends

Travel is highly dependent on the world economy and geopolitical factors. Countries with expanding middle classes and growing GDP have emerging tourism markets. Major economies like the US, EU, China, Japan, and India account for over 50% of the world's GDP.²² Fast developing economies like China, India, and the ASEAN nations are driving

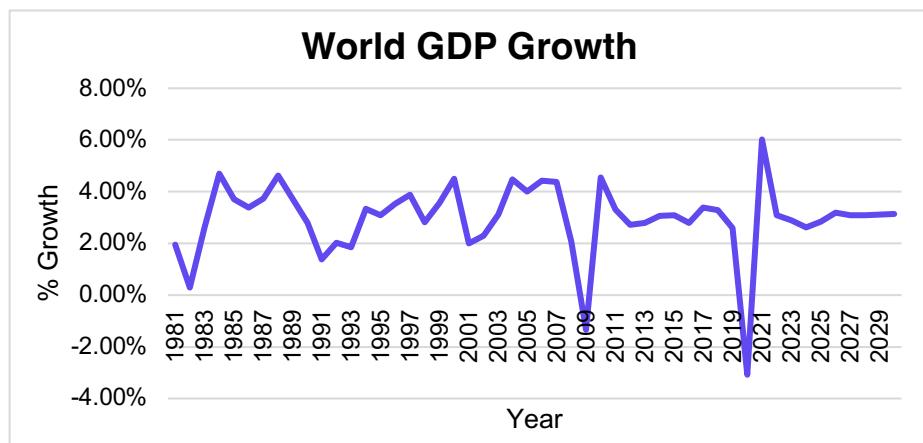


Figure 2 World GDP Growth from 1981-2023, Projected GDP Growth from 2024-2029, Data from IBISWorld Report A3111.

²⁰ "US BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT PROFILES REPORT F316." IBIS World, 2023. <https://my-ibisworldcom.libproxy.wustl.edu/us/en/business-environment-profiles/f316/business-environment-profile>

²¹ Girma, Lebewit Lily. "\$1.2 Trillion Us Travel Industry Is Plummeting, Says New Study." Bloomberg.Com, January 12, 2024.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-01-12/-1-2-trillion-us-travel-industry-is-plummeting-says-new-study?embedded-checkout=true>

²² "US BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT PROFILES REPORT A3111." IBIS World, 2023. <https://my-ibisworld-com.libproxy.wustl.edu/us/en/business-environment-profiles/a3111/business-environment-profile#>

much of the world's economic growth. From 2019-2024 world GDP grew at a 2.3% annual rate, propelled by the post-pandemic surge but impacted by the Russia-Ukraine war. Analysts forecast a 3.1% annual GDP growth over 2024-2029. This predicted growth is driven by developing economies like the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), and the ASEAN nations. These countries with high GDP growth bring emerging tourism markets for travel services like Ellipsis.

STRATEGY

Introduction

We recommend Ellipsis incorporate the Never-Ending Spring Break and Abroad Ambassadors as two strategies for expanding the app and website user base.

Never Ending Spring Break

Contest Guidelines and Timeline:

The Never-Ending Spring Break competition will provide brand familiarity and further prove feasibility and effectiveness of the Ellipsis concept among a key demographic of young students.

These videos should showcase participants' most memorable and exciting moments during their spring vacations.

The timeline for submissions will be through the months February-April to ensure time for travelers to properly capture and compile their experiences.

All submissions must adhere to a minimum duration of thirty seconds and a maximum of two minutes and thirty seconds for sake of viewer attention span and consistency of submissions.

After signing up, regular updates and reminders will be texted to participants to ensure thorough participation and completion.

Promotion through Campus Organizations:

Through collaborating with social and professional fraternities, Ellipsis will access candidates with high propensity for group travel during spring break.

Collaborate with fraternities, sororities, and other on-campus groups likely to engage in group travels to spread awareness about the competition.

Provide promotional materials and incentives for these organizations to encourage participation among their members.

Contact List:

Professional Fraternities

DSP: olindsp@gmail.com

AKPsi: Ben Sorota b.r.sorota@wustl.edu

PGN: John Budinger jbudinger@wustl.edu

Phi Delta Phi: Kerrigan Ferland: (214) 223-0062

Social Fraternities/Sororities

Beta Theta Pi: Lance Berryman (210) 721-1800

Alpha Epsilon Phi: Maya Lebowitz (917) 626-5279

Zeta Beta Tau: Luke Johnston (314) 586-1744

Alpha Delta Phi: Andrew McCarthy (818) 318 -9064

Sigma Alpha Epsilon: Ethan Rush (314) 586-1744

Tau Kappa Epsilon: Nico Schmidt (314) 746-3939

Gamma Phi Beta: Margo Covington (314) 541-9499

Kappa Delta: Madeline Allburn (847) 877-7021

Kappa Kappa Gamma: Sydney Tran (636) 730-0233

Contest Rollout:

Launch the contest through multiple channels including contacting campus organizations and online social media advertisement.

With each dedicated member, an instructions outline will be sent listing the guidelines and timeline.

Winner Determination and Presentation:

At the end of the period, the winner will be selected by the Ellipsis team based on storytelling, cinematography, creativity, and the overall perceived impact. The winning video will be prominently featured on the Ellipsis website and application, alongside the planner's template so users can do the same trip for themselves.

Each time the winner's template is used, they receive 30% of commissions on the trip.

Abroad Ambassador Program

Guidelines and Application Process:

The guidelines for being an ambassador are as follows:

1. Must be a current college student who is studying abroad
2. For students seeking real world marketing experience at a growing tech startup
3. Must be in fair academic standing (2.8 and above)
4. Must be involved in at least one extra-curricular on campus

These guidelines are meant to present the ambassador program as an opportunity and somewhat of a selective process that can be featured on a student's resume. The description will include all details of the program including a timeline and outline of the compensation. All ambassadors will be paid on a commission basis, specifically a 30% commission from trip profits that exceed \$1000 in consumer value. This commission only kicks in after the ambassador has successfully attracted ten new user accounts.

The application will not feature a resume upload but will include a single free response question: "Imagine you're tasked with promoting a new mobile app that helps users discover and book global experiences. What creative strategies would you employ to generate excitement and drive user engagement for this app?" This will not only add to the perceived exclusivity of the program but will make the applicant demonstrate their creativity and generate valuable ideas for app growth.

Program Promotion and Rollout:

The prime channel of promoting this program will be through direct messaging via LinkedIn. This approach of messaging students will add another layer of perceived exclusivity in the ambassador program and will help students associate it with other opportunities, closer in nature to an internship.

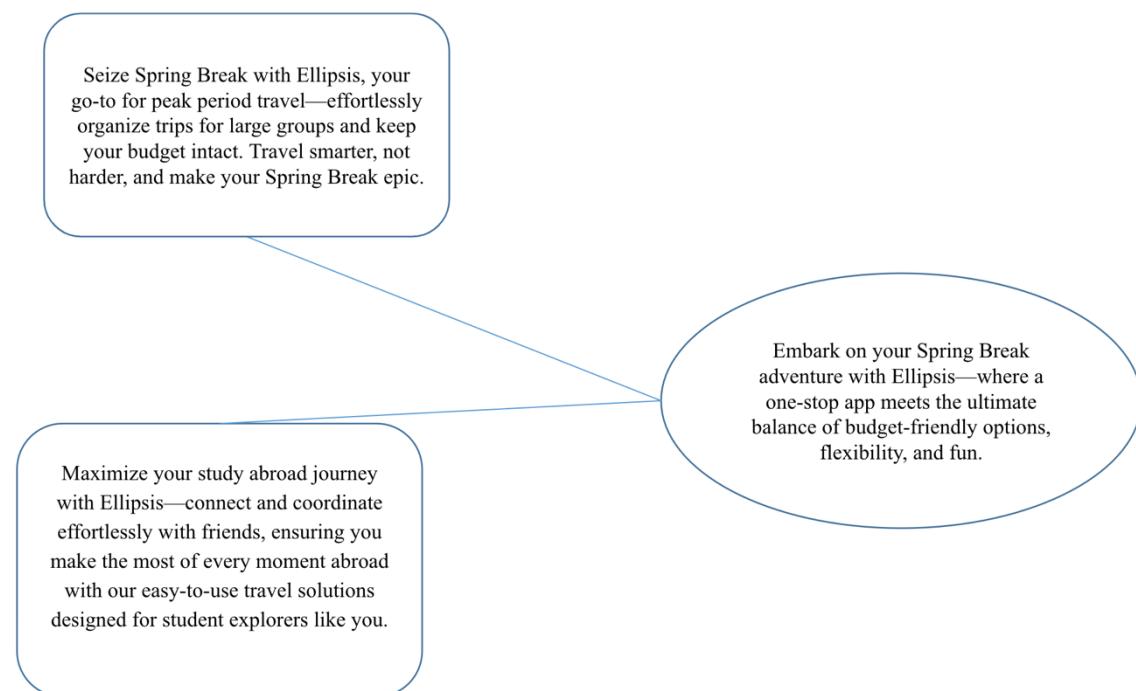
More buzz can be created by contacting college campus organizations such as the professional and social fraternities located in the above contact list, as well as issuing Instagram ads.

CONCLUSION

Our comprehensive analysis underscores the importance of focusing on college students, particularly those studying or traveling abroad, as a primary target market for Ellipsis. This demographic presents a significant opportunity for growth, given their increasing numbers, propensity for international travel, and openness to using technology for planning these experiences. The demographic and psychographic profiles of potential users—especially college students—highlight a group with a strong desire for exploration, socialization, and relaxation. These insights are crucial for tailoring Ellipsis's marketing strategies to address specific needs, interests, and motivations, enhancing the platform's appeal. Ellipsis stands out in the travel planning industry through its modern user interface, comprehensive planning features, and unique social networking capabilities. This differentiation is vital for capturing the interest of the target demographic and positioning Ellipsis as the go-to company for travel planning among tech-savvy, adventure-seeking college tourists.

The travel industry's gradual recovery post-COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the growth of international travel among U.S. residents, sets a positive backdrop for Ellipsis's launch and growth. However, understanding and leveraging global economic trends and the increasing demand for travel in emerging markets will be crucial for long-term success. A strong recommendation for Ellipsis would be to consider strategic partnerships or campaigns specifically tailored to university students to increase brand visibility and user acquisition during key travel planning periods.

MESSAGE MAP



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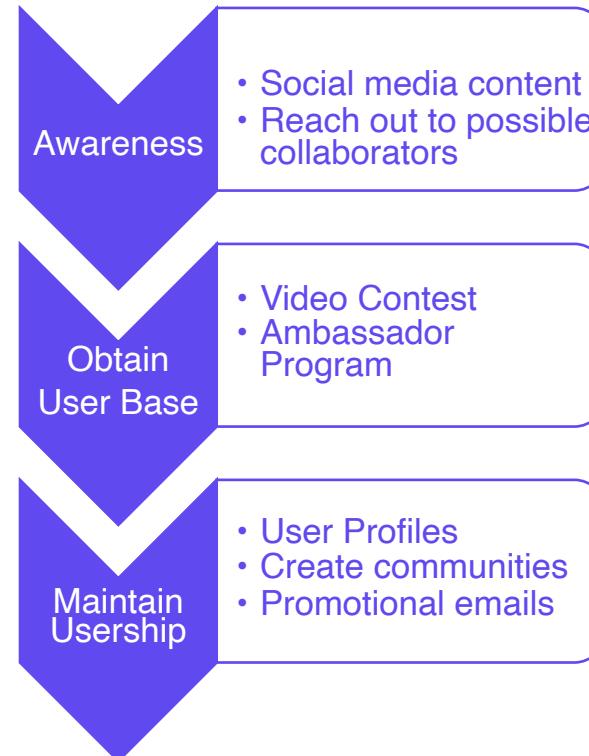
 ellipsis
your next
trip is
waiting...



Overview

This report outlines two strategies for Ellipsis to explore a niche, yet crucial market in online travel: college students traveling abroad.

Through a multi-layer communication strategy, our recommendation targets young, adventurous frequent travelers seeking to maximize their travel experience.



Proposed Audience

We recommend Ellipsis focuses on U.S. college students, aged 18-22, who are traveling abroad. This includes students spending a semester abroad, as well as those studying in the U.S. but traveling internationally during breaks.

This market is sizable:

Semester Abroad: Though the number of students studying abroad plummeted during the pandemic, the figure skyrocketed to 188,753 students in the 2021-2022 academic year. As more COVID-19 restrictions continue to be lifted, this figure is expected to rise steadily in the coming years (NAFSA).

Spring Break: Currently, an estimated 1.5 million U.S. college students travel internationally for spring break each year, spending an average of \$1,080 per person (Best Colleges)

Audience Traits

The Qualities of this Untapped Market



College Students



Technologically Savvy



Adventurous



Influenced By Peers

Audience Traits: In Depth Explanation

Technologically Savvy

- 98% of US college students utilize social media (Gitnux)
- 84% of college students believe social media can be a very effective tool for promotions (Gitnux)

Adventurous

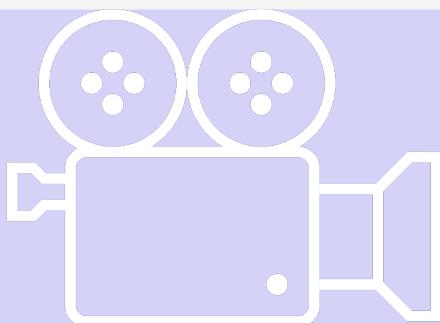
- 70% of Gen Z wants to sightsee, 68% of Gen Z wants to experience a new culture, 59% want try new cuisines, 58% want to explore nature and 37% want to meet new people (Student Universe)

Influenced by Peers

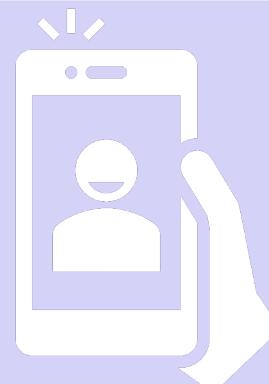
- Approximately 90% of teens reported having experienced peer pressure (Center Stone)

Strategy Outline

Spring Break Video Contest



Ellipsis Ambassador Program



Communication Channels



TikTok



Instagram



LinkedIn

Spring Break Video Contest

Implementation Strategy

- Explain contest and reward system
- Outline requirements for submission
- Create a timeline

Contest Guidelines

- Campus partnerships (fraternities, sororities, business clubs)
- Social Media

Promotion

- Kickoff contest on social media
- Post biweekly content encouraging submissions

Roll out the Contest

- Ellipsis selects winning video
- Announce winner on all social media platforms

Determine the Winner

- Feature winning template on site and social media
- Ad campaign with winner

Use as Further Promotion

Ellipsis Ambassador Program

Implementation Strategy

- Determine submission guidelines and timeline
- Advertise reward

Create Application Process

- Reach out to potential candidates
- Post on social media

Promote Program

- Ellipsis selects 10 ambassadors based on campus involvement and past experience

Choose Ambassadors

- Daily social media posts
- Host on-campus events
- Collaborate with campus clubs
- Recruit new users

Ambassadors Provide Deliverable

- Compensated based on number of recruited users and cost of users' trips

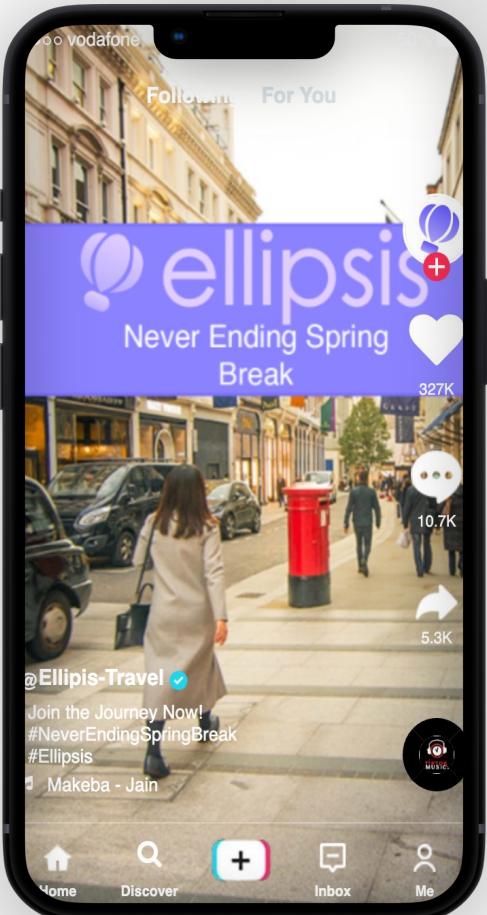
Compensate Ambassadors

TikTok

Promote Contest Via TikTok

Known for short and fun video content, TikTok provides an ideal platform for Ellipsis to promote its video contest. Not only has the app's popularity grown exponentially in recent years, but it has become increasingly popular among college students, with 47% of them using the app daily (Street Insider).

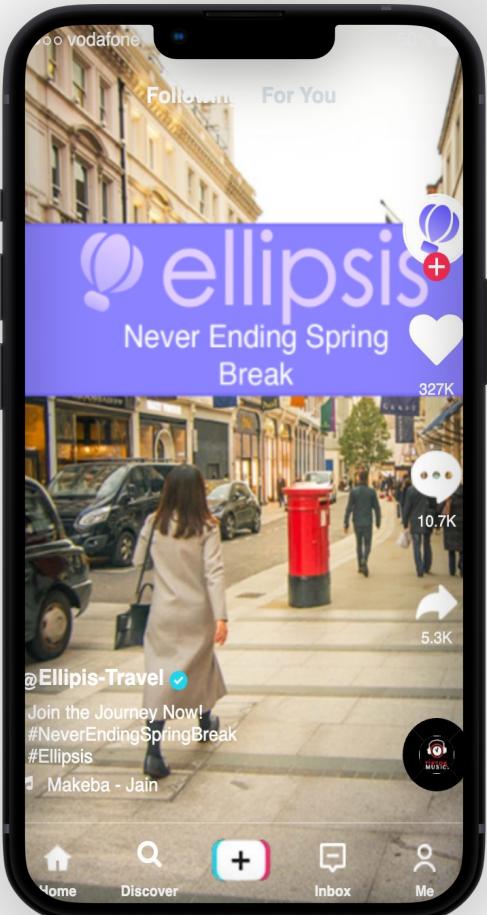




Mediums

Why This Medium: TikTok

- **Growing Popularity, Especially for Travel:** In a Tript survey of 1,000 American travelers, 44% reported using TikTok to find travel inspiration (Mashable). Especially as TikTok itself becomes increasingly popular, travel content has also skyrocketed (Skift).
- **Viral Potential:** Well-created TikTok videos have the potential to go viral, reaching millions of users in a matter of minutes. In-app features make liking, commenting, and sharing videos easy, providing an ideal platform for exponential success.
- **Video Platform for Video Content:** What better place to promote a video contest than an app designed for video content. Not only can Ellipsis use TikTok to advertise its campaign, but it can also use the platform to showcase the winner's video (as well as other users' content).
- **Global Reach:** 20.83% of all internet users use TikTok, spanning countries around the world. As an app well-designed for international travel, Ellipsis is primed for success in this arena (Search Logistics).



Mediums

Projected Impact: TikTok

47%
of college students use TikTok
'every day' (StreetInsider)

4.25%
average engagement rate,
which is the highest of all social
media platforms (*Influencer
Marketing Hub*)

55.8
minutes spent per day

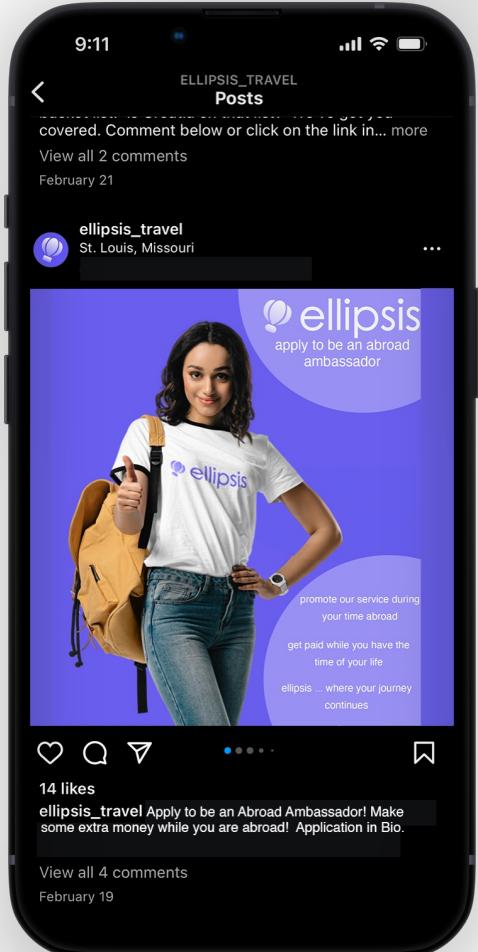
92%
of users take action after
watching a TikTok (*Influencer
Marketing Hub*)

Instagram

[Find Ambassadors via Instagram](#)

We suggest that Ellipsis advertises their ambassador campaign on Instagram to increase the number of applications, as well as build brand awareness. Currently, 85% of college students use Instagram, making it a valuable channel for reaching new audiences, building connections, and showcasing Ellipsis's features (Pepperland).





Mediums

Why This Medium: Instagram

- **Build Awareness and Community:** By posting frequently, Ellipsis can appear on users' Explore pages and build a following. Instagram's algorithm will also promote Ellipsis to users interested in travel, allowing for easy segmentation.
- **Highlight Ellipsis's Features:** Ellipsis can post Instagram content in many forms – posts, stories, and reels – in order to highlight its features and promote targeted campaigns. Reels, for instance, may be used to demonstrate the interactive mapping tool, while posts can include photos from users' vacations.
- **Easily Shareable:** Instagram users can seamlessly share content with friends through the in-app share feature or through instant messaging. Users can also repost others' content – for instance, our brand ambassador can repost stories shared by Ellipsis's page.
- **Geotags:** Instagram allows users to indicate the location of their posts, which is a popular feature for international travelers. By reposting users' content to international destinations, Ellipsis can boost its presence in the algorithm and increase visibility on travelers' Explore pages.

Projected Impact: Instagram

75%

of college students use
Instagram (*Fierce*)

1,000

followers on average per
ambassador

1

daily post on Instagram
(*Social Pilot*)

87%

of Instagram users say they take
action after seeing a product on
Instagram (*Social Pilot*)



LinkedIn

Find Ambassadors via LinkedIn Messaging

The first medium of our strategy is connecting with potential student ambassadors via LinkedIn messaging. Personalized outreach can cultivate student interest in the ambassador program, as well as develop brand awareness and expand Ellipsis's LinkedIn following.

Furthermore, Ellipsis's LinkedIn profile can direct users towards the company's website.





Search



Home



My Network



Jobs



Messaging



Notifications



Me



For Business



Learning

Messaging

Search messages

...



Focused

Unread

My Connections

InMail

Starred



April Robinson

Apr 7

Hi April, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Kate Smith

Apr 1

Hi Kate, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Samuel James

Mar 25

Hi Samuel, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Laura Meltzer

Mar 15

Hi Laura, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Jack Franklin

Mar 15

Hi Jack, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Maria Miller

Feb 1

Hi Maria, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...



Chris Wilson

Jan 19

Hi Chris, I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel...

April Robinson

LinkedIn

...



LinkedIn Offer

Apr 7



April Robinson • 2:09 PM

Hi April,

I'm Daniel from Ellipsis, a travel planning company. I came across your profile and thought you would be a great fit for our Campus Manager position at WashU!

This experience can help you sharpen your communication, leadership, and strategic thinking skills to make your resume stand out by working on actual sales and marketing projects with tangible outcomes.

Let me know if you are interested, and I would be happy to arrange a 20-minute phone call so you can learn more.

PREMIUM



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Messaging

...



Why This Medium: LinkedIn

- **Targeted Audience and Credibility:** with education, field of study, and experiences listed on each student profile, LinkedIn allows for precise ambassador targeting. Furthermore, students may verify their university or showcase skill endorsements on the platform.
- **Building a Network:** most college students are new to LinkedIn and actively work to build connections and find opportunities. Not only could Ellipsis forge relationships with its ambassadors, but it could also foster connections among the ambassadors themselves.
- **Brand Visibility:** companies with large LinkedIn followings experience “social proof” – wherein, once past the 1K threshold, brands will see exponential growth on the platform (*Medium*).
- **Click-Through Rate:** LinkedIn InMail has a 18%-25% response rate, over three times the response rate of cold emailing (*E Campus News*). Further, LinkedIn users enjoy a 2.74% higher conversion rate than Facebook and Twitter and avoid the risk of emails being mislabeled as “spam” (*MDG Solutions*).



Projected Impact: LinkedIn

30%

of college students use
LinkedIn (*Gitnux*)

52%

Of LinkedIn InMail messages are
opened, compared to 25% for regular
emails (*LinkedIn*)

3x

InMail messages have 3x the response
rate of cold emails with the same
content (*LinkedIn*)

15%

Higher response rate for personalized
InMail messages

By reaching out to **100** students with personalized
messages, we will receive **60** responses. We hope at least
30 will apply.



Projected Impact: LinkedIn

- We expect to choose **5** of our **10** ambassadors from LinkedIn applicants
- With an average follower count of **1000** each, we can reach **5000** users with a single post (Viralyft Blog)
- Accounts with 1000–5000 followers have the highest engagement rates (Colorlib)



Summary Projected Impact

Through a range of social media platforms, we hope to engage a wide variety of student ambassadors and student users. Using all platforms is necessary to reach different types of students – for instance, reaching business fraternities is more accessible through LinkedIn, while social clubs are more active on Instagram and TikTok.

Using a variety of platforms is also conducive to different forms of content, including photos, 24-hour stories, and videos. Furthermore, through consistent activity on all platforms, Ellipsis will begin to show up on users' Explore and "For You" pages, reaching a wider audience beyond its initial user base.

We expect that social media activity will lead users towards Ellipsis's social media pages and website, encouraging exploration, bookings, and, ultimately, unparalleled travel experiences and long-term use of the platform.

