

What Airports Can Teach Us About Marketing in Motion

Travel doesn't just comprise Point A and Point B — it also includes the space in between. How to deliver your message in this liminal zone.

Travel doesn't just comprise Point A and Point B — it also includes the space in between. The process of passing from here to there is an experience in liminality. This concept was developed by 20th century anthropologists to describe global 'rites of passage' from one life stage to another.

Liminality is a special phase in human experience when established social hierarchies and routines dissolve as the individual changes roles and status. They're unusually open to different experiences that can change the trajectory of their lives in big ways or small.

Marketing in Liminal Spaces

Social scientists have applied the concept of liminality to literal journeys across geography and to travelers' openness to new experiences en route. That openness includes brand messaging. Literally neither here nor there, people in transit are already changing locations; why not switch brands on the way?

How to Guide Your Audience Through Their Transitory Journey

1. Identify liminal moments when the audience you want to reach is in a state of transition outside of their daily routine
2. Engage the liminal audience as a guide who can help them achieve goals and fulfill desires once their journey is complete
3. Provide immediate opportunities for the audience to take action on your guidance

According to a 2018 Nielsen study, 80% of frequent flyers notice the media they pass in the airport, and 42% take action. To achieve similar engagement in liminal space, identify opportunities when your audience is between Points A and B — physically and psychologically — and provide them with information that can be transformative.