

First and Lasting Impressions

Certainly, one of the most important parts of a consumer's travel experience is their initial point of meaningful contact with a guide, outfitter or adventure lodge. This 'welcome' stage is defined as that pivotal interaction where a customer has explicitly requested something from you or has initiated contact, they have read your brochure, requested information, read your ad in a magazine, visited your web site, signed up for your newsletter, opened a direct mail piece, stopped at your trade show booth or however the contact occurs.

Consumers who actually request something from you or initiate contact are interested, thereby qualifying themselves as a potential guest. Economically, these consumers deserve more of your marketing attention and budget. At this initial welcome stage, consumers are free of prejudice and preconceived notions toward your services, therefore more open and receptive to what you have to say than at any other time in the relationship.

Utilizing a well-planned and designed welcome strategy has the power to move the consumer from simply 'shopping around' to seriously considering your service in their short-list and becoming a client. For the guide, outfitter or adventure lodge, these initial points of contact represent a significant and unique opportunity.

Use these measures to capitalize on this opportunity:

- ✦ Use phone-answering scripts designed to ask all significant questions on the first call – demonstrating your attention to detail and professionalism.
- ✦ Design and use reservation forms with detail trip expectations – meal preferences, room location and view, guide preference, shoe and clothing sizes, beverage choices, level of exertion expected – leave no detail out.
- ✦ Send pre-visit confirmation and information – confirm all the information you collected from reservation form – demonstrate that you were listening to them and you care.
- ✦ Use a pre-visit guide phone call script – what could be better than their guide calling the client and discussing what equipment they need, want they want to do and learn, any pre-work or practice the guide may suggest, setting the stage for a great trip.
- ✦ Have itinerary for their trip and small welcome gift waiting in their room – tell them where things are and when things happen.

These points of interaction set the stage for the rest of the relationship between the client and you.

Your client's experience with you is simply one of a linked series of contact points, where you have the opportunity to exceed their expectations. As for when it stops, preferably it never should, once they are a client, your goal should be to make them a client for life.

- ✦ Call or send an email – one or two days after departure, just checking to make sure they made it home safely.
- ✦ Design and use client experience report filed by the:
 - a. Guide – how did the guide think the trip went including details of client's successes, skills and experience?
 - b. Manager – did you exceed their expectations, room, lodge, staff and bill?
 - c. Chef – what did they like and dislike?
- ✦ Send a survey to the client asking about their experience – one week after departure, ask the hard questions and compare to the guide, manager and chef's comments.

Set this in place so it is easy to collect information, use web based forms to collect data and programs like Outlook to set reminders. Save all this information for marketing to client in the future.

Outdoor Adventure Marketing

We are a virtual agency composed of marketing, graphic design, web design, public relations and operations professionals with years of experience and success operating and marketing adventure lodges. We are a flexible organization that is dedicated to generating strategic and creative solutions for our clients.

What we do for you:

Email and Direct Mail Marketing - Utilizing the synergy of internet based communications and direct mail solutions we work with guides, outfitters and adventure lodges to start and maintain a permission-based conversation with their clients.

Search Engine Marketing - Your web site must be listed in the top of all major search engines. Many web designers do not understand how search engines work and can leave you with a beautiful site that is lost in the trillions of sites out there. SEM is not black magic; it is a combination of math, experience, and resources that can dramatically improve your organic search ranking.

Web Site Reporting - Analyzing and using information about your search engine rankings, site visitors, and their behavior on your site, the ways they found your site, and conversion rates, to make continual improvements in rankings and conversion rates.

Operations Consulting - We help our clients take advantage of opportunities in the marketplace. We specialize in market analysis, management consulting, marketing consulting and operational reviews.

Why you need Outdoor Adventure Lodge Marketing: Because the rules for success in the adventure lodge market have changed, 'old school' advertising agencies will no longer do. To cut through the noise and clutter of advertising that is bombarded on consumers daily, a new solution is needed. Permission-based email messaging allows your organization to be heard, loud and clear. Recipients are open and receptive as long as you are delivering what they want. Email allows you to segment and target your communication to connect and engage the consumer in a relevant and rewarding conversation. In addition, permission-based programs work, unlike the vast majority of 'old school' advertising.

For more information visit: <http://www.outdooradventure-marketing.com>