3 ways travel marketers can help Australians and New Zealanders plan their next trip

The desire to get out and explore is part of our culture down under. In 2019, Australians spent $172 billion on international and domestic travel — that's an average of nearly $7,000 per person.[1]

While many people can't travel and aren't quite ready to book their next trip given changing travel guidelines, they're still dreaming about going on getaways as soon as they can. And savvy travel brands are making moves to meet travellers who are gearing up for future adventures.

Adapting to changing traveller behaviour starts online

Leaders in travel know that up-to-date trends keep businesses resilient when challenges strike. As consumers explore and evaluate their options, brands can use Search insights to understand what travellers are looking for and keep up with market demand.

"Analysing specific regions and markets has helped us monitor demand, react to constant changes, optimise exposure, and inform key decision-makers."

Ben Will
Paid Media Leader, Virgin Australia

"When our performance marketing team needs to support how we prioritise our marketing spend, they turn to real-time tools and insights."

Paul Hayden
APAC VP of Growth, Kayak

Here are three tips for connecting with travellers in today's fast-changing environment.

1 Help travellers respond to unexpected changes

People are eager to book safe trips as soon as they align with government policies and healthcare professionals' advice. In late 2020 and throughout 2021, travel sentiment bounced back in Victoria shortly after lockdowns lifted and the government announced clear safety guidelines.

Intrastate travel demand in Victoria[2]

Between the time restrictions tightened and lifted during state-by-state snap lockdowns in the first half of 2021, search interest in domestic travel **increased by an average of 72%** across impacted states in Australia (Victoria, Western Australia, and Queensland).[3]

Regulations' impact on travel sentiment

>15X travel interest from Australia to New Zealand in April 2021 after the trans-Tasman travel bubble announcement[4]

Search interest in "can I travel" peaked across Australia in June 2021.[5]

Australians and New Zealanders are no strangers to snap lockdowns, and they're relying on brands to make changing plans easy.

58% of Australians say **flexible booking and cancellation policies** are a top consideration for choosing a travel brand.[6]

32% of New Zealanders say **flexible booking and cancellation policies** are a top consideration for choosing a travel brand.[7]

To-dos for travel marketers

Restrictions and lockdowns are often difficult to predict, but they have a big influence on itineraries. Showing up with relevant messaging and compelling offers comes down to having the right data. Use tools such as Travel Insights with Google to anticipate shifts in demand and changing interests for destinations.

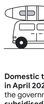
2 Show up when travellers are considering domestic options

With international travel on pause, future travellers are searching online for guidance around evolving travel regulations and ways to safely explore their own backyards.

People planning domestic holidays in the next 3 months[8]

Australians' and New Zealanders' evolving travel preferences

2X intrastate travel searches across Australia in 2020 compared to 2019[9]

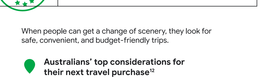


Search interest in "caravan" peaked in January 2021 across Australia and New Zealand, reflecting a growing desire for **longer road trips and outdoor activities.**[10]

Domestic travel interest peaked in April 2021 across Australia after the government announced **subsidised half-price flights.**[11]

To-dos for travel marketers

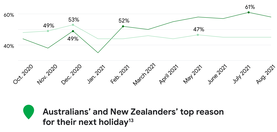
Although changing regulations make it challenging to visit new destinations, people are clearly ready to travel when they can. Connect with potential travellers when they're interested in booking a trip by being discoverable on Google Search and Maps.



3 Stay relevant to what travellers care about

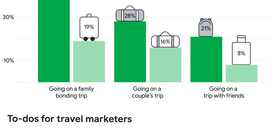
When people can get a change of scenery, they look for safe, convenient, and budget-friendly trips.

Australians' top considerations for their next travel purchase[12]



Australians' and New Zealanders' top reason for their next holiday[13]

The desire to reconnect with loved ones motivates many Australians and New Zealanders to hit the road or runway.



To-dos for travel marketers

People want to spend quality time with their friends and family on worry-free trips that don't break the bank. To ensure your messaging engages future travellers from the first moment of inspiration to the final booking, level up your digital marketing with tips from Grow with Google workshops.

Sources:
1 Tourism Research Australia, Missing Amazon. The risk of domestic resort in Australia's tourism recovery, Aug. 2019.
2 Google Trends, 90 search terms for "travel" and "holiday" in Victoria, Australia, compared to pre-COVID-19 baseline, May 30-Oct. 2021.
3 Internal Google analysis with Google Ads, Victoria, Western Australia, and Queensland, compared to pre-pandemic baseline, Oct. 1, 2017, June 30, 2021.
4 Internal Google analysis with Google Ads, Australia and New Zealand, Jan. 1, 2020-June 30, 2021.
5 Google Trends, 90 search terms for "can I travel", accessed July 2021, Jan. 1, 2017-July 5, 2021.
6 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Jan. 2021.
7 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Jan. 2021.
8 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Oct. 2020-Aug. 2021.
9 Internal Google analysis with Google Ads, Australia, compared to pre-COVID-19 baseline, Jan. 1, 2019-Dec. 31, 2021.
10 Google Trends, 90 search terms for "caravan", accessed July 2021, Jan. 1, 2017-July 5, 2021.
11 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Jan.-June 2021.
12 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Jan.-June 2021.
13 Google, A/NZ, APAC Travel Sentiment Tracker Consumer Survey, n=1,000, Jan.-June 2021.