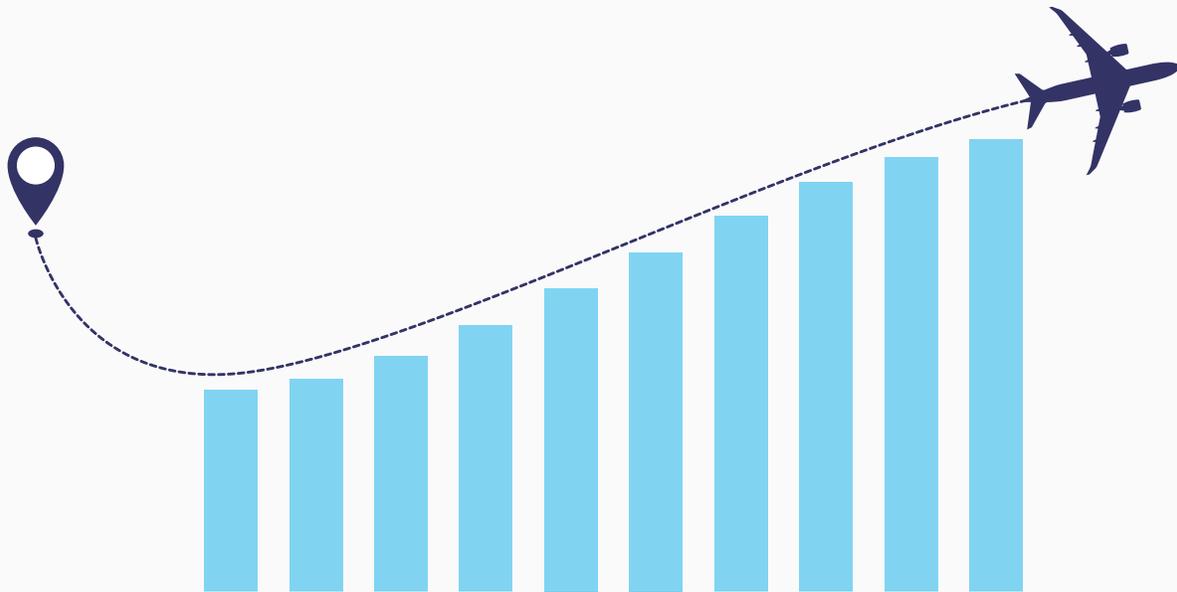


# 2022 Travel Trends Forecast:

What's Coming in  
Digital Marketing





Keeping up with marketing trends has become more critical than ever for the travel industry. As we move into 2022, COVID-19 restrictions and hesitations are still impacting travel. But confidence is building. Travelers are feeling more comfortable with land and air travel now that we have vaccines and booster shots. And with the lifting of U.S. international travel bans in November, travel bookings to other countries are also rising.

Our [2021 Outlook whitepaper](#) discussed the importance of prioritizing connection and

empathy about travel uncertainty since the pandemic. We talked about the massive boost in social media from people spending more time at home and, as a result, the spike in social advertising. The publishing of high-quality content became more crucial than ever before. We urged marketers to put extra care into crafting their brand messaging and focus on connection above all.

This year's paper will look at digital marketing trends we can expect in 2022, especially those surrounding video marketing.

Marketers should be aware of new digital marketing trends and how to prepare for changing attitudes around travel. With rapid advances in technology, travel too is evolving at a fast pace, and keeping up with the latest information will ensure your branding and marketing efforts stay relevant. We hope the data and guidance in this report help prepare you for the newest changes and success in the upcoming year.

## Travel has increased – but it looks different

While people are eager to get away in the new year, many are still postponing travel when they would typically take bigger trips. Others are feeling too stir-crazy to wait, planning to take their vacations in 2022 no matter what. Marketers have already had to adjust strategies around the current travel norms, and in 2022, destinations will need to once again re-strategize to reach their target audiences most effectively.

One huge change that came with the pandemic is people working remotely. Many companies have switched to hybrid or fully remote work models. As a result, more people now bring their work with them and take more frequent trips to local destinations. Cleanliness is still a concern, but less so according to online searches. Instead, travelers are searching for pet-friendly locations so that their furry friends can tag along. In response to remote work and contact-free safety concerns, tech

is gaining an even more prominent role in travel processes, from contactless check-ins to mobile ordering and digital vaccine passports. Virtual reality and video will also play a significant part in trip planning, offering digital tours of hotels, resorts, and attractions so that travelers can “try out” a place from afar before booking. Destinations can even offer virtual events from all around the world.



“While remote work was a MUST during the height of the pandemic, we have learned that people do need real human connection to flourish in just about any industry,” said Jacquie Blackwell, Regional Sales Manager. “Remote work all the time might not be around forever, but a hybrid version will. Be on the lookout and plan marketing messaging for shorter and more frequent trips planned by people. This will continue to be a trend into 2022.”

## Digital marketing – what’s changed, what’s next

### CONTENT MARKETING: THE YEAR OF VIDEO

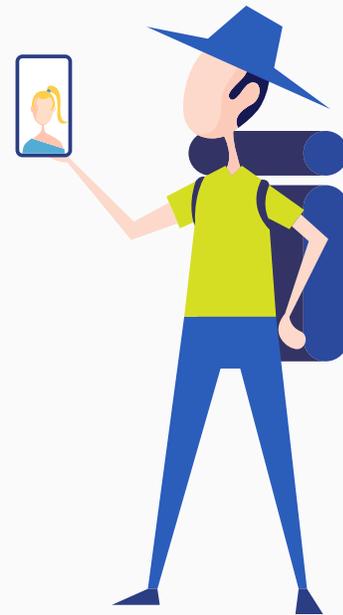
Video is everywhere now — and it’s not going anywhere. A [2021 Wyzowl report](#) found that 86% of companies used video as part of their marketing. Further, 93% of those using video saw it as a vital part of their marketing strategy, and 86% say video has increased their website traffic. In 2022, [Cisco](#) predicts that over 82% of consumer online traffic will be in video form.

Social media advertising and marketing campaigns are including video now more than ever, in part due to the rise in consumer video consumption since the pandemic.

From a marketing perspective, video is often quicker and more affordable to make, and

companies can create their own videos in-house. Many can even create high-quality videos on smartphones, which drastically reduces the cost.

Speaking of smartphone-created videos, brands will have increasing opportunities for [user-generated content](#) (UGC) in 2022. The pandemic has continued to leave users skeptical of online platforms and flashy ads, so brands have had to get creative. Destinations can encourage travelers to record and share their experiences on social media. With the rise of social media influencers, many of these people have mastered the art of angles, lighting, and story-telling for the best user experience.



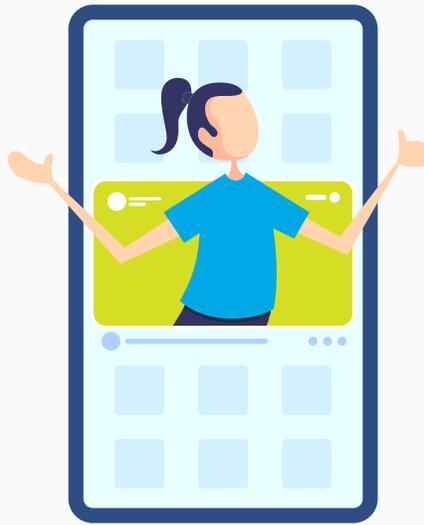
And the stats don’t lie: consumers are [2.4 times more likely](#) to view UGC as authentic than brand-created content.

Short-form videos like those on TikTok, Instagram reels, and the newer YouTube Shorts are also huge, and they’ll continue to grow into 2022. Some of these videos only last a few seconds, allowing brands to communicate with their audiences quickly, effectively, and in easily shareable ways. Short video snippets can educate potential customers about an offering before they have a chance to get bored and move on to something else.

Live streaming has also seen a considerable uptick in recent years. As more people stay home and work remotely, live videos allow a unique sense of connection with brands and other people. On Facebook, people watch live videos **three times longer** than other videos, providing unique marketing opportunities for brands. There are chances to reach more diverse and engaged audiences.

Another interesting video trend is watching with no sound. Many mobile users scroll through social media in public places, which means they watch videos without listening to the audio. As a result, Facebook and Instagram have introduced autoplay features defaulted to play on mute. As we move into 2022, brands will need to create content with audio-free features in mind, such as accurate subtitles and appealing visuals.

As people continue to consume more video content online, you'll need a solid organic and paid strategy to stand out from competitors. From small to large budgets, video can and should play a part in your content strategy. You can profit from the video mania to boost leads, drive traffic to your website, and maximize sales through the right strategies. What does this mean for travel marketers in 2022?



Here are some tips to get the most out of video in your digital marketing strategy:

1. Jump on the video train. If you aren't already making video a considerable part of your marketing efforts, the time is now. Repurpose your current content, such as blogs and landing pages, into videos. Try out live videos and track engagement.
2. Keep it short, silent, and engaging. Prioritize easily-digestible videos that don't require sound to get your message across.
3. Tailor your video marketing to your audience. Think about how your target audiences will view your videos, and adjust your content strategy to fit that. Stay on top of changing environments online so that you know what's most effective for the people you want to reach.

## Metrics that Matter

These platforms require various success metrics as well as various types of content. Each video type can have a different success metric—consider that when deploying videos, organic or paid. Is your goal just to get the comedic

video in front of as many people as possible? Do you have a great blog about best brunch spots in your area that you want people to read? Do you have a video with a lodging call to action and want to drive people to book?

Equally as important as the content you are testing are the audiences you are showing them to. For a site remessaging video on social media, consider showcasing a lodging ad that nudges the user to book.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Despite the rising negative connotations between social media and well-being, social platforms continue to make up a significant part of users' online worlds.

Facebook and YouTube were still the most-used platforms in 2021. And according to [Pew Research Center](#) surveys, YouTube and Reddit usage have grown significantly since 2019. The number of Americans using other platforms like Instagram and Snapchat mainly stayed the same in 2021, but there are notable changes in how people use each social media site.

On September 29th, 2021, Facebook released [Facebook Reels](#), its own version of TikTok. Reels are short videos (30 seconds or less) that can include audio, video, and special effects. Facebook announced that they would start testing full-screen, sticker, and banner ads that show up between Reels.

Brands can insert full-screen vertical ads in between organic Reels. Like regular Reels, ads can be up to 30 seconds, and users can like, comment, and save ad videos. This newest focus on video offers unique ways for brands to connect with their audiences through organic and paid options.



## Metrics that Matter

Think about the short-form videos you watch on any of the platforms offering them. What makes you engage? Review other travel-related videos that gain the most engagement, shares and views. Take notes and build your Reels content plan similarly. Test and retest. Learn and relearn.

Instagram was long known as the place for pictures, but it seems determined to stay on track with the rise of video content. Instagram has moved away from solely photos to stories, Reels, and video posts. Reels are longer here than on Facebook, lasting up to 60 seconds.

Users and brands could already add Caption stickers to stories that add subtitles when someone is speaking. Now, Instagram has added a translation feature on videos where the app translates subtitles in another language to the language set in the user's app. This feature can be valuable for destinations that target audiences all around the world.

An Instagram [update](#) from June 2021 said that videos will focus more on entertainment and posts and users want to engage with. Since then, the platform has added several exciting features that brands can use for marketing purposes.

Most recently, the Add Yours Sticker released in November lets creators invite others to add their own photos onto the initial story. Brands can use the feature to create giveaways, contests, and other collaborations with their audiences. Instagram also finally rolled out the link feature for all users, regardless of follower count, which is huge for smaller businesses who want to share

direct links to their offerings. Collab is another option for users to invite others to create reels and posts that show up on each user's feed, allowing them to share likes and view counts.

Analytics are also getting an upgrade. Marketers can view more in-depth numbers on who is engaging with their content and the total reach of posts. Overall, there are many exciting changes to Instagram for brands to experiment with as we move into 2022.

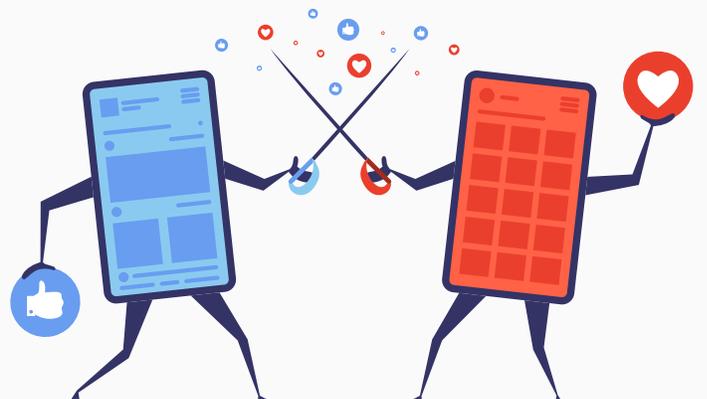
## Social Media Usage in 2021

Percentage of adults who say they use the platforms below:



While TikTok may be trending and on the incline, other social platforms still dominate.

Source: [Pew Research Center](#)



It's hard to spend any time online without witnessing the explosion of TikTok. As this platform has blown up, it has built an impressive self-serve [ad manager](#) similar to other social platforms.

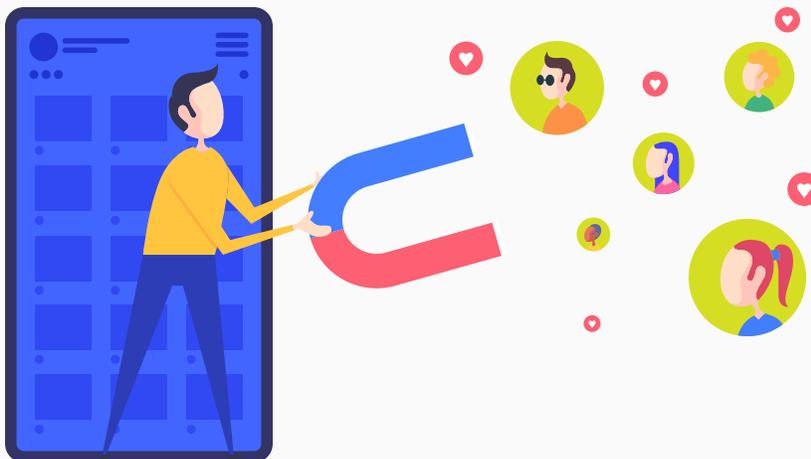
These ad manager platforms are great, but do not replace the experience and expertise of a marketing partner who can help you decipher results and optimize accordingly. Working with an agency will make these platforms more effective and efficient for your

destination. Work smarter, not harder, right?

Snapchat was the impetus for in-the-moment posts that Instagram and Facebook have since taken and made their own. We hear about Snapchat less these days, but it hasn't gone anywhere. In the third quarter of 2021, Snapchat had [306 million](#) daily users worldwide, increasing from 293 million the year before. It remains the most popular social media app for teenagers in the U.S.

The app has rolled out several advertising features that brands can use to engage potential visitors, such as AR Lenses. Different than filters, AR Lenses let you add 3D effects and animations to whatever you record through your phone camera. Story Ads is another feature that allows brands to get their ads in the Snapchat Discover feed. Since the app's Discover section is tailored to each person, you can set your ad to target a specific audience.

Snapchat seems promising for new marketing opportunities in 2022. Many big brands have partnered with the app, and it appears to be moving more towards an advertising-friendly space with unique engagement possibilities. Although Instagram has surpassed Snapchat in user counts, the platform has introduced new features that are likely to keep people — especially Gen Zers — coming back.



## Metrics that Matter

For these two platforms, your expectations should be minimal when it comes to driving direct website traffic. For travel, these platforms should be used for more inspirational or informative content. Just as

quickly as [#tiktokmademebuyit](#) gained traction, so can [#tiktokmademevisit](#). Objectives should primarily be focused on views, followers, and engagement for paid marketing on these platforms. While direct site traffic

can be achieved, the session duration may be lower than other channels. Consider setting up a filter in Google Analytics for organic traffic from TikTok, to compare paid vs organic traffic from these channels.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRAVEL MARKETERS IN 2022?

Social media continues to offer substantial marketing opportunities for travel brands. And one thing is clear: followers care about companies that care about their needs. Keep the “human” in your brand as you read through our top tips:

- Get creative with your content strategy. Just as social media platforms face stiff competition with each other, travel marketers will need to brainstorm new and exciting ideas to keep their advertising on point. Research your target audiences so that you’re curating the most engaging content for them. Follow your competitors closely to see what they are doing — and do it better. Utilize user-generated content through contests, hashtags, and collaborations with influencers to gain trust.
- Make the most of video. Stories, Reels, and other short-form videos keep your brand fresh and interactive so that you stay in travelers’ minds. Develop a content plan including video that focuses on a few main post types that you can cycle consistently. You don’t want to be single-channel focused; instead, create a diverse and varied social strategy. Content — especially video content — is king, but what you do with it through each channel is what’s most important.

- Set goals, and track them. Many social media platforms have made metrics more accessible to brands. Set a few main goals for what you want to accomplish with social media marketing in the new year. For example, reach, engagement, sentiment, clicks, and comments are essential metrics to track the success of a campaign. Instead of posting and hoping for the best, track your data closely so that you can continuously improve.

## AR/VR FEATURES

The future is here — augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) experiences place the user in the center of the action. While AR and VR are still in the early stages, the technology is spreading quickly thanks to people seeking socially-distanced experiences during the pandemic. Experts expected that 58.9 million people would use VR and 93.3 million would use AR at least once a month in 2021.

So, we can expect to see more of AR/VR in the coming year and beyond. Most notably, VR is upgrading the shopping experience, allowing people to try out an experience, such as driving a car, before buying. Snapchat is making [earnest investments](#) in AR shopping.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRAVEL MARKETERS IN 2022?

Pay close attention to quickly evolving AR and VR opportunities, as they can soon offer unique advertising experiences. Brands may soon cultivate more personalized relationships with customers and even create more “try-before-you-buy” and virtual offerings.



## CTV/OTV

Connected TV (or CTV) means TV sets connected to streaming services, such as Roku, Fire TV, and Apple TV). Over-the-top TV (or OTT) refers to video content accessed on the internet, such as Netflix, Disney+, and Hulu, rather than traditional cable. A lot of OTT content is watched through CTVs.

Both CTV and OTT have taken over viewers' screentime, and travel marketers should be paying attention. Consumer research from [Leichtman Research Group](#) found that 82% of TV homes in the U.S. have at least one CTV.

With OTT, DMOs can now target travelers on TV like never before because it's cheaper. Ads on CTV platforms have made it possible for those with smaller budgets to dip their toes into the TV commercial space, reaching wider audiences in the process.

OTT consumers are also engaged in what they are viewing and often have no choice but to let ads run in between whatever they're watching. In addition, brands can access first-party data from their ads and rest easy knowing there are fewer risks placing ads on high-quality CTV content.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRAVEL MARKETERS IN 2022?

CTV and OTT content can be good platforms for digital marketing. However, make sure you know how to measure performance on CTV before investing. Also, keep in mind that your KPIs must shift with the channel. You will need to pay attention to metrics like TV tune-in, TV attribution, and foot traffic attribution to track your ads' success levels.



## Metrics that Matter

Like we talked about in the social video section, creating the right content and success metrics for other video channels is important too. CTV doesn't typically offer a click thru option, so metrics for success are purely based on completion rate. Consider a OTT campaign that is exclusively targeting people streaming from their mobile device or computer. At that point, you have direct click attribution from a content provider you want to be paired with as well as your own data set from analytics on how they engaged with your site.

Also consider how these video platforms can require a different type of video. While sometimes we say more professionally produced, that may not always be the case. Think first of the audience and second what you want to accomplish.

## DATA COLLECTION/ PRIVACY

Third-party cookies — tracking codes placed on a website by someone other than the site's owner — are going away soon. Many browsers have already blocked third-party cookies, and Google [plans to remove them](#) from Chrome (the most-used browser) in 2023. With this knowledge comes the importance of gathering first-party data while being cautious about data collection.

[Data](#) provided to Hubspot revealed that 41% of marketers are worried about tracking the correct data with the death of third-party cookies. But don't panic. Marketers can keep up by pivoting into other ways of collecting information from their audiences.

First-party cookies are still safe, allowing you to gain data from your website viewers on all browsers. That said, if you've been relying on significant third-party data for your advertising strategies, you'll need to shift your efforts to first-party-focused methods in 2022.

Besides first-party data collection, contextual targeting is also becoming more important. With contextual targeting, ads show up based on the current webpage's content. You can provide the user with a more pleasant ad experience, and they are more likely to show interest in an offering related to what they're already viewing. Plus, the user stays anonymous since the ad is targeted to the page, making the whole process privacy-friendly. Machine learning that detects sentiment has also increased the effectiveness of display advertising, better ensuring that the ad fits appropriately with the page content.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TRAVEL MARKETERS IN 2022?

Privacy and data collection are constantly changing, but here's what we know so far:

- The more data you have, the better you can target your audience effectively. DMOs

can collect data from sources like email newsletter sign-ups, visitor guides, and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms. Use the data you collect to upload custom audiences and find similar audiences to target on social media. And remember: you can still track valuable first-party analytics about your website visitors.

- Prioritize safety and security. As marketing involves more consumer data, brands should take more precautions with cyber security. [PWC data](#) shows that a whopping 85% of consumers don't feel there are enough companies they can trust with their data. Don't collect more data than you need, and be transparent with your audience and how you use their data and what you're doing to ensure a safe online experience.

## Metrics that Matter

When you are running lead generation campaigns to increase your database, play close attention to your Cost Per Lead. It is important to know that CPLs can have a wide range, and the quality of that lead

can range greatly too. If you are contesting, the lead can be less quality but also less in cost. If you are running a newsletter sign up campaign, the lead may cost more, but the quality is much higher.



## The importance of marketing attribution

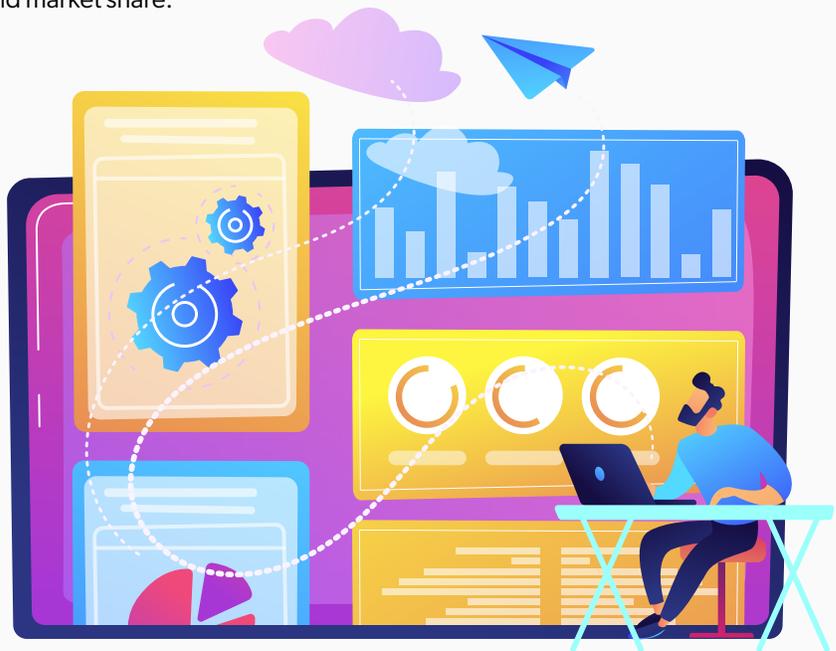
A customer's path from interest to purchase is rarely linear. Customers can book with you from various channels, making it more challenging to gauge ROI and the value of your marketing efforts. That's where marketing attribution comes in.

Attribution modeling is on the rise as a solution for measuring ROI. To determine success and guide future marketing decisions, brands need to look at many different KPIs and attributions.

Our Advance Attribution Analytics (A3) uses best-in-class data sources to deliver an always-on measurement solution. It uses offline behavior to attribute incremental visits to marketing campaigns across various media channels. A3 is Comscore-verified, first-party, always-on GPS data providing granular data quality

not available anywhere else in the mobile space. We combine this data with robust campaign analytics, CVB data (if available), and competitive analysis to create benchmarks on performance and contribution to total overall visitors and market share.

Contact [Advance Travel and Tourism](#) to learn more about how our attribution solutions benefit DMOs.



## Metrics that Matter

What KPIs matter to you? If you're a small- to medium-sized DMO, an attribution model isn't something you should be focused on because it requires a lot of data collection to work — often six-figure budgets.

Don't have that budget? You don't have to miss out if you don't have an attribution tool. You can still show value and ROI through other methods.

Consider mini conversions like VG requests, newsletter sign ups, outbound partner referral clicks, and even conversion value from Google. All of these can help you build a much more robust ROI for your marketing efforts.

## 2022 Focus: accessibility, innovation and connection

### **PRIORITIZE CONNECTION AND SAFETY THIS YEAR**

Many travelers are eager to travel after postponing trips and working longer hours at home, but safety is also a top priority for travelers. People also care about supporting their communities and feeling like they are part of a collective sigh of relief to travel again. As many are still socially distancing and dipping their toes back into travel plans, social media platforms and video-based content keep us connected.

Destinations should connect and emphasize with travelers as we all strive to get back to normal. Marketing messages will need to focus on brand trust, more virtual experiences, and collaboration as people begin to branch out again.

As we move into the new year, don't be afraid to think outside of the box and explore new ways to engage with potential travelers. From collaborative IG stories to VR tours, marketing trends will offer more opportunities to increase engagement and bookings.

Overall, prioritize content that meets your audience on a human level. We've all been through the wringer since 2020, but 2022 will bring a renewed sense of adventure that DMOs can use to connect with travelers.



## **About Advance Travel & Tourism**

Advance Travel & Tourism is a destination marketing team within Advance Local, one of the leading media and marketing companies in the United States. From local to regional, national or international, we reach travelers everywhere.

Advance Travel & Tourism works with travel partners across the US, with local account managers waiting to meet you in person (or on Zoom in today's environment). Our hands-on approach ensures we understand your needs and creates a solution that meets your goals and budget.

[advancetravelandtourism.com](http://advancetravelandtourism.com)