

11 steps to selling a new destination

Selling travel can sometimes be tricky but selling a destination that neither you nor anyone at your agency has visited brings its own challenges. To help you overcome this, FlightSiteAgent has put together a list of 11 easy steps to follow to help you make the sale.

1. Understand it. Begin by asking the client “why,” so you understand what excites them about the destination and what they see themselves doing there. Based on this knowledge you can embark on your research. Word to the wise: Before starting your research, make sure you’re spelling the destination correctly. You don’t want to research Oakland if your client is thinking about Auckland, or send them to Colombo when they were asking about Colombia.

2. Match it. Even when a client requests a specific destination, you still need to qualify the client so you can see if there is a match between their needs and the destination.

3. Google it. After understanding the client’s reasons for their destination choice, your next step is online research. Narrow your Google search by looking for the top 10 reasons people travel there, top 10 attractions, etc. Read Wikipedia articles to grasp what the country is all about.

4. Map it. Learn where the destination is located, including surrounding countries, bodies of water, etc. Map work will also give you an idea of the climate as well as possible routings for arriving at the destination.

5. Check it. Look up travel advisories to learn the status of the country, passport and visa requirements, any medical concerns or safety issues, areas of the country that are not appropriate for tourists, the currency situation, etc.

6. Watch it. Experience the ambience and energy of the destination via resources such as YouTube, destination videos, television programs, food TV, guidebooks, travel magazines, newspaper travel sections, online destination reviews, and more.

7. Niche it. Find out if your client has special interests that line up with what is available at the destination – for existing clients, this info should be in your files.

8. Network it. Think of agents and suppliers you’ve met who may know the destination. Contact the tourist board. Check your LinkedIn contacts and query your other social networks. Remember to rely on trusted sources and have healthy scepticism towards anonymous sources.

9. Present it. Once you’ve done your homework, put together a short story of destination highlights. Include cultural aspects such as music, dance, art, as well as attractions, hotel and restaurant choices suited to your client. You can even brand it with your agency logo.

10. Sense it. For a major client or a group booking, you need to go the extra mile. One way to do this is by providing a sensory experience. You can host an info session at your office featuring the destination’s music as well as sample foods from a local restaurant that specialises in the cuisine. Ask the tourist board and suppliers for help providing a feel and taste of the destination.

11. Sell it. Use your selling skills just as you would for any sale. Even if the client already seems convinced that they want this particular destination, you need to match features and benefits and respond to questions and objections. Based on your client’s needs, you can discuss the nuances that separate one hotel or resort from the next, dining experiences, activities, etc.

By following these steps you'll have a better understanding of the destination and how to promote it making it easier to sell irrespective of whether you've visited it before or not. For further guidance and tips on how to sell better follow our #blog or get in touch via info@flightsiteagent.co.za.

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