

ROUTES TO MARKET – THE SALES CHANNEL LANDSCAPE

DIRECT

- **Own Web** – booking-engine packages/offers, client testimonials, destination and activities content
- **Social Media** – offers two-way connections with existing & new customers using entertaining, informative & compelling content, images & competitions through Blogs, Vlogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and Snapchat media
- **Google/Similar Search Engine Technologies**
- **Hosted Media Feature/ Article**
- **Direct Email/Ezine Marketing**
- **Phone**
- **Email**
- **Walk-In**
- **Local or Customer Referral**

INDIRECT TRADITIONAL

Via Realtime Booking System (Common systems in Ireland include Netaffinity, Bookassist, Travelclick, & Avvio (Accommodations), Eviivo & Upbooking, Treksoft (for tours, activities and rentals)

Facilitated by Channel Manager System & PMS (Software solution managed by your in-house team) Some systems offer integrated channel management, property management and POS solutions. Common channel Manager brands include Xotels, Ratetiger, Rategain, Siteminder, Cloudbeds, Travelclick.

- **Irish Based Inbound Tour Operator** ITOA members and non ITOA members. They mostly offer land only packages for groups and FITs to in-market tour operators and travel agents. It is similar to the services of a DMC except all services are included in the package rather than an a la carte approach that some agents or in-market buyers want from a DMC.
- **DMC** A DMC provides local destination knowledge & service to in-market TOs and TAs, acting as their representative company in the destination. Services include itinerary design; logistics; meet and greet, transfers / transportation, accommodation bookings (often at preferred rates), restaurant bookings, activities, excursions, personal guides, driver guides etc.
- **Tour Operator (Wholesale)** Tour Operator who designs programmes and itineraries which they offer as fixed guaranteed departures to Retail Tour Operators and Travel Agents. Some of these Wholesale Operators also sell as retail Tour Operators. Some also have an on the ground representative in the destination who design their programmes for them and negotiate with local service providers for rates and commissions, although the contracting and payments will be made directly to the provider by the wholesale tour operator.
- **Tour Operator (Retail)** Responsible for operating and providing your vacation through the contracting, booking and packaging together of the various components of your tour such as your hotel, transportation, meals, guides, optional tours and sometimes flights. They may also purchase pre-designed tour packages from wholesalers or Inbound Irish Tour Operator partners. Some tour operators offer land only package focussing on the end to end experience once you have arrived in your destination, while others include flight and insurances. May also have an online presence.
- **Coach Tour Operators** own & operate their own coaching fleet. Some organise, plan or purchase touring holidays to sell directly to special interest groups or regular customers – on a pre-planned departure schedule or ad hoc basis (the latter is mostly for group organisers or travel agents).
- **Travel Agent – Independent or Consortia** May have shopfront or be homebased. May also be affiliated to a member based consortia e.g. Virtuoso, Signature, Ensemble, AA, Amex, Travel leaders or large TA networks e.g. NEST, Protravel, Tzell. May purchase from a mix of In-Market Tour Operators, Irish based Tour Operators, DMCs or have local travel designer representative in the destination (sometimes Tour Guide/Driver Guide whom they know and trust) to develop/design itineraries for which they will contract directly with providers/suppliers or elements through their consortia. If they are part of consortia they get preferential room rates negotiated on their behalf by the consortia from consortia member properties and transport services. However, they are not always obliged to buy only from them.
- **Travel Concierge/ Travel Designer** Operates like a private and exclusive travel agent to more wealthy clients. Tend to seek to bespoke design the complete itinerary for their select portfolio of clients. Clients see them as their personal travel planners and advisors and they have quite an influence on their consumer choices, as their clients are time poor so trust all shortlist selections to them. Can be harder to identify these in the market and introductions often happen by way of Representation Companies.

INDIRECT ONLINE

- **Airlines** holiday shops that offer dynamic packaging - some including tours/experiences or packages e.g. Delta Vacations, Virgin Vacations, Aer Lingus Vacation Store, BA Holidays, Luftansa holidays, Ryanair, etc.
- **OTAs Online Travel Agents** - the types of OTAs differ greatly, don't make the mistake of thinking they are all the same. The merchant models differ and many service very different customer profiles. For example:
 - **Big Bed Banks** e.g. Expedia Group and Priceline/Booking.com brand families dominate in the mainstream OTA sales volumes and consumer audience reach
 - **Specialist or Smaller OTAs** are more often membership based, so content promoted is personalised to customer preferences e.g. Secret Escapes, Mr & Mrs Smith, Voyage Privés
- **Online Aggregator** may look similar to comparator sites, but they tend to be community based ecommerce online (social) media sites that sell travel products and value driven priced packages e.g. Ebookers, Travel Republic, TravelZoo, Groupon.
- **Metasearch or Comparator Sites** Gather multiple source prices for same products and present to consumer, May include your own site direct price offer. Examples include; Trivago, Google, Tripadvisor, Hipmunk, Skyscanner, Kayak, Momondo, Dohop
- **Wholesale Online Agencies**
 - **GDS** - Sabre, Travelport, Amadeus, Worldspan. B2B online wholesaler of flights and ground travel products, services and tours
 - **GTA** - B2B online wholesaler of ground travel products and services, tours and activities
 - **Beds online** - B2B online Wholesaler of Bed and ancillary travel products
- **OTAs for Activities, Tours and Events (B2C):** e.g. Viator, Musement, Viagogo, Cheaptickets (Concert/Event tickets), Ticketmaster, Eventbrite