

Advantage Travel Partnership launches the 'Rise of the Travel Agent' Turn of Year Campaign



London, UK – 17 December 2020: Following a year that has been far from normal, The Advantage Travel Partnership, the UK's largest travel agent consortium, has adapted its regular turn of year marketing campaign and has created four mini-campaigns, to offer its members the flexibility and freedom to promote offers and themed content that will work for their individual businesses. The campaign is underpinned by the need for members to think more commercially than ever before. Earning potential and suppliers that have been supportive to the trade over the last nine months have been key factors in building the campaign.

Travel agents up and down the country are still dealing with limited resource as many staff remain furloughed and with the government travel advice often switching at any given moment, travel agents will be reluctant to invest money on expensive marketing tactics if restrictions change and prevent clients from travelling. Therefore, Advantage has designed each of the four campaigns to have a digital focus, as this is not only cost effective for its members, but it enables speed to market, the content is easily adaptable in a fast-changing travel environment and it is highly shareable in order to reach and acquire even more new customers. Advantage has also worked to significantly uplift their B2B comms to help train and educate agents on partner products and services, plus Covid protocols in some of the key travel destinations for the UK market.

On the new concept, David Forder, head of marketing at Advantage Travel Partnership commented, "The customer research we carried out this year indicated that there was a renewed appetite from consumers to book with a travel agent, and the results demonstrated that this is due to the trust, expertise and personal service. During times of continued uncertainty, the 'Rise of the Travel Agent'

campaign will offer our members a wide range of content that will help them inspire, inform and reassure their customers, and demonstrate why there is no-one better to book a holiday with than an local independent travel agent. We are also really pleased with the support that has been shown from our tour operator and tourist board partners who are involved in the campaign.”

The mini-campaigns will include a range of assets that members can use to drive engagement and enquiries, and the offer-led option will include a new range of assets for agents to utilise for their customer base.

1. Promotional Content

The promotional led content that has been created with Advantage is aligned with traditional turn of year marketing activity and aims to draw in customers with competitive offers for 2021. Content will be personalised to members and their customers and will be available for members to segment to both mass market and more high-end clients, all complete with regional pricing. As well as having access to Advantage’s ‘Hot Offers’ private members Facebook Group where members can lift and shift supplier offers into their own social media, the new assets will include:

- Hot Offer Email – a personalised email that will feature a handpicked selection of 10 offers which will be sent directly to Advantage member’s customers in January and February.
- Solus Email – Mass and Upmarket solus emails created to offer a higher level of personalisation for members. These will promote key partners and destinations to provide aspirational content about these destinations and will also include exclusive offers for customers that directly respond. Both the Hot Offers and Solus Emails will be sent by Advantage on behalf of agents, demonstrating an additional level of support to its members.
- The Family Travel Magazine – a digital and PDF version including a wide range of content with the ability for members to personalise with their own branding and call to actions. Includes ‘How to Guide’ to create flickable and add own branding.
- Silver Traveller magazine – a new issue in digital format of the popular customer magazine tailored to the over 50s market, produced in partnership with Silver Travel Advisor.

2. Count on Us

Travel now is very different than it was pre- pandemic, with new processes and procedures such as testing and adhering to individual destination’s protocols that must be navigated, which is why the

expertise and advice of a local travel agent has never been so important. The Count on Us campaign will offer assets that helps agents reassure the customer and highlight the trust and service elements of booking with a local travel agent. The assets will include a wide range of social media banners for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram whilst also incorporating a variety of messages to help convey the main benefits of booking with a travel agent, including offering advice around Covid safe travel.

3. Say Hello Again To...

Say Hello Again To... is a destination focused campaign that will help target the pent-up demand from travellers and re-introduce them with familiar destinations that they have been dreaming about. Assets will include a variety of social media banners for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, aspirational images used in social banners and image libraries of royalty free images created for members to use in their own marketing. Members will also have access to a 'build your own email' toolkit, providing them with everything they need to create their own email marketing including images, copy, video, and a guide on how to build an email marketing campaign using Mail Chimp. Members will also have access to B2B assets including Q&A videos from suppliers and engaging quizzes for the chance to win prizes including holidays and places on FAM trips.

4. Back on the Water

The cruising sector is one that not only relies heavily on the advice and services of a local travel agent, and is important to Advantage members, but also a sector that will need renewed consumer confidence when travel resumes following the pandemic. As part of the Back on the Water campaign, Advantage has created assets that will help to educate members on COVID safety and protocols when it comes to cruising through the range of B2B Q&A webinars with suppliers, solus emails to their 'Cruise Champs' member product community and social assets have been created that can be rolled out across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

All Turn of Year information will be housed in an easy to navigate members extranet hub with commercial information, and a dedicated COVID-19 section providing advice and information to members.

ENDS

For further information about Advantage Travel Partnership please contact bgadvantage@finnpartners.com

Note to editors:

Advantage Travel Partnership is the UK's largest independent travel agent partnership. Advantage leisure and business travel agents who are part of the group are each independently owned, but as a collective they produce over £4.5bn of travel sales each year, making members experts in every aspect of the travel industry.