

Passport Online Releases 2019 Year-End Digital Report Card

Digital Channels Rise and Bob Marley was Most Shared Facebook Post

Beaverton, OR (March 3, 2020) – Passport Online Inc., the industry’s leader in travel agency digital technology, analyzed its unique travel agency data across consumer facing websites, social media channels, and booking technology for all of 2019. Consumer shopping sessions on Passport Online customer agency websites dipped to 40 million in 2019, but consumer engagement with those sites rose. Click through rates to supplier offers on the travel agency sites topped 4.6 million for a click through rate of 11.6%, well above the industry average for click through rates. And in a year when Facebook made it more and more difficult to garner consumer engagement, Passport Online-powered travel agency business Facebook pages more than held their own, with increases in organic views, shares and likes.

“Our travel agency customers have established their identities in the digital space and are engaging with existing and new customers on websites and on social channels,” said Jeanne Colombo, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Passport Online. “Supplier content is critical to an agency website, as our data shows significant click through activity to detailed supplier offers from our customers’ websites.”

What is working best in social media? Passport Online data for 2019 indicates famous quotes coupled with eye-catching photos are the way to go. The top three posts for the highest number of shares were all quotes from very different messengers including Bob Marley, the Dalai Lama and author and linguist Benny Lewis.

Marley took the big prize for most shared post of 2019 with his quote “If travel was free, you would never see me again” being shared more than twice as much as the next leading post.

Passport also has data in the b-to-b booking space, with hundreds of travel agencies using its Tandem online cruise/tour booking tool. Tandem had a 17% increase in sailed bookings in 2019,

an amazing growth after a 25% rise in 2018. In 2018, only two months topped 20,000 sailed passenger; in 2019, seven months recorded 20K sailed bookings.

“Our Tandem customers have increased their usage of comparison tools and are becoming more comfortable with completing the purchase online for their customers. This technology is designed to make their sales process more efficient and they continue to embrace it,” said Colombo.

Passport Online is in the unique position to monitor consumer interaction with their travel agency as the company helps more than 7,500 travel agencies create, expand and diversify their digital footprint through websites, social media and email marketing. The reach grows exponentially as Passport powers digital tools for more than 35,000 agents in partnership with many of the industry consortia and host agencies as well as hundreds of independent agencies.

Passport’s analysis of social media engagement for its ESP Facebook Posting service customers shows steady growth and engagement. By the end of 2019, ESP services were helping to power more than 1,600 travel agency Facebook business pages with nearly 2 million followers.

“Our analysis shows that the overall views for a single post went up in 2019. That is a great statistic and proves that Facebook was just as relevant in 2019 as in 2018 for ESP users even though Facebook initiated several changes designed to challenge the effectiveness of business pages” said Colombo. The average shares for a single post were up 17% and the average likes for a single post went up 14%. In 2019, the Passport Online content team created over 1,100 curated posts for their travel agency ESP customers. The success of the ESP posts can also be linked to the kinds of posts created by the Passport team. Of those 1100 posts, only 7.5% were specific supplier driven sales posts. “We know consumers are engaging and responding to their travel agencies on Facebook, but the subtle approach of teasing travel and helping their clients dream about their next vacation, coupled with occasional sales posts, seems to be the perfect combination.”

For more information on the website products, contact Jeanne Colombo at jeannec@passportonlineinc.com.

About Passport Online

Passport Online is the leisure travel industry leader in website, web content, email marketing, and social media solutions. Passport also offers state of the art cruise and tour booking engine solutions for b-to-b and b-to-c needs. A major distribution channel for leisure travel suppliers to connect with the leading consortia, retail agencies, professional home-based agent networks, and their clients, Passport Online enables millions of consumer shopping sessions on thousands of travel agency websites. For more information, visit www.passportonlineinc.com.

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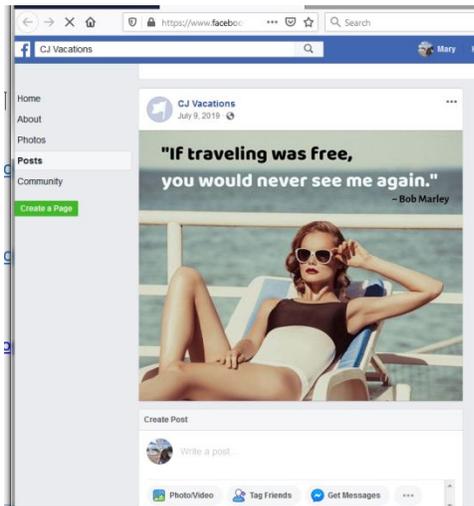
SIDEBAR OF MOST EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS IN 2018

Powering content for more than 1,600 travel agency business Facebook pages, Passport is able to quantify consumer interaction and determine what kinds of posts generate the highest levels of engagement.

Most Shared Posts

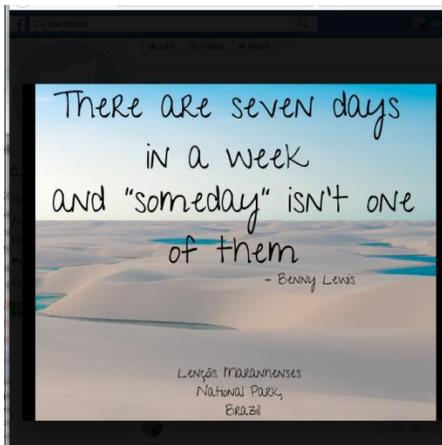
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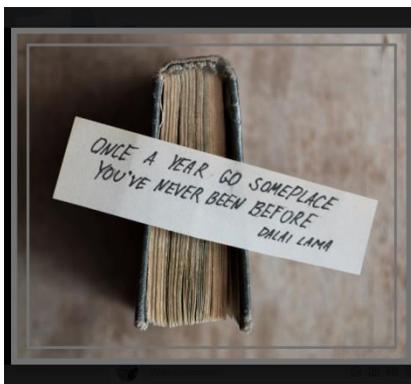
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409 shares:

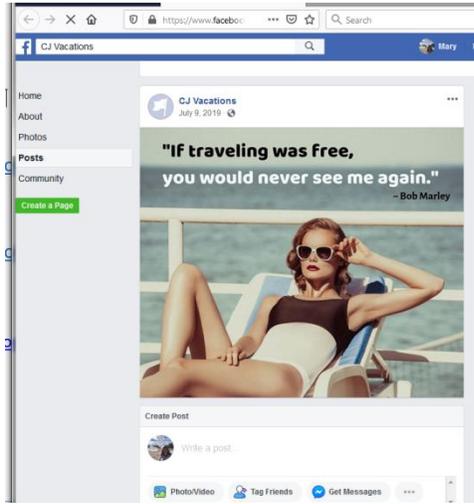
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Most Liked Posts:

6686 likes:

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3208 likes:

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2809 likes:

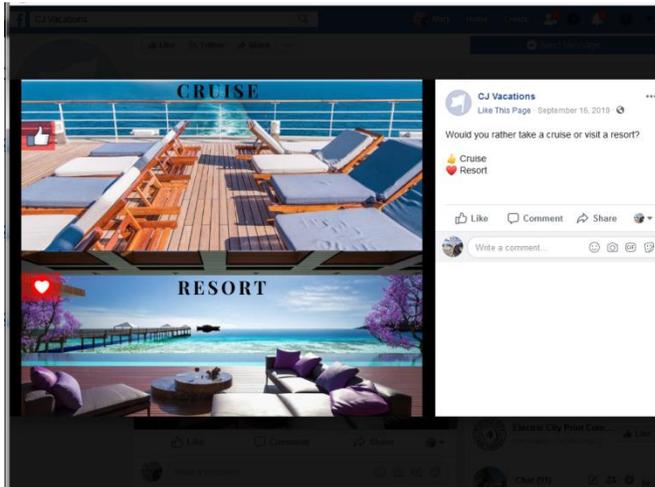
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Posts with the Most Comments:

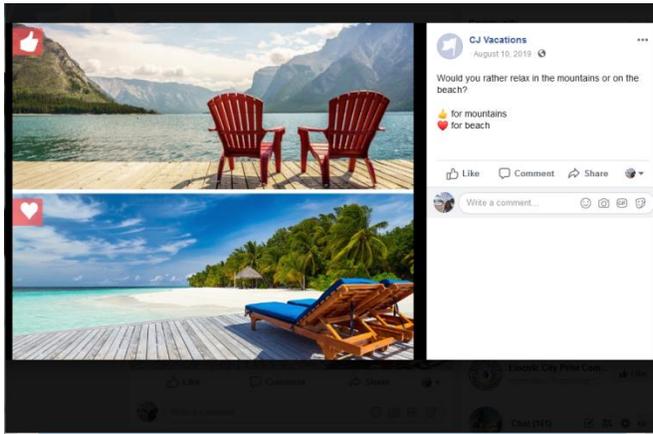
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1563 comments:

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1420 comments:

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