

Sounding Off



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Sounding Off: Coronavirus strategies might have unintended longevity

By PhocusWire (/PhocusWire-2147097825) | October 30, 2020



Ben Drew, Viator

"It's good to hone our approach in the more local market, which we're doing, but I don't think we're doing a pivot or completely repositioning the business in that way."

Quote from Ben Drew, president of Viator, in an article on PhocusWire this week outlining the tours and activities site's strategy.

Each Friday, PhocusWire dissects and debates an industry trend or new development covered by PhocusWire that week (<https://www.phocuswire.com/viator-ends-speculation-of-tripadvisor-sale-talks-quality-strategy-google>).

Targeting the local market is not where hundreds of travel and tourism brands expect or perhaps even want to be.

But that's the reality where many find themselves in as, once again, national travel restrictions of varying degrees are put into play by governments or regional authorities.

The challenge is that these businesses were, more often than not, created with tourists in mind - positioned as platforms for those going to new destinations or countries.

Tripadvisor is able to play a decent strategy here, knowing that among the sites of its nature, it was arguably the one already used pre-pandemic by locals or a domestic market to get restaurant reviews or details about things to do or where to stay for either a short or day trip.

For others, it is not so easy.

For example, how often would people in, say, New York City turn to a global travel brand (full-service or focused on activities) to find out information about and book a product in their hometown?

Restructuring inventory and marketing tactics to cater for that specific type of market is requiring a definite shift in thinking for travel sites, especially without any solid end in sight to the pandemic - or, at least a realistic one that comes before the end of 2021.

But here's the thing: Working within these new parameters might not be something that needs to be contained within a period of time and then flung away once people take to making trips further from home, at scale.

Something that many pundits and tourism bosses are sensing (perhaps hoping, more than anything else) is that the travel restrictions imposed on people for the better part of 2020 might inspire a wider appreciation of their own cultures, attractions, cities and more.

And this could actually continue long after the pandemic releases its stranglehold on travel.

To not plan for that seems like a wasted opportunity.

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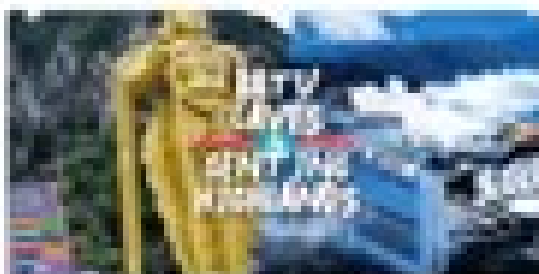
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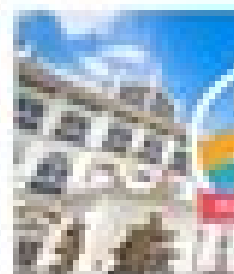
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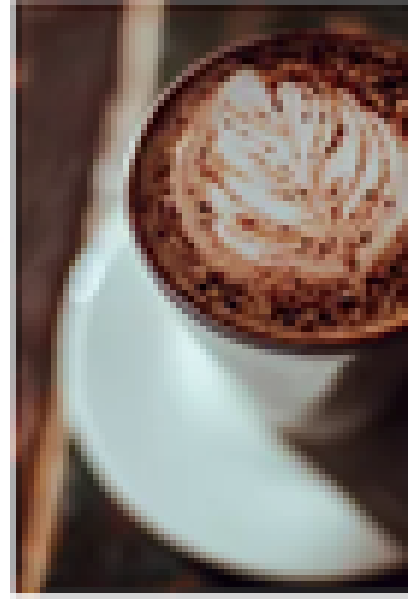
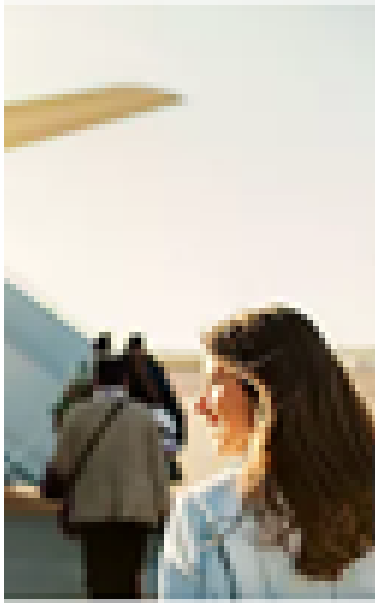


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