

## IS METASEARCH RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Travelport explains the new Metasearch opportunity

With hotel metasearch technology developing so quickly, how do you decide where, or if, it fits into your business? In recent months, the online travel industry has sent a clear message: metasearch matters. Heavyweight OTAs are spending on metasearch, with Priceline buying Kayak, and Expedia investing in both Trivago and Room 77. Traveller review site, TripAdvisor has launched a successful hotel metasearch function, as well as winning a deal that pushes these hotel search results up front on Bing.

But does that mean that metasearch will benefit your business? The key to any decision will be considering how well your business will sit with the metasearch environment. Tracie Carillo, Head of Hospitality Sales at Travelport, identifies a few essential factors that you should take into consideration before you make that crucial decision.

### **High Volume, Low Average Booking Value**

Metasearch is a numbers game, the auction-based cost-per-click (CPC) model may make it a natural fit for a business that works on high volume, low average booking value (ABV), but it's a far less attractive model for OTAs targeting niche customers and a higher ABV.

### **Price Driven Customers**

It is crucial to review your client's search behaviour as price isn't always the starting point for a search. Investing in price-led metasearch may be counter-productive if your clients are seeking a bespoke experience rather than a good deal.

### **Well Recognised Brand**

Is your business a widely recognised and trusted brand? An important element when considering metasearch is that it can be hard to differentiate your brand. With sites typically showing only brand and price in the first results screen, it's the prominent OTAs and hotels that will inevitably get the most clicks.

### **Conversion Rate**

It's also important to remember that winning the first click within a metasearch site is just the beginning. Conversion is what counts and metasearch sites provide you with little or no opportunity to interact or influence your clients. That means any spending on metasearch needs to be supported by investments in your own website.

Whatever your decision about metasearch, it is worth keeping an eye on the travel technology industry as it is evolving fast, with new models and opportunities being presented every day. With so many options, it is essential that you consider two key issues: first, where you'll find the best return on investment for your agency now, and second, which routes will deliver the sustainable business model that will take your brand into the future.

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