

OUTDOOR TOURISM MARKETING PROJECT

WORKING PAPER 3 TRENDS

This working paper was produced for the Outdoor Tourism Marketing Project. It summarises relevant global adventure trends, UK Activity Holiday Market Growth (UK consumers) trends, future drivers for outdoor tourism and an overview of leisure/holiday-taking trends which impact on outdoor tourism.

GLOBAL ADVENTURE TOURISM TRENDS SNAPSHOT

In a recent survey¹ of over 100 tourism boards by the Adventure Travel Trade Association, 85% of respondents said that they recognise adventure tourism as a stand-alone travel sector.

The adventure tourism industry has entered a new stage with industry participants experimenting with a range of new strategies. For example, established tour companies like TUI now have 17 adventure brands, including a joint venture with Intrepid, and destinations famous for sun and sand, such as Mexico, are shifting their strategy towards adventure tourism development. Mexico's tourism campaign, "The

¹ Adventure Tourism Development Index 2010 Report published by George Washington University and The Adventure Travel Trade Association.

Mexico You Thought You Knew," pairs images of scuba divers and remote waterfalls to suggest undiscovered adventure far from the all inclusive resorts of Cancun.

Destinations such as New Zealand, Greenland and Norway are now positioning their offerings and marketing exclusively towards adventure travellers. Perhaps cementing the sector's mainstream appeal, pop culture figure Oprah Winfrey teamed with Tourism Queensland to market Australian tourism. "Oprah's Ultimate Adventure" featured the iconic talk show host zip lining and snorkelling. The study found that 26% of travellers engage in adventure activities on vacation.

According to Iceland Statistics, over 70% of people indicated that "Nature" was a main motivator for visiting Iceland. The tourism board, perhaps acknowledging this motivation, adopted the slogan: "Iceland Naturally." Iceland's National Tourism strategy specifically mentions three things important to adventure tourists: a unique and varied landscape and nature; protection of the environment; and the culture and people.

The branding of New Zealand, "100% Pure You," also presents an adventure and nature-based image. The youth and backpacker markets are very important to New Zealand (in 2009, the country received over 0.5 million tourists between the ages of 15 and 24). New Zealand's Go All the Way Campaign was designed to appeal to this demographic.

According to research² carried out on behalf of the ATTA, the typical adventure travellers are aged between 35 and 47 years of age and are evenly split between men and women and married and single people. They enjoy exploring new places and engaging with local people and cultures while on holiday. When researching their holidays their preferred source of information is online followed by recommendations from friends and family. Their main online resources are Google and official tourism websites, they also value peer reviews and are users of social media. They tend to be early adopters of new trends. A key finding of the research indicates that the appeal of adventure/activity travel is broadening internationally.

² Tourism Adventure and Activity Update based on a presentation for the Tourism Adventure and Activity Forum in Killarney on 3rd November 2010

UK ACTIVITY HOLIDAY MARKET GROWTH (UK CONSUMERS)

Overall activity holidays have most appeal to people aged 20-44. The pre-family and family lifestage groups which form the core group for activity holidays are flat or declining in terms of population growth. The third age and retired groups are forecast to grow at a much faster rate. There are already more people aged over 60 than under 16's and by 2025 there will be more over 60's than under 25's. Activity holidays have a broad appeal across ABC1/C2 groups although there is a strong peak among AB with 58% having experienced an activity break compared with 43% of the population overall.

Mintel's latest study reported that the main growth sectors in the activity markets are likely to be the following:

- ▶ Family adventure market
- ▶ Customers becoming more involved with packaging breaks as co-creators of holidays
- ▶ Short intense activity breaks as an alternative or adjunct to city breaks
- ▶ Strong growth still seen in higher quality combination of activity and luxurious

In terms of new opportunities, Mintel also recognised that activity needs to be incorporated alongside lazing, shopping and sight-seeing (Flop & Fitness - activity/relaxation). It also highlighted that there is scope for giving more youthful activity holidays a 'middle-age makeover'.

Other drivers relevant to the outdoor tourism sector are as follows:

- ▶ Interest in healthy life styles and wellbeing (amongst some market segments)
- ▶ A desire to experience something different (experiential travel), particularly ABC1
- ▶ Changing demographics, particularly in relation to the increasingly health conscious, environmentally aware ageing population
- ▶ Increasing levels of disposable income, which have helped to make taking part in activity tourism affordable (along with, in some instances, decreasing cost of equipment)
- ▶ Increasing awareness of activity tourism via the internet; better access to the countryside/coast
- ▶ Growth of tour companies specialising in field of activity tourism and increasing professionalism in the sector
- ▶ Activity destinations are becoming more accessible via improved and low cost transport links with the growth of low cost airlines
- ▶ Greater awareness amongst consumer of the environmental impacts of tourism, particularly overseas travel, perhaps, leading to an increase in domestic UK tourism; also economic reasons for increase in the "stay at home holiday" market.

SUMMARY OF LIFESTYLE, HOLIDAY AND SOCIAL TRENDS RELEVANT TO OUTDOOR TOURISM

Trend	What it means for our areas	What it means for marketing	Relevant segment(s)
Showing off - where I went, what I did...	Our areas need to be somewhere you can show off what you do. Which have a status as a destination – and provide activities which offer status and are photogenic. This is most relevant to Wales and to DL as part of a Dublin break (link to Dublin City +)	Social media channels – use of # on twitter, Flickr, destination or provider Facebook pages.	All segments from taster to enthusiast
Flop & Fitness	Activity needs to be incorporated alongside lazing, shopping and sight-seeing	Itineraries for physical activity coupled with relaxation	All segments from taster to enthusiast
Staycation – increase in domestic holidays and breaks.	Communicate value for money, ease of access and care for special area	Easy online information and booking. Packages, smart cards, vouchers	All segments from taster to enthusiast
Desire for easy - relates to info and booking, but also taster sessions, thrills without danger (eg Go Ape sort of thing). Equipment supplied	Most relevant for product development/business development. Information must be easy to find and use. Centralised booking. Relevant to both Wales and Ireland. All types of activity	Clear, easily navigated websites with the right content and good functionality. At all levels from individual provider to national destination sites. Also clear articulation of the offer across all channels.	Taster and learners
'Wilderness Refined' Outdoors + creature comforts' - good food easily available, nice places to stay, drying rooms	Collaboration with accommodation and other tourism providers. Relevant to all areas.	Packages. Links and information Good opportunity for press trips	Tasters, learners, dabblers. But probably a sub-segment of each not all.
Extreme/hard core - triathlons, challenge	New events and expand existing. Most relevant to Wales because of infrastructure and	Niche market but could be used to generate good PR.	Only enthusiasts would participate. Dabblers

<p>racers, free climbing etc</p>	<p>maturity of the sector.</p>	<p>Good photo opportunities and wider news coverage. Supports the outdoor/activity brand showing you are a serious player.</p>	<p>would enjoy finding out about and going to same places. Awareness among tasters and learners.</p>
<p>Self-satisfaction / self-actualisation</p>	<p>Offer of ‘pure’ experiences ie remote, getting close to nature, unpackaged. Or very challenging experiences. Or the desire to learn something new. Challenging and learning experiences will need packaging. Relevant to all our areas, but mostly to Wales.</p>	<p>Subtle messages in marketing communications. Promotion of packages via web and directly by providers.</p>	<p>Learners, dabblers and enthusiasts. Internally referenced.</p>
<p>Box ticking / achievements.</p>	<p>Need to have achievements which are worth ticking boxes on. Most relevant to Wales and DL.</p>	<p>Promoting ‘best ofs’; top 5s; giving stats eg times, league tables. Making it competitive Social media useful platform.</p>	<p>All segments. But probably a sub-segment of each – externally referenced.</p>
<p>Short activity breaks replacing city breaks</p>	<p>Growing market and interest in action-packed breaks in rural areas</p>	<p>Promotion of high adrenalin, exciting breaks</p>	<p>Tasters</p>
<p>Experiences – desire for experiences rather than things or objects. Participation rather than passive</p>	<p>Activities are ideal vehicles for offering experiences – participation rather than voyeurism, engagement and interaction.</p>	<p>Present activity holidays and breaks as experiences – tap into the emotional motivators outlined above</p>	<p>All segments</p>
<p>Active Greys or Vigorous Old</p>	<p>New markets and new opportunities</p>	<p>Tailor (relevant) offers to this segment – nb be careful not to patronise or make assumptions. These are fit people!</p>	<p>All segments</p>
<p>Slow Travel – opportunity to relax, authentic</p>	<p>Particularly relevant to Kildare & Kilkenny Packaging of activity plus other experiences</p>	<p>Packaging. Promoting what else there is to do. Tone of voice and images important</p>	<p>Tasters and dabblers</p>

experiences, get to know a place and its people			
Family bonding – quality time with each other and with the kids	Activities for different interests, skill levels, ages. Boating, walking and cycling particularly relevant. Packaging with accommodation	Social media channels, images and messages important “activities are a great way to keep the kids happy...”	Tasters, dabblers and learners