

THE ROLE OF ELEARNING APPLICATIONS
WITHIN THE TOURISM
AND HOSPITALITY SECTOR:
ELEARNING COURSES FOR TRAVEL AGENTS

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There are some DMOs that offer training and accreditation online to retail travel agents to become
'destination specialists'

(Handbook on e-Marketing for Tourism Destinations, UNWTO, 2008)

DMOs / NTOs...

- thanks to ICTs got a direct contact with travelers / prospects
- have been perceived (and maybe have become) as a threat to intermediaries
- but...
- ... are realizing that travel agents
- ✓ are not (AT ALL) their enemies
- ✓ are still alive and could be allies
- ✓ should be involved also through internet-supported B2B initiatives

Brick and Mortar Travel Trade

- have lost market-share, and many disappeared, especially in economically advanced countries (where FIT do live)
- ✓ too early to declare their end
- ✓ do still play a major role in developing markets and for specific segments...
- have embraced ICTs as pioneers, but then started to feel threatened by them
- are striving to find their place in the new eTourism context



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SEPTEMBER 7, 2014, 9:00 AM

Don't count travel agents out just yet.

Although online travel websites like Orbitz and Travelocity are now responsible about 70% of travel booking in the U.S., the folks who work out of brick-and-mortar travel agencies are reporting booming sales.

Travel agents say revenues, bookings and the total number of clients are up in the first half of 2014 compared with the same period last year, according to a survey by the American Society of Travel Agents, which represents nearly 6,000 travel agents across the country.

Photos



Daytime talk show host, comedian and Academy Awards show host Ellen DeGeneres led the list of celebrities whose homes tourists most wanted to see in 2013. The list is compiled by Starline Tours, the largest celebrity tour bus company in Los Angeles.

Of the agents questioned in the survey, 47% reported higher revenue, with 27% saying revenue has remained about the same as last year. Also, 45% reported more transactions this year, with 30% saying business has been about the same.

The surge in business for travel agents may be a sign that Americans—encouraged by an improved economy and higher home values—are turning to travel agents to plan more intricate vacations, according to travel agents.

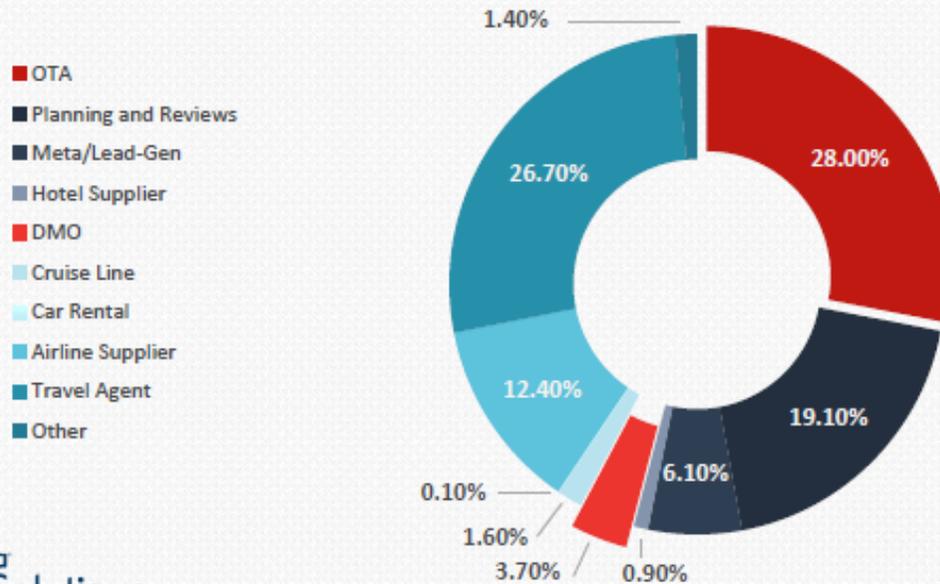
“You book an airline seat or a hotel online,” said Jay Johnson, owner of Coastline Travel Advisors in Garden Grove. “But if you want to do something more

exotic like go to Buton in Indonesia, you want to talk to an expert.”

OTAs, Planning & Reviews and Traditional Travel Agent Sites are Most Visited

Share of Visits by Travel Category

(Share of segment's total travel visits claimed by each travel category, Aug'13-Jan'14 aggregate)



Read as: 3.7% of all visits to Travel Sites made by segment members were attributed to DMOs

Prospects / travellers

- some have embraced with enthusiasm ICTs
- others are (getting) confused by info overload
 - ▣ looking for assistance
- others do not have access (yet)

The screenshot shows the TravelPulse website interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Search TravelPulse.com" and a "GO" button. To the right of the search bar are links for "Sign In / Register" and "Follow TravelPulse" with social media icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. The main header features the "TRAVEL PULSE" logo on the left, a central banner with the text "Your Website. Your Way." and "We build it." next to a small image of a laptop, and a purple box on the right that says "START YOUR 7 DAY FREE TRIAL NOW!" with the "AS AGENT STUDIO" logo. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for "SUBSCRIBE", "NEWS", "DEALS", "VIDEO", "OPINION", "TRENDING", "SUPPLIERS", "DESTINATIONS", "MAGAZINES", and "TRAINING & TOOLS". A small text line indicates "Last updated: 07:00 PM ET, Fri September 05 2014". The main content area features a large article titled "Survey Says: More Affluent Travelers Plan to Use Travel Agents" by James Shillinglaw, dated September 05, 2014. Below the article title is a large image of a man and a woman on a boat. To the right of the article is a sidebar with a repeating advertisement for "AS AGENT STUDIO" that says "Your Website. Your Way. We build it. START YOUR 7 DAY FREE TRIAL NOW!". Below the advertisement is a "SIGN UP FREE" button for the TravelPulse Daily newsletter. At the bottom of the page, there is a "FEATURED VIDEO" section with a small video player showing a man in a blue shirt sitting in a forest.

Destinational eLearning Courses. Facts & Figures

Between 2009 and 2012 almost doubled.

As of now:

eLearning offers by NTOs: 75

Target public: Travel Agents and Tour Operators

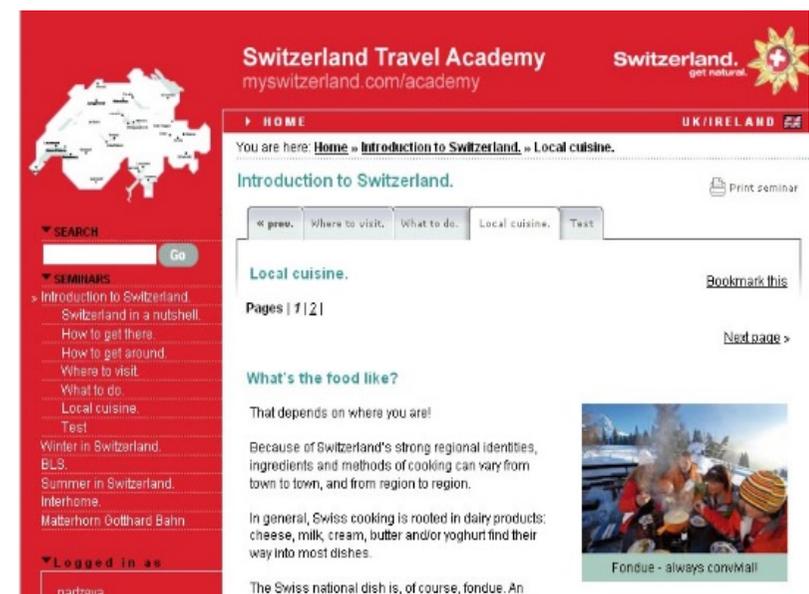
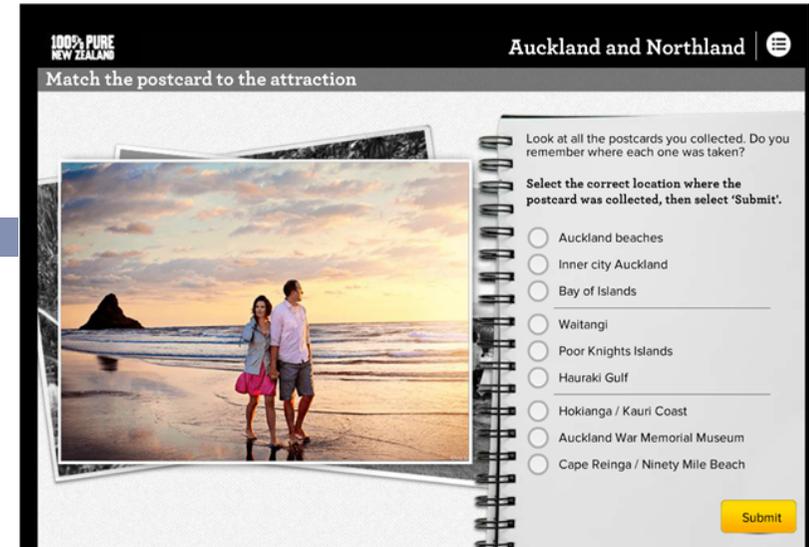
Providers: DMOs (including the city level!)

Teaching/learning strategy: self-study, asynchronous mode

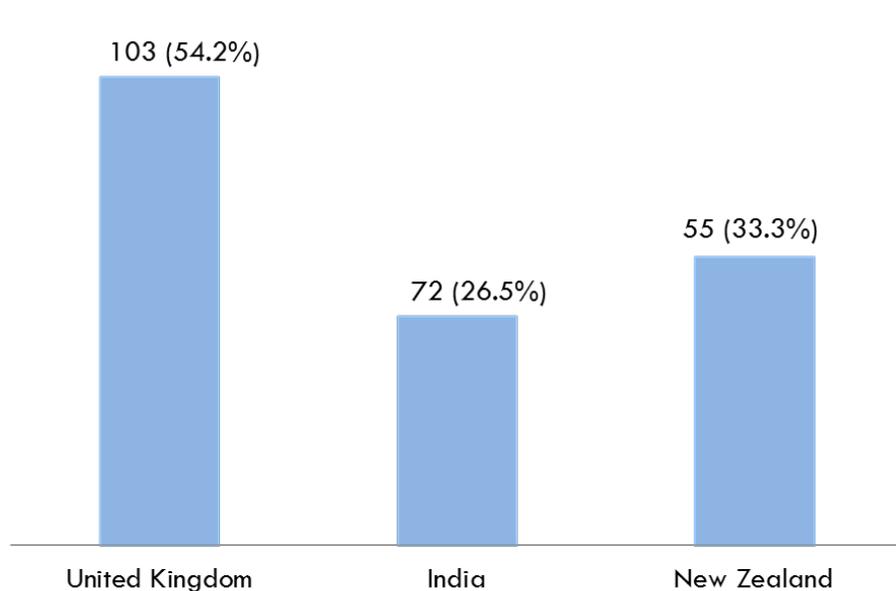


How they work

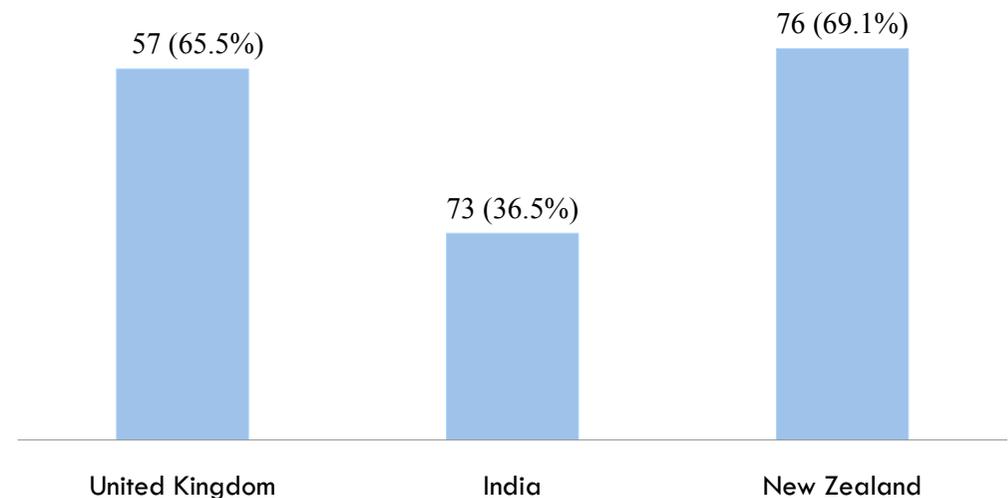
- Contents
 - ▣ Geography, Culture, Languages, Traditions, Accommodation, Transportation, Formalities, Itinerary Planning, Selling tips
- Incentives
 - ▣ certificate
 - ▣ suggested travel consultants' list
 - ▣ promotional gadgets
 - ▣ discounts
 - ▣ invitations to educational trips



Participation and awareness in three markets



Participation in destinational eLearning courses



Awareness about destinational eLearning courses among those who haven't participated

Motivations

NTOs

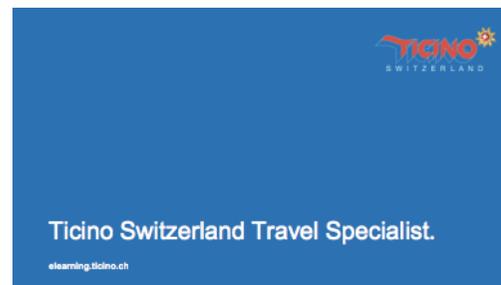
- coordinate industry partners
- curate brand identity
- enhance educational opportunities among trade partners globally
- save on training and trade partnership costs
- help travel trade to effectively plan, promote and sell the destination
- provide credibility to travel agents through certification

Travel Trade

- upgrade knowledge and skills
- overcome competition
- satisfy the needs of a new consumer
- study online (from office/home) as unable to leave the enterprise for in-present trainings, workshop, road shows
- get certified

The case of Ticino Switzerland Travel Specialist

- www.ticino.ch/e-learning
 - ▣ Total number of users: 650
 - ▣ Certified users: 281

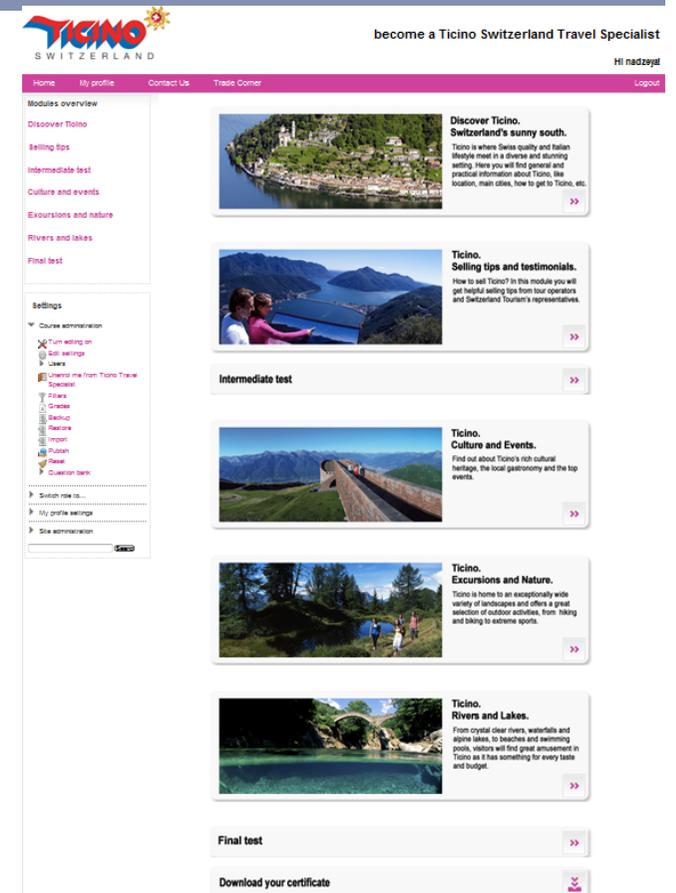


Ticino Turismo certifies
nadzeva kalbaska
 as a qualified Ticino Switzerland Travel Specialist
 for having successfully completed
 the Ticino eLearning course.
 Congratulations!



Elis Frappoli
President

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Thanks!

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More info:

www.elearning4tourism.com

To try a course:

www.ticino.ch/e-learning



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