



**From Content To
Conversion, Turning
Photos, Videos, and Words
Into Sales!**



Introduction:

After more than a decade of building successful travel websites and creating content that reaches millions of travelers annually, Heather and I have learned one crucial lesson: the photos and videos you're already taking can be your most powerful sales tools.

In fact, the image and video library that Heather and I have accumulated over the past several years plus assets provided by the cruise lines, BDM teams, and our host agency, have allowed us to continue building our client base even when we're not able to travel as frequently as we'd like to be able to do.

As influencers and agency owners, we've discovered that the key to driving cruise and resort bookings isn't just about having beautiful content – it's about knowing how to use it strategically.

That's why I've prepared this guide to show you how to transform the content you're already capturing into a booking generation machine. Whether you're doing ship inspections, resort site visits, or enjoying your own vacations, every moment is an opportunity to create content that converts.

Thank you for downloading my e-book, please feel free to reach out to me any time if you are looking for more information and insights regarding content marketing for Travel Advisors and Destination Marketers!

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Our Family Of Websites:

- FlowVoyages.com
- ManTripping.com
- CruiseWestCoast.com
- CouplePlaces.com

A blurred background of a desk with a laptop, a notebook, a pen, and a coffee cup. The text is overlaid on this background.

Creating Content That Solves Real Problems

“Understanding the customer journey isn't just about tracking the path from interest to booking - it's about recognizing the specific concerns and questions that drive people to seek out a travel advisor in the first place. Some of the most powerful content you can create addresses particular planning scenarios that overwhelm potential clients.”

Special Occasions: Beyond the Basic Birthday Cake

When someone searches for “birthday cruise” or “anniversary resort,” they're not just looking for a place to celebrate - they're looking for reassurance that their special occasion will be memorable. While cruise lines and resorts all advertise celebration packages, your content should address the real questions that keep planners up at night.

Pre-booking content for celebration planners should address concerns like:

- Coordination between multiple cabins/rooms for group celebrations
- Private venue options and associated costs
- Photography services and policies
- Special meal arrangements and cake-ordering processes
- Entertainment and decoration restrictions

A client planning a milestone birthday doesn't just need to know that the cruise line offers birthday packages - they need to understand how to coordinate dinner for 12 people, whether they can bring their own decorations, and if there's a private space where family can gather.

Accessibility: The Details That Matter

The difference between a generic “accessible rooms available” note and truly helpful content can be the deciding factor for clients with mobility concerns. Your content should go beyond listing ADA compliance to address real-world usage scenarios.

Consider creating detailed guides that address:

- Actual door widths and turning radiuses in different room categories
- Bathroom configuration details with photos
- Distance and terrain between key venues
- Elevator access and peak usage times
- Equipment rental processes and policies

For example, instead of just noting that a resort is “wheelchair accessible,” create content that walks through a typical day: How far is breakfast from the accessible rooms? What's the surface like between the room and the pool? Are there thresholds to navigate on balconies?



Family Planning Beyond "Kid-Friendly"

Parents researching family vacations aren't just looking for confirmation that children are welcome - they're looking for logistical reassurance. Your content should address specific scenarios like:

Baby Care Basics: Walking through real considerations like pack-n-play placement options in different room categories, bottle warming services, and beach stroller accessibility.

Teen Space: Addressing parental concerns about independence while maintaining safety, like meet-up spots, supervised activities, and communication options.

Multi-Generation Management: Helping families plan spaces and activities that work for grandparents through toddlers, including dining arrangements and activity coordination.

Converting Interest to Bookings

While detailed planning information is crucial, remember to maintain focus on conversion. Each piece of content should include:

- Clear next steps for booking
- Relevant timing considerations
- Package or promotion tie-ins
- Direct contact information

For example, when creating content about birthday celebration planning, include notes about booking windows for private venues or specialty restaurants. When discussing accessibility features, mention high-demand periods for accessible rooms and optimal booking timelines.

The Content Balance

Your goal is to create a resource library that answers specific planning questions while moving potential clients toward booking. This means:

Primary Focus: In-depth answers to specific planning scenarios that drive bookings. These should make up about 70% of your content efforts.

Supporting Content: General information and post-booking support that helps clients execute their plans, comprising about 30% of your content.

Remember: While the beautiful sunset photos and general destination content have their place, it's the detailed planning content that typically converts browsers to bookers. Focus your primary content creation efforts on addressing specific planning scenarios, and you'll find your content becoming a more effective sales tool.



Understanding The Sales Funnel

Most travel advisors are incredibly good at networking and building a client base through traditional word-of-mouth tactics like partnering with community groups, attending wedding shows, and simply providing amazing customer service that makes one client tell five of their friends.

To a new travel advisor it almost seems like magic. The truth is that this is a lot of hard work and it takes time! The same is true with content marketing and you need to have a basic understanding of marketing fundamentals in your back pocket before we begin.

As you think about your business, consider how different types of content can help you build awareness, interest (consideration), conversion, and loyalty.



Awareness:

Hosting a Facebook Live video stream from the Wake: "We're on Virgin Voyages, do you have any questions for us?"

Interest:

Photo gallery of the unique food such as poke, noodles, vegan milk and cookies etc. that you had on the cruise.

Conversion (sales):

Responding to an interested prospective customer who posts a comment about how LGBT-friendly Virgin Voyages is with your unique tracking link, contact information, and being able to show him some photos from the pool deck, all-gender restrooms, and a video from a queer cruise influencer promoting how much they loved the cruise.

Loyalty:

Sending an email out to your client list sharing the things you loved about your Virgin Voyages cruise, as well as texting some images and videos to a couple of special clients that you know are interested in specific elements such as the exclusivity of Richard's Rooftop, vegan dining options etc.

So now that we have your creative juices going, let's dive in and go a bit deeper!

Chapter 1: Understanding the Cruise and Resort Content Landscape



The cruise and all-inclusive resort markets are unique in the travel industry. Unlike simply promoting a hotel or a destination, as a travel advisor putting together a content marketing strategy, you are ultimately focusing on promoting an experience.

This experience includes everything from the hotel aspect of a cruise or resort - rooms, restaurants, daily activities etc. as well as the destination itself.

This creates both challenges and opportunities in content creation.

What Content Really Drives Cruise and Resort Bookings?

Through years of analytics and client feedback, I've discovered that the most compelling content often isn't what you'd expect. While sunset shots and infinity pools get likes, it's the detailed, practical content that drives bookings:

- Cabin and room layouts with actual storage solutions
- Real-world dining experiences (not just the fancy presentation shot)
- Entertainment venues during both peak and quiet times
- The reality of sea days and resort activities
- Behind-the-scenes glimpses that clients can't find on official websites
- Niche points of interest for specific clients who you want to consider booking with you and not just going to a cruise deal website.

This may seem a bit daunting but while you absolutely should generate your own unique photos and videos, resources like YouTube are a fabulous asset filled with great content that is free to share with clients, integrate into your newsletters, and build blog posts around.

A decorative white plate with chocolate swirls and the words "Welcome" and "Gille" is set on a table. On the plate are several macarons in various colors (yellow, pink, green) and a stack of brown cookies. A blue glass dinosaur figurine stands on the plate. In the background, a bowl of fruit (apple, orange, banana, kiwi) is visible.

**Content That
Converts vs.
Content That
Just Looks
Pretty!**

When I started doing ship inspection videos and photos, I was focused on getting the “beautiful shots” and chasing professional production companies and mega-influencers. I quickly discovered, though that the reality of content marketing for travel advisors is that it’s more important to focus on getting lots of video clips that feature unique details than just a pretty picture of a flower arrangement on the bed.

For example, we had a recent client that was looking at booking an accessible cabin on Norwegian Prima, she’s traveled around the country staying at hotels and was always frustrated by how limited some “accessible” rooms actually are. We were able to show her and her partner the video we took recently including things like the pull-down hanger rack and bathroom details.

Make sure that your content shows your current and future clients that you are the one that they feel comfortable working with to create an amazing vacation experience.



Chapter 2: Maximizing Your Ship Inspection and Resort Site Visit Content



Ship inspections and resort site visits are gold mines for content creation, but only if you capture the right moments. Here's how to make the most of your limited time:

Pre-Planning Your Content Capture

Before every ship inspection or resort visit, I create a content capture checklist based on common client questions as well as questions that I find people asking in the comments on YouTube videos and other forums:

For Cruises:

- Cabin storage solutions
- Bathroom size comparisons between categories
- Dining venue capacity and atmosphere
- Pool deck at different times of day
- Entertainment venue sightlines
- Specialty restaurant menus
- Sea day activity spaces

For Resorts:

- Room category differentiators
- Beach access timing and distance
- Restaurant reservation processes
- Pool atmosphere throughout the day
- Spa facilities and treatment rooms
- Kids' club spaces and activities
- Evening entertainment venues

Food, drinks, and snacks are an incredibly important part of any vacation experience but this can be challenging to capture during a ship inspection because things are so tightly controlled. However, I do like to take a peak at the buffet, bar area, and ask for menus so I can take photos of those as well.

Additionally, I always make a point to take photos of accessible travel elements where possible. This includes the rooms but also beach wheelchairs and which pools have lifts.

Resort Tours & Ship Inspections:

A ship inspection or resort tour isn't a replacement for an actual familiarization trip or individually booked travel experience. However, it is still a great resource for capturing content that you can use to share with your community. Use these opportunities to tease future content and build your pitch to your BDM so they can help make sure you're invited back to do more indepth content in the future!

Chapter 3: Content With Purpose: Beyond Direct Sales



Every piece of content you create should serve a specific purpose in your business strategy. While generating sales is crucial, other objectives can indirectly support your business growth. Understanding this broader perspective helps you create a more effective content strategy.

Primary Business Objectives

Your core content should primarily support key business goals. This might mean creating a detailed ship tour video to generate leads, writing a comprehensive cruise planning guide to capture newsletter signups, or sharing client success stories to encourage referrals. Each piece should have a clear purpose that moves your business forward.

When planning content, ask yourself: "What specific action do I want someone to take after consuming this?" Sometimes it's a direct booking inquiry, but other times it might be joining your email list or downloading a planning guide. These stepping stones build toward future sales.

Supporting Industry Partners

Your Business Development Manager (BDM) might occasionally ask you to promote specific campaigns or initiatives. While these requests shouldn't dominate your content strategy, supporting them can yield unexpected benefits. A BDM who sees you as a reliable partner might provide extra support during wave season, offer additional marketing resources, or prioritize your clients for upgrades.

The key is balance. If promoting a cruise line's new ship launch aligns with your target audience's interests, it can serve both your BDM relationship and your business goals. However, if pushing a particular promotion would distract from your core strategy, it's fine to politely decline.



Strategic Content Planning

Before creating any content, consider:

- How does this support my business objectives?
- What specific action do I want to drive?
- Does this align with my target audience's interests?
- Can this serve multiple purposes?
- Will this build valuable relationships?

Remember that not every piece of content needs to drive immediate sales. Building your email list, increasing brand awareness, and strengthening industry relationships all contribute to long-term success. The key is maintaining a clear understanding of each content piece's purpose and ensuring it aligns with your overall business strategy.

Chapter 4: Content Promotion: A Strategic Approach



Creating valuable content is just the beginning. To make your content truly effective, you need a thoughtful promotion strategy that leverages three distinct types of media: owned, paid, and earned. Each plays a crucial role in reaching and engaging potential clients.

Owned Media: Your Content's Foundation

Your owned media channels form the foundation of your content strategy. At its core is your blog, which serves as your content hub. Unlike social platforms, you maintain complete control over your blog, making it an invaluable asset for your business. Regular updates with useful content, clear organization, and strong calls to action will help convert visitors into clients.

Email newsletters remain one of the most effective ways to reach potential clients. A consistent schedule mixing promotional and informational content keeps your audience engaged. The key is segmenting your list based on interests, allowing you to provide more relevant content to each subscriber.

Private Facebook groups offer a unique opportunity to build community around your travel expertise. Rather than creating a single general group, consider separate spaces for different travel interests. This allows for more focused discussions and targeted content sharing.

Text messaging has emerged as a powerful tool for immediate connection with clients. Creating specific groups for destinations or ships allows you to share quick updates and deals while maintaining personal connection. The key is keeping messages brief and valuable while making it easy for people to opt in and out.

Paid Media: Strategic Amplification

Paid promotion can significantly accelerate your reach when used strategically. Facebook and Instagram ads offer powerful targeting capabilities, allowing you to reach specific demographics with visual content. Starting with small test budgets helps you refine your approach before scaling successful campaigns.

Content discovery platforms like Taboola provide another avenue for reaching potential clients. These platforms can place your educational content on major news sites, expanding your reach to new audiences. Success here requires compelling headlines and images, but always test with small budgets before expanding.

Earned Media: Modern Authority Building

The landscape of earned media has transformed dramatically. While traditional PR agencies still offer value, new tools have made it possible for travel advisors to build media relationships directly. Services like Press Ranger enable you to create targeted media lists and connect with relevant journalists, influencers, and podcasters without the substantial investment previously required.

Building relationships with travel influencers and podcasters offers another path to earned media. The key is offering genuine expertise and unique insights rather than just seeking promotion. These relationships, when cultivated properly, can lead to ongoing opportunities for sharing your expertise.

Creating an Integrated Strategy

The most effective promotion strategies combine all three media types thoughtfully. Start by building a strong foundation with your owned media channels. Your blog, email list, and social groups provide the base from which you can grow. Once established, use paid promotion strategically to amplify your most valuable content.

As your presence grows, focus on earning media coverage by sharing your expertise and building relationships with industry media. Track your results across all channels to understand what delivers the best results for your specific audience.

Measuring Impact

Success in content promotion requires careful tracking of results. For owned media, monitor website traffic, email engagement, and group participation. With paid promotion, track not just costs but conversion rates and lead quality. For earned media, pay attention to the quality of mentions and resulting referral traffic.

Remember that effective content promotion isn't about being everywhere – it's about being present and effective in the channels that matter most to your potential clients. Start with strong owned media, use paid promotion strategically, and build earned media opportunities over time. Focus your efforts on the channels that deliver the best results for your specific business goals.

Chapter 5: Three Essential Content Types for Travel Advisors



"In my years of content creation and travel marketing, I've discovered that success isn't about trying to do everything. Instead, it's about choosing a few key content types and executing them well. While many content formats are available for us to use, I've identified three buckets that any travel advisor can implement, regardless of their experience level or technical expertise.

Before we dive into these formats, let's address a crucial truth: content without distribution is worthless. Too many travel advisors fall into the trap of thinking their content will magically "go viral" or that they'll build a massive following overnight. The reality is that building an engaged audience takes years of consistent effort. Success comes from consistently creating valuable content and having a clear distribution strategy for reaching your target audience.

Targeting your strategy is just as important as curating the content - after all, if you just wanted likes, shares and comments you could focus exclusively on beautiful cruise food or taking photos of a beautiful model posing around the resort. That's not going to sell vacations though!"

Let's explore the three content types that have proven most effective for travel advisors:

1. Produced Videos (YouTube + Short Form)

Video content is powerful because it builds authority and creates personal connections with potential clients. However, many advisors avoid it because they think they need professional equipment or extensive editing skills. The truth is, that you can create effective video content with just your smartphone and basic editing apps.

Key Strategies for Video Content:

- Start with ship and resort walk-throughs
- Focus on answering common client questions
- Keep videos short and focused on specific topics
- Use both long-form (YouTube) and short-form (Reels/TikTok) formats
- Include practical tips and insider information
- Show your personality while maintaining professionalism

Distribution Approach:

- Post consistently on YouTube (aim for weekly)
- Repurpose long-form content into short clips
- Share videos in relevant Facebook groups
- Include embedded video and links in your client newsletters
- Use videos in follow-up emails to prospects, potentially including personalized pitches created just for those prospects that have a high potential of booking this product

Remember: Building a YouTube following takes time. Focus first on creating a library of useful content you can share with clients during their booking journey. If you aren't ready to post weekly - post when you can. This won't be as effective but cumulatively you can create a library of content that can be shared directly as well as attracting potential leads from folks that find it through search.

2. Blog Posts (Owned and Guest Content)

Written content is often overlooked in today's video-first world but it remains incredibly lucrative, and you can create promotable content without having the detailed visual assets needed to create a video. Blog posts are especially powerful for advisors who aren't comfortable on camera or want to promote destinations they haven't visited yet. They're also excellent for SEO and establishing expertise.

Effective Blog Strategies:

- Focus on specific, searchable topics
- Include detailed, practical information
- Use headers and bullet points for readability
- Incorporate your keywords naturally
- Add relevant photos to break up text
- Include clear calls to action

Distribution Approach:

- Post on your own website consistently
- Seek guest posting opportunities
- Share posts in relevant online communities
- Include in your email newsletters
- Repurpose content for social media posts

Pro Tip: Don't just write about destinations - focus on solving specific problems or answering common questions your clients have.

3. Photos and Videos for All Channels

Smartphone content is the most accessible format for any travel advisor. Modern phones can capture professional-quality photos and videos that can be shared across multiple platforms. The key is knowing how to use this content effectively.

Content Capture Strategy:

- Focus on authentic, in-the-moment shots
- Capture both overview and detail shots
- Take photos and videos of the same scene
- Document the entire travel experience
- Include people (with permission) for scale
- Show both luxury moments and practical details

Distribution Strategy:

- Share in Facebook groups (both your own and others)
- Include in email newsletters
- Post on your personal social media profiles
- Use in blog posts and marketing materials
- Send directly to interested clients

Real-World Application: During a ship inspection, you might:

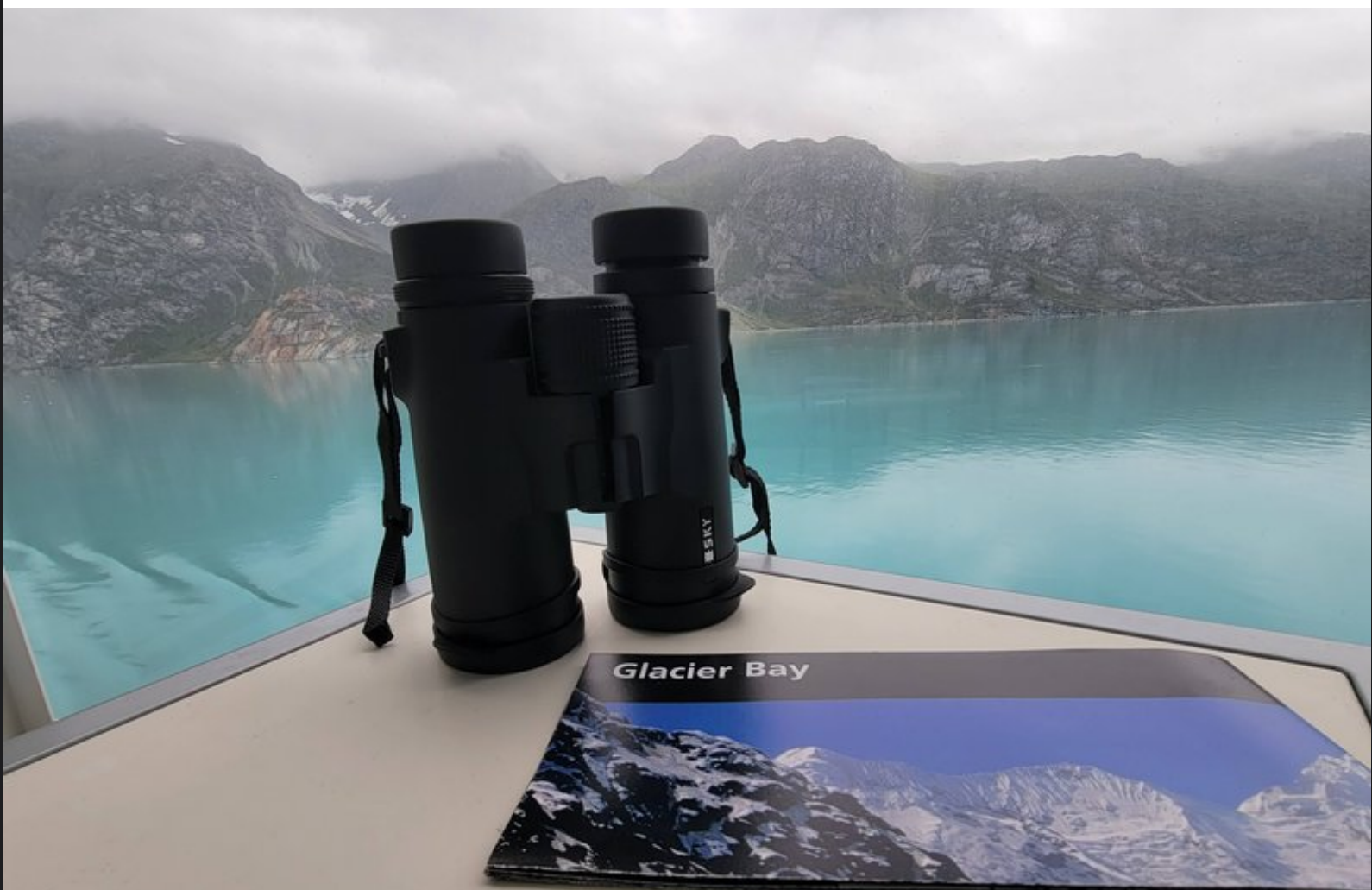
- Take 360-degree room videos for YouTube
- Capture detail photos of storage solutions
- Film quick tips for social media
- Document dining experiences for blog posts
- Record walk-throughs for client emails

Consistency and strategic distribution are the key to success with any of these content types. Rather than trying to be everywhere, focus on:

1. Creating valuable content regularly
2. Building a content library you can reference
3. Distributing through channels where your clients are active
4. Measuring what generates actual bookings and the booking value
5. Adjusting your strategy based on results

Remember: Your goal isn't to become an influencer - it's to use content to support your travel business. Focus on creating content that helps your clients make informed decisions and positions you as their trusted travel advisor.

Chapter 6: Making Meaningful Connections Through Content



Creating content isn't just about showcasing destinations – it's about making yourself accessible and building relationships with potential clients. The key is ensuring that people can easily connect with you whenever and however they're ready to start planning their vacation.

Clear Introductions Matter

Every piece of content you create should clearly establish who you are and how you can help. This isn't about selling; it's about being transparent and accessible.

Video Introductions

Start your videos with a simple, friendly introduction: "Hi, I'm Heather with Flow Voyages, and I'm a cruise specialist who helps families plan memorable vacations. Today, I'm touring the new Virgin Voyages ship..."

Blog Post Bylines

Include a clear byline and brief introduction: "Written by James Hills, Luxury Resort Specialist at Flow Voyages. I've helped over dozens of couples plan their perfect beach getaways, and I'm here to share some insights about choosing the right resort for your next couples getaway"

Making It Easy to Connect

People consume content in different ways and reach out through different channels. Make sure you're accessible through whatever method they prefer.

Essential Contact Information

Include in all content:

- Direct phone number for calls or texts
- Professional email address
- Links to custom booking pages
- Social media handles (if you use them professionally)

Example footer for blog posts: "Have questions about planning your cruise? I'm here to help! Text or call me at (555) 123-4567, or visit my Viking Cruises booking page at [custom link] to explore available sailings."

Custom Booking Links

Many cruise lines and resorts provide custom booking links that track your referrals. Use these strategically:

- Include them in your video descriptions
- Add them to blog post resource sections
- Share them in follow-up emails
- Use them in your email signature

Remember: These links ensure you get credit even if clients book directly through the cruise line or resort website.

Building Trust Through Accessibility

Your content should make potential clients feel comfortable reaching out, whether they're ready to book or just starting to explore options.

Video Endings

Close videos with a warm invitation: "If you'd like to learn more about this ship or start planning your own cruise, feel free to text me at [number]. I'm always happy to chat about travel, and there's never any pressure to book."

Blog Post Conclusions

End posts with an open invitation: "Planning a resort vacation can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to figure it out alone. Feel free to call or text me at [number] with any questions. I'm here to help make the process easier, whether you're ready to book or just starting to explore your options."

Making Content Work Long- Term

Your content should continue working for you long after it's published. Make sure it includes:

Evergreen Contact Information

- Use a dedicated business phone number
- Create professional email addresses
- Set up custom booking page links
- Include multiple ways to connect

Clear Expertise Statements

Help people understand how you can help: "As a certified Viking Cruises specialist, I can help you navigate cabin choices, shore excursions, and booking timing to ensure you get the best value for your vacation."

Instead of pushing for immediate bookings, offer simple ways to learn more:

- Download planning guides
- Access comparison charts
- Schedule casual conversations
- Join information sessions

Natural Content Promotion

Your goal isn't to sell in every piece of content – it's to be helpful and make it easy for people to connect with you when they're ready. Whether someone texts you six months after watching your video or books directly through your custom link, ensure they have all the information they need to reach you.

Instead, Focus on:

- Being clearly identifiable as a travel professional
- Providing multiple ways to connect
- Making custom booking links easily accessible
- Maintaining a helpful, pressure-free tone

The most effective content builds trust by being helpful and making it easy for potential clients to reach out through whatever channel they prefer.

Chapter 7: Measuring Success: Understanding True Client Value



When starting your content marketing efforts, the initial numbers might seem discouraging. You might spend \$1,000 on content creation and advertising to acquire your first few clients. Don't let this discourage you. Understanding the true value of a client requires looking beyond their first booking.

Calculating Client Acquisition Cost (CAC)

Your initial CAC calculation is simple: $\text{Total Marketing Spend} \div \text{Number of New Clients} = \text{CAC}$

For example:

- Content creation: \$500
- Advertising: \$400
- Social media tools: \$100
- Total new clients: 2 Initial CAC = \$500 per client

This might seem high, but here's where the math gets interesting.

Understanding Lifetime Value (LTV)

Let's look at a typical cruise client:

- Initial booking: \$3,000 commission
- Annual cruise: \$3,000 commission per year
- Average client retention: 5 years
- Basic LTV = \$15,000

But this is just the beginning.

The Hidden Value Multiplier: Referrals

Happy clients become your best marketers. A typical scenario:

- One satisfied client
- Refers two friends in first year
- Those friends refer others
- Zero acquisition cost for referred clients

Real Example: Your \$1,000 investment brought two clients

- Each books annually (\$3,000 commission x 5 years = \$15,000)
- Each refers two clients (4 new clients)
- Those clients book and refer others Initial \$1,000 investment can generate \$60,000+ in commissions over five years

Essential Metrics to Track

Marketing Investment

- Content creation costs
- Advertising spend
- Tool subscriptions
- Time investment

Client Value Indicators

- First booking value
- Rebooking rate
- Referral numbers
- Testimonial generation

Engagement Metrics

- Website visits
- Newsletter signups
- Resource downloads
- Consultation requests

Optimization Strategy

1. Track all marketing expenses
2. Monitor client booking patterns
3. Record referral sources
4. Calculate true ROI including referrals
5. Adjust marketing based on full picture

Remember ...

Don't let a high initial CAC discourage you. Focus on:

- Creating excellent client experiences
- Encouraging referrals
- Maintaining client relationships
- Tracking long-term value

Your most expensive marketing will be at the start. As referrals increase and your content library grows, your effective CAC will decrease while your booking volume continues to grow.

Chapter 8: Advanced Content Strategies for Cruise and Resort Sales



One of the biggest advantages of being both an influencer and agency owner is the ability to test content strategies at scale. Here are the advanced techniques that have proven most effective:

The Multi-Platform Content Matrix

Instead of creating separate content for each platform, we develop content matrices that tell a complete story across platforms:

Pre-Cruise/Resort Content:

- Instagram: Room and cabin tours, packing tips
- Facebook: Planning timelines, group discussions
- Blog: Detailed reviews and comparisons
- Email: Exclusive offers and insider tips

During-Trip Content:

- Instagram Stories: Real-time experiences
- Facebook Live: Virtual ship/resort tours
- Blog: Daily experience updates
- Email: Similar itinerary opportunities

Post-Trip Content:

- Instagram: Highlight reels and memory shares
- Facebook: Client success stories
- Blog: Comprehensive reviews
- Email: "Book your next" promotions

Leveraging User-Generated Content

Some of our most successful booking conversations start with client-created content. We've developed a system for encouraging and utilizing it:

- *Pre-Trip Photo Guides*: We send clients tips for capturing their own content
- *Hashtag Campaigns*: Property-specific tags that build our content library
- *Client Feature Programs*: Regular showcases of client experiences
- *Review Integration*: Combining visual content with written testimonials



Chapter 9: Creating Content Systems That Scale



As your business grows, you need systems that allow you to maintain content quality while increasing output. Here's our proven approach:

Content Calendars

We organize our content calendar around key booking windows:

Wave Season (January-March):

- Focus: Caribbean and Alaska cruises
- Content Type: Pricing comparisons, cabin tours
- Urgency Drivers: Early booking benefits, suite availability

Summer Planning (April-June):

- Focus: Mediterranean cruises and European resorts
- Content Type: Destination guides, excursion previews
- Urgency Drivers: Flight pricing trends, group space deadlines

Holiday Planning (July-September):

- Focus: Holiday cruises and resort packages
- Content Type: Celebration planning guides, group coordination tips
- Urgency Drivers: Limited availability, special event access

As you put together your content schedule, remember that you need to consider the customer journey and understand that what they are thinking about needs a lead time to translate into a purchase decision then actually executing on the vacation.

For instance, you may think that promoting Alaska cruises in February to folks in Michigan might be silly - but if they wait to book till May, the best rooms will be gone and there's little time for them to budget for the summer Alaska season. The same is true for folks booking tropical getaways and Christmas market river cruises in Europe.

Content Batching Strategies

We've developed efficient systems for content creation during ship inspections and resort visits:

5-Minute Room Tour Template:

1. Entrance and first impressions
2. Storage solutions and workspace
3. Bathroom details and features
4. Balcony or view highlights
5. Special amenities and extras

15-Minute Resort Overview:

1. Arrival experience
2. Room category quick tours
3. Restaurant walk-throughs
4. Pool and beach access
5. Activity highlights

Chapter 10: Building Authority With Media: A Travel Advisor's Guide to PR

"The days of needing an expensive PR agency to get media attention are over. Today's travel advisors can build significant visibility through strategic media appearances, podcast interviews, and guest posts. The key is understanding how to position yourself and your expertise."

Find Your Expert Angle

Before reaching out to any media outlets, identify your unique perspective. Perhaps you're particularly knowledgeable about accessibility in cruising, planning multi-generational resort vacations, or coordinating destination weddings. This specialized knowledge makes you valuable to media outlets looking for expert commentary.

Leverage Your Unique Travel Experiences

Think about the destinations you've visited, the types of travel you've planned, and the experiences you're passionate about. Maybe you've mastered family-friendly cruises, luxury honeymoons, or off-the-beaten-path adventures. Focus on what sets you apart from other advisors and share personal insights, stories, and tips that demonstrate your expertise in that niche.

Identify Your Ideal Client's Needs

Your expert angle should resonate with your target audience. Consider their pain points and interests. Are they budget-conscious travelers, adventure seekers, or looking for cultural immersion? By aligning your expertise with their specific needs, you'll position yourself as the go-to advisor for their dream trips.

Combine Personal Passions with Professional Skills

Your hobbies and interests can shape your angle. Love wine? Focus on wine tourism. Big on fitness? Cater to wellness retreats or active vacations. Merging personal passions with your travel knowledge not only makes your content authentic but also helps you connect with clients who share those interests.

Research Gaps in the Market

Examine what other travel advisors in your field are doing and look for areas where expertise is lacking. For example, if many advisors cover luxury Caribbean getaways but few discuss eco-lodges in Costa Rica, you could carve out a niche. Being one of the few experts in a specialized area makes you stand out in a crowded market.

Leveraging PR & Media Opportunities

Services like Press Ranger have revolutionized how travel advisors can connect with media. Instead of paying thousands to a PR agency, you can build relationships directly with journalists and content creators. When using these platforms:

Start with responding to queries in your specific expertise area. If you have deep knowledge about Caribbean cruises, focus on those opportunities first. Quality responses to a few relevant queries are more effective than generic responses to many.

Create a compelling expert profile that highlights your specific experience. Include relevant statistics, such as "planned over 200 multi-generational family vacations" or "coordinated accessibility arrangements for 50+ cruise passengers annually."

Podcast Guest Opportunities

Podcasts offer a unique opportunity to share your expertise while building personal connections with potential clients. The key is finding shows that align with your expertise and target audience.

When seeking podcast appearances, look beyond just travel shows. If you specialize in destination weddings, wedding planning podcasts might be perfect. If you focus on corporate retreats, business leadership podcasts could be ideal.

Prepare a clear value proposition for podcast hosts. Instead of just offering to "talk about travel," propose specific topics like "How to Plan a Multi-Generation Family Vacation Without Losing Your Mind" or "Making Luxury Travel Accessible: What Travelers with Mobility Challenges Need to Know."

Strategic Guest Posting

Guest posts on established blogs and travel sites can drive traffic to your own platforms while building authority. The key is creating content that serves both the host site's audience and your business goals.

Focus on solving specific problems When Writing Guest Posts

- Include actionable advice
- Share unique insights from your experience
- Tell compelling client stories (with permission)
- Link to relevant resources on your site

When executing a guest posting campaign, be wary of working with SEO link builders. These agencies will focus more on algorithmic strategies than focusing on quality and helping your content reach the right audiences.

Guest posting on blogs is a great way to build authority but it can quickly become a very expensive mess if not done properly.

Building Your Media Library

Every media appearance becomes part of your authority-building content library. Create a dedicated section on your website showcasing:

- Podcast interviews
- Media quotes
- Guest posts
- Expert commentary
- Speaking engagements



Converting Media Exposure to Client Bookings

Media Appearances Alone Won't Automatically Generate Bookings!

Instead, you must focus on creating clear paths for interested audiences to connect with you:

- Develop specific landing pages for media referrals
- Create lead magnets related to your expert topics
- Set up tracking links for different media appearances
- Follow up with media-specific email sequences

Remember that each media opportunity builds on the previous ones. What starts as a quote in a small blog post can lead to podcast appearances, which can lead to speaking engagements or features in major publications. The key is starting somewhere and consistently providing value.

Make Every Media Piece Work Harder For You!

- Creating social media content from appearances
- Sharing clips in your newsletter
- Adding media logos to your website
- Including mentions in your bio

Remember: Think Long Term

Building authority through media isn't about quick wins – it's about consistently demonstrating expertise over time. Focus on providing genuine value in every interaction, and your reputation will grow naturally.

Action Steps

1. Identify your expert positioning
2. Set up profiles on media connection platforms
3. Create your expert biography
4. Develop three signature topics
5. Start responding to relevant queries
6. Track and leverage every appearance

— “ —

"Being quoted in major publications or appearing on popular podcasts builds credibility that can't be bought through advertising. When potential clients research you online, these third-party endorsements provide powerful social proof!"

**Conclusion:
Your Content
Journey
Starts Now!**

Creating effective content for cruise and resort sales isn't about having the most polished photos. It's about understanding your audience, addressing their needs, and consistently delivering valuable information that helps them make confident booking decisions.

Every photo you take, every video you record, and every post you share is an opportunity to connect with potential clients and demonstrate your expertise. The key is to be strategic, authentic and focused on providing real value. The journey from content creator to successful travel advisor isn't about becoming an influencer – it's about using content strategically to build trust, showcase expertise, and drive bookings. Start with what you have, focus on providing value, and keep refining your approach based on what works for your audience.



Appendix A: Beyond Traditional Seasons: Unique Travel Opportunities

While traditional travel seasons drive much of our content planning, there are numerous other seasonal opportunities to generate bookings. Understanding these alternative timing windows can help you create targeted content when others are quiet.

Tax Season (February-April):

- Focus: Luxury resort getaways, premium cruise suites
- Content Type: Investment in experiences, using refunds wisely
- Urgency Drivers: Limited suite availability, early booking savings

Sports Draft Season (August-September):

- Focus: Resort weekends, sports-friendly cruise ships
- Content Type: Group planning guides, sports bar venue tours
- Urgency Drivers: Draft day timing, group space availability

Spring Break Planning (October-November):

- Focus: Family-friendly resorts, short cruises
- Content Type: Multi-family coordination tips, teen-friendly activities
- Urgency Drivers: Popular week availability, group rates

Corporate Retreat Season (September-October):

- Focus: All-inclusive resorts, private cruise venues
- Content Type: Meeting space tours, team building activities
- Urgency Drivers: End-of-year budget use, venue availability

Wedding Planning Season (January-March):

- Focus: Destination weddings, honeymoon packages
- Content Type: Wedding venue comparisons, planning timelines
- Urgency Drivers: Premium date availability, group room blocks

Back-to-School Booking (August):

- Focus: Holiday breaks, spring vacation planning
- Content Type: School calendar alignment guides, family coordination
- Urgency Drivers: Holiday availability, early booking rates

Bonus Season (December-January):

- Focus: Luxury experiences, bucket list trips
- Content Type: Suite comparisons, exclusive experiences
- Urgency Drivers: Limited luxury inventory, special perks

End of Fiscal Year (varies by industry):

- Focus: Corporate groups, incentive travel
- Content Type: Meeting space solutions, group activity guides
- Urgency Drivers: Budget deadlines, space availability

Dominican Baseball Experience Season (Year-round with winter peak):

- Focus: Luxury resorts near MLB academies in Boca Chica, San Pedro de Macorís, and other baseball hubs
- Content Type: Resort guides combining baseball academy visits, winter league game schedules, future star spotting opportunities
- Urgency Drivers: Winter league schedules, academy training sessions, perfect beach weather timing
- Special Opportunities: Exclusive resort packages with baseball academy tours, meetings with future stars, winter league VIP experiences

Remember: These alternative seasons often have less competition for attention than traditional peak booking periods, making your content more likely to stand out. Focus on creating urgency around specific timing windows while addressing the unique needs of each seasonal opportunity.

Appendix B: Travel Expert Media Pitch Template: Cruise Industry Specialist

This pitch letter template is designed to be dynamic and adaptable. While the core structure remains consistent, you can easily modify the middle paragraphs to incorporate breaking news, industry developments, or seasonal trends. This flexibility allows you to provide timely, relevant commentary that journalists seek when covering travel-related stories. Whether it's a new cruise line announcement, industry data release, or emerging travel trend, you can quickly adjust the content to offer your expert perspective on current events.

Subject: Local Cruise Expert Available for Travel Industry Insights and Consumer Tips

Dear [Editor/Reporter Name],

As a certified cruise specialist with [X] years of experience serving [City/Region] travelers, I regularly advise clients on everything from luxury Mediterranean voyages to family-friendly Caribbean adventures. Given the significant number of [Region] residents who cruise annually, I wanted to introduce myself as a resource for your travel-related coverage.

[Current Event Tie-In Example: With the cruise industry projecting record bookings for 2025 and several new ships launching in our region, local travelers are seeking guidance on everything from optimal booking windows to emerging destinations.]

I can offer your audience expert insights on:

- Latest cruise industry trends and how they affect local travelers
- Money-saving booking strategies and insider tips
- Ship and itinerary selection for different traveler types
- Regional cruise port developments and their economic impact
- Sustainable cruising practices and environmental considerations

Recent topics I've advised clients on include:

- Multi-generational family reunion cruises
- Luxury expedition voyages to remote destinations
- River cruising through European wine regions
- Wedding and honeymoon cruise planning

As a member of [Organizations/Certifications], I maintain deep connections within the cruise industry and stay current on market developments. I can provide quick-turn commentary for breaking news or contribute to longer-format pieces about travel trends.

You can view my professional background at [LinkedIn/Website]. I'm available for:

- Expert quotes and background information
- In-depth interviews
- Guest articles and blog posts
- TV/radio segments
- Consumer Q&A columns

For immediate response, reach me at: [Phone] [Email] [Social Media Handles]

I look forward to being a helpful resource for your travel coverage.

Best regards, [Your Name] [Agency Name] [Credentials/Certifications]

Media Pitch Distribution Strategy

Getting your pitch letter into the right hands is crucial for media coverage success. You have several options for distribution:

Professional PR Agency

- Full-service management of your media relations
- Access to established media contacts
- Professional writing and strategic guidance
- Higher cost but potentially better results

Self-Distribution via Press Ranger or Similar Services

- Monthly subscription options
- Build and maintain targeted media lists
- Track pitch success rates
- Send personalized follow-ups
- More cost-effective than full-service PR

Press Release Distribution Sites

- Wide distribution to news outlets
- SEO benefits from online placement
- Automated distribution to relevant channels
- Good for major announcements

For ongoing media relations, consider combining approaches:

1. Use Press Ranger or similar tools for regular pitching
2. Distribute major announcements via press release sites
3. Engage a PR agency for specific campaigns or launches

Remember to track your success rates and adjust your approach based on response patterns. Build relationships with journalists who respond to your pitches, and maintain consistent follow-up without being pushy.

Appendix C: Guest Posting Opportunities For Travel Advisors

The world of guest contributors for major media is extremely competitive, as it is even for smaller sites and local media. You should think of this as a ladder - start small and build your reputation and experience but don't lose sight of larger opportunities too. Remember - sometimes "things happen" and you can jump to the front of the line.

However, when working with my PR agency, I made clear that my expectation is to consistently hit singles and doubles each month. Homeruns will happen once people recognize your expertise.

Consumer Travel Publications That Accept Guest Posts

Lonely Planet: Accepts pitches for their digital platform. Focus on unique perspectives and off-the-beaten-path destinations. Submit through their contributor portal with clips of previous work. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/about/contribute>

Travel + Leisure: While primarily staff-written, they accept expert contributions for their digital platform. Pitch unique angles on luxury travel, focusing on expert insights that only travel advisors can provide. <https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-tips/how-to-pitch-travel-and-leisure>

Condé Nast Traveler: Accepts pitches for their digital platform, particularly interested in expert insights on luxury travel trends, destination expertise, and industry analysis. <https://www.cntraveler.com/info/how-to-pitch-conde-nast-traveler>

Industry Publications and Blogs

- Travel Weekly
- Travel Market Report
- TravelPulse
- Travel Research Online (TRO)
- Travel Agent Central
- Host Agency Reviews
- Insider Travel Report
- Luxury Travel Advisor
- Travel Agent Magazine
- The Company Dime
- Business Travel News
- Travel Industry Today
- Recommend Magazine

When approaching these publications, prepare a professional pitch similar to media outreach, but focus on your writing capabilities and topic expertise. Include sample clips of your writing, specific article ideas, and your unique perspective as a travel advisor.

Some publications like TravelPulse make the process straightforward with dedicated submission guidelines on their contact page. For others, you'll need to research the appropriate editor and make a direct connection.

Niche Market Publications

Depending on your specialization, consider reaching out to publications focused on specific market segments:

- LGBTQ2+ Travel: Passport Magazine, ManAboutWorld
- Accessible Travel: Emerging Horizons, Wheel:Life
- Corporate Travel: Business Travel Executive, Executive Travel
- Black Travel: Travel Noire, Black Enterprise Travel
- Hispanic Travel: Latino Travel, Vida Today
- Luxury Travel: Robb Report, Elite Traveler
- Family Travel: Family Travel Magazine, Parenthood Travel
- Adventure Travel: Adventure Travel News, Outside Magazine

Regional Travel Publications

- **State and regional travel magazines:** Often more receptive to local expert contributions
- **City-specific travel blogs:** Look for opportunities in your geographical area of expertise
- **Regional business journals:** Often interested in tourism industry perspectives

Finding Additional Opportunities

Research Methods

Google Search Operators

- Use: "travel blog" + "write for us"
- Use: "travel website" + "contributor guidelines"
- Use: "travel magazine" + "submission guidelines"

Social Media Research

- LinkedIn: Connect with travel editors and publication managers
- Twitter: Follow travel editors and look for calls for pitches
- Facebook Groups: Join travel writing and industry professional groups

Networking Approaches

Professional Organizations

- ASTA (American Society of Travel Advisors): Network with publication members
- SATW (Society of American Travel Writers): Connect with editors
- Travel Media Associations: Join regional chapters

Industry Events

- Travel industry trade shows
- Writer's conferences
- Tourism board events

Pitch Development Strategies

Essential Elements of a Strong Pitch

Unique Perspective

- Highlight your specific expertise
- Focus on niche market knowledge
- Share original insights

Professional Credentials

- Years of experience in the industry
- Specializations and certifications
- Notable achievements

Writing Samples

- Professional blog posts
- Industry newsletter contributions
- Previous published articles

Content Types That Typically Succeed

How-To Guides

- Industry best practices
- Client service techniques
- Business development strategies

Trend Analysis

- Emerging destination insights
- Travel behavior patterns
- Industry technology adoption

Case Studies

- Success stories
- Problem-solving examples
- Client experience improvements

Maintaining Professional Relationships

Follow-up Actions

- Share published pieces on social media
- Engage with comments
- Thank editors and maintain contact

Building Long-term Relationships

- Pitch regular columns
- Offer to be an expert source
- Provide referrals to other experts

Track Submissions

- Keep a spreadsheet of pitches and responses
- Follow up on pending submissions
- Monitor publication schedules

Content Calendar

- Plan seasonal content in advance
- Align with industry events
- Coordinate with publication editorial calendars

Resources and Tools

Writing and Editing

- **Grammarly:** Professional editing tool
- **Hemingway Editor:** Clarity improvement tool
- **AP Stylebook:** Industry standard style guide

Pitch Tracking

- **Trello:** Submission management
- **Google Sheets:** Pitch tracking template
- **Asana:** Editorial calendar management

Media Databases

- **Muck Rack:** Find journalist contacts
- **Cision:** Media outlet database
- **Help a Reporter Out (HARO):** Source request monitoring
- **Press Ranger:** Media outlet database and all-in-one tool aimed at startups