

6 ways you can market to a zoomer tourist

 By [Kerry Hayes](#)

19 Sep 2022

Generation Z individuals are bringing a new dynamic to the global travel space, including business travel and are using their youth to capitalise on the freedom of remote work culture.



Source: www.unsplash.com

These digital nomads are earning a living as they travel and optimising their time in different countries and cities by threading leisure travel experiences into their professional work structures. This opens huge doors of potential for the tourism industry to attract Gen Zs embarking on *bleisure* travel - who are spending their money on fully experiencing destinations and their attractions - across both leisure and business travel.

But this sharp and tech-smart generation needs fresh, innovative and engaging marketing tactics to grab their attention, build brand trust, and then convert into profitable business.

Here's what tourism businesses need to know about the Generation Z *bleisure* traveller, and how to market to them.

1. Capitalise on the Gen Z tech connection

Gen Zs were born surrounded by smart technology, so they expect tech to be part of their business travel experience. So much so, in fact, that they do their own travel research and often prefer to make their own bookings so that they have full control of their travel experience, and can customise elements according to their preferences.

Online tools such as flight, accommodation and transport search-and-compare engines enable Gen Zers to find airlines, flight times, and unique and interesting hotels that fit their preferences.



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Top tip: As a tourism business, ensure that your brand is accessible and easy to engage with on the digital platforms on which this generation spends most of its time. This includes social media channels like Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube - with TikTok currently being the most popular amongst Gen Zers, who enjoy short-form video content.

2. Unconventional accommodation with heart

Gen Zs are all about experiencing new and different things, and that includes where they stay while travelling. Smaller boutique hotels and short-stay accommodation are popular because they offer a different, more intimate experience for working digital nomads.

Top tip: Now is the time for smaller establishments to step up their marketing efforts. But keep it authentic - the “human element” is vital in building rapport and relationships with Gen Zs. Share meaningful experiences that they can enjoy when they’re taking time out of a busy work day - tapping into that emotive “me too” side is powerful when connecting with Gen Zs. And use storytelling! Stories build a taste of what an experience could be like, so they are already “committing” to you and your establishment.

Don’t forget to signpost the workplace-supportive features that your establishment has as well. While this generation plays hard, they work hard too, and need the facilities and amenities to support a streamlined work experience.

3. Give them what they want - for as long or short a time as needed

Gen Zs are like experience sponges - they want to experience as much as possible- and extra initiatives to deliver this for them will earn you a big gold star in their books. They also like to experience the “better things in life” that they may not normally have access to in their own daily lives.

“If you know a Gen Z has booked into your establishment, go the extra mile and bring in extra luxuries for the time they’re staying there,” suggests Jazeign Kesari, national procurement manager at Teljoy.

4. Make a point of making a difference

This generation also has a strong affinity for accommodation spaces that make meaningful efforts to uplift the environment and their communities. They are keenly aware of causes and environmentally conscious, says Tshepo Matlou, head of marketing and communications at Jurni.

“If you haven’t done so yet, implement smart eco-friendly initiatives at your establishment. There are so many brilliant green tourism ideas out there, like installing a water-bottle filling station at reception, using sustainable furnishings in your rooms, sourcing food from nearby suppliers, donating leftover food to charities, composting, and water-wise gardening. As you improve your sustainability practices, get the word out. Share it on social media, using hashtags to appeal to eco-conscious consumers,” he says.

Sandra Kneubuhler, district director for Radisson Hotel Group in South Africa, echoes this sentiment, adding that Gen Zs who are considering hotels will be looking for an establishment that prioritises sustainable business practices such as

carbon reduction and ethical business procedures.

5.Leverage local

Gen Zs' appreciation of authenticity is threaded right through into deeply local elements, including food, the heritage of the local community, cultural experiences, the shopping scene, and even the local nightlife.

Now, more than ever before, Gen Z travellers are finding personal value in engaging with local communities, and there is perhaps no better way to experience and embrace new cultures than through food, which transcends all barriers to understanding between cultural groups, says Matlou.

Top tip: If your establishment has a restaurant or offers an in-room food menu, source your ingredients locally - and share with your Gen Z market that you do so. Also, partner with unique local tourism experiences to give your customers exciting options to include in an experience itinerary. Bringing in a local transport partner is also a great way to include local tourism businesses in a holistic offering - and they can give your customers peace of mind by transporting them to business meetings or events.

6.Capture your slice of the hyperconnected-generation pie

Gen Zs are a unique consumer market - they are tech-sperts, they are decisive in what they want to experience, and they want to experience as much as possible. Add to that that they're willing to pay more to experience activities, accommodation, and a remote working environment that supports this flexible and experiential lifestyle, and you've got a market worth its weight in gold.

Put effort into connecting with them authentically across all touchpoints of communication - from booking to helping them build an itinerary; and plump up their whole experience with little added extras. It's worth the effort - and remember that going that extra mile could be rewarded with excellent reviews (a solid go-to for Gen Zs researching trustworthy accommodation and activities), and word-of-mouth referrals.

ABOUT KERRY HAYES

Kerry Hayes is a senior account manager at Irvine Partners. She used to be the Editor of Tourism Update, a tourism news publication reporting on tourism-related news across southern and East Africa. She has worked in the publishing industry for over a decade, with editorial experience in the décor and design, food and wine, motoring, marketing and social media, and travel and tourism industries. Hayes holds an Honours degree in Marketing Communications.

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