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A Communication Plan for a Portuguese Travel Agency: Portugal With

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Master in Marketing

Supervisor:

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Department of Marketing, Operations and General Management
Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

June, 2021



**BUSINESS
SCHOOL**

Marketing, Operations and General Management Department

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RESUMO

A Portugal With é uma agência de viagens portuguesa fundada em 2013 com o objetivo de proporcionar uma experiência personalizada e pessoal aos seus clientes. Disponibiliza uma vasta oferta de viagens, contando com o apoio de vários operadores nacionais e internacionais.

Tendo em conta a origem familiar desta empresa, o passa-palavra foi desde sempre o principal meio de divulgação da marca. No entanto, a era digital dos dias de hoje e a situação pandémica existente há mais de um ano, criaram uma necessidade de investir mais em marketing, essencialmente digital, para aumentar o reconhecimento da marca e intensificar a presença da mesma junto do público-alvo.

Desta forma, foi criado um Plano de Comunicação para o segundo semestre de 2021, com o intuito de estudar as características e comportamento do consumidor relativamente ao mercado das agências de viagens e desta forma, auxiliar a Portugal With com uma estratégia que permita atingir os objetivos acima mencionados.

Para desenvolver este plano de comunicação, a autora recorreu primeiramente a uma revisão de literatura, análise externa e análise interna. Para além disso, realizou um questionário online e uma entrevista com a responsável pela Portugal With, que forneceram uma visão clara sobre a marca e as características do público-alvo. Como consequência desta abordagem inicial resultou o Plano de Comunicação proposto em que se definiu uma estratégia que permite alcançar os objetivos definidos com ações de comunicação, de forma a melhorar o mix promocional atual.

Palavras-chave: Plano de Comunicação, Turismo, Agências de Viagem

JEL: M310 – Marketing; L830 – Turismo

ABSTRACT

Portugal With is a Portuguese travel agency founded in 2013 with the aim of providing a personalized and personal experience to its customers. It offers a wide range of trips with the support of several national and international operators.

Taking into account the family origin of this company, spreading the word, has always been the main way of publicizing the brand. However, today's digital age and the pandemic situation that has existed for over a year have created a need to invest more in marketing, essentially digital, to increase brand awareness and intensify its presence with the target audience.

In this way, a Communication Plan for the second half of 2021 was created in order to study the characteristics and behavior of the consumer in relation to the travel agency market and, thus, assist Portugal With, with a strategy that will achieve the above objectives mentioned.

To develop this communication plan, the author first made use of a literature review, external analysis and internal analysis. In addition, she conducted an online survey and an interview with the person responsible for Portugal With, who provided a clear view of the brand and the characteristics of the target audience. As a result of this initial approach, the proposed Communication Plan resulted in a strategy that allows reaching the objectives defined with communication actions in order to improve the current promotional mix.

Keywords: Communication Plan, Tourism, Travel Agencies

JEL: M310 – Marketing; L830 – Tourism

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final goal of this theses is to develop an effective communication plan for a Portuguese travel agency – Portugal With. This travel agency is a small company based in Lisbon, created in 2013, that offers travel programs and itineraries in Portugal and around the world.

The main communication tools of this company are the word-of-mouth (WOM) and the website, taking into consideration the evolution of the digital era. The aim of this communication plan will be improving these tools and at the same time increase the digital presence of the brand to keep the current audiences and reach new ones that can have sales potential.

In order to achieve the final goal of this thesis several chapters were developed which contributed for the development of the company project.

First, a literature review was developed that includes an analysis of academic papers on the main topics in study: communication and tourism marketing, that make possible to understand mainly the steps that need to be followed on the communication plan, the existing communication tools and the marketing practices in tourism. Secondly, external analysis was conducted with the goal of understand the Portuguese market, the industry of the travel agencies and the main competitors in this business, being possible to realize a benchmarking that was important on the moment to have ideas for the final plan. In order to understand better the context of the company in question, its services and the main communication practices that it already has and that can be improved or new ones that can be added, was developed an internal analysis.

Then, to define the next steps to achieve the final goal of the thesis, was chosen the methodology that should be followed for both primary and secondary data, having decided to carry out an interview and an online survey. Consequently, these methods start to be developed with an interview with Sofia Martins, the owner of the company, to better understand the history of the company, its main objectives, but also what kind of approach they practice regarding company communication, and on which channels they present themselves. Additionally, a survey was carried out online to study traveler's consumer behavior and the motivations in relation to the travel agency market in a more general perspective.

After reviewing the results of this in-depth research, the proposal for a communication plan was carried out, elaborated, based on several aspects such as above, among others. The steps developed in the communication plan were: determine goals and objectives of the plan, identify the audiences to reach, establish the messages to be communicated along the plan, develop strategies and tactics, prioritize these strategies considering the importance of each one, creating

the action plan with the schedule of activities and a budget plan and finally, define the ways to evaluate the performance of the plan.

The strategies and tactics suggested throughout the communication plan were restricted to the most recent methods of communication and which are considered most appropriate in this industry and in the conditions of the company that since 2020 works only online: interactive/online marketing, social media marketing, sales promotions, spreading the word and the creation of new partnerships. The main concern in all activities was to keep the personal connection with the audiences and give to the customers the security and confidence needed in this moment of returning to travelling. At the same time, a proposal to reach new B2B segments was developed since it is a target that the company already works with, but that has potential to increase.

In conclusion, all the plan was developed considering the goal of improving the online presence, without never forgetting the familiar and personalized origin of the company.

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List of Abbreviations

WTTC – World Travel & Tourism Council

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

IoT – Internet of Things

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística

APAVT – Associação Portuguesa das Agências de Viagens e Turismo

IMC – Integrated Marketing Communications

AAAA – American Association of Advertising Agencies

SEM – Search Engine Marketing

SEO – Search Engine Optimization

PPC - Pay Per Click

WOM – Word of mouth

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies

RNAVt – Registo Nacional de Agências de Viagens e Turismo

FGVT – Fundo de Garantia de Viagens e Turismo

PESTEL - Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal factors

DGS – Direção Geral de Saúde

OTAs - Online Travel Agency

WTO - World Tourism Organization

INTRODUCTION

Travel and Tourism is one of the world's largest economic sectors, normally being in constantly increase. According to the WTTC¹ (2019), the industry supports 1 in 10 jobs worldwide and generates 10.3% of global GDP² and in 2019, the Travel and Tourism industry experienced 3.5% growth, compared to that of the global economy (2.5%).

The emerging of new technologies and new ways of communication influence this sector, contributing for the more recent changes and have been transforming tourism globally. This is generating a new paradigm-shift in the marketing strategy, (Happ & Ivancsó-Horváth, 2018) transforming the tourism industry structure and developing a whole range of opportunities and threats (Gratzer *et al.*, 2004).

Specifically, regarding travel agencies, a lot of challenges are identified that can overtake the use of effective communication tools and current technologies. The main challenges faced are, beyond the usual competitors with online offers in hotels and flights search engines, this year, travel agencies are dealing with the huge effects of the pandemic crisis that the whole world is suffering.

According to Allied Market Research (2019), “*globally the online booking segment of the travel and tourism industry is projected to reach a size of \$1091 billion by 2022*” due to the growing options to book a trip, hotels, flights and attractions with the search engines or direct booking (Talwar *et al.*, 2020).

In Europe, from 2008 to 2012, the share of trips booked with travel agents decreased from 33% to 20% (Abrate *et al.*, 2020). So it's possible to conclude that the future of travel agencies is uncertain because consumers increasingly prefer individually planned trips to the travel packages offered by travel agencies (Yoon *et al.*, 2006).

Another factor is a wide range of competition: tour operators are increasingly trying to sell directly to their end clients such as airlines that have reduced the sales commission for travel agencies to cut out the profit margin of the travel agencies and maximize their own profits (Oppermann, 1999). In addition, the increasing availability of tourism information on the Internet, coupled with direct booking and payment facilities, is detrimental to travel agencies (Bennett, 1993). Furthermore, all of these factors, this year was also a challenge for the travel agencies due to COVID-19 pandemic, which has had an “*absolutely devastating impact*” (Ferreira, 2020 cited in ECO, 2020).

¹ WTTC - World Travel & Tourism Council

² GDP – Gross Domestic Product

The quarantine affected the agencies' revenues nationally and internationally. According to INE³, *“revenues from the sector fell 28% in March this year”*, despite only 15 days of quarantine in that month, because of the temporary closure of some travel agencies. For 3 months the barriers were closed which blocked all the tourism activities. According to the president of APAVT⁴, *“In July, 76% of our companies had a drop above 90%”*. After the quarantine period, *the “huge disharmony” and “lack of synchronization” of measures between countries to curb the transmission of Covid-19, such as “circulation in airports, access to destinations, masking protocols or tests to Covid-19”* they still create barriers to travel (Ferreira, 2020 cited in ECO, 2020).

It's in this context that the thesis project will be developed to improve the communication strategy having in consideration all the new tendencies to face these actual challenges and prepare the travel agency for a new future.

The main motivation for the choice of this thesis theme by the author, was the passion for communication and tourism. The passion for the communication area was mainly because of the experiences in the communication departments in university organizations and the subjects in the first year of the master's. In addition, taking into consideration an actual situation of COVID-19 pandemic in the whole world, doing a thesis of a theme that can help the companies, would be the better option to feel fulfilled.

In the moment of searching a business area to develop this communication plan, the range of options was facilitated in order to be the ones that were more affected because of COVID-19 pandemic such as tourism, restaurants and entertainment. From these, the area that the author most identifies with and that wants to know more about was tourism, namely travel agencies, because travel and all of the things related to this theme, is one of her passions. The choice of this specific company: Portugal With, was because it's from a friend of the family who facilitated access to the information.

Portugal With is a Portuguese company based in Lisbon and created in 2013 that offers a travel programs and itineraries in Portugal and around the world. The main goal of this company is providing a personalized and personal travel experience for their customers, giving them confidence in the moment of preparing the trips. Their main target is Portugal, although they also work with operators around the world. Additionally, they provide a personalized service

³ INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística

⁴ APAVT - Associação Portuguesa das Agências de Viagens e Turismo

for those that seek a customized trip for a specific group of people, like families, friends and organizations and wish to attract schools and companies for this service too.

Besides that, the main challenges existing are, moreover the normal difficult communication with the young target, the need to promote the new offer that was adapted according to COVID-19 pandemic situation.

According to Sofia Martins, the owner of the company, “*Portugal With doesn’t have a big online presence on social media*” or “*a huge marketing investments*”, that is the place where the youngsters are located and spend more time looking for travel opportunities. About the new offer to face the current situation, Portugal With already has some options but they need to better communicate, in order to achieve the target audience, with an adapting tone of voice. The challenge is to keep the usual customers and communicate in a way that potential customers see this travel agency as a way to return to their travel plans with all the comfort and security. Nowadays, besides traditional agencies and tour operators, Portugal With faces some competitiveness in the Portuguese market since there are several travel agencies offering similar services and online travel agencies (OTAs). Since all tourism sector and travel agencies are in this situation, the ones that better communicate a new safe and attractive offer, will be differentiated.

The differentiation of Portugal With should be made by creating unique experiences and building relationships that make travelers come back for more and inform their friends and families. Therefore, the author made a proposal to build a communication plan for the company, to suggest improvements to current options used and to develop new ideas.

To develop this communication plan, firstly the author will develop a literature review to acquire the theoretical knowledge about communication and tourism marketing. Following, an external analysis will be made to better understand the travel agency market in Portugal and an internal analysis to know more about Portugal With and its communication practices. In addition, a methodology will be defined to achieve the final goal with some methods such as an online survey and an interview with the person responsible for Portugal With, in order to have a clear vision about the brand and a perception of the characteristics and behaviors of the target audience. As a result of this initial approach, the communication plan will result in a strategy based on the main objectives of the plan, a message, a target audience and suggestions for communication actions to improve brand awareness and recognition as well as consumer engagement, which will eventually lead to an increase in experiences shared (sales). Finally, to organize the actions, a schedule will be made of the activities and a budget plan with a definition of the most important steps to evaluate the results of the plan.

CHAPTER 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. The 4th P of the marketing mix: Promotion

The 4 Ps of the Marketing Mix are Product, Price, Place and Promotion (Clow & Baack, 2004; Philip Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). To build a profitable long-term relationship and have a greatest impact, a strong product, adequate pricing and effective distribution channel (place), needs to be considered because all communicates something to the buyers, although the promotion mix is the company's primary engagement (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Promotion mix, the fourth P of the Marketing Mix, is also called marketing communication mix. It consists of the blend of communication tools that are used to communicate with customers and other stakeholders, engage consumers, persuasively communicates a company's value proposition and builds trustful customer relationships and therefore sustainable business with them (Egan, 2015; Philip Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Marketing communications involves a mix of three elements: tools, media and messages (Fill, 2009). New technologies in marketing communications enable a new and more diverse way of communicating with the customers. The diffusion of smartphones with capacity to access internet at any moment and the digital television that changed mass media, are two examples of how communication has changed over the last years. Moreover, the gathering of data from them offers the ability to target the messages very precisely (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Because consumers are often experiencing a surge of messages, it is crucial for companies to send appealing and consistent messages to their target audience adapting the content to them. To deliver a clear and compelling message, each tool must be carefully coordinated under the concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC) and with this, companies are able to coordinate and manage their communication effectively as well as efficiently (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

1.2. Integrated marketing communication

American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) formally defined IMC as: *“a concept of marketing communications, planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines – for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact”* (Kliatchko, 2005). The goal of IMC is to influence or directly affect the behavior of the selected communications audience (Schultz, 1993).

1.2.1. Dimensions

According to Porcu *et al.* (2012) with the concept of IMC is possible to distinguish four principal dimensions:

- **One voice** refers to have unique image and positioning that implies a clear delivery of coherent messages and images through all marketing communication tools;
- **Interactivity** is the element that allows the paradigm shift that consists in having a constant dialogue between the organization and the stakeholders through two-way communication;
- **Cross-functional planning** is a strategic integration that has to take place in the organization as a whole, because the messages don't come just from the marketing department;
- **Profitable long-term relationships** represent the main purpose of IMC. Duncan and Moriarty argued that interactive communication at the corporate, marketing and marketing communication levels leads to long-term relationships and positively influences brand value.

1.2.2. IMC choice criteria

Ogbeiwi (2017) suggests several criteria to assess the IMC strategy tools:

- **Coverage** - it is a proportion of the target market reached by each communication option and the existing overlap among communication options;
- **Cost** measures the financial efficiency associated with the communication options and program;
- **Contribution** is the ability of a communication option to create the desired communication effects and achieve the desired communication objectives;
- **Commonality** measures if the information conveyed by different communication options share the same meaning;
- **Complementarity** is related to the extent to which different associations and linkages are emphasized across communication options;
- **Cross-effects** is the extent to which communication options are designed to work together such that interaction or synergy occur and communication effects emerge as the result of exposure by consumers to both options;
- **Conformability** is related to the extent to which different associations and linkages are emphasized across communication options.

The IMC choice criteria can also provide guidance into designing and implementing IMC programs. It involves: 1) Evaluating communication options, 2) Establishing priorities and tradeoffs, and 3) Executing final design and implementation (Lalama, 2015).

1.2.3. Barriers

The organizational structure has repeatedly been raised in the IMC literature as a barrier to integration (Kerr & Patti, 2015). It's possible to identify some barriers such as: "power, coordination, and control issues; client skills, centralization, and cultural issues; agency skills and general time/resource issues; flexibility/modification issues;" (Duncan & Everett, 1993; Ratnatunga & Ewing, 2005).

1.2.4. Benefits

The benefits of IMC can be summarized as an IMC approach aligns short and long-term marketing to avoid conflicts within an organization; it is a solid and clear approach; all target audiences are considered; individual and direct communication is encouraged; synergy and increased recall; results in financial benefits (McGrath, 2005; Pickton *et al.*, 2015).

1.3. Communication objectives

To do a communication plan, it's necessary to understand the communication objectives that need to be SMART⁵ (Ogbeiwi, 2017). Having this in consideration, according to Lalama (2015), it's possible to identify 4 main communication objectives:

- **Top-of-Mind Awareness** sets either when the brand name needs to maintain a first place or improve the place on the ranking of brands that are in the consumer top-of-mind. A highly creative advertising can achieve it;
- **Brand Image** sets when the brand name is associated with undesired attributes and there is a need to improve the brand's image perception;
- **New Product Introduction** is set when a company needs to launch or introduce a new offer. This goal is measured as the number of people who made contact with the organization due to the messages' stimuli;
- **Promotional** set when there is a need to stimulate sales of a product for a limited time, by means of a relevant economic incentive.

⁵ SMART - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timebound

1.4. Marketing communication plan

1.4.1. Steps in developing an effective communication plan

The following steps, proposed by Tennyson & Ray (2005) will help companies avoid planning obstacles and create plans that are realistic, creative, flexible, measurable, and above all else, usable documents that lead to implementation.

- 1) **Goals and objectives** - To have a successful communication plan, it's necessary that it achieves the company goals, that should be clearly defined for developing the communication goals and objectives. This type of strategy ensures that all communication resources are supporting the organization and complementing one another (Tennyson & Ray, 2005). With the aim of identify the goals, is important to know the target position in the six buyer-readiness stages⁶, that includes: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).
- 2) **Identify audiences** - The audience may be current users or potential buyers, those who make the buying decision or those who influence it. The target audience will heavily affect the communicator's decisions on who, how, when, where and what will be said (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). It's crucial to identify the audiences because different groups require different kinds of information, at different times and with different areas of focus (Tennyson & Ray, 2005).
- 3) **Establish messages** - Messages are the communication focus, being crucial that their audiences can understand and retain it in order to achieve the final goal. Nowadays people are flooded with messages everywhere so it's important to choose and communicate an effective and clear message. A company's communication program should focus on no more than three main messages and these messages should be simple, limited, and identified in advance (Tennyson & Ray, 2005). Ideally, the message should get Attention, hold Interest, arouse Desire, and obtain Action, as suggest in AIDA framework. The content should include at least one of the three types of appeal: rational (claiming the product will produce benefits such as value, performance, economy and quality), emotional (stir up negative and positive feelings) and moral (director to the audience's sense of what is right and proper, urging people to support social causes) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). When writing the message, the marketer must decide what to say (message content) and how to say it (message structure and format) (Keller,

⁶ Six buyer-readiness stages - the stages consumers normally pass through on their way to a purchase

2016). Therefore, decisions have to be made regarding the content, structure and format of the message (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

- 4) **Develop strategies and tactics** - Success strategies and tactics depend on all the previous steps. This development is when creativity starts working, by doing brainstorming sessions to develop new communication ideas. An embracing communication plan should include multiple strategies, to ensure all audience members receive a personalized and effective message for them (Tennyson & Ray, 2005).
- 5) **Prioritize** - In this step it is defining the priority order in which strategies and tactics will be implemented, assigning levels of effort and budget resources to each. In this process one should have in consideration some criteria such as: proven track record; cost versus reach; hard-to-reach audiences; cost and resources; creation of beneficial relationships. This planning process must consider: what a company can realistically accomplish; unforeseen challenges and opportunities that may divert staff and budget resources (Tennyson & Ray, 2005). To establish the communication budget there are four common approaches: affordable method (what the manager thinks the firm can afford), percentage of sales method, competitive-parity method (aiming to achieve share-of-voice equivalent to competitors) and objective-task method (based on the objectives and the cost to execute the task needed to accomplish them) (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).
- 6) **Creating the action plan** - The action plan should identify three main things: who is responsible for what, which and when activities will happen. This can be done in the form of a timeline, a chart, or a spreadsheet and should also include a matrix of ongoing responsibilities. For a successful implementation, the team should meet no less frequently than once a month to review progress and once a quarter to compare progress with the original plan and make adjustments accordingly (Tennyson & Ray, 2005).
- 7) **Evaluation** - This step considering how the plan helped the organization achieve its goals, analyzing the metrics. The evaluation involves asking target audience members aspects such as: whether they remember the content; how many times they saw it; how many people bought the product or talked to others about it. The specific measurement tools should be built into each strategy and tactic, because can be different for each one. The benefits of evaluation include the ability to constantly monitor what has worked and what has not, to demonstrate the value of communication, and to be able to make improvements in future plans and also in the product offer itself (Keller, 2016).

1.4.2. Tools for a communication plan

A communication option is any marketing form of communication that is related directly or indirectly to the brand and are often grouped into broad communication types or media types (Keller, 2016). Fill (2009) suggests the key criteria that should be considered when selecting communication tools:

- The degree of control required for the delivery of the message;
- The financial resources available to pay a third party to transmit messages;
- The level of credibility that each tool bestows on the organization;
- The size and geographic dispersion of the target audiences;
- The communication tasks each tool is best at satisfying.

The more usual traditional marketing communication tools that companies use in their communication plan are:

- 1) Advertising - It's any paid form of nonpersonal communication by an identified sponsor (Keller, 2016) it's a tool that is used mainly to targets of large scope, has a medium/long term effect and is product oriented. The main objectives to use this tool are: to increase recognition, encourage purchases and inform the consumers of new products (Dionísio *et al.*, 2010). This tool includes: via print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (radio and television), network media (telephone, cable, satellite, wireless), electronic media (audio, video, website) and display media (billboards, signs, posters) (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Philip Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).
- 2) Direct marketing and database marketing – It's used only to defined target consumers, communicating directly with them to generate a response small/medium term. The main objective to use this tool is: to increase recognition, inform consumers about new products and inspire client action. It includes: direct-mail marketing; catalogs; database management; direct selling; tv shopping, telemarketing; and broadcast (Keller, 2016). Database marketing is the process of building, maintaining, and using customer database and other databases to contact, transact, and build customer relationships. A database provides a variety of important information about customers such as customer transactions, registration information, telephone queries, cookies and every customer contact (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- 3) Interactive/online marketing – It allows for a back-and-forth flow of information whereby users can participate in and modify the form and content of the information they receive in real time. They can receive and alter information and images, make inquiries, respond to questions, and, of course, make purchases (Belch Georg E. &

Michael A. Belch Michael A., 2018). For this the main tool used are websites that can be marketing websites to engage customers and move them to a purchase or conversion or brand community websites to build relationships and incentive engagement with different content (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). About search ads and display ads, they are related to Search Engine Marketing (SEM), which places messages on a search engine to encourage click through to a website. It can be done by Search Engine Optimization (SEO) that aim to achieve the highest position or ranking in the organic (non-paid) results with sites and keywords optimization, considering the algorithm used by search engines or by display advertising that placing ads on result pages from a search engine (Broder *et al* 2007) typically on a Pay Per Click (PPC) basis (Chaffey & Smith, 2008, p. 283). It includes: Internet; CD-ROMs; kiosks; interactive television; websites; search ads; and display ads (Keller, 2016).

- 4) Mobile marketing - It is used, through customers' mobile devices, to engage customers anywhere, anytime during the buying and relationship building processes (Keller, 2016). It makes shopping easier and enrich the brand experience with product information, price comparisons, advice and reviews and digital promotions (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). It allows to customize the information in terms of consumers location (where), the exact time they are interested in a product (when), the way they search for information and their purchase behavior (how), and whether they are with someone else or alone (with whom) (Tong *et al.*, 2019). It includes: mobile ads, apps, mobile websites and text messages (Fill, 2009). Looking at mobile usage statistics clarifies how important this communication option is nowadays. According to the Global Digital 2019 report (Hootsuite, 2019), 5.112 billion people have a smartphone which equals a 67% penetration rate, 2% more than in 2018. Furthermore, 52% of the total population are active mobile internet users, which on an average amount of time spend 6 hours and 49 minutes online each day on their smartphone.
- 5) Social media marketing - The main objectives to use this tool are: engage with customers; increase brand exposure; increase traffic; generate leads; enhance brand image; improve search rankings; and develop loyal fans (Clow & Baack, 2004). In a Social Media study that surveyed over 3000 marketers with the goal of understanding how they are using social media to grow and promote their businesses, 86% answered that the Social Media networks are important to their business (Business 2 Community, 2015). It includes: online communities; forums; blogs; social networks; influencers; and content marketing; (Belch & Belch, 2018).

Blogs and forums are used to post people and companies' thoughts and other content related to a defined topic. The individuals that produce this content can be identified, as experts (Droge *et al.*, 2010), as enablers of customers connections in a unique and personalized manner (Singh, Veron-Jackson & Cullinane, 2008) as current and advanced information providers (Hsu and Tsou, 2011) and as new journalists (Tomaszeski, 2006). Social media networks are independent and commercial platforms to persuade and engage with customers, where they can socialize, seek or share opinions or recommendations and share content, so all the content is user-generated. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018; Kaplan, 2010).

Digital influencers are multiplatform internet micro celebrities who accumulate followers on social media, sharing their personal lives and lifestyle and can share opinion of brands if they receive a fee to endorse a specific brand (Freberg *et al.*, 2011). Thus, they serve as online opinion leaders that can lead followers, that trust on them, for purchase and use the recommended product, increasing the diffusion and impact of the brand's image and value. (Uzunoglu & Kip, 2014; Casalo *et al.*, 2018). About the content marketing, it's used to produce content and is important that the message be positive and provokes emotion to make it viral (Wylie, 2014, cited in Kee & Yadanifard, 2015), being diverse and updated to attract the customers (Harad, 2013).

- 6) Sales promotions - Activities that provide extra value to the sales force, the distributors, or the ultimate consumer. It's generally divided into two major categories: consumer-oriented and trade-oriented activities (Belch & Belch, 2018). It's a tool that is used mainly to defined targets of smaller scope and is product and brand oriented (Keller, 2016). According to Gupta (1998) sales promotion can have an impact on three major decisions consumers take, regarding purchase: what to buy, how much and from which brand. The main objectives to use this tool are: increase loyalty; inform the consumers; increase credibility; spread trust; creating interest; and brand switching (Dionísio *et al.*, 2010). It includes: price promotions – reduce the cost of the product (price discounts, coupons, rebates, quantity deals and loyalty programs) (Lichtenstein *et al.*, 1995) or non-price promotions – increase the value for the regular purchase price (samples, free trials, premiums, gifts, contests, sweepstakes and demonstrations) (Goyal, 2019; Nathwani, 2017).
- 7) Publicity and public relations - Publicity includes nonpersonal communications not directly paid for and public relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures and executes an action (Belch & Belch,

2018). It has a long-term effect and is mainly developed in business communication. The main objectives to use this tool are: image improvement; increase of recognition; involving and informing the audience (Keller, 2016). It's includes: special publications, press kits, participation in community activities, fund-raising, sponsorship of special events, and various public affairs activities.

- 8) Experiences and events – This tool include company-sponsored activities and programs designed to create daily or special brand-related interactions with consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016) using stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments (Brakus *et al.*, 2009, p. 53). Once it is a sponsorship, there is a commercial activity in return for funds, services or resources, used in the medium/long term. The main objectives to use this tool are: build awareness; developing customer loyalty; improving the perception held of the brand; take position in the market (Fill, 2009); build its image and reputation; establish and nurture important contacts; (Dionísio *et al.*, 2010) high audience involvement (Drenger *et al.*, 2008; Tafesse *et al.*, 2014) and experiential richness (Close *et al.*, 2006; Tafesse *et al.*, 2014). Areas to use this tool marketing: sports, causes, arts, entertainment, tradeshow and street activities (Keller, 2016).
- 9) Personal selling - It's a form of person-to-person communication to assist, make presentations and persuade prospective buyers, being most effective at later stages of the buying process. Allows to collect immediate and precise feedback, adapting the message considering the customer's reactions (Belch & Belch, 2018). It is relationship-oriented, so the seller might create a friendship with the customer and also response-oriented, allowing the customer to interact and express their thoughts (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It includes: Sales presentations, sales meetings, incentive programs, samples, fairs and trade, shows (Keller, 2016).
- 10) Word-of-mouth (WOM) - refers to informal communications made by potential, actual or former customers, between private parties such as friends, neighbors, coworkers, or family members, concerning evaluation of goods and services (Dichter, 1966; Westbrook, 1987) rather than formal complaints to firms and/or personnel. The valence of WOM may be positive, neutral or negative, depending of the customer' personal opinion (File & Prince, 1992) that can also be shared online (electronic-WOM) (Teichert *et al.*, 2008).

1.5. Tourism marketing

Lumsdon (1997) defined tourism marketing as: “*The managerial process of anticipating and satisfying existing and potential visitor wants more effectively than competitive suppliers or destinations. The management of exchange is driven by profit, community gain, or both; either way long-term success depends on an interaction between customer and supplier.*”

There are five essential features of tourism marketing: a philosophy of consumer orientation; analytical procedures and concepts; data-gathering techniques; organizational structure; strategic decision areas and planning functions (Seaton, A.V. and Bennett, 1996).

1.5.1. Travel agencies

“*Travel agents are, and remain, a key component of the tourism industry*” (Chow *et al.*, 2015; Klenosky & Gitelson, 1998). There are three groups of strategies for travel agencies improve their competitiveness and profitability: To improve the quality of the services provided by the supplier (Lai, 2014; Ryan & Cliff, 1997); to improve marketing strategies from the demand side (Gee *et al.*, 1997; Ku *et al.*, 2013) and to increase the efficiency of travel agencies (Anderson *et al.*, 1999; Fuentes, 2011).

According to Bowie and Chang (2005) all the interactions between tourist and the tour leader influence the image of the travel agency, the loyalty of the customers, the WOM and define the competitiveness of the travel agency. Therefore, travel agencies should consider this aspect by reinforcing the skills and professionalism of their tour leaders, that will pass all the time with the tourist and also design the itinerary (Wang *et al.*, 2002; Lin *et al.*, 2008).

On the other side, because travel agencies provide an intangible service, the formation of consumer’s expectation is difficult. Hence, the corporate image of a company have an important role to attract customers. This dimension is influenced by prior knowledge, interaction with employees and physical installations (Grönroos, 1990).

Other aspect that differentiates the travel agencies is the relationship with consumers that are influenced by the personal characteristics and judgements. To measure the quality of this concept to maintain it in the long-term, is important to analyze satisfaction and trust, both antecedent to commitment (Baker *et al.*, 1999; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Smith, 1998; cited in Moliner *et al.*, 2007).

1.5.2. Consumer of a travel agency

The main segmentation criteria to create a travel agency’s consumer profile are: age, gender, level of education, travel frequency, type of trip, degree of prior preparation required,

familiarity with the destination, trip duration and “travel companion” (alone or in group) (Castillo-Manzano & López-Valpuesta, 2010).

According to the results found by Castillo-Manzano & López-Valpuesta (2010) it's possible to identify 3 personas:

- **Buy online:** *"a young person (of between 15 and 30 years of age), more likely to be female, a student or with a high academic level, a habitual traveler, who is booking a simple trip or is to a destination that is already known";*
- **Buy by phone:** *"being male, middle-aged (50–65), on a business or short trip and requiring the services of a travel agency";*
- **Buy in store:** *“passengers who are over 65, with a lower academic level, who are seeking the intermediation of a travel agency and are planning to go on a more complicated trip which therefore needs greater preparation”.*

These results were supported by authors such as: (Alamdari, 2002; Law & Wong, 2003; Teichert et al., 2008).

In addition, cash-rich and time-poor clients prefer to delegate their holiday choices to expert travel agents (Buckley, 2014; Cheong & Miller, 2000).

Regarding the tourist consumer behavior, it is important to understand consumer motivations to choose a destination, accommodation and/or services, in order to improve and adapt everything, including the communication plan. Some of the internal factors that influence tourism behavior are: motivations, self- concept and personality, expectations, perceptions, lifestyle, past experience; and the external factors are: culture, values, demographics, reference groups, WOM, risk, political instability, among others (Pinto & Castro, 2019).

About the destination choice process, Karl (2016) conclude that is influenced by factors such as risk and uncertainty. Risk refers to the probability of certain (negative) events occurring (Weber & Bottom, 1989, cited in Karl, 2016), familiarity seeking (Plog, 2001), risk-taking propensity and sensation seeking (Pizam *et al.* 2004, Fuchs 2013, cited in Karl, 2016). Uncertainty is related to the availability of information in the decision- making process (Crompton, 1992, cited in Karl, 2016).

Normally, the travelers who are anxious about more complex plans will probably choose professional travel agencies. Once vacation packages, cruises and international travel often involve more uncertainties, the typical consumer seeks consultation on these matters before making a decision (Pinto & Castro, 2019). Furthermore, travelers cannot predict the quality of the service before arriving at a destination and enjoying it, so they rely on information

from other sources, such as media, friends and family members, or travel organizations.

1.5.3. How to communicate in a travel agency

All communication strategies aim to increase the perceived value in order to enhance the relationship with their customers and achieve better results. The tourism industry has been affected by progress in information and communication technologies (ICT) and by the generalized use of the Internet in planning and purchasing trips (Castillo-Manzano & López-Valpueda, 2010). Travel service providers use digital tools such as websites, mobile applications, and social media for attracting new consumers (Mariani *et al.*, 2014) improving customer service, enhancing operational efficiency.

From these tools one of the most commonly information sources and with more power and influence on tourism is the social media (Simms, 2012). Thus, it is essential to comprehend when and how tourists use it at several stages of the travel process (pre-trip, during- trip and post-trip), as well as their decision- making journey. The social media made the evaluate (pre-purchase) and the advocate (post-purchase) increasingly relevant (Curt *et al.*, 2009; Fortis *et al.*, 2011; Hudson & Thal, 2013), being also possible to conclude that this tool has a long-term effect and not an immediate impact (Kane *et al.*, 2012).

Hybrid agencies can offer both the convenience and control of the online services with automatic reservation and booking systems and still provide personalized and customized attention and information through walk-in and telephone services. They can also take advantages by specializing in certain types of travelers or certain types of travel that are not targeted by the large purely online sites (Kaynama & Black, 2000).

The traditional travel agencies have physical premise and limited digital presence as have limited adoption of digital marketing (Abou-Shouk *et al.*, 2013) which is gaining increasing importance, mainly the social media (Leung *et al.*, 2013; Sharma *et al.*, 2020). Normally they use the Internet as a communication tool to promote the business on static website or to receive e-mails from customers (Kaynama & Black, 2000). In order to maximize their potential profit, traditional travel agencies should create their own websites (Tsai *et al.*, 2005; Yu, 2008), providing a greater added value to the information and advice they offer clients (Cheyne *et al.*, 2006) and investing on personal attention for their usual customers and their WOM referrals (Kaynama & Black, 2000).

Sánchez *et al.* (2006) developed the GLOVAL⁷ scale to measure the perceived value of a tourism package, including both the travel agency and the product purchase. It includes six

⁷ GLOVAL: GLObal purchase perceive VALue

dimensions: installations of the travel agency; the contact personnel (professionalism), quality of the tourism package, the value price, emotional and social value. Mainly for traditional agencies, they must carefully select, motivate, and train their employees aiming to make every contact with the tourist a unique experience.

Frequent customer usage of a travel agency supports the collection of valuable information that serves as a basis for developing database marketing strategies and allows to organize and provide unique information to meet their customers' needs (Kaynama & Black, 2000).

CHAPTER 2 - EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

2.1. Travel agencies' industry in Portugal

Portugal has been improving its position in The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2019 (World Economic Forum) in recent years, occupying the 12th position in the ranking among 136 countries (7th in the EU) (Calderwood & Soshkin, 2019).

In 2017 travel agencies and tour operators generated 3.240 million euros to the Portuguese economy, representing 2.1% of the country's GDP (Jornal de Negócios, 2017). In addition, this sector contributed with 270 million euros for the national wealth creation, being possible to conclude they have a huge relevance for the countries (APAVT-EY, 2017).

This calculation includes the estimate that the autonomous effect of travel agencies and tour operators, including their gross added value and employment, amounts to 1,090 million euros, to which 2,150 million are added as what is defined as a catalyzed effect (outgoing and incoming). In addition, the travel agencies and operators contributed for 82.000 works stations which is equivalent to 1.5 billion euros in earnings. (APAVT-EY, 2017). In 2021, there are more than 2.580 Portuguese travel agencies operating in Portugal, 789 in Lisbon, 354 in Porto and 602 in Faro. The number reduced 150 in the last year due to the impact of covid pandemic.

Kotler (2011), mentioned that the number of travel agencies has decreased in recent years due to the growth of online bookings and direct sales whether of airline tickets, accommodation, among other services.

2.2. PESTEL Analysis

This analysis aims to identify the macro-environmental factors that can have influence on the travel agency industry, by looking at Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal factors (PESTEL).

Political and Legal Factors

For travel agencies able to create and operate their business in Portugal, there are some regulations and procedures, controlled by Turismo de Portugal, that must be fulfilled. This entity is responsible for the promotion, valorization and sustainability of the tourism activity in this country, which is integrated within the Ministry of Economy and Digital Transition.

It's important to know that travel agencies have to be registered in RNAVT⁸ that is also organized by Turismo de Portugal. RNAVT allows better monitoring and follow-up of the sector's evolution and better inspection by the competent public entities. Furthermore, travel

⁸ RNAVT - Registo Nacional de Agências de Viagens e Turismo

agencies in Portugal have to subscribe and contribute for FGVT⁹, enter into a civil liability insurance contract that covers the risk arising from its activity and being members of APAVT.

In 2020, due to the pandemic COVID-19, the government did some changes on the Decree-Law No 17/2020 of April 23, establishing exceptional and temporary measures related to the tourism sector as a result of the declaration of a state of emergency on 18th March. According to this article, trips organized by travel agencies, which date took place between March 13 and September 30, 2020, which were not made or cancelled due to the fact attributed to the outbreak of pandemic COVID-19, gave to the travelers the right to choose to receive a voucher of equal value to the payment made valid until December 31 of 2021 or to reschedule the trip until the same date (Decree-Law No 17/2020, 2020).

Economic Factors

The global economic crisis in 2008, had a strong impact on global and national tourism on the following year, because there was also a credit contraction, an increase in unemployment and also a flu A. In Portugal, the overnight stays tourism in 2009 recorded a 6% drop and it was needed a year to recover, occurring an employment worldwide which grew by 11% between 2010 and 2018 (UNWTO, 2020).

On tourism sector, according to a study about touristic distribution in Portugal presented by APAVT (2016), the sector was represented by 2033 companies with a turnover of 2131 million euros and the contribution of creation of wealth was 241 million euros.

According to INE (2019), the tourism sector was the country's largest export economic activity in 2019, being responsible for 52,3% of services exports and 19,7% of total exports. Moreover, Tourism Consumption, which includes the consumption of non-resident visitors, residents and other components, represented 8% of the Portuguese GDP in 2020 (TravelBI, 2020).

In 2019, the employment in tourism increases with a weight of 6,9% in the national economy and there was a rate of growth in tourist revenues of 8,1% and overall income of 7,3%. There was also an increase on the intern and external market with a diversification on the American and Brazilian markets (Turismo de Portugal, 2020).

Despite this relevant contribution, 2020 brought an unexpected pandemic that led countries to close borders and governments to declare a state of emergency imposing quarantine to their population, which is leading to serious impact on tourism and economic aspects.

⁹ FGVT - Fundo de Garantia de Viagens e Turismo

According to INE (2020) this will be one of the sectors most affected because of the crisis of COVID-19. A 25% reduction in tourism activity, on both for non-resident visitors and domestic tourism, will lead to a 2,9% reduction in annual GDP in Portugal. So, it's possible to conclude that a health crisis in long-term will be a financial crisis, with a high level of uncertainty regarding the impact on both crises.

In the beginning of April 2020, Euromonitor International changed its previsions for GDP growth in 2020, stating that it is expected for the euro zone economy to contract 4.4% this year (Euromonitor International, 2020). One of the major consequences of the pandemic COVID-19, was the elimination of many jobs. In the end of April 2021, were registered in employment centers more than 424.000 unemployed, representing 60,7% of a total of 608,121 job applications (IEFP, 2021).

By age group, the younger population is likely to be experiencing greater difficulties, since of the total unemployed registered in employment centers, more than 88% are young people aged up to 25 years. By regions, in August, the major increase occurred in one of the most touristic areas, Algarve, with an increase of 177.8% over the same month of 2019 (IEFP, 2020).

Accordingly, it possible to predict that in addition to the fear of traveling, due to financial difficulties, leisure trips will not be a priority for the Portuguese in the coming months, which becomes a threat to all industries related to the tourism sector.

Social Factors

In 2019, the Portuguese effective growth rate was positive (0.19%), after nine years of population decrease (-0,14% in 2018). This population increase resulted from the increase in the migratory balance (from 11,570 in 2018 to 44,506 in 2019), since the natural balance (difference between births and deaths) remained negative (-25,214 in 2019), for the 11th consecutive year. In that year there were 10.286,3 residents in the country, being 47% men and 52% women (INE, November 2019).

That same year, aging continued to rise, reaching an aging rate (compared to the population aged 65 and over with that from zero to 14) of 161.3 elderly people for every 100 young people in 2019. In 2018, Portugal had the highest median third age in the European Union, at 45.2 years (Eurostat). In the last ten years, the number of elderly people (65 years old or more) increased by 350,028 (rising to 21.8%) and the number of young people (0 to 14 years old) decreased by 221,008 (to 13.7%). The number of people of working age (from 15 to 64 years old) also decreased, by 406,590, which increased the total dependency index. In addition, the average life expectancy at birth was 80.8 years in 2018, 77.78 for men and 83.43 for women (INE, November 2019).

In relation to the birth rate, in 2019 it was 8.4%, and the synthetic fertility index has registered slight annual recoveries, reaching 1.42 children per woman of childbearing age. Women are also becoming mothers later. The average age at birth of the first child was 29.9 years, two years more than in 2009.

Regarding the mortality, it was 10,9% in 2019 (INE, November 2019). Nonetheless, considering the current pandemic these numbers are higher in 2020 compared to the previous two years between March and June, and potentially in the next months until the whole population is vaccinated. In 6th of January 2021, the number of active cases was 87.004 while 352.225 have recovered and 7.277 passed away (DGS, 2021).

Technological Factors

According to the Annual Study of the Digital Economy, in 2020, 81% of the Portuguese population used the Internet and it is estimated that in 2025 it will be 93% of the Portuguese population. Of this population, 57% made online purchases, corresponding to 7.4 billion euros in volume of online purchases. In 2020, 60% of Portuguese companies had a presence on the internet, of which 82% had a website and 76% were present on social (VOGT, 2006).

The tendency of travel agencies in Portugal is to sell through online and traditional systems, taking advantage of the potential of each of the channels. Most travel agencies tend to follow the evolution of information and communication technologies in order to combat the potential loss of business, promote their tourism products more effectively, simplify processes, increase competitiveness, increase sales, capture new business opportunities and increase the number of customers.

On the other side, the technology allowed the traveler to be much more informed and to take a proactive role in organizing the trip. This proactivity and autonomy of the traveler is possible due to metasearch companies and Online Travel Agency (OTAs) that allow customers to search, book and pay through the same platform. Now, the tourist is much more demanding, has several options to choose from and has negotiating power. He has also become a content generator that shares with other travelers' opinions, reviews and experiences on blogs and social media.

So, it's possible to conclude that the use of technology in the tourism sector is increasingly being improved to help companies to have a better service, through personalization, by using all the inputs identified in the data analysis, and digital planning experiences that facilitate the life of travelers. Furthermore, in present and mainly in the future, travel will benefit from the

use of possibilities like IoT¹⁰, voice technology, automation and blockchains. Nonetheless, human connection is still crucial in this industry and should not be overlooked (Deloitte, 2018).

Environmental Factors

The tourism industry, through its activities has huge impact in the environment. It contributes for the global warming and climate change by increasing all types of pollution mainly on the regions with greater tourism flows.

Furthermore, over tourism leads to depletion of natural resources, like water, and puts a strain on locally existing ones, which can endanger natural ecosystems affecting endangered species.

Nevertheless, tourism can contribute to environmental conservation through financial contributions to help conserve sensitive areas and habitats, by improving environmental management and planning within tourism businesses, by raising environmental awareness through their communication and activities, by protection and preservation of biological diversity, and by establishing regulatory measures that limit the negative impacts (Sunlu, 2003).

This interaction with transports, environment and regional planning, justify the sustainable tourism practices. Because of this in 2017, the WTO¹¹ celebrated the International Year for the Development of Sustainable Tourism, in order to raise awareness about the contribution of sustainable tourism development, work with stakeholders to make the sector a catalyst for positive change and promote changes in tourism policies, business practices and consumer behavior (OMT, 2017).

2.3. Competition Analysis

In this section, will be analyzed 3 direct competitors of Portugal With, previously identified, to provide an insightful view about them, regarding aspects such as history, product diversity and communication. Having into consideration that Portugal With is part of a big group of travel agencies without own product, the travel agencies selected for this analysis the ones more relevant for the company having in consideration the dimension, localization and visibility.

Turiworld

Turiworld was founded in 2000 in Batalha and since then has been growing steadily, both in the traditional market and in the online market. Because of this online growing, the company also has an office for the online booking in Guimarães. Its mission is to be different, based betting on an increasingly complete and personalized travel consultancy service.

¹⁰ IoT - Internet of Things

¹¹ WTO - World Tourism Organization

Analyzing the website is possible to conclude that Turiworld is a GEA (First Management Group for Independent Travel Agencies in Portugal) travel agency as Portugal With and because of this the product range, the prices and the reservation system are very similar. In general, the website is very simple with the contacts, address and a company presentation. On Google, when looking for “Turiworld” it has the first position with 3 comments and an evolution of 4.3. They also include the address in Guimarães, schedule and phone number.

On the social media, Turiworld has more than 16.000 followers on Facebook, using the profile mainly to post exclusive opportunities and packages with videos and photos. The post descriptions are in Portuguese and the majority include the phone numbers, email, RNAVT number, website and Instagram profile which facilitates the contact. About Instagram, they have 900 followers, don't have highlights with instastories and the content are the same as Facebook. On both social media, having in consideration the number of followers the interaction with likes and comments is too low (average of 10 comments and likes per post) and the tone of voice is very direct and inspiring for a quick but personal understanding.

Oasis Travel

Oasis travel was founded in 8th august 1986 in Lisbon and have 31 travel managers that develop the business areas of incentives and congresses, thematic groups and leisure, individual trips and business trips. In the scope of the program Fincesce, that distinguishes companies with superior performance profiles, they obtained the award of PME leader since 2018. Its mission is based on the change and innovation for internal and external customers as well as partners.

On the website, Oasis travel have all their own programs and circuits for all over the world, with a reservation system online and by phone number. In addition, they inform the reasons to choose Oasis Travel, have a section to suggestions and claims, and provide travel information such as flights timetable, securities and destination meteorology. Oasis travel also have a contest to win a cruise for Greece and catalogues with all the conditions and itineraries of the packages divided per year season or type of trip. On Google, the location that appears is Marques de Pombal that have an evaluation of 4.4 and 13 comments with good feedback.

Regarding the newsletter, on the website they have a form to subscribe with an option to choose the continent preferences and consult the previous editions. They have between 1 or 4 editions per month and the content is mainly packages suggestions, news and for example, postcards for Christmas.

Concerning social media, on Facebook they have more than 30.000 followers with an average engagement of 100 likes. The posts are mainly about the packages, that include all the

conditions and contacts to book, exclusive promotions and the history and curiosities about destination points of interests. More recently, because of the covid pandemic, they have webinars all Tuesdays to present the destinations in order to provide a virtual travel. On Instagram, Oasis travel has more than 1.500 followers with an average of 80 likes, highlights for each continent and posts, mainly with photos and videos of the destinations with the trip conditions and contacts to book. On the two social media the descriptions are written in Portuguese and use a formal but empathic way to communicate. They also have a YouTube account with 160 subscribers where they post short videos to present the destinations and the records of the webinars that are shared on Facebook.

Abreu Viagens agency

Founded in 1840, Abreu Viagens is the bigger travel organization operating in Portuguese market with 150 company owned stores. They organize leisure, work trips and events for travelers from all parts of the globe with European circuits and group trips, considered 2 icons of the company. The goal of Abreu Viagens is keeping the recognition and confidence of the market as a result of the innovation capacity and performance of more than 1500 collaborators and the selection of the best partners.

On the website, they have a search system for vacation programs, flights, hotels, cruises and Disneyland and also the packages available per destination or year season. In addition, Abreu Viagens has services such as travel vouchers and insurances and also the contacts, stores network and the customer support page. At the bottom of the website, they have the ongoing contests, the brochures that are also available in the stores and a VA Abreu car conditions. In order to catch the user attention, Abreu Viagens has a banner with the actual campaigns to click and get to know the packages availability.

About the newsletter, they have a form to subscribe on the website and the content is mainly about the last offers with suggestions according to the current campaign or festive season.

On Google, when looking for “Abreu Viagens” they have the first position with sub links, a stores list and the main information from Wikipédia. When looking for “agência de viagens” they also appear on the first position.

Regarding social media, on Facebook Abreu Viagens has more than 650.000 followers with an average of 180 likes on the posts. On their page is included a section to subscribe the newsletter and also the company’ terms and conditions. There are 3 categories of posts: photos of the destinations with an inspirational copy or things to do; campaigns with the promotions and packages conditions; and quizzes for the people to put “like” or “heart” on the destination they prefer.

On Instagram, Abreu Viagens has different types of highlights:

- Destinations with curiosities, tips, polls and quizzes;
- Traveler's quiz about the destinations points of interest;
- Campaigns like "VA pelo mundo fora", "Em 2021 vou" and Valentines Day with destination and activity tips;
- Inspirational quotes;
- Tips with links for articles;
- Specific attraction of a destination with a link for the google arts and culture.

Regarding IGTV, they have fun videos for the quotation "Esta viagem podia ter sido diferente" where they present problems that can happen if the people don't choose Abreu Viagens, presenting how they avoid that. On the guides, they have tips to explore a country based on photos. The publications are mainly with photos, inspirational copy and campaigns that are also present on Instastories.

On both social media, they interact with the users and have an image template for each campaign. The way they communicate is inspirational and informal, with the use of emojis. In addition, on Youtube they have promotional destination videos and the quotation "Esta viagem podia ter sido diferente".

CHAPTER 3 - INTERNAL ANALYSIS

3.1. Company overview

Portugal With was established in 2013 by two professionals with more than 20 years of experience. Portugal With's mission, "is to contribute through good practices, to sustainable tourism and with added value." (Portugal With, 2020). Aware that each trip, each tour and each event is unique, the company works to find the best relationship/quality commitment available on the market.

Furthermore, the main goal is providing a dedicated plan made by specialized consultants from the destination decision until the safe return. With this the success of the trip is guaranteed, including availability 24h, in order to offer comfort and tranquility to their customers.

This company belongs to GEA group, that is an organization that includes independent travel agencies, selected for their experience and professionalism. These agencies have as common objective, provide the best service in terms of quality/price ration, meeting expectations of customers who have chosen one of their agencies.

3.2. Portfolio analysis

Group trips

The main product Portugal With offers are group tours, that have into consideration the goals and perspectives of each on to achieve the ideal trip.

In the process of plan this type of trip, Portugal With has in consideration the budget of each customer, adapting the proposals of each group needs, together with their services partners. Most trips include: accommodation, meals, transportation within the country, multilingual guide-interpreters, among others.

The main commitments when planning a group trips are seriousness, competence and security at the best price. Additionally, these group trips can be cultural, religious and leisure, in Portugal or all around the world. Sometimes it's done in partnership with several locals and internationals organizations, such as parish councils, parishes and associations.

Honeymoon

For honeymoons Portugal With offers packages of travels of amazing couple experiences and prepare everything for the couple to have a worry-free wedding. There are some options like exotic destinations, African safaris, paradisaical beaches or close destinations, to ensure that the couple will have an unforgettable experience.

Customized trips

Customized trips are called for Portugal With as “Viagens à sua Medida” and have the goal of creating exclusive itineraries having in consideration the dreams and interest of each traveler.

In this service the customer just has to indicate what she/he wants and then the consultants will prepare everything having this in account and adapt it to the individual budget.

3.3. Communication Mix

3.3.1. Social media marketing

Portugal With is present in both Facebook and Instagram, which are used often with a strategy not very defined. The company also have LinkedIn account, but they never use it.

In both two social medias, the company uses the Portuguese language with a formal way of communication, but at the same time close to people which gives it a family relationship with potential customers.

Facebook

Portugal With Facebook account have more than 1550 likes, 1570 followers and an average of 15 interactions per post. They are also open to critics which are all positive having a rank of 5/5, although it is based on the opinion of only 10 people. On this page contacts and the localization are available

They post contents about destination suggestions and their packages trips and one post in the beginning of each month too. The photo albums are not organized, just having a folder for cover photos.

Moreover, they have a services section with a little description for each type of offers like, travelling in Portugal, gift card, groups and honeymoons, with the indication of the email to know more information (see annex 1).

Instagram

For Portugal With, Instagram is a recent social media only created on March 12th 2020, having until now 230 followers and an average of 18 interactions per post. On the description they have the business area, a quote, email, phone number, the website and a hashtag with the company's name, encouraging travelers to use it.

Regarding the feed they use it, mainly to post suggestions of destinations to visit, holidays packages, some discounts and inspirational images and quotes, that is very similar of Instagram. It's possible to see that some images are without copies and there are links on the description, that is impossible to open.

About the highlights, they use them to share the posts, images of the destinations and also promotions and specific packages regarding some year seasons. On these Instagram stories that share the hashtag, partners and the website link (see annex 2).

3.3.2. Online marketing

Website

The core of Portugal With communication is their website, which is divided in seven main pages: Home, promotions, specific time of the year, customized trips, group trips, honeymoon, contacts and D.M.C. area (see annex 3).

In the Home page, below the banner with a landscape image, it is possible to search for trips based on dates, destinations and needs (eg: hotel, flight and hotel, cruises, etc.). Below this area is possible to see the main packages available at the moment, with the minimum price and what is included. Followed by an area with the 2 posts of the Facebook page and then a form to send a message to the company with the contacts and a google map with the office localization.

The promotions section provides all the packages available with information like destination, price and number of nights included, with the possibility to read more and know everything that is included and make the booking by email too. On the specific season section, the information available is very similar of the promotions section but with packages to enjoy on a specific time of the year (eg: New Year's eve, summer holidays).

The customized trips section is mainly to explain the concept and all the advantages and encourage the visitors to contact the company as well, to know more information. Then the group trips section, also explains the concept and all the specification of this type of trips with a form to fulfill to request a budget. The honeymoon area is very similar of the last two sections, explaining the types of experiences available. The contacts section includes a contact form and all the contact information such as email, phone number, location of the address with a map and he link for the social media pages. Finally, the D.M.C. (destination management company) section which means that the company is specialized in Portugal and that can be contacted by a foreign agency to organize a trip here. It includes a summary of all information in a visual way, available in English, Portuguese and German.

On the website' footer it is possible to find the presentation of GEA group, an organization that integrates some independent travel agencies, some bureaucratic information such as travel conditions, standard information sheet and the link to the website with dispute resolution entities.

Moreover, the footer of the website also provides some utilities such as meteorological information, currency convertor, passports, flights itineraries, traveler medical appointment, communities portal and time zones. Lastly there are a fill in camp to subscribe the company' newsletter adding the name and the email.

SEO

SEO isn't a very developed version, having a lot of opportunities to explore and improve the content and structure of the website.

Hence, the travel agency appears first when looking for “Portugal With” on Google. Besides that, their business is also included on this search engine with the Google My Business, which has the main information like address, phone number, products, some photos, promotions and good reviews.

However, there are a lot of keywords that travelers can use when looking for this travel service, such as "travel agency", "group trips" and "customized trips". In those cases, the Portugal With's position was not as good, not appearing on the Google's first page (see annex 4). The companies that appear on the first page for the keyword “travel agency” are Top Atlântico, Abreu Viagens and Geostar, for “group trips” are Pinto Lopes Viagens, Rotas do Vento and Viagens-booking and for “customized trips” are Landescape, Travel Tailors and Levartravel.

3.3.3. Direct marketing and database marketing

The personalization and direct contact with their customers are the key factors that differentiate the company. Portugal With is available by telephone and email to make the budgets and clear all doubts before, during and after the trip. With this it ensures that the customer has all the information during the search phase, having support during the trip and being able to share the feedback on the return.

In this strategy Portugal With also has a newsletter, which can be subscribed on the website by providing the name and email. This newsletter is mainly to keep the contact with the customers, send coupons, present actual campaigns and share the company' news (see annex 5).

3.3.4. Sales promotions

Portugal With, in specific times of the year, use price promotions, offering coupons for the person's use in the booking trip process. For example, on the Christmas season for the people who subscribe the newsletter (see annex 6).

CHAPTER 4 - METHODOLOGY

The final goal of this project is to create a communication plan for a travel agency: Portugal With. In order to do that, it is important to understand three different dimensions: the company, the market and the communication practices for a travel agency.

To accomplish what is being proposed in this report, further literature review was developed in order to get a deeper understanding of marketing promotion, communication plans and travel agency customer' profile.

Succeeding, an external analysis has been conducted to better understand the industry and market in which Portugal With's operates, including an examination of their competitors and best practices. It was also developed an Internal analysis to study the company - its goals, business model and current marketing strategy.

After this, it is crucial to collect and analyze data that will support and sustain the decisions and strategies chosen for the implementation of the communication plan. The main objectives of this research will be to obtain information and insights about Portugal With and its market, consumers behavior and their preferences.

Next will be described the techniques used to collect the data mentioned above, resorting to quantitative and qualitative methods.

4.1. Data Collection

Data collection can be primary and secondary. Primary data consists of new data that is collected by the researcher with a specific purpose. Secondary data involves a collection of data that already exists made by different researchers or other sources with other purposes (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014).

4.1.1. Secondary data

Secondary data is a data collected from a source that has already been published in any form (Kabir, 2016). So, it is possible to conclude that all the literature review already done was an example of the use of this method, through the research on books and scientific journals.

Furthermore, additional secondary data has been collected used the same sources adding others like market reports, news articles and previous research about topics like communication plan, travel agencies, Portuguese tourism market and others.

Additionally, a benchmarking of companies with similar business models to Portugal With and its competitors nationals and internationals have been developed, to understand their strategies, communication practices and collect different ideas that can be used.

4.1.2. Primary data

4.1.2.1 Interview

Regarding the primary data, will be used an interview as a form of qualitative research. This type of research is mostly used to gain an understanding of why certain things happen and for explore a context defining problems in more detail (Hill & Hill, 1998). In this case, it will include an interview with Sofia Martins, the owner of the company, that will be done via zoom, because of the pandemic situation.

To ensure that the main topics are covered, while still leaving enough freedom and space for additional aspects to come up, the interviews will be semi structured. Although in this type of interviews the researcher has a list of questions to be covered, the order of questions may be varied depending on the flow of the conversation and additional follow-up questions may be required to explore a particular subject.

This type of interviews is easy to replicate and to compare respondent's answers, can be performed in informal environments, provide very rich information, give additional information and insights, justify previous answers, and establish a connection between several topics. It's also fairly quick to conduct and offer a comfortable atmosphere in which people may feel more comfortable to establish a conversation. On the other side semi-structured interviews can be rigid, requires a lot of preparation time, can be difficult to obtain detailed data and can't be generalized (Almeida *et al.*, 2017).

In this type of interviews the collection of data should be recorded by audio-recording or/and by taking notes. In this study, collection of data in the interview will be taken by audio-recording and just some quick notes, allowing to review and better analyze the answers and save time (Catterall, 2000).

The main goal of this interview is to know more about the company and understand how the several areas works. It's possible to divide the goals of this interview in two parts: business model and communication. In the first one is important to understand the evolution in the last years; strategy and main goals; its mission, values and processes; actual challenges and competitors. Regarding the communication it's crucial to understand general communication practices; the target; physical and digital communication tools that the company uses; communication partners.

The process used to analyze this qualitative data will be "summarizing of meanings" and then, the summary will compress long statements into briefer statements in which the main sense of what has been said is rephrased in a few words (Kvale, 1996).

Furthermore, the interview will be conducted in Portuguese and later translated into English.

4.1.2.2. Survey

A survey is a way to collect primary data, using quantitative research, directly from a person involved in the researcher through a set of questions organized in a certain order. It allows to obtain information about a given topic, through questions that reflect the opinions, perceptions and behaviors of a group of individuals.

This technique admits a high representativeness of the entire population, can reach high audiences, provide an easy data collection and analysis using statistical methods, have a good cost-effective relation and requires low development time. On the other side, the reliability of survey data is very dependent on the survey structure and the quality of answers and don't capture emotions or behaviors of respondents. (Almeida *et al.*, 2017).

In this study, the online survey will be conducted through an online survey with the main purpose of collected data from the core target group, Portuguese people, and understand their preferences and behaviors as travelers planning a trip and knowledge regarding Portuguese travel agencies. Moreover, it is also crucial to know the online habits of people when looking for a travel.

The survey will be written and shared online in Portuguese and later translated to English for analysis. It will cover 4 areas: personal information, traveler profile and online behavior, pandemic impact and Portuguese cultural and travel agencies. The survey will include closed questions, multiple choice questions and scaled questions in order to be easy to answer, have spontaneous answers and create patterns regarding different people categories.

The technique that will be used to create the sample dimension is “self-selection sampling”, within the non-probability sampling technique. This method occurs when the researcher allows each respondent to take part in the research through an invitation made by the researcher. Thus, a hyperlink will be shared, which by clicking on it would automatically indicate who volunteered to the online survey (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The hyperlink will be sent by messages through Messenger and WhatsApp, by posts on Facebook profile, Facebook groups, LinkedIn and IBS' website and by stories on Instagram, inviting colleagues, friends and relatives to participate in the study and share it with their acquaintances, using a snowball technique. Before sharing the hyperlink to the public, a first version will be sent as a test for five people to give their opinion. About the people chosen for an answer, the first step will be the people that normally travel like traveler groups, friends and family with that habit and Portugal With's

contacts. After this, the second step will be sending the hyperlink for other colleagues, friends and relatives and the last step will be sharing the link to the public on social media.

In this process, the best hour to send the messages will be lunch time for people that aren't working yet and after working hours for the ones that are working. This way it will be guaranteed that when the people see the messages, they will have enough time to answer at that moment.

After reaching a considerable number of answers, an analysis will be done of the information collected from the online survey with the statistical program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and used tables and graphics to describe and discuss data collected and to illustrate some trends found.

This analysis will help to support the decision and development of a more effective communication plan and find out which are the most appropriate tools and how to use each one when communicating with customers.

CHAPTER 5 - DATA ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Interview

The main purpose of this interview was to acquire missing information regarding Portugal With mainly about the business model and communication and also to clarify some doubts about aspects already elucidated through their website. The analysis of this qualitative data will be made in summary throughout the interview into the main ideas learned. Nevertheless, the complete interview is available in the annexes (see annex 7).

The first question was about the Portugal With's history in order to understand how the company was formed. Based on this information, it was possible to conclude that Portugal With is a family business with four workers that emerged in order to face the demand that the owners already had as travel leaders.

After this, regarding the mission, values and goals of the company, Sofia Martins, the owner of the company, admitted that they never thought a lot about it but that they based on truth and proximity with their customers.

In the third question, the author tried to understand the evolution of the company in the last years. Regarding this topic, it was possible to understand that once Portugal With is a familiar company, they want to maintain a close connection with customers. With. The goal of have a sort of services to offer to their customers, they are part of a travel agencies group, the group GEA that provide different packages. During the last years they accompanied foreign groups that wanted to visit Portugal and they did partnerships with agencies for companied Portuguese people in their countries. During the summer of 2020, in spite of the pandemic restrictions, they tried to create different programs, but just one was possible to realize. For the future, Sofia thinks that the main fear of the people is staying in hotels and because of that they prefer apartments, something that the company will have to adapt.

Regarding the companies processes and customer touch points, they usually contact directly the company by phone or email, explaining their main preferences. Then, Sofia and her employees request quotes from different operators to compare and choose the best option. In addition, they also have a reservation area on the website but it is not much used by the customers.

The next question continues to focus on the strategy, by clarifying the type of differentiation which is not completely due to price or offer. The offer is very similar for all the agencies because of the travel operators that provide the same services to all. With the price the same thing happens, they are priced equally but in this case Portugal With makes a little difference

not charging reservation fees and trying to attract new customers with this option. The main differential factors identified were, a personal connection with customers and the trust that they tried to transmit with the WOM.

About the competitors, the main ones are the travel agencies because they have the same product. Although other competitors more and more developed are the OTAs because they allow people to book by themselves everything that they need for travelling. On the other side, in 2020 another threat was people deciding to travel in Portugal at the moment, booking directly the stay with the hotel, which can be a habit and occur again in the post-pandemic situation. For the future, Sofia expects that because of some problems that happened during the beginning of the pandemic, with people buying the flight trip online, they will value more the travel agencies because of the insurance and guarantees.

Following these aspects, regarding the critical factors of success the main ones identified by Sofia was the close relationship with the customer, the security offered and monitoring throughout the process and availability 24 hours in case of any problem during the trip. Moreover, they are very flexible and can reach out to the customer if he is unable to go to the office to collect the trip documentation. The company also provides a lot of different travel insurances and has an office location in an area with good access.

In order to differentiate from the competitors, they also think about creating e-books with itineraries by destinations but is something that they haven't done yet.

Regarding to the actual challenges due to the pandemic situation, the main concern is about to show security to the customers for them to regain confidence to travel again. On the other side, Sofia identified a tendency during the summer of 2020 that was, people decided to go to somewhere at the moment and reserve directly at the hotels and she is a little bit afraid that it can be a habit in the future.

Other challenge that already existed before the COVID-19, is the OTAs that inhibit people to look for travel agencies that most of the times have a better price, but they never get to know. In this scope other challenges that already exists is to reach new customers without WOM because sometimes the company works on budgets and the people don't move forward.

After this, the author focused on marketing aspects, starting by the range of products that are mainly two: group trips and individual bookings. In both options, hotel, flight, rent-a-car, guide and itinerary services, excursions (mainly to unknown destinations, are more difficult to find), attractions, transfers, insurance, tours and other activities on site are available. In terms of destinations, they have packages and options for all countries in the world, using different operators.

The next question was about the target. About the actual customers, they are essentially organizations that promote group trips for older people, but Sofia doesn't have a direct contact with the participants and it can be of interest, in order to contact them in other occasions for future travels. In this sense reach more unions is also a goal to increase the WOM. Regarding the age, from the groups where the people are normally older, and the individual is younger with or without children. In terms of mensal income is very variable but the company tries to adapt all the package components. About the location of the customer, those who want to travel to more far away destinations, are mainly from Lisbon, Alentejo and Peniche.

Next, the author tried to understand the physical and digital communication tools which are more used. The main one is the word-of-mouth. Regarding the physical ones, they already participate in a travel fair (with some long-time effects) and did some flyers to distribute around the office area (with no effects). About the digital tools they have a website that is something that they consider that need more time to explore and they already did newsletters but without constant periodicity.

Focusing on social media, this is something that the company only use more when they have less work and because of this they don't have a communication plan. Facebook is the one that they use for the longest time, Instagram is since the pandemic and LinkedIn is the more recent and didn't have any post. About the post, they are mainly to let to know the company and remind people that the agency exists. For the future, Sofia wants to create something on Tiktok, improve the presence on Facebook that she considers important for the older people and also invest on videos for the other social media.

Regarding communication partners, the company doesn't have any. However, the travel operators who they work with, refer the company as one of the points of sale for the packages they offer.

The author also tried to understand if the Portugal With's website is present in others forms like forums and blogs, but Sofia explains that they are only present on the GEA group website as an agency belonging to the group.

In order to understand if the company has already done some market research that the author can use on the project, the company explains that they never did it. However, they already think about doing a feedback survey at the end of the trip to collect some opinions and contacts of the people that participate in the group trips. In this question the author also tried to understand if the company has a way to know how people engage with the company and normally, they said on the first contact with Sofia.

Finally, the last question is about the physical office that is closed for now and the goal is to keep a quiet location to be easy to work, but probably in a coworking space to increase the networking.

5.2. Survey

The main purpose of this survey (see annex 8) was to collect information regarding the consumer preferences and behavior in the Portuguese travel agencies market. According to quantitative analysis techniques, descriptive analysis and graphics will be used to illustrate and complement the analysis of the data. Lastly, all the charts used in this chapter were made by the author of this thesis resorting to SPSS tools.

5.2.1. Sample characterization

Firstly, to know who answered the survey, an analysis will be developed of respondents' main demographic characteristics, based on the question 1 to question 8, present in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 - Social demographic characterization

Variable	Variable classification	Relative frequency (%)
Gender	Female	66%
	Male	34%
Age groups	<18 years old	0,4%
	18-25 years old	50%
	26-35 years old	12%
	36-55 years old	26%
	>55 years old	12%
Education level	Nine grade	0,8%
	High school	12%
	Professional course	3%
	Bachelor's degree	48%
	Postgraduate	8%
	Master's degree	27%
	Doctorate degree	0,6%
Occupation	Student	34%
	Employed	57%
	Unemployed	4%
	Retired	5%
Monthly income	<500	33%
	500-1000	21%
	1001-1500	21%
	1501-2500	19%
	>2500	6%

Variable	Variable classification	Relative frequency (%)
Area of residence	North	6,6%
	Center	80,3%
	South	14,6%
	Islands	2,2%
Civil status	Single	42%
	In a relation	29%
	Married	26%
	Divorced	3%
	Widow	0,4%
Household	Without children	67%
	With financial dependent children	26%
	With financial independent children	7%

Starting by the gender, from the sample of 504 respondents, 66% are female and the remaining 34% male. Furthermore, after recording the variable age into groups it is possible to see that 50% are between 18-25 years old, which is expected since the author shared it with her friends that are around her age. Nevertheless, 0,40% are less than 18 years old, 12% are between 26-35 years old, 26% have 36-55 years old and 12% are older than 55 years. Concerning the education level, 48% have a bachelor's degree, 27% have a master's degree, 8% have a postgraduation and the remaining 17% have lower levels. About occupation wise, more than half (57%) are employed, 34% are students and the remaining are either unemployed or retired.

The last two variables are reflected in the monthly income as only 33% receive less than 500€, since the majority are working and have a high level of education. Therefore, 21% receive between 500-1000€, 21% between 1001-1500€ which can be considered a medium level of income and around 25% earn more than 1501€ which is going towards a high-level salary considering the average wage in Portugal is around 970€ (INE, 2018).

Concerning the area of residence in Portugal there are answers from all the country, except Vila Real, Bragança e Portalegre. The respondents are 69,25% from Lisbon, 4,37% from Santarém, 8,33% from Setúbal and the rest represent small percentages. Finally, regarding the civil status of the respondents, 42% are single, 29% are in a relation and 26% are married, whereas 3% are divorced and 0.4% are widowers. In addition, out of the 504 respondents, 67% have no children while 33% have at least one child, of which 26% are financial dependent and 7% are financial independent.

5.2.2. Traveler profile

This section of the survey aims to clarify respondents' travel habits and preferences.

Q9. Select how often each of the following situations occur in relation to your fellow travelers

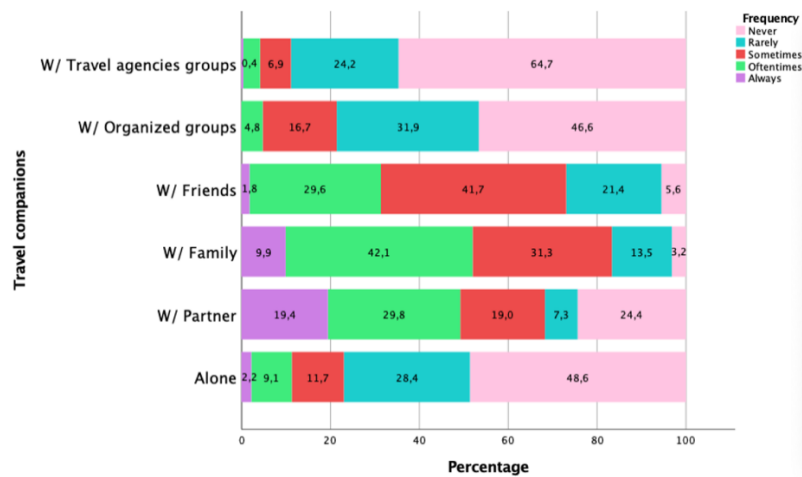


Chart 5.1 - Frequency of each possible travel companion (Q9)

Analyzing the Q9, it is possible to conclude that more than half of the examples have never traveled within groups gathered by travel agencies (64.7%). At the same time more than 45% of the examples never traveled with organized groups (eg. sports, religious, school, etc.) or travelling alone. On the other side, the preferable companions are a partner (19.4% always travel with them and 29.8% often), family (9.9% always travel with them, 42.1% often) and friends (1.8% always, 29.6% often and 41.7% sometimes) (see chart 5.1).

Q10 Select how often each of the following situations occurs in relation to the person responsible for booking the trip

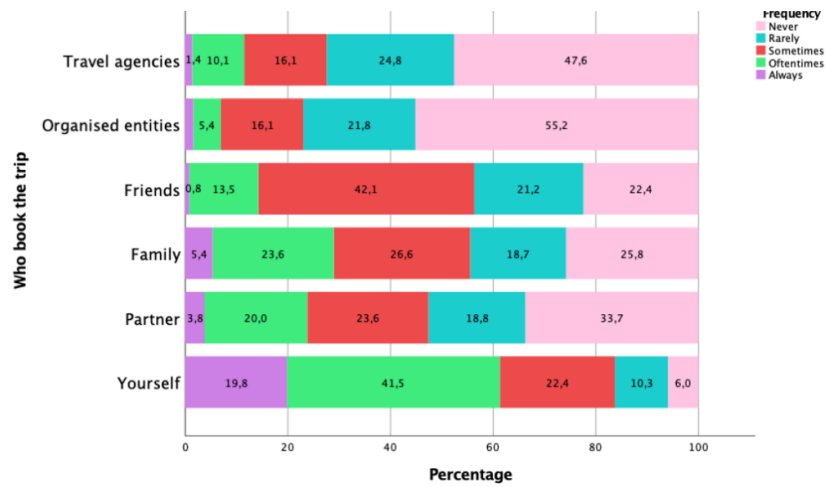


Chart 5.2 - Frequency of who organizes the trip (Q10)

Regarding who book the trip (Q10), is possible to conclude that more than half the respondents usually book the trip by themselves (19.8% always do it and 41.5% do it often). For the other options, in a descendent order, the most common is the partner (23.6% sometimes, 20% often and 3.8% always), family (26.6% sometimes, 23.6% often and 5.4% always) and friends (42.1% sometimes, 13.5% often and 0.8% always) (see chart 5.2). The less common options are organized entities (55.2% never) and travel agencies (47.6% never).

Q11. Select how often you travel, depending on your destination

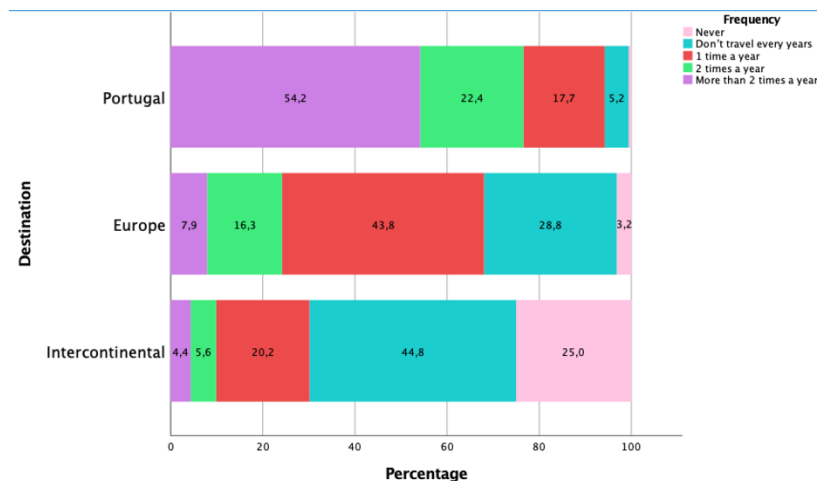


Chart 5.3 - Frequency of travel by destination (Q11)

More about the destination, the frequency, in decreasing order, is higher for Portugal (54.2% travel more than 2 times a year, 22.4% travel 2 times a year), Europe (7.9% travel more than 2

times a year, 16.3% travel 2 times a year) and Intercontinental (4.4% travel more than 2 times a year, 5.6% travel 2 times a year). For the last destination, it is possible to conclude that more than half of the respondents never or don't travel every year to other continents. This result is expected due to the cost that in general is higher for longest distances, some people have 2 houses in Portugal which increase the national travels and have immigrated family around Europe (see chart 5.3).

Q12. Select how often you travel, depending on the reason

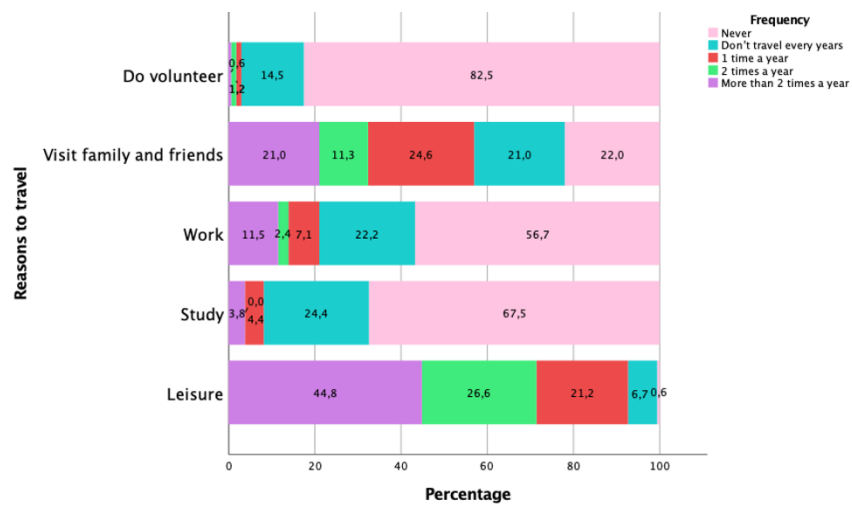


Chart 5.4 - Frequency of travel depending on the reason (Q12)

Having in consideration the reasons to travel, the respondents travel mainly for leisure (44.8% more than 2 times a year, 26.6% 2 times a year) and visit family and friends (21% more than 2 times a year, 11.3% 2 times a year). Do volunteer and study are the less frequent reasons once they are more punctual activities. 82.5% never travel to do volunteer and 14.5% don't do it every year. About study 67.5% never travel to do it and 24.4% don't travel every year. At the same time, travel for work is also a punctual reason but more frequent, 11.5% travel more than 2 times a year and 9.5% travel 1 or 2 times a year (see chart 5.4).

Q13. Select the advance in which you plan most of your trips, depending on the destination

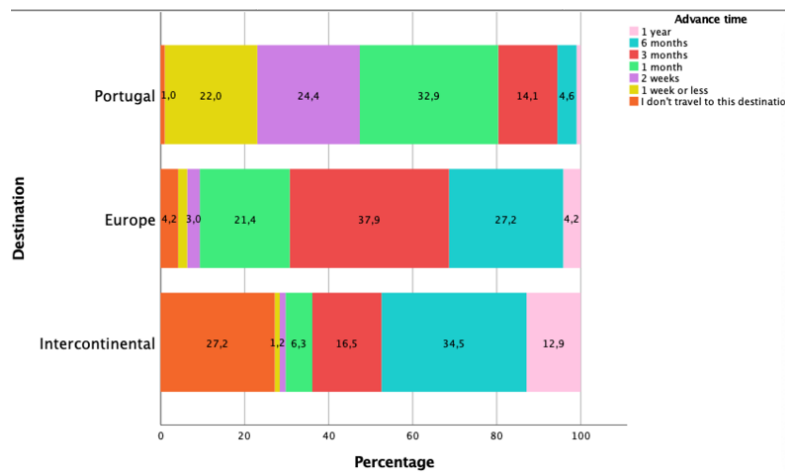


Chart 5.5 - Time needed to plan a trip, depending on the destination (Q13)

Concerning how far in advance respondents plan their trips, as expected, the further away the destination is, the more advance they start planning, probably because of the costs, flight and hotel availability. Thus, for intercontinental destinations, from the 72.8% that travel to others continents, the majority of the respondents (34.5%) planed 6 months in advance and 16.5% 3 months. For Europe destinations, a significant part planned their trips with 3 months in advance (37.9%) and 6 months (27.2%). Finally, for Portugal trips, 32.9% planned 1 month before, 24.4% 2 weeks and 22% 1 week or less (see chart 5.5).

Q14. Select the number of nights you normally book for each trip, depending on the destination

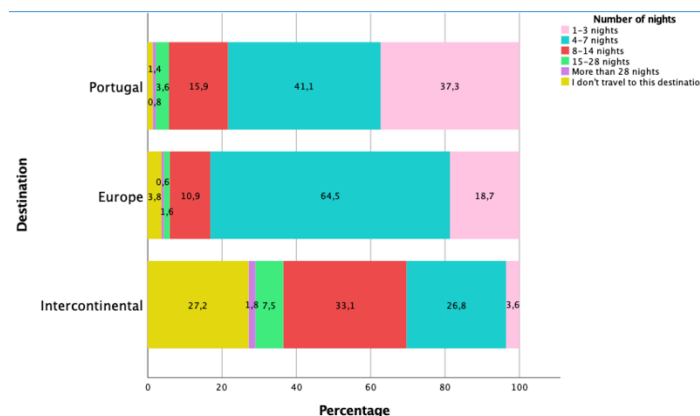


Chart 5.6 - Average number of nights depending on the destination (Q14)

Regarding the average number of nights per trip it is possible to conclude that the most common is 4-7 nights, both for Europe (64.5%) and national (41.1%) trips, and 8-14 nights for intercontinental (33.1%) probably because of the time and money spent on flights. The second most common for Portugal (37.3%) and Europe (18.7%) trips are 1-3 nights and for intercontinental are 4-7 nights (26.8%) (see chart 5.6).

Q15. Select your travel types that attract you more

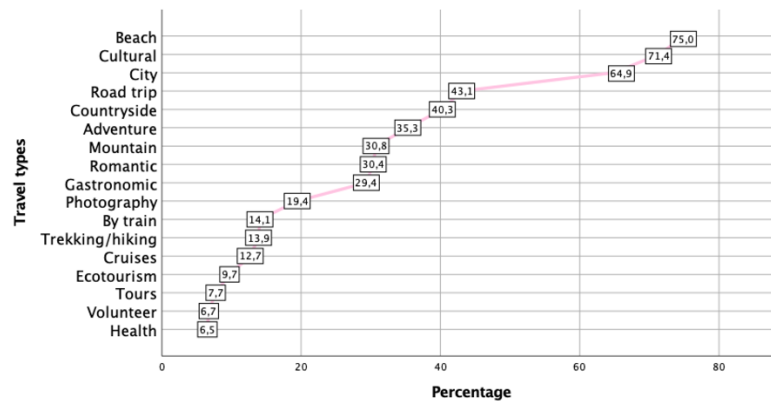


Chart 5.7 - Preferable types of trips (Q15)

In a descendent order, the 3 preferable types of trips are Beach (75% of total examples choose it), Cultural (71.4%) and City (64.9%). On the other side, the 3 that the respondents like less are health (6.5%), volunteer (6.7%) and tours (7.7%), that normally is associated to group trips. In the middle there are the other types of trips with percentages between 9.7% (ecotourism) and 43.1% (road trip) (see chart 5.7).

Q16. Select from the media below, those you use most to search for travel content/ information

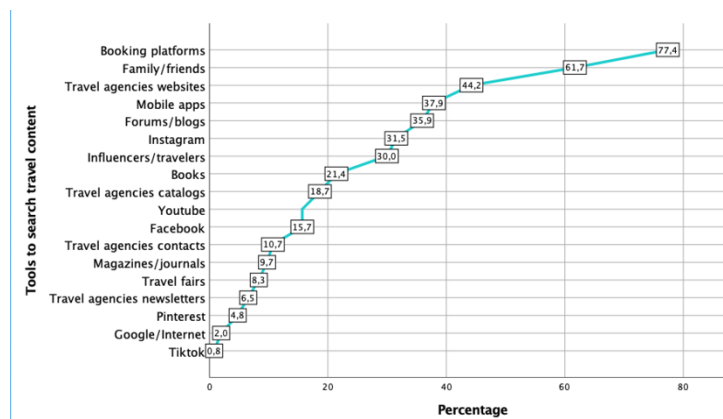


Chart 5.8 - Tools to search travel content (Q16)

This question aims to understand where respondents normally look for travel content/information and based on the answers, there are two sources that distinguish themselves from the others: flight and hotel booking platforms (77.4%), such as booking, hotel website, airline websites, Momondo; and family, friends or other people that already visit the destination (61.7%). Then the travel agencies websites are the tools mostly used with 44.2% of the answers, followed by mobile apps (from booking platforms, travel agencies, etc) with 37.9% and travel forums/blogs with 35.9%. Focusing on social media, 31.5% use Instagram, 15.7% YouTube, 15.7% Facebook and 0.8% Tiktok. About the more traditional travel agencies tool, 18.7% use catalogs, 10.7% contact by email, phone or presential, 8.3% travel fairs and 6.5% newsletters (see chart 5.8).

Q17. Select from the media below, those you use most to book trips

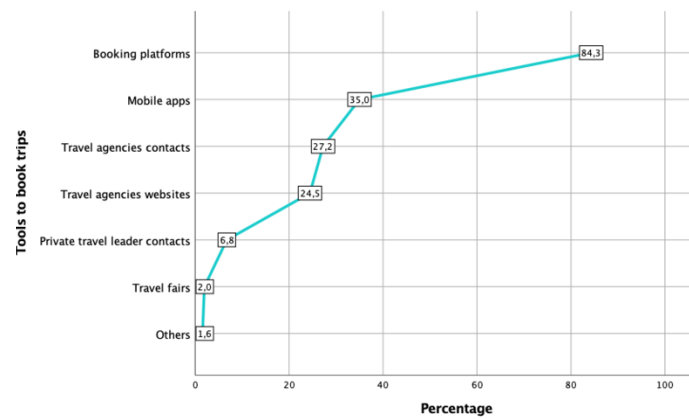


Chart 5.9 - Tools to book trips (Q17)

This question focuses on the tools that the respondents use for effectively book the trip and is possible to conclude that the tool mostly used is the same for search travel information: booking platforms with 84.3% of the answers. Then, the respondents use mobile apps (35%), travel agencies contacts (27.2%) and travel agencies websites (24.5%) (see chart 5.9).

Q18. Select how often you share your travel experiences on social media

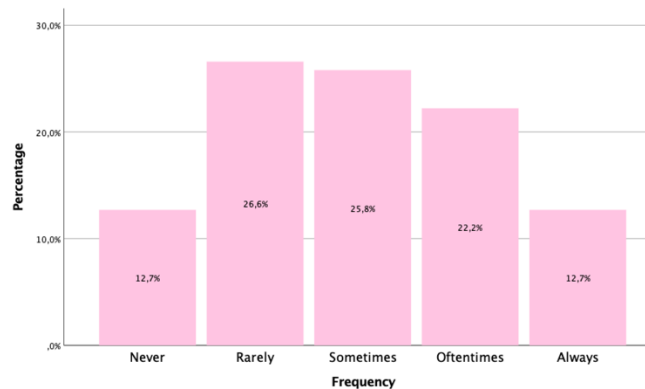


Chart 5.10 - Frequency of sharing personal travel experiences on social media (Q18)

Afterwards, to understand the power of online WOM in the travel community, was inquired the frequency with which the respondents shared their travel experiences on social media. In fact, a significant percentage does not share (12.7%) or at least does it rarely (26.6%). Nevertheless, 25.8% share their experience sometimes, 22.2% does it often and 12.7% always (see chart 5.10).

Q19. Select how many Portuguese travel agency accounts you follow on social media

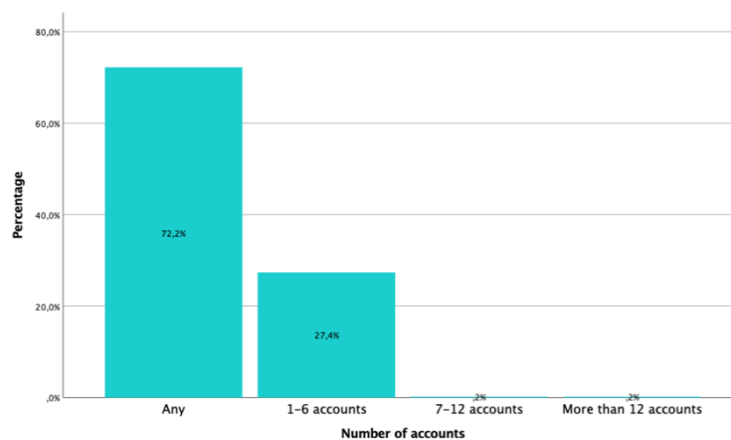


Chart 5.11 - Number of Portuguese travel agency accounts followed on social media (Q19)

In order to understand the interest of the respondents on Portuguese travel agency social media accounts, was inquired the number of accounts that they follow. About this topic, it was possible to conclude that more than half of the people (72.2%) don't follow any accounts, 27.4% follow 1-6 accounts and 0.2% follow more than 7 accounts (see chart 5.11).

Q20. Indicate which Portuguese travel agencies you know

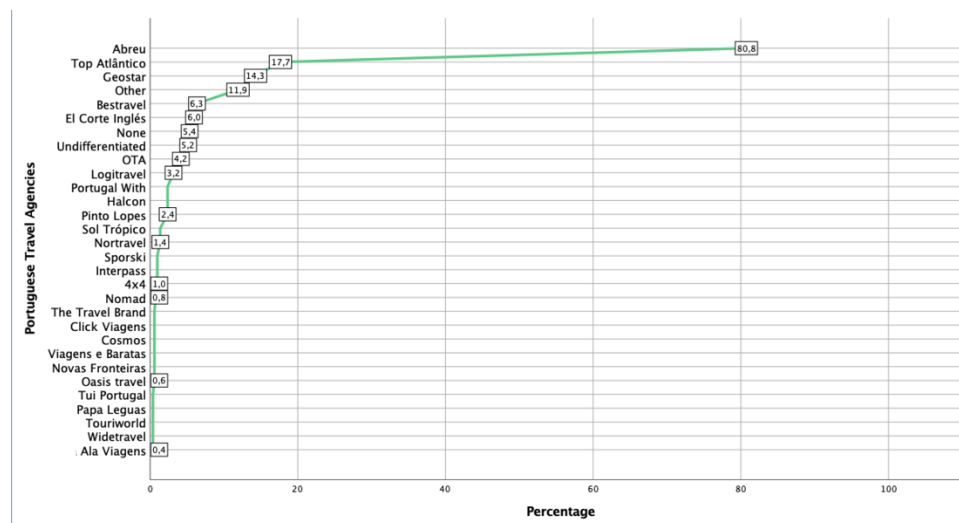


Chart 5.12 - Portuguese travel agencies that the respondents know (Q20)

With the goal of understanding which Portuguese travel agencies the respondents know as expected, Abreu is the most known. Following there are Top Atlântico (17.7%), Gesostar (14.3%) and other smaller ones (11.9%). It is also possible to conclude that 5.4% don't know any travel agency and 5.2% knows but don't know the name. Regarding Portugal With, 2.4% of the respondents know the agency (see chart 5.12).

5.2.3. Portuguese culture and travel agencies

This section aims to understand your preferences and behavior in relation to Portuguese travel agencies.

Q21. Select from the reasons mentioned below, those that may lead you to turn to a travel agency

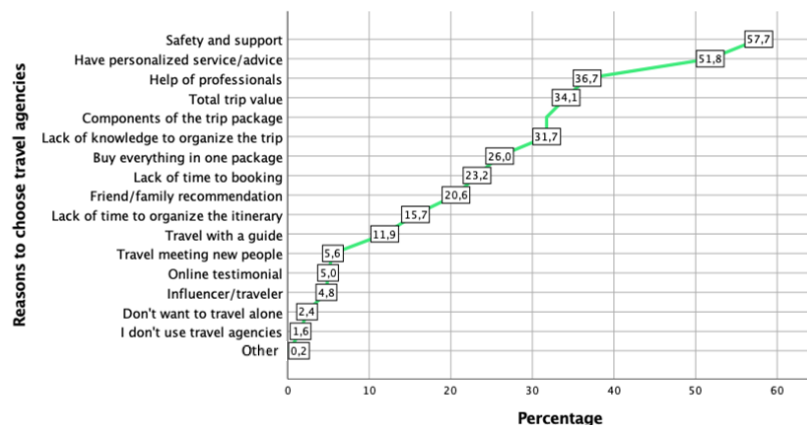


Chart 5.13 - Reasons to choose travel agencies (Q21)

The next question aims to understand the reasons why the respondents choose travel agencies. It's possible to conclude that the 3 main reasons are: safety and support before, during and after the travel (57.7%), have a personalized service/advice (51.8%) and preference for help of professionals, depending on the destination (36.6%). On the other side, the less important factors for the respondents are, don't want to travel alone (2.4%), recommendation by an influencer (4.8%) and online testimonial (5%) (see chart 5.13).

Q22. Select if you would be interested in the following services offered by a travel agency

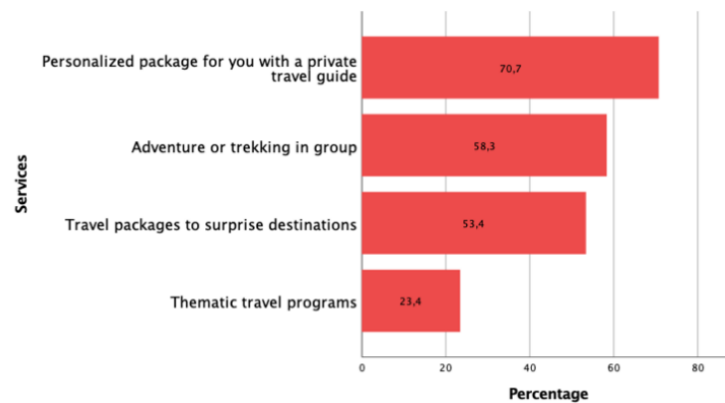


Chart 5.14 - Interest in specific services (Q22)

About the interest in services offered by travel agencies, the most chosen is a personalized package with a private travel guide (70.7%). The others are, in descendant order, adventure or trekking in group (58.3%), travel packages to surprise destinations (53.4%) and thematic travel programs (23.4%) (see chart 5.14).

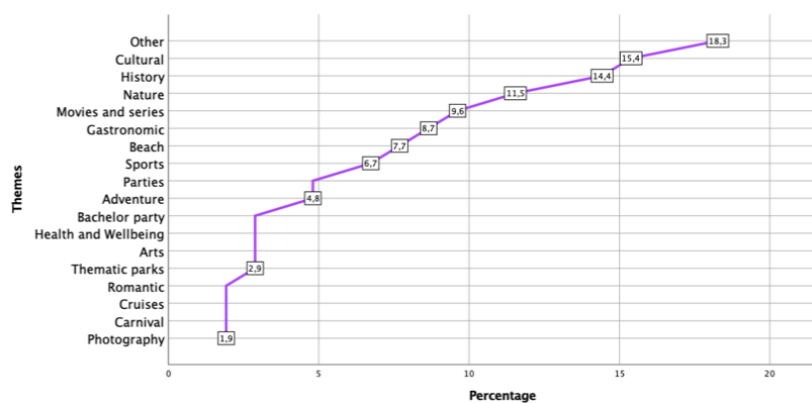


Chart 5.15 - Themes for the thematic travel programs (Q22)

From the thematic travel programs there are 18.3% of the respondents that choose several themes such as literature, fashion, tropical, pilgrimage and spiritual. On the other side, 15.4% choose cultural, 14.4% history and 11.5% nature. The less chosen is photography, carnival, cruises and romantic with 1.9% each (see chart 5.15).

Q23. Select the types of trips most likely to use travel agencies

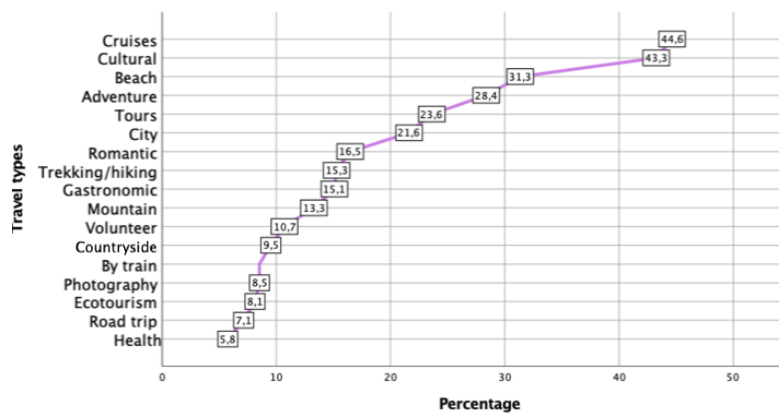


Chart 5.16 - Travel types most likely to use travel agencies (Q23)

Regarding the travel types most likely to use travel agencies, they are cruises (44.6%), cultural (43.4%) and beach (31.3%). The least chosen are health trips (5.8%), road trips (7.1%) and ecotourism (8.1%) (see chart 5.16).

Q24. Select the content/tools you value most on a travel agency website

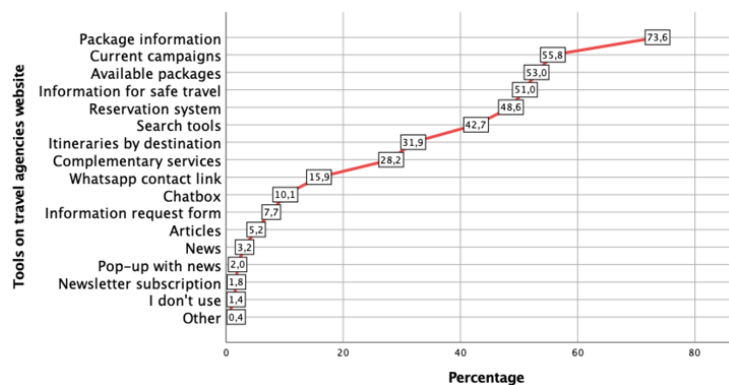


Chart 5.17 - Content/tools valued on travel agency website (Q24)

The question 24 tries to understand the tools that the respondents most value on travel agencies website. About this, the factors most valued are package information (73.6%), current campaigns/promotions (55.8%), available packages (53%) and information for safe travel (51%). About the less valued are newsletter subscription (1.8%), pop-up with news (2%) and news (3.2%). Besides that, there is a respondent that values FAQ's on a website (see chart 5.17).

Q25. Select the content/tools you value most on a travel agency social media

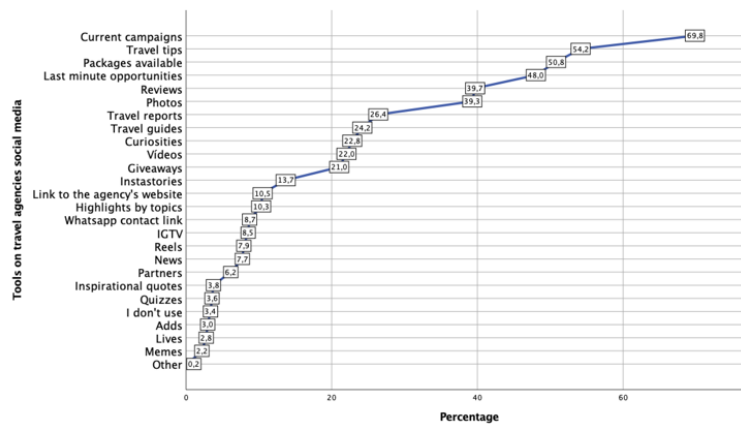


Chart 5.18 - Content/tools valued on travel agency social media (Q25)

Then, was inquired the tools that the respondents most value on travel agencies social media. Regarding this the content most valued are current campaigns (69.8%), travel tips (54.2%), packages available (50.8%) and last-minute opportunities (48%). On the other side, the less valued are memes (2.2%), lives (2.8%) and adds (3%). In the middle is possible to conclude that giveaways, videos, curiosities, travel guides and travel reports have similar percentages, between 21% and 26.4% (see chart 5.18).

5.2.4. Impact of the covid-19 pandemic

This section was included in the survey aiming to understand the pandemic impact in respondents' willingness and plans to travel again abroad.

Q26. Select the period in which you plan to resume your trips taking into account the destination

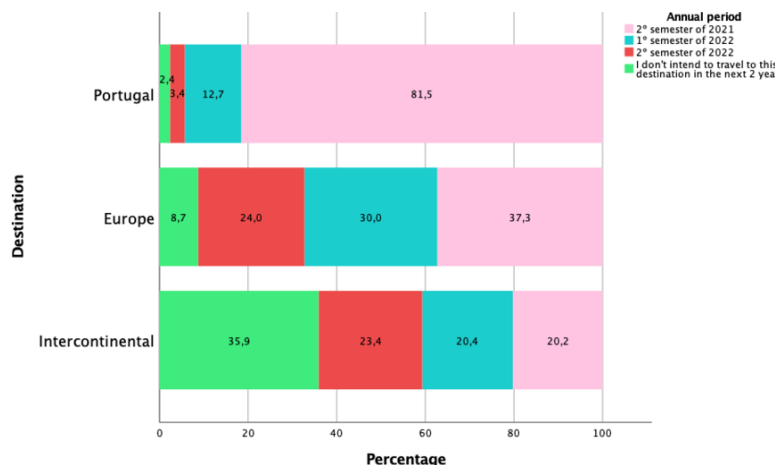


Chart 5.19 - Period to resume trips depending on the destination (Q26)

Starting the questions about the coronavirus impact, the author tried to understand when the respondents plan to return the travels taking in account the destination. For Portugal 81.5% of the respondents pretend to travel in the 2nd semester of 2021 and just 15.8% plan to travel in 2022. On the other hand, for Europe the scenario is a bit different with 37.3% planning to travel in 2021, 30% in the 1st semester of 2022 and 24% in the 2nd semester of 2022. About intercontinental trips the majority (35.9%) don't intend to travel in the next 2 years and the rest are divided in similar way for 2nd semester of 2022 (23.4%), 1st semester of 2022 (20.4%) and 2nd semester of 2021 (20.2%) (see chart 5.19).

Q27. Select the types of travel that you will feel the safest to take

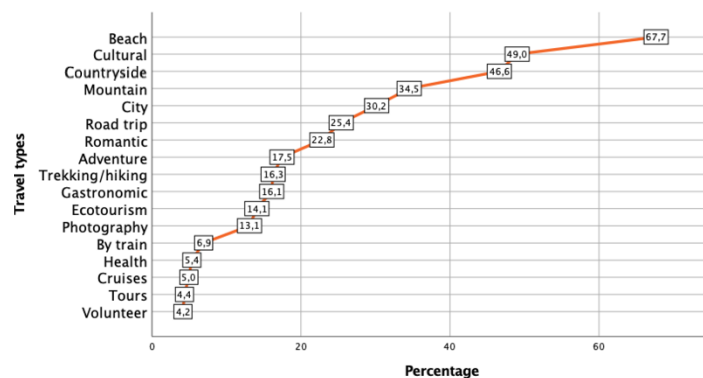


Chart 5.20 - Safer travel types to resume trips (Q27)

Regarding the travel types that the respondents will feel safe to take, the three more selected was beach (67.7%), cultural (49%) and camp (46.6%). The three less selected are volunteer (4.2%), tours (4.4%) and cruises (5%) (see chart 5.20).

Q28. Select the continents for which you are likely to feel safer on your first trips

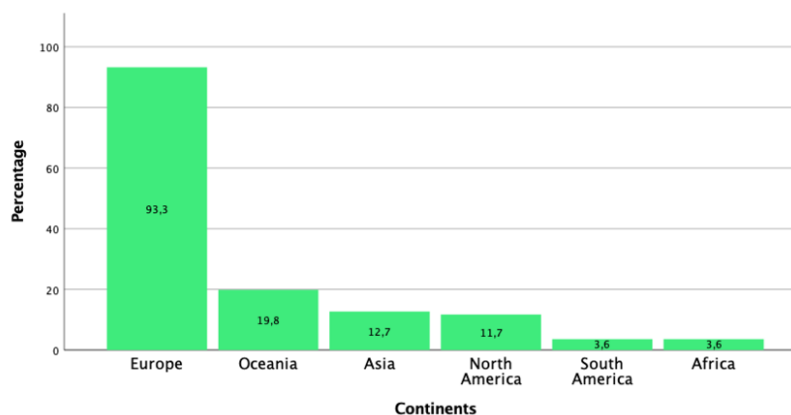


Chart 5.21 - Expected destination for the first trips (Q28)

The next question found out that the continents are most likely chosen for the first trips and as expected, Europe is the most selected with 93.3%, followed by Oceania (19.8%), Asia (12.7%), North America (11.7%) and Africa and South America with 3.6% each one (see chart 5.21).

Q29. Select the extent to which you agree with the following statements the moment you return to travel

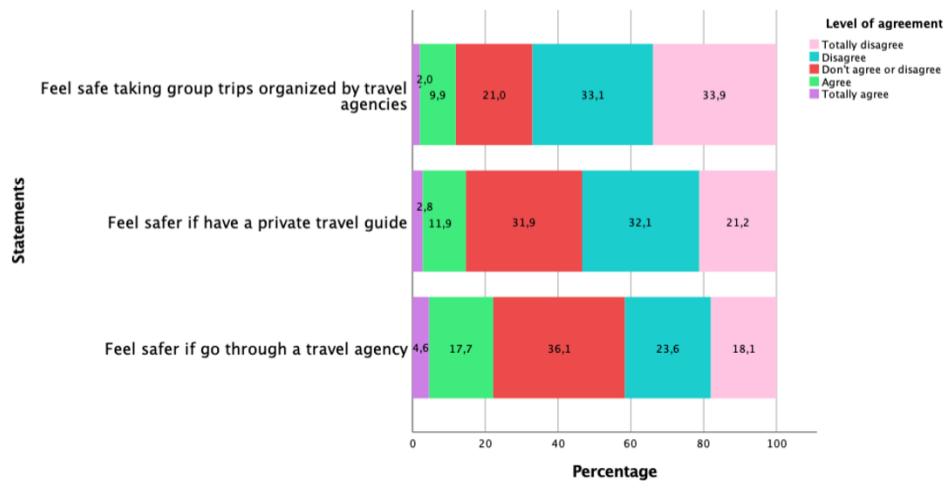


Chart 5.22 - Safety to return to travel (Q29)

The last question aims to understand how the pandemic influences the respondents' options regarding travel agencies. The first statement inquires if the respondents will feel safer to travel with a travel agency compared to the pre-pandemic period, and is possible to conclude that 33.9% totally disagree, 21% don't have a specific opinion and just 2% totally agree.

The second statement is about the safety feel with a private travel guide/leader, comparing with the pre-pandemic period and in this case 21.2% totally disagree, 31.9% don't have a specific opinion and 2.8% totally agree.

The last statement tries to understand if the respondents will feel safe taking group trips (with people they don't know) organized by travel agencies. About these topics, 18.1% totally disagree, 36.1% don't have a specific opinion and 4.6% totally agree (see chart 5.22).

5.2.5. Cross Tabulation Analysis

Aiming to understand if any of the variables studied has any relation with another the author conducted with crosstabs analysis, to research more than one variable, charts were created according to the data in the tables obtained. The questions that were selected to make these crossings are the ones that present the greatest variations between them.

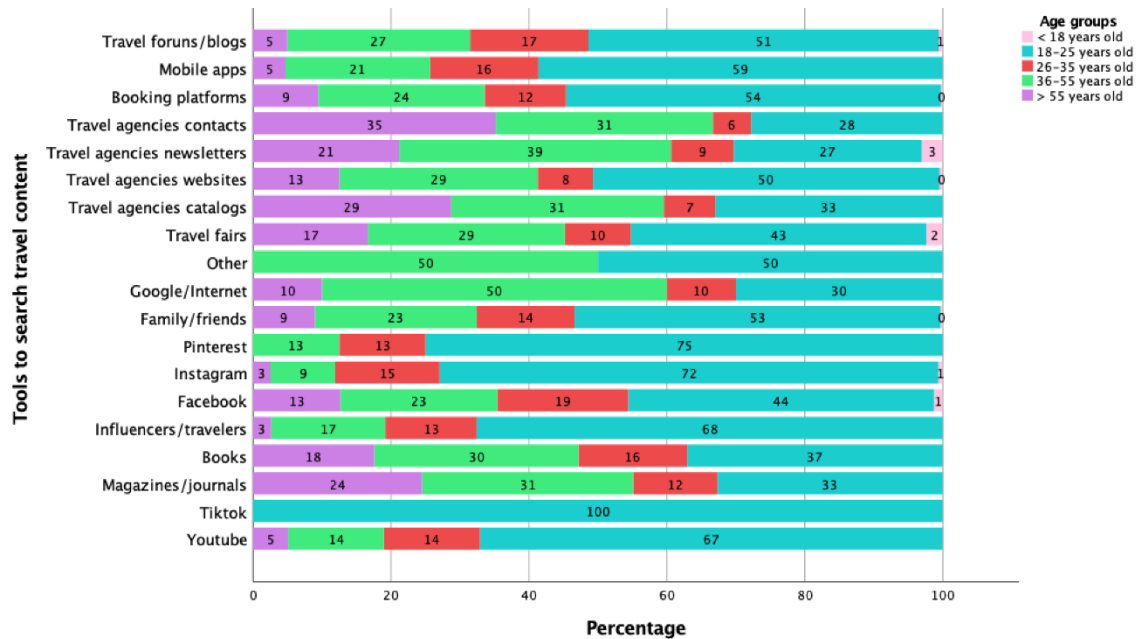


Chart 5.23 - Crosstabs: Age groups x tools to search travel contents

Regarding the comparison between the age groups and the tools to search travel contents, it is possible to conclude that travel forums/blogs, mobile apps, travel fairs, booking platforms, social media and influencers recommendation are used mainly by people with 18-25 years old. Tiktok is only used by this age group. Google, travel agencies websites and newsletters are mainly used in the 36-55 age group. Finally, travel agencies contacts are preferred for people with more than 55 years old. People between 26-35 years old mainly use forums/blogs, Facebook, mobile apps and books (see chart 5.23).

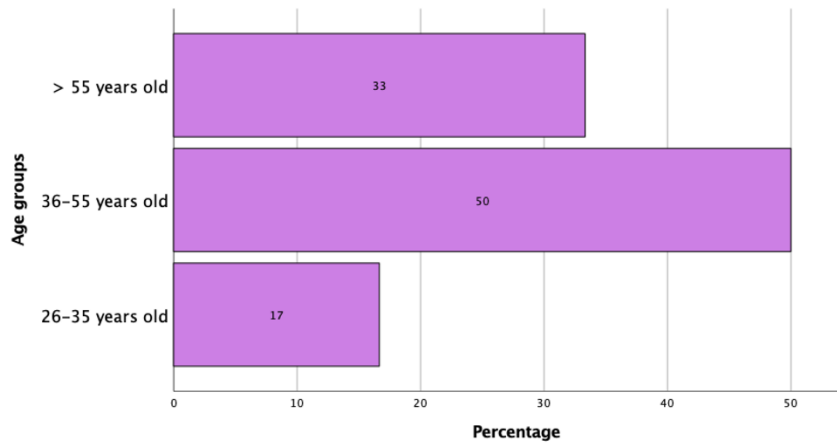


Chart 5.24 - Crosstabs: Age groups x people that refer Portugal With

From the question to identify Portuguese travel agencies it is possible to see that the respondents that refer Portugal With are between 36-55 years old (50%). The others are more than 55 years old (33%) or between 26-35 years old (17%). There is no one with less than 26 years old that mentioned Portugal With (see chart 5.24).

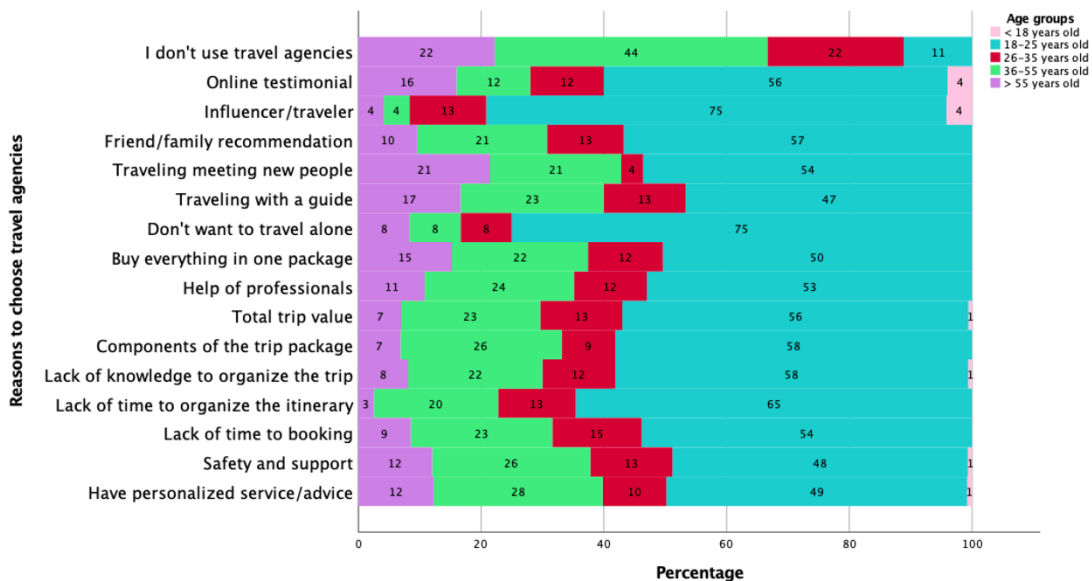


Chart 5.25 - Crosstabs: Age groups x reasons to choose travel agencies

Comparing the reasons to choose travel agencies with the age groups, it is possible to conclude that the youngest people mainly choose travel agencies because of an influencer/traveler recommendation, don't want to travel alone or because they don't have time to organize the itinerary. On the other hand, the reasons that lead older people to choose travel agencies are mainly to have a personalized service/advice, the components of the trip package and the safety and support offered. So, it is possible to conclude that the younger people are mainly influenced

by the online aspects and the oldest for the support and service personalization. From the respondents that don't use travel agencies, they are mainly 36-55 years old (see chart. 5.25).

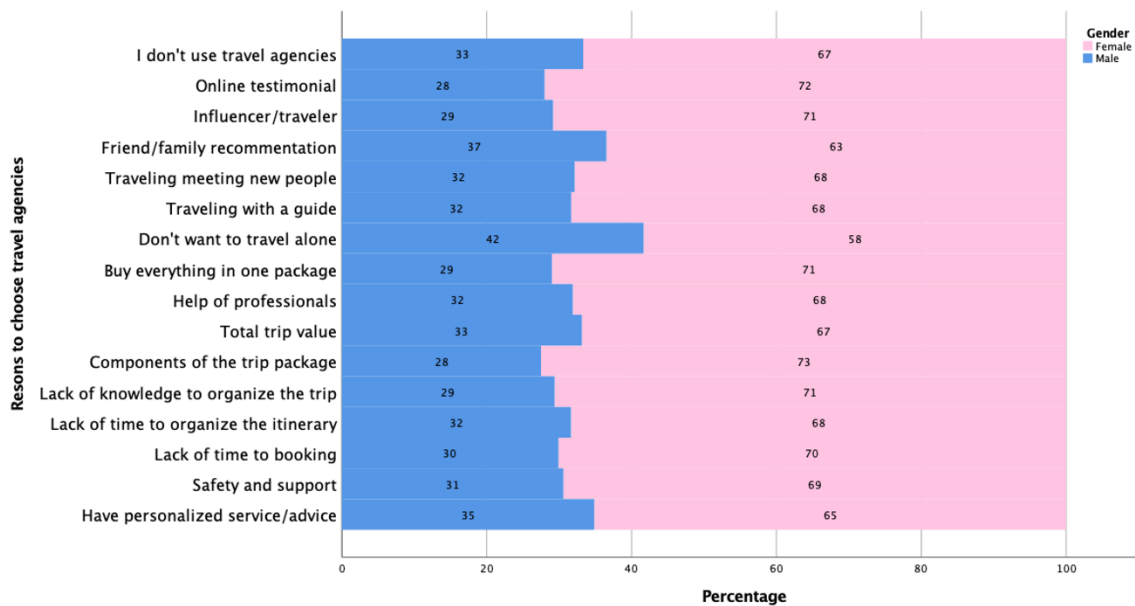


Chart 5.26 - Crosstabs: Gender x reasons to choose travel agencies

For reasons to choose travel agencies but now comparing with the gender, the females choose travel agencies mainly because of influencers, online testimonial and components of the trip package. On the other side, the main reasons for the males are that they don't want to travel alone, friend or family recommendation and have a personalized service/advice (see chart 5.26).

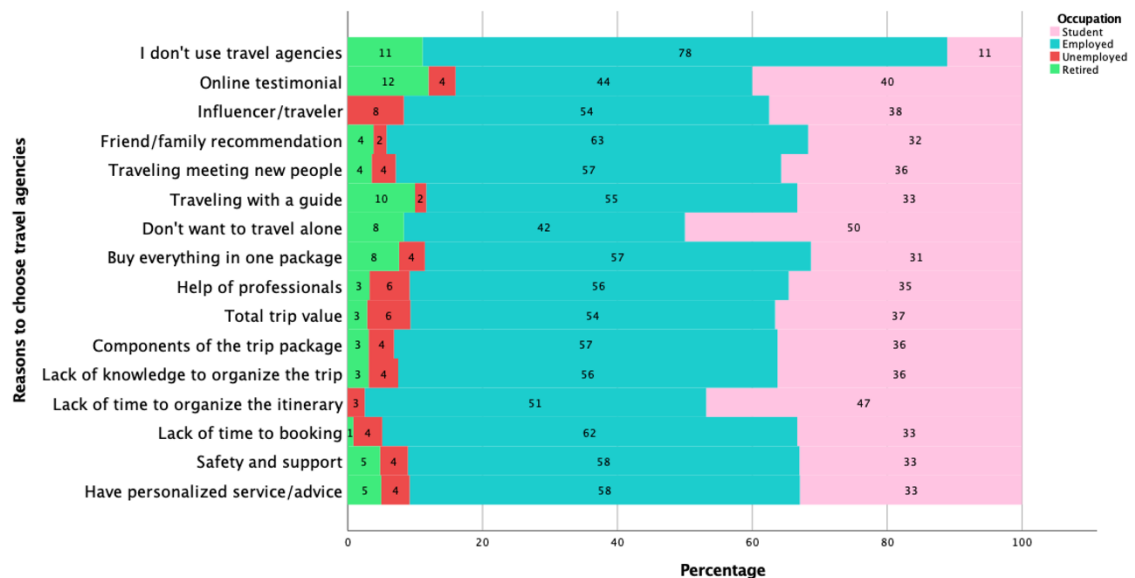


Chart 5.27 - Crosstabs: Occupation x reasons to choose travel agencies

Comparing the reasons to choose travel agencies with the current occupation of the respondents, it's possible to understand that for students the main reasons are that they don't want to travel

alone and the lack of time to organize the itinerary. For employees, the more important factors are friend/family recommendation, lack of time to booking and factors related to support and personalized service. The unemployed choose because of influencer/traveler recommendation and the retired because of an online testimonial or for travel with a guide which is expectable considering the age (see chart. 5.27).

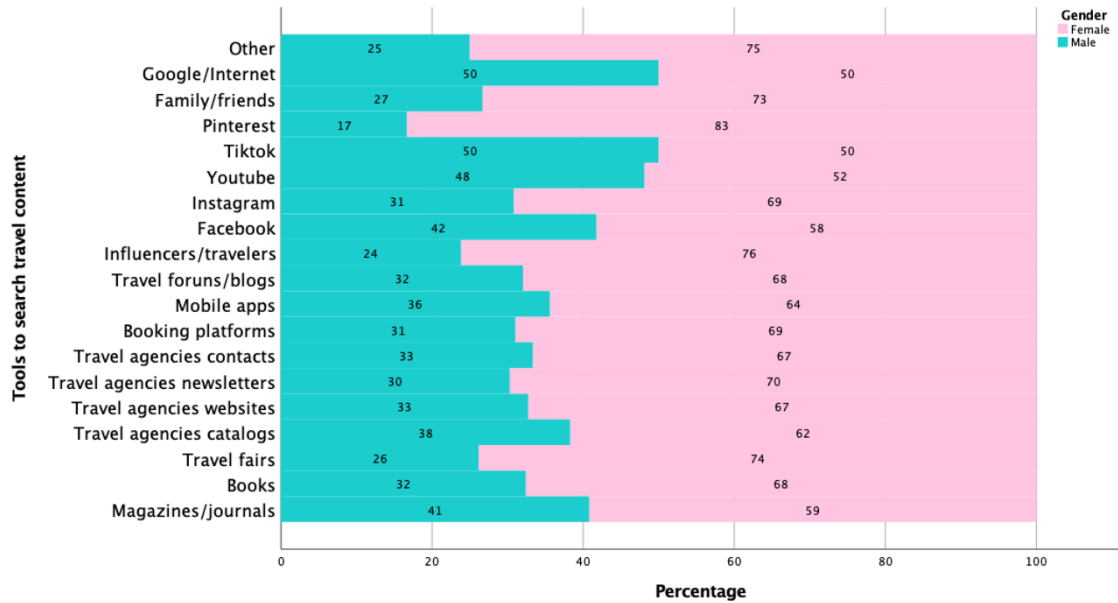


Chart 5.28 - Crosstabs - Gender x Tools to search travel content

Comparing the tools to search travel content with gender, it's possible to conclude that males mainly use Google/internet, Tiktok, Youtube, Facebook and magazines and females choose Pinterest, influencers/travelers social media pages and travel fairs (see chart 5.28).

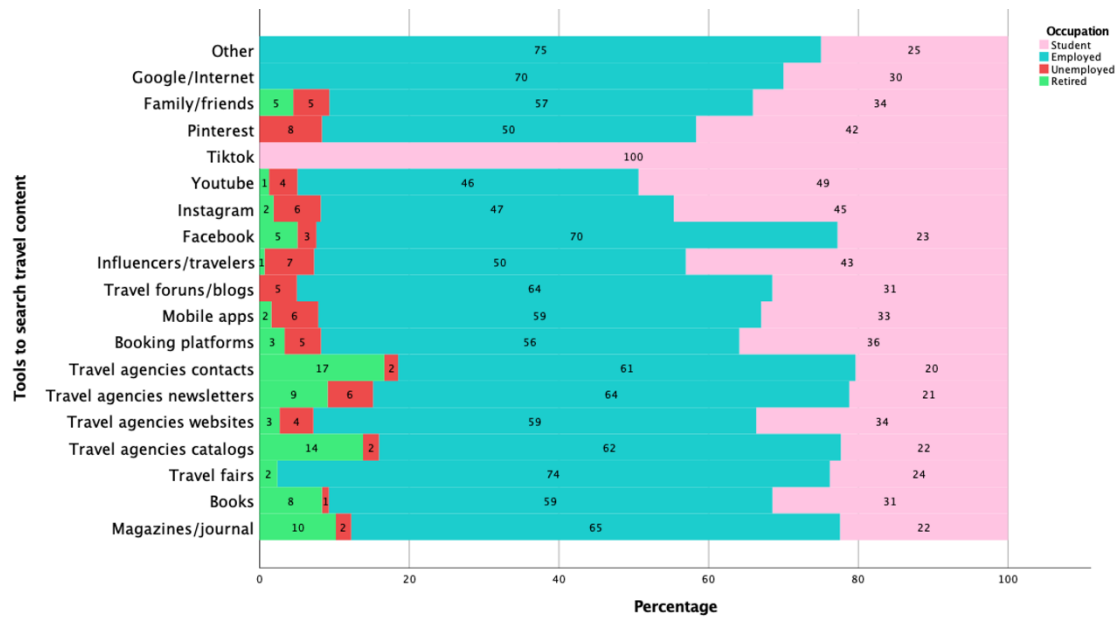


Chart 5.29 - Crosstabs: Occupation x tools to search travel contents

About the respondents' occupation when compared with the tools to search travel contents, it is possible to understand that the retired use more offline tools such as travel agencies contacts, catalogues and magazines. Employees use more travel agencies tools and Facebook and the students choose more online tools such as YouTube, Instagram and influencers/travelers social media pages (see chart 5.29).

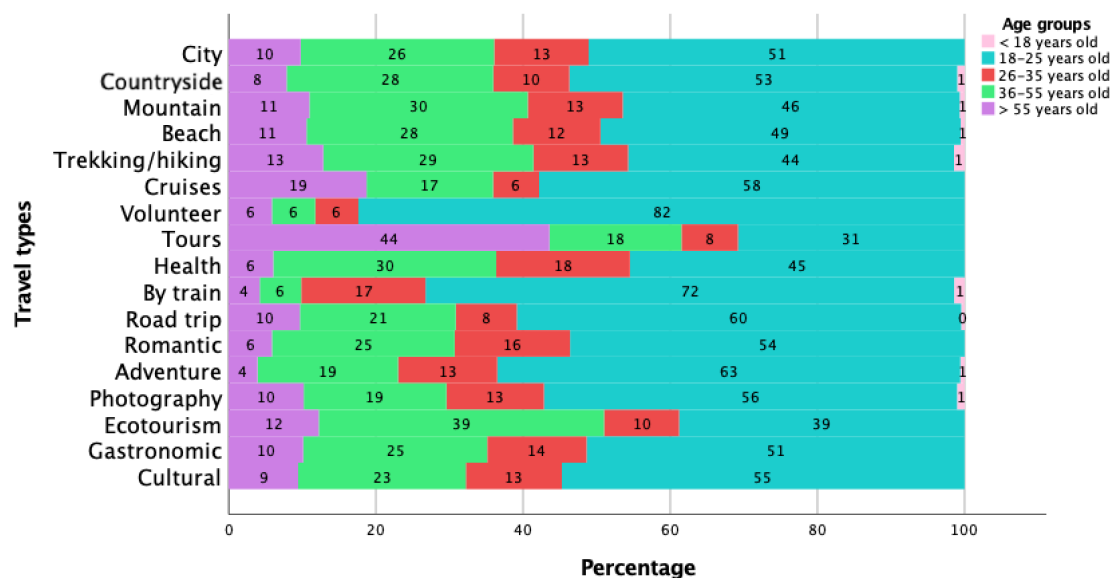


Chart 5.30 - Crosstabs: Age groups x preferred travel types

The analysis of travel types with age groups, aims to clarify the potential travel types for each age groups and is possible to conclude that the respondents with ages between 18-25 years old prefer volunteer, trips by train, road trips and adventure, 26-35 years old health, photography

and gastronomic trips, 36-55 years old, health and ecotourism and finally the respondents with >55 years old prefer tours and cruises (see chart 5.30).

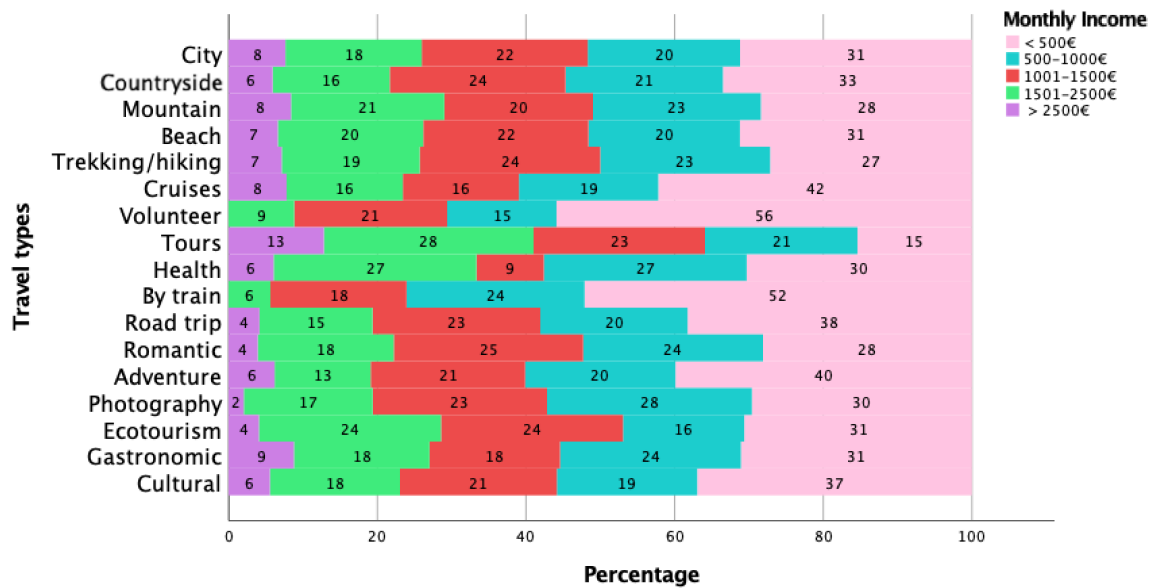


Chart 5.31 - Crosstabs: Monthly income x preferred travel types

Regarding the travel types and the monthly income, it's possible to understand that the respondents with high income choose tours, ecotourism, gastronomic and health and in the other side the ones with less income prefer volunteer, trips by train, adventure and cultural (see chart 5.31).

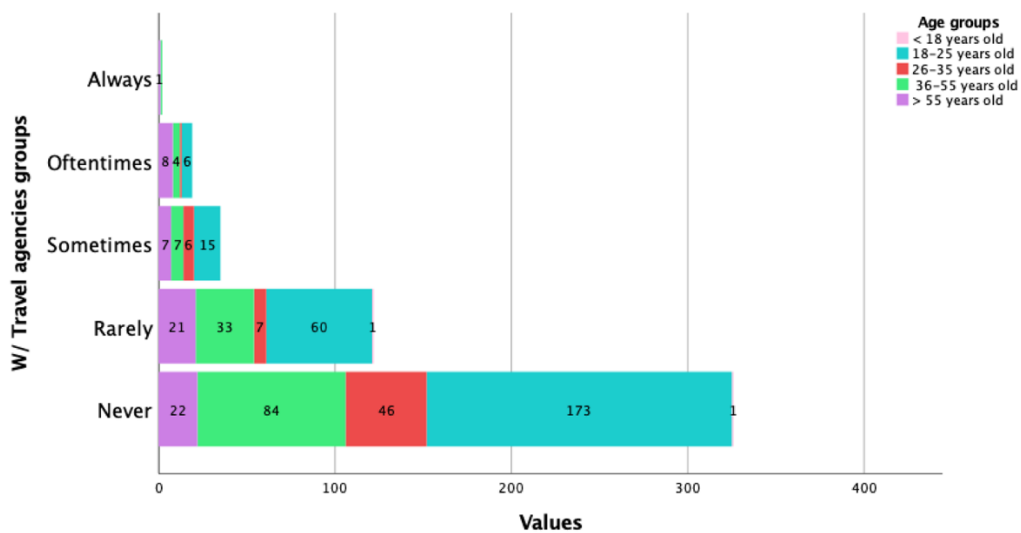


Chart 5.32 - Age groups x people who travel with travel agencies

Concerning the question regarding who the people travel with, when compared with the age groups, specifically travel with travel agencies groups, it is possible to observe that the one

who does it, are mostly above 36 years old and that the age groups that do it less are the ones with ages between 18-25 years old (see chart 5.32).

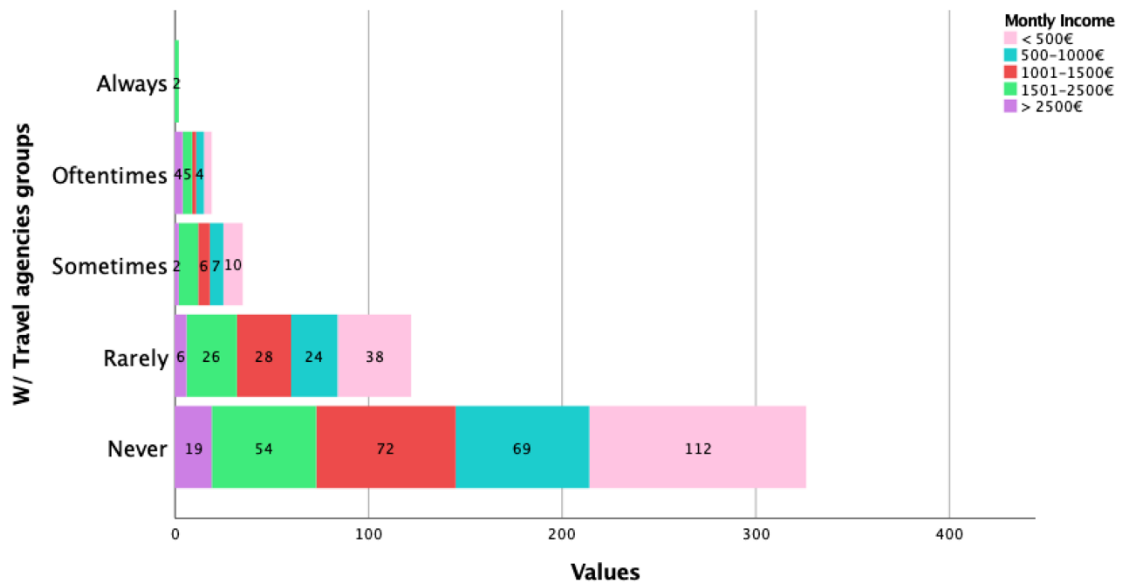


Chart 5.33 - Crosstabs: Monthly income x people who travel with travel agencies

On the other side, when comparing with the monthly income, it's possible to conclude that the majority of the people have a monthly income above 1.501€. On the other hand, the ones that never travel with travel agencies groups, in the majority receive less than 500€ per month (see chart 5.33).

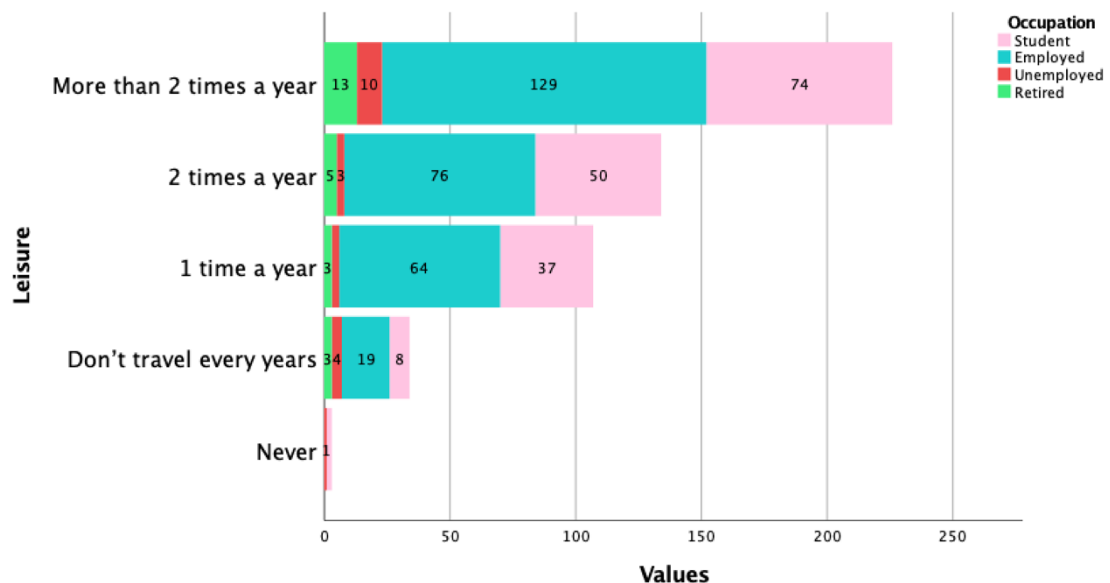


Chart 5.34 - Crosstabs: Occupation x travel for leisure

Regarding the main reasons to travel with current occupation, the employed specially travel for leisure, 129 travel more than 2 times a year, and students (74 respondents) are the ones that travel more times a year following by the retired (13 respondents) (see chart 5.34).

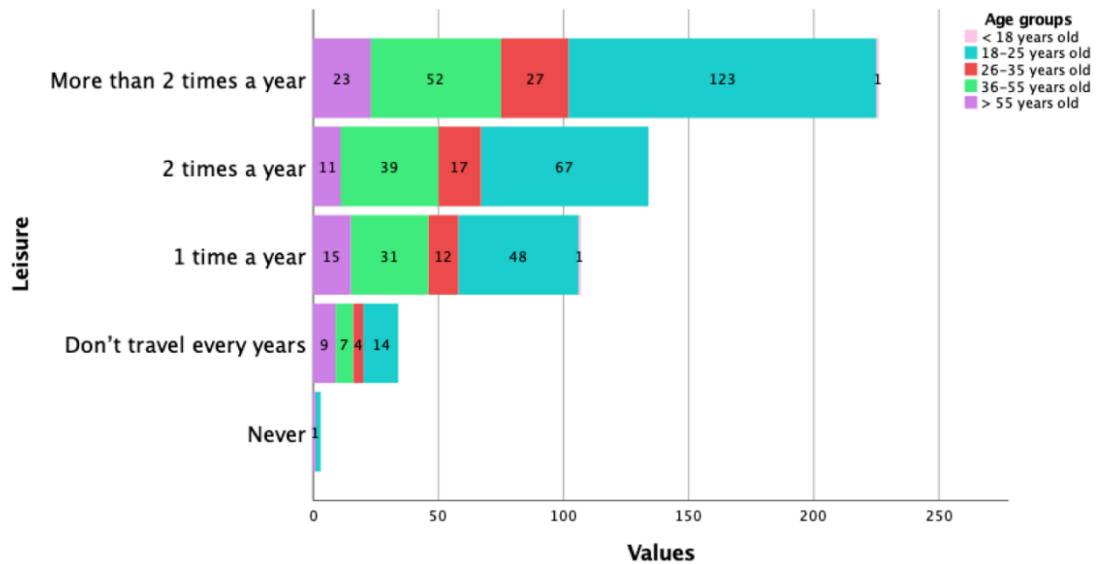


Chart 5.35 - Crosstabs: Age groups x travel for leisure

When comparing the leisure reason to travel with the age groups, within each age group the majority travel more than 2 times a year. At the same time, the ones that travel more than 2 times a year are mainly 18-25 years old and 36-55 years old (see chart 5.35).

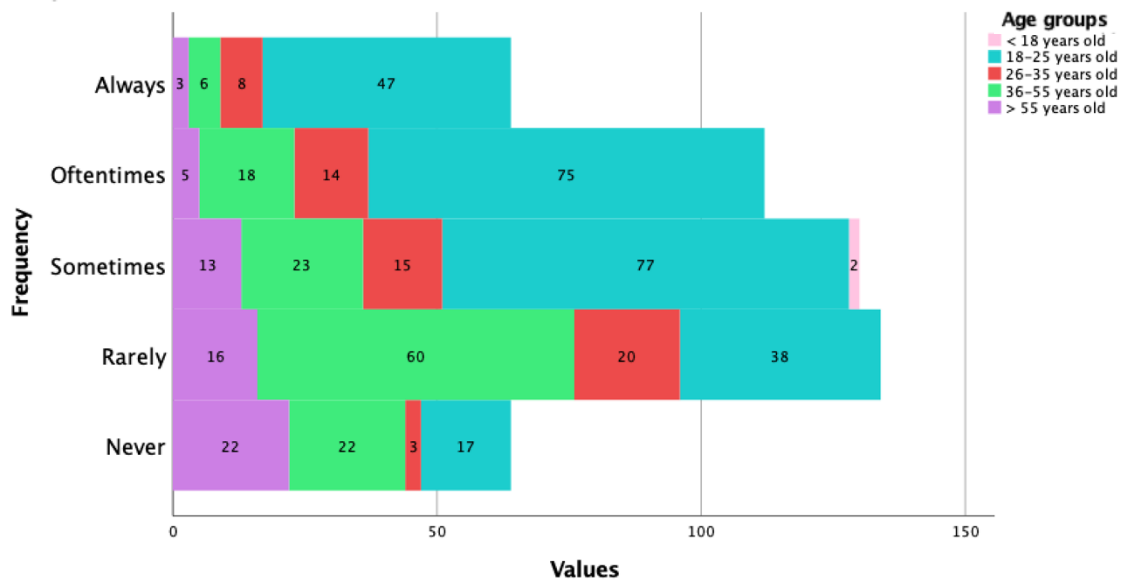


Chart 5.36 - Crosstabs: Age groups x frequency of sharing travel experiences on social media

Concerning the question about the frequency which the respondents share their travel experiences on social media, when comparing with the age groups it's possible to conclude that as expected the older people are the ones that share less, 22 respondents never do it, and that the people with ages between 18-25 years old are the ones that share more, 47 always and 75 often. The respondents with medium ages, 26-55 years old, sometimes or rarely share their travel experience on social media (see chart 5.36).

5.2.6. Conclusions

Concerning the previous analysis of the data collected, it is possible to obtain the following conclusions about the consumer's preferences and habits:

- Traveler profile: Regarding the travel companions, the favorites ones are: travel with a partner, family, alone and with friends. At the same time, there are more people travelling with organized groups than with travel agencies groups. Normally the responsible for booking the trip is the person itself, his/her partner or family.

The respondents in majority travel 1 time a year to Europe, more than 2 times a year for Portugal and don't travel every year to other continents. They travel mainly for leisure and to family and friends and there are few people that travel to do volunteer or to study. About the time to prepare the trip, the further the destination, the longer the preparation time (6 months for intercontinental, 3 for Europe and 1 for Portugal). About the number of nights spent in each destination the ones that requires more travel time and preparation are the ones where the people spend more nights (8-14 for intercontinental, 4-7 for Europe and Portugal).

Concerning the various travel tips, the favorite ones are beach, cultural and city. The respondents search travel contents, talking with their family and friends and also with travel agency websites. Regarding social media, Instagram is more used than Facebook and YouTube. From the more traditional tools, travel agencies catalogs can be a good tool. Instead, newsletters and forums and blogs continuously are being used. Although travel agencies contacts are not a very used way to search travel contents, they are used to book the trip at travel agencies' websites. Travel fairs are not very used for both search and booking trips. Booking platforms is the tool mostly used for both.

More than half of the respondents share their travel experience online, so spreading the word online is very important. On the other side, the majority of the respondents don't follow Portugal travel agencies on social media. Regarding Portuguese travel agencies,

2.4% of the respondents referred Portugal With as one of the Portugal travel agencies that they know.

- Portuguese culture and travel agencies: The people choose travel agencies mainly because of the safety, support and personalized service as well as the topics regarding the package like total value, components and itineraries. Online testimonial and influencer recommendation are not very chosen reasons however, family/friend recommendation are.

There are a lot of people interested in personalized packages with a private travel guide, and adventure in a group which are travel types that Portugal With already have. Although the favorite travel types are beach, cultural and city, the one most likely to use travel agencies are cruises, cultural and beach. Following, there are adventure and tours. The types easier to do alone or more private like road trips, photography and train are the less likely.

The tools more valued on travel agencies websites are packages information, current campaigns and available packages. As expected, because the people don't use for search travel contents, newsletter subscription is not a very valued tool. There are more people that prefer WhatsApp link than chatbot. On travel agencies social media, the tools most valued are current campaigns, travel tips and packages available. The less valued are the most interactive such as lives, quizzes and memes. The respondents prefer photos than videos.

- Impact of the covid-19 pandemic: The majority of the people plan to travel in the 2^o semester of 2021 for Portugal and Europe and intercontinental trips are not on the plans for the next 2 years. The first trips will be mainly for Europe, Oceania and Asia. Although countryside and mountain trips are not one of the most favorite, are one of the most likely for the first trips, so trips for destinations in nature will be a tendency. Trips that require a contact with more people such as volunteer, tours and cruises are the less selected.

In general, the covid pandemic situation doesn't influence the choices about travel agencies compared with the pre-pandemic period once the majority disagree with the statements about group trips, private travel guides and travel with travel agencies. Although it is possible to conclude that group trips compared with the pre-pandemic period, will be less chosen and more people will prefer the safer with a private travel guide and travel through a travel agency.

CHAPTER 6 - IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

6.1. Determine goals and objectives

According to the survey analysis conducted and the Portugal With's products and competitors, the author defined several objectives that mostly aim to improve the brand reach, online presence and results, having positive effects on the customer's experience. These goals were determined taking into account the internal analysis that was carried out and where it was possible to see the aspects that the brand needed to improve plus the interview with the owner of the company, where the author understood some goals that the company wants to achieve.

In general, the goal of this plan is promotion, once the focus will be stimulated sales with an increase brand presence.

The specific objectives are:

- Incentive positive word-of-mouth, because it is a way that the company already uses, so it should be stimulated;
- Reach different target audiences, mainly the youngsters, once it is a target that the company has more difficult to achieve;
- Increase the number of leads generated;
- Intensify the partnerships with B2B segments, to reach different companies and organizations;
- Intensify brand purchase intention, to increase the sales;
- Improve customer's journey experience, to optimize the process that already exists;
- Improve the brand online presence, to increase the brand awareness and be a position in the top of the mind of the online users;
- Keep the personal customer relation in the online channels, in order to keep this differentiation factor of the company.

6.2. Identify audiences

To create a communication plan, it is important to understand who we want to reach. In the definition of these audiences, it is important to consider some segments such as: demographic (age, gender, monthly income...), geographic (country, city...), psychographic (lifestyle, personality traces, motivation...) and behavioral factors (purchase frequency, customer loyalty...) to distinguish them.

Considering the Portugal With products, and the knowledge acquired during the interview with Sofia Martins and with the analysis of the results of the survey according to the author's

perspective, it was possible to identify two main segments: B2C and B2B. In B2C are included close groups, independent travels and couples. In B2B are included associations, companies and schools.

Starting by close groups, they are normally a group of friends or families, with more than 20 years old, medium or high income and can include or not children. They seek a holiday without concerns, do not want to organize the trip by themselves or do not have the time to do it and can value the guidance of a travel leader, mainly for cultural trips.

Independent travelers are the ones that are single, divorced or widower, have a high income and more than 30 years old. They don't have time to organize the trip and value the travel agency support and advice. They can travel by themselves or join a group with a travel leader because they value the security or don't want to travel alone.

The couples have a medium or high income, more than 25 years old, can have or not children but normally when they have, the children have more than 5 years old. These couples do not have time to organize the trip and value the security of a travel agency. They can choose a customized trip just by themselves such as a romantic trip honeymoon or join a group with a travel leader.

Regarding B2B, they are a segment that Portugal With already works with but that have a goal to attract more with a specific approach to serve their needs. The focus will be enlarging the number of associations such as parishes and parish boards, that Portugal With already works with and attract different business areas such as schools and private companies.

The participants in associations trips normally have more than 60 years old, are retired with a medium or high income. They are people that value a travel leader presence, a personal contact, personalization and a safe trip with everything scheduled. During the pandemic situation, they can be a good focus because they are the ones the keep their profits and will be the first to be vaccinated.

For schools, Portugal With can plan field trips, finalist' trips or school projects creating awareness around professors, students, parents or directors. The participants can be children in school aged between 6-18 years old or adults in universities with age between 18-26 years old.

In the last two groups, the direct contact with the associations and schools are people that don't have time and knowledge to prepare the trip and that value a personalized service with good components travel packages.

For private companies, Portugal With can create partnerships with benefits for the employees, team-buildings activities or organize business trips, creating a direct contact with Human Resources department in big companies or with the CEO in smaller ones.

6.3. Establish messages

In order to design the communication activities, ensure their consistency and reach the target and objectives previously outlined it is essential to define the message. Even though the way, aim or words may differ slightly between the actions proposed, the overall message will remain the same.

Based on all information gathered during the internal analysis and the interview with the owner of the company, it was possible to conclude that the main critical success factors are about the close relationship with the client, the security offered and support during the booking process and constant availability if there is any problem during the trip.

Although this message is present on the company channels, it is not widely promoted. Because of this, the following communication plan aims to transmit to the audience that the agency is always available to provide a travel experience without concerns. Furthermore, it is also important to explain how the customers can have a personalized service with an easy-to-contact agency that meets the customer's needs.

Regarding the types of appeal, in this case the two that the plan will focus on is the rational by sharing the product benefits and the emotional, explaining the positive feelings that an experience with Portugal With can provide.

In general, the message aims to encourage the people to choose a company that will support and advise them in the moment of choosing the trip, give Portugal With the opportunity to offer them a unique experience from day one, showcasing their values and the benefits of building a trustworthy relationship with the agency.

With the aim of better identify and remember the brand, it is important that the slogan is well defined and present in all communication tools. From some statements that the company already uses as a slogan, the one that the author thinks to be the best option is “Porque a vida é uma constante viagem, nós organizamos a sua”, once it is easy to understand the company's business and what it can do for the customers.

6.4. Develop strategies and tactics

In this section, it will be present the strategies and tactics that will be adopted in order to achieve the established goals. In order to implement these strategies, communication tools and channels on the different activities and experiences will be used.

6.4.1. Interactive/online marketing

Website

Portugal With's website is a channel in development to facilitate the contact with customers, since it aggregates all information about the travel agency, its packages and is where customers can automatically book their trips. To become the website the main core communication channel it is important to be appealing, enhance user experience and provide all information for the decision process.

After deep research for benchmark ideas along with a detailed analysis of the website to understand what can be improved, some suggestions were developed.

Home page

- Once all the website is in Portuguese the reservation system should also be in Portuguese;
- Exclude the zone with the Facebook updates once the users can find the information directly on the Facebook page;
- Include the current campaigns on the top in a banner, in order to catch the user's attention as soon as they arrive on the website;
- Include testimonials and reviews from the customers.

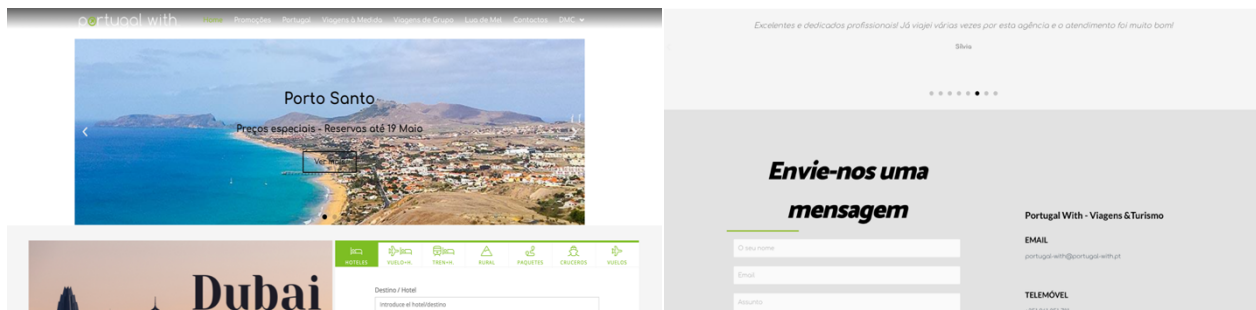


Figure 6.1 - Website: Home page (own elaboration)

Navigation menu

- Change the “Group trips” tab for “Your company” in order to be clearer that the information is for B2B. Because there are different types of B2B groups, might be better to create individual tabs under the options, such as “For schools”, “For associations” and “For companies”;
- Change the “Engaged” tab for “Honeymoon” in order to have a match between the tab name and the content provided on the page;
- Include the “About” tab divided in two subtabs “about us” and “why us”;

- Include the “Blog” tab separated in several themes in order to showcase the type of content it has and guide the user to the one he is interested in, without having to travel back in time through pages to find the content he/she might be interested in without being sure it exists.



Figure 6.2 - Website: Navigation menu (own elaboration)

For the “Your trip” and “Your company” pages

- Choose more attractive images;
- The description of this service does not give enough information regarding who is the target and what solutions the agency can provide. Therefore, it should be included the components that the people can choose, and the benefits offered by the agency, which will have good results on the SEO optimization;
- Include a form with the options to inquire information, in order the agency receives all the information and with this can provide a more personalized proposal.



Figure 6.3 - Website: "Your trip" and "Your company" page (own elaboration)

Nome	<input type="text"/>
Telefone	<input type="text"/>
Telefone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Data	<input type="text"/>
Data	<input type="text"/>
Duração	<input type="text"/>
Duração	<input type="text"/>
Destino	<input type="text"/>
Destino	<input type="text"/>
Número de pessoas	<input type="text"/>
Número de pessoas	<input type="text"/>
Descrição do itinerário	<input type="text"/>
Descrição do itinerário	<input type="text"/>
Enviar	

Figure 6.4 - Website: Information form (own elaboration)

D.M.C. page

- Because this is a content more targeted to operators, probably the majority of the people don't know the meaning of this, so the author suggests to add a brief introduction in the beginning of the page. The translation of D.M.C. should be explained at the first place: Destination Management Company and then explain that it is a content directed to travel operations. In order to separate this content from that intended for the general public, another website, exclusively for operators, can be created.



Figure 6.5 - Website: D.M.C. page (own elaboration)

For the footer

- Delete “about us” because it will be in the navigation menu;
- Reduce the size of the window for the people to send a message;
- Because Portugal With no longer has a physical store, the Google map can be deleted.
- On the utilities area, add information for a safe trip with recommendation about covid and complementary services such as rental car.

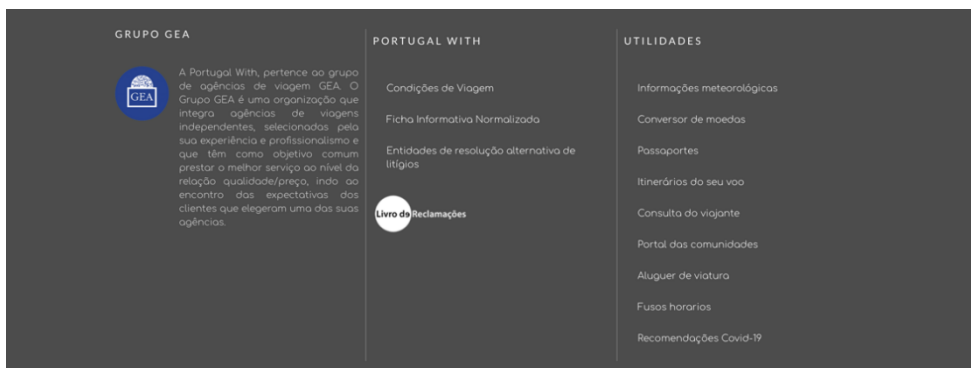


Figure 6.6 - Website: Footer (own elaboration)

New content

- **WhatsApp link:** In order to facilitate and create a personal contact with the customer, in the contact area and in a pop-up icon, a button with a link for a WhatsApp chat, should be included. With this tool it will be possible to talk directly with the customers, making it easier to better understand their needs.

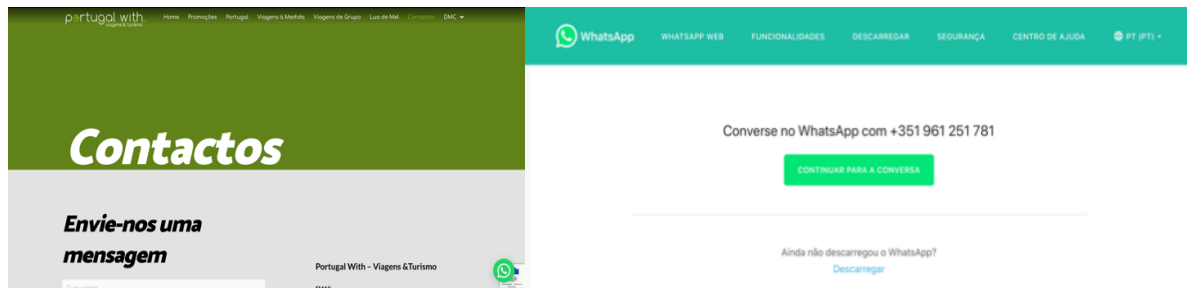


Figure 6.7 - Website: WhatsApp pop-up and link (own elaboration)

- **Blog:** Create a blog with some articles can be a good option to first of all improve the SEO optimization and then create more useful contents for the users. Thus, the suggestion is creating contents with three main themes: travel tips, destination curiosities and trip itineraries. With travel tips it will be possible to provide useful contents for a trip preparation, such as, how to prepare the luggage, how to save money for travel or what is the best time to travel to America. Destination curiosities can include information about their traditions, local transports, food, people and so on, to promote a trip to that country, adding a link to a package for that destination leading to a potential purchase in the near future. Finally, trip itineraries should be about different countries, motivating people to see the “must places” in each one and creating in them the desire to visit them.
- **“About” page:** Change the information that is located on the footer for a new tab and divide it in two main topics: “about us” and “why us”. “About us” should include some topics regarding the agency’s origin and history, who the brand is, the main values and its mission. In the “why us”, a new page, should be explained of the benefits of travelling with Portugal With, emphasizing the differentiation factors and all the reasons why it is the best solution. In order to reinforce those statements, can be included in this part some testimonials that prove in the first person the reasons mentioned.

6.4.2. Mobile marketing

Once having a personal contact with the customers, provide them a personalized and personal service, is one of the goals of the company, mobile marketing can be a good strategy to achieve this.

Using this technique will be possible to be in touch with the customers creating a relationship with them and at the same time promote the packages and current campaigns. This strategy must be used for the people that give to the agency the authorization for receiving promotional messages. To measure the performance of this strategy, a bit.ly should be included at the end of the message with the website URL, in order to know from the people that received the message, how many visited the website.

The suggested seasons to apply this strategy are: Christmas, Carnival, Easter, customer's birthday, summer holidays and occasional promotions. The content should be both personal and promotional that is, have a familiar way to communicate but at the same time let the customer know the campaigns opportunities.



Figure 6.8 - Mobile marketing (own elaboration)

6.4.3. Social media marketing

Social media is a channel that can be very useful for Portugal With to have a digital presence and reach the younger people while increasing the brand awareness. Because of this, some improvements will be suggested in order to provide contents for the users to better understand the brand and its services and mainly reinforce the proximity with them.

In general, to create a connection with the social media community it is important to answer all the messages and comments which will increase the interaction with the users. Besides that, opportunity marketing can be taken into account as a way to make the agency be known through other pages, commenting, for example, the posts from partners pages.

Regarding the way of communicating used on social media, it should be chosen a formal but personal way at the same time, creating a good relation with the users, using some inspirational expressions about travel and emojis.

As behind a company there are people, B2B services should not be forgotten on social media in order to increase the reach and knowledge about it.

From all the different travel types the ones that must be highlighted on the content are cultural and beach. Besides that, in the first months of the communication plan, countryside and city trips are also a good option because of the pandemic and after this the cruises, once it is a type of travelling for which people use travel agencies but still don't feel safe to do for now.

Instagram

Instagram is the social media platform that Portugal With has been betting most recently. In order to make the network grow with relevant travel content, some actions will be suggested.

For stories:

- Promote the different types of trips that the agency provides adapting for the two main target groups: B2B and B2C;
- Create interactive content with the help of Instagram tools such as polls, questions and quizzes. These stories can have two main goals: entertain the users testing their knowledges about countries, curiosities or understand what the people mostly like, giving them options to choose about a specific topic;



Figure 6.9 – Instagram stories: Interactive content (own elaboration)

- Once a week share content about a specific destination for the people to know more about it, creating the desire to visit it. The contents can be, for instance, about culture, gastronomy, history, monuments, transportation or local people;



Figure 6.10 - Instagram stories: Destination content (own elaboration)

- Share the articles published on the blog, introducing the theme and directing the people to visit the blog. Until the Instagram page has 10.000 followers, swipe up the tool. The directing should be done with the link in the bio;



Figure 6.11 - Instagram stories: Share articles from the blog (own elaboration)

- Share last minute opportunities or current campaigns with the summary of package components and the way to book. After publishing these stories they can be collected on the existing “Promotions” highlight;



Figure 6.12 - Instagram stories: Last minute content (own elaboration)

For highlights:

- Change the current “Portugal With” highlight for “About”, to provide a context to who visits the page for the first time, explaining the history of the agency, its values and why it is a good choice in the moment of choosing an agency to travel with;
- Create a highlight for each continent in order to save the stories mentioned above. For better organization include a story with the name of the country to separate each one;
- Organize the trips contents in 2 highlights: your trip for B2C services and your company for B2B;
- Create an icon for the “Blog” highlight that will include the stories about each article. If there is more than one article about the same theme, one can have a story to separate it;
- When several reviews are collected, create an “Testimonials” highlight to save all of them and give confidence for the new followers.



Figure 6.13 - Instagram highlights (own elaboration)

For linktree:

- Create a linktree to have multiple website links in the same link in the bio. With this it is possible to have a button for the website home page, other specifics for each service and add different ones for current campaigns too.



Figure 6.14 - Instagram linktree (own elaboration)

For feed:

- Regarding the template image, the suggestion is this be according to the post topic in order to better identify what the post is talking about;
- On the copies, apply the AIDA strategy to catch the Attention with a question or an exclamation that make users stop scrolling and start reading, arouse Interest with curious aspects about the theme, create Desire to travel with all the destination attractions and the focus on the Action using a call to action for the people to contact the agency for booking the trip, visit the website, comment with an answer or tag a friend. In the final of the text, the way to contact the agency has to be mentioned directing to the bio and not using the links directly as they are not clickable;

- Include content about commemorative days to create interesting contents with, or just as a way to keep a personal connection with, the people such as, for example, wishing a Merry Christmas;



Figure 6.15 - Instagram posts: Commemorative days (own elaboration)

- Create a rubric called “The ideal trip for...” where twice a month destination and activities tips can be shared for each type for travelers. With this, the people who match each traveler profile will feel identified and will want to get to know how to experience what he is viewing;

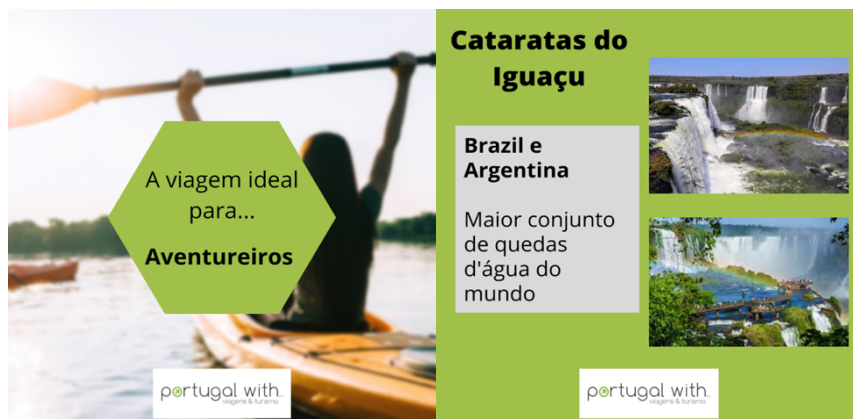


Figure 6.16 - Instagram posts: "The ideal trip for..." (own elaboration)

- Include quotes and photos about travel to inspire the people;



Figure 6.17 - Instagram posts: Inspiring quotes (own elaboration)

- Occasionally include travel tips regarding, for example, the luggage, health care when travelling and visas;

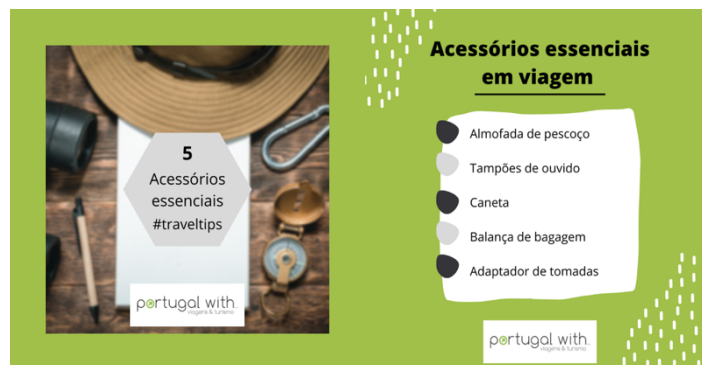


Figure 6.18 - Instagram posts: Travel tips (own elaboration)

- Once a month have a content completely focus on sales, showing the benefits of choosing the agency, the services available and how to contact them;



Figure 6.19 - Instagram posts: Benefits to travel with the company (own elaboration)

- Repost the posts from the customers that tag the brand;
- Use hashtags related to the brand, GEA group, travel and leisure and the destination or type of trip that is being promoted.

For IGTV:

- Create short video clips edited with specific spots and moments in different destinations, that can be shared on the stories to increase the reach. With this strategy it is possible to have bigger videos that will show in greater detail a destination creating the desire to travel.

For Instagram Guides:

- Collect information about the same topic with quantifiable contents such as 3 places for beach trips or 5 monuments to visit in Italy. The main goal is providing useful content to the customers, having the information organized with images and texts regarding just a specific topic per guide.

Facebook

Regarding Facebook, once its where the agency has more followers, it should continue to publish the contents about the trips offered and apply the ideas given in Instagram. Besides that, some updates should be done on the tab structure to ensure that all information is complete and updated.

Tabs:

- Change the order of the tabs starting with “about”, “services” and then the ones that are already in the first position, like “reviews” and “photos”;

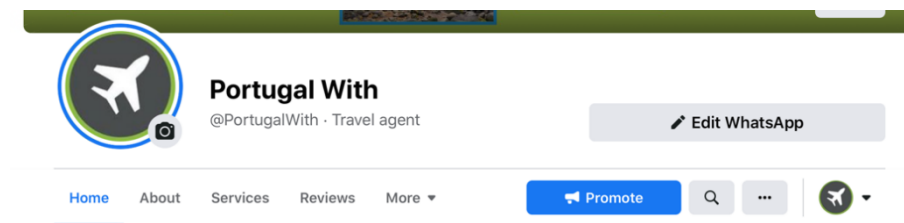


Figure 6.20 - Facebook: Tabs menu (own elaboration)

- On the “about” tab, the company’s description should be further developed, to make it easier to understand what type of travel agency Portugal With is and what are, in general, the main services provided;

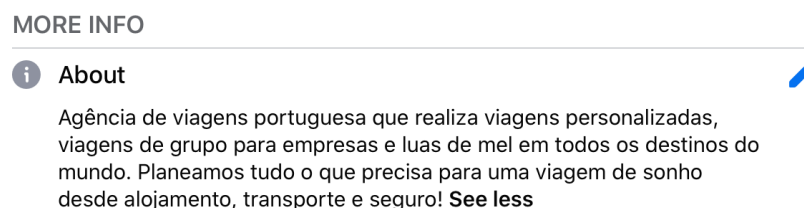


Figure 6.21 - Facebook: "about" tab (own elaboration)

- On the “services” tab it is important to have the different categories according to the website, so divide it in: Your company, Your trip and Honeymoon. In each, the information should be coherent including a description, what is normally included, a website link and a way to contact the company by email or phone number.



Figure 6.22 - Facebook: “Services” tab (own elaboration)

For post

- Promote the Instagram page: In order to lead Facebook followers to also follow Instagram, a post can be developed to let people know that Portugal With has an Instagram page, encouraging who follows, will have access to different and spontaneous content;



Figure 6.23 - Facebook post: Promote the Instagram page (own elaboration)

- Interactive post for understanding preferences: In order to create interaction with the users and understanding their preferences, post reactions can be used as a way to answer questions, for instance, about what the people already have done or what they mostly like in a specific trip.

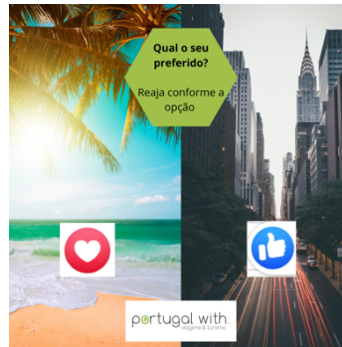


Figure 6.24 - Facebook posts: Interactive content (own elaboration)

Facebook and Instagram ads

With the aim of reach more people social media advertising should be used in the most important content. Regarding the campaign goals the most important are: reach for more people get to know the brand, engagement to have users that interact with the content, brand awareness, for having the brand in the top of the mind of the people and traffic to increase the website visits.

About the locations, the content can be promoted in all places in Instagram and Facebook to increase the hypothesis of impacting people. At least, the viewers should be according to the target and to the content, in this way can be all genders with ages between 20 and 80 years old and living in Portugal. Concerning the interests, the majority can be, travel, countries, world, cultures, explorations and the more specific regarding different types of trips can be, photography, cruises, beach, mountain and city. Concerning behaviors, the main costumers are for example, travelers, frequent travelers, international travelers and bloggers. Regarding demographics aspects (education, financial, life events, parents, relationships and work) for the main ads there is no need to make a selection. However, in the case of ads regarding more specific services, these aspects can be taken into account in order to focus better the audience. For example, in the case of ads regarding honeymoon can be selected “in a relationship” in the relationship status or for ads about family holidays with kids can be selected “parents with preschoolers” in the parents’ category. In order to have different types of viewers, a lookalike ad viewer can be a good option to reach new people with similar characteristics to those already defined. With the goal of connecting with people that already has shown interest in the Portugal With page, custom audience is a good solution for retargeting and achieve new conversions.

With the goal to perceive what results better, A/B tests can be used on the ads. A/B tests should be used with the same copy for different posts’ formats like animation and static or with the same information for different tools like posts or stories.

Tiktok

Tiktok is a social media that is growing and that can be very interesting for the travel marketing once the content are videos which allows to show how the different destinations are.

The author's suggestion first starts with videos of the destinations over the world and then the intercalation with animation about the different packages available and Portugal With's services.

Linkedin

Linkedin is the most recent social media created by the agency. Although it is an important social network, its function is more related to professional environment so should not be a focus for now.

6.4.4. Sales promotions

Regarding sales promotions Portugal With already used vouchers as a gift for Christmas however it didn't have many effects probably because it is something with higher values that the Portuguese people normally don't choose as a gift. Having this in consideration, the vouchers shouldn't be used anymore.

The suggestion to have a different sales promotion approach is implement giveaways. The giveaways can be used on Christmas time, Valentine's day and before summer holidays and as a way to celebrate the agency's birthday. On festive seasons there are a lot of campaigns from various brands which create an excessive information flow on social media, and the operators that the agency works with normally have different promotions. To celebrate the Portugal With's birthday can be a most effective strategy.

Portugal With was founded in 6th October of 2013 so in 2021 the birthday day will be on a Wednesday. Hence in this day the proposal to celebrate is create a giveaway on Instagram with a personalized trip until 500€ for a European destination, whose winner will be announced one week after. With the goal of increasing the brand awareness and the number of followers on the page, will later help verify the agency's communication and giveaway strategy which should be focused on the page. The participants should follow Portugal With's page, like the post and identify 3 friends in the comments, more than once, if they identify different people. The winner will be chosen randomly with the help of an online tool, if the requirements to participate were completed by the participant and announced in the Instagram stories.

For the others three festive dates, the giveaway logistics can be the same but with a different prize, in this case 100€ of discount in the next trip booked.



Figure 6.25 - Sales promotions: Birthday giveaway (own elaboration)

6.4.5. Word-of-mouth (WOM)

Once WOM is normally the most effective way to attract Portugal With’s customers, a recommendation program should be developed.

The idea with this program is, that the current customers work as brand ambassadors while they are, at the same time, collecting advantages when they recommend to their families and friends.

In order to easier draw the attention, both parts should have benefits. The current customer who indicates a friend, can take advantage of 100€ and his/her friend/family 50€ in the next trip in packages above 600€. The discount can be used in 6 months after the recommendation moment.

Using this strategy, the WOM will increase with a positive feedback from the people that already use Portugal With services.



Figure 6.26 - Word-of-mouth: Recommendation program (own elaboration)

6.4.6. Feedback form

Considering one of the values of the agency, having a personal contact with their customers, and taking in consideration their feedback, is crucial. Due to this, the author suggests a creation of a feedback form for two reasons: constantly improve the service to better meet the customer needs and desires and on the order side, collect contacts for future promotional actions. Regarding the last reason, it is crucial mainly to reach the people that integrate travel groups from associations and keep contact with them after the trip. The feedback form should include personal and contact data, opinion regarding the services and a testimonial to use on the social

The image shows a digital feedback form with the following sections:

- Formulário de feedback**: Introduction text: "O seguinte formulário tem como objetivo recolher o feedback da sua experiência enquanto nosso cliente. Ajude-nos a melhorar!" and a red asterisk indicating it is mandatory.
- Programa realizado ***: A text input field labeled "A sua resposta".
- Opinião sobre a Portugal With no apoio durante a viagem ***: A 5-point Likert scale from "Muito fraco" to "Excelente".
- Nome ***: A text input field labeled "A sua resposta".
- Opinião sobre o voo**: A 5-point Likert scale from "Muito fraco" to "Excelente".
- Aconselhariá a Portugal With a um amigo/familiar? ***: Radio buttons for "Sim" and "Não".
- Contacto telefónico ***: A text input field labeled "A sua resposta".
- Opinião sobre o alojamento**: A 5-point Likert scale from "Muito fraco" to "Excelente".
- Gostaríamos de incluir o seu feedback no nosso website. Um pequeno testemunho acerca da sua experiência connosco, basta um parágrafo. ***: A text input field labeled "A sua resposta".
- E-mail ***: A text input field labeled "A sua resposta".
- Opinião sobre a Portugal With na preparação da viagem ***: A 5-point Likert scale from "Muito fraco" to "Excelente".
- Aceita receber novidades e ofertas por e-mail? ***: Radio buttons for "Sim" and "Não".
- Como nos conheceu? ***: Radio buttons for "Familiares/amigos", "Pesquisa google", "Redes sociais", and "Empresa/associação".
- Aceita receber novidades e ofertas por contacto telefónico? ***: Radio buttons for "Sim" and "Não".
- Obrigada!**: A final thank you message.

Figure 6.27 - Feedback form (own elaboration)

6.4.7. Partnerships

It is crucial to approach and gain attention from B2B segments such as associations, companies and schools for customized trips in order to enlarge the potential of this service and the return that it can have.

Associations

Once this is a segment that Portugal With already works with, the current approach should be kept being used, so it is important to continue to use direct contacts to reach these types of associations because it will be easier to first establish the contact and then move forward to booking the trip.

On the other side, other associations should be contacted in order to enlarge the number of customers. For this, the approach would be sending an email with the institutional presentation of the agency, its purpose, the type of trips that they can organize for each association and then, because it is a service that the agency has already done, should be included a testimonial as a quality proof.

Companies

Companies is a target that Portugal With wants to achieve for some time and for this the author will suggest some actions. For the companies the idea is a bit different from schools and associations. The agreement should be a partnership, with benefits for both sides where Portugal With benefits with brand disclosure and the company with discounts for their employees. Regarding the discounts offered by Portugal With, they should be negotiable having in consideration the channels and reach of the promotions provided by the companies and the number of employees that will benefit.

Besides that, Portugal With can also suggest packages for travel trips with special prices for business class that meet the needs of the workers.

The communication would be made by email with the institutional presentation of the agency, its purpose and a personalized paragraph with the proposal focusing on the benefits that both parts will have with the partnership having into consideration the needs and requirements of each company.

Contact schools

Because this is a segment that normally Portugal With doesn't work with, first of all it is important to understand the market. Starting by the product to offer, is important to understand the needs, desires and requirements that the schools have for the different types of trips. Then, a plan should be done for each trip having in consideration the categories more likely to need this service and an estimated budget for the period when these activities are most common.

After this, a list with all school clusters in Portugal should be done, including the contact information and the person responsible to organize and decide the trip for each case. In this process, the author believes it is better to test the demand with schools where Portugal With has a direct contact, either through their family/friends or through their travelers, since it might be easier to make the first positive interaction. Furthermore, the feedback and knowledge acquired with these experiences will help reach and convince other schools to trust Portugal With too.

When contacting schools without an inside connection, the approach would be: first of all send an email to the school, ideally to a specific person the agency researched beforehand as the one responsible for these decisions. This e-mail should include a short institutional presentation of the agency, its purpose and a pdf with the trips proposal for each kind of goal (field trips, finalist' trips or school projects).

Along with these proactive behaviors, as previously mentioned, the website should have a specific page to target schools inside the "Your Company" tab.

General

In the three targets, the e-mail, example available in the annex 9, can be followed by a meeting in order both parts get to know each other, create a more personal connection and Portugal With understand better the needs and how they can personalize the service to provide an outstanding quality.

6.5. Prioritize

After defining the various actions to be implemented, it is important to understand which are the most important, taking into account the current situation of the agency and what is more feasible considering the budget and the time for each one. Besides that, in the moment of prioritizing the tactics, it is crucial to consider the knowledge that the agency has to implement it and what will create better results in a short term.

First of all, the focus should be on improving the tools that already exist starting by the website because it is the main digital tool used by the company where it is possible to find the trips information and make an online reservation. Afterwards, another strategy possible to develop with few investments, is the social media in order to build a better online presence. Regarding this, the priority is: Instagram, Facebook and Tiktok, in ascending order. After this, although Portugal With already has some partnerships, is important to enlarge the partners areas. At the same time the feedback form can be also implemented because these are two actions easy to implement and are related to each other.

With the existing tools improved, it is time to implement new strategies. Because WOM is something that normally already occurs with the Portugal With customers with good results, create a campaign for it can be a first step to leverage this way of promoting the brand. Afterwards, considering the company's value of having a personal relationship with the customers, mobile marketing is the next action to implement. Finally, the last action must be the sales promotions because it is the one that requires a greater investment in time and money and that should be done when the social media have a larger community for achieving better reach and results.

6.6. Creating the action plan

Concerning the periods each activity should be implemented, which was decided considering the demand expected for specific periods of the year, the period people mentioned when they will return travelling and the dependence that the actions have with each other, a schedule was created regarding the year of 2021 (see table 6.1).

Regarding the actions, the website must be the priority once it is the main digital channel and the place where the other tools will direct the user. After everything is on the website in a functional and appealing way, all the other actions can start to be implemented.

Concerning digital channels like website and social media, since content and updates will always be mandatory for these two channels, all the rest of the year was selected. About the partnership strategies, the whole year was selected except for the summer holidays when the majority of the companies and schools work with less capacity. The sales promotions will occur on the months when commemorative dates happen, already mentioned above, and the other new activities will occur according to what the author believes to be the best time according to the knowledge acquired throughout this thesis.

The owner of Portugal With and her team will be responsible to develop all of the action plan taking into account that it is a small company without all the roles very defined.

Having in consideration the sum of the various proposed actions, it is possible to obtain a total budget of 5920 euros. Calculations were done considering the following costs:

- 1000€ for the website structural changes, taking in account that the time of 65h with a price per hour of 15€/h;
- 1800€ to create campaigns in Instagram and Facebook, considering an investment of 150€ per month, each more or less 75€ for each social media network;
- 500€ to do partnerships with companies, schools and associations for covering some expenses that may come up from the approach proposed;
- 1800€ for WOM campaign considering that one person per month indicates a friend/family member which results in a total discount of 150€;
- 20€ for mobile marketing in order to cover the expenses of a new SIM card and extra SMS service that may be necessary;
- 800€ for sales promotion which includes 500€ for the anniversary giveaway and 300€ for the giveaways about Valentine's day, Christmas and summer holidays.

The costs associated with each communication option that aim to give an estimative of the total budget, were defined based on an objective-task method, with an order of words based on

the objectives and the cost to execute the actions needed to accomplish them. For some actions, the author did not have a clear basis to define the associated costs and therefore estimated them considering her own, the supervisor and Sofia's perspective and therefore the budget is only an estimated value to guide managerial decisions.

Table 6.1 - Schedule and budget for the Communication Plan (own elaboration)

Communication actions	2021						2022						Budget
	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Website													1000€
Instagram													1800€
Facebook													
Partnerships													500€
WOM campaign													1800€
Mobile marketing													20€
Sales promotions													800€
Total													5920€

6.7. Evaluation

After designing and implementing the communication strategies, one should define metrics to carefully evaluate the efficacy of each one during the period it is active to identify if any adjustment must be made to improve the final result.

Analyzing this metrics is possible to comprehend if the action implemented was useful to reach the previous goals established and thus, if it is something to continue to develop in the future.

These evaluation metrics are described in table 6.2, directly associated with the communication channel or activity they are meant to.

Table 6.2 - Evaluation metrics for the Communication Plan (own elaboration)

Communication tools/activity	Evaluation metrics
Website	Bounce rate; Number of reservations; Session duration; Number of pages per visit; Organic position; Number of new visitors; Number of visits; Number of views of new pages;
Facebook	Number of followers; Reach; Impressions; Engagement rate; Interactions (ad clicks, comments, reactions and shares);
Instagram	Number of followers; Reach; Impressions; Engagement rate; Interactions (comments, likes, saves, shares and stories replies); Profile visits; Linktree clicks; Video views;
Partnerships	Number of leads acquired; Number of reservations;
Feedback form	Number of respondents;
WOM campaign	Number of referrals;
Mobile marketing	Link clicks;
Sales promotions - Giveaways	Engagement rate; Number of new followers; Reach; Impressions;

CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

Having in consideration the interest of the author in travel and tourism and the marketing growth potential of this travel agency, the author chose this company to develop her thesis. Furthermore, the author has a good relationship with the owner of Portugal With and all the interest to help her to increase the brand awareness, which encouraged the choice of the theme and the company to work with.

This thesis project will contribute to the marketing community by studying the external context about tourism in Portugal and the consumer behavior and preferences regarding travel agencies. Besides that, for the company this plan aims to improve brand awareness and recognition as well as consumer engagement, which will eventually lead to an increase in sales.

Additionally, it is important to refer that an unexpected pandemic emerged in the world during the elaboration of this thesis, which impacted the tourism industry strongly and thus Portugal With.

To support its elaboration, several researches and analysis about related topics were conducted, which had a crucial role in the entire project. Firstly, through secondary data, mainly books and scientific journals, the author was able to complete a literature review that provided the basis and the theoretical guidelines about the communication and tourism marketing aspects. Regarding communication, the main topics covered are about the relevance of promotion, communication objectives, the steps to develop a communication plan, the main tools that can be used and the aspects regarding the tourism marketing. Looking into the tourism context, especially factors related to travel agencies, the author was able to understand the consumer of a travel agency and the best practices to communicate in this business area.

Afterwards, it was imperative to study the travel agencies industry in Portugal, resorting to PESTEL analysis and competition analysis, besides considering the Portuguese's travel behavior, the main target market. This allowed the author to have a clear view of the external factors that can influence Portugal With's business and consequently the communication plan. For instance, although there are several agencies with the same product, their 3 main competitors are Turiworld, Oasis travel and Abreu Viagens.

Finally, in order to have a better knowledge about the company, the author surveyed Portugal With to be sure the plan was related to the business and to what the brand represents. Hence, its history and goals were analyzed to understand the basis of the company, a portfolio to know which services can be promoted and a communication mix to have a clear view about

the practices that are already implemented. With this analysis it was possible to identify flaws and aspects to be improved.

However, this information was not enough to support the implementation strategy and therefore primary data was collected by the author, both qualitative and quantitative.

For the first, an interview with the owner of Portugal With, Sofia Martins, was conducted to increase the knowledge about the company and clarify some doubts about the portfolio and communication practices implemented. After this, a survey was shared online through several social media platforms and direct messages to obtain information and insights regarding consumer behaviors and preferences about travel agencies in Portugal, resulting in a total sample of 504 valid respondents.

Looking into the final part of this thesis, the implementation phase, the author followed the steps and criteria mentioned in the literature review to create the communication plan.

Firstly, the author defined the objectives for the plan, being the main goal the promotion. Besides that, the other relevant objectives are to encourage positive WOM, reach different target audiences, increase the number of leads, intensify the partnerships with B2B segments and brand purchase intention, improve customer's journey experience, improve the brand online presence and keep the personal customer relation.

Secondly, it was defined the audiences considering some segments such as demographic, geographic, psychography and behavioral. On these segments criteria, based on the knowledge acquired, the author decided to focus on B2C and B2B. In B2C are included close groups, independent travels and couples. In B2B are included associations, companies and schools.

Thirdly, the overall message was defined taking in account the critical success factors to make sure that the message across communication options is cohesive and stronger, showcasing the benefits and the value of the experience provided from the first contact with Portugal With.

Then, the strategies and tactics was developing using five tools of communication: interactive/online marketing thought the website, mobile marketing, social media marketing with Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok, sales promotions, using giveaways and WOM with a recommendation campaign. Additionally, was also developed a proposal for a feedback form and partnerships growth.

The principal suggestions given to improve the website included adding a banner with the current campaigns, clarifying the content of the pages in the navigation menu, improving the visual aspect of the pages, creating a WhatsApp link, improving the customer's experience with a form for contact request with travel information. Besides that, it was also suggested to

improve the SEO optimization with better descriptions and a blog with useful content for the users with three main themes: travel tips, destination curiosities and trip itineraries.

Furthermore, the mobile marketing provides a personal relationship with the customers being present in the most important seasons of the year and at the same time updated them with the packages and the current campaigns available.

As for their social media accounts, several ideas were given and was suggested that the most important content should be promoted. Starting by Instagram the main ones are to create interactive content on stories, to share the content from the blog, to upgrade their highlights, to create a linktree to have multiple websites link in the bio, to create quotations about the destinations, to use IGTV for short videos and Instagram guides to collect information about the same topic.

About Facebook, the suggestions provided for Instagram can also be used, and besides that it was suggested to better develop the “about” and tabs, promote the Instagram because Facebook has more followers and to create interactive posts. Besides that, it was also suggested to start slowly the Tiktok page and not to focus for now on the LinkedIn page because it is more related to professional environment.

Regarding sales promotions campaigns, the author suggested to implement giveaways that will help reach new costumers and increase the number of followers, which will later be impacted by the agency communication on that platform. These giveaways can be done in specific seasons of the years, focusing on the agency’s birthday whose winner can receive a personalized trip until 500€.

Because WOM is an important way for Portugal With to get new customers, a recommendation campaign was suggested. In the campaign the current customers work as brand ambassadors receiving a discount of 100€ and give to their friend/family also a discount of 50€ in the next trip.

Additionally, feedback from the customers is essential to adjust the portfolio offers and also the services, so it was suggested to create a feedback form to be filled-in, in the end of each trip.

Furthermore, although the segments B2B already exist in the company, it was suggested to enlarge this potential service reaching associations, companies and school with a proposal that should be send by e-mail explaining the offer that exist for this segment.

Regarding the others tools mentioned on the literature review, it was possible to conclude that the advertising in a physical store like catalogues and posters are not a focus for now once the company is working only online. On the other side, experiences, events and personal selling

with travel fairs are not the best idea because of covid-19 pandemic. Finally direct marketing and database marketing, using newsletters, according to the results of the survey are not a common way to search for travel content.

Finally, it was time to prioritize the actions starting by the website, social media, partnerships, feedback form and then WOM campaign, mobile marketing and sales promotions. Additionally, an action plan was created considering to begin on the 2nd semester of 2021 along with a budget defined based on the expected cost to complete each activity, reaching a total of 5.920 euros.

To conclude, there were some limitations faced during this project that need to be mentioned. Starting by the external analysis: one limitation was the lack of data about the travel agency market in Portugal which wasn't very completed and updated.

Besides that, another limitation was to reach people outside the author's connections to answer the survey. For the survey to reach a larger number of people, it should have been disseminated and made available by other means, such as physicists through QR code flyers, at specific points such as streets, stores, etc. This was not possible due to the circumstances in which the world is today, with the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, in the implementation phase it was difficult to have in detail all information to define the costs of some of the activities proposed, which affected the accuracy of the final budget.

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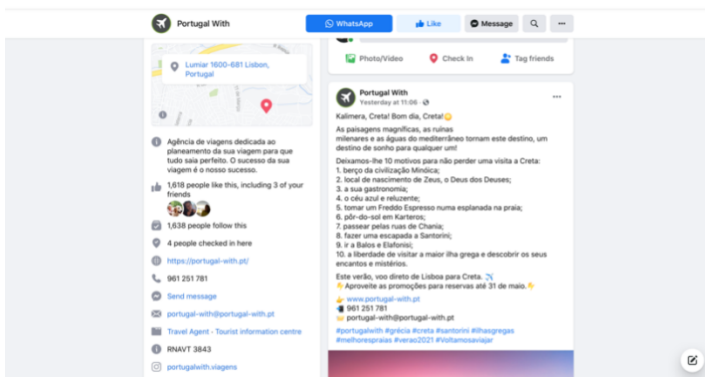
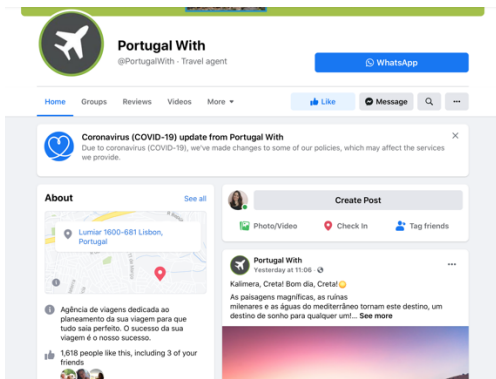
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CHAPTER 9 - ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Portugal With’s Facebook page



Annex 2 – Portugal With’s Instagram

The image shows the Instagram profile for 'portugalwith.viagens'. The profile picture is a green circle with a white airplane icon. The bio identifies it as a travel agency and provides contact information: email (portugal-with@portugal-with.pt), phone (+351 961 251 781), and website (www.portugal-with.pt). It also lists 92 posts, 326 followers, and 233 accounts to follow. Below the bio are five category icons: Promoções, IlhasPortu..., Férias, LuadeMel, and Portugal ... The main feed shows three posts: a beach view, a coastal landscape, and a bouquet of roses. A detailed view of a post is shown below, featuring a photo of a patio with a table and chairs under a pergola. The post text describes a rural escape in Alentejo, mentioning 'Casas da Juromenha' and listing amenities like air conditioning, TV, and a pool.

Instagram

portugalwith.viagens

92 publicações 326 seguidores A seguir 233

PortugalWith.Viagens
Agência de viagens
Porque a vida é uma constante viagem, nós organizamos a sua!
✉ portugal-with@portugal-with.pt
☎ +351 961 251 781
RNAVT: 3843
www.portugal-with.pt

Seguido/a por longevitycegonhacountryclub e longevitywellnessworldwide

PUBLICAÇÕES **VÍDEOS DO REELS** **IDENTIFICAÇÕES**

portugalwith.viagens ...

portugalwith.viagens Para uma escapada ao Alentejo, próximo da fronteira e da barragem do Alqueva, sugerimos o turismo rural das Casas da Juromenha, composta por seis casas independentes, de diferentes tipologias. 🏡
As casas estão identificadas por cores e decoradas de forma simples e colorida, em concordância ao ambiente natural que as rodeia mas sem descuidar as necessidades de hoje. Todas estão equipadas com ar condicionado, lareira, televisão, cozinha com micro-ondas, fogão e frigorífico.
A piscina, construída em frente às casas, promete longas horas de banhos e mergulhos. 🌊

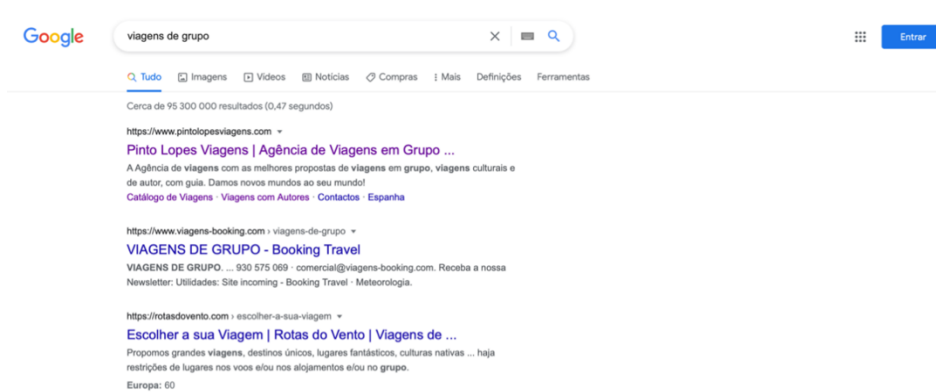
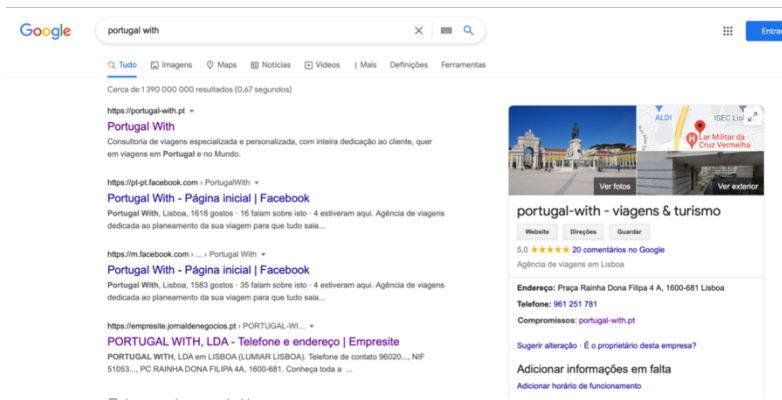
16 gostos
24/4

Adiciona um comentário...

Annex 3 – Portugal With website



Annex 4 - SEO

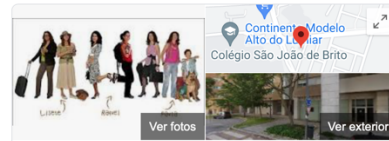


Cerca de 12 300 000 resultados (0,64 segundos)

<https://www.landescape.pt> > viagens-personalizadas >
Viagens Personalizadas - Criamos viagens costumizadas à ...
 Landescape - especialistas em organizar viagens personalizadas completamente customizadas à tua medida para todos os destinos culturais e de aventura.

<https://levartravel.pt> > viagens-personalizadas >
Viagens Personalizadas - levarTravel
 Viagens Personalizadas. "Para viajar basta existir" Fernando Pessoa. A levarTravel organiza a viagem por si! Escolha o destino, e nós tratamos do resto!

<https://www.travel-tailors.com>
TravelTailors agência de viagens à medida
 Preparamos itinerários exclusivos e viagens à medida, para indivíduos e organizações que procuram experiências em Portugal e no estrangeiro. Levamos os ...
[Viagens](#) · [Quem somos](#) · [News&letters](#) · [Perguntas frequentes](#)



Traveltailors Portugal - Turismo Activo, Lda.

Website Direções Guardar

4,9 ★★★★★ 13 comentários no Google

Agência de viagens em Lisboa

Endereço: R. Belo Marques nº 5 loja 4, 1750-008 Lisboa

Horário: Aberto · Fecha à(s) 18:00 >

Ver tudo

<https://www.topatlantico.pt>
Agência de Viagens Top Atlântico: Férias, Voos e Hotéis
 A agência de viagens preferida de milhares de portugueses. Reservas de férias, voos, hotéis e escapadinhas a preços competitivos.
[Pacotes de Viagens](#) · [Promoções Pacotes de Viagens](#) · [Viagens e Voos Baratos](#)

<https://abreu.pt> > home-30854 >
Agência Abreu | Férias, Viagens, Voos e Hotel
 A agência de viagens com as melhores propostas para as suas férias. Viagens e marcação de voos ou hotel. Conheça as promoções da Agência Abreu e ...

<https://www.geostar.pt> >
GeoStar | Reservas de hotel, viagens, voos baratos, férias
 A agência de viagens online, para as suas reservas de férias, voos, hotéis e escapadinhas. Oportunidade, conveniência e comodidade nas suas reservas.

Annex 5 - Newsletter

Continuamos consigo 😊 Caixa de entrada x

Portugal With Viagens & Turismo portugal-with@portugal-with.pt através de gmail.mosv.net para mim

quarta, 3/03, 16:07 ☆ ↶ ⋮

[View this email in your browser](#)

portugal with...
viagens & turismo

Esperamos que este email o encontre bem!

Caros clientes e amigos,

Esperamos antes de mais encontrar-vos bem de saúde.

Há um ano que a pandemia começou a mudar a nossa vida e conseguiu pôr à prova a nossa resiliência. Fez-nos alterar a nossa forma de viver, em casa e fora dela. Todos estamos com saudades de voltar a sair, ir a um restaurante, passear e viajar.

Acreditamos que durante este ano será possível reiniciarmos as viagens que tanto desejamos. Os corredores verdes já estão a ser criados, permitindo as viagens sem restrições a quem tenha sido já vacinado ou quem se encontre recuperado da Covid19 num período de 90 dias.

Annex 6 - Sales promotions

Na sua Próxima Viagem

O ano de 2020 foi talvez o mais inesperado e estranho das nossas vidas. Confinados aos nossos lares, ficámos longe dos nossos amigos e familiares, privados de sair, passear, viajar.

Acreditamos que o futuro será melhor e que 2021 nos permitirá compensar esse tempo. Queremos estar consigo e ajudá-lo a realizar as viagens que ficaram suspensas. Por isso, decidimos oferecer-lhe um cheque-viagem para descontar na sua próxima viagem.

Siga-nos nas redes sociais, contacte-nos e receba uma proposta personalizada para a sua viagem.

Desejamos-lhe umas Boas Festas e um Excelente 2021!

Até breve!



Annex 7 – Interview

1. What is the company's history?

Portugal With is a family business that emerged in 2013 from a previous franchise I already had with my husband, since we have both been travel leaders for several years and provided services to other companies.

Given this previous experience in the area and the family business that my father has, we decided to create this agency in order to respond to the demand that we are beginning to feel more and more.

Currently the management of the company is assumed by me, who is more responsible for group travel, and with the support of my husband to handle the more commercial part. In parallel, the company has two employees who are responsible for operational tasks.

2. What is the company's mission? Values and objectives?

As there was already so much demand, we ended up creating the company and starting working right away and that's why we never stopped to define these more strategic aspects. However, I think that the main aspect is the trust and proximity to the customer.

3. What is the evolution of the company in the last years?

The company has always focused on personalized trips for groups, and we increasingly receive orders for other types of travel. To meet these requests, we have the support of the group of several travel agencies of which we are part, the GEA group, which allows us to have access to

the most varied programs and services. As we are a family business, the goal was never to grow much, but to keep the business for acquaintances and regular customers in order to ensure that we can continue to perform the role of guide.

For 2020, the prospect of trips already scheduled was very large, as well as the organization of an international congress, which led us to hire another employee in December 2019. All these plans were affected by the current pandemic situation, which led to the cancellation of most trips and postponement of the rest.

In terms of group travel, we accompany groups of foreigners who come to visit Portugal and partner with partner agencies, which in turn will provide support to Portuguese groups traveling abroad. Regarding foreign groups that come to know Portugal, contact is made through travel agencies that are partners of the country of origin and subcontract the service for the group be accompanied by someone from the country. This same process is done by us: if there is a Portuguese group wanting to visit Germany, we have hired a German travel agency that will assist in booking and accompanying the group as it knows the country better, thus overcoming the barriers of language and culture that may exist.

In 2020, even after the lockdown period, the business was stopped due to the discomfort and lack of security shown by the usual participants of group trips, that is, people of older age. However, during the summer it was possible to make a day visit in Portugal, which went quite well. The prospect would be to repeat, which was not possible due to the increase in the number of cases and restrictions in the end of October. Regarding this pandemic situation, I think that the main fear of people is to stay in hotels and therefore, they choose apartments. However, given all the training we have on this topic, we realize that there is no reason to be afraid because all the players: hotels, transport, restaurants, etc. are taking every care to transmit the necessary confidence and not have bad publicity.

4. What are the main company's' processes and the customer touch points?

The group always contacts us directly and explains their needs and preferences. That said, depending on the type of trip and the client's budget, we evaluate the need to use a local operator in order to facilitate all logistics. In this outsourcing process, we normally request a quote from 2 or 3 operators in order to have a comparison, advancing with the option with the best quality/price ratio.

In Portugal, the different groups of travel agencies that exist, we are part of the GEIA group, which brings together various agencies in Portugal, creating a networking and economies of scale that allow each agency to have better commissions and access to different services (eg: juridic services). In terms of reservations, we provide services for both groups and individuals,

with complementary services such as a travel guide service, for example, available to both modalities. Regarding the points of contact with the client, the most used ones are by phone, go directly to the agency's office or by email. In addition, we also have an option on the website for automatic reservations, however it is not widely used by customers.

5. How do you define the strategy followed by the company? Differentiation by price or offer?

Regarding the offer, it is quite similar in all agencies, since the primary source is travel operators who provide the same services to all agencies associated with them, regardless of the size of each one. The exception will be agencies that have their own products, tailored to each client.

As for the price, I do not consider it to be the biggest differentiating factor, since the values of each service are tabulated equally for all brands. However, we do it by making a difference by not charging reservation fees mainly for new customers to get them to buy and stay loyal.

So, I think that the main points of differentiation are the personal connection with customers because as we are a small agency, customers always know who they are talking to. On the other hand, the large WOM network that is generated, also offers confidence to customers, as they seek the agency on the recommendation of someone close to them, such as a friend or family member.

6. Who do you consider to be the main competitors?

The main competitors identified are the other travel agencies. However, more and more, the tendency is people to book trips for themselves directly on the internet, which becomes a major threat to the travel agency market.

Due to the pandemic, the expectation is that this behavior will be more evident, since online commerce in general is growing in all areas, as you can see in a webinar in which I participated where a study was mentioned that shows that the world of online commerce took a 4-year leap during the pandemic.

From our experience to date, whenever we have online sales available, this has never been a channel used by customers.

In the year 2020, since most of the trips made were in Portugal, the main competitors identified were the hotels, since people were closer to the destination and for that reason they directly booked their stay by calling the hotels instead of turn to the agency. With this, we conclude that in the understanding of people in general, the travel agency is not necessary for reservations in Portugal, being more useful when traveling abroad.

Regarding flight bookings on online platforms, this is something that also brings some risks since, in the case of what happened in March 2020, many people were unable to return to

Portugal, unlike those who had the trip scheduled by an agency that received the repatriation information and all the support to return to Portugal.

So, I think that agency booking always has an advantage that people often do not value: the included travel insurance, which is responsible for the repatriation of people in these types of cases. With this, I hope that people who were in that situation (of not being able to return to Portugal), in the future think better and make the booking of their trips by agency so as not to go through the same and feel more secure.

Regarding insurance outside the agencies, in my experience people do not use insurance companies to buy insurance, but directly to insurance companies that only provide part of the service, contrary to what happens with insurance from agencies. There are usually different types of insurance, but all of them only guarantee the service purchased directly from the agency, having the same price regardless of the number of services purchased. In terms of general insurance categories there are basic insurance and cancellation insurance, with the exception of other more expensive insurances such as insurance for the United States, due to the high value of health care in the country.

7. What are the critical success factors of the company?

I think the main factors are the close relationship with the customer, the security offered and monitoring throughout the process and availability 24 hours in case of any problem during the trip. At the same time, we are very flexible and will reach out to the customer if he is unable to move to the office to collect any necessary trip documentation.

In addition, we have several travel insurance and an office location in a residential area, making it very affordable for most clients. In order to also differentiate ourselves from the competition, we thought about having e-books with itineraries by destinations, so that people can make the trip themselves but without having to worry about the itinerary of the trip, however we did not get to do.

8. What are the company's current challenges in the face of the pandemic situation?

The main challenge will be, when it is possible to go back to travel, to show security to customers. On the other hand, during this pandemic time in the summer of 2020 when it was possible to make some trips, the tendency was to stay in Portugal. So people chose to plan everything in the moment and directly book their stay with the hotels, which could become a habit and be recurrent in post-covid times.

Another challenge is the online presence of the booking platforms, which often means that people do not even seek out the agencies' proposals, whose prices may even be more advantageous but the client is unaware.

Due to covid, in terms of changes in suppliers, I have tried to be closer during the period when the business is stopped in order to be aware of all changes. The main changes in these operators were in terms of the destinations they provide which, in the case of some operators, now include countries closer to Portugal and the archipelagos of Madeira and the Azores.

Then, at a more general level, we always have the challenge of reaching customers without speaking, because in these cases, as they do not know the agency, they have less confidence and that is why we run the risk of having work to do budgets and then people do not move forward.

9. What is the company's product range?

In terms of product range, the types of trips are group trips and individual bookings. In both options, hotel, flight, rent-a-car, guide and itinerary services, excursions (mainly to unknown destinations, more difficult to find), attractions, transfers, insurance, tours and other activities on site are available. In terms of destinations, we have packages and options for all countries in the world, using different operators.

10. Who are the current customers and who do you want to reach?

As for current customers, they are essentially organizations that promote group trips for the elderly (eg. churches, unions, parish councils, etc.), that is, we do not have direct contact with the group participants but with the organizing identities.

Thus, one of the targets that can be interesting to reach would be directly these people, in order to become customers for other trips apart from group. In addition, another advantage of this target audience is the fact that they are retired and therefore will not start losing economic power with the current pandemic situation. With this, I think that a focus is to have these participants as clients for trips in addition to those made in the usual organized groups. This situation has sometimes happened, being contacted directly, but it is not a very recurring thing.

My father is responsible for one of the unions, which has promoted the WOM. However, reaching more nuclei (ie churches, unions, etc.) is also an objective. In terms of age, groups are usually over 60 years old and individuals are usually younger, mostly friends and friends of friends or people who got to know the company.

These individuals can also include small groups of about 10 people and are necessarily couples with or without children, with children the tendency is to start traveling when the

children are older, especially if they have more than 1 child. In addition to couples, we also have groups of women in their 30s and 40s. As for younger ages, the majority look for something cheaper and always have the perception that by agency it will always be more expensive.

In terms of the monthly income of customers, it is quite variable even among small groups. Thus, the proposal is also made taking into account the value restrictions of each person and for this reason many times, the person says how much he wants to spend and then we look for a destination that meets.

As for the location of customers, they are mainly located in Lisbon, Alentejo and Peniche. As for the destination, the most popular trips are to more distant and unknown destinations, as people feel more comfortable doing the agency, as opposed to closer countries that end up booking by themselves.

11. What are the main physical and digital communication tools do you have?

The main focus has even been the word-of-mouth. In addition, we have participated in travel fairs in places that are close to us, such as Ourique for example, which is my husband's land. At these fairs we managed to attract some customers because they are people who know us and for being an area that does not have much offer in terms of travel agencies. However, these customers did not book directly at the fair, but in the medium and long term, they ended up contacting us later via phone or email to make the appointment. The main advantage of these fairs is that we make ourselves known and people see the face of those behind the agency and thus have more confidence.

Punctually we have already made some brochures to distribute in the agency's area, but it has not had many results. In general, whenever we try to do something for people who don't know us it is much more difficult because people don't know the agency so they are suspicious and on the other hand, we end up having to make a difference for the price in order to take people want to know us. At the same time, we end up having a lot more work, because most of the time people ask for multiple quotes and then end up never scheduling anything. With this, we ended up realizing that the best strategy is to focus on those who already know us because otherwise we lost time without results and we could use these resources to actually generate results with those we already know that they end up scoring.

At a digital level, our presence is still weak and I am not very satisfied. At the website level, we initially had a long time without a site, then we started having it, but each change took a long time to be implemented and then it ended up no longer making sense and being out of date. At the moment we still have the website but there are aspects that I am not satisfied with, namely

the reservations area. I believe that the website is something that we did not give much importance to or promote much and that it is something crucial and that we should bet more on.

On our website we have an option: DMC - destination management company; it means that the agency is specialized in the destination and that it can be contacted by a foreign agency to organize a trip in Portugal. We have also had one for the foreign public, with only a guide service in Portugal, with all communication only in German and with a focus on guides. This site could later take you to the current site, even the one from Portugal With.

In addition, there is also a need for a newsletter which, although we have already tried it on time, is something we have not done regularly and which can serve to remind people of the agency's existence.

We have also thought about rebranding the brand in two segments: foreign customer (individual or agencies) and Portuguese customer (as we usually have). This is also to change the logo and name, since Portugal With as it is English does not tell the Portuguese public as much and, therefore, it could be interesting to have a name for the Portuguese public with an adaptation abroad.

12. More specifically for social media, which ones do they use and for what purpose?

As for social media, it is something that we invest only when we have little work and that is why it has been more developed during the pandemic. We have had facebook for some time, instagram created it at the beginning of the pandemic and linkedin we created a short time ago but we haven't published anything yet. I think tiktok is also something very interesting, different and a good bet for the future but I still haven't been able to think of anything to develop it. I believe that facebook, since it is used by older people, is a network that we must continue to use.

In all social media, there is no defined communication plan, but occasional publications at times of less work.

In terms of objectives, we want to use these channels mainly to make the company known and to remind people that the agency exists and that we are available to help with booking trips. The posts that we have already are about the destinations and packages, for the people know what we have available and to create in people the desire to travel.

Regarding the future, we consider that video is more and more a trend and we try to follow the pages of social networks both from other agencies and from our operators.

13. Do you have communication partners?

We do not have communication partners, however, the operators with whom we work and who do not have their own agency, always refer to our agency as one of the points of sale of the packages they offer.

14. Are they present on other websites, such as forums or blogs?

I think we are only present on the GEA group website, as an agency belonging to the group.

15. How do you characterize the space surrounding your physical location of the agency?

We closed the agency during the pandemic and put an indication with the contact email in the window. In the future, we aim to change for other location when the pandemic situation improves. One of the possibilities is a coworking space as networking can generate business.

The location of the space we had was designed to be reserved and not lead to a lot of people entering and leaving because it hinders work and productivity but at the same time having a door to the street. In terms of people that lives around the previous office, we don't feel that they got to know the agency through the store, in 7 years we had 3 people who knew us that way. When the pandemic situation finished, we will then look for a new space that will allow the team to work together, although in teleworking it has gone well, and at the same time have a point to face and receive customers, especially the older people.

16. Have you done any market research or feedback forms?

No. We have already thought about making a feedback form at the end of the trip, in order to understand how it went and ask about the next destination planned by the customer. For that it would be necessary to collect all emails from people in the group, something that does not happen now and would be interesting even for us to send the newsletter too.

In terms of ways of knowing how people got to know us, usually they say when they contact us, but it is still an option to facilitate the registration and analysis.

Annex 8 – Survey

Master's Thesis: Portuguese travelers and their relationship with national travel agencies

My name is Sofia Almeida and I developed this survey within the scope of the thesis project of the Master of Marketing at Iscte Business School. This project consists of carrying out a Communication Plan for a Portuguese travel agency.

The main objective of this survey is to know the various profiles of travelers and understand what they value in travel agencies in Portugal.

The expected response time is 8-10 minutes. All responses are anonymous, confidential and will be used exclusively for academic purposes.

There are no right or wrong answers, the aim is to answer according to your perspective and personal experience.

For any questions do not hesitate to send an email to: sofia_ferreira@iscte-iul.pt

Thank you very much in advance for your participation.

Section 1 - Personal information

This section aims to get to know your demographic profile.

Please select the answer that best describes you.

Q1. Gender

- a) Women
- b) Men

Q2. Age

- a) < 18 anos
- b) 18-25 anos
- c) 26-35 anos
- d) 36-55 anos
- e) > 55 anos

Q3. Academic level

- a) 9ºyear
- b) High School
- c) Professional course
- d) Bachelor
- e) Post graduate
- f) Master
- g) Doctorate

Q4. Current occupation

- a) Student
- b) Employee
- c) Unemployee
- d) Retired

Q5. Monthly income

- a) < 500€
- b) 500-1000€
- c) 1001-1500€
- d) 1501-2500€
- e) > 2500€

Q6. Residence area

- a) Viana de Castelo
- b) Braga
- c) Vila Real
- d) Bragança
- e) Porto
- f) Aveiro
- g) Viseu
- h) Guarda
- i) Coimbra
- j) Castelo Branco
- k) Leiria
- l) Santarém
- m) Portalegre
- n) Lisboa
- o) Évora
- p) Setúbal
- q) Beja
- r) Faro
- s) Região Autónoma dos Açores
- t) Região Autónoma da Madeira

Q7. Marital status

- a) Single
- b) In a relationship
- c) Married
- d) Divorced
- e) Widower

Q8. Household

- a) Without children
- b) With financial dependent children
- c) With financial independent children

Section 2 - Traveler profile

This section aims to get to know you better as a traveler.

Please select the answer that best describes you.

Q9. Select how often each of the following situations occurs in relation to your fellow travelers

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Oftentimes	Always
Alone					
With your partner					
With your family					
With your friends					
With organized groups (eg sports, religious, school, etc.)					
With travel agencies groups					

Q10 Select how often each of the following situations occurs in relation to the person responsible for booking the trip

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Oftentimes	Always
Yourself					
Your partner					
Your family					
Your friends					
Organised entities (eg sports, religious, school, etc.)					
Travel agencies					

Q11. Select how often you travel, depending on your destination

	Never	Don't travel every years	1 time a year	2 times a year	More than 2 times a year
Intercontinental					
Europe					
Portugal					

Q12. Select how often you travel, depending on the reason

	Never	Don't travel every years	1 time a year	2 times a year	More than 2 times a year
Leisure					
Study					
Work					
Visit family and friends					
Do volunteer					

Q13. Select the advance in which you plan most of your trips, depending on the destination

	1 year	6 months	3 months	1 month	2 weeks	1 week or less	I don't travel to this destination
Leisure							
Study							
Work							
Visit family and friends							
Do volunteer							

Q14. Select the number of nights you normally book for each trip, depending on the destination

	1-3 nights	4-7 nights	8-14 nights	15-28 nights	More than 28 nights	Don't travel to that destination
Intercontinental						
Europe						
Portugal						

Q15. Select your travel types that attract you more

- a) Cultural
- b) Gastronomic
- c) Ecotourism
- d) Photography
- e) Adventure
- f) Romantic
- g) Road trip
- h) By train
- i) Health
- j) Tours
- k) Volunteer
- l) Cruises
- m) Trekking/hiking (trails/walks in companies)
- n) Beach
- o) Mountain
- p) Countryside
- q) City

Q16. Select from the media below, those you use most to search for travel content / information

- a) Magazines/journals
- b) Books (from travelers, tourism guides, etc)
- c) Travel fairs
- d) Travel agencies catalogs
- e) Travel agencies websites
- f) Newsletters from travel agencies
- g) Contact (email/phone/presential) for a travel agency
- h) Flight and hotel booking platforms (booking, hotel website, airline website, momondo, etc.)
- i) Mobile aps (booking platforms, travel agencies, etc)
- j) Social media pages from influencers/travelers
- k) Travel forums/blogs
- l) Facebook
- m) Instagram

- n) Youtube
- o) Tiktok
- p) Pinterest
- q) Family/friends/known that already visit the destination
- r) Other: __

Q17. Select from the media below, those you use most to book trips

- a) Contact (email/phone/presential) for a travel agency
- a) Travel fairs
- b) Contact (email/phone) for a particular guide/travel leader
- c) Travel agencies websites
- d) Flight and hotel booking platforms (booking, hotel website, airline website, momondo, etc.)
- e) Mobile aps (booking platforms, travel agencies, etc)
- f) Other: __

Q18. Select how often you share your travel experiences on social media

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Oftentimes
- e) Always

Q19. Select how many Portuguese travel agency accounts you follow on social media

- a) Any
- b) 1-6 accounts
- c) 7-12 accounts
- d) More than 12 accounts

Q20. Indicate which Portuguese travel agencies you know: __

Section 3 - Portuguese culture and travel agencies

This section aims to understand your preferences and behaviors regarding Portuguese travel agencies.

Please select the answer that best describes you.

Q21. Select from the reasons mentioned below, those that may lead you to turn to a travel agency

- a) Have personalized service/advice
- b) Safety and support before, during and after travel
- c) Lack of time to organize the trip booking (flight, hotel, etc.)
- d) Lack of time to organize the trip itinerary
- e) Lack of knowledge to organize the trip
- f) Components of the trip package
- g) Total trip value
- h) Depending on the destination, you prefer the help of professionals
- i) Depending on the destination, you prefer to buy everything in one package
- j) Don't want to travel alone
- k) Traveling with a guide / travel leader enriches the trip
- l) Traveling to meet new people enriches the trip
- m) Recommendation from a friend / family member
- n) Recommendation by an influencer / traveler who follows on social media
- o) Recommendation through an online testimonial
- p) Others: __

Q22. Select if you would be interested in the following services offered by a travel agency

	Yes	No
Personalized package for you / your group with a private travel guide / leader		
Travel packages to surprise destinations		
Adventure or trekking (nature trails) in group		
Thematic travel programs. If so, with what theme? __		

Q23. Select the types of trips most likely to use travel agencies

- a) Cultural
- b) Gastronomic
- c) Ecotourism
- d) Photography

- e) Adventure
- f) Romantic
- g) Road trip
- h) By train
- i) Health
- j) Tours
- k) Volunteer
- l) Cruises
- m) Trekking/hiking (trails/walks in companies)
- n) Beach
- o) Mountain
- p) Countryside
- q) City

Q24. Select the content / tools you value most on a travel agency's website

- a) Reservation system
- b) Information / conditions for safe travel
- c) Available packages
- d) Detailed package information (price, number of nights, destination, package content, etc.)
- e) Flight search tools, hotels, cruises, etc.
- f) Articles
- g) Current campaigns / promotions
- h) Complementary services (transfer, rent-a-car, travel insurance, etc.)
- i) News
- j) Itineraries by destination
- k) Information request form
- l) Newsletter subscription
- m) Chatbox (chat that simulates a human being in conversation with people)
- n) Whatsapp contact link
- o) Pop-up with news
- p) Other: __

Q25. Select the content / tools you value most on a travel agency's social media

- a) Last time opportunities
- b) Current campaigns/promotions

- c) Testimonials/Reviews
- d) Packages available
- e) Partners
- f) News
- g) Videos
- h) Photos
- i) Travel tips
- j) Content/phases of inspiration
- k) Curiosities
- l) Travel stories
- m) Giveaways
- n) Memes
- o) Quizzes
- p) Whatsapp contact link
- q) Link to the agency's website
- r) Existence of highlights with instastories by subjects/topics
- s) Instastories
- t) Reels
- u) IGTV
- v) Lives
- w) Travel guides
- x) Adverts
- y) Others: __

Section 4 - Impact of the covid-19 pandemic

This section aims to understand the impact of the pandemic on travelers.

Please select the most likely answer considering that, in the second half of this year, the pandemic situation will be controlled, making it possible to make international trips.

Q26. Select the period in which you plan to resume your trips taking into account the destination

	2nd semester of 2021	1st semester of 2022	2nd semester of 2022	I do not intend to travel to this destination in the next 2 years
International				
Europe				
Portugal				

Q27. Select the types of travel that you will feel the safest to take

- a) Cultural
- b) Gastronomic
- c) Ecotourism
- d) Photography
- e) Adventure
- f) Romantic
- g) Road trip
- h) By train
- i) Health
- j) Tours
- k) Volunteer
- l) Cruises
- m) Trekking/hiking (trails/walks in companies)
- n) Beach
- o) Mountain
- p) Countryside
- q) City

Q28. Select the continents for which you are likely to feel safer on your first trips

- a) Europe
- b) Africa
- c) Asia
- d) Oceania
- e) North America
- f) South America

Q29. Select the extent to which you agree with the following statements the moment you return to travel

	Totally disagree	Disagree	Don't agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
Compared to the pre-pandemic period, you will feel safer if you go through a travel agency					
Compared to the pre-pandemic period, you will feel safer if you					

have a private travel guide / leader					
You will feel safe taking group trips (with people you don't know) organized by travel agencies					

Annex 9 - Email for partnerships

Good afternoon,

>Purpose of the email

My name is Sofia Martins, owner of the Portugal With travel agency and I send this email in order to present a partnership proposal.

>Company presentation

Portugal With a 21 years old travel agency based in Lisbon that promotes various types of trips within and outside Portugal. We believe that traveling is the best investment and we work every day to provide the best travel experiences for our customers with a focus on personalization and follow-up throughout the trip to make it a memorable experience.

In our service catalog we have as destinations the five continents of the world, travel insurance always included and different package options with flight, hotel, private tour guide, tours and other activities.

>What do we want from the company

In this sense, we are going to present our company and the services we have for possible work trips/study visits/group trips that you want to carry out in your company/school/association, and we are fully available to send you a quote that meets your needs. **OR** In this way, we come to propose a partnership with your company in which your employees can benefit from special conditions assigned by us, upon presentation of proof that they work with you. In return, we count on the presence of our agency on your internal communication platforms.

Attached we send a booklet with more information. We will be happy to clarify all your doubts and schedule a meeting for discuss the details.