

Insights from a  
Google Premier  
Partner Agency



# 5 key travel trends marketers should know about in 2024

Launch

# Turning Google insight into simple advice for travel marketers

Travel CMO's, we've taken [Google's Travel Trends report](#) and added some actionable tips to share with your marketing teams, including how to add affordable luxury or destination dupes into your ad campaigns. This does come with a brand warning – only action tips which are aligned with your brand – Ryanair is definitely not affordable luxury!

## Our team of experts



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[Click here to read the Google report](#)

# Trend 1: Affordable luxury

According to the Google travel trends report: “In 2024, people are making budget-friendly luxury happen through elevated, impactful travel experiences. This includes upgrades — 54% of travellers would pay for accommodation upgrades and 47% are willing to invest in flight or train upgrades, as long as it doesn't break the bank...”

## Tips for Ads

- Highlight added value and extras to appeal to the budget-weary traveller looking to enhance their experience without breaking the bank.
- Show details of what is included in your packages to emphasise the value and communicate better with your prospective clients.
- It's not that consumers don't want luxury but they are more price conscious so be clear with your pricing to ensure the right people click through.

## Targeting

- In Google Ads, test new keyword themes you might not have tried before "affordable luxury vacations," "luxury on a budget," and "luxury travel deals." Don't forget 15% of search queries are new so you might pick up on less competitive keywords.
- Showcase different aspects of your packages (luxurious yet affordable rooms, added perks, etc.) to attract users. Include strong calls-to-action, like "Indulge in Affordable Luxury—Book Now!"



# Trend 1: Affordable luxury

## Audience and messaging

- Remarketing campaigns: Depending on the style of holiday, it can take 100's of touchpoints to get a customer to convert so being clever with your remarketing campaigns can help nurture those potential customers.
- Ensure your retargeting ads remind the audience of the extra benefits they'll get. Skip down to the experiments section below to know how to test your creative!
- Use dynamic content in your ads and emails reflecting a website visitor's behaviour. For example, if they have visited sale pages, you can show them campaign messaging which show price points. For those who were looking at your top end experiences, give them messaging which tells them more about your story and why they should trust you with their holiday.



## Content marketing

- Blog posts and guides: create content which explores the concept of affordable luxury travel, such as “How to Experience Luxury on a Budget” or “Hidden Gem Destinations for Affordable Luxury.”
- Video tours and behind-the-scenes: use video to give potential customers a taste of the experiences they'll enjoy—showing them that luxury can be accessible. Behind-the-scenes footage from customers can be just as valuable as video with a high production value.
- Use reviews, testimonials and user-generated content from travellers which emphasise the luxury feel of your trips. These can work well within your advertising creatives too and have been shown to have a higher click through rate.



# Trend 2 - Popularity of destination dupes are on the rise

Google says: “Another way the affordable luxury trend is playing out, is through a rise in popularity for “destination dupes”. These are more budget-friendly locations that have all the charm and luxury of their more popular counterparts.”

Travelers are looking for ways to find the experience of luxury travel destinations without the same price tag. Here’s how you can tailor your strategy to convert them into your customers.

## Tips for Ads

- Put your creative to good use in well-budgeted campaigns on Instagram and Pinterest. Pinterest is where high intent browsing and gorgeous visuals meet, and is very effective at converting as users often arrive planning a project or experience.
- Showcase experiences like private beach access, exclusive resort stays, or fine dining options mentioning lower prices. Segment your audience by interests and behaviours (like luxury travel), and lookalike audiences. Focus on ad keywords like "affordable luxury travel," "hidden gems," "undiscovered luxury locations," and "luxury travel for less."

## Targeting

- Do some destination research to work out which dupes you could target. [This article from the Independent gives some examples](#) – travellers to Taipei may be tempted by Seoul, or may consider flying to Bangkok over Phuket to save money on flights. You could try targeting the dupe destination to see if you can persuade travellers to the destination you’re promoting instead.
- Use targeted digital ads on social media and search engines, specifically aimed at budget-conscious luxury travellers.



# Trend 3: The great rail escape continues a trend in sustainable travel

Trend as reported by Google: “According to Euromonitor, rail is the fastest growing travel category worldwide. They cite a growth of over 35% during 2023-2024, with a third of eco-adventurers saying they prefer trains to air travel.”

Eco-conscious holiday-goers are looking to train travel as an alternative to flying. Capitalise on this by promoting new experiences for travellers. Here’s how.

## Tips for Ads

Alongside keywords like ‘flight-free holidays’, ‘no fly’ etc, ad copy could focus on stunning landscapes, comfortable travel conditions, and onboard amenities.

## Targeting

To connect with eco-conscious travellers you could think about creating a suite of content related to green travel on your website or blog. Then work on ad campaigns which focus on keywords around environmental impact, and direct through to this content.

## Audience and messaging

Highlight the scenic beauty and unique experiences slow travel offers compared to other transport options. Be helpful with tips on choosing alternative travel options.

## Content marketing

- Could your packages be adapted to combine train travel with popular destinations or experiences, if they don’t already?
- Investment in creative is key - think content like blog posts, social media posts, or videos, as vivid imagery and storytelling will help stop customers in their tracks.
- This is an area where budget put towards social can really pay off. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are ideal for showcasing visually appealing moments and provide opportunities for partnering with influencers who specialise in train travel. Competitions where customers can submit their best train travel photos or stories for a chance to win discounts or freebies can help build community and provide authentic content to share across your channels.



# Trend 4: AI is changing how people approach their travels...

Google reports: “We’ve seen an incredible rise in the use of AI technology, and the travel industry is no exception. There’s been a particular movement towards helpful tools that take the stress out of trip planning.”

There has been a huge increase in AI tools that help travellers plan their journeys. Invest in and embrace this technology to stay ahead of the curve.

## Content

ChatGPT and soon SearchGPT have become a replacement travel agent and the influence of AI created travel itineraries continues to grow. Do you know how your travel brand appears? Make 2025 the year you learn to power your content with AI “ask driven” searches in mind.

## Targeting

- Paid search as we know it will never be the same again. People are more likely to ask questions rather than search for products. Adapt to this change by using broad match keywords more, enabling you to target the conversational nature of these queries.
- Take your thinking away from traditional keyword targeting, and towards tools such as value based bidding, Demand Gen and Meta’s Advantage Plus.
- As with any field of marketing, travel marketers are reliant on accurate data to build effective campaigns. But marketing data is declining in quality for a variety of reasons. Google has come up with various AI powered tools to help you navigate this, and we recommend you check they’re enabled on your ad accounts – enhanced conversions and consent mode v2 in particular. [This guide unpacks how.](#)



# Trend 4 - AI is changing how people approach their travels...

## Audience and messaging

- You'll want to make the most of your first party data to be able to harness personalisation effectively – [read more about how in our White Paper.](#)
- Optimise the full customer journey so you can influence each touchpoint and deepen connections with your customers.
- Aim to track all those touchpoints so you can have a holistic view of customer behaviour and campaign performance, optimising and testing to get improvements across the full funnel.

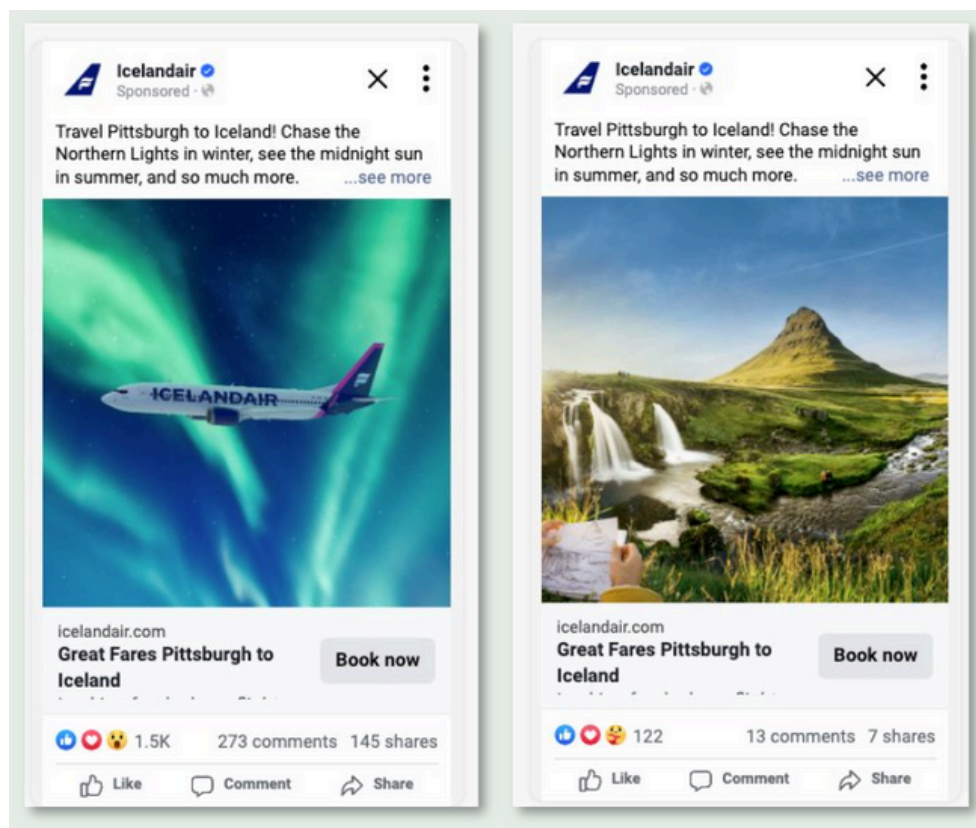




# Trend 5 - ...but use AI with caution

Our research has shown an emergence of cynicism with AI-weary consumers. Put authenticity at the core of your ads.

For example, the user feedback we had on a campaign for Icelandair (see below) showed the user was put off by the visuals, thinking they were fake.



## User reactions after seeing these ads included...

"I actually think the text is better than the photos for this ad... The reason that I say that is like the photos look so CGI like, I'd rather just see like a real picture of Iceland (User 6)"

This was a comment sentiment coming back from the test.

So whilst AI can enrich your understanding of your customer, and help with targeting and experimentation, it doesn't make up for a consistent and authentic brand with investment in quality creative.

# Helpful resources

## Watch and learn: The CMOs guide to Peak Performance

Soak up tips from marketing leaders including The Natural Adventure's Director of Marketing. Expert talks and panels examine how to maximise measurement to improve the way you connect with customers along every touchpoint of their journey.

## Read: how to boost customer engagement with qualitative research

A 30 minute webinar looking at different customer research techniques to help you begin experimentation and innovation with your marketing campaigns.

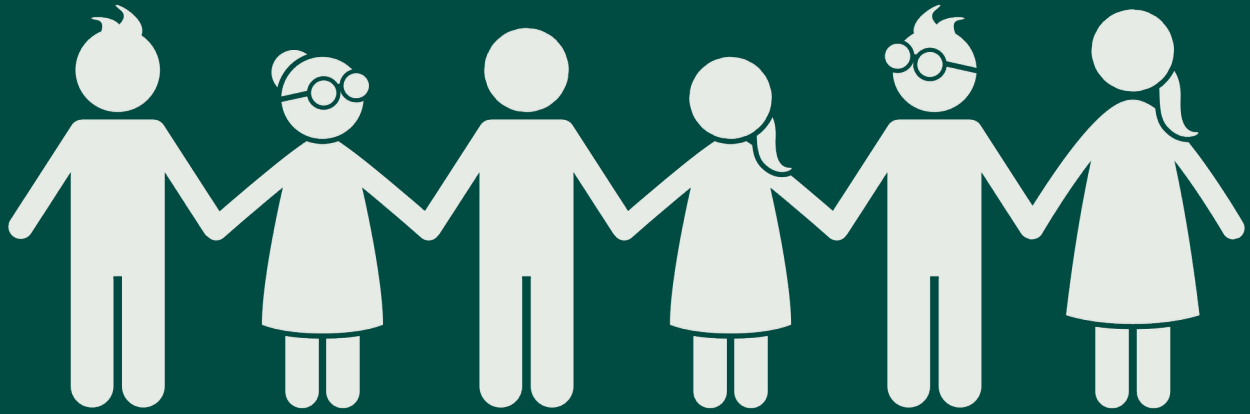
## Watch: optimising campaigns with Google's AI powered tools

In this 30 minute webinar experts from Launch share their learnings from Google Marketing Live, which include tips on campaign optimisation with DemandGen, Pmax and Youtube

## Watch and read: enhancing PPC Campaigns with AI: Top Strategy Tips for 2024

Which AI tools are most useful for creative inspiration? How does AI change the role of Paid Media agencies? And what are the pitfalls to look out for when using AI for your campaigns? We examine all these questions in this blog from Launch.





# Need a hand?

We breathe new life into performance campaigns with fresh thinking and the latest techniques. But we don't treat your ads in isolation – we'll also make sure you have a robust approach to data, ensuring you gather those all-important insights responsibly.

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Shortlisted -  
Workplace  
Excellence

Google Agency Excellence  
Awards 2024



Best PPC  
Agency in  
Europe

European Search Awards  
2023



Winner -  
Performance  
Marketing

Drum Awards 2023



Freedom Award  
Winner

Independent Agency  
Awards 2024

# Launch

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