

Go Big, Go Deep

*More Than A Niche, Adventure Travel
Earns Hard Commissions*

By Steve Crowhurst, CTC

Life is one big adventure all by itself isn't it – and then you can travel too! What a world we live in. And what a selection of suppliers we have represented in this article. You've got a variety of places and destinations to sell and types of adventures to learn about. Let's review and come up with some marketing ideas that you can adopt and apply your own sales and marketing talents to.

The Adventure Adventure

The adventure travel niche could be an adventure all by itself couldn't it? I'm not sure if it is a niche anymore as, quite honestly, to my way of thinking it is pure mainstream travel now and rides right up there with the sun, sand and sea ITCs, or cruising. Why don't we bring this type of product front and centre and feature it where it can make you some money. It is one of those products that you can pitch to the youth market and all the way up to seniors.

Putting The Adventure In Adventure

You can sit there and sell from the brochure, regurgitate what you learned from a supplier's BDM and from webinars – however I suggest, if you truly want to make it in the adventure travel segment, that you get out of the agency and go taste the product. Put yourself in the adventure and learn first hand. Truly, your ability to sell and to conjure up marketing slogans will increase ten-fold. Your sales persona will be more confident. You will have those images in your mind as you speak from the heart to your clients. You will have the heart of a lion as you take the podium to deliver a presentation to an invited list of guests. Make contact with the suppliers related to this article and ask them about putting you into and onto one of their adventures. Don't forget to consider the adventure specialist training programs that are available too.

Africa – Soc(cer) It To Me

This is a gimmie. Africa is and will be getting so much airtime brought about by the World Cup Soccer event that you have a marvellous opportunity here. You can ride on all of that exposure. You could be clever with your slogans and use statements such as “When it comes to Adventure - We're on the ball!” or, “If your goal is to experience an African Safari...our dream team can help deliver on your adventure!” Be careful not to confuse the message. You are selling adventure – not soccer.

Out Of Africa and Back In Too

One of the suppliers involved here (Wild Africa Safaris) has a slogan on their website which is: “We came out of Africa to take you back.” Now that is a classic statement and it ties into man's migration out of Africa. You can tie into this as you explore the Genographic Project that National Geographic has undertaken. If you do not know about this project between NG and IBM click here: <https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/genographic/index.html>. I have bought the kit and the results are in. I, as in my ancestors, came out of Africa to Central Asia, turned left and headed for Europe ending up in Spain and France. Then someone caught a whiff of fish 'n' chips and got on the ferry and went for the UK! Then of course I migrated to Canada. Migration never stops.

The adventure of “going back” was recorded by one traveller after he received his migration results and then went in search of the people, the tribes who shared his same DNA. His ancestors. Click here to read more: <http://traveler.national-geographic.com/2005/10/genographic-photography?fs=www.3.nationalgeographic.com>. With this information under your belt you will better understand the slogan on the Wild Africa Safari website. Now you can sell it. Now you can market it. Selling someone on an African safari would take them “home” or closer to their ancestors of some 60,000 years ago. Fascinating and a potentially huge niche market. It is called Deep Ancestry. Work with Travel Studio and Wild Africa Safaris to set up your Deep Ancestry adventure program. Not sure? Sell their off-the-rack products first.

You Won't Believe Belize!

There's your first slogan. After reading about Belize on the official tourism website I want to go. Their theme is: Mother Nature's Best Kept Secret and it seems that Belize is a place for all adventures for all people. From the website: *Belize is culturally unique among Central American nations. It is the only nation in Central America with a British colonial heritage, and is the only constituent nation of the Commonwealth of Nations in its region. Culturally, Belize considers itself to be Central American but keeps ties to the Caribbean Islands – AND English is an official language. That's worth mentioning in your promotional material and it features large on this video clip: www.travelbelize.org/maps-more/video/video.html. Clicking here: www.belize.traveltrade.org/ will land you on the 'everything you need to sell adventures to Belize' page. WOW! The BTB have done a terrific job here. From videos to self study. It's all here for you.*

Costa Rica

This country is well known to Canadians. It has been packaged and sold via your preferred ITC suppliers. Chances are you have already sold your clients here. Now

you can ramp it up and think about targeting the adventure traveller. Check with your adventure product suppliers and find a focus such as “Green Adventures” – especially as the tourism slogan is: No Artificial Ingredients. I love it! Now that's a winner. They also practice “safe adventure” here – and are sticklers that adventure operators meet regulations – one more thing to note in your promotional efforts.

U Gotta Be In Utah

From Africa to Belize to Costa Rica to Utah. How about a four-destination adventure program? Why not? Talk about diverse. You could start or finish in Utah. Either way – what a place it is – a favourite of photographers, rafters, hikers, rock climbers, and most recently mountain bikers and base jumpers. This is, of course, due to the canyons, the rock formations (Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park and Zion National Park) and the colour and two special places to focus on Moab and St. George. Knock on the doors of camera clubs, art groups and work with your local outfitters to tap into their client list.

Marketing Your Adventure

You have so many choices. Which type or style of adventure will you go for? Which country? Well no matter your decision make sure you do these things: add an adventure signature to your e-mails, add a call to action banner to the top of your e-mails. Use the best images possible and play those off your website. You can embed video, too. Create an adventure club and develop an adventure newsletter. Hold meetings for your adventure club members and beam in tourist officials and or adventure tour operator BDMs via Skype conferencing. Use all the social media that makes sense, too.

Deep Adventure

That's it. You have your work cut out for you. Your adventure starts now. Make contact with all the suppliers here. Get their information sent to you. Hold a staff meeting. Decide on your adventure choice and off you go. Go deep. Go BIG. Go to the edge – that's where the view is!

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