



Run for the sun: Brits booking more holidays in winter than ever before

Early 2018 travel booking numbers rise 9% YoY as Britain embraces the minibreak

London–Apr. 30, 2018 – Criteo, the leading commerce marketing technology company, reveals that UK holidaymakers aren't just dreaming of the perfect getaway during winter – they're booking them too. Criteo's [Travel Peak 2018 Report](#) provides an overview of holiday bookings made between November 2017 and Easter 2018 and analyses customer behaviour. This year's data found that mobile devices continue to grow in popularity for booking travel and identifies some of the UK's most popular destinations based on bookings made earlier this year.

According to analysis of over more than one million bookings, **UK travel sites saw buyer numbers surge by 9% while overall visitors increased by 2% year-on-year**. The statistics show that holiday makers are increasingly eager to commit to holidays earlier in the year in a bid to escape 2017/18's particularly cold winter.

Travel sales surge

Boxing Day has always been a popular day for booking a holiday in a bid to stave off post-Christmas blues and saw a 17% increase in bookings YoY. However, the latest findings from Criteo reveal that **Black Friday 2017 was the real winner for travel businesses, experiencing a huge 22% increase in holiday sales**. This shows that the buying bonanza usually associated with retail is now impacting travel too. Holiday makers are now taking advantage of the deals and offers available around this increasingly popular shopping date.

Mobile minibreaks take off (but half leave it late!)

The report also highlights other changes in Brits' booking habits. In January 2018, **a quarter of all holidays booked were minibreaks** (between 1 and 3 days) as shoppers look for cost-effective ways to get their holiday fix. Meanwhile, last-minute Easter breaks proved popular this year, with **47% of bookings made in the two weeks leading up to the public holiday**.

The growing preference for shorter, last-minute breaks has in turn seen mobile to continue grow in importance as a booking platform. **With up to 80% of these last-minute holidays booked on mobile devices**, the smartphone has quickly become a key channel for holidaymakers thanks to its flexibility and convenience.

Spain accounts for a fifth of January's bookings

The statistics also reveal the UK's favourite holiday destinations booked over the course of January 2018. Spain was the number-one choice, **accounting for 21% of all bookings in January** (based on 1m transactions) as travellers sought warmer winter climes. The top three countries, Spain, France and the USA, **accounted for 1/3 of all bookings**. Short-haul and domestic destinations make up eight of the top ten destinations, underlining the trend for shorter breaks ahead of the traditional summer holiday period.



“Today’s findings show that a more mobile-savvy Britain, that has embraced the convenience of booking online, is realising how easy and secure it can be to book an entire holiday on their mobile. As travellers start to look ahead to the summer, it is key that online travel agents offer a seamless booking experience on whatever device their customers choose to use, wherever they are, whether it is sitting on the sofa or on the bus home from work!” says Christian Armond, Marketing Director at loveholidays.

“How British people book holidays and the types of trips they are taking is constantly evolving. Our latest report shows the growing popularity of last minute trips, booked on the fly via mobile web or app. What was most surprising, and in many ways, totally unexpected, was the unprecedented rise in bookings on Black Friday which outstripped Boxing Day for the first time ever. To keep pace with these changes, particularly those unpredictable ones, travel companies need to remain flexible and ensure that they are set up to adapt to the volatile purchasing habits of today’s demanding travellers”. said Pauline Lemaire, Head of Travel and Classified, Criteo. “What hasn’t changed, however, is the British desire to escape the cold and find some sunshine!”

Top 10 holiday destinations booked by Britons

1. Spain – 21.10%
2. France – 6.33%
3. United States – 6.28%
4. Italy – 6.27%
5. Germany – 5.13%
6. Netherlands – 3.70%
7. Portugal – 3.58%
8. United Kingdom – 3.24%
9. Ireland – 3.20%
10. Thailand – 2.67%

Study Methodologies

Criteo’s Travel Peak 2018 Report is based on the analysis of up to 25 million booking transactions in the UK between November 2017 and March 2018. The pool of advertisers was composed of airlines, OTAs and accommodation advertisers to provide a complete picture of travel booking habits in the UK. For a complete look at the Q4 Travel Insights, view the report [here](#).

About loveholidays

Launched in 2012, loveholidays is one of the fastest growing travel agencies in the UK offering a wide range of holidays to short and long haul destinations. loveholidays is an ABTA member and provides ATOL protection to customers as well as a price match guarantee. The company’s current ATOL license is for 804,000 passengers making it the 6th largest travel agent in the UK. Please see www.loveholidays.com for more information.

**About Criteo**

Criteo (NASDAQ: CRTO), the leader in commerce marketing, is building the highest performing and open commerce marketing ecosystem to drive profits and sales for retailers and brands. 2,700 Criteo team members partner with 16,000 customers and thousands of publishers across the globe to deliver performance at scale by connecting shoppers to the things they need and love. Designed for commerce, Criteo Commerce Marketing Ecosystem sees over \$550 billion in annual commerce sales data. For more information, please visit www.criteo.com.

Media Contact:

Sarah-Anne Bray

sa.bray@criteo.com