

FIVE TIPS & IDEAS TO CONSIDER WHEN STARTING A TRAVEL BUSINESS

STEP 1: THINK ABOUT & WRITE DOWN YOUR PLAN

You might have an idea of what type of travel agency you plan on opening, but it's important to conduct some research to give you the time to determine your plan to market and where your business will fit.

You should be able to answer the following:

- Who are my potential customers?
- Which companies, groups or organizations should I affiliate with?
- How large is my target market?
- How much are potential customers willing to pay?
- What is my value proposition?
- Do I want my agency to specialize in anything?



STEP 2: FIND CLIENTS

As a home-based travel business owner, you are responsible for building a reliable and steady network of clients and the good news is, because traveling is a pastime for many, it is easy to build a list to start.

- Make a list of people you know. You will find it becomes long fast when you think about the people you interact with every day. Send them an email letting them know you have opened your own travel business.
- Ask your network to refer new clients to you. Give them an email to forward or a flyer to pass along to people they know.
- Schedule a few presentations at your local community center, senior center or church event. (Most of the time this is free.)
- Set up business social media channel, especially Facebook and Instagram – tell people about travel and you are open for business.
- Partner with a local business and offer your services to their employees.

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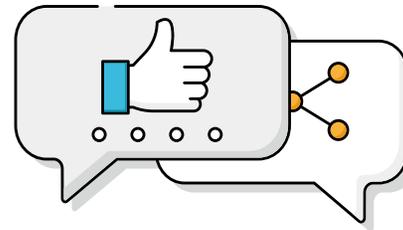
STEP 3: BE ENGAGING

Rather than simply selling your services, determine a way to get the attention of new clients first. Finding an interesting approach is important when you are reaching out through email or at a networking event. For example, host an event, virtual or in-person, to share the latest about cruising today or the top 10 golf resorts.

- It is important to pay attention when chatting with people what sparks their interest. This will help you with what to promote for an event or even just trips to promote on your social media channels.
- Share the benefits to them when using a Travel Advisor to book their travel experiences and adventures.
- Ask your current clients for a testimonial, review or referral.

STEP 4: MARKETING 101 – TELL PEOPLE WHAT YOU DO

Technology allows you to get your business in front of clients all over the world. Take advantage of free social media channels and email sending tools. Ensure the host agency you join to help support your business has a backoffice system that can give you a customized website, an email send tool, ability to collect payments and a place to build and track client profiles. (We offer the LevartéCRM as part of the membership to Levarté Travel.)



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STEP 5: SET GOALS

A successful travel agency directly depends how focused you are on booking travel. Though you're running your travel agency from home, it's important to create certain practices to keep you working toward your business goals.

- Set weekly goals for the number of new people you want to add to your prospect list. It can be as few as 5. Just set the goal and focus on reaching it.
- Determine the number of trips you want to book per year. For example, 24 per year or 2 per month.
- Establish hours of business. Be productive during the hours you set. This doesn't mean you won't ever work outside of the hours, but set limits.
- Connect with other Travel Advisors weekly or monthly. Brainstorm ideas on what is working in your businesses or the next hot destination to book.
- Establish a customer follow up process after a client takes a trip. Send them a thank you card, ask them to come on a zoom and tell you all about their trip – record it and use it to promote to prospects and other clients.

