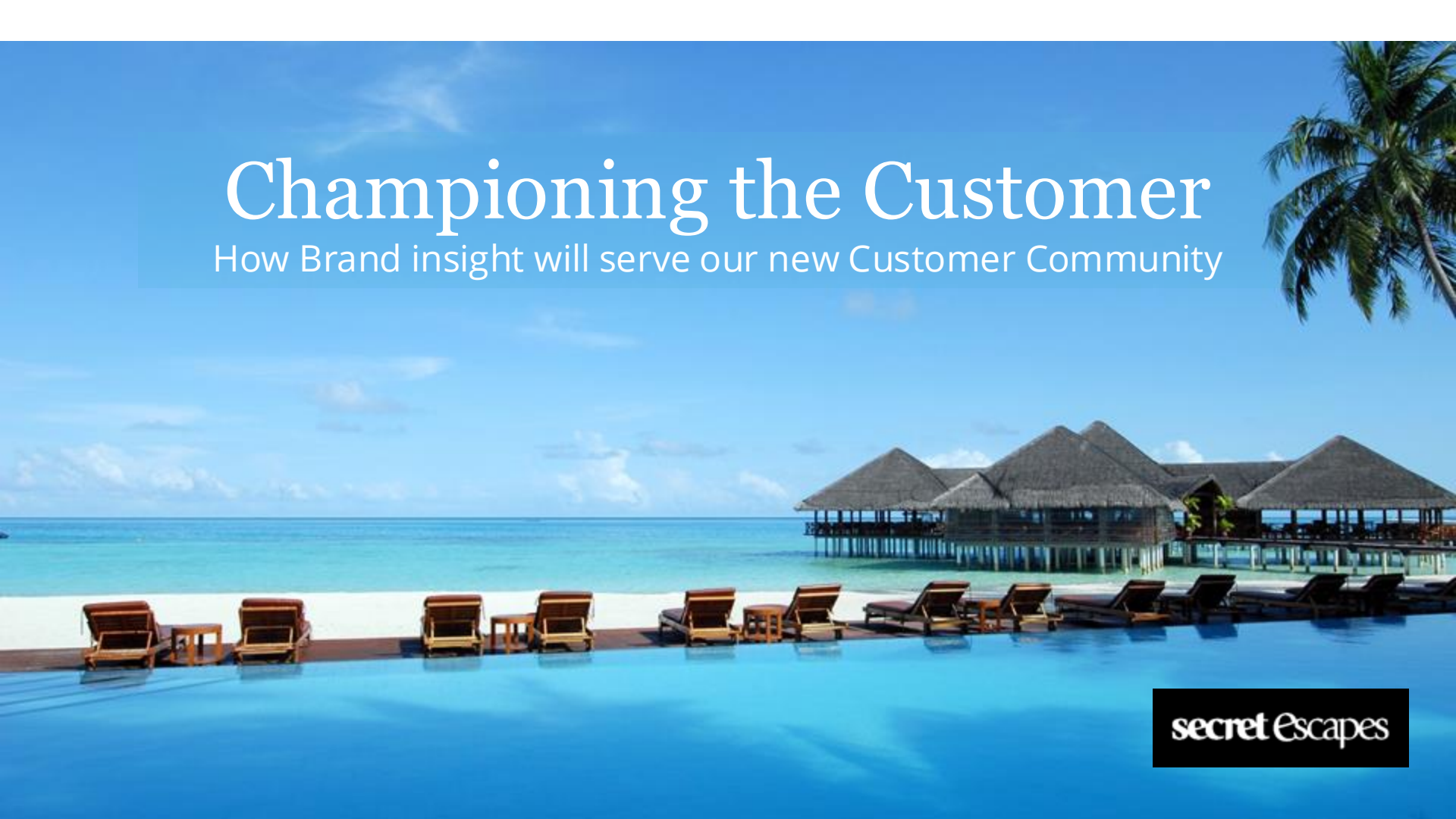


Championing the Customer

How Brand insight will serve our new Customer Community



secret escapes

Today's Session

Me talking (sorry for that...)

1. Brand in brief
2. A shared Customer vision
 - a. What we are
 - i. *Our Value Proposition*
 - ii. *Our biggest barrier*
 - iii. *Our new Mission*
 - b. Who are we for
 - i. *Our users*
 - ii. *Some shared behaviours*
3. Catalogue complexity
4. Conclusions

**THIS BIT:
1 hour**

You talking (thank goodness for that...)

5. How can I help
6. Where in the process can I help

**THIS BIT:
Your call**

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The prospect of this should help ...1pm!!



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Who am I ?

Skillsets: People & Persuasion



20 years as a strategist in
world's 2 biggest advertising
agencies



Head of Brand &
Communications



London & London

**Woman raises more than £10,000 for
homeless man who helped her when
she was stranded in London**

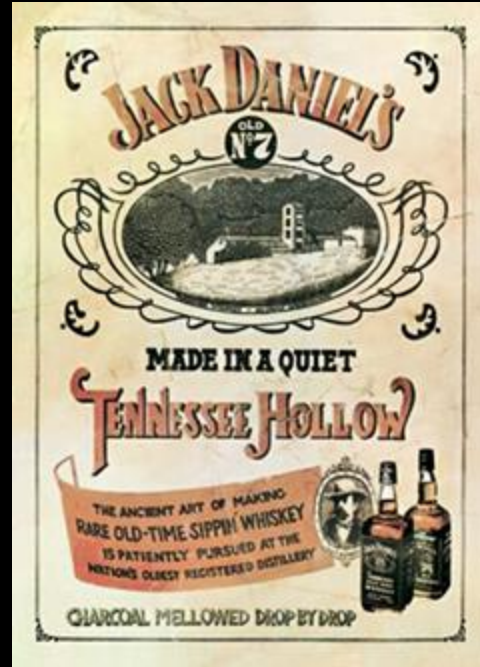
HANNAH AL-GHANNAM | Monday 16 March 2016 21:55 | 1 comment

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Brand: The beginnings

Reliable quality

Quick identification



What is Brand value?

*“A brand’s value is merely the sum total of **how much extra people** will pay, or **how often they choose**, the expectations, memories, stories and relationships of one brand over the alternatives.”*

Seth Godin

*It **persuades** outsiders to buy - and insiders to **believe**”*

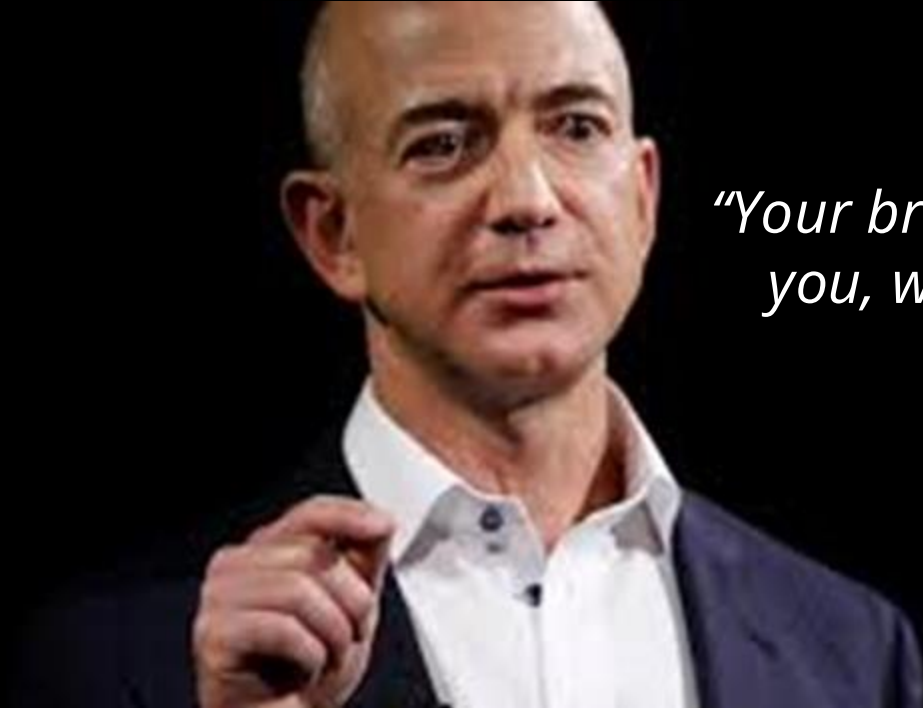
Wally Olins

Some things Brand isn't...



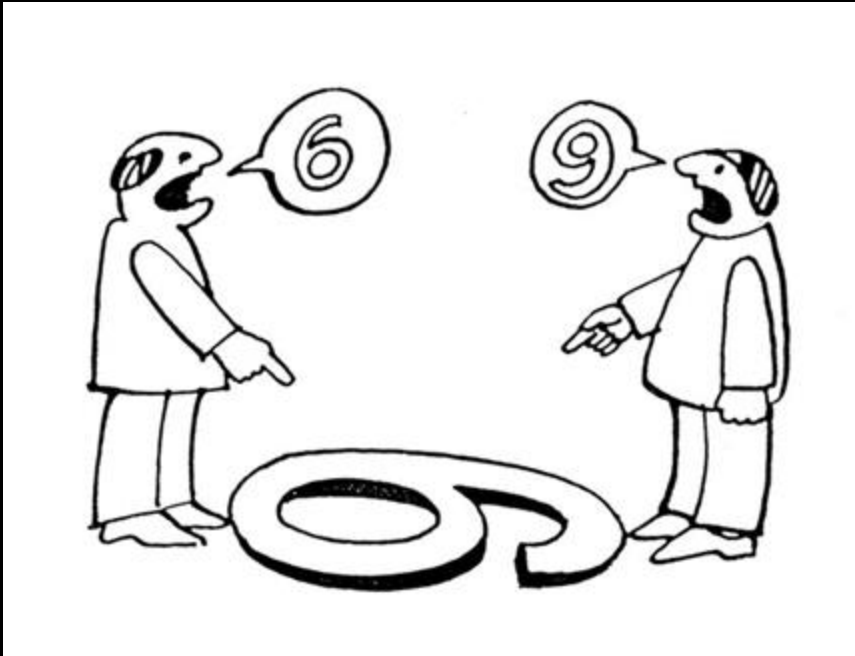
"Fun stuff"
(vs 'real
work')

What Bezos says....



"Your brand is what people say about you, when you are out of the room"

And **THAT** is the problem...



Whatever we think we are,
if users see us differently
their perceptions win

With humans,
feelings always trump facts

Trumping is **HUGE** right now...

**FAKE
NEWS**



“Our inherent cognitive biases make us ripe for manipulation and exploitation by those who have an agenda to push, especially if they can discredit all other sources of information.”

— Lee McIntyre, [Post-Truth](#)

But don't despair!

Great brands share 3 common characteristics

Differentiation

A clear sense of how it
stands apart from
competitors

Easy reasons to select

Consistency

An ability to always be
what the user expects

**Clear cues of
familiarity and
reassurance**

'Feelies'

Emotional connections
that we make with
brands we like

**Strong bonds shortcut
rational thoughts**

Marketing is only a part of what
creates brand equity

Most is derived from experience
(your own or others)

So, Brand might be in my title, but
to make it work..



One Customer team:

Multiple skill sets, one dream (no team 'dance'...yet...)



Behold! Our new, customer obsessed community

Product

Brian (10)

LaunchPad

*Lina (App)
Egle (Data Science)*

Brand, MarComms & Partnerships

Lou (8)

Performance Marketing

Rumi (15)

Customer Marketing

Ollie (15)

Offline Marketing

Steph (3)



To build a shared **customer view**,
we need

1. The same start points
2. The same language and truth
3. The ability to know when and how to call on (and build on) each other's genius



Our shared **customer goal**

Make travel a daily itch members want to scratch

By building a proposition that:

- Expertly curates inspiring travel ideas
- That feel handpicked for individual preferences
- And showcase unbeatable value at every step
- And makes the selection and purchase experience effortless

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Let's get sharing....



Our corporate definition: (What we function as)

Secret Escapes is a global, digital marketplace,
that uses innovative technology to connect
discerning travellers with unbeatable discounts
on inspiring travel experiences

secret escapes



Our Vision

(Our purpose beyond profit)

We inspire the world to escape

(NB, this is LONG on feelies...)

Our core proposition

Our experts hand-pick selected hotels and holidays

And get you [amazing discounts] unbeatable prices

By time-limiting our deals - so they don't last long

New deals launch weekly

But check back, or risk missing out!

Our biggest perception problem



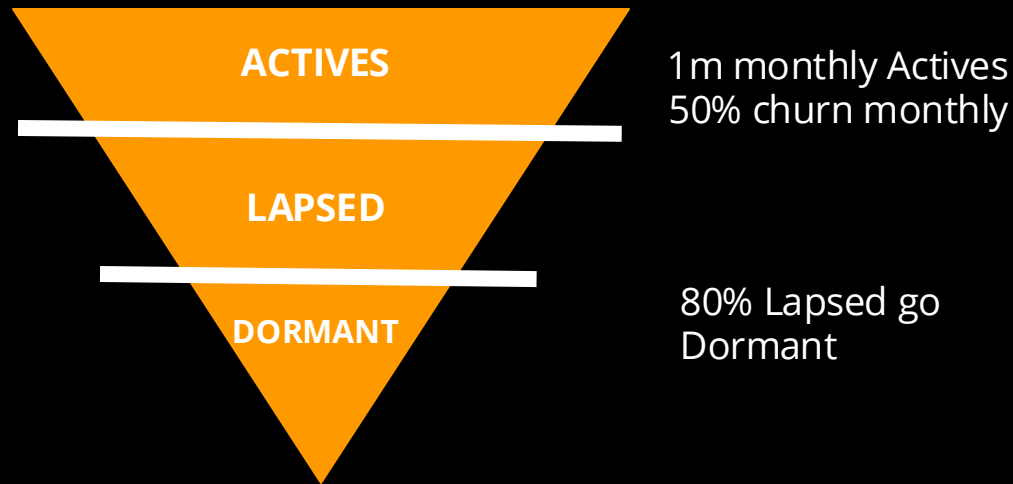
Reasons for not using Secret Escapes – Market sample





secret escapes

Our **biggest barrier:** Availability, leading to fatigue



0.3% & 2100:1 reality checks



This has caused a re-think on our Mission

Become the biggest and best (of our type)

About us, not our users

Hard to action and measure

Become the preferred brand of discerning travellers
(who demand quality, but are smart enough not to pay full price for it)

Our members might be demographically diverse and hard to predict, but they share common DNA

Discerning Travellers

Discerning Travellers / anspruchsvoller Reisender

Discerning Travellers aren't always constrained by dates or budgets - but that doesn't make them millionaires or celebrities: Discernment is about attitude, not just wallet. They like the good things in life, but are astute enough to avoid paying top dollar if they don't have to. Even if they can cover the full cost of a 5* deal, they would probably bridle at the expense - it just doesn't feel like a smart way to spend.

Discerning Travellers are curious about the world, often adventurous, but unwilling to compromise on comfort. They value the notion of being '*well travelled*', but don't equate it with hostels and lumpy mattresses - it can be a cosy Cotswolds bolthole, chic Berlin boutique or a '*fly and flop*' in Italy. For them it's about combining stylish, authentic places with interesting experiences - be that an Icelandic glacier, a Mallorcan cove or a Mayan temple. Discerning Travellers have high standards, so might recoil a little from very touristy options (although, who doesn't enjoy a river tour, musical tickets or a museum pass, especially if it's included...)

They enjoy research but will gladly delegate to brands they trust, if they feel looked after and understood. They love having an inside line to inspiring ideas not widely available everywhere - it enables them to mention that they are just back from Finland, when the rest of the world is considering France.

Bookers identify strongly with this language

78%

agreed being '*well travelled*' was important to them

99%

agreed being '*well travelled*' wasn't just about hostels and backpacks

90%

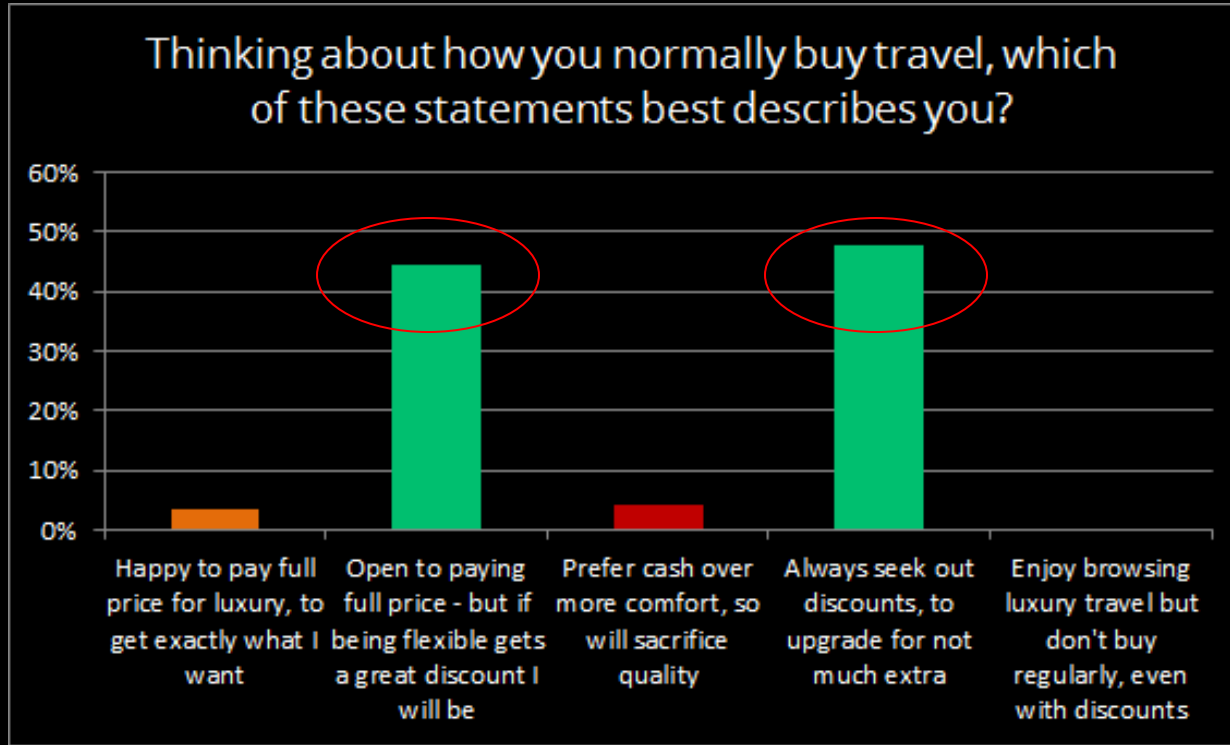
agreed Discerning Travellers prioritise best value over cheapest price

97%

agree discerning travel isn't about how much you spend, but how well you spend it

The same survey also offered insight into how people engage more broadly with our brand

Value is 'baked into' travel buying behaviour



A great deal is key to almost all Bookers

Very few are 'Full Pricers', driven by spending more to get exactly what they want

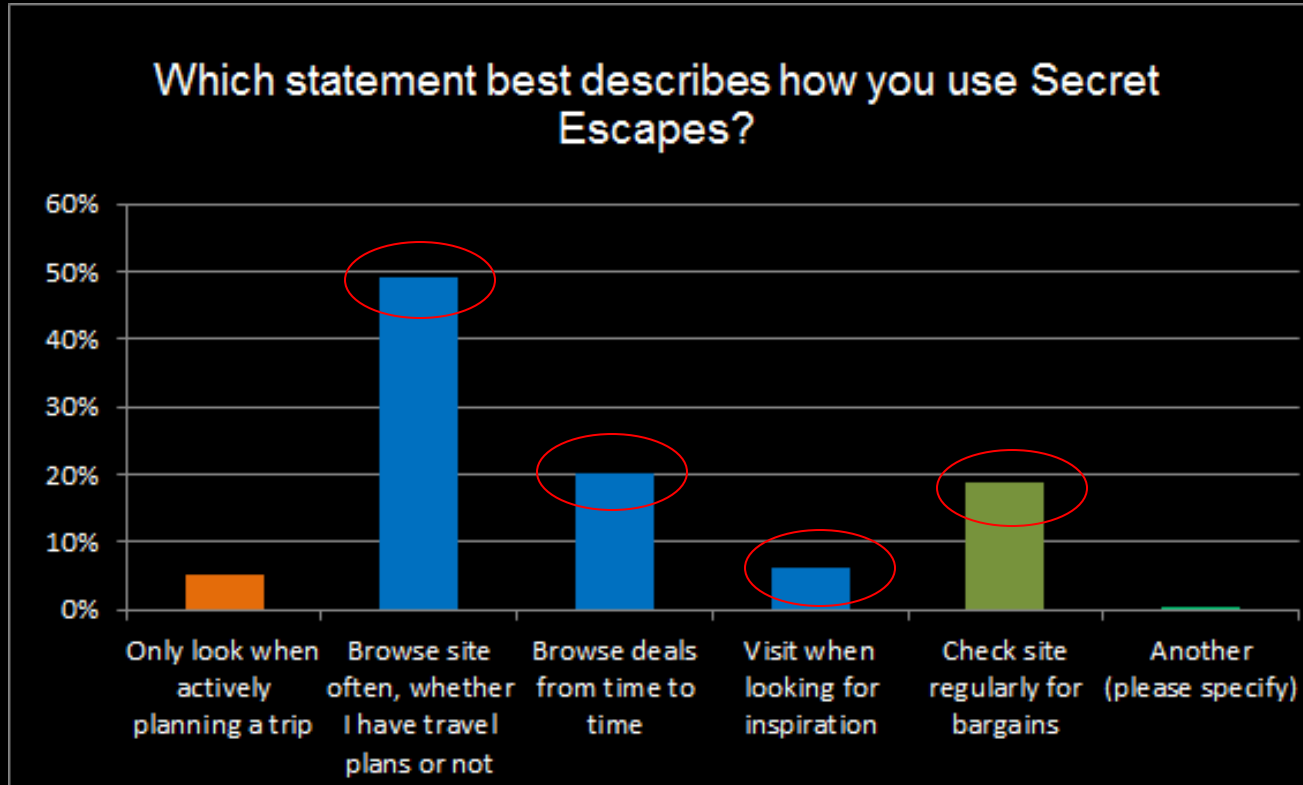
or 'Cheap Thrillers', up for compromising on quality

Discounts do influence purchase

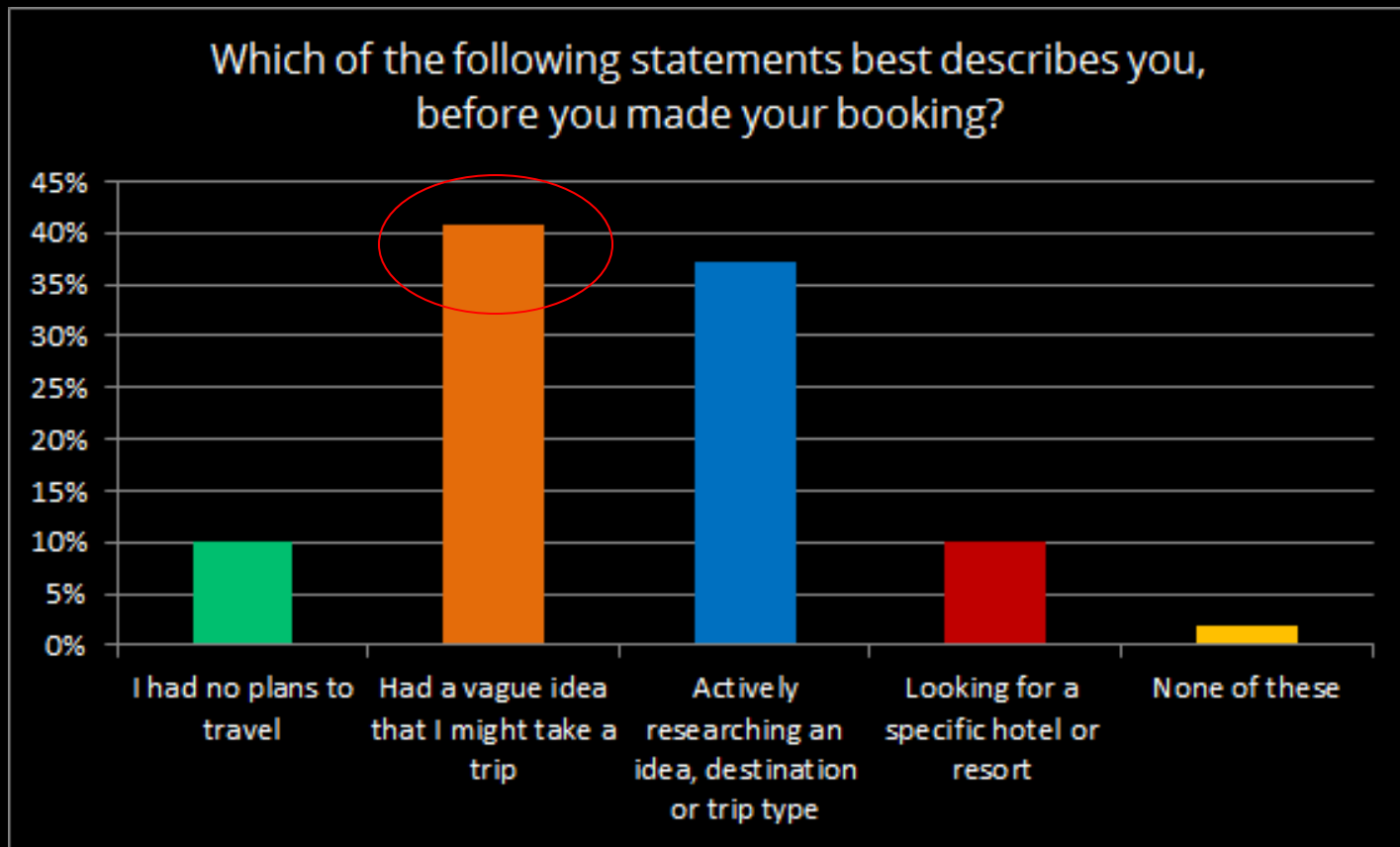
Bookers are active 'dealseekers'



Championing inspiration remains key



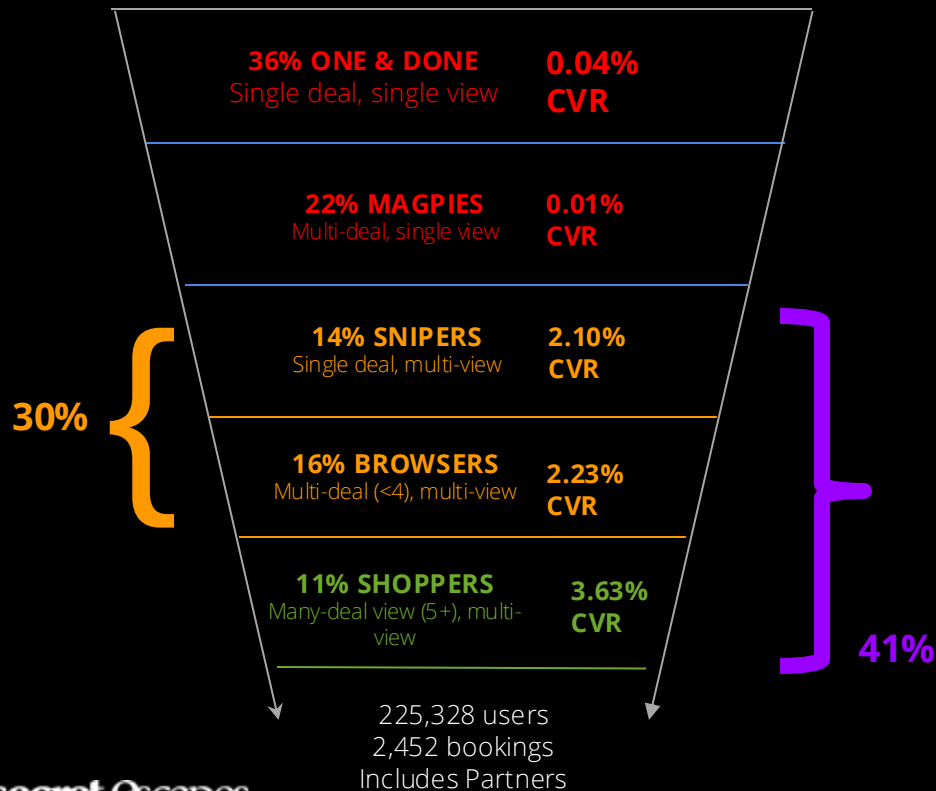
Many people are not attached to specific itineraries



It has always been difficult to cluster users by behaviour, but January site analysis offers new insight around usership groupings

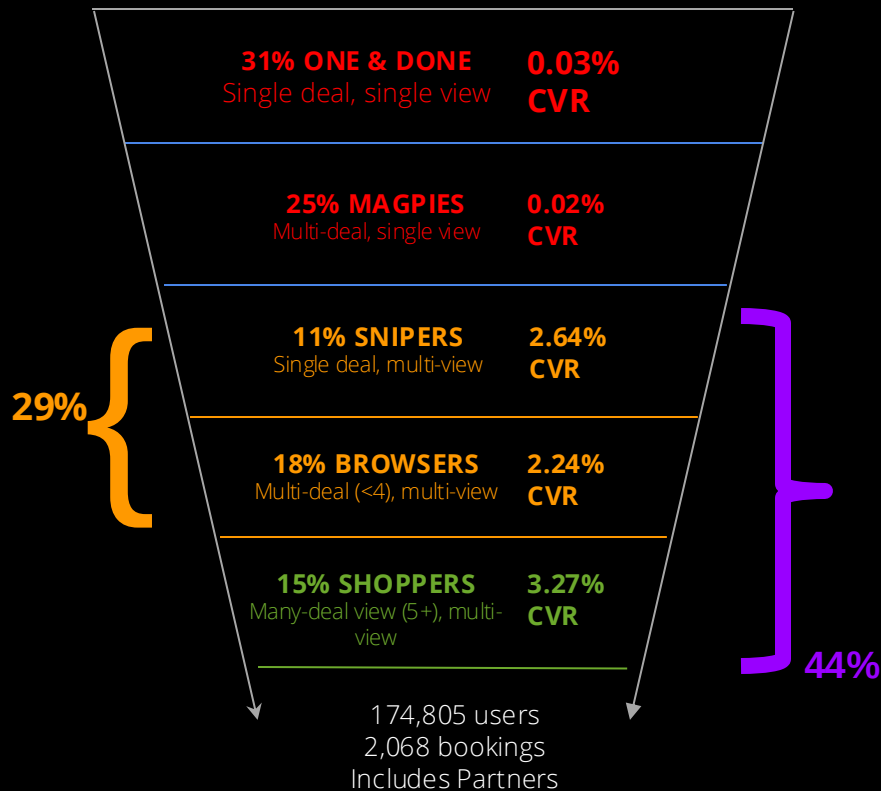
UK Week 2 2019 Visitor Breakdown

(first visit in over 30 days)



DE Week 2, 2019 Visitor Breakdown

(first visit in over 30 days)



Learnings summary



Learnings summary



People are united by their desire for deals and ideas

But they arrive with different needs and agendas

We need to think about them holistically, (they think in ideas not features)

And help them slide into a deal they like, even if it wasn't what they expected

All within a structure that is relentlessly and reassuringly the same (inspiring places, unbeatable prices, expert curation)

This underpins the '4th Way' strategy ([ORIGINAL DECK HERE](#))

Maximise engagement by:

- Entertaining and inspiring browsers to encourage them to meet (and book) an unexpected trip
- Give them reasons to revisit (deals and more (magazine))
- Learn from their cues/ trails to ensure the experience gets better every time (hooks. loops, stickiness)

Maximise conversion by:

- Helping intentional bookers find stuff fast
- Offer intentional bookers relevant, inspiring, alternatives (retain serendipity)
- Enable them to tell us what they like so we can prioritise it and reward them for interacting with us/ trigger continued interaction

If only life was that simple...
(stick with me for one last bump in the road)

Remember this?

secret escapes

Our experts hand-pick selected hotels and holidays

And get you [amazing discounts] unbeatable prices

By time-limiting our deals - so they don't last long

New deals launch weekly

But check back, or risk missing out!



Up to ~~70~~ 60% off luxury travel
Lowest possible price guarantee

Discount messaging: An inconvenient addiction

Up to 60% off luxury travel
Lowest possible price guarantee

Problem 1:

Hard to achieve big discounts, even on flash

Problem 2:

Increased ASA 'heat' means more scrutiny than ever

Problem 3:

Price checking Ops are expensive & onerous

- AB test vs 'unbeatable prices' : Sign ups dropped 85%, equating to over 800K leads lost
- Which extrapolates to 8k bookings lost and c. £540k margin lost (annualised)

Plus it fails completely with the addition of catalogue

- Permanent deals carry smaller discounts
- Which means that total discount promise becomes unsupportable
- And we get beaten up by the ASA
 - So we either lose our claim (and lose business)
 - Or we lose our new supply (and lose business)
 - Neither works.

Catalogue deals behave differently to traditional 'flash'

In some very important ways

Our experts hand-pick selected hotels and holidays

and get unbeatable prices,

by time-limiting our deals. So they don't last long...

...but new deals launch weekly

So check back or risk missing out!



Stay the same:
Curation plus value = brand



BUT
Catalogue is NOT time bound
whereas Flash is
We need Cat people to keep
coming back or engagement
will drop if they only use us
intentionally
**WE MUST STAY FLASH IN
MENTALITY**

To solve a both business problem (*claim*) and explore a potential customer problem (*get the deal I want / get the best from SE*) we are looking at a sub-naming structure

Limited Edition

Flash deals;
time-limited

*Deals sell fast, don't miss
out, book today!*

Extended Edition

Catalogue deals;
time unlimited

*Great avails! Secure your
best dates today!*

Both share a consistent, curated tone
(Edition feels 'chosen')

In conclusion

Our members are discerning and prioritise travel over stuff

They are dealseekers, using discounts to unlock more luxury for the same money
(but they don't care what the deal actually 'is')

The combination of luxury and (time-limited) value makes us a brand they love to browse

Many haven't got a clear plan and
are open to suggestion

Matchmaking

Members are looking for help around a
more concrete idea

They struggle with availability and find it hard to buy
Which leads to fatigue and disengagement

So more, suitable deals with

Inspiring Packages

tailored to their preferences and keep

But we must promote the returning, deal-seeking, browsing behaviour, if we are not to lose
people to seasonal set-piece travel planning. We must stay flash in our heads

My ideal world?

A single, shared source of truth

