The Process of Profiling your Ideal Customer

The process of understanding who your most profitable customers starts with understanding who your current customers are.

So the first question you need to ask yourself is:  
*Are you currently getting the customers you want through your door?*

The common answer to this is, yes and no – yes, there are a few fantastic customers who love their experience with you, and then there are some customers you’d prefer stayed at home.

To attract more of the people you want, you have to intimately understand the traits, dispositions, and emotional reasoning of a single person who represents your ‘fantastic’ customers as it relates to how they experience travel. which is a process called ‘Ideal Customer Profiling’.

What does an Ideal Customer look like?

Generally the people who you want to be attracting to your business:

* Spend the most and never ask the question about price
* Don’t whinge, leave bad (unwarranted) reviews on TripAdvisor
* Love you, your product, your region… everything about what you offer
* Are your biggest fan, and brand advocate – they are proud to associate themselves with you and your business, and want the world to know about it
* Make you want to get out of bed and go to work for

How to identify your Ideal Customers

Identifying your Ideal Customers is more or less a brainstorming exercise – a very important one at that. Customer Profiling starts with focusing on one of your current customers (or someone you know of that fits the above criteria – which is absolutely fine too) and then drill down the characteristics of that single person.

You will need to find answers to the following in order to paint a clear picture of the persona of your Customer, and also how they purchase tourism product.

* Exact Age, Sex, Income, Marital Status, Location, family status
* What books they like to read, what TV shows they watch, their favorite food, their past times/hobby’s
* What keeps them up at night, what gets them excited, what they value in life, why they value it
* Who they travel with, why they travel, what questions they have when planning travel, what emotions they have when planning travel
* What questions do they ask during the stages of travel? (Dreaming, Planning, Booking, Pre-Travel, In-Destination, Post-Travel (refer to our post on [Micro-Moments](https://tourismeschool.com/micro-moments-travel-planning-research/) to learn more about this!)

Once you have the answers to the above, you will know exactly how to engage them in your brand, which will not only help you to achieve engagement and cut-through, but also create more bookings / sales for your brand.

Types of tourism:

Following are some types of tourism:

**1. Recreational tourism:**

Tourism is an often activity for recreational purpose. Most tourism took for a change and rest; this is the reason why package tours have become so popular.

**2. Environmental tourism:**

Rich and affluent tourist are preferred to spend more visits to remote places where they get pollution free airs to breath.

**3. Historical tourism:**

Tourist is interested to know how our forefather lived and administered in a particular area. They visit heritage locations, temples, churches, museums, forts etc.

**4. Ethnic tourism:**

This refers to people traveling to distance places looking to their routes and attending to family obligations. Marriage and death bring people together to their native places. Persons who are settled overseas during later part of life visit place of their birth for giving boost to ethnic tourism.

**5. Cultural tourism:**

Some people are interested to know how other people or communities stay, survive and prosper. The kind of culture they practice their art and music is different from ours. So in order to acquire knowledge, understands culture well, to become familiar with the culture, they undertake journey.

**6. Adventure tourism:**

There is a trend among the youth to take adventure tour. They go for trekking,  
rock climbing, river rafting etc. They organized camp fire and stay under the blue sky. This tourism is meant for people with strong nerves who can tolerate stress.

**7. Health tourism:**

In recent years, health tourism has become highly popular. People visit nature cure centers and hospitals providing specialist treatment. Many foreigners visit India for treatment because similar services in their country are costly.

**8. Religious tourism:**

India represents multi-religious composition of population. Various package tours are organized to enable people to attend the religious duties and visit places of religious importance. E.g. Char Dham yatra.

**9. Music tourism:**

It can be part of pleasure tourism as it includes moment of people to sing and listen music and enjoy it.

**10. Village tourism:**

It involves traveling and arranging tours in order to popularize various village destinations.

**11. Wild life tourism:**

It can be an Eco and animal friendly tourism. Wild life tourism means watching wild animals in their natural habitat.

20 Niche Tourism Groups

If you thought that Niche Tourism covers just a hand-full of interest groups, think again. In the 5th edition of his book ‘Marketing Tourism in South Africa’, **Richard George** identifies 20 distinct Special Interest tourism groups.

Special interest tourism (SIT) to South Africa has increased rapidly in the last few years. Special interest tourists are motivated by the desire to go on holiday and take part in a current interest or develop a new interest in a new or familiar location. Special interest tourism is a niche market, similar to adventure tourism, but it differs in that it involves little or no physical exertion. The special interest may be a one-off interest (for example, going on a safari, white-water-rafting or shark-cage-diving) or an ongoing interest (for example, spiritual tourism). Some of the most popular special interest tourism products include the following

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**1. Agri-tourism** (also known as agro-tourism or farm-based tourism): This involves activities such as fruit-picking. Tourists may go on tours of working farms or on established tourist routes such as brandy or wine routes. They may visit factories that process farm produce (for example, jam) and may stay overnight in farmhouse B&Bs.

**2. Ancestry tourism**: Tourists travel to destinations with the aim of learning more about and possibly tracing their ancestors.

**3. Architourism** (or architectural tourism): Tourists are attracted by the design and buildings of a destination.

**4. Avitourism** (or birding tourism): Birdwatching is a popular hobby all over the world. Southern Africa is one of the richest birding regions, with a network of birding routes. BirdLife South Africa, a membership-based non-profit organisation, represents the birding tourism sector in South Africa.

**5. Battlefields tourism**: Tours to former battlefields have grown in popularity. Popular battlefields sites in South Africa include Islandwana in KwaZula-Natal and the Western Front (Normandy, the Somme) in Europe.

**6. Eco-tourism** (or wildlife tourism): Tourists view the flora or the game of an area. This includes whale-watching.

**7. Gambling tourism**: Tourists visit casino destinations and holiday in gambling cities that have many casinos.

**8. Gastronomy tourism** (or food tourism): “Foodies” visit a destination in order to experience cuisine and food festivals. Gastronomy tourism is defined as travel that has food as the primary factor of influence in travel behavior and in the decision-making process.

**9. Lighthouse tourism**: Tourists visit and sometimes stay in lighthouses that provide accommodation for tourists.

**10. Military tourism**: Tourists who visit war memorials, battlefields, forts and war museums.

**11. Nostalgia tourism**: Tourists return to a destination for sentimental reasons. For example, they go back to a destination where they had a memorable childhood holiday, or where they lived or studied in their younger years.

**12. Photographic tourism**: Tourists visit Africa’s natural and cultural attractions in order to take photographs.

**13. Property tourism**: Tourists travel to holiday destinations to purchase residential property. The property tourism operator who organises the tour may reimburse all or a portion of the cost of the holiday that was taken in order to view the property if the tourist purchases the property.

**14. Rural tourism** (or Cultural tourism): This includes homestays so that tourists can experience rural life and food.

**15. Safari tourism**: Tourists participate in art safaris and rail safaris.

**16. Spa tourism**: Tourists visit mineral or hot springs. This type of niche tourism is not bound to any season. It is a year-round activity.

**17. Wedding tourism**: This involves honeymooners and couples wishing to have their wedding ceremonies in Africa. Wedding tourists tend to travel in quite large numbers.  
18. Wellness or spiritual tourism: Tourists come to a destination in order to unwind and enjoy reflexology and massages, for example.

**19. Wildlife tourism**: Tourists participate in activities such as safaris, viewing marine wildlife and photographing wildlife.

**20. Wine tourism**: Tourists visit wine-growing regions and wine routes, vineyards, wineries (cellar tours and tasting rooms), wine festivals and so on, for the purpose of consuming or purchasing wine. South Africa has excellent wine regions and offers a variety of additional benefits to wine tourists, including natural and cultural visitor attractions. The country’s wine routes are ranked as the fourth most popular visitor attraction for international and domestic tourists. The winelands in the Western Cape, Napa Valley in California, the USA and Adelaide in Australia are examples of world-class wine tourism destinations.

**More Specialist Tourism Groups**

Here’s 6 more niche tourism groups to add to the above list – Editor.

**21. Accessible tourism:** Accessible tourism is ‘Tourism For All’. It’s about making travel and hospitality more reachable and pleasurable for travelers with universal access requirements. It’s also about sensitising yourself to the language of disability.

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**22. Adventure tourism**: Adventure travel is a type of tourism, involving exploration or travel with perceived (and possibly actual) risk, and potentially requiring specialized skills and physical exertion. Adventure tourism is rapidly growing in popularity, as tourists seek different kinds of vacations.

**23. Cruise tourism**: Cruise tourism is a great way to expose a country’s beauty and culture and also a nice way to travel the world giving tons of jobs and employment to places that it visits, mostly “ports of call”.

**24. Cultural tourism**: This kind of tourism normally occurs in urban areas with particular historical significance or cultural facilities, such as museums and theatres. Cultural tourism also highlights the various traditions of indigenous communities through observing their rituals, customs as well as their values and lifestyle. Tourism therefore serves as the carrier of culture and cultural tourism has become the platform for cultural consumption.

**25. Film Tourism**: Film tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide, motivated by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel. Film induced tourism explores the effects that film and TV-productions have on the travel decisions made when potential tourists plan their upcoming holiday or visit to a destination.

**26. Red-tape tourism**: OK, this one is more tongue-in-cheek! Could Home Affairs offices, licensing departments and similar facilities in South Africa’s small towns compete on service delivery to create a new domestic tourism niche