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Travel sites fail to meet consumer expectation

by Elizabeth Clifford-Marsh, revolutionmagazine.com 30-Mar-09, 09:35

LONDON - Top travel websites including EasyJet and Lastminute.com are failing to meet customer expectations, according to a study by Global Reviews.

The research shows that only Expedia managed to live up to consumers' expectations in delivering a website in tune with their needs.

Expedia recorded a satisfaction rate of 59 per cent, five percentage points above the standard Global Reviews regards as satisfactory. Lastminute.com scored 54 per cent, while EasyJet was the worst performer, scoring 46 per cent.

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A score of 55 per cent indicates users' needs are met, while a score above 69 per cent exceeds consumer expectation, according to Global Reviews.

The websites were assessed against more than 600 criteria including the information available to prospective customers, customer support and site usability.

For online bookings, Expedia received the highest score of 65 per cent, closely followed by Ebookers with 64 per cent. Lastminute and Ebookers scored over 80 per cent for their error management system which helps customers through the booking process.

All the sites received good scores for overall website navigation, but content and tools available were low-scoring categories for all providers.

Global Reviews director, Bertie Stevenson, said online travel agents need to up their game.

"Companies wanting to improve their customer experience should start by looking at what their competitors are doing online," he said. "It's a long process when booking a holiday. Sites should give consumers utilities such as wish lists to manage that journey better so they don't need to go back and forth."

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