Consumers Set To Cut Their Holiday Spend By As Much As 50% This Year

Contributed by IMRG and eDigitalResearch
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The latest e-Customer Service Index (eCSI) survey conducted by IMRG and eDigitalResearch reveals that one in four people are looking to spend less on their holidays by as much as 50% this year.

Also according to the survey, 48% of people are more likely to shop online to capture online holiday best deals to save money.

Traditionally, the Christmas period has been a busy time for holiday bookings with travel companies advertising early bird discount offers.

However, 87% of those surveyed didnâ€™t book holidays during the festive season this year, testament to changing public attitudes.

David Smith, Director of Operations at IMRG explains:
â€œThis marks a shift in consumer purchasing behaviour as more people are swayed by better holiday deals online and are less likely to plan so far in advance. With retailers announcing bumper sales figures over the festive season, it is clear that people preferred to spend their money on instant gratification, as opposed to planning their sunny getaways. With another tough year ahead for travel, it is important that companies capture the growing online bookings market with better deals and a better user experience.â€•

Over the last year, the online travel sector has witnessed the biggest growth in bookings across the retail sector according to a recent survey conducted by eDigitalResearch, with 12% more people booking travel products online this year than last.

With more people moving online, customer expectations are growing as a result of the increased convenience and control that the online space affords them.

The eCSI index highlights that such growing expectations has partly contributed to a drop of one percent in overall customer satisfaction across the entire retail sector.

Many people who have gone online have been frustrated by poor phone and email support, with customer service contact dropping by two per cent since October 2009.

Chris Russell, co-founder and director at eDigitalResearch comments:
â€œOne of the biggest reasons for a drop in satisfaction is the inability to deal or resolve customer queries quickly. Call volumes are generally higher during the January sales and adverse weather conditions have further compounded this with more people questioning delivery times and dates. To reduce pressure on busy call centres, companies need to address the online self-help function so that customers can answer their questions quickly, without the need to pick up the phone.â€•

â€œWith more people hunting for better deals online with less disposable income, companies need to concentrate on ensuring that the customer journey is seamless from the homepage to the purchase and delivery. While they may be investing more of their marketing budgets online, it is important to look beyond the wow factor and balance clear engaging content with good customer service support.â€•

About eDigitalResearch
eDigitalResearch is a leading provider of digital market research, enabling customersâ€™ to make critical business decisions with the benefit of comprehensive consumer insight and informed direction. eDigitalResearch possesses a unique combination of research expertise, marketing background, web technology and knowledge of the cross-channel consumer.

As well as providing invaluable research data, the modules of its fully integrated research system - ratings, surveys, panels, communities and forums - can combine to provide holistic analytics and essential market-leading insight.

This gives our clients the power, confidence and backup to make crucial decisions on key aspects of their business including product range, marketing, customer service, supply chain, even basic positioning.

For further information, please visit: www.edigitalresearch.com
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About IMRG

IMRG (Interactive Media In Retail Group) is the industry body for global e-Retail. Formed in 1990, IMRG is setting and maintaining pragmatic and robust e-Retail Standards to enable fast-track industry growth, and facilitates its community of members with practical help, information, tools, guidance and networking.

Consumers can be confident when dealing with IMRG Members because all have committed to operate using methods that are Honest, Decent, Legal, Truthful and Fair, and have undertaken to not bring the industry into disrepute.

The strength of IMRG is the collective and cooperative power of its members.

For more information please visit http://www.imrg.org/ or email market@imrg.org

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