

Waitrose

Set to Break into Travel Market



Supermarket chain Waitrose is poised to join competitors Tesco and Asda in a bid to capture a slice of the online travel market. The UK is Europe's fastest growing area for online travel bookings and Waitrose are keen to tap into this huge and fast-growing market.

The plan is to offer city breaks, wintersun holidays, and ski trips through the www.greenbee.com website, targeting their existing customer base of some 8million consumers. Initially, the site will sell a generic range of flights and travel packages provided by Expedia, although bespoke options will be added in 2007.

A recent survey conducted by The Telegraph found that increasing numbers of people prefer to do their holiday research, planning, AND booking in front of their computer rather than spending time trawling round traditional travel agents. The same survey indicated that over 50% of people feel they get better value for money by booking online, showing a general rise in confidence in using the internet to research destinations and a preference to book directly with airlines and hotels.

It's not just holidaymakers who are booking online either – many businesses are taking advantage of the administrative efficiencies, cost savings, and time savings by booking their travel online. As a result, online bookings have risen at a phenomenal rate throughout Europe during the past 3 years – a trend that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

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