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ROLLOVER STOP WASTING

Convenience Vs. Destination

by [Chris Copeland](#), 4 hours ago

Every summer, millions of people take time off for the annual family vacation. Families take to planes, trains and automobiles in search of an escape from their day-to-day grind. Yet, during these tough economic times, many families have chosen convenience over destination. Fewer families headed to Disney's theme parks and more headed to their closest lake or amusement park. Likewise, high-end vacations such as international travel and cruises all saw declines during the past twelve months.

People chose convenience because it offered something desirable, a lower cost. But in doing so, they also gave up specific amenities and luxuries that they would expect from going to a specific destination. When you choose convenience over destination in travel, you are making a swap of cost not only in locale, but also in food, entertainment and lodging.

At some point during 2010, this reality will come to search marketing in the form of the Bing-Yahoo merger. In recent discussions with the principals, it has never been clearer that their consumer marketing strategies could not be more divergent. Microsoft is squarely aiming to be in a fight with Google as a destination people turn to for relevant information to any problem they find a search engine beneficial to solving. Meanwhile, Yahoo is going back to its roots in a sense, focusing on the convergence of offering and convenience of searching while embedded within the Yahoo portal and network of properties.

Frankly, both approaches fit the companies and their aspirations for differentiation and market capture. Yahoo plans to win by growing the base and subsequently seeing more of that base use search while on site. Microsoft wants to innovate to become a natural alternative that expands cross platforms.

What's clear is that while someone can choose convenience or

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destination at any given time, it's impossible to be in two places at once. And once they've made their decision, people want to be communicated with in a relevant means to their needs

Which brings us to the rub in the proposed Yahoo-Microsoft deal. In order to gain scale, further innovation and streamline support (all of which are good things), Bing will provide a single platform across both partners. In doing this an advertiser will place a single buy across both networks with usage of a single creative at a single price. Currently, we find Bing to be a better performer than Yahoo, due in part to lower CPCs from less competition and a more targeted audience as it tends to be more of a destination. In the future, we'll buy Bing based less on its own attributes and more so on the performance from Yahoo due its greater market share.

Last year, I took my kids to Disney World for a week. This year, we went to Wisconsin Dells (site of my wife's family trips for many years when she was a child). For many, Disney is a destination, not a convenience; while Wisconsin Dells is almost reversed in terms of those who go for the convenience versus the destination. Targeting the audience of both is a different proposition. At Disney, we had breakfast with Cinderella and the other princesses. In Wisconsin, it was at Mr. Pancake. In the search world, my query for breakfast would carry very distinct and different expectations if I was going to a destination versus doing a search for convenience.

Given the technology advancements forthcoming in search and required of Microsoft as part of the Bing-Yahoo deal, it is my hope that this issue will not be overlooked. Bing has started to gain traction by being more relevant, and in some cases, more timely in its solution. To not give advertisers a better way to target between Yahoo, an engine of convenience, and Bing, a destination, would be short-sighted.

Search is a business of relevancy. It is the marriage of relevant content with consumer intent. When consumer intent is a mixture of audiences seeking convenience and precise desired solutions, then the ability to be relevant is compromised and value is minimized.



This commentary is insightful. I recommend it to others.

10 people recommend this article.

2 comments on "Convenience Vs. Destination "



Clayton McLaughlin from **SMG Directory Marketing**

commented on: September 25, 2009 at 11:59 AM

Next time you need breakfast in the Dells, I recommend Denny's Diner. Spot on with the article



Nina Zapala from **Fareed Zapala Koepke**

commented on: September 25, 2009 at 11:44 AM

This article was very insightful. As a marketing public relations professional in the travel industry, your comments about convenience vs. a destination is spot on, and is parallel to the Google -- Bing/Yahoo conversation. This is a great read thanks for sharing. Nina Zapala, Partner Fareed Zapala Koepke

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