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Passport Online Reports Surge in Agent Website Upgrades

NexCite Contracts at Record Levels for June 9 out of 10 New NexCite Contracts are Upgrades to Existing Websites

Beaverton, Oregon -- June was a record month for new NexCite accounts for Passport Online. NexCite is a complete website solution for travel agents and agencies. Though the new customers were spread evenly among brick and mortar and home based agencies, there was one common theme. In a survey conducted with those agencies who signed on in June, 9 out of 10 were switching to Passport Online from a competitive website program.

“These agencies cited the need for more in-depth supplier content and the desire for flexibility and customization options offered in our website program,” said Greg Kott, president and CEO of Passport Online Inc. Though there were a handful of brand new websites being created, this past month seems to indicate a new attention being paid to the value of content and quality of websites for travel agency consumers.

"Over the past decade, many agencies have put up a website which might just be a basic page or a few pages of content and just let it sit. They have not updated or enhanced their sites. With today's consumer of every product starting their searches on the web, it seems agents are deciding to upgrade their web presence," said Kott. “This is an encouraging sign that the agents are seeing the value of their website as a shopping tool for the customers. They want to upgrade their sites as part of their sales and marketing strategy.”

At Allways Travel Center, a MAST Vacation Partners member from Janesville, Wisconsin, it was all about control of the site. “I want to gain new customers from my site and get existing customers to write reviews. With NexCite, I am able to make updates and changes easily and the site is simple and professional,” said agency manager, John Sullivan.

At Admiral of the Fleet Travel, a full service Vacation.com agency, the website is used for clients to refer their friends. “We needed something we could change quickly and update as we had new deals. We use our website for our existing customers to refer their friends and family for vacations,” said Admiral of the Fleet Cruise Center, Steve Marinkovich, www.ontheship.com.

Border City Travel wanted the content. “With more than 80 reputable suppliers in the Passport system, my website immediately has strong, sellable content for my customers and potential customers,” said home-based agent Sharon McKee, www.bordercitytravel.com.

And in today's social media society, the agency website has become an essential component. According to some agents, websites are necessary if the agency is participating in the social media space. For home based agent Laila Matarwe of Five Star

World Travel, a Vacation.com agency, NexCite is her first website. “I felt that having a website was the most cost efficient way to reach people. I have a Facebook page and a twitter account, but you still need a place with all the content!” Her new web address is <http://www.fivestartvl.vacationport.net/>

About Passport Online

Passport Online is a leading supplier of Internet tools that help the leisure travel industry reach the travel agency consumer. Millions of unique travel agency consumers use Passport Online's shopping engine on travel agency websites to search for their next vacation experience. Each day, unique consumers are on those sites, seeking the product advice and opportunities offered by their trusted travel agent. Passport Online's key products are VacationPort and NexCite. Passport Online also offers complete email design and delivery services that integrate with the VacationPort and NexCite systems.

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