

Honeymoon Wishes Makes for Some Wishful Profits

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HoneyMoonWishes.com—an online registry geared toward travel agents selling honeymoon/wedding product—provides a lot more than wishful promises for agents eager to max out the wedding and honeymoon experience for their clientele and just as important, max out their own profits on a destination wedding or honeymoon package sale.

This online marketing tool doubles as an invaluable customer service vehicle for honeymoon and destination wedding clients, while making honeymoon planning a virtual snap for agents. It also provides agents with a tool to develop new business with the added traffic the registry provides.

"We provide agents a private label link where they have their own logo and name at the top—a branded URL so their clients remain proprietary to them, instead of going out of their site to another registry or wedding site where those same clients can find other travel agents," explains Kristin Stark, president of HoneyMoonWishes.com. "So, if you buy travel from say, Kahala Travel, your honeymoon registry is also through Kahala Travel. So the agency gets new eyeballs on their website because the bride and groom's friends and family are basically forced to go to KahalaTravel.com to look at the registry."

In addition, Stark points out, "We also give the bride and groom a wedding website. That's another tool where they can put up pictures of themselves, tell their story and, more importantly, give directions to the

church, details about the reception, etc. So even if there's someone who chose to buy a gift from Crate and Barrel, they still have to go to KahalaTravel.com to get directions to the venue. We're constantly trying to find ways to bring both the bride and groom's friends and family back to Kahala Travel and basically bring them more traffic to that site."

So how effective is this program at driving traffic? According to the company's numbers for 2007, the program is currently serving an average of 2,100 wedding couples per month and experiencing site traffic increases of 64 percent month-to-month, with each couple averaging \$2,000 in gift money per registry. And one more important testament to its effectiveness—since its inception just four years ago, the company is currently providing private label, full-service software registry sites to more than 65,000 agents in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Still, another important point, because the honeymoon registry is separate from the booking, it's a totally non-competitive tool. "We instituted our high-tech solution for travel agents without getting into the travel business ourselves.... We focus 100 percent on the registry and leave the travel bookings to the travel agents," Stark says.

The way it works is the agent's client goes online, registers and then they get to choose what they want to list. "Some choose to just request a honeymoon trip contribution and keep it simple so that it goes to the base cost of a cruise, for example. They might ask for 40 gifts of \$100 to help cover the cost of the cruise. Sometimes they don't want to do that and they'd rather list all the incidentals like the massages, the shore excursions, a special dinner," Stark explains. "It's not a cookie-cutter kind of list, they get to choose whatever they want and if it's something we don't have, we have a section where they can add their own ideas. So every list is literally totally different—really flexible and totally up to the bride and groom."

On the revenue side, Stark says, all fees are

focused entirely on the client couple and the agent receives a 20 percent commission on those fees. "We charge a 7 percent service fee per transaction and when the bride and groom sign up, they can decide to take that out of the money they receive or, they can add it to what the guest pays. The agent just pays a one-time fee of \$29.95 for a private label link and we send that over; that's the only fee they ever have to pay."

For agents, signing up is easy. All you have to do is go to HoneyMoonWishes.com, click on "Partner Programs," located at the bottom left of the page, and select which kind of link you want. "It's literally less than a 10-minute process. We also have a whole travel agent training site where we've got everything from how to use the site, to marketing material with the agent's name, phone number and website that they can print out as flyers," Stark points out. "We also have a whole bridal show training section where all of the suppliers we work with post their marketing materials. So if an agent is doing a bridal show, instead of having to go to 12 different companies, all they have to do is go to our site and download everything that's needed to do bridal shows. If they've never done a show before, we have scripts for them and all kinds of things that we hope is good training information for them."

But the company isn't stopping at the honeymoon market. "We just launched **AnniversaryWishes.com** and it came out of necessity because we had so many anniversary couples and kids registering their parents on HoneyMoonWishes.com. We have a lot of people that want to register for their first year anniversary trips, or who want to register their parents for their 25th anniversary, 30th, 50th, and they're also doing vow renewals."

In addition to that, Stark adds, "We're also doing a "Trip Registry," like a graduation registry in conjunction with **Contiki Holidays**. This is a different model, it's mostly for kids taking trips with Contiki that are just graduating from high school or college or maybe taking trips for their birthday. That's going to be called **MyTripRegistry.com**." ●