

THE POWER OF **ESCAPE**

Why travel remains one of the world's most effective rewards

The world has changed. Consumer priorities have pivoted. Travel behaviour has shifted. Yet travel itself remains remarkably resilient. Why? And what does that mean for your brand?



tlc-worldwide.com



For more than three decades, travel has been one of TLC Worldwide's most popular reward categories, globally. Throughout that time, consumer behaviours, technologies and economic conditions have evolved beyond recognition. Yet one thing has remained constant: people continue to value experiences that take them out of everyday life. Even amid economic uncertainty and changing travel habits, the desire to escape has remained strong.

Consumers haven't fallen out of love with holidays, in fact they dream about them even more. That's why travel rewards continue to prove remarkably resilient.

Today's consumers are experience-led, value-conscious, and emotionally-charged. They seek rewards that feel meaningful, memorable, and – in a world overwhelmed with dehumanised interactions – personally relevant to them. They want to feel seen and they want to feel appreciated.

Few categories are better positioned to meet those needs. From access to a spontaneous weekend break to a family staycation or the trip of a lifetime, travel provides one of the most powerful emotional storytelling platforms available to brands. It fosters deeper engagement, connectedness and loyalty with customers – regardless of who they are, where they reside and what motivates them.

Yet many brands have overlooked travel, assuming consumers no longer value it in today's uncertain world.

So if you think travel is dead, think again!

In this guide, we bring you global data that pushes beyond the headlines to evidence:

- How consumers truly feel about travel
- What some remarkable brands are doing with this insight
- And, most importantly, where you could take your customers next.

Enjoy the journey!



Ashley Artusa-Barrell,
Group Product Innovation Director,
TLC Worldwide

1

TRAVEL REMAINS REMARKABLY RESILIENT

**79%**

of consumers plan to take the same number or more holidays in 2026 than they did in 2025.

\$12.3 TRILLION

Projected contribution of travel and tourism to the global economy.



"Despite economic and geopolitical uncertainty, consumers continue to prioritise travel."

2

TRAVEL ISN'T DEAD. DECISIONS HAVE SHIFTED

Consumers aren't travelling less, they're travelling differently.



THE AVERAGE TRAVELLER NOW PLANS:

**2 Domestic flights****2 Short-haul trips****1 Long-haul trip each year**

For some, that means a dream holiday abroad.
For others, a staycation, wellness retreat, or nearby city break.

But, choice matters.

The modern traveller seeks flexibility, relevance, and options.

3.

PEOPLE ARE TRAVELLING FOR MORE THAN A DESTINATION

Travel is becoming an extension of personal identity.

68%

have travelled to pursue a **passion or interest**.



82%

of these travellers are **Gen Z**.



TOP MOTIVATIONS:



4.

TRAVEL HAS BECOME A WELLBEING TOOL

In an always-on world, travel is an opportunity to **disconnect from digital overload**, spend meaningful time with loved ones, explore new perspectives, and restore balance.

57%

say the most meaningful benefit of travel is the opportunity to **rest and recharge**.



59%

have booked a premium hotel, spa stay, or luxury experience specifically to help them **relax before or after a trip**.



75%

of such consumers are **Gen Z**.



Travel is becoming less about getting away and more about getting back to what matters.

5.

THE SILVER TRAVELLER IS RESHAPING TRAVEL

Travel demand isn't only being driven by younger generations. Older travellers are now one of the fastest-growing and highest-spending audiences in global tourism.

+8.7%



Growth in travel spend among the 65+ demographic - the highest of any age group.



TODAY'S "SILVER ECONOMY" IS PRIORITISING:



Premium accommodation



Comfort and convenience



Longer stays



Curated experiences



Quality over price



For brands, travel has become one of the few rewards capable of resonating across every generation.



6.

THE JOURNEY NOW STARTS LONG BEFORE DEPARTURE

For today's traveller, the holiday begins long before take-off.

Consumers are spending more time researching destinations, comparing accommodation, reading reviews and building trips that reflect their interests, budgets and lifestyles.

71 DAYS

The average travel purchase journey now lasts 71 days, with travellers investing significant time researching before they book.

54%

1 in 2 travellers now choose to book multiple hotels within a single destination.

35%

Prioritise better value through deals and discounts.

50%

Choose to explore different neighbourhoods.



Today's travellers aren't looking for pre-packaged holidays. They're looking for the freedom to build a trip that's uniquely their own.



7.

PEOPLE WANT TO ELEVATE THEIR EXPERIENCES

The desire to travel remains strong. And, consumers also want to make those moments feel special.

THINK:



Airport lounge access.



Premium accommodation.



Room upgrades.



VIP experiences.



Exclusive local experiences.



Travel rewards allow brands to create moments of delight that far exceed their actual cost.



Small upgrades can create disproportionately powerful memories.





"The world still remains full of places people want to explore.

What has changed is how consumers make decisions. They are seeking value, flexibility, wellbeing, and experiences that feel personally meaningful.

Yet the desire to travel remains remarkably resilient. For brands, the opportunity is not to persuade people to travel. It's to help them get there."

Kelly de Silva, Global Marketing Director, TLC Worldwide



UNLOCKING THE POWER OF TRAVEL REWARDS

Travel has always carried strong emotional value. But for many brands, it has traditionally been associated with significant cost.

Hotels, flights and premium experiences can quickly become expensive, making travel feel more suited to prize draws, high-value customers or small groups of winners than large-scale reward programs.



THE COMMON MISCONCEPTION:

Travel rewards can't be delivered affordably or at scale.



Today, that's no longer true. By combining a global travel ecosystem with a flexible reward model, brands can now offer meaningful travel rewards to every customer - without the cost of funding thousands of holidays.

Instead of rewarding one lucky winner, brands can create memorable travel experiences for everyone.

TAKE A LOOK AT HOW LEADING GLOBAL BRANDS ARE BRINGING TRAVEL REWARDS TO LIFE.

Singtel

TOMMY HILFIGER

FERRERO

GOCOMPARE





SPOTLIGHT

GLOBAL BRAND INSPIRATION

TLC has helped some of the world's most iconic brands better connect with their customers on a deeply individual level, regardless of their demographic, behavioural motivators and geographical location.



CLIENT
Go.Compare

SECTOR
Insurance

LOCATION
UK

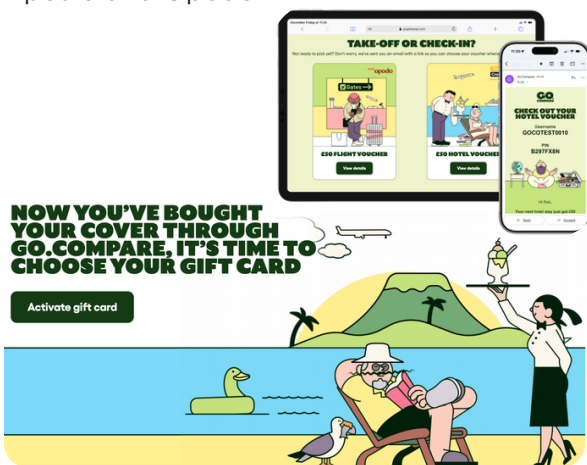
SOLUTIONS
Acquisition & Engagement Programs

GO COMPARE

Turning comparison shoppers into engaged customers.

Most comparison sites compete on price. So how do you get customers to care about your brand when every competitor is offering equivalent products and similar savings?

Go.Compare answered that challenge with Go.Getaway. Rather than relying on another cashback offer or discount, the brand partnered with TLC Worldwide to reward every eligible customer with a £50 travel incentive, redeemable across flights and hotels through trusted partners including Expedia and Opodo.



GO.COMPARE

By transforming a functional insurance purchase into the gateway to a future holiday, the campaign injected aspiration into an otherwise highly rational purchase journey, giving customers a memorable reason to choose Go.Compare beyond price alone.

The campaign has already seen 250,000 customers qualify, leading to 30,000+ travel reward redemptions and 4,000+ hotel bookings. Through continuous optimisation of the reward, creative and customer messaging, Go.Getaway has evolved into a scalable acquisition platform that continues to drive engagement in a highly competitive market.

250k

Customers qualified.

30k+

Travel reward redemptions.

4k+

Hotel bookings.

“People may shop around on price.
But they remember how a brand made them feel.”



CLIENT
Tommy Hilfiger

SECTOR
Retail

LOCATION
USA

SOLUTIONS
Acquisition & Engagement
Programs

TOMMY HILFIGER

Maximising Black Friday foot traffic through the power of travel.

Black Friday is typically dominated with discounts, but Tommy Hilfiger opted for a different approach.

On a mission to increase footfall, drive sales, and grow membership of the Hilfiger Club, the brand partnered with TLC Worldwide to offer customers a \$250 travel credit when they spent \$250.

With the desire to gather with loved ones stronger than ever following the Covid pandemic, the reward tapped into customers' appetite for meaningful travel experiences during the festive season.

T O M M Y  H I L F I G E R

The campaign delivered an 86% increase in sales, generated a 16x ROI, and saw 31% of qualifying transactions driven by new member sign-ups.

And most importantly, Tommy Hilfiger achieved these results without relying on margin-eroding promotions during one of retail's most competitive periods.

When brands understand what their customers truly value, travel rewards become far more powerful than discounts.

86%

Increase in sales.

16x

ROI.



[Click to read in full](#)



CLIENT
Ferrero

SECTOR
Consumer Goods

LOCATION
Italy

SOLUTIONS
Acquisition Programs

FERRERO ROCHER

Turning a simple purchase into a story worth sharing.

During the Olympic Games, Ferrero partnered with TLC Worldwide to launch its "Travel is an Amazing Sport" campaign across international airports – celebrating travellers as athletes in their own right as they navigated busy terminals, long queues, and high-stakes journeys.

Rewarding duty-free shoppers who spent €20 on Ferrero products with €20 in travel credit towards future hotel stays, the campaign brought a sense of fun and relevance to the travel retail environment.

The program delivered sales uplifts of up to 18.8% and sell-out increases of up to 32%.

FERRERO

Building on this success, TLC helped activate another travel-led campaign, rewarding customers with €50 accommodation credit if they purchased two boxes of Ferrero Rocher.

This didn't just reinforce the brand's role in festive gifting moments as consumers travelled home to celebrate with loved ones. It also drove a 66% increase in sell-out value and a 62% rise in sell-out volume across six airports versus the previous year.

The chocolate was enjoyed in minutes, but the memory it facilitated lasted much longer.

GET 20€ OF TRAVEL CREDITS
WHEN YOU SPEND AT LEAST 20€ ON FERRERO PRODUCTS

Travel Credits
Powered by Expedia

ferrerotravelchampions.com

32%

Sell-out at Frankfurt Airport.

62%

Rise in sell-out volume across six airports.

66%

Increase in sell-out value.



[Click to read in full](#)



CLIENT
Singtel

SECTOR
Telecoms

LOCATION
Singapore

SOLUTIONS
Loyalty Programs

SINGTEL

Giving customers a reason to stay.

With many telcos offering the same network benefits, they have grown to become an expectation among customers.

Rather than competing on a commodity, Singapore's largest mobile network operator recognised an opportunity to instead create stronger engagement through experiences that elevate customers' lifestyles.

Recognising that short regional holidays are a regular part of life for many Singaporeans, we worked together to launch a tiered hotel rewards model.



All Singtel subscribers received access to curated hotel savings, with 15% off selected stays, while Red and Prestige Members unlocked enhanced savings of up to 20%, creating greater value for higher-tier customers.

The program felt enticing, rewarded loyalty at numerous tiers, and encouraged repeat engagement over time, with a 30% uplift in app activity and a 71% repeat redeemers in the first six months.

71%

Repeat redeemers in the first six months.

30%

Uplift in app activity.



[**Click to read in full**](#)



CLIENT
Activo Bank

SECTOR
Financial Services

LOCATION
Portugal

SOLUTIONS
Loyalty Programs

ACTIVO BANK

Using travel to make salary account switching feel worthwhile.

For many consumers, switching a salary account feels like an administrative task rather than an exciting opportunity.

ActivoBank recognised that its target audience of young, digitally savvy professionals was motivated by experiences that help them make the most of their income.

Rather than offering cash incentives or traditional financial rewards, ActivoBank partnered with TLC Worldwide to reward new salary account customers with return trips for two.

Return trips for two

to Prague, Ibiza and Marrakech.

14 European destinations

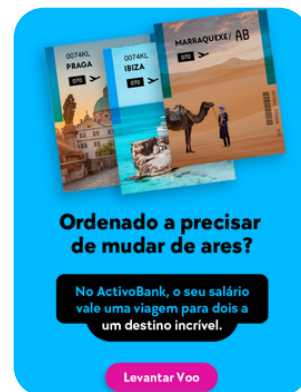
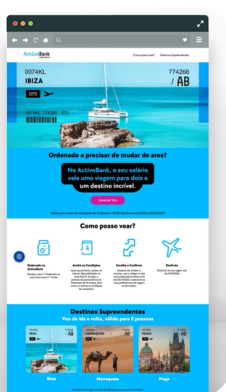
Expanded travel choice in the second campaign.

ActivoBank

The first campaign rewarded customers with return trips for two to Prague, Ibiza and Marrakech. Building on its success, a second campaign expanded the proposition with return flights for two to 14 European destinations, giving customers even greater freedom to choose the escape that suited them.

By transforming a routine banking decision into the promise of a future escape, ActivoBank created a compelling reason for customers to engage, act and explore.

The result of two consecutive campaigns was an immediate uplift in salary account acquisition, the attraction of higher salary customers and an improved Net Promoter Score (NPS).



[Click to read in full](#)



CLIENT
Continental

SECTOR
Retail

LOCATION
UK

SOLUTIONS
Acquisition & Engagement
Programs

CONTINENTAL

Turning tyre purchases into memorable journeys.

The premium tyre market is highly competitive, with brands often competing around similar product benefits. Continental wanted to create a stronger reason to choose the brand while driving sales and engaging both customers and its dealer network.

With a particular ambition to broaden its appeal among female customers, Continental partnered with TLC Worldwide to connect the confidence of buying premium tyres with something far more emotive: the freedom to travel.

Customers purchasing two or more Continental tyres could claim a free one-night hotel stay



TLC are different – they always come with a strategy and an idea. Other agencies just try to sell me stuff.

**Marketing Communications Manager,
Continental Tyres**

with participating hotel partners across the UK, turning an everyday purchase into the starting point for their next journey.

The campaign delivered strong engagement, achieving a 43% female participation rate alongside an impressive 95% dealership buy-in. Its success was also recognised with multiple UK and European industry awards.

By moving the conversation beyond the product itself, Continental created differentiated value in a crowded category while giving customers another reason to choose the brand.



[**Click to read in full**](#)



THE WORLD IS THE REWARD

Travel is not one single reward. It's thousands of destinations. Millions of experiences. Countless opportunities for brands to create meaningful moments for their customers.

From dream long-haul adventures and short city breaks to family holidays, luxury retreats, airport experiences, and domestic escapes, today's consumers want choice. And that choice is exactly what makes travel such a powerful behavioural driver.



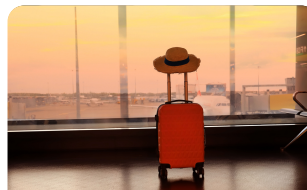
At TLC Worldwide, we've built one of the most extensive travel reward ecosystems in the industry - connecting brands with domestic and cross-border experiences consumers genuinely aspire to enjoy.



HOTELS



FLIGHTS



TRAVEL CREDITS



HOLIDAY PROVIDERS



**TRAVEL EXPERIENCE
PARTNERS**



**AIRPORT & LOUNGE
PARTNERS**



**CAR HIRE & MOBILITY
PARTNERS**



**CRUISE & CROSSING
PARTNERS**

ONE CATEGORY. ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.



The world remains full of places people want to explore. Brands have an amazing opportunity to help them get there.



THE POWER OF ESCAPE

Consumers may be travelling differently than they did five years ago. They may be seeking greater value. Different destinations. Shorter breaks. More flexibility. More meaningful moments.

But they haven't stopped yearning for travel. If anything, travel has become more important. In the increasingly busy, connected, and always-on lives that we lead, people continue to seek moments that allow them to reconnect with loved ones, prioritise wellbeing, pursue passions, and enjoy experiences that will live with them forever.

In fact, right now, your customers are probably dreaming about holidays. Some are in planning mode, others are perusing travel sites and even more are in the midst of a trip. Wouldn't it be great if your brand was a part of their next memory?

LET'S START THE JOURNEY

We empower our clients to offer rewards that are more personalised to customer interests, more generous in value and frequency, and more authentic to the brand's own story.

And with over 30 years of global experience, we know the role that travel plays in driving customer acquisition, engagement, and loyalty, even in the face of extremely tight timescales or seemingly restrictive budgets.

NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN?

Let us help you

Sources:

<https://www.bcg.com/publications/2024/loyalty-programs-customer-expectations-growing>,
<https://www.sellerscommerce.com/blog/customer-loyalty-statistics/>,
<https://queue-it.com/blog/loyalty-program-statistics/>, <https://www.businessinsider.com/consumer-loyalty-dead-airline-miles-internet-company-car-insurance-prices-2025-8>, <https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2025/02/20/is-there-loyalty-program-fatigue-or-are-brands-just-doing-loyalty-wrong/>,
<https://the-ela.org/are-leading-brands-faking-their-big-l-status-a-look-at-whos-really-valuing-customers/>,
<https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2025-06-03-gartner-survey-reveals-personalization-can-triple-the-likelihood-of-customer-regret-at-key-journey-points>, <https://www.wgcn.com/en/future-consumer-2026>,
<https://home.barclays/insights/2025/07/2025-travel-trends/>,
https://partnerexpediagroup.com/en-gb/resources/blog/travelers-booking-behavior-path-to-purchase-marketing-strategies?utm_source=chatgpt.com,
<https://hotels.com/unpack/26/hotel-hojo>



tlc-worldwide.com