



Online Travel Intent Actions Rise Sharply in January

January 2010

This report marks the third installment of the BlueKai Pulse, an analysis of data from the BlueKai Data Exchange, which aggregates intent data from over 160 million unique users on top-tier e-commerce, online travel agency and auto comparison sites. This installment specifically examines more than 40 million travel booking intent actions in December 2009 and January 2010. Travel booking intent actions are defined as trip configurations for flights, hotels, car rentals, cruises, or vacation packages on travel websites.



Online Shopping for Air Travel up 45% from December to January Despite Recession and Airline Restrictions

The volume of online flight search actions increased by 45% from December 2009 to January 2010, with activity for domestic destinations up 44% and international destinations up 48%.

While a seasonal increase in travel related internet activity is expected, this year's increase in flight search activity is particularly impressive given the slowdown in travel seen in 2009. Factors contributing to the slowdown include the economic recession, new airline charges for ancillary services such as baggage and food, and widely known security-related issues in December. The 45% increase in flight search actions in January suggests that consumers are still actively showing their intent to travel by shopping for the best deals, and bodes well for stronger category performance in 2010.

Domestic trips made up 67% of researched flight search actions, while international trips made up 33% of intent actions. This ratio was unchanged from December to January.

Las Vegas continued to be the leading domestic destination, with nearly 10% of all flight search actions in January, with volume of flight searches to Las Vegas increasing by 67.7% from December. Florida destinations, including Orlando, Miami, Fort Lauderdale and Tampa also showed larger than average gains in volume in January versus December.

Top Domestic Flight Destinations January 2010			
Top 10 US Airport Destinations		% of Total	Change from December
1	Las Vegas NV (LAS)	9.9%	67.7%
2	Orlando FL (MCO)	6.0%	62.2%
3	Miami FL (MIA)	5.6%	52.3%
4	Los Angeles CA (LAX)	5.3%	31.2%
5	Fort Lauderdale FL (FLL)	4.3%	46.9%
6	Phoenix AZ (PHX)	3.8%	60.8%
7	Tampa FL (TPA)	3.5%	62.1%
8	San Francisco CA (SFO)	3.3%	38.8%
9	Atlanta GA (ATL)	3.0%	28.1%
10	Denver CO (DEN)	2.9%	39.2%

Unlike domestic travel, there was no one dominant international city that travelers tended to consider most often. The tropical destinations of Cancun, Mexico, San Juan, Puerto Rico and San Jose, Costa Rica proved to be popular with travel shoppers, and European destinations including London, Barcelona, Madrid, Amsterdam and Frankfurt were also included in the top ten.

Top International Flight Destinations January 2010			
Top 10 International Airport Destinations		% of Total	Change from December
1	Cancun, Mexico (CUN)	4.9%	69.4%
2	San Juan, Puerto Rico (SJU)	4.1%	52.5%
3	London, United Kingdom (LHR/EGLL)	3.1%	58.0%
4	Bangkok, Thailand (BKK/VTBS)	2.5%	31.0%
5	Barcelona, Spain (BCN/LEBL)	2.2%	83.1%
6	San Jose Costa Rica (SJO)	2.1%	54.8%
7	Manila, Philippines (MNL)	2.0%	51.5%
8	Madrid, Spain (MAD/LEMD)	1.9%	61.5%
9	Amsterdam, Netherlands (AMS/EHAM)	1.9%	56.3%
10	Frankfurt, Germany (FRA/EDDF)	1.9%	54.8%



Cost-Conscious Travelers Seek Vacation Packages, Caribbean Destinations Most Popular

Examination of nearly 8 million intent actions regarding vacation packages on the BlueKai Exchange in December 2009 and January 2010 suggest that travelers are increasing their consideration of vacation packages in light of economic concerns. BlueKai data showed an overall increase of 57% in volume relating to vacation packages (greater than the 45% increase in flight shopping volume) when comparing December 2009 and January 2010. Vacation packages offer discounts on air, hotel, car, and activities that would not be available if purchased separately.

As with flight activity, domestic vacation packages were more popular with shoppers, making up 61% of vacation package intent actions in January 2010. Once again Las Vegas topped the list, comprising more than one third of all domestic vacation package intent actions. Orlando, Florida, home of Walt Disney World, comprised 10%. Other popular warm weather destinations included Oahu, Maui, and Fort Lauderdale. All showed impressive increases in intent activity in January over December.

Vacation Packages - Domestic Destinations January 2010			
Top 10 US Destinations		% of Total	Change from December
1	Las Vegas, NV	37%	50%
2	Orlando, FL	10%	68%
3	Miami, FL	6%	53%
4	Oahu, HI	6%	54%
5	New York, NY	6%	26%
6	Los Angeles, CA	5%	39%
7	San Francisco, CA	4%	58%
8	Maui, HI	4%	83%
9	Fort Lauderdale, FL	3%	56%
10	San Diego, CA	2%	71%

Cancun, Mexico was the leading destination for international vacation packages. With the exception of Paris, France, all of the leading destinations for vacation packages were those with warm weather, suggesting that travelers are actively seeking escape from a tough winter, and beginning to plan their spring vacation activities. The top nine warm weather destinations for vacation packages comprised 78% of all vacation package intent actions. The overall increase in volume of international vacation package intent actions was 58% from December 2010 to January 2010, while the average increase for the leading Caribbean or Pacific destinations was much higher, as seen in the chart above.

Vacation Packages – International Destinations January 2010			
Top 10 International Destinations		% of Total	Change from December
1	Cancun, Mexico	27%	77%
2	Nassau, Bahamas	9%	89%
3	Montego Bay, Jamaica	8%	91%
4	Los Cabos, Mexico	7%	93%
5	Punta Cana, Dominican Republic	7%	58%
6	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico	6%	107%
7	San Juan, Puerto Rico	6%	81%
8	Cozumel, Mexico	4%	93%
9	St. Thomas, Virgin Islands	3%	53%
10	Paris, France	3%	36%

The increase in intent actions for flights and vacation packages supports the continued price sensitivity of consumers, but suggests that travelers are willing to transact at the right price. The high level of interest vacation packages may be a longer term trend as consumers continue to seek ways to reduce personal spending.

About BlueKai

BlueKai (<http://www.bluekai.com>) created the world's largest and highest quality online intent data exchange to better connect advertisers with their target consumers online. BlueKai aggregates valuable shopping and research activities across the Internet, offering non-personally identifiable actionable data to marketers, ad networks, and publishers on over 200 million retail, travel, auto, education and financial product shoppers online. Additionally through strategic partnerships with top-tier data providers – who earn revenue in a privacy friendly way – the BlueKai Exchange gives marketers access to over 10,000+ combinations of intent, demographic, geographic, lifestyle, B2B data and additional segments. The privately-held company is based in Bellevue, WA and is a recipient of the AlwaysOn 2009 OnMedia 100 award as a Technology Innovator in Advertising, and the OnMedia 100 Top Private Companies.