

Outlook for Travel to Britain

- Due to the weak Pound, an increase in Dutch travelling to Britain (most likely mainly London) is expected during the sales in January.
- Traditionally January to March are good months for the online shop with people spending the spring school holidays in London or preparing their May and summer holidays.
- For many schools the May holiday which starts end of April, will be a 2 week break. If the Pound remains weak, the spring break is expected to generate many Dutch travellers to Britain.

Britain in the News

- The floods in Cumbria were in the news with images of flooded villages and destroyed bridges on television and in newspaper. Because the coverage was brief and at a time when consumer are least likely to think about let alone plan a touring holiday in the countryside, the effect on tourism will be minimal.
- The celebration of London 2012, 1000 days until the Olympics games, was well covered in newspapers and on television. London 2012 also is mentioned a lot in sports programmes and sports magazines due to athletes already working hard on getting their Olympic tickets in qualifying events.
- This autumn bmiBaby in the Netherlands has marketed flying bmiBaby to England for cheap rock and pop concerts. In general many artists perform in Manchester and Birmingham in this time of year and both destinations are serviced with daily flights from Schiphol.
- British Airways promoted Christmas shopping in London. As a result of this British Airways saw a growth in 2009 of 50% of Dutch visitors going to London.

General Market Mood

- The Dutch economy is slowly recovering from the recession, and is lagging other Eurozone members such as Germany and France. Less optimism over the general economic outlook will have an effect on consumer confidence.
- The consumer confidence in the economy is waning which means the pick-up in consumer spending in 2010 will probably be slow. However, holidays and short breaks remain very popular in the market and with the news of the weak pound continuously being fed through the media, Britain will most likely continue to be a popular destination.

Consumer Behaviour

- More than 50% of all Dutch are frequent online shoppers. The main purpose of their online shopping is to shop for travel/holidays/vacation. 40% spent between €100-500 in the last 3 months. More than 75% shopped online 1-6 times in the last 3 months.
- An investigation by Vliegwinkel.nl, a website offering cheap flights, showed that 74% of all Dutch travellers book their airline ticket online. 56% Of all bookings were flights only, 44% were package deals.
- During the autumn break, Britain remained a popular destination according to belvilla.nl
- Dutch consumers show greater interest in 'green' holidays. TUI, Thomas Cook and British Airways have signed an agreement 'Tourism Vision 2023', to work together for greener tourism with an aim to protect the environment, create an awareness amongst both employees and customers, sell sustainable products, make sure the locals profit from tourism and ensure that accommodation, transport and tour operators become greener and more aware.

- A nationwide investigation conducted by Max Havelaar (fair trade producer in the Netherlands) and undertaken by Marketresponse, shows that 53% of Dutch consumers find it important that hotels offer 'FairTrade' products. 75% Of the Dutch population have a positive attitude towards fair trade products and 72% think it's only logical that hotels strive to be as fair and sustainable as possible. 56% Feel better about themselves and think they contribute to a better world when they sleep in a fair trade hotel and see these hotels as an example of how they can live at home also.
- The same report shows that the Dutch are prepared to pay €17 more for a green/sustainable hotel.

Media Matters

- Pyton, provider of communication services for the travel industry, launched a new social media forum especially designed for holiday makers. The Pyton Open Social Platform is created to share knowledge and experiences and maintain this information for future projects. The platform allows a travel organisation to built they're own community and work on customer loyalty.
- Almost 2.5 million consumers use mobile internet. The amount of mobile internet users in Holland increased with 61% in the past 6 months.
- Social media users lose overview on their network and are becoming more selective on the platforms they're signed up to and the people they stay in touch with, according to David Armano (global expert on social media). Nowadays people are linked to so many platforms, but they're not interested to receive information from sources that are not of any interest to them. Users are becoming more critical on who they interact and share certain information with. For brands it might become more difficult to get in touch with users.
- According to a European survey (Weber Shandwick) about use and influence of media channels, the Dutch are very sceptical about brands that are trying to interact through social media networks. Only 20% claim to be receptive to branded messaging, this is set against a European average of 35%.
- Research by TNO-NIPO shows that in Holland the internet has become a more important news source then TV. Elderly mainly gain news through TV and newspapers, while the younger generation uses the internet as their main news source. In 20 years time 80% of the consumers expect to gain their news through the internet, 72% expect to also be using TV. The value of a newspaper as information source is expected to drop from 59% now to 37% in 20 years time.
- The only Sunday newspaper in Holland announced to cease their publication. Telegraaf, the biggest national daily, launched their Sunday paper 5 years ago, but the current economic climate caused problems for the paper to cover the high printing and delivery costs.

Routes and Fares

- Transavia will open the route Amsterdam – London Gatwick.
- BMI will close the route Amsterdam – London Heathrow in March 2010.
- BMI will close the route Brussels – London Heathrow in January 2010 (many Dutch fly from Brussels).
- VLM airlines has had a name change as is now: City Jet.
- City Jet will discontinue the route Rotterdam – Manchester in mid December.
- easyJet will open the route Dusseldorf to London Gatwick. (Many Dutch fly from Dusseldorf).
- easyJet have announced that they will start daily flights from Amsterdam to Doncaster/Sheffield as of April 2010.

Business Tourism

- American Express research has shown that the trend for 2010 will be that companies will begin to spend more money on business travel.
- Britain takes the 3rd place for the most popular congress locations in the Netherlands.

Leisure Travel Trade

- Tour operator Pharos Reizen (part of the ANWB network) will start to offer trips to London. VisitBritain has been in touch with them to discuss commercial opportunities with the online shop.
- The Dutch travel trade have now prepared their summer brochures and summer plans.
- ATP is the official partner of NOC*NSF for London 2012. They have started their cooperation by a work visit to London.

Competitor Activity

- Austria/Tirol organised a successful trade event in an indoor ski centre.
- Germany has been promoting their Christmas markets in Trade and consumer e-newsletters and had some coverage in printed media.
- France launched an online competition.
- Visit Finland has closed their office in the Netherlands.
- Sweden organised a trade event which included building raft.

VisitBritain Activity Update

- E-newsletters went out to press contacts, business tourism contacts and travel trade contacts and to consumers
- On the 27 October VisitBritain and 6 partners participated in the MICE & Business Travel Fair. Partners who participated: MeetEngland, Visit Scotland, Birmingham, Leeds, Newcastle & Gateshead and Yorkshire. More than 350 visitors attended the event.
- A trade campaign started in the trade magazine and website of Reisrevue to promote VisitBritain and the online shop and offer the services of VisitBritain. Eurostar is partner in the campaign.
- On the successful website Youropi we started a partnership to promote the online shop. 18 Product links have been inserted into all relevant Britain pages. We also have a small banner on their site.
- The VisitBritain website was short listed by Travelution, a travel trade and business travel magazine, for best travel website. Although we didn't win, we got some good coverage through this nomination.
- We participated in Antor Press workshop. It was a very successful event which resulted in 25 quality press contacts and some promising leads for press trips.
- A mailing went out to all night schools and coach tour operators to promote the online shop and the special discount code we have for trade and school groups.
- A mailing went out to Olympic sport clubs to start building on a relationship leading up to London2012. The mailing focused on the services that VisitBritain can deliver.

Upcoming activity

- Shop promotion at regional Dutch airports (Eindhoven and Rotterdam) through City Jet airlines in December.
- Vakantiebeurs (national holiday fair), Great British Breakfast trade and press event organised for 12 January. Over 150 key trade and press contacts have been invited.
- Meet the media event will be held on 3 March at the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam.
- A mailing will go out to all associations to promote the online shop and other non-Olympic sport clubs.
- British Interest Group meeting will be held on 3 March at the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam.
- Best of Britain and Ireland and a trade familiarisation trip to East of England in March.

Who's in Town?

- Nothing to report for October to December.