# BUILDING DATA-BASED GUEST PERSONAS DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 is shifting the demographics and concerns of your guests – and they're likely to continue changing as your market enters different stages of crisis and recovery.

That's why buyer personas should be the pillar of all your communications efforts: **They're an essential tool for addressing a guest's greatest concerns and challenges before, during, and after their stay.**

IN THIS GUIDE, WE'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO TAKE DATA FROM DISPARATE PLATFORMS TO BUILD PROFILES OF THE TRAVELERS MOSTLY LIKELY TO STAY AT YOUR HOTEL DURING THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF COVID-19. YOU CAN ADAPT THIS FRAMEWORK TO YOUR PROPERTY AND MARKET **TO DEVELOP A CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL PERSPECTIVE ON YOUR GUESTS.**
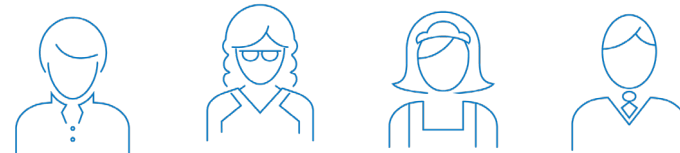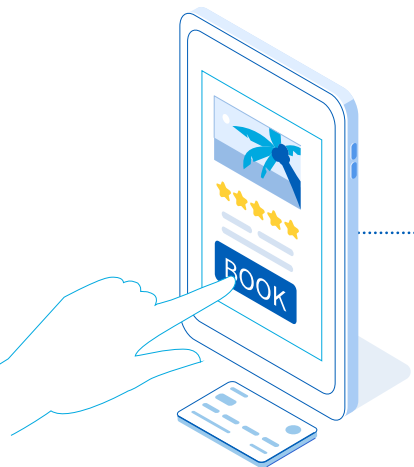
START SLOW:
YOU DON'T NEED TO BUILD OUT EVERY PERSONA IN THIS GUIDE. IN FACT, YOU SHOULDN'T.

1. → **2.** → **3.**

IDENTIFY YOUR MOST VALUABLE GUESTS

Use your data to define who stays at your hotel and pick 2-3 personas that bring in the most revenue for your hotel.

UNDERSTAND THE BUYER MINDSET

This part's easy – because we've already done the research for you! Select from nine individual and group personas.

At the bottom of each persona page, there's a link to download the complete template for that persona. The mindset is already there – all you need to do is add your data to finish it up!

CRAFT MESSAGING AND CHANNEL STRATEGY

Build messaging that responds each persona, and create a channel plan to get your brand visibility with this audience.
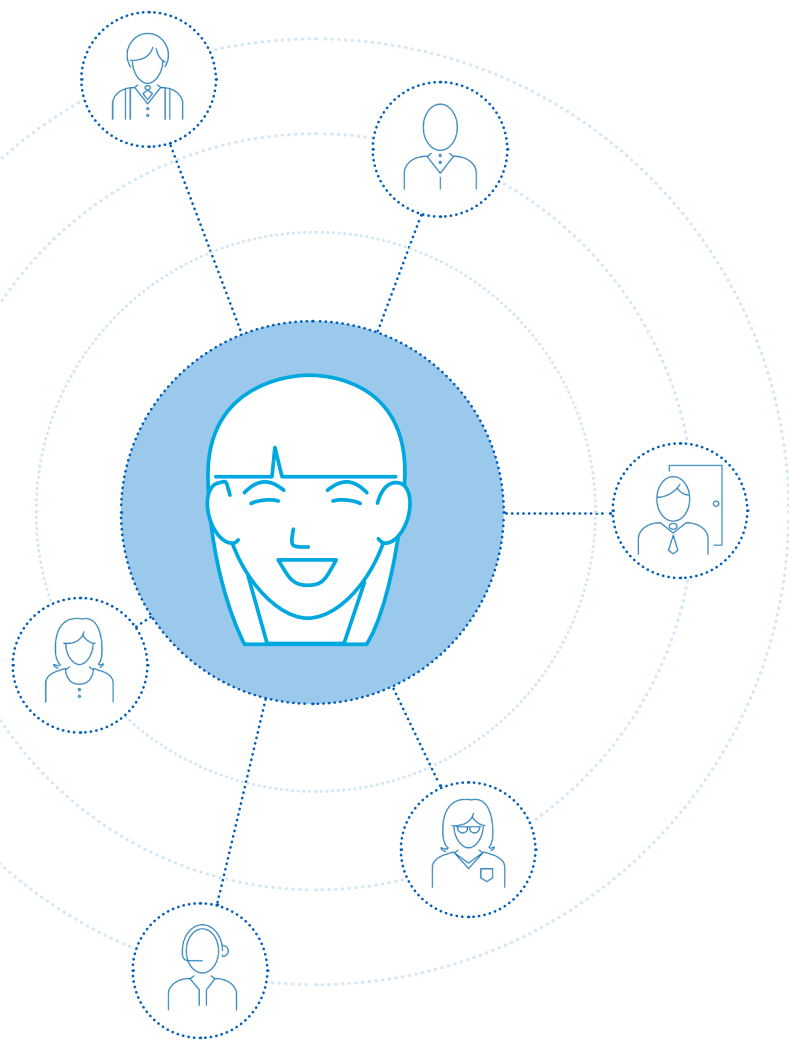
IDENTIFY YOUR
MOST VALUABLE GUESTS

Who is staying and spending at your property?

The most effective guest personas are built around first-party data from your property. They provide revenue-based rationale to increase focus on your most profitable audience.

Draw data from different platforms to identify who stays at your hotel and pick 2 - 3 personas that bring in the most revenue. You can always add more or shift to a different persona if conditions change.

Remember the demographics booking your property may have changed – so it's a good idea to revisit your data each time your market's conditions or restrictions change to keep track of your most valuable personas.

USE YOUR DATA TO DEFINE WHO STAYS AT YOUR HOTEL AND PICK 2-3 PERSONAS THAT BRING IN THE MOST REVENUE FOR YOUR HOTEL.

Demographics

Who is my guest?

_Age
_Gender
_Location
_Industry
_Income
_Interests
_Device
_Education

CRM

Website analytics

Social Media Analytics

Booking Engine

Hotel Value

Why is it worth it to focus on this guest, specifically?

How much revenue does this guest bring to the property?

_Conversion rates
_Average booking value
_On-property spend
_Estimated lifetime value
_Average Length of Stay
_Average Daily Rate
_Estimated Lifetime Value

QUICK LINKS

Solo traveler

Mature traveler

Couples

Young families

Friend groups

Solo business traveler

Small business event

Small family event

Travel agent

UNDERSTAND THE BUYER MINDSET

Why do your guests want to travel – and what are they worried about?

Don't worry – we're already done the lion's share of the research for you. Just download the templates that most closely resemble your most valuable guests and pop in your property data to create personas tailored to your hotel and your market.

A cross-departmental perspective is essential for this part: Once you've populated the template, consider having getting input from Revenue Management, Sales, and Operations.

Consistent and positive brand interactions throughout the entire user journey make loyal customers.
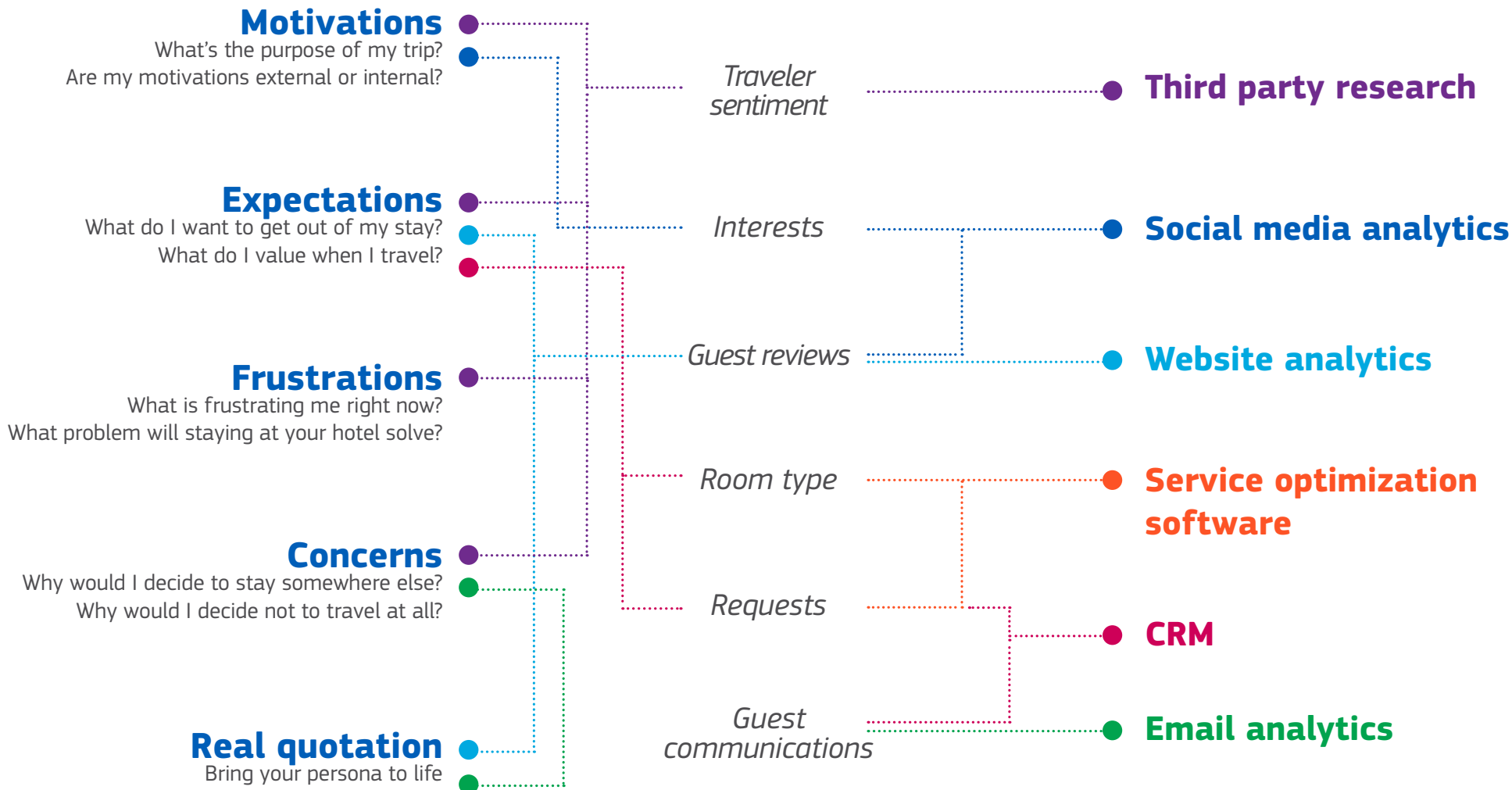
ONCE YOU'VE IDENTIFIED YOUR MOST PROFITABLE PERSONAS, START DIGGING INTO THEIR MOTIVATIONS , EXPECTATIONS, FRUSTRATIONS, AND CONCERNS.

Motivations
What's the purpose of my trip?
Are my motivations external or internal?

Traveler sentiment

Third party research

Expectations
What do I want to get out of my stay?
What do I value when I travel?

Interests

Social media analytics

Guest reviews

Website analytics

Frustrations
What is frustrating me right now?
What problem will staying at your hotel solve?

Room type

Service optimization software

Concerns
Why would I decide to stay somewhere else?
Why would I decide not to travel at all?

Requests

CRM

Real quotation
Bring your persona to life

Guest communications

Email analytics

SOLO LEISURE TRAVELER
Gen Z and Millennials (23 – 38)

Motivations

I need to regain some sanity after weeks or months of lockdown and enjoy some excitement. I want to travel as soon as I am given the green light.

Expectations

I don't mind where I go, or how I get there, as long as there's an experience to be had. I am motivated by offers or good travel deals but would be happy to spend a little more if it meant I could avoid crowds or if the trip provides some tranquility and escape after the mental stress of lockdown.

Frustrations

I need to know where it's possible for me to travel as a first step. I'm looking for the right balance between the destination protecting my health and safety with updated measures, without feeling restricted or under constant surveillance.

Concerns

Government restrictions and limited travel options. In some cases, furlough or reduced employment may limit my budget.

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COUPLES

Mid-Gen Z and Millennials (25 – 38)

Motivations

We want an intimate, romantic respite to rekindle our relationship. We want to break free from our quarantine routine and revitalize our relationship.

Expectations

We want to bond and spend quality time together with fun, intimate activities designed for adults. We want to relax without worrying too much about safety.

Frustrations

We've been isolated together for weeks or months (in some cases with children) or haven't seen much of each other throughout the period of isolation. We had a trip planned for our anniversary but had to cancel and now we want to make up for it.

Concerns

One of us had a salary reduction, so we want to make sure this trip is something we can afford. We're worried about being limited in our movement or activities at the destination.
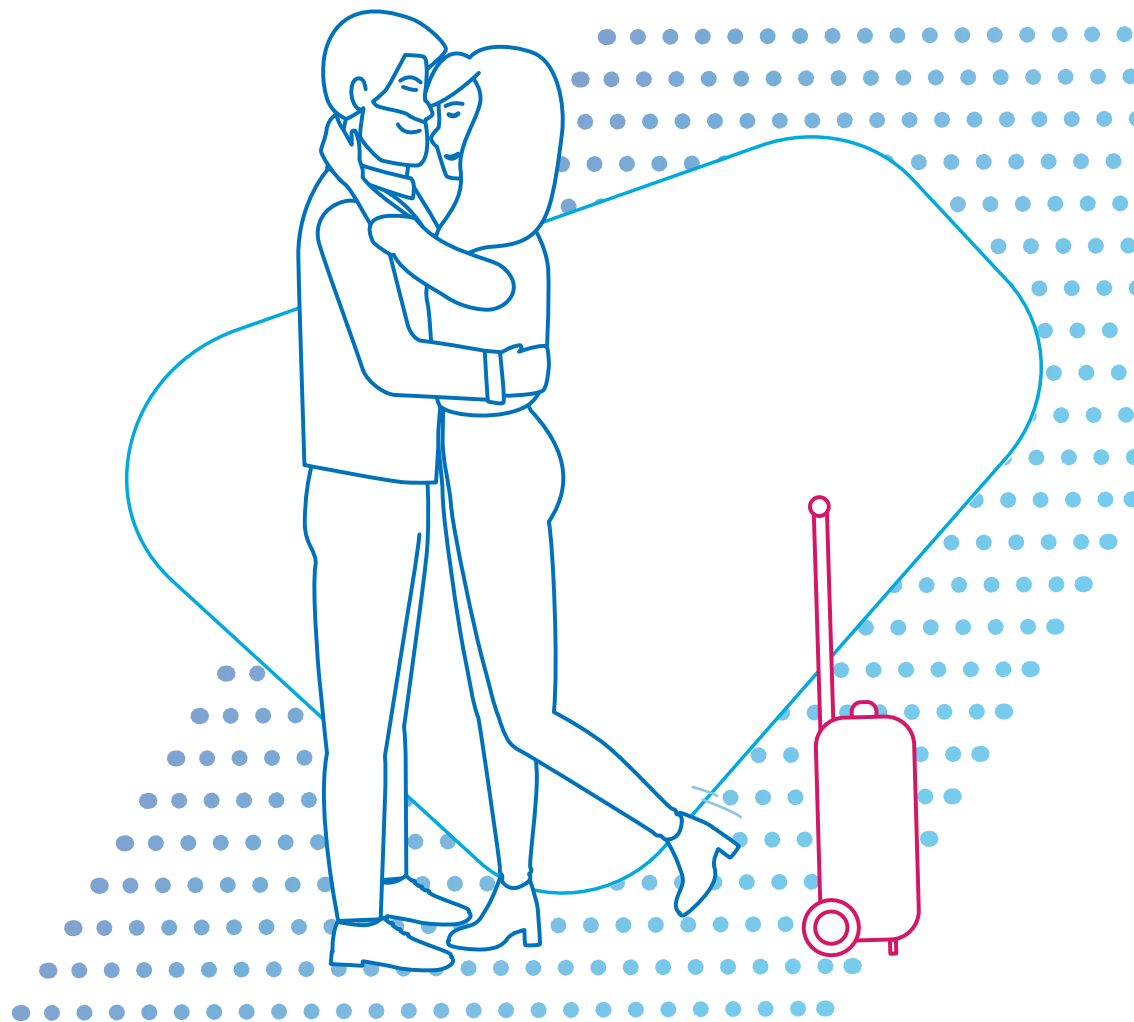
Click here to download
complete template

YOUNG FAMILIES
Millennials and Gen X (26 – 55)

Motivations

We want to create new family memories and take the chance to reset after being cooped up in the house for so long. We want a fun, activity-filled vacation that keeps our kids safe.

Expectations

We want to spend time with our kids doing fun activities without worrying about their safety. Private or self-guided tours appeal to us as they lower the risk of contamination. We don't yet know how safe it is to fly, so we are looking at destinations we can reach in our car.

Frustrations

It's been hard to juggle working from home with homeschooling kids, especially since the kids are tired of being in the house and let us know it. We feel like we're on the clock 24/7.

Concerns

We don't want to put our family at risk, and we're worried that we will infect our other family members if we pick up something during our travel. We are concerned about the future of the economy and our job security, so we don't want to break the bank and are looking for good offers that benefit the whole family.

Click here to download complete template

FRIEND GROUPS

Gen Z and Millennials (25 – 35)

Motivations

We want to reconnect with friends on a rejuvenating vacation that enables us to feel social and active again.

Expectations

We want to enjoy the company of friends after being isolated for a long time. We've had less activity over the past few months and have had to cancel or postpone a lot of celebrations and events, so we want to catch up with each other whilst making up for lost time.

Frustrations

We're itching to get out of the house, and we're tired of video chat. We've been stuck in the city for too long and want to experience a change of scenery, and some fresh air.

Concerns

We're still nervous about catching COVID. Our friend group has varying levels of comfort with traveling, and we don't want to feel responsible if someone in our group gets it while on vacation. The pandemic has affected a lot of our friends, in terms of both illness and employment, so we want to find a location that the whole group can safely travel to and afford.

Click here to download complete template

SOLO BUSINESS TRAVELER

Older Millennials and Gen X (30-55)

Motivations

I've enjoyed my downtime during lockdown, but now I'm ready to get back out there and resume face-to-face meetings. However, I've seen an uptick in digital adoption during the crisis, so I need a private space and high-speed WiFi space to continue some of my virtual engagements. My overall return to travel might be slow, but in the longer-term I'm looking to resume old habits.

Expectations

I want new health and safety protocols to feel integrated, with minimal impact on my time and travel experience. I'm looking for contactless and up-to-date technology to ease this.

Frustrations

Working from home has its challenges and I miss the seamlessness of being in an office. Some conversations cannot be had virtually, and I need to meet in person to make real progress.

Concerns

I don't want my trips to pose an additional risk on my family and friends, and I'm worried about the levels of contamination at the destination. Hygiene is the new luxury, and with travel budgets cut in the short-term, I'm worried this will be compromised.

Click here to download complete template

MATURE TRAVELER

Baby Boomers (62+)

Motivations

I'm retired and looking forward to being able to spend more time with my grandkids or visiting extended family. I like to relax in sunny, familiar places for a longer period of time, but I also want to keep seeing new places.
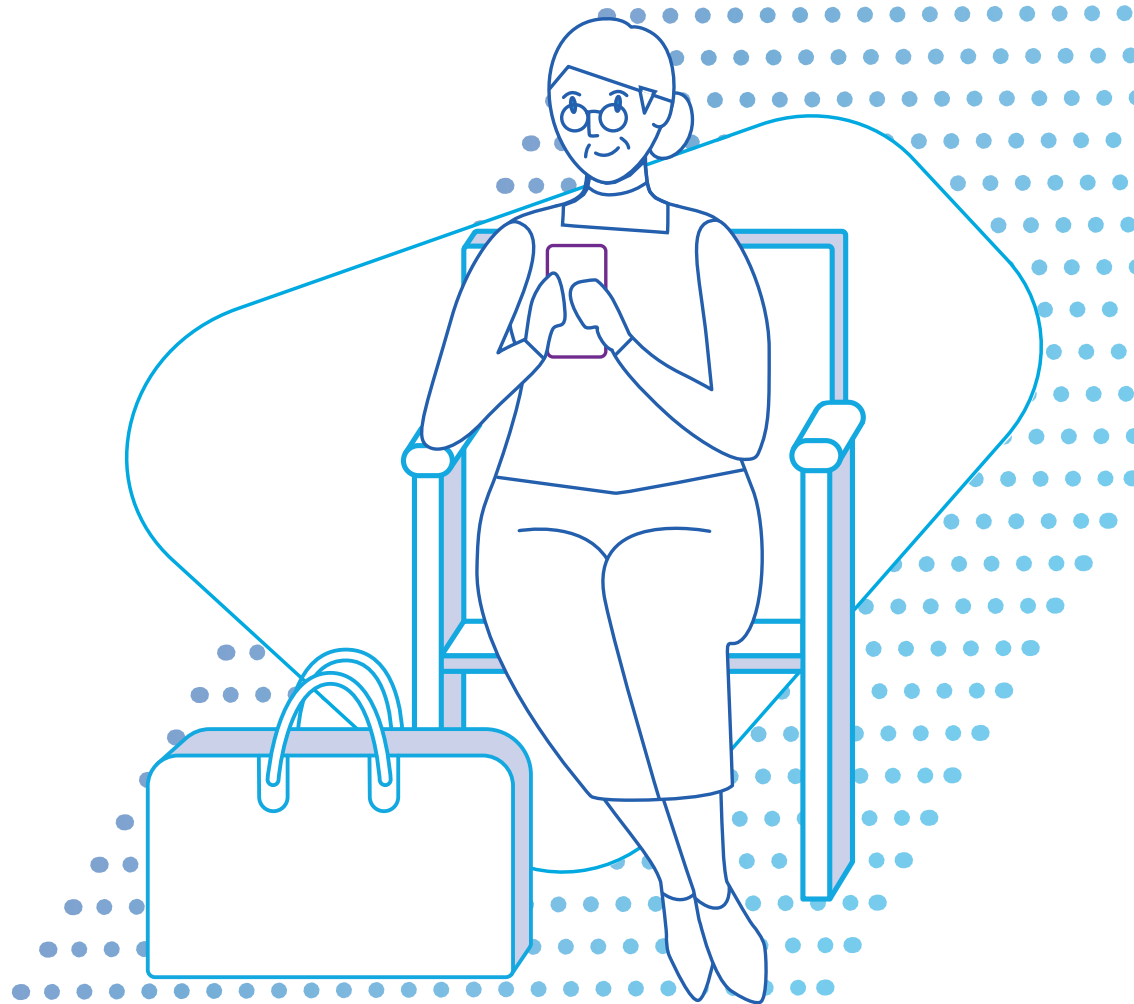
Expectations

I have a comfortable budget, and I want to plan a trip with the opportunity to see and do new things. I'm not as active as I used to be, so I'm looking for a slower pace of life. As I'm high-risk, I would prefer to stay closer to home or opt for a trip that gives me more space and comfort.
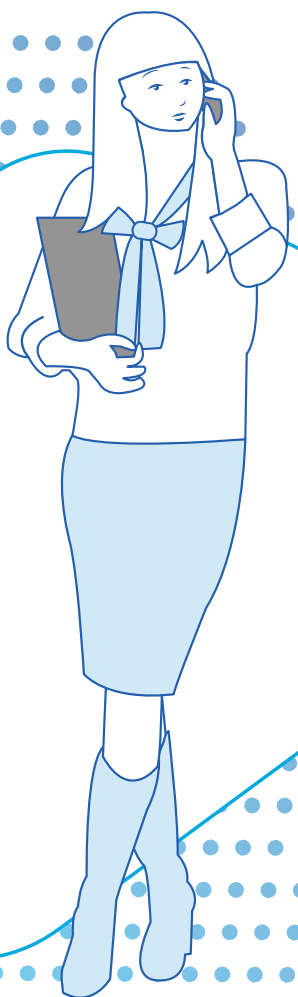
Frustrations

I feel like I've lost time with my loved ones and being isolated from them has been lonely. The pandemic has prevented me from traveling to the places I want to see and enjoying my retirement to the fullest.

Concerns

I don't want to risk infecting myself or my family members, so I need a certain level of safety at my destination. I prefer taking longer trips, giving me time to adjust to my destination before moving on.

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TRAVEL AGENTS
Older Millennials and Gen X (30-55)

Motivations

I want my clients to feel like they got a great deal on an unforgettable experience. I'd like to become known as an expert on a specific type of travel or destination so that I can stand out in a competitive industry.

Expectations

I need to book a hotel that meets my clients' requirements, so it's essential to know what's open in various regions and which safety policies are in place. I prefer to book on global distribution systems, because I will earn commission and can manage the itinerary all in one place.

Frustrations

I'm juggling a lot of tasks at once - arranging bookings, processing payments, negotiating deals, sending itineraries, and advising clients. Some clients are hard to deal with or have unrealistic expectations. Not all hotels practice good rate or content parity on global distribution systems, so I look at multiple channels to get a complete idea of the hotel's amenities and find my client the best rate.

Concerns

My client is expressing doubts or concerns about traveling. My reputation depends on my client's satisfaction, so if a hotel isn't consistent in pricing or descriptions, I will avoid booking them rather than risk an unhappy client.

They might be booking on behalf of another persona, but travel agents are still an extremely important part of your revenue ecosystem!

Don't forget to keep them in mind as you review the audiences who are booking your hotel – especially considering that many travel agents love to travel themselves.

Click here to download complete template

SMALL BUSINESS EVENT

Older Millennials and Gen X (30-55)

Motivations

Technology has allowed us to stay in contact during COVID-19, but we need to do business face-to-face in order to make real progress, especially with top customers. Priorities and strategies have shifted, so we need to make sure everyone is aligned.

Expectations

We need a venue with clear health and safety guidelines, so colleagues and customers feel at ease. We need the same level of support as before (e.g. technology, equipment), with updated measures in place that limit the disruption to our work as much as possible. We want access to private space, both during meeting hours and also for socializing, that has plenty of room for social distancing.

Frustrations

Virtual meetings don't facilitate the same level of interaction and discussion as in person. It's more difficult to present and gather feedback. Relationship building is harder, and networking is a key part of our business.

Concerns

Bringing people from different locations together still poses a risk and creates a distraction. With event budgets limited, we need to know that this will be an effective use of time and resources. We also don't want to lose money, should we need to cancel.

Click here to download complete template

SMALL FAMILY EVENT

Older Millennials and Gen X (30-55)

Motivations

We had to cancel our celebration due to the peak of the crisis, but now we're ready to rebook. Even though we've had to downsize, we want to mark this milestone with the people most important to us.

Frustrations

Celebrations require a certain level of human interaction, so maintaining social distancing will be a challenge. We trust the people attending and want to feel that we can enjoy each other's company.

Expectations

We need a private space and the guarantee that the space, furniture and any F&B have all been effectively treated with the right health and safety measures.

Concerns

The risk of a second wave is still a possibility and we're concerned we will have to cancel or delay again. We need to know that we are working with a flexible venue, who can support potential changes.

Click here to download
complete template

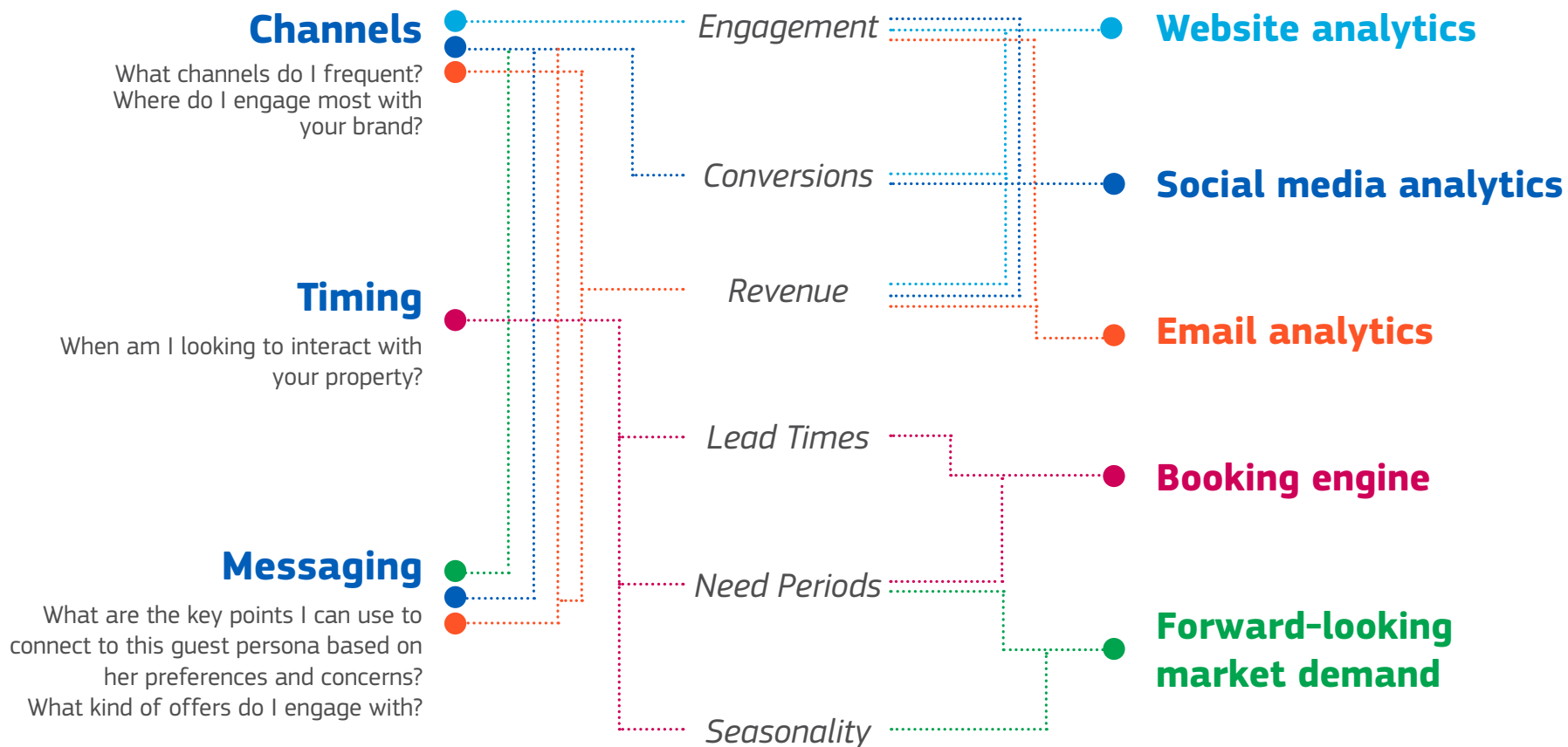# CRAFT MESSAGING AND CHANNEL STRATEGY

How are you going to reach your guests?

Use the persona you've created to launch your marketing strategy into action.

Build messaging that responds to each persona, and create a channel plan to get your brand visibility with this audience.
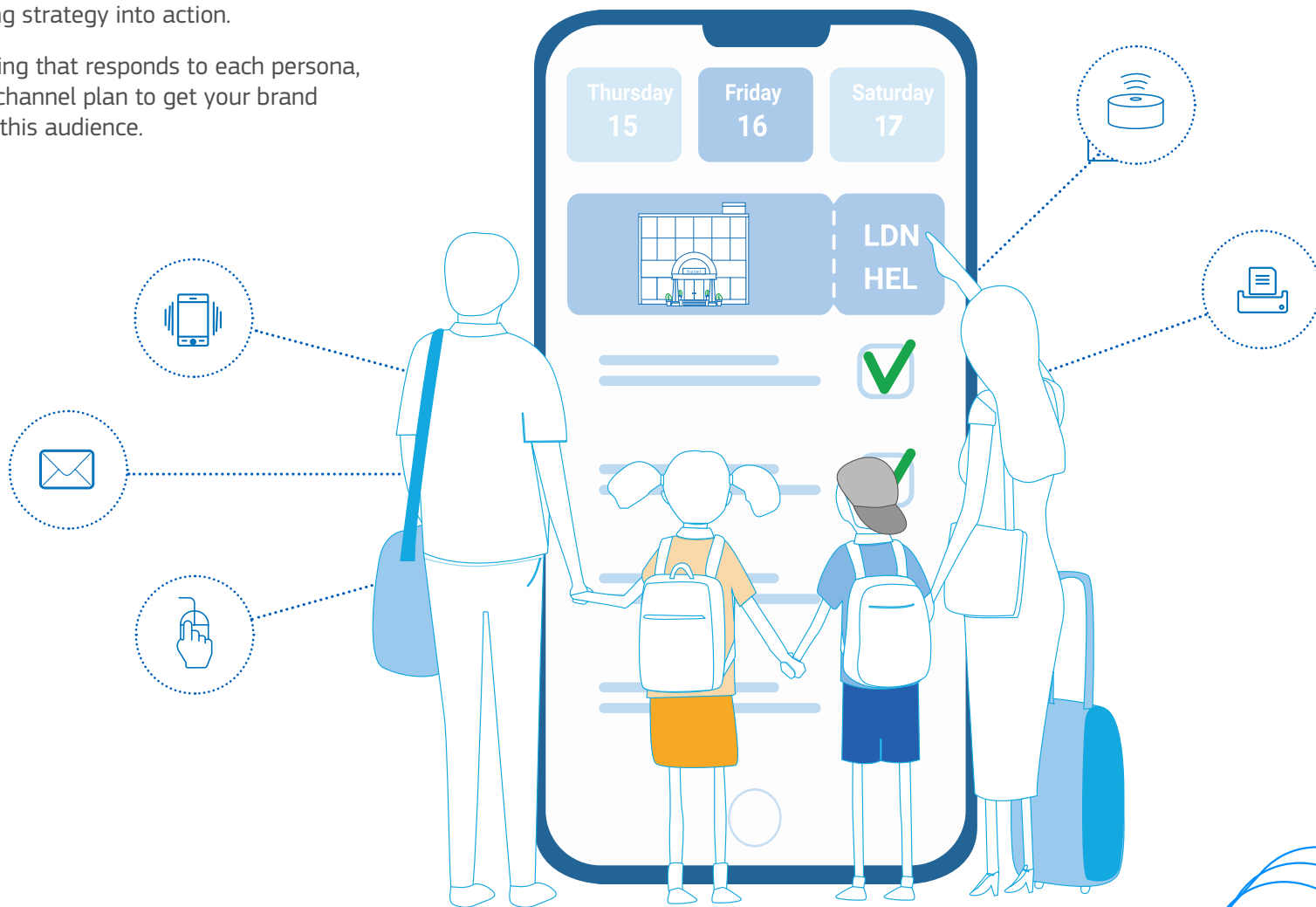
TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR DATA TO DEVELOP PERSONA-BASED MESSAGING TO DIFFERENTIATE YOUR RECOVERY MARKETING FROM COMPETITORS AND INCREASE RECOGNITION.

Channels

What channels do I frequent? Where do I engage most with your brand?

Timing

When am I looking to interact with your property?

Messaging

What are the key points I can use to connect to this guest persona based on her preferences and concerns? What kind of offers do I engage with?

Engagement

Conversions

Revenue

Lead Times

Need Periods

Seasonality

Website analytics

Social media analytics

Email analytics

Booking engine

Forward-looking market demand

EMPHASIZE OFFERS AND BENEFITS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND TAILOR THEM TO SPECIFIC GUEST PROFILES

On-site social distancing

Emphasize contactless check in/out process, limited breakfast capacity, board games, or luxury in-room dining.

Value for money

Give guests a deal without dropping your rate through value adds like free parking, F&B credits, or bar drinks.

Emotional connections

Offer chances to reconnect or celebrate with personalized enhancements like private cooking lessons or spa credits.

Explore safely

Highlight experiences that allow for safe social distancing, such as visiting local parks or hiking.

Sanitation & Safety

Make it clear sanitation and guest safety are the core of everything you do: Daily cleaning & sanitization checks, regularly sanitized rooms, and your audit process to ensure frequent cleanings.

Flexibility

Promote relaxed cancellation fees, rate guarantees, and rebooking policies. A must to get guests to book.

Community contribution

Consider special rates for government officials and medical professionals.

Enhanced productivity

Show great connectivity with high-speed Wi-Fi, conference call capability, and hygienic access to printers.

Minimal commute

Highlight your proximity to local businesses and government offices.

GO FORTH AND CONVERT!

Well, almost. You have the persona. Now it's time to build out your messaging and channel plan. Don't worry – we can help with that too. Check out the Planning for Hospitality Recovery - Marketing eBook to find guidance on:

- **What steps to take to begin preparing your marketing plan, including what relevant data and leading indicators to look out for.**

- **How to create messaging to appeal to changing trends and behaviors caused by COVID-19.**

- **Which channels and steps you should consider in order to retain existing guests and attract demand throughout the different stages of recovery.**

Download the Planning for
Hospitality Recovery – Marketing eBook

https://www.mmgyintel.com/travel-intentions-pulse-survey-tips-impact-covid-19

https://en.calameo.com/read/004427423429658c1ad8f

https://www.destinationanalysts.com/insights-updates/

https://renatus.ie/covid-19-newsletter-survey/

https://www.ibisworld.com/global/market-research-reports/global-travel-agency-services-industry/

https://www.travelclick.com/resources/2019-global-travel-agent-gds-report/

2020 Amadeus/HSMAI member survey and interviews

2020 Amadeus/IoH member survey and interviews

2020 Amadeus/HOSPA member survey and interviews

THROUGH TIMES OF GREAT CHANGE

the hospitality industry continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience. Together, we will learn, adapt, and grow towards a new future. As we look towards better days, Amadeus stands ready to help hoteliers worldwide manage the present and plan for the future.

aMaDEUS

Let's
shape the future
of hospitality

For further information, visit
amadeus-hospitality.com/crisis-management-resources/
or speak to an Amadeus representative today.

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