



**KMP** Digitata

**Digital Planning Products**

# **TrekAmerica LIVE Social Media Platform**



**TrekAmerica wanted to provide both current and potential Trekkers with a platform that enabled them to meet others in their group before travelling, keeping in touch with friends and family whilst away and share photos and videos on return. Although TrekAmerica have in the region of 15 000 fans on Facebook, they required a platform to fulfil these requirements and with a 99% referral rate from past passengers, it was deemed an invaluable way of utilising past Trekkers as brand ambassadors for TrekAmerica.**

### **The Strategy**

TrekAmerica Live is a community platform designed to deliver three key benefits to the business;

- Increase cross sell of tours
- Build email addresses of potential customers
- Generate high quality imagery and video for use in promotion

Trek approached KMP Digitata to scope and deliver the “next step” within social media. The proposed solution was designed to receive user generated content from people who are, or have been, on a Trek and presents the most interesting and valuable content to potential customers at the point of purchase. Not just limited to the sharing of content, the platform encourages interaction between the two groups.

Fostering and encouraging this sharing of information is the key objective of this social media platform, with a view to dramatically increasing brand awareness and sales revenue. People trust recommendations from their peers more than a company’s sales pitch and TrekAmerica Live is perceived as an independent platform where people can find out more about what travelling with TrekAmerica is really like and discover for themselves the experiences people have.

**\*All images used have been uploaded to TrekAmerica Live by its users**



### **The Execution**

TrekAmerica Live gathers user generated images, videos, blog posts and diary entries, tagging each piece of media to a specific destination and monitors its popularity (views, ratings, comments and age). The platform’s best content is then bubbled to the most prominent pages visible to potential customers to excite and entice them into a booking.

Upon booking a TrekAmerica tour, each passenger receives a unique URL, linking him or her to their own individual Trekkers profile on TrekAmerica Live. This page is pre-populated with their details, along with an interactive map of the tour they have booked. A user’s personal profile will allow passengers to upload photos and videos, write travel blogs, post comments to Facebook and send tweets whilst on the road with TrekAmerica.





Travellers can invite friends and family to login to their profile and keep track of their progress while on tour. The interactive tour map will display exactly where they are on any particular day and will allow followers to find out more information about the exciting destinations.

The media uploaded to the users profile and tour group is then used on the public side of the portal. As potential customers browse through tours and destinations, they're shown images, videos and blog posts of people actually on Trek. The interaction is not one way however, with new customers encouraged to ask questions of veteran trek goers. A loyalty system rewards veteran trekkers with increased status on site and discounts off future treks; so they too are encouraged to keep interacting and offering advice.

People booked on a trek can visit the platform and meet the other people on their trip 6 weeks before departure, while TrekAmerica can talk to its customers in a one to one capacity.

Although TrekAmerica Live has significant benefits over Facebook (higher resolution images and video, fewer ads & the TrekPoints loyalty scheme), from a strategic level it was very important that we didn't try to replace Facebook. Many users are comfortable with using Facebook to communicate with their friends back home. To this end, TrekAmerica Live supports push/pull image exchange with a users Facebook account. Users can upload their media to either platform and send them to the other. TrekAmerica Live can also push status updates into Facebook when a trekker reaches a new destination.

## The Results

A staged the launch of TrekAmerica Live was initiated with relevant emails being sent to various sections of our database to help us test the system. TrekAmerica Live was then fully launched a week after with banners on the main branded website and an announcement on our Facebook fan page this week, which saw an increase in users and page views.

In the first month following the initial launch on the 27 July, TrekAmerica Live has received:

- **864 registered users**
- **1900+ photos uploaded**
- **54 Travel Blog Entries**
- **92 Forum Threads**
- **Over 100,000 Pageviews**

***“TrekAmerica Live is making the “social” just as important as the “media”. This eclectic blend of user-generated content and social media has been designed to deliver very real business objectives.”***

**Rob Sandbach**, Account Director, Kmp.

***“Fostering and encouraging this sharing of information is the key objective of this social media platform, with a view to dramatically increasing brand awareness and sales revenue.”***

**Jenny Black**, Head of Marketing, TrekAmerica.



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**For more information:**

**Jon Keefe, CEO**

**T: 0870 868 8900**

**email: [jon.keefe@kmp.co.uk](mailto:jon.keefe@kmp.co.uk)**

**2nd Floor | Kingfisher Court | Yew Street | Stockport | SK4 2HG  
[www.kmp.co.uk](http://www.kmp.co.uk) | 0870 868 8900**