



# Finding Your Niche Webinar Exercises and Articles

## Find Your Passion Worksheet

My hobbies: \_\_\_\_\_

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My clubs and organizations: \_\_\_\_\_

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My fitness and outdoor activities: \_\_\_\_\_

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My favorite destinations: \_\_\_\_\_

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My favorite magazines and books: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_ My favorite travel suppliers:

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\_ My favorite specialty stores:

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\_ My local connections that I can use to help develop leads:

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\_ My current clients special interests:

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### Assess The Market Worksheet

Is this specialty already adequately served? \_\_\_\_\_

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How will my product and services differ from those already offered? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much will it cost to penetrate the market? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much can I depend on my current connections and word of mouth? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much advertising and Marketing Dollars will be needed? \_\_\_\_\_

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How easy will it be to reach the target audience? \_\_\_\_\_

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Will I get repeat business? \_\_\_\_\_

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What training will I need to get? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Marketing Plan Worksheet

Mission

Statement:

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Target Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

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Competitive Analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

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Goals and Objectives: \_\_\_\_\_

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Action Tasks to Achieve Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

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Promotion Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

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Financial Analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Find Your Niche**

By Richard Earls

One way top travel agents stand out from the crowd is to develop a niche area of practice. Though we hear the advice to specialize, the concept of niche marketing is often misunderstood. Niche marketing is a way of helping you focus on locating new clients, not a set of restrictions on your business offerings.

Niche marketing is not necessarily about gearing your entire business to a particular type of travel, but rather about segmenting your marketing efforts to focus on particular groups of people. Many travel consultants avoid it as a concept out of fear of having to turn away business outside the chosen niche, or being too closely identified with the niche.

Properly executed, however, niche marketing is a terrific way of locating and marketing to a group of potential clients in a highly effective and cost efficient manner.

The lesson of effective niche marketing is this: It is important to be clear about the market you are addressing and to address the target market clearly. This might require you to have one marketing brochure or presentation for adventure travel and another for senior escorted tours and yet another for golf travel.

You do not have to devote your practice exclusively to any of these niches, but you can devote some of your marketing tactics to the niche. Then, choose the appropriate marketing tools and pitch for the market you are addressing.

When you focus on a niche, you very quickly become an expert. You will be able to speak with authority on your topic and marketing will be a matter of speaking directly to those who share an affinity for your niche. One great advantage of a niche market is the way in which it helps you locate potential clients.

When you are marketing general travel, everyone is your potential market and you lack focus. When your market is “adventure travelers,” however, you know where to find them. When your market is “golfers,” you know where to find them. Once you have located your market, it is much less costly to reach out to them as opposed to using much less efficient “shotgun” approaches.

As an expert in a niche, your ability to generate referrals and word of mouth advertising will be amplified as those who have used you in the past tell others interested in similar travel experiences. You will also develop deeper and richer relationships with the suppliers that you use as they come to understand your devotion to their area of business.

A niche will assist your other marketing efforts. For example, search engine optimization in generalized travel can be very difficult to accomplish. However, within a niche market, your website or blog can more easily stand out as authoritative on a topic and become a favorite of the

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search engines. Compare a search for “travel agency” and its 25 million results with a search on “tours of civil war battlefields” and its 107,000 results.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, niche marketing can place you squarely in the middle of the type of travel about which you are most passionate. Far too many agents spend the majority of their time researching and planning travel for which they have no affinity or expertise. When working within the context of a favorite genre, the travel consultant’s passion shows.

Do yourself a favor and begin to search out a niche area of practice. Done well, you will be a happier travel consultant for the effort.

## 3 Steps to Making More Money by Specializing

*By Meredith Hill*

Specializing is the number one thing you can do to make more money. But if you are going to specialize, do it correctly.

Many travel agents erroneously think that specializing has to do with choosing a certain destination and then focusing on that. That is one way to specialize but by no means is it the only way. Achieving success through specialization can be broken down into three simple steps.

**Step #1. Claim your expert status.** Stop trying to be all things to all people and become an authority on something. Whether it's gay travel, romantic travel, soft adventure travel for senior outdoor enthusiasts, travel for wine lovers, or Disney travel – be an expert!

Experts are sought for their opinion, and make more money. What are you an expert at? It might be obvious or you may have to do some thinking. If you don't know what your expertise is, ask yourself these questions:

1. What are my passions?
2. What activities completely consume me? Where I am so engaged that the hours fly by?
3. What are my greatest success stories with my clients? What have I done for my clients where they were totally awed, and it was very easy for me?
4. What do people constantly compliment me on or ask my assistance for?

**Step #2. Target a subset of the market.** Even if your expertise is something as general as luxury travel, you'll do yourself a huge favor by picking a subset of the market. Don't sell luxury travel to everyone. Sell luxury travel to investment bankers or interior designers.

It is so much easier to know where to market when you identify a specific part of the population. Also, people will pay you more because you understand them. If you are having trouble deciding, ask yourself this question: Who needs me most?

**3. Stop marketing products or your credentials. Start marketing solutions and experiences.** People could care less about what you do or what you offer until they know what's in it for them. If you are an expert on luxury travel and are focused on investment bankers, don't tell them about your 22 years in the travel business or your credentials.

Instead, tell them about that secret hideaway in the Caribbean, with a Michelin-Star chef, that's just a three-hour plane ride from the office. Tell them that you will arrange every last detail so all they have to do is show up at the airport.

*Meredith Hill is the CEO and Founder for the Global Institute for Travel Entrepreneurs (GIFTE). GIFTE helps travel professionals monetize their passion for travel so they can go from surviving to thriving. Learn more at [www.TravelBusinessU.com](http://www.TravelBusinessU.com).*

