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Tourism talk: acronyms & glossary



You may have noticed that tourism language is very acronym-heavy! Here are some of the more common tourism acronyms and terms to help you:

ABTA	Association of British Travel Agents	GIT	Group inclusive traveller
ADS	Approved Destination Status (relates to the China travel market)	GSA	General sales agent
BIT	Borsa Internazionale del Turismo held every February in Italy (trade event)	IATA	International Air Transport Association
BT	Business tourism (Meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions)	ICCA	International Congress and Convention Association
CRS	Computerised reservations system	ITB	Internationale Tourismus-Börse held every in March in Berlin
CVB	Convention and visitors bureau	ITO	Inbound tour operator
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	IPS	International Passenger Survey
DMC	Destination management company	LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
DMO	Destination marketing organisation	MICE	Meetings, incentives, conferences and events
ETOA	European Tour Operator Association	NTO	National Tourist Organisation
FIT	Fully independent traveller	ONS	Office for National Statistics
FOC	Free of charge	OTA	Online travel agent
GALTA	Gay and Lesbian Travel Association	PAX	Passengers
GDS	Global distribution system (same as a CRS) e.g. used by airlines	PR	Public Relations
		UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
		USP	Unique selling proposition
		VFR	Visiting friends and relatives
		WTM	World Travel Market

Tourism glossary

Agent

A person or company that sells your product on your behalf, including ITOs, wholesalers and retail agents

Aggregator

A website that search for deals across multiple websites and shows you the results in one place

Allotment

A pre-negotiated number of seats/rooms/ vehicles held by a wholesaler or inbound tour operator for sale

Business tourism

Incorporates visitors travelling for conventions, conferences, seminars, workshops, symposiums, incentives, exhibitions and special events

Commission

The fee paid to agents for them to market, distribute and sell your product

Co-operative advertising

Advertising funded by two or more partners

Distressed inventory

Product whose potential to be sold at a normal cost will soon pass

Distribution

The channels or places through which a consumer may purchase your product

Ecotourism

Ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation

Export tourism

International tourist traffic coming into a country, with foreign currency contributing to the export economy

Educational visits

Hosted trips which provide the opportunity to experience your product first hand and improve attendee product knowledge

Free sell

A room, seat or vehicle provided by an operator to a wholesaler or inbound tour operator in unrestricted quantities until otherwise indicated, so a booking may be confirmed immediately to a client

Frontline staff

The agents that deal directly with consumers including retail agents and reservations staff

Fully independent travellers (FIT)

Travellers who plan their own travel arrangements. There are a number of types of FIT including visiting friends and relatives, and partially packaged travel

Gateway

A major air, land or sea entry point to a region or country

General sales agent

Offer representation and marketing of your product in international markets. They may also provide a booking service

Gross rate

The price that consumers pay for your product. Also retail rate, rack rate or door rate

Group inclusive travellers (GIT)

Travellers who purchase the bulk of their holiday arrangements before leaving home, also referred to as package travellers

Inbound tourism

International tourist traffic coming into a country. Also referred to as export tourism

Incentive travel

Incentive travel is a trip offered as a prize or reward, for top performing employees or sales agents

Industry

All businesses that are involved in tourism including distribution agents and product suppliers

Intermediary

Any dealer who acts as a link in the chain of distribution between a product and its customers. In the tourism industry, travel agents, tour operators etc. are considered the intermediaries (distributors)

Long haul travel

International travel to a destination, generally more than 5 hours from the point of origin, i.e. England is a long haul destination for travellers from USA and Australia

Meeting and incentive planners

Organise and manage all aspects of meetings, incentives and events

Net rate

The gross rate less the commission amount. The amount that you receive from the agent

Online distribution

Using the internet and web portals to distribute or promote your product to consumers

Online travel agent

Allows consumers to check live availability and pricing then book travel products in real time through the OTA website

Operator

The owner and/or manager of the tourism product

Outbound tourism

Residents travelling out of their country to an international destination

Product manager

Responsible for identifying and selecting the products and suppliers that a tour operator or wholesaler will sell

Retail travel agent

The link to the consumer, retail agents allow travellers to book travel products either through a wholesaler, a tour operator, or direct with the supplier

Sales calls

Face to face meetings with agents. Purposes may include; to update and educate them on your product, negotiate inclusion in their programs, negotiate rates etc.

Short haul travel

International travel to a destination, generally less than a few hours from the point of origin, i.e. England is a short haul destination for travellers from France, Germany etc.

Tour operator

An agent that specialises in developing programs and itineraries for distributors

Trade shows

Events held both in England and overseas which act as a forum for product suppliers to meet with agents

Travel distribution system

A global network of independent businesses which allow international consumers to research and book travel

Travel trade

A collective term for the agents that make up the distribution system, including tour operators, wholesalers, retail and online agents

Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)

Visitors whose main purpose is to visit with friends and relatives

Wholesaler

Contract supplier product. They are B2B and act as a silent partner. They will sell these products via travel agents, tour operators, coach operators and other third parties



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