

AIDA CRUISES DIGITAL CHANNEL:

“Cruise Passengers’ Customer Journey”



Questions for Gerlinde Leichtfried-Dehn, Senior Vice President of Marketing & E-Commerce at AIDA Cruises

HOW DOES AIDA CRUISES ORGANIZE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY?

MS. LEICHTFRIED-DEHN / Digitization has enriched the entire added-value chain for us. The cruise industry still has considerable growth potential. We have to inform all prospective customers about our product in authentic and striking ways. Digitization of the cruise experience with VR (virtual reality) technology, like 360-degree tours of ships, drone flights and more, make it possible for us to help people experience the fascination of AIDA at various touchpoints. Due to the diversity of experiences on our ships, we have the opportunity to captivate guests with different content. In the age of digitization, 'word of mouth' has once again gained an entirely new signifi-

cance. User-generated content in the form of travelogues, recommendations, but also criticism, needs to be managed. The opportunities we have through digitization drive the simplification of classic processes on board, like seamless check-in, for example.

ON AVERAGE, CRUISE PASSENGERS ARE 50 YEARS OLD. HOW CAN THIS TARGET GROUP BE REACHED SUCCESSFULLY?

MS. LEICHTFRIED-DEHN / Due to the complexity of the “cruise” product, customers have a strong need for information before they book. Nearly 100% of our guests research our website several times before booking. We hope to make it as easy as possible for customers to make the decision using conventional and digital channels. We want to reach all

target groups on different channels with relevant content that is emotional and as personalized as possible. This also means that we coordinate different content elements with the relevant channel strategy.

HOW WILL YOU APPROACH THIS ISSUE IN THE FUTURE?

MS. LEICHTFRIED-DEHN / All signs point to growth in the cruise industry. By 2021, the available bed capacity on cruise ships worldwide is expected to increase by more than 28% when compared to 2016 (Cruise Industry News 2016). AIDA Cruises will put three additional ships into operation in this time frame. Digitization of sales becomes particularly meaningful in this process to increase demand. Our approach is to authentically present the AIDA brand in all formats and inspire people to go on vacation. ■