

## TRAVELTRENDS™

Monthly travel insights from Compete

### KAYAK.COM LAUNCHES MULTI-CITY SEARCH & "BUZZ" ENHANCEMENTS

Kayak has been a leader in Meta search and appears poised to continue that role in 2006. On November 18th, Kayak introduced two innovations – multi-city search for flights and enhancements to its recently launched "Buzz" feature.

The new features on Buzz, a Google Maps-enhanced tool for finding low fares, lets users search by region or theme. Historically, 2.5% of Kayak.com's 200,000 weekly visitors used Buzz, but since November's enhancements, penetration has declined to less than 2%. And, just 3% of flight-searchers on Kayak are using the new multi-city search functionality. The low penetration of multi-city search and Buzz tools demonstrates that while there are segments of travelers demanding these types of advanced features, the majority of meta-searchers continue to leverage the sites for basic queries only.

### DELTA AND SIDESTEP PARTNER

Delta and Sidestep's partnership, announced in December, is designed to drive qualified prospects to Delta's new Web site. Compete data shows that Delta's site has been performing well, but the partnership has not had a significant impact on prospect volume.

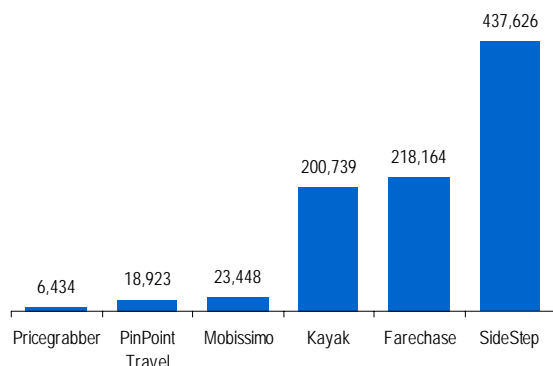
Prior to the announcement, Sidestep had been sending Delta approximately 10,000 leads per week, representing half of one percent of Delta's online audience. These leads were 2.5 times more likely to book a ticket on Delta.com than the average prospect. With this existing volume in place, how much incremental business could the new promotions yield? In the three weeks following the partnership, the volume of Sidestep-driven prospects has been flat and the conversion rate has dipped to 8.7%, a 16% decline from prior levels. While holiday period weakness could be responsible, it calls into question the value of peripheral promotions on Meta search sites. Travelers savvy enough to use search sites like Sidestep may not be easily influenced by banner ads and other brand promotions.

### YAHOO! INTEGRATES FARECHASE INTO CORE TRAVEL OFFERING

In mid-November, Yahoo! boosted the profile of Farechase, integrating promotional links throughout Yahoo! Travel. Compete found that this change has driven some new users, but not prevented an overall decline in Farechase's audience.

#### Meta Search Engine Traffic

(Weekly average visitors, 11/20/05 – 12/25/05)



Before the change, Farechase attracted 325,000 weekly prospects. Even with 23,000 incremental visits from the new promotions, Farechase traffic slumped 30% in December to 220,000 weekly prospects. Outside of this decline, however, Yahoo!'s move has generated positive results. The promotions deliver 14% of Farechase's audience – a subset 55% more likely to conduct a hotel or flight search compared to average Farechase users. Yahoo! has cultivated a valuable user base for its core travel offering, and now has to find a way to encourage more of it to give Farechase a try.

### PRICEGRABBER LAUNCHES TRAVEL SEARCH

Pricegrabber, a destination with over one million weekly visitors, introduced travel search in November, moving to capture the travel activity its user base currently performs elsewhere. To date, though, the offering has been lost in the shuffle of Pricegrabber's 20+ product categories, attracting only 6,000 users a week. In order to deliver a worthwhile volume of travel leads to suppliers and agencies, Pricegrabber will need to find a way to better promote the service to its core audience.

Compete's Travel practice researches the entire online consideration and booking process for consumers, offering an unmatched level of insight into how travelers engage, cross-shop, and convert across all agency and supplier destinations.

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