

# SIGHTSEER MAGAZINE

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## Bloggers Over 50: They're Influencers Too!

By Alex Rosa

In a world where so many are swept-up in wanderlust, why not try standing out and connecting with an audience that on average will vacation five times in one year? Or better yet, contributes 51% of all consumers spending?

### It's Time to Tap Into the Baby Boomer Generation

Grand Pacific Resorts is a timeshare management company based in Southern California, with resorts in the most popular California destinations, and Hawaii. The majority of our owners and guests are over 50, and we're here to tell you that this is an audience worth engaging, guiding and creating relationships with.

According to AARP's 2017 Travel Trends, the 50+ market is expected to grow by 15 million over the next 10 years, and it's also where 71% of the nation's wealth lies. Yet, only 10% of marketing dollars are targeted toward this audience, leaving a lot of room for growth in a virtually untapped market.

### Throw Out What You Think You Know About the Baby Boomer Generation

While the return on investment may not be immediate when engaging the over-50 influencer, it's important to realize it's no longer enough to simply have a quality product. You must also have quality content to accompany your brand that speaks to your audience.

It's easy to assume the Boomer generation isn't online. However, the numbers show that 39% of the over 50 population makes online purchases, according to AARP, meaning they're online more than you think! The Boomer generation's favorite social media platforms follow the same trends as their Millennial and Generation X counterparts, primarily using and sharing content on Facebook, and we're seeing an upswing on photo sharing platforms like Instagram.

Along with having the discretionary income and time, this is a generation looking for reasons to take more vacations. Plus, they want to be part of inspiring their own generation, which makes them perfect brand ambassadors.

### **How To 'Activate' Your Baby Boomer Influencers**

Although seeking out the Boomer generation online may not be the easiest, there are great ways to pull in this audience.

One of Grand Pacific Resorts' greatest influencer relationships came from contest winners Jim and Shelly H., who are now self-proclaimed Baby Boomer bloggers thanks to their partnership with our team.

It all started when Grand Pacific Resorts posted a call to action to their guests and owners to submit their vacation memories for a chance to win a great prize. One of the entries – a video of Jim and Shelly enjoying their retirement collecting sea glass on a Southern California beach – stood out due to their effortless portrayal of our brand audience.

We saw this as an opportunity to forge a relationship with a couple who perfectly represented our brand and were already fairly tech-savvy. Jim and Shelly were posting their travel photos and videos online for friends and family – all they needed was a little guidance on how to expand their social reach and breathe more life into the authentic content they were producing.

### **Nurturing and Guiding Your Boomer Influencer Relationship is the Important Part**

Although Boomers use social media, you may find their skills are not at quite the same caliber of Millennials who were practically brought up with a smartphone in their hands. Take the time to give your Boomer influencer tips on how to take better photos, blogging how-to's and simple lessons on hashtag usage. In exchange for free vacationing opportunities, they'll deliver authentic content. And the better guidance you provide, the more amazing your content will be.

With this approach Grand Pacific Resorts turned Jim and Shelly into social media pros and brand ambassadors. In turn, Jim and Shelly not only get excited about new opportunities to work with Grand Pacific Resorts but they bring their content to life in a rich way that guests and owners can relate to.

We also "white list" our influencers in our user-generated content management platform, Chute. Chute makes it easy to create a valuable media library of user-generated content from influencers by white listing them. White listing is the ability to identify the influencers you are working with and curate their content without repeated rights requests. You have already identified them as your partner and documented their agreement to share their content with you, so all of their content is automatically stored in a library and ready to use for your brand.

Once your influencer relationship is established, send an email to your Boomer influencer asking if they'd like a free stay to explore a destination. Suddenly, you have an influencer you can be confident will produce high quality content from their perspective in fun and exciting ways that your brand audience can connect with - all without much effort needed from your marketing team.

Strengthening influencer relationships and giving them the proper guidance can now have a positive impact on your marketing budget, not to mention the future vacations your brand ambassadors will inspire other Baby Boomers to take. We've been able to dramatically decrease our stock photo budget and it's helped reduce labor needs when we can trust an influencer to provide content rather than sending one of our associates to coordinate.

### Be Fearlessly Authentic With Your Brand

Along with developing strong relationships with influencers who are a great representation of the Grand Pacific Resorts brand, our company is now finding new ways to inspire the Baby Boomer generation. Highlighting new and exciting outings in destinations our audience already loves to vacation in - through the eyes of an age group that deserves more representation - suddenly gives our audience more reasons to vacation.

Creating rich and engaging content your audience can relate to through partnering and nurturing the Boomer influencer relationship becomes a game of longevity for your business. The more they explore and share, the more inspired your brand audience will be to start planning their next bucket list vacation or multi-generational outing.

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