

mediahawk

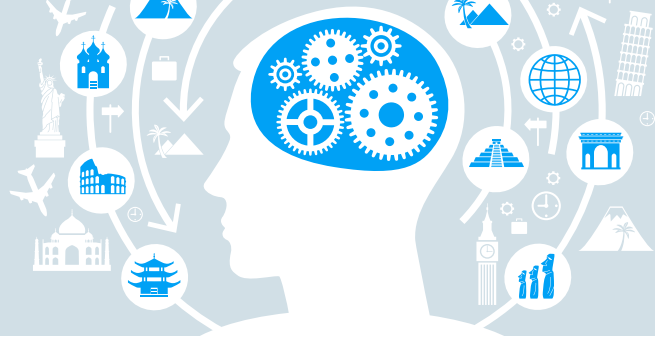
UK Holiday Planning and Booking Trends Report 2016



“47% of people will call a travel provider before booking”

Discover the key trends influencing travel consumer behaviour

Executive Summary

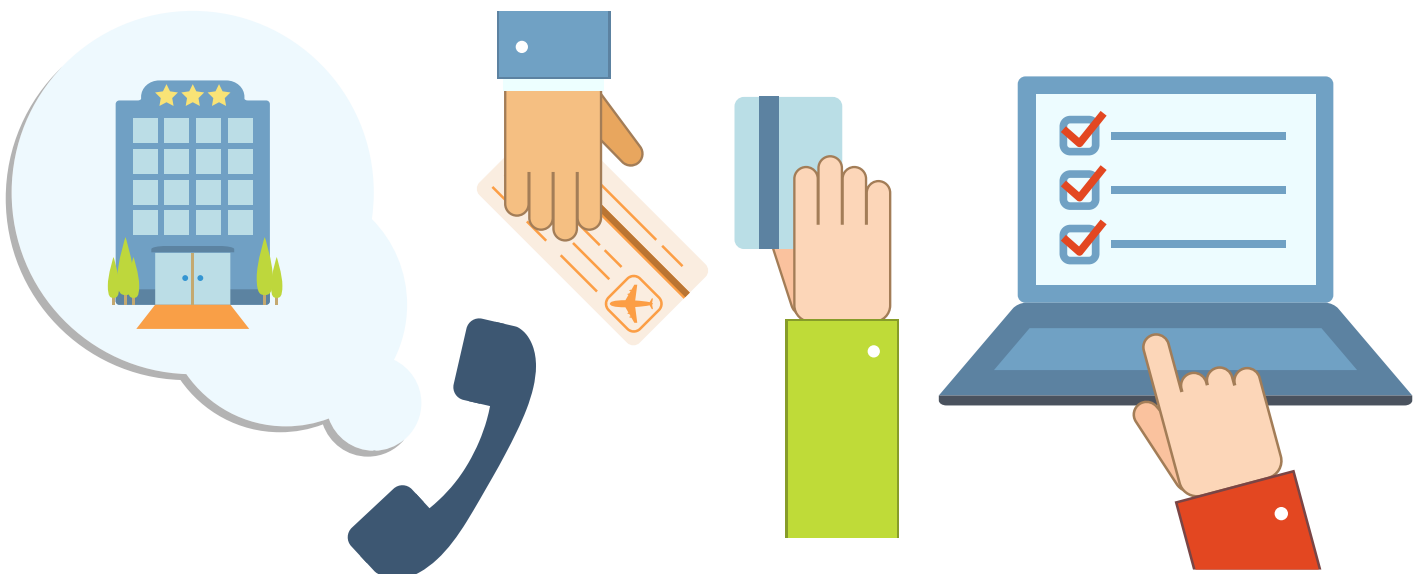


Telephone drives up to 80% of a travel company's revenue. In this climate of fierce competition compounded by increasing advertising costs, travel marketers are constantly looking for cost-effective ways of increasing returns.

It's not just because holidays are an important part of the pleasure calendar or the expense that makes travellers use the phone. It's the plethora of marketing touchpoints and the need for reassurance that makes them call. They look at online travel sites, they receive emails, they look in magazines – and then they read a review site.

[Mediahawk](#) surveyed 1,500 consumers about their methods of holiday research and booking activities. Our report looks at the areas that travel brands need to keep pace with, including:

- The role that different technologies play in the research and booking process
- How different demographic groups communicate with travel companies
- The disconnect between online marketing and offline response
- How marketers can leverage call tracking technology and advanced analytics to deliver a more targeted marketing strategy



47% of Holidaymakers Call Before Booking



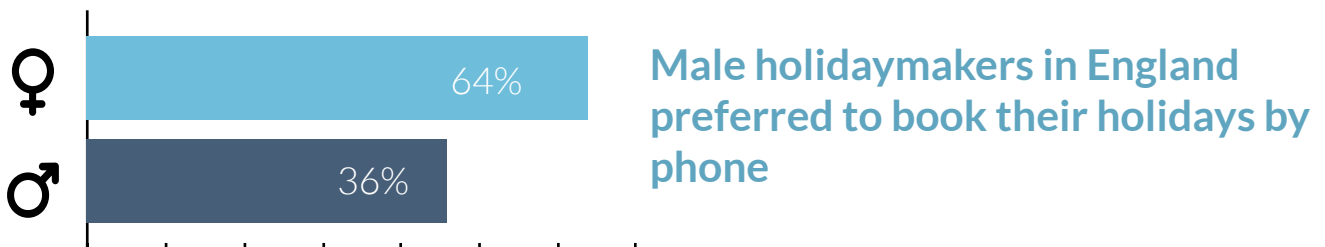
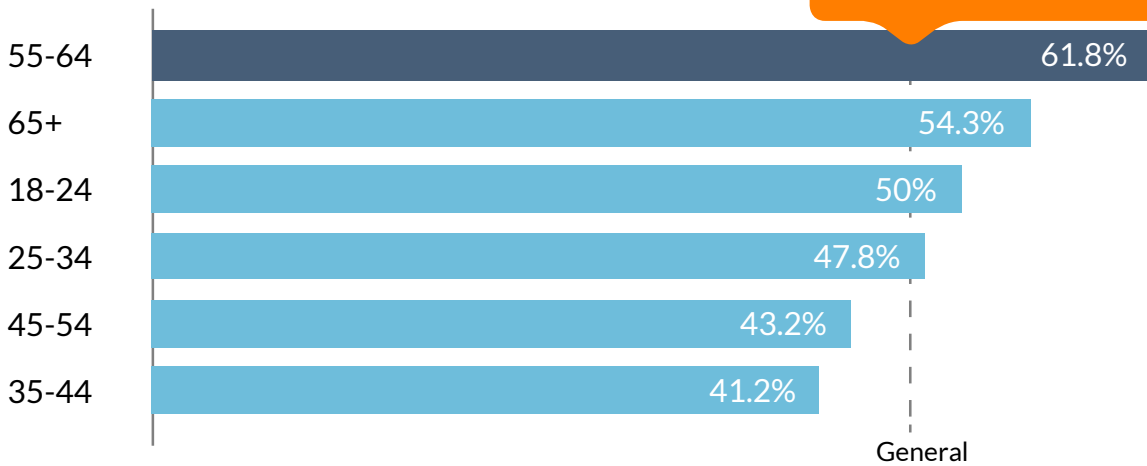
Even in this digital age, personal connections are still important to consumers.

But which audience is more likely to pick up the phone? Our survey found that it is the higher-spending older generation. Some 52% of the 55+ age group spent more than £1,000 on their last break and were much more likely to book by phone. For higher-priced breaks, telephone calls were critical to overcome any reservations customers had and to reassure them.

Brands want to communicate more efficiently with their customers. The telephone allows them to do so more effectively. The potential for voice channel conversions has increased due to the rapid increase in mobile browsing. Businesses that invest in optimising marketing spend to drive inbound phone calls have seen an uplift in conversion rates of up to 20%.*

Which age groups prefer to pick up the phone?

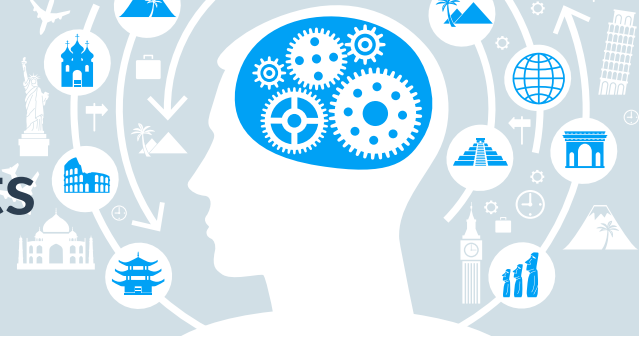
52% of the 55+ age group spent more than £1000 on their last break. If you're targeting high-spending clients it's worth knowing that men spend more than women - and they are more likely to use the phone when booking.



Travel brands who use this insight gain an edge over their competitors. Generate higher returns and optimise your marketing channels by fine tuning your advertising campaigns to engage your audience more effectively. Whatever sparks the decision for the trip, the consumer journey is non-linear - taking in multiple interactions during the research and booking process, including offline channels such as a brochure and a telephone call, as well as an online search.

*Source: ehotelier.com

Attribution Headache: Eight Consumer Touchpoints Fuels Ad Spend

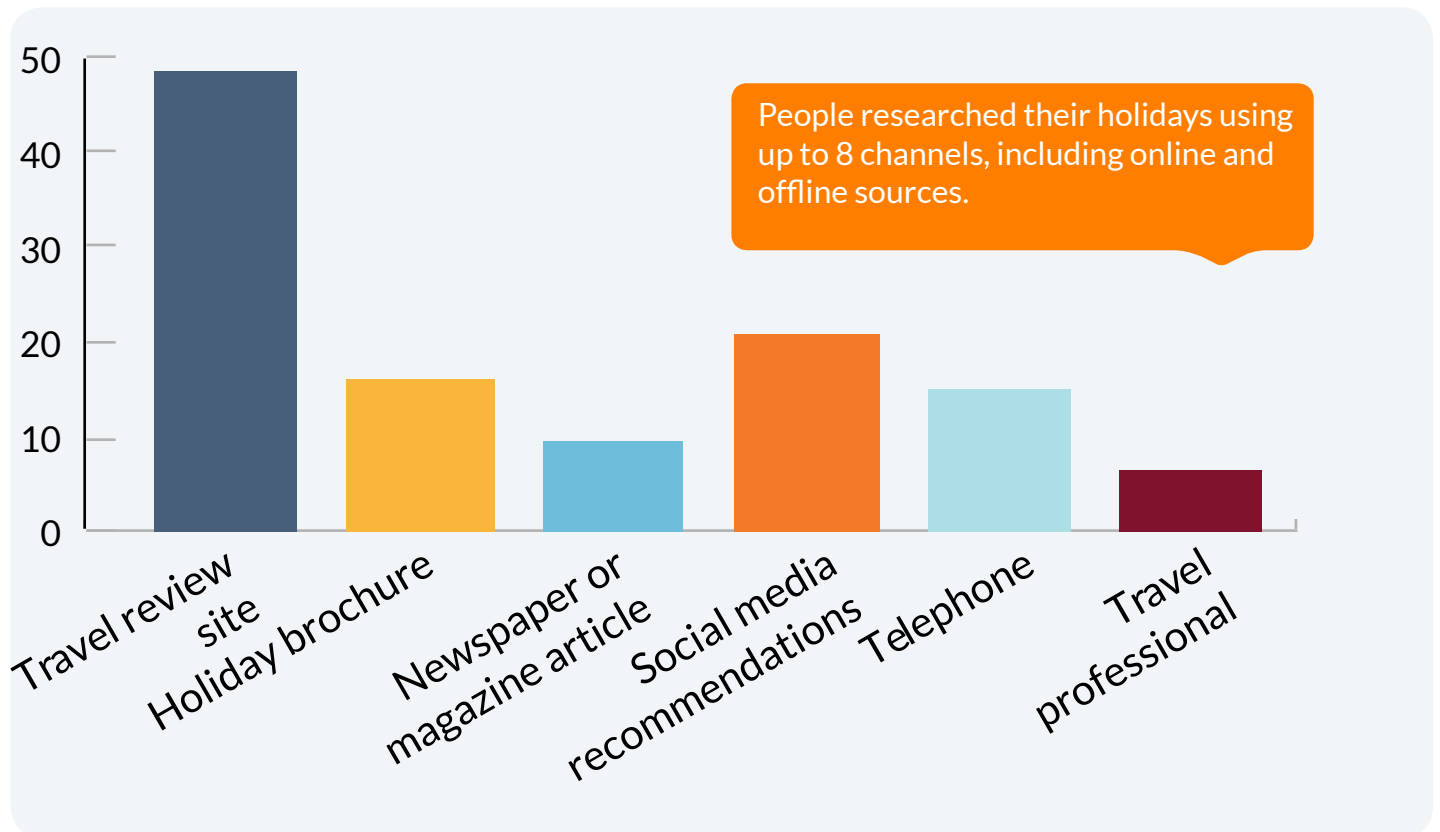


When asked which marketing channels they use for holiday inspiration, 60% of respondents said they engaged with up to 8 marketing touchpoints, including paid search ads, holiday brochures, brand website, travel review sites and social media.

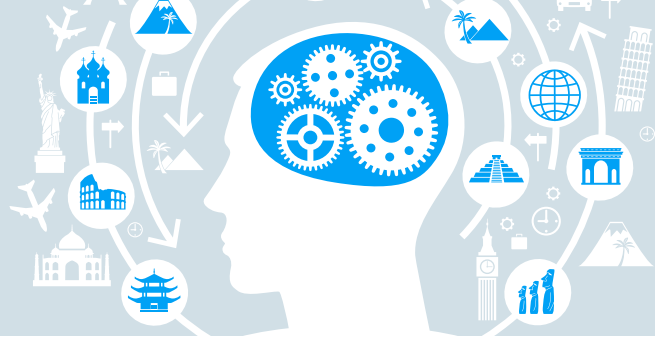
With ad spend in the sector outstripping growth, and the buying process becoming increasingly complex, travel marketers face an attribution nightmare. Shrewd businesses measure and monitor the different stages of the buying cycle to ensure that they're capturing data from every channel.

This data can be leveraged to re-engage consumers who haven't yet converted.

When researching your holiday which method(s) did you use before you eventually booked?



The Telephone Dominates Offline Booking



A consistently high quantity of travellers still go offline to book and pay.* 45% of our survey respondents had used the phone to make an offline booking.

Most popular offline booking channels, 2016



Better customer experience, higher values and greater up-selling opportunities mean that the telephone as a conversion channel offers more potential.

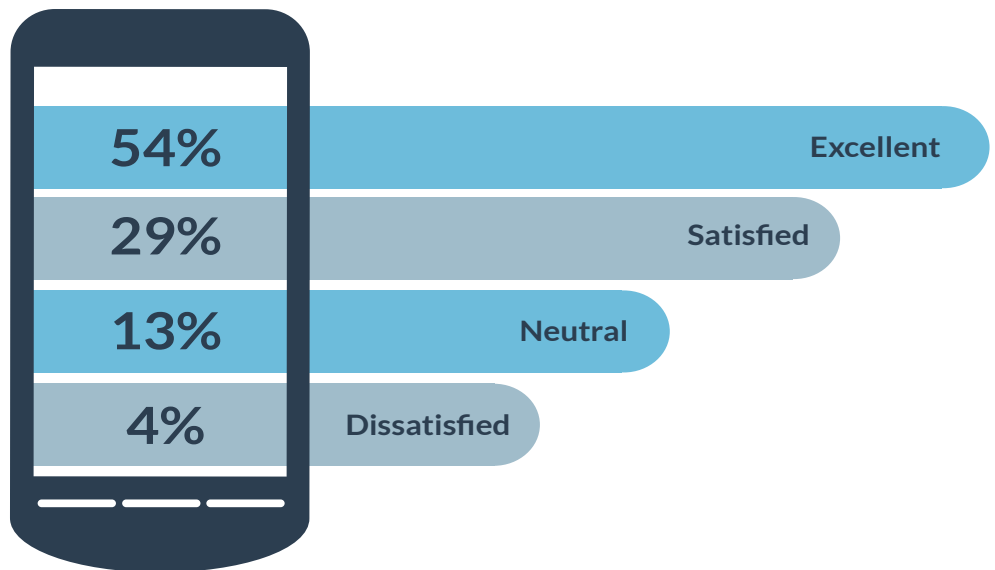
83% of respondents who booked by phone rated their experience as ‘Satisfactory’ or ‘Excellent’

Travellers know that there’s value in having a direct relationship with your business. The way call handlers respond to inbound phone calls is instrumental in converting more leads. It allows you to get to know your customers and create real-time relevant experiences.

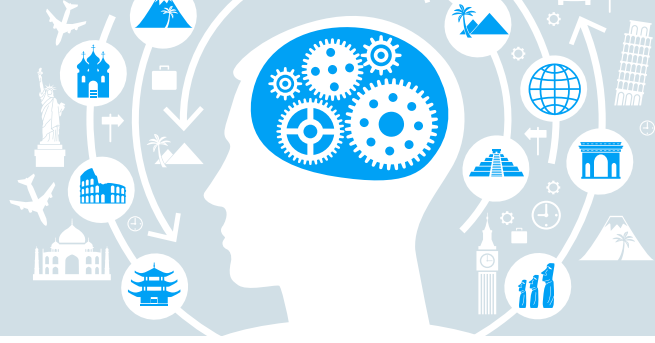
Integrating call analytics with your CRM or PMS enables you to take this personalised experience further: Your call handlers can easily identify

VIP callers and customise their welcome message. It also means that sales agents can use that information to upsell offerings that may be of interest to them. This seamless experience boosts the guest’s confidence in your ability as a provider, as well as increasing your opportunity to drive incremental revenue.

*Source: PhoCusWright.com

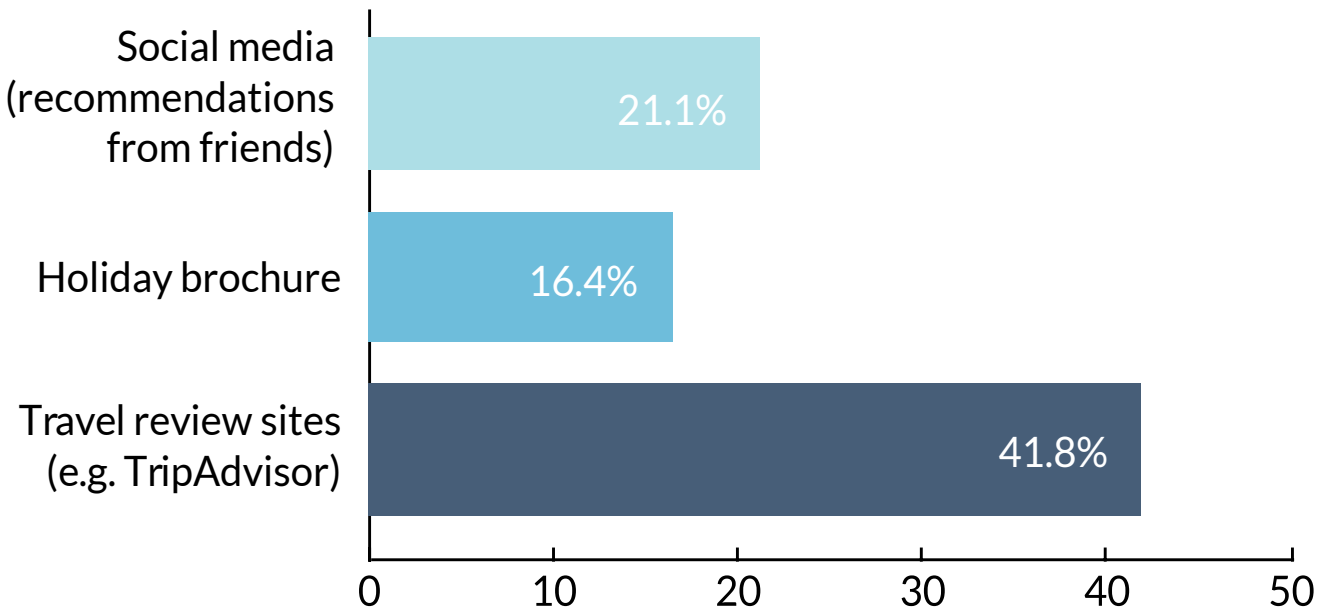


For Better, For Worse - Review Sites are the Number One Influencer



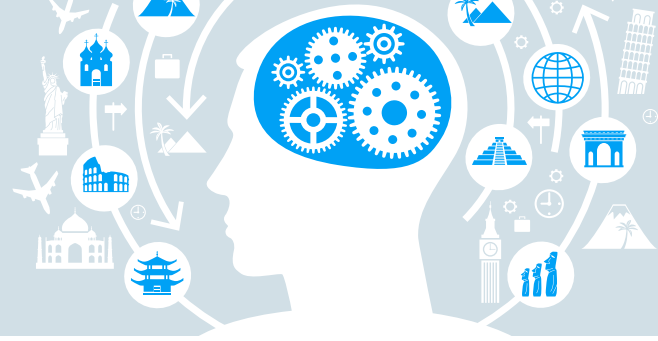
48% of respondents had used travel review sites such as TripAdvisor to research their holiday. Online reviews, social media and personal recommendations form the pillars of many travel consumers' research, yet they have made the path to purchase much more fragmented.

The top three channels to research a holiday



Every channel that creates content is an opportunity to drive bookings - reviews play a pivotal role in the purchasing decision. Driving these lower-cost, higher-value enquiries is essential. Optimising your presence on online review sites allows you to capture consumers at the most important stage of their journey. Linking these opportunities directly to inbound enquiries enables you to accurately measure the performance of these channels.

Travel is Set to be Transformed by Mobile



Purchases via mobile will account for 40% of sales in 2019.* Our survey revealed that almost one-third of respondents used a tablet or mobile device to book their trips.

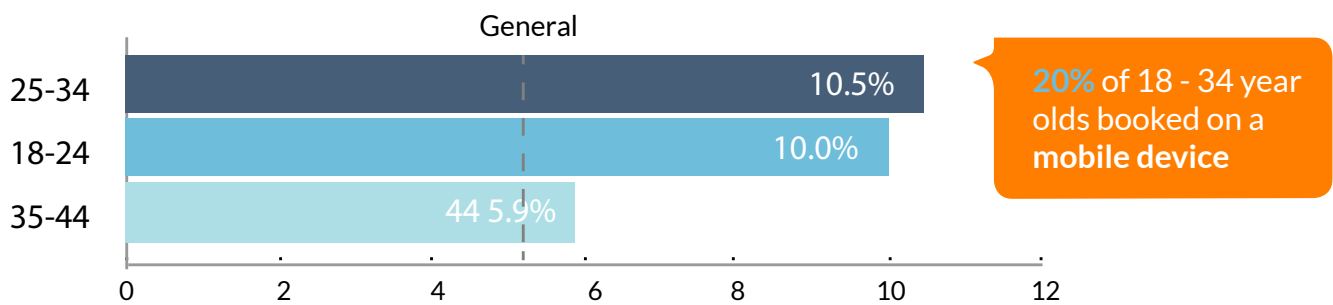
Start optimising for mobile now – it takes longer than you think to get it right.

It's important to understand the traveller's intent when using different devices. Overwhelmingly, smartphones are used for making last-minute bookings and research.

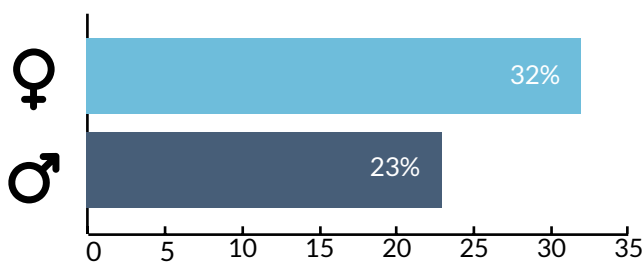
Contextualising the experience is critical. Smartphones allow you to identify the user's location, enabling you to tailor content and offer a customised, immediate deal. This personalised experience, coupled with the notably impulsive behaviour of smartphone users, allows you to leverage those spur-of-the-moment opportunities.

Tablets are great for browsing, research and booking in a similar way to the PC or desktop, but are infinitely more accessible. Think of the 'couch surfing' nature of these devices. It's easier than ever for a potential customer to respond immediately to a TV ad, turning spontaneous research into an immediate conversion. Travel brands need to exploit these opportunities by closely aligning their television advertising with their online activities.

Millennials are the greatest adopters of mobile booking



Further analysis showed that men were more likely to book their holiday via a mobile device.






*Source: eMarketer.com

Develop a Truly Customer-centric Marketing Strategy



Mediahawk clients such as Goodwood, The Caravan Club, Discover the World, and English Lakes, use call tracking to bridge the gap between online and offline activity. They understand what prompts a call, the path a visitor takes, the value of bookings and the ROI of each marketing campaign.

Call tracking gives detailed insight on the channels that resonate with different target audiences, as well as evidence of the effectiveness of individual campaigns. Mediahawk clients experience the following benefits:

-  **Increase revenue:** Better customer experience, higher basket values and greater up-selling opportunities mean that the telephone as a conversion channel offers more potential.
-  **Multi-channel understanding:** Use call data to track customers who engage both online and offline, and optimise your marketing campaigns to improve response rates.
-  **Accurate Attribution:** Correctly attribute revenue to marketing campaigns, prove return on investment and focus spend on the most effective channels.

Call us to discuss how call tracking will improve your marketing effectiveness

0333 220 3165

Mediahawk's clients include:

