



Every month we'll be sending you the latest insights, research and thoughtful perspectives on the issues that matter most to tourism businesses and operators in RTO9.

In this month's newsletter we look at **innovations in technology and ideas for you to improve the skillset within your business to provide the best possible consumer experience** throughout the evolving consumer journey.

If there are topics you want to read about in a future newsletter please email [Imedeiros@thegreatwaterway.com](mailto:Imedeiros@thegreatwaterway.com) with your ideas.



# 2018: Canada's Best Year Ever!

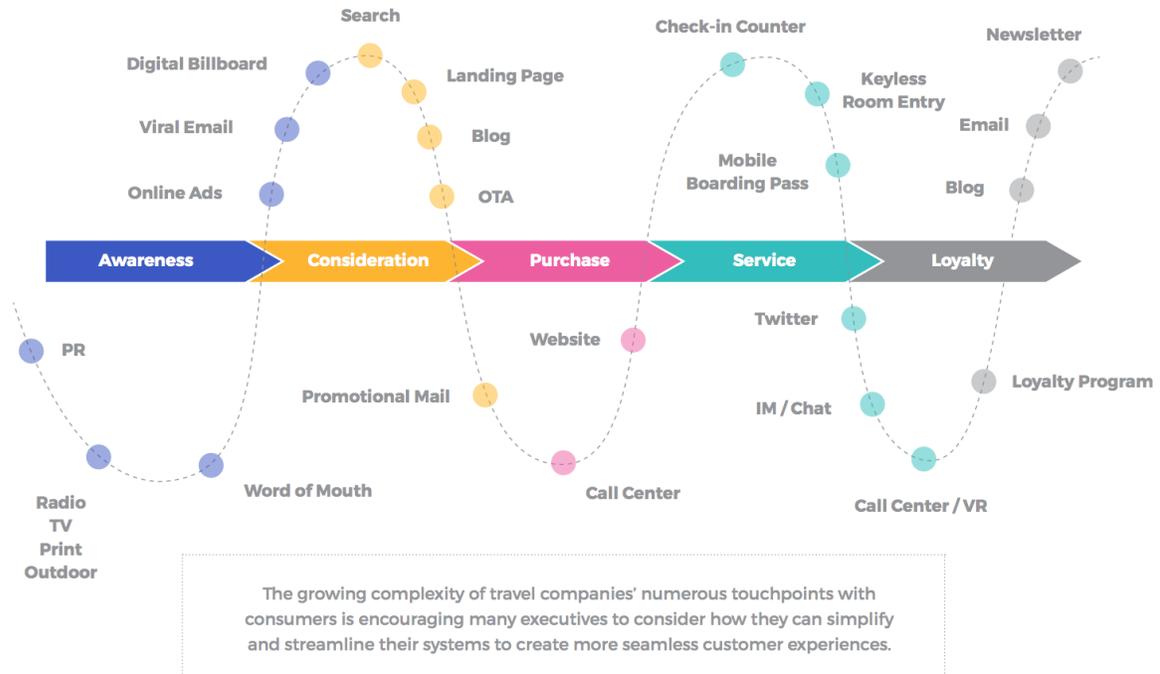
Based on preliminary estimates from Statistics Canada\*



## Destination Canada Monthly Tourism Snapshot

Even with economic political uncertainties on the minds of travellers, tourism in Canada continues to prove its resiliency. Record visitor arrivals continue to be achieved; the year 2018 ended with **an increase of 1.2% over 2017 to 21.13 million visitors**. While China and Mexico represented the top performers in terms of year-over-year growth, the US continues to be our top source market at 14.44 million or 68% of all international overnight arrivals.

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## Digital Transformation in the Consumer Journey

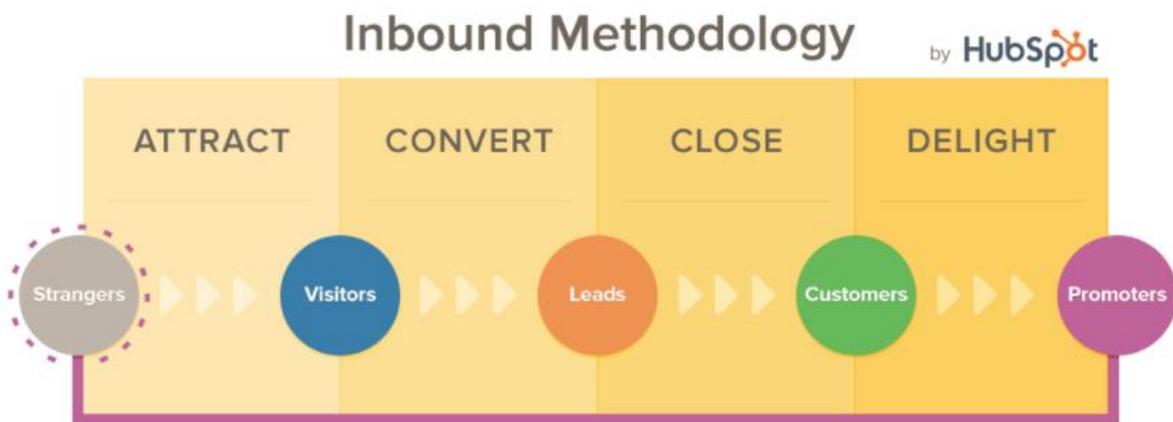
The Report offers six key takeaways for businesses, alongside the following advice for those looking for the next big opportunity and tool to adopt: "the key is balancing the desire for innovation with the need to serve larger business goals and customer desires."

Key takeaways:

1. Today's customer interaction includes a range of touch points; all linked digitally, whether they take place online or offline.
2. Leading multi-national companies have changed consumer expectations and there's no going back. Think Amazon and Google.
3. Mobile is a requirement. Responsive websites that allow users to toggle between various devices have helped businesses looking to grow digital sales in a cost-effective way.
4. With more data and tracking available, actually knowing what to do and using the information strategically remains a challenge for executives and business owners across the industry. The best advice given is to streamline in a way that works for your business and find the best way to bring the data together. This may be through the development of customer segmentations or a unified dashboard that lays it out for you.

5. Personalization efforts need to have a human touch.
6. New tech tools are popping up regularly but knowing which ones are best and most impactful will require some experimentation. Chatbots, blockchain, artificial intelligence and augmented reality and some of the top opportunities mentioned by travel executives in 2018.

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## HubSpot Academy offers free online tools and courses

As we noted above in our review of Skift and Adobe's 2018 Digital Transformation Report the challenges of not having a dedicated marketing specialist can be overwhelming for small and medium sized businesses. Fortunately, companies like **HubSpot are helping to fill the training gap by offering free tools and courses on inbound sales and marketing.**

Our Digital Marketing Specialist, Lindsay Medeiros, has challenged herself to complete 1 certification each week for 10 weeks. The courses are online and can be completed on your own schedule; they cover different digital marketing topics related to inbound sales and marketing.

**Are you up for the challenge?  
If so check out the HubSpot Academy for yourself here:**

[GET CERTIFIED](#)

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