

## Should Marketers Pay for Travelers' Gas?

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Fuel rebates and green issues are consumer hits.

A June 2008 Prospectiv survey revealed that online travelers could be enticed to spend more on travel if offered promotions, such as rebates on gas expenses. In response, many hotels have been giving out gas rebate cards at higher amounts than ever before—\$50, \$100 or even \$200 per trip. Some independent travel Websites such as Expedia and hotels.com are also offering gas cards.

### **Leading Promotions that Would Motivate US Internet Users to Travel, June 2008 (% of respondents)**



Note: n=500  
Source: Prospectiv, "Consumer Preference Index," provided to eMarketer, July 2008

096552 [www.eMarketer.com](http://www.eMarketer.com)

More online travelers are also basing decisions on a travel supplier's environmental policy. Prospectiv's survey found that 22.8% of respondents made purchase decisions based on a company's green policy. Another 40.6% said that policy would not influence a purchase but would create a favorable impression.

Research conducted by New York University's Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management for PhoCusWright found that cruise lines are the most advanced segment of the travel industry in their efforts to preserve the environment. Some initiatives being launched by cruise lines include:

Onboard recycling of solid waste products and wastewater treatment

Satellite positioning systems that help avoid dropping anchors on seabeds and coral

Onboard desalination units

LED lighting that uses 50% less energy than regular lighting and reduces the carbon footprint by 70%

Learn how travel Websites can play to their strengths during the economic downturn. Read eMarketer's [US Online Travel: Planning and Booking](#) report.

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