



### **The Niche Domination Resource Book**

- Is your property in an area where you are competing with hundreds – maybe thousands – of similar properties?
- Do you find it challenging to attract guests out of the traditionally popular seasons?
- Are there activities in your area that may pull visitors to your rental home if they only knew you existed?

It is rare to find a property that can appeal to guests year round AND attract maximum occupancy with just a listing or a simple web site. A fabulous ski chalet or cute waterfront cottage may be filled with happy guests in the appropriate season, but it's usually challenging to fill those out of season weeks. For many owners these are the times when they get to use the place themselves, but for those who want to create the most income from a property, more aggressive marketing techniques are required. This is where niche domination comes in.

This is about focusing on one or two aspects of your area that draw a significant number of people in the traditional low and shoulder seasons. Many of those people will be searching for accommodation and your area may be well served with hotels and resorts that already cater to them, but they may have never considered a vacation rental. Your task is to convince them this could be an alternative or superior option.

## **Focus on a niche**

Don't start out by trying to be all things to all people. Choose one activity, and get immersed in the research to find out where your target market hangs out. You also need to be enthusiastic about the niche. It's not necessary to be an active participant but in order to appeal to enthusiasts, it's better to know something about it. You'll be joining in forums and commenting on blogs so some knowledge and interest in the subject is handy.

## **Find the forums**

Where there are a lot of people who are involved and interested in an activity, there are forums, and more commonly now, Facebook pages and groups. The advent of Facebook has created an alternative place for a focused group of people to congregate, which makes it easier to join in, however the same rules apply.


It's better to concentrate on a single forum where you may become known as a participant in the activity. Over time you can begin mentioning your property. Jumping in with promoting before you get accepted as a contributor can result in negative action by forum moderators.


Let's say your property is on water and it's popular with kayakers so you want to find out where the kayakers congregate. Start off by Googling "kayaking forum"


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About 992,000 results (0.35 seconds) [Advanced search](#)


[Welcome to the Kayak Forum](#)   
A community for discussing all aspects of sea kayaks and kayaking. Learn about the best paddling trips and find out how to build a kayak.  
[Kayak Building](#) - [Message Index](#) - [Kayakwiki](#) - [Kayak Trips](#)  
[www.kayakforum.com/](http://www.kayakforum.com/) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[Kayaking Info, News, Pictures, Forum and Community @ ABC-of-Kayaking](#)   
Kayaking portal including information articles, newsdesk, pictures, forum and community.  
[www.abc-of-kayaking.com/](http://www.abc-of-kayaking.com/) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[Forum - Kayak Magazine](#)   
Welcome to our Kayak Forum, if you are a new user please introduce yourself ... Surf Kayaking forum where surf kayak enthusiasts can share their experience ...  
[www.kayakmagazine.com/forum.php](http://www.kayakmagazine.com/forum.php) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

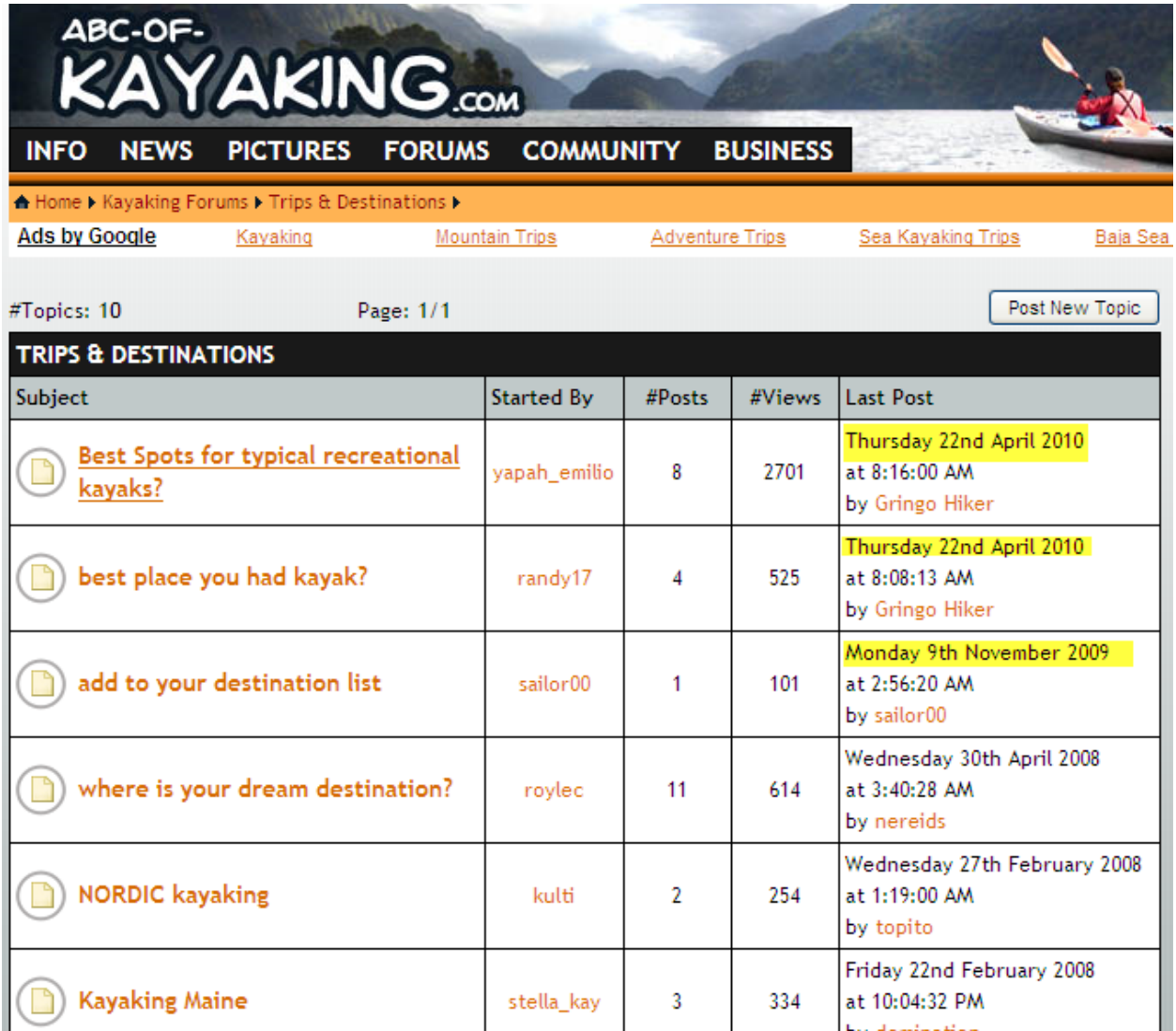
[Québec Kayak - Communauté de pagayeurs Québécois - Rivière, Mer, Lac](#)  - [ [Translate this page](#) ]  
Oyé! Oyé! c'est le temps du Party de fin de saison de Québec Kayak. Samedi 13 novembre, à Québec (St-Émile). Rendez-vous sur ce message du forum pour tout ...  
[www.quebeckayak.qc.ca/](http://www.quebeckayak.qc.ca/) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[THE SEA KAYAK FORUM • Index page](#)   
ADVERTISE on THE SEA KAYAK FORUM For our commercial members. Last post by admin. Tue Nov 11, 2008 7:45 am: 1. Topics Topics: 1. Posts Posts ...  
[www.seakayakforum.com/](http://www.seakayakforum.com/) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)







[Vancouver Kayak Club Forum - Index](#)   
Disclaimer: This forum was established as a service for the paddling community. The Vancouver Kayak Club does not screen, monitor or approve the posted ...  
[www.vankayak.org/forum/](http://www.vankayak.org/forum/) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

You'll find links to general forums as well as more focused ones for different areas. Look for a forum that has a lot of members and is very active since there is little point in posting in one that is rarely visited. Initially this one called ABC Kayaking looked promising and it had a section for Trips and Destinations, but it's not very active so probably not worth the time. Note that the last post was in April and this resource book was written in December. Regardless of how interesting a forum looks, it needs to have visitors or no-one will see your comments or responses.

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The screenshot shows the website 'ABC-OF-KAYAKING.COM' with a navigation menu including 'INFO', 'NEWS', 'PICTURES', 'FORUMS', 'COMMUNITY', and 'BUSINESS'. The breadcrumb trail is 'Home > Kayaking Forums > Trips & Destinations >'. Below the navigation are several advertisement links: 'Ads by Google', 'Kayaking', 'Mountain Trips', 'Adventure Trips', 'Sea Kayaking Trips', and 'Baja Sea'. The forum page displays '#Topics: 10' and 'Page: 1/1' with a 'Post New Topic' button. The main content is a table titled 'TRIPS & DESTINATIONS' with columns for 'Subject', 'Started By', '#Posts', '#Views', and 'Last Post'.

Subject	Started By	#Posts	#Views	Last Post
 <a href="#">Best Spots for typical recreational kayaks?</a>	yapah_emilio	8	2701	Thursday 22nd April 2010 at 8:16:00 AM by Gringo Hiker
 <a href="#">best place you had kayak?</a>	randy17	4	525	Thursday 22nd April 2010 at 8:08:13 AM by Gringo Hiker
 <a href="#">add to your destination list</a>	sailor00	1	101	Monday 9th November 2009 at 2:56:20 AM by sailor00
 <a href="#">where is your dream destination?</a>	roylec	11	614	Wednesday 30th April 2008 at 3:40:28 AM by nereids
 <a href="#">NORDIC kayaking</a>	kulti	2	254	Wednesday 27th February 2008 at 1:19:00 AM by topito
 <a href="#">Kayaking Maine</a>	stella_kay	3	334	Friday 22nd February 2008 at 10:04:32 PM by domination

This site at [www.paddling.net](http://www.paddling.net) looked more promising with a lot of recent posts and some good discussions going on destinations. There is a section called “Getting Together and Going Paddling” and the posts are quite wide-ranging in topic and area showing that forum members are quite widespread. This would be a good forum to get involved in. Some threads have 20+ comments and there’s a lot of conversations being started. This may not necessarily be an appropriate forum to dive into but it gives an idea of what to look for.

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[Sign In](#) | [Main Page](#) | [New Topic](#) | [Search](#) | [Extended View](#) **Topic** title zone: col

Limit Display to Category:

Topics	Replies	Date/Time	Author
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">I'M jealous</a>	20 replies	12:05 AM Dec-11-10	by <a href="#">magicpaddler</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Central IL</a>	0 replies	10:57 PM Dec-10-10	by <a href="#">bowrudder</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Ozark trip dates</a>	29 replies	10:20 PM Dec-10-10	by <a href="#">Boyscout</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Burlington, Wi to Algonquin, Il</a>	4 replies	9:43 PM Dec-10-10	by <a href="#">babye</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Eleven piont river /current river 26-28</a>	8 replies	11:20 PM Dec-09-10	by <a href="#">Boyscout</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Today 12/12 Upper Delaware River</a>	0 replies	8:39 AM Dec-09-10	by <a href="#">suntan</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Ed Hayden memorial poling</a>	0 replies	7:50 PM Dec-08-10	by <a href="#">daggermat</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Warmer weather paddling?</a>	0 replies	5:38 PM Dec-04-10	by <a href="#">lackge</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Central Florida Paddling</a>	7 replies	7:03 PM Dec-03-10	by <a href="#">fwalburg</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Jocassee this weekend</a>	2 replies	9:50 PM Dec-01-10	by <a href="#">fanopoe</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Polar Bear paddle, Milwaukee Wi</a>	3 replies	11:18 PM Nov-26-10	by <a href="#">tradtkc</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Central America in 2011?</a>	0 replies	9:53 PM Nov-26-10	by <a href="#">packcamera</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">winter kayaking blues</a>	0 replies	3:17 PM Nov-23-10	

## The rules of forum marketing

This was probably not the best headline since it's important not to blatantly market on a forum. Becoming dominant in a niche is not about advertising – it's more about creating relationships with your potential guests and becoming known in the places where they gather to talk about their activities. This needs some commitment because people can get clannish in forums and any whiff of someone popping in to simply market their product can be met with a negative response.

- Introduce yourself as a person with an interest in the activity that is the subject of the forum, rather than as the owner of a property members might like to stay in.

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- Be a genuine forum user – other members are very savvy and are naturally suspicious of anyone who may have an ulterior motive for joining.
- Most forums allow you to create a signature block that has a web address in it. Sometimes it's better to start without putting this in. Get known as a regular poster – make at least 20 posts on a popular forum – before you include the property URL
- Be relevant – don't use a topic as an excuse for advertising as this won't create any friends.

Getting involved in a forum requires a lot of commitment and may not be for everyone. However, it can be an extremely effective form of “marketing” to a very targeted community.

### **Travel Forums**

Travel forums are a great place to offer recommendations and advice about your area. As with all other forums, advertising is rarely permitted so read the Forum Rules on each site thoroughly.

### **Comment on blogs**

Make a habit of commenting on blogs in the niche community. You can find them as easily as finding forums just by Googling the activity followed by the word “blog”. Check that the blog is up to date and the blog writer posts regularly, and look at a few posts to see how many comments are made. As with forums, there is little hope of your comment being seen if the blog is not being read by others.

If you have never commented on a blog there's a few things you should know before you jump in and start advertising your property.

- Signature is important – Most blogs require registration to comment and how you do this will impact on what shows on the post. There is usually a field for your URL and it's fine to use it.
- Be relevant
- Don't promote yourself within the comment
- Add something of value

Most blog comments will be checked before they are published and any that appear to be off-topic and posted purely for marketing purposes will never make it to the Comment section on the post.

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## Resources

More resources will be added here and we will let you know when there has been an update

### General Resources

Check out [Meet Up](#). This is where groups plan get together and there may be opportunities to market to them.

Twitter is an excellent resource for finding travel writers as there are thousands of them out there just looking for the next story. Follow them on Twitter or just go to their profiles and check out their web sites. Here's a few lists to start with:

Mashable's list of [women travel writers](#)

Here is a great list of [award winning travel writers](#) with links to their vital information

At time of writing there are [264 travel writers](#) on this list

## Forums & Blogs

### Photography

Digital Grin - <http://www.dgrin.com>

Outdoor Photography Canada: <http://www.outdoorphotographycanada.com/forum>

Travel Photography Forum: <http://photo.net/travel-photography-forum/>

### Best Travel Forums

Fodors: <http://www.fodors.com/community/>

Virtual Tourist World Travel Forum: <http://forum.virtualtourist.com/>

Trip Advisor: <http://www.tripadvisor.ca/ForumHome>

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## Geocaching

This is a niche everyone can get into and so easy to become an enthusiast. Promoting geocaching in your area could be a perfect niche option.

Official geocaching website: <http://www.geocaching.com/>

Groundspeak Forum (686,000 members): <http://forums.groundspeak.com/GC/>

## Travel Blogs

BootsnAll Travel Guide: <http://www.bootsnall.com/>

Nomadic Matt's Travel Guide: <http://www.nomadicmatt.com/>

Everything Everywhere: <http://everything-everywhere.com/>

Travel Savvy Mom: <http://www.travelsavvymom.com/>

The Vacation Gals: <http://thevacationgals.com/>

Delicious Baby: <http://www.deliciousbaby.com/>

The Perrin Post (Conde Nast): <http://www.concierge.com/cntraveler/blogs/perrinpost>

Amateur Traveller: <http://amateurtraveler.com/>

Travel Rants: <http://www.travel-rants.com/>

Vacation Home Rentals Blog: <http://www.vacationhomerentals.com/blog/>

We Just Got Back (Family Vacations): <http://www.wejustgotback.com/>

Travelling Mom Blogger Network: <http://www.travelingmom.com/blogs.html>