

BEST PRACTICES GUIDE TO:

Creating an Outstanding Online Booking Experience





Table of Contents



3 Introduction

14 Ad-ons, Upsells & incremental revenue streams in the Zaii OBE

4 Your Website

19 Optimizing the Zaii online booking engine experience by user type

6 Linking to the Zaii Booking Engine from your website

24 Conculsion

9 Branding & Optimizing your Zaii Online Booking Engine



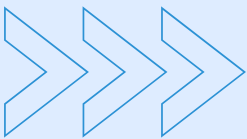
Introduction

In this hyper-connected world, your website and booking experience tell the story you want to tell about your brand and product offering. This is your most important marketing channel, and your most profitable booking channel.

Your website not only needs to entice and excite potential customers by showcasing your unique products and services, but also provide a frictionless path to purchase, via your online booking engine.

For this and many other reasons, it is imperative that your website and customer journey through to purchase is flawless.

To help you get the most out of your website and Zaii booking engine, we've created this best practice guide to creating an outstanding online booking experience from start to finish.



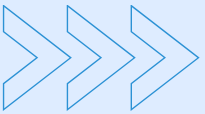
Your Website

It is not the purpose of this guide to go into great detail on the subject of website design. There are innumerable resources to help build a beautiful and highly converting ecommerce tour booking website.

However as a quick checklist, the keys to a highly-converting ecommerce website include:

- ✓ Beautiful, eye-catching visuals, such as quality photos and videos of showcasing your tours
- ✓ A clean and intuitive design that guides users through the booking process
- ✓ Clear and concise copy that highlights the unique features of each tour or activity
- ✓ A voice and tone that matches your personality and brand
- ✓ Consistent branding throughout the website
- ✓ Mobile-responsive design for seamless browsing on any device
- ✓ Interactive maps for visualizing tour locations
- ✓ Integration with social media platforms for easy sharing and promotion of tours
- ✓ An easy to find Book Now link located in the header of your website





Your Website

WEBSITE DESIGN RESOURCES FOR TOUR AND ACTIVITY OPERATORS

- **Tourpreneur.com** - a community of passionate tour business owners eager to improve their skills and increase their profits. Host of the Tourpreneur Podcast series [tourpreneur.com](https://www.tourpreneur.com)
- **Tourpreneur Facebook Group** - for tour operators & professionals - An active group of over 7500 tour and activity professionals
- **How to Turn Lookers into Bookers** - a free guide to Tour Operator website design and strategy tourismmarketing.agency/lookers-into-bookers
- **How to use AI to assist in your marketing and website design** - searchenginejournal.com/small-local-service-businesses-use-ai-digital-marketing



Linking to the Zai Booking Engine from your website



The Zai booking engine is the final stage on the path to purchase. It is essential that it is easy to find, flows seamlessly and is in keeping with the theme, style and tone of your website.

In this section we cover best practices and the tools available to you to optimize your Zai Online Booking engine. For this we'll use a fictitious rafting tour company - *Rocky River Rafting* as an example.

A live, interactive website for this company can be found at <https://demolabs.zai.com/rocky-river-raft-tours/>

There are two ways to integrate the Zai Booking Engine into your website:

1. **Book Now Buttons**
2. **Activity Booking Widget**

Below we describe each method and when to use them.



Linking to the Zauai Booking Engine: *Book Now Buttons*



BOOK NOW BUTTON METHOD

This is the default method for linking to the booking engine. Potential customers simply click booking buttons to view and interact with the booking engine.

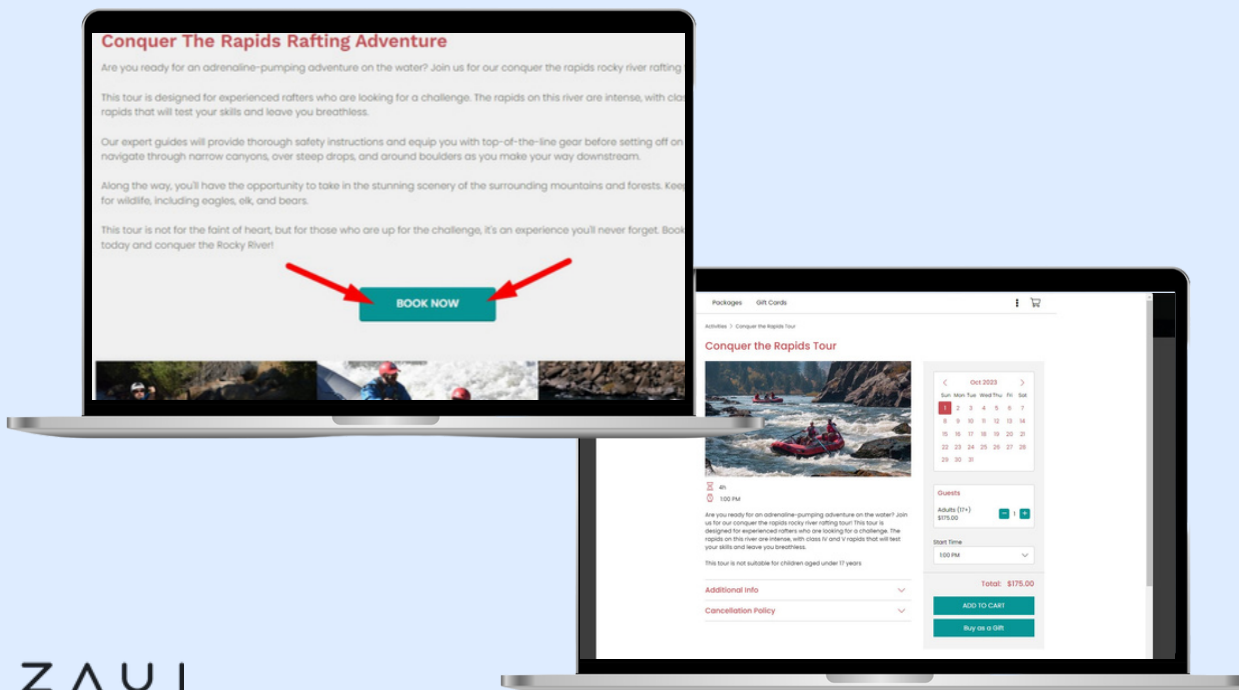
Book Now Buttons Should be:

- ✓ Easily visible and distinguishable from other elements on a page
- ✓ Placed in a prominent location, like near the top of the page or at the end of a description
- ✓ Linked to the most relevant landing page based on where they are situated on your website

We recommend configuring book now buttons so when clicked, the online booking engine opens into a light frame that sits on top of your website, rather than opening full screen in a new tab or loading over the top of your website*. Instructions on how to configure your book now links to open in a light frame are detailed in our knowledge base [How to Link the Zauai Booking Engine to your Website](#).

*Booking link behaviour differs by device type. Mobile devices do not support light frame and always open in a full screen.

FIG 1. WEB PAGE WITH PROMINENT BOOK NOW LINK AND EMBEDDED BOOKING ENGINE



Linking to the Zauai Booking Engine: *Activity Widget*



ACTIVITY WIDGET METHOD

This method involves integrating an activity availability calendar directly into your website so potential customers can check availability and price out the total cost for their group without leaving your website. This provides a more seamless experience and reduces clicks on the path to purchase.

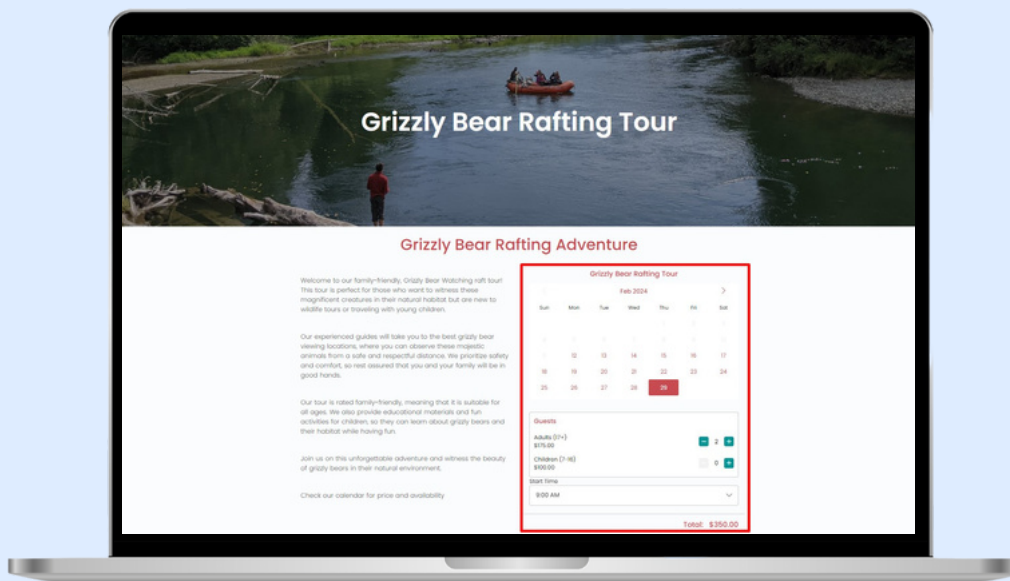
The Booking Widget is designed to display the availability of one particular activity, therefore they should only be used on activity-specific pages of your website.


Formatting recommendations for booking widgets:

- ✓ Use a two column format, placing the widget in the right hand column
- ✓ Situate the widget high on the webpage and aligned closely with key tour info
- ✓ Place widgets only on activity-specific pages of your website. If you have a tour overview page, use book now buttons to link to each activity

Detailed instructions on setting up booking widgets can be found in our [Knowledge Base](#).

FIG 2. BOOKING WIDGET EMBEDDED IN WEB PAGE



 [Click to view](#) a live example of the activity widget

Branding & Optimizing your Zai Online Booking Engine

There are three controls available to you to control the look and feel of your Zai Online Booking Engine: Font Family, Colours and Images. You'll want to match the look and feel of your website as much as possible.

FONT FAMILY

The Zai booking engine has 30 font family options, covering the full spectrum of available web fonts. Click the drop down button to select and preview the font family. If the font family your website uses is not included in the list, a web search for 'Fonts similar to [FONT FAMILY NAME]' will provide you with some alternative options.

COLOURS

Match the primary, secondary and font colours to those on your website. If you don't know the exact hex (hexadecimal) codes for your website, use a web browser extension tool such as [Eye Dropper](#) to scrape the hex codes of the primary colours from your website.

IMAGES

Images are essential to the storytelling process. You have two images to work with in your Zai online booking engine: The activity (or product or package) image and the activity category image.



TIPS

- Engage the assistance of your marketing person or team, and/or the individual(s) responsible for looking after your website to complete these steps.
- To avoid disrupting your booking site, create a test portal in your Zai system, under Settings > Online Bookings > Portals > Create New Portal. Make your updates, then go to Online Bookings > Booking Embeds & Widgets. Select your newly created test portal from the drop down list, then preview the Book Now button. Refresh the page as you make changes. When you are satisfied with the look and feel of your booking engine, copy the settings over to your live portal and save the portal.

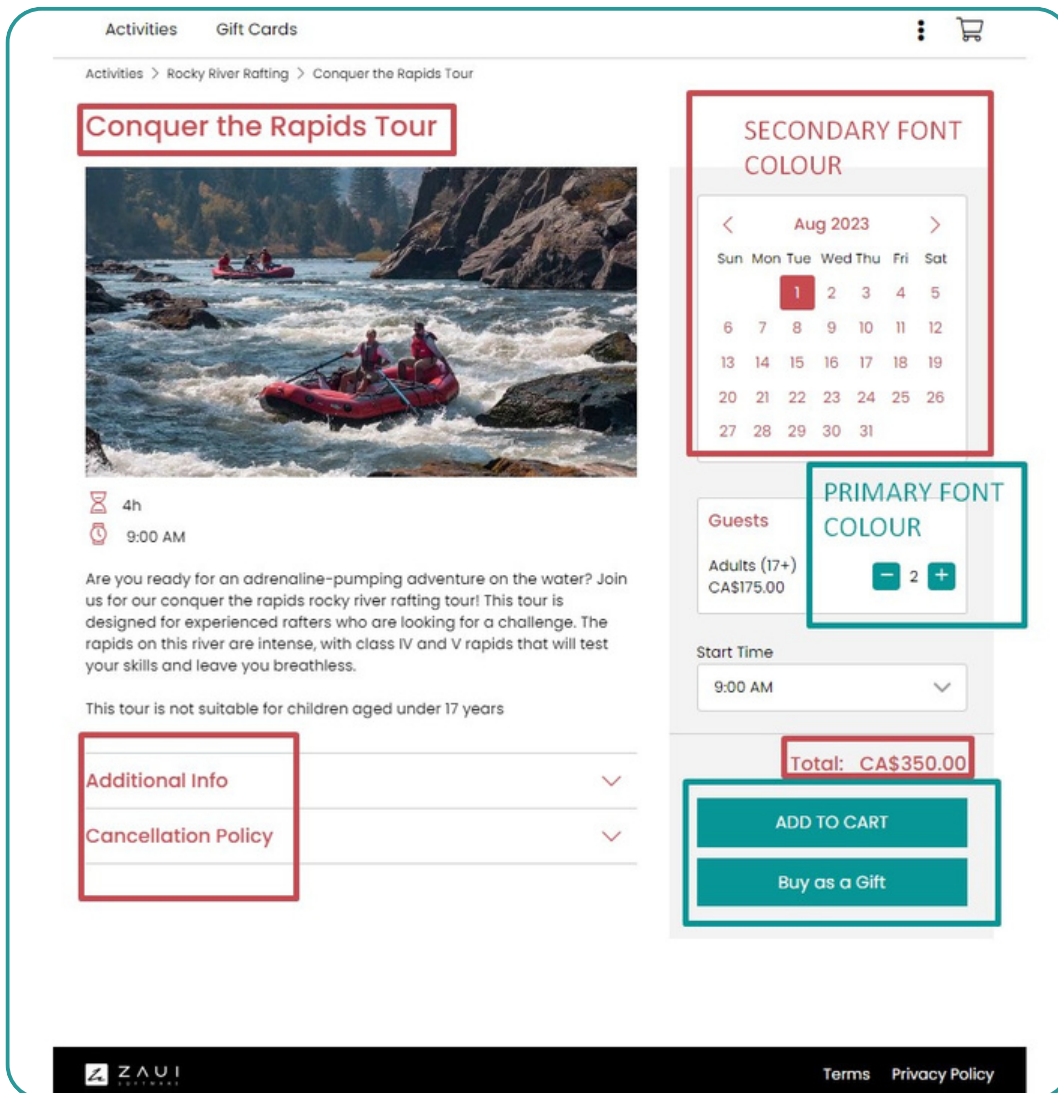
Colours

Primary Colour is the colour of your Book Now and other call to action buttons, including date and passenger selection buttons and purchase options - add to shopping cart or purchase as a gift.

Secondary Colour is the colour of your titles, including the activity/product/package name, Month in the Calendar, Guests, Duration, Time, Total Price, Notes/Restrictions, Additional Info and Cancellation Policy.

Font Colour is your tertiary colour, and is used for your text copy and less essential information. The majority of users will want to use a simple black or dark grey.

FIG 3. ELEMENTS BELONGING TO EACH COLOUR GROUP



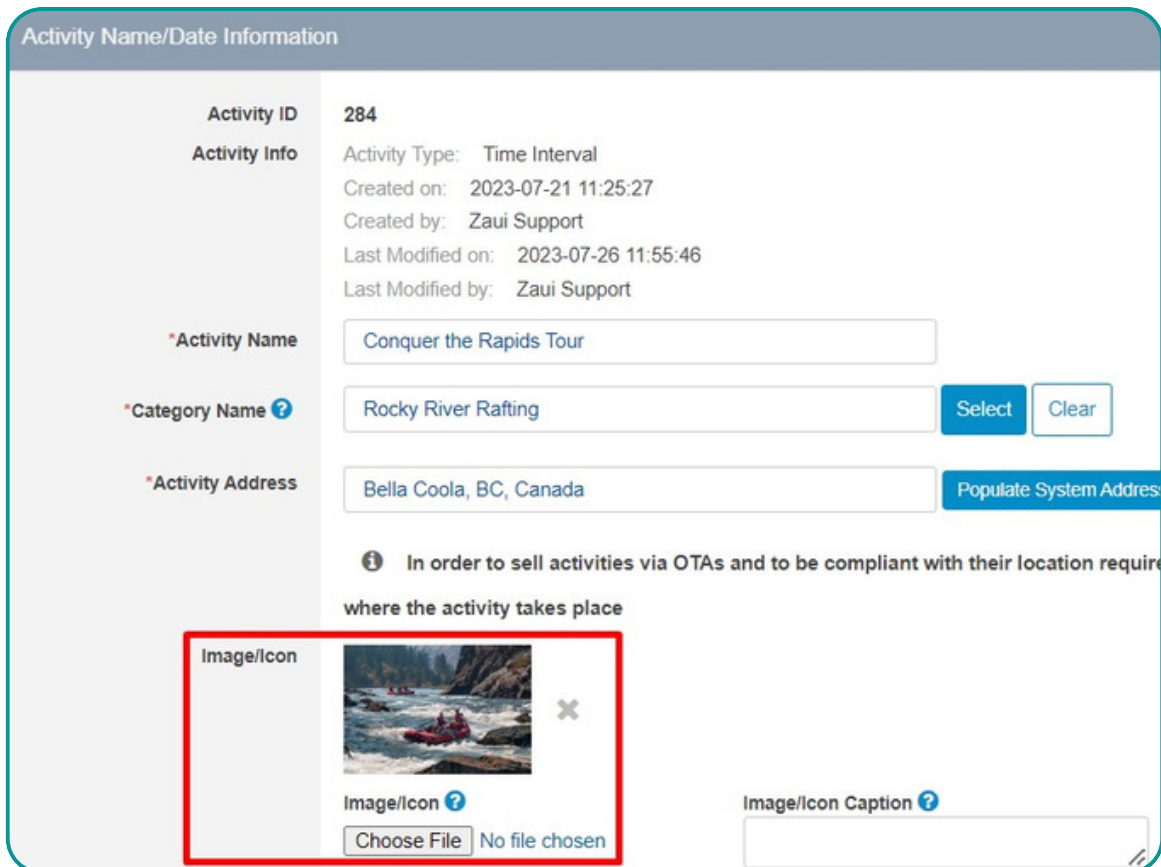
Images

The Zai Booking Engine allows for two images to be uploaded per activity:

The Activity image should be your most recognizable and iconic image. The chosen image should feature prominently on the tour-specific page of your website, providing a visual cue and confirmation to a customer looking to book your tour that they are booking the right one. This image will appear on the activity booking and shopping cart pages of your booking engine, as well as on your booking confirmation emails.

Upload your activity image by going to Activities > Activity List > Select the activity you want to add the image to, then choose the file you want to upload.

FIG 4. ACTIVITY IMAGE LOCATION IN ZAUI



Activity Name/Date Information

Activity ID: 284


Activity Info: Activity Type: Time Interval
Created on: 2023-07-21 11:25:27
Created by: Zai Support
Last Modified on: 2023-07-26 11:55:46
Last Modified by: Zai Support

*Activity Name: Conquer the Rapids Tour

*Category Name: Rocky River Rafting [Select] [Clear]

*Activity Address: Bella Coola, BC, Canada [Populate System Address]

i In order to sell activities via OTAs and to be compliant with their location requirements, you must provide a location where the activity takes place

Image/Icon:  [X]

Image/Icon: [Choose File] No file chosen

Image/Icon Caption: [Text input field]

Images

The Activity Category image is the image under which all the tours grouped into a particular category fall. Depending on which page a customer enters the activity booking flow, they may never see this image, thus it is less important than the activity image. However, an image should always be added as best practice. Select a high quality image that represents your offerings as a whole, for example an image that features on the landing page of your website.

Upload your activity category image by going to Activities > Activity Categories. Select the category you want to add the image to, then choose the file you want to upload.

FIG 5. CATEGORY IMAGE LOCATION IN ZAUI

FILE TIPS



- For activity file size must be less than 781 KB, with dimensions at least 765px x 430px and in JPG or JPEG format.
- The recommended aspect ratio is between 4:3 and 16:9.
- Avoid using any images with text and those that don't look good when shrunk. Upload and check every image to ensure it looks great!

Content of your Zau Online Booking Engine

Now it's time to turn your attention to the content of your activities within your Zau booking engine. You most likely already have your tours and activities set up, including description and additional tour information. Go to the landing page on your website for each tour and review the content there. Now follow the link to your Zau Booking Engine and in the context of the content on your website, consider what information needs to be presented on the Zau booking engine for that same activity. It is likely that you won't need to repeat everything.

The content should:

- Reassure the customer that they are booking the right activity
- Cover any important logistical information, such as: what to bring, what's included and what's excluded
- Be simple and mention only what is absolutely necessary for the customer to know before they complete their purchase

To update any of this go to your activity configuration. For more information review:

- [Setting up Interval Activities](#)
- [Setting up Standard Activities](#)

TIPS



- Consider asking a friend or family member who is less close to your product to review and provide feedback on the content.
- Keep in mind that the content contained in the Additional Info section is included on booking email confirmations therefore it is the best place for important logistical tour details.
- Information contained in the Activity Specific Cancellation/Reservation Policy will also be included on booking confirmation emails by default.

Add-ons, Upsells & Incremental Revenue Streams in the Zauí OBE

In addition to being hard wired for success in sales, the Zauí Online Booking Engine also opens up the opportunity for additional revenue streams including:

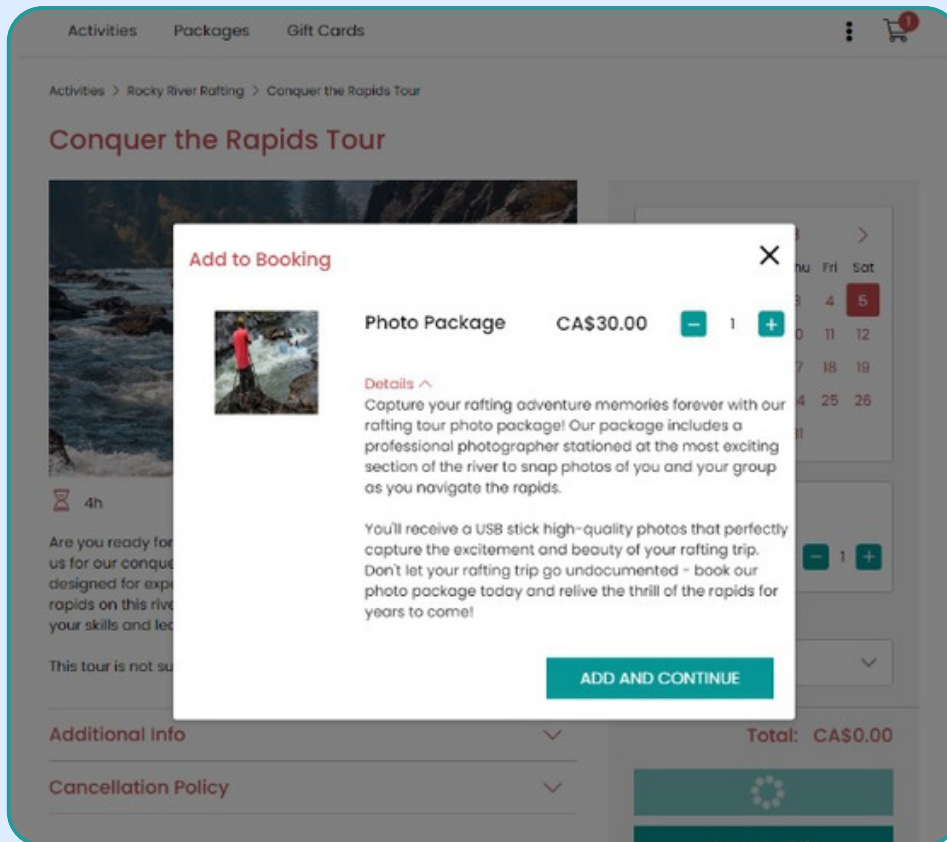
- ✓ Linked activities/products
- ✓ Packages
- ✓ Packages upsells
- ✓ Online gift cards

LINKED ACTIVITIES/LINKED PRODUCTS

These are optional upsell activities or products can be shown to customers as a pop-up after they add an item to the shopping cart. Examples include related tours, a gift shop item, or a tour add-on such as a photo package.

More info in this [Knowledge Base article](#).

FIG 6. PHOTO PACKAGE PRODUCT UPSSELL



Add-ons, Upsells & Incremental Revenue Streams in the Zau OBE

PACKAGES

Packages are a fixed group of activities and/or products that can be combined and sold together for a set price

FIG 7. PACKAGE CONTAINING TWO ACTIVITIES

The screenshot displays the Zau OBE interface for a rafting package. On the left, a category page titled "Rocky River Rafting Combo packages" shows a single package: "Running Rapids & Conquer Rapids Combo Raft Package". On the right, a detailed view of this package is shown. The package is titled "Running Rapids & Conquer Rapids Combo Raft Package" and is priced at \$300.00. It includes two activities: "Running Rapids Tour" and "Conquer the Rapids Tour". The "Running Rapids Tour" is scheduled for Sunday, Oct 1, 2023, at 9:00 AM, and the "Conquer the Rapids Tour" is scheduled for the same date at 1:00 PM. The total price is \$300.00, and there is an "ADD TO CART" button.

Add-ons, Upsells & Incremental Revenue Streams in the Zauí OBE

PACKAGES

If the activity a customer is viewing is available in a package tour option, this is automatically presented to the customer on the activity page.

FIG 8. UPSELLS IN PACKAGE CONTAINING THE ACTIVITY OF INTEREST

The screenshot displays a product page for a rafting activity. On the left, there is a description of the 'intermediate running rapids tour' and a note that it is suitable for children aged 10 and above. Below the description are expandable sections for 'Additional Info' and 'Cancellation Policy'. On the right, a 'Guests' section shows 1 adult (CA\$175.00) and 0 children (CA\$100.00). A 'Start Time' dropdown is set to 1:00 PM. The total price is CA\$175.00, with 'ADD TO CART' and 'Buy as a Gift' buttons. A teal arrow points from the 'Cancellation Policy' section to a section titled 'Packages that include this activity', which features a card for the 'Running Rapids & Conquer Rapids Combo Raft Package' with two images of rafting.

Add-ons, Upsells & Incremental Revenue Streams in the Zau OBE

ONLINE GIFT CARDS

Gift cards are an option which can drive incremental revenue, particularly around the holiday season. Zau Gift cards are available for purchase in two formats:

- Value-based
- Tour/activity-specific

If enabled, tour-specific gift cards will be promoted as an option within the booking process. More info in this [Knowledge Base article](#).

FIG 9. GIFT CARD OPTION & PURCHASE INTERFACE

The image displays two parts of the Zau OBE interface. On the left, the 'Conquer the Rapids Tour' booking page is shown. It features a photo of rafting, a calendar for October 2023, and a 'Buy as a Gift' button highlighted with red arrows. On the right, a 'Gift Cards' purchase form is shown, which includes fields for activity, guests, recipient details, and a total price of \$175.00.

Conquer the Rapids Tour

4h
9:00 AM

Are you ready for an adrenaline-pumping adventure on the water? Join us for our conquer the rapids rocky river rafting tour! This tour is designed for experienced rafters who are looking for a challenge. The rapids on this river are intense, with class IV and V rapids that will test your skills and leave you breathless.

This tour is not suitable for children aged under 17 years

Additional Info
Cancellation Policy

Oct 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Guests

Adults (17+) \$175.00

Start Time
9:00 AM

Total: \$175.00

ADD TO CART

Buy as a Gift

Gift Cards

Amount Activity

Activity
Conquer the Rapids Tour

Guests
1 Adults (17+)

Recipient Details

First Name Last Name
Robin Hood

Email Address
rhoad@gmail.com

Message to Recipient
Happy Birthday!

Total: \$175.00

ADD TO CART

Zaui Booking Engine Configuration



PAYMENT PAGE SETUP

This is the final page where you have the option to customize and optimize your Zaui Online Booking Engine. Here, customers complete their bookings and make payment. To reduce clicks and friction in this critical final stage, ensure you are only collecting the bare minimum information required to run your tour.

There are mandatory and optional fields on the payment page.

Mandatory fields:

- Customer Name
- Email
- Customer Credit Card information
- Agreement with your policies and terms of service

Optional fields you may want or need to collect (can be mandatory or optional):

- How did you hear about us? A drop down list to track referral source
- Additional customer information: Phone number, country, address, notes or comments
- Custom fields. Any additional required information to run your operation. These can be in the form of check boxes (as below), a date, a text field or a numerical dropdown.

FIG 10. CHECKOUT PAGE OPTION

The screenshot shows the checkout page for the 'Conquer the Rapids Tour'. It includes a 'Customer Details' section with fields for First Name, Last Name, and Email Address. A red box highlights a confirmation checkbox: I understand this tour is for experienced rafters and confirm that I/all members of my group has previous white water rafting experience. To the right, a summary box shows the tour details: 'Conquer the Rapids Tour', 'Sunday, Oct 1, 2023 @ 9:00 AM', '2 Adults (17+)', '\$350.00', and 'Cancellation Policy'. Below this, a subtotal of \$350.00 and taxes & fees of \$0.00 result in a total of \$350.00.

Optimizing the Zau online booking engine experience by user type

We've now covered the branding and incremental sales opportunities that the Zau OBE provides. The final piece of the puzzle and as important a consideration of anything we've covered so far is what booking interface to present to a potential customer based on where they are at on their journey to purchase.

In this final section we'll review the most common visitor states, describe their purpose and needs, and how they interact with your website and booking engine. We then recommend the best interface options to present to them based on the stage they are at when they visit your website.

User types:

1. Lookers/Researchers
2. Bookers
3. In destination Tourists/Planners
4. Agents

Your website should accommodate and be optimized for all of the above booking journey scenarios, allowing the user to access the information they need and provides a direct, frictionless path to purchase.

For a full list of all Zau Online Booking Engine interfaces view [How to Link the Zau Booking Engine to your Website](#).





Lookers / Researchers



Visitor state

A potential customer has discovered your company and is visiting your website for the first time. They might be researching options and not yet have a specific tour in mind.

Visitor purpose

Learn about what you have to offer. They may be comparing prices, reading reviews, and evaluating alternative ideas or competitive options at the same time. They may or may not be ready to make a purchase.

Website interface(s)

Tour-specific pages. See [Grizzly Viewing Tour](#) and [Conquer the Rapids Tour](#) as examples. As this group is still evaluating their options, your website needs to wow them with compelling video footage or imagery, well-written, succinct copy and excellent reviews. This group is by far your largest source of traffic and where you have the most to lose.

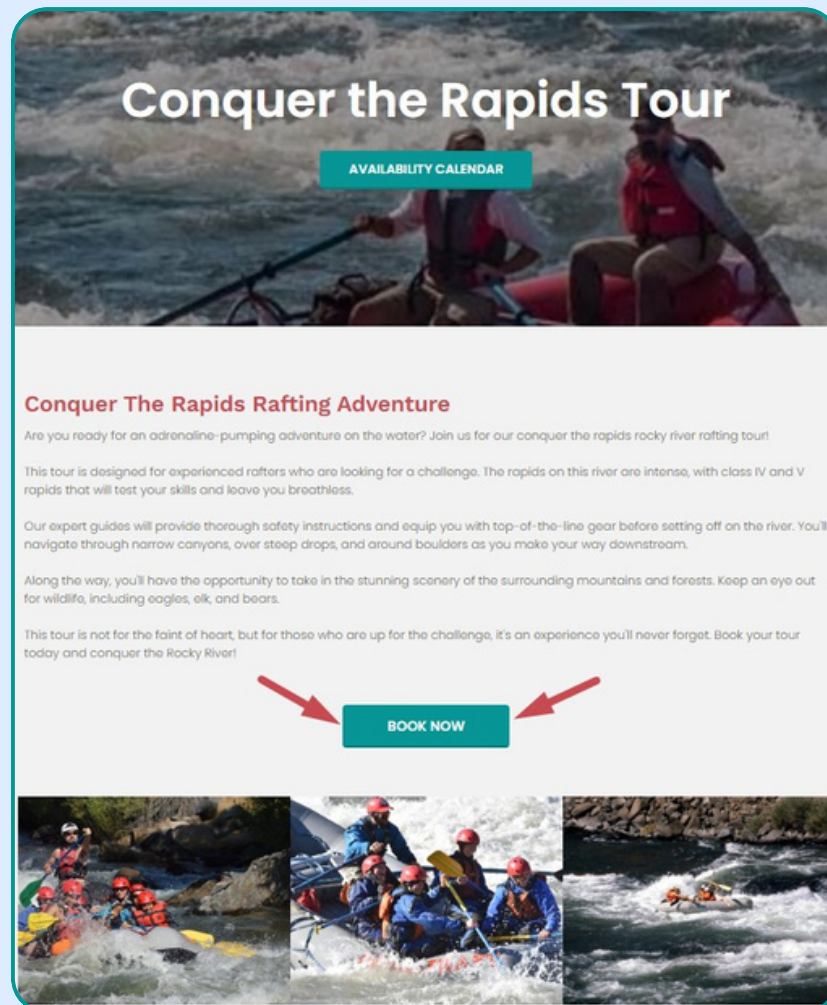
Booking engine interface(s)

Embedded Booking Widget or activity-specific page via Book Now link. These visitors are browsing specific tour pages. If something catches their eye, they may want to check availability and total price for their group. As shown in Fig 11, a clear call to book that directs to the booking page of the specific tour page they are interested in is the best interface to present.

Typical booking lead time

Months to days before activity date.

FIG 11. ACTIVITY-SPECIFIC BOOK NOW BUTTON





Bookers / Return to purchase

Visitor state

These visitors are further along in the booking process. They have completed their research and decided on the specific tour they want to book.

Visitor purpose

Checking availability and pricing, completing their purchase.

Website interface(s)

These visitors may either navigate back to the tour-specific page on your website, or look for your generic booking link, as seen below.

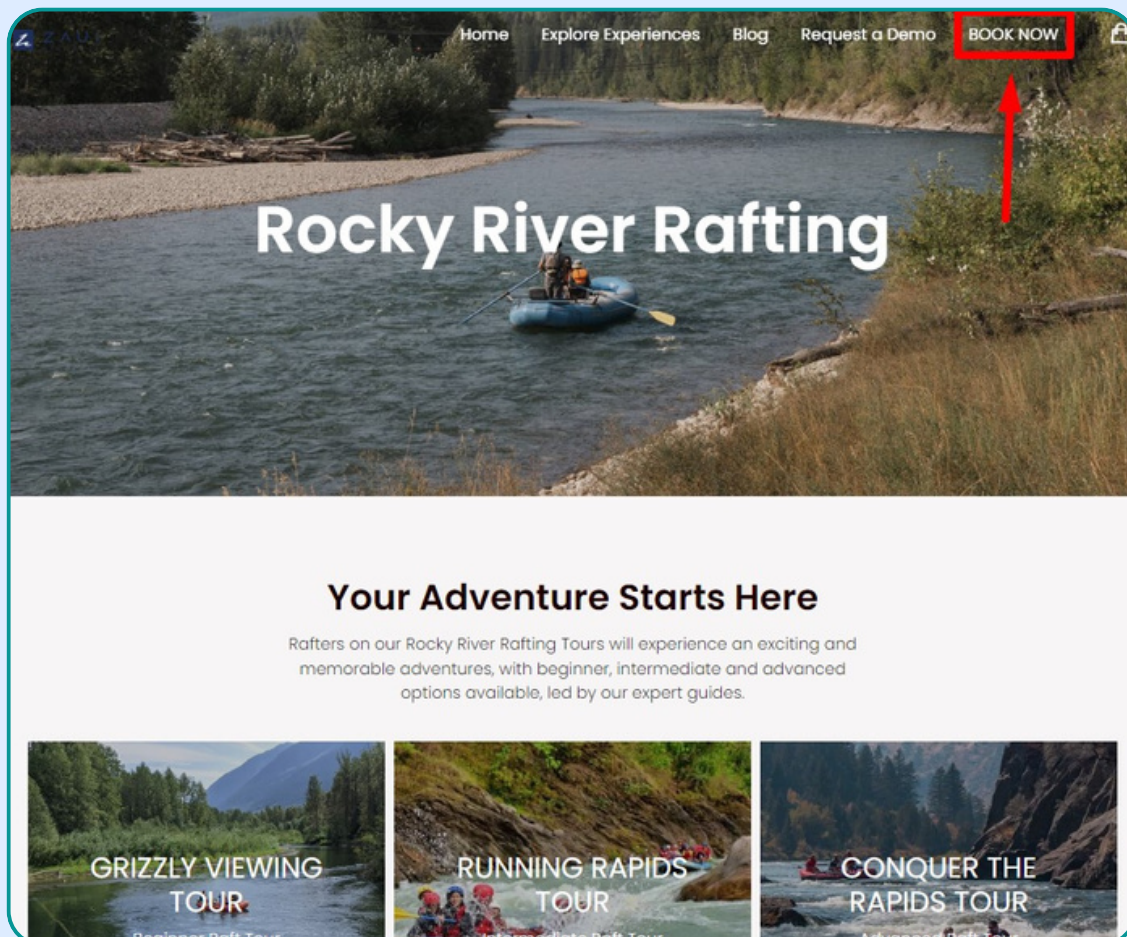
Booking engine interface(s)

These visitors may land on your tour overview page, your tour specific booking page or your availability calendar page.

Typical booking lead time

Weeks to hours before activity date/time.

FIG 12. GENERAL BOOK NOW LINK





Planners / In-destination Tourists

Visitor state

These visitors are interested in experiencing one of your tours or activities but have a limited timeframe in which to travel and/or may already be in destination and looking for a last minute tour or activity.

Visitor purpose

Research options and ascertain whether availability aligns with interest and given timeframe. They may be planning a trip for a group or family and need to coordinate multiple itineraries or looking for information on group discounts, private tours, or other customized options.

Website interface(s)

Similar to Bookers, Planners may have already researched your tour options and decided they want to book with you. The question they are wanting to answer: Do any of the options I'm interested in fit with my schedule? As seen below, an easy to find booking link can quickly provide this information. This may be in the form of the book now button in the header of your website, or via an 'Availability check' button on the tour-specific pages of your website.

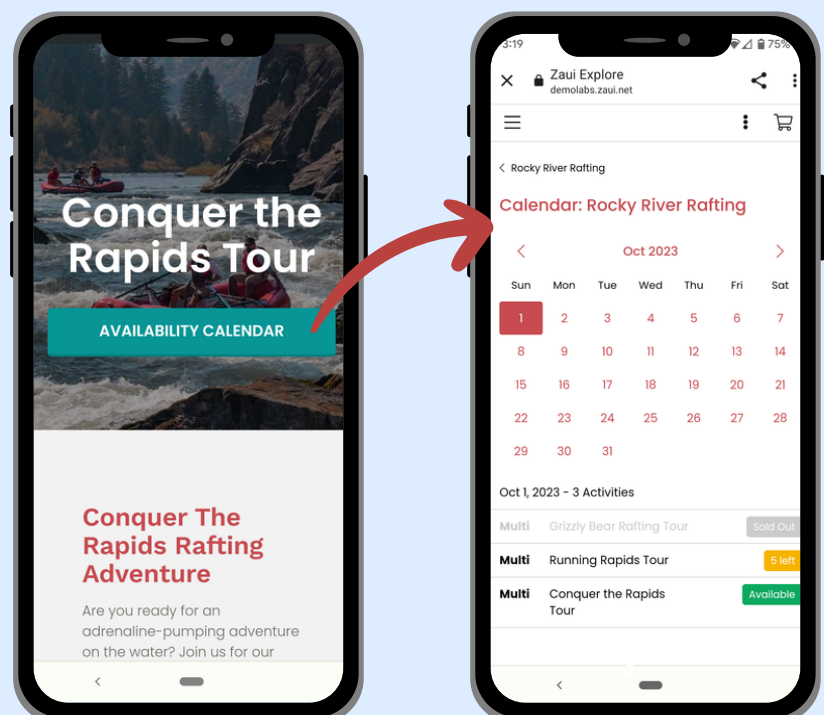
Booking engine interface(s)

The best booking interface to present to this visitor group is the overall or category availability calendar, which provides availability at a glance. In the image below, a user can easily see what is available and what is sold out.

Typical booking lead time

Weeks to hours before activity date/time.

FIG 13. AVAILABILITY CALENDAR BOOKING LINK





Agents



The end consumer is not the only user type that may visit your website. Agents with whom you have commissionable or wholesale agreements also access your website.

Visitor state

Agents are most likely already familiar with your tour and activity options and are visiting your website to check your availability and make a booking on behalf of their clients.

Visitor purpose

This is a very similar profile to in destination tourists/planners: The agent is assisting their clients in selecting the best option based on their interest and availability to determine whether a tour can accommodate their customers.

Website interface(s)

You may want to host an agent booking link and/or information page in the footer of your website. Alternatively, provide a direct login link or coach agents where to access the agent login in your online booking engine.

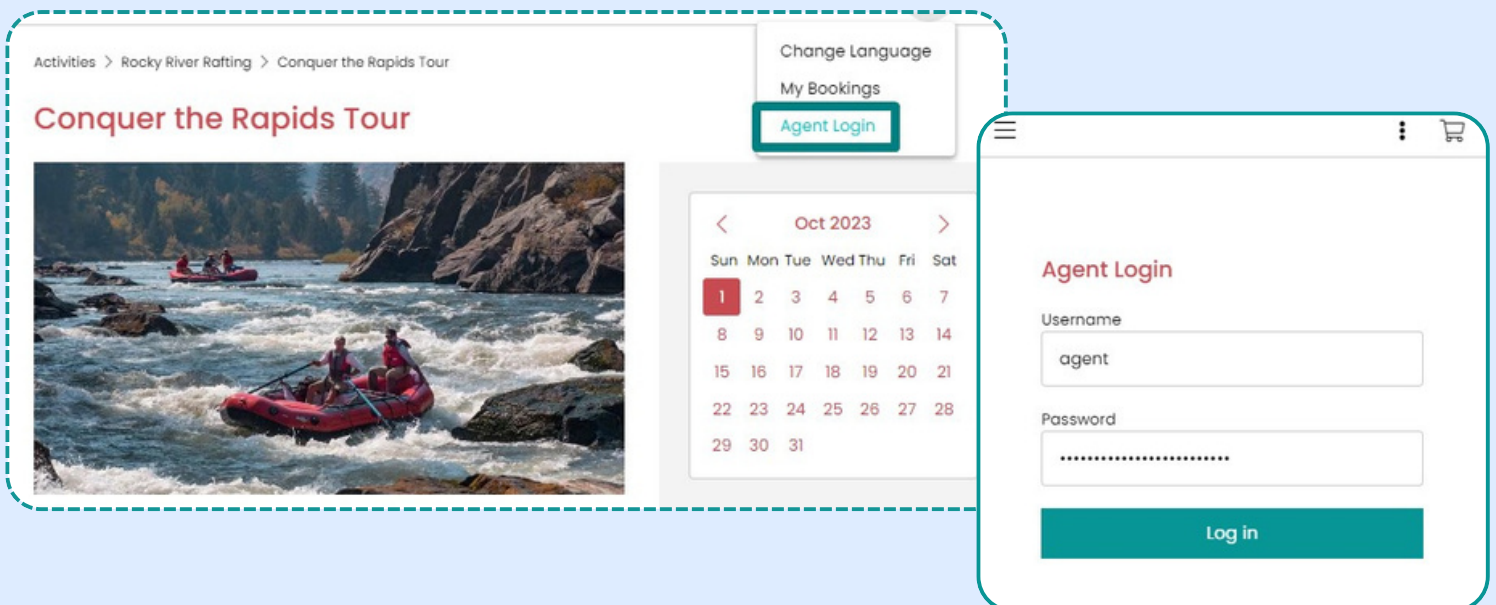
Booking engine interface(s)

Agent login to activity specific booking page or Availability Calendar.

Typical booking lead time

Days to hours before departure.

FIG 14. AGENT BOOKING LINKS



Conclusion

Creating an outstanding online booking experience is crucial for the success of any tour and activity operation that offers online reservations. By following the best practices outlined in this guide you can be confident that your website and Zau Online Booking Engine is optimized for all user types and is showcasing your product range to the best of your ability.

NEXT STEPS

Now you have optimized your booking experience, some additional items to review and update include:

- [Google Things to do](#)
- [Google Analytics](#)

