

Essentialist hits 97% CSAT with Front

INDUSTRY

TRAVEL

COMPANY SIZE

51 - 200

Essentialist is a private membership service for travelers seeking unique luxury travel experiences. Led by CEO & Founder, Joan Roca, Essentialist curates high-touch itineraries based on each member's needs and interests, leveraging expertise and insights from local travel editors and food journalists around the world.

Each itinerary has an editorial feel, beautifully designed and hand-crafted to reflect each traveler's ideal experience. Members have 24/7 access to Essentialist Member Experience Managers and Travel Designers who can further optimize their vacation, whether it's a weekend getaway or an overseas trip.

By pairing proprietary in-house technology with best-in-class customer operations platform Front, Essentialist is able to ensure a seamless and exceptional experience with every member interaction.

Challenge

Everything the Essentialist team does is in service of delivering a premier member experience. But tailoring itineraries, coordinating travel plans, and answering member questions in Outlook was an inefficient process, requiring teammates to work harder to exceed customer expectations.

Although the team had an email distribution list, it wasn't used on a large scale. To communicate internally, travel designers and account managers copied and forwarded emails from their personal Outlook inboxes, which made critical metrics like response time challenging to track.

Response time is key to their customer retention strategy. Because of Outlook's limitations, it could take several hours to get messages to the right teammate and seek manager input – delaying their reply to a member.

Essentialist CEO & Founder, Joan Roca, explains, "Operationally, we needed to share information in a much easier way in order to maintain the high level of personalization our customers anticipate."

Solution

Front's omnichannel communications platform brought visibility and efficiency to the member support experience, skyrocketing the company's CSAT score to an all-time high. As Joan puts it, "our company's collaboration has drastically improved thanks to Front."

Enabling speed and personalization with automatic routing and centralized data

Before Front, routing emails to the right person was a challenge in and of itself. Today, the team uses Front's rules engine to route messages to the right pod of account managers and travel designers based on custom fields in Front's contact and account manager.

Getting the right message to the right team in seconds has dramatically decreased response time – one of the company's key metrics for an optimal member experience.



Response time is everything. Before, it was difficult to route an email to the right person in order to get a response. Now it can be actioned as soon as possible.

- JOAN ROCA, CEO & FOUNDER AT ESSENTIALIST

Getting the Essentialist team out of siloed inboxes and into a shared workspace like Front has also set team members up for greater personalization in their communications. With an entire member's history at their fingertips, they can customize every stage of the planning process with precision and accuracy.

“Our customers should never have to repeat something twice. If they tell us they don’t like larger chain hotels, it’s now saved in their profile and visible in Front. The agent should never have to ask it again.”

When needed, Front users can easily loop in managers or other team members for consultation. Front’s comments take users straight to the relevant parts of a member’s message, eliminating the need to sift through lengthy chains and getting members answers to their questions faster.

“Comments are one of our favorite features. Everyone loves them. It’s huge to be able to comment in a thread, discuss next steps, and celebrate when a member gives great feedback.”

Best of all, Front’s shared inboxes allow team members to automatically assign messages to a specific person or another inbox, providing wrap-around coverage during shift changes or time off.

Providing a consistent member experience thanks to templates and approvals

Personalizing trips based on members’ travel preferences, style, and frequency is a non-negotiable for Essentialist, but it can’t come at the sacrifice of brand voice.

To help team members maintain a certain tone and style, the Essentialist team built Front message templates for multiple types of member communications, from acknowledging requests to sending proposals to collecting feedback – all with ample room for personalization.

They also created customized approval workflows to ensure all one-off member requests fall within an acceptable scope. Front’s shared drafts act as a final double-check for travel designers, giving managers a bird’s-eye view into all member communications and allowing them to step in when needed.

“Travel designers on our team need to be following our approved processes and wording. Someone may have a request that’s out of scope or a complaint that needs to be resolved with utmost care. Front helps us get things done the proper way,” says Joan.

Maintaining an unbeatable member experience with real-time analytics

Essentialist’s luxury clientele expects premium service, and Front gives the team the tools to deliver and measure it. Whereas monitoring response time in Outlook would take hours of manual work, Front makes it easy to pull key KPIs from pre-built dashboards.

The Essentialist managers use Front reports to continuously monitor response times and to set new goals each quarter, ensuring all team members stay on track.

They’ve found that working more efficiently with Front has reduced Essentialist’s response times to 30 minutes compared to a 12-hour industry average, boosting their CSAT score to one of the best in the travel industry.



“Front is essential to our fast response times and exceptional member experience. We’ve reduced our response time to 30 minutes compared to an industry average of 12 hours. We’re also measuring our CSAT score now. It’s at an all-time high of 97%, way above the average in our industry.

- JOAN ROCA, CEO & FOUNDER AT ESSENTIALIST

Staying on the cutting edge of travel innovation

Essentialist continues to be a Front power user, taking advantage of calendar links, AI compose and summarize features, and integrations with software like Dialpad and WhatsApp.

Centralizing operations into an all-in-one, intuitive platform like Front has become core to Essentialist’s competitive strategy, setting them up to provide an unbeatable member experience – today and for years to come.

“When we switched over four years ago, there was some pushback, but now we can’t imagine not using Front,” says Joan.

24/7

Operations

97%

CSAT score

30-min

Response times