

Youtravel targets growth through trade partnerships

By Lee Hayhurst | 05 March 2014 at 08.16 GMT [1 Comment](#)

Bedbank Youtravel.com is to host its first agent fam trips as part of a renewed focus on the trade.

Youtravel aims to take up to 240 agents this summer to see its exclusive properties in beach destinations such as Greece, the Canary Islands and Malta.

The German-owned bed specialist plans to launch a revamped website in May and to boost its trade profile, service levels and product range.

The company recorded £100 million worth of transactions in its financial year to October 2013, a figure it said it hoped to increase to £220 million this year with the addition of more product.

In 2012, Youtravel put a turbulent period behind it when it became majority-owned by German tour operating giant FTI Touristik.

The new owner scrapped plans to establish a consumer-facing website, and FTI's destination management company Meeting Point became its exclusive supplier.

Roula Jouny, Youtravel's recently-appointed chief executive, said ensuring Youtravel had "castle", or exclusive, properties was key to its success.

"There have been challenges in places like Greece, Spain and the Canaries, so our plans are to give agents new content with availability and service in destinations as well," she said.

The FTI deal brought some much-needed buying power and financial stability to Youtravel and came after a series of management changes that undermined confidence in the trade.

Although Youtravel's previous chief executive, Jacky Bedlow, left in January after only six months in the role, Jouny said its strategy had not wavered.

"The strategy was very much identified at the time of the acquisition by FTI," she said. "We have a plan and we are very happy with the team we have."

