

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE: MOBILE TRAVEL CONSUMERS TRENDS



The results of a recent survey by Millennial Media and comScore show some interesting trends in the behaviour of mobile travel consumers and the travel companies trying to earn their business. In 2013, the travel industry was the seventh largest brand vertical in mobile advertising and these businesses worked towards the main goals of promoting brand awareness and increasing mobile traffic with 33% of companies involved - 275 of which were airlines

- targeting vacationers, 24% targeting business travellers and 16% targeting affluent. This suggests that these airlines and other companies understand the importance of the average mobile travel technology user, who tends to be between 25-44 and on a decent wage (27% of those asked earning over \$100k a year).

The important link between mobile technology use and businesses like airlines and hotels.

There is a strong link between airlines, airports and smartphone users and, unsurprisingly, airlines made up the highest percentage of those aforementioned business spending so much money on mobile advertisements (30%). This has to be due to the fact that smartphone use plays such an important part in our relationship with them: 50% of those asked said they use their device to check prices and schedules and 46% use it to check in but there are options being taken advantages of, with 32% using their phone as a boarding pass and 23% to track their bags.

Data from this survey also shows a interesting relationship between mobile travel consumers and hotels - although expenditure by hotels in the travel vertical was just 11% - and these users also use their phones for multiple purposes: 57% compare prices and availability, 55% look up the address and 51% read reviews. What is interesting is while 83% of smartphone users will research their hotel, only 67% will book it from their phone. Furthermore, while tablet user percentages were lower than those for smartphones when researching trains, buses, cruises and package deals, these users are more likely to buy them via their device than smartphone users.

Reliance on mobile travel technology and the many opportunities offered to users on the go.

What this information shows is that even though bookings are still a primary reason to use this technology, there are more benefits being offered and further data suggests that the connection between consumer and business is maintained for a longer period of time. The survey shows that 61% of the smartphone audience and 70% of the tablet audience prefer to book their holidays at home; however, there are also significant results for users making the most of this technology on the go. After booking flights and rooms, users continue to use their device to research the trip, with many looking at reviews, directions and other pieces of information on the establishment or destination. In addition to this, it is worth noting the 24% of smartphone users who make bookings and carry out research at the airport and the 23% who do so once they have reached their destination city.

Summary: What can be learnt from this study?

The results above show a sense of fluidity and stronger connection between mobile travel consumers and their chosen airline and hotel as they plan and book their holidays; the relationship no longer

ends when booking a flight at home as more and more smartphone users take advantage of the technology for extra services during their travels. What is most encouraging is that it seems that those in the travel industry - airlines especially - are understanding the importance of mobile devices and their users in the way they are targeting affluent business travellers with brand awareness.

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