

MOBILE BOOKINGS GROWING IMMENSELY IN POPULARITY



The recent "Travel Flash Report," by Criterio, highlighted the importance of the mobile gadgets in the travel and tourism industry. The report was based on 2014 first half data, showing how the consumers made 300 million bookings, worth more than USD 150 billion within the period. The data was retrieved from online travel agencies and online travel suppliers in all the holiday marketplaces.

The Rapid Mobile Growth

According to the report, the mobile bookings of travel trips are growing faster at the moment compared to the desktop alternatives. **Bookings through smartphones and tablets represented the biggest part of the growth in the online travel sector globally, and this was uniform throughout the travel markets and categories.** The calculations showed that the mobile growth platform was ten times bigger than the desktop bookings. The report further revealed that cruises and apartments mobile bookings also jumped by 35% during the period.

Note that these figures leave out the lucrative in-app sales, which represent a big part of regular mobile bookings. There was a separate analysis for the in-apps bookings representing 12 percent of the entire mobile sales in June, suggesting that the mobile platform sales are huge, more than the results indicate.

Cultural and Geographic Perspective

The report went further to analyze the same data on the basis of culture and geographical locations. While the mobile platform is being accepted in all parts of the globe, online bookings are still influenced by cultural variations.

The report showed that due to culture, low figures of online bookings were reported in countries like Germany and Brazil. The figures were higher in the central European destinations, the United States, Australia, and Japan. Japan had the highest bookings. These figures show that tourism marketers must take into consideration the culture and geographical differences in the marketing apps/platforms.

The report showed that most of the bookings had taken place from Android devices, and this is explained by the fact that there are lots of Android devices in the market, and Android apps do the trick. The Android flight bookings were massive. The iPad bookings came in second, beating the other devices by a huge margin. The main picture created by the research findings is that the mobile booking value was equal to or exceptionally valuable compared to the desktop bookings.

Coining Decisions

The report was very categorical that mobiles became very critical in the last-minute bookings. This makes sense since mobiles are directly associated with people having very busy schedules, who pop in to make the bookings while on-the-go. The air travel average booking value was 21% higher in the mobile gadgets as compared to the desktop counterparts. The same was

reported for bookings for car rentals, at 13% higher. This was primarily boosted by the fact that last-minute bookings are very valuable, and such consumers can only be effectively targeted using mobiles.

According to Euromonitor International, global online travel sales accounted for USD 589 billion in 2013, amounting to 25% of total travel and tourism sales. Online sales are expected to grow faster than the total travel industry, growing 10% year-on-year and reaching USD 827 billion by 2017. In 2017, 45% of the world's population or 3.3 billion people will be internet users, with smartphones the most popular way of getting online.

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