

TRAVEL TRENDS IDENTIFIED: PERSONALIZATION, HUMAN TOUCH, AND BUDGET SERVICES



Travel has changed over the last century, from a quest that only a few people could afford to one that many can accomplish. This in turn has resulted in innovations in the travel industry in order to stay ahead with demographical and technological changes and consumer expectations. A new report published by American Express Travel reveals as to what current travel trends are dictating the future when it comes to leisure travel.

Travelers would expect service providers to offer more customized travel experiences as **85 percent of the customers want to do as much leisure travel, or even more, over the next 5 years**, according to the “Future of Travel” report revealed at the American Express Retail-Travel Network Learning Forum and National Summit.

Luxury Means Personalization

Extravagant tours used to be part of luxury travel, but travelers of today are looking for highly customized and meaningful experiences when they are away from their homes. This is because 76 percent of survey participants said that the success or failure of a trip is dependent on the personalized services offered and 63 percent opined that they would like travel brands to provide customized services on the basis of their personal data. So the personalization is among the latest travel trends.

High-Tech vs High-Touch

Technological advancements may make travel more cost-effective, but it is the human touch that would make it an unforgettable experience. As much as 92 percent of the US survey participants expressed that consultation with a travel professional helped to enhance their experience. Further, 88 percent of UK respondents said that they would prefer to use the services of a person to book their flight tickets, accommodation and activities.

Technological advancements make destination research and routine travel tasks easier, but travel professionals can offer help to deal with the emotional highs and lows of travel. These include helping with lost luggage, cancelled flights and changing itinerary.

High-Low Travel Experience

When it comes to air travel, travelers can expect luxury experiences of the premium cabins alongside bare-bone options of the economy cabins. Among the U.S. millennials, 71 percent said that leisure travel cost can be a barrier; 58 percent of Gen X travelers and 49 percent of Baby Boomers and 45 percent of mature travelers also expressed the same opinion. Travelers on a budget would decide their own travel trend terms by applying the high-low approach of juxtaposing the extremes of budget and luxury within the same experience.

Date: 2015-10-12

Article link:

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