

BIG DATA APPLICATIONS ARE USEFUL FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY



Modern tourists are used to the increasingly digital world and are less dependent on traditional travel agencies thanks to the development of booking search engines, online comparison tools, review websites and photos uploaded by other travelers. What can the tourism industry do to adapt and not to lose control of the market? The answer lies in Big

Data.

Just by measuring the huge amount of information that travelers have left around the internet about their likings, habits and preferences **the sector can personalize services and adapt to the demand.** In fact, many companies are already taking advantage of it. Specifically, the IMF Business School reviews five case studies focusing on Big Data in the tourism industry:

Smart bracelets

These devices use a radio frequency system that allows you to open a hotel's room as if it were a key, can store credit or debit cards information to make purchases more quickly, can also be used in theme parks such as Disney's to help control quick pass, or to save photos that have been taken. Additionally, they have hidden sensors with information about the user that park employees can scan, which allows them to surprise visitors by knowing their names or congratulate them if they happen to celebrate their birthday during the trip.

Geolocated offers

There is a difference between the offer that a visitor from Sevilla and one from Galia receive, as well as a loyal client next to a new one. Thanks to the use of Big Data, tourism companies and travel agencies can send their clients personalized offers and benefits based on their geo-location, GDP, traffic, the city's weather, search history, reservations and expenses in trips, etc.

Airports 4.0

The data provided by travelers in their passage through airports, and even their luggage, can help airlines to effectively plan the services and resources at their disposal. This is followed by the addition of another technology known as 'seeking', which allows them to know anonymously how passengers move through airports, if they visit duty-free stores, and even whether they rent a car or take a taxi.

Personalized welcome at the hotel

Some hotels hold staff meetings prior to the arrival of new guests to figure out who they are like through the public information found in their social network profiles or in the client's file if the person is a regular. This way, the staff welcomes the guests in a personalized way, greeting them by name or leaving their favorite chocolates in the room.

Direct charge of mini-bar fees

There are hotels already where you do not have to pay for what you consume in the mini-bar at the time of checkout, but instead, charges are directly added to the card used to pay for the stay. To do this, the mini-bar has a built-in scanner of the available items and uses its sensors to charge the consumed goods.

For the president of IMF Business School, Carlos Martínez, “**modern tourists look for different and personalized experiences**. They do not want to see the same every time they make a reservation, like the kind of pillow they are used to or the type of bed they prefer, and the use of Big Data helps business owners maintain a much more personalized relationship with their guests, increasing the chances that they return.”

To provide security to all the data the blockchain technology is increasingly used. Blockchain can be thought of as a register in which all data is encrypted, transparently and decentrally stored in the form of blocks chained together. This makes them tamper-proof and prevents corruption or manipulation of this data. Blockchain is therefore especially interesting for those companies that have to prove the correctness and integrity of their data.

Anyone working in the area of supply chain management can thus ensure the traceability of goods. Origin, movements and quantity can be better monitored and analyzed. In the area of quality assurance, it is easier to trace back, why there were any deviations.

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