

# YOUNG TRAVELLERS NOW USE THE INTERNET EVEN MORE



In the days leading up to and including the 90's, it was typical to be strolling down the high street until seeing an advert offering a cheap escape abroad. The process would continue with customers flicking through colourful brochures on agency shelves and being advised by a smily attendant dressed in airline-style uniform. These days, especially for young people, are rapidly becoming outdated. It has been revealed that almost half of the world's population of young travellers use the internet to book holidays and arrange education. 80% of them, even those who have used travel agencies, use the internet to find further information about their destinations.

Most youths go to Australia, France and the United States, with some backpackers spreading their wings to as far as Thailand or other Asian destinations. Three quarters of them travel in order to either learn a language, study or get to know a foreign culture and most of them return with the feeling that they have become more tolerant towards different societies. Mostly thanks to the internet, this area of business, i.e. youth travel, is the fastest growing branch of tourism on the planet. It has been estimated that if youngsters continue to bombard Google.com with enquiries and bookings, then 86% of all youth travel transactions in 5 years time will be carried out without the aid of high street agencies.

There are, of course, upsides and downsides to this equation. On the positive side, the internet can offer a quicker and greater choice of destinations, hotels and hostels for youngsters to search for. Each major city is said to be represented by around 300 possibilities for accommodation. It would take a human being around a day to offer such a choice. Similarly, questions regarding their stay are answered immediately and with great accuracy. Most sites are in English and have a high level of reliability.

On the downside, the speed of reservation making and the cheaper prices due to competition have meant that many hotels quickly become full. On a similar note, what ever happened to communication between people?

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