

TIPS TO BECOME A SMART TOURISM DESTINATION



Smart tourism destinations refer to a concept that goes beyond the mere integration of new technologies available in the visitors' devices, it is an idea closely related to a complete digital transformation.

This transformation includes the development of innovative destinations that are built on a state-of-the-art technological infrastructure that ensures sustainable development for the destination, is accessible to all, and eases the interaction and integration of tourists with the environment, increasing the quality of their experience while improving the quality of life of the inhabitants.

Keys for turning to smart tourism destinations

First, it is necessary to clarify that not all cities that seek to become smart tourism destinations should follow the same path: this depends on its tourism offer, its maturity as a holiday destination, and its investment capacity, among other factors. However, there are certain common technologies that many destinations currently use to increase their appeal and visibility:

Tourist information center

A new concept for centers with a strong technological base and ability to market destinations in real time, which must have accessible touch screens, enable and encourage downloading tourism and travel apps for the destination, as well as booking and selling services.

Free Wi-Fi

One of the most demanded services by tourists as well as residents is the possibility of having free Wi-Fi connections, in addition to the traffic of information that it generates, this produces significant benefits for the development of online marketing of companies.

Mobile apps

These should be provided as mobile solutions targeted at the search of destinations, products, and services, as well as geolocation of all types of resources and access information on real-time offers.

Virtual reality or augmented reality solutions

One of the main goals of smart tourism destinations is for tourists to feel immersed in history. For years, this has been possible with the help of audio or video guides; however, the latest technological advances make immersion much more intense when using virtual reality or augmented reality solutions either through a smartphone or smart glasses, allowing the tourist to see what the destination was like centuries ago, for example, or even witness historical battles.

Safety and health services

The safety of tourists and their possessions is a priority for smart tourism destinations. To achieve this, location and occupancy sensors have been developed, in order to guarantee safety in places

with large crowds. In addition, apps for security alerts are available which are able to notify local authorities about any problem that the tourist may have.

A smart tourism destination should invest in technology to prevent any medical incident that the tourist may experience. For example, provide information in real time on the weather, in addition to geolocation services of open drugstores, and multilingual apps that allow access to their medical history if necessary.

Mobility

Tourists should not feel disconnected or without alternatives to move around the destination. Having access to a Wi-Fi connection is not always enough; tourists will also need apps to be informed about traffic, metro lines, or carsharing services near their location. **It is also advisable that smart tourism destinations develop virtual tour guides with geolocation** and include path recommendations to improve the mobility of visitors.

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