

VIRTUAL TOURISM: THE TREND THAT HAS WON OVER TRAVELERS



Imagine being able to live a unique travel experience while being miles and miles away from the destination. Tourism has accustomed us to explore one offer to the next, and new technologies have much to do in this process.

We usually talk about social media as a disruptive mechanism in the industry; however, in recent years, there are many innovations linked to the digital world that have made its way through the offer of many tourism agencies. Such is the case of virtual tourism.

Virtual reality was crowned **as the ideal marketing strategy to impact consumers, both at the time they plan their trip and in the decision-making process.**

In the first case, virtual reality is particularly useful because it offers tourists access to information about the destination more accurately and reliably. This is even more evident if we compare it to catalogs, diptychs, or even traditional websites.

Faced with all these elements, virtual reality adds new dimensions, such as interaction or representation of sensations. In addition, experts say it increases awareness and a sense of respect for the destination.

As for decision-making or booking, what virtual reality has made easier is adding emotional aspects to the (mostly) rational decision of the consumer when it comes to planning their holidays. That is, if until now the price played a key part in this decision, virtual reality has made possible to incorporate a new factor: the inner desire of the traveler to visit a certain destination and have special travel experience.

The truth is that virtual reality is able to spark emotions by stimulating the senses of users, allowing them to interact inside that experience.

What began as a marketing technique for future travelers to visualize destinations and grasp a full knowledge before conscientiously choosing which place to visit, has ended up becoming a virtual tourism proposal in itself.

Some tourist companies and agencies already offer this type of 360° experiences to their customers, with trips simulations quite similar to video games. However, we must not forget that the future of tourism is geared towards personalization of the travel experience, and virtual reality allows, precisely, a unique and adapted offer for each customer that can also be enjoyed at any time and any place.

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