

NEW BOOKING TRENDS SWEEPING THROUGH 2022



The Cloudbeds Travel Trends Report 2022 analyzes the new booking trends expected to make it easier for hoteliers and owners to drive more revenue and profitability from their future guests. The report brings together the trends that will shape the future of the hotel and lodging industry as the market learns to live with the impacts of the pandemic. A dynamic demand environment, direct bookings and longer stays are the three trends that will lead the bookings in 2022.

The report, which uses multiple resources such as Expedia, Vrbo, Airbnb and Skift, as well as hospitality data platforms such as STR, offers insight into how the pandemic has influenced three major shifts in booking trends that will affect the lodging businesses this year.

The document also provides useful advice on **how to respond to these changing trends, as well as valuable recommendations to hoteliers and owners on business related issues such as where to invest**, and useful tools and techniques on how to adapt, update and promote their offerings to optimize all available opportunities for revenue generation.

Dynamic Demand

One of the biggest impacts of the pandemic is that travel demand has been unpredictable. Even factors such as location and seasonality are no longer as reliable as they once were. Much of the unpredictability has been driven by quarantines and changes in border restrictions, which have forced many travelers to cancel or change their plans at the last minute.

A single announcement can also trigger huge spikes in demand. Proof of this was the dramatic growth in searches for travel to the U.S. from EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa), which on Expedia increased 95% week on week after the White House announced the lifting of travel restrictions for vaccinated international visitors.

Travelers, now accustomed to these uncertainties, have changed their booking habits accordingly, shortening booking times considerably. In fact, many consumers prefer to wait until a date closer to their trip to make their reservations.

Flexibility remains a priority for many travelers: nearly one in three travelers say that an accommodation provider's cancellation policy is one of the top three factors influencing their booking.

An increasing number of travelers are taking advantage of the flexibility to "stack travel," booking two or more trips in the same period in case coronavirus-related problems ruin their preferred travel plans.

Direct Booking Preferred

According to the data, early in the pandemic, when restrictions led to mass travel cancellations, many consumers "were frustrated with OTAs for their poor communication and delays in issuing refunds. The resulting negative press eroded consumer confidence in booking with them."

In a survey conducted by GlobalData last June, 39% of consumers said they would normally book direct, compared to 17% who would opt for OTAs and comparators. According to Skift, 56% of independent hotel bookings came from direct channels in 2020, up from 39% a year earlier, reflecting a 17% increase.

Longer Stays

Before the pandemic, **weekend getaways were one of the most popular travel modes, but that trend has since reversed.** A GlobalData survey has revealed that 44% of users prefer leisure trips of at least seven nights, while 26% prefer more than 10 nights.

Longer stays are also growing in popularity - Airbnb's Q3 2021 earnings report shows 28 days or longer are growing the most for the company, accounting for 20% of nights booked that quarter, up from 14% a year earlier.

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