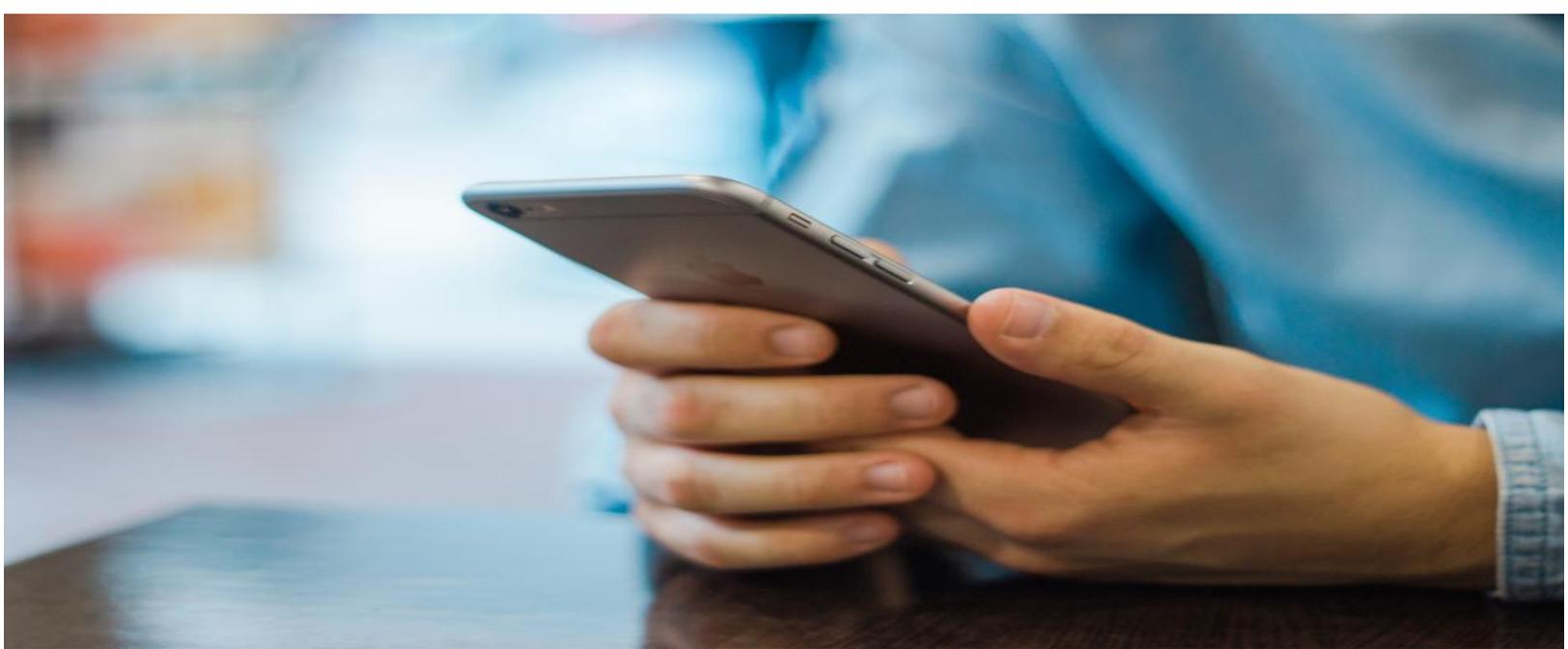


Tech Trends That Are Defining The Future Of Travel



1. Mobile Is The Key Travel Management Device

Since 2014, mobile has overtaken desktop usage for travel bookings, and that does not predict to change any time soon. Google Data Trends reveal:

- More people are booking travel online
- Using multiple sites for research and;
- Using more than just one device

The 2016 currency of time and context is what the consumer desires, therefore the use of mobile will continue to grow as the convenient, fast and effective choice of device.

Not only is mobile growing, but the way leisure travellers are communicating with airlines, suppliers and TMC's inside the mobile device is evolving. Consumers are now expecting to use their mobiles in the context of text, in-app chat or social media to request changes, make bookings and ask for help. Marriott and Hilton hotels, for example are allowing guests to request room service all within their dedicated app, while other suppliers have gone even a step further, allowing customers to use text message to requests services or travel advice.



2. CLOUD PASSPORTS BECOMING A REALITY

Australians already have biometric passports allowing us to travel seamlessly to many countries with SmartGate technology; however, Foreign Affair Minister Julie Bishop wants to take this a step further. After a Canberra youth tech hackathon, Julie Bishop is pushing the idea for a world-first digital cloud passport.

Both Australian and New Zealand are now in discussions to trial the new passport together. The digital passport would contain biometric data including a digital photo, travel log, and other identification. Bishop acknowledges the technology must meet security requirements, but if successful, it could cut down the number of missing and fraudulent passports, and the potential to go global as a technology innovation.



3. Self-Serve Kiosks Are Growing

Airlines and airports are both working to streamline the travel process by investing in self-serve technology that puts more focus on the consumer initiative, paired with automation and friendly consumer-facing technology, whilst reducing the needed staff.

This has been notably most seen in the recent 24 months of self-service kiosks for baggage check-in. Air New Zealand has recently introduced their new self-serve bag drops, featuring world-first biometric technology.

With the aim to reduce baggage check-in time and the dreaded long line congestion, Air NZ has invested in a number of self-serve bag drops at Auckland airport with more to come. The technology works similar to SmartGate passport control facilities, scanning the customers boarding pass and inviting them to drop their bags on the scale. Using advanced biometric camera technology, the handling system automates the process, weighing the bag and processing the tags. The most important part of the kiosk is the friendly and simple communication guiding the consumer through the process.



4. Big Data Brings More Personalization

Tomorrow's travellers have a high expectation to travel the world in their own unique way. Personalized travel is a growing need amongst APAC travellers, seeking our tailored unique experiences whilst being 'understood' by suppliers for their routine or frequent travel behaviors.

Big data collected from airlines, hotels and Travel Managers is the key to understanding the behaviors, preferences and future intentions of a traveller. Utilizing the right data through the right technology will allow brands to better engage and relate to their travellers.

For example: A hotel can better utilize data collected from various consumer touch-points in the travel journey to filter into a digital profile on file, helping that hotel understand the behaviors and preferences of the traveller. This trend will define the future of travel as more convenient, more comfortable and more efficient.



5. In-Flight Wi-Fi Keeping Us Connected

For so long, the travel cabin has been the ‘black hole’ of connectivity for the consumer. The days of travellers scrambling to send those last minute emails and text their friend's plane selfies before the cabin door closes are long gone, with the wave of Wi-Fi connectivity technology growing rapidly. We first saw in-flight Wi-Fi appear a few years ago, however the past 8 months more airlines have increasingly signed up for the technology as next generation satellite Wi-Fi is ready.

Qantas is utilizing the latest ViaSat technology to bring complimentary Wi-Fi to all passengers flying across Australia for the near future. Other airlines including Emirates, American Airlines, Etihad and others are also offering wireless connection to passengers on selected routes. The future of air travel will be more a connected experience, allowing passengers and business travellers to keep working or simply keep in touch with what’s happening on the ground.