

7. Advancement in Technology, Software and Apps Making a Smarter Tourist - A New Trend in Tourism Industry

Dr. Suvarna Sathe

Principal, Department of Hotel Management, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Gultekdi, Pune.

Mr. Mahesh Randhave

Assistant Professor, Department of Hotel Management, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Gultekdi, Pune.

The impact of digital transformation is marked in all industries and sectors. The tourism industry is also witnessing major changes due to technology advancement and increasing percentage of users of Internet.

As much as possible tourists are doing a research before planning an itinerary. Tourists want easy access to information before they actually arrive at a destination. It is necessary being able to offer this through a website or social media, but apps are becoming increasingly more popular in allowing users to procure information as and when they need it.

There are an increasing number of destination-specific applications available for download. Tourists have prior information, on the tips of their fingers, as they arrive at a destination. They have information with them about the best attractions, the top-rated restaurants, how to get around the city and so on.

Travel agencies and physical bookings are now old-fashioned. Recent surveys show that travel-based mobile apps are the 7th most downloaded category and that 60% of Smartphone users prefer travel apps for planning their leisure tours. (Source: Web Article - <https://www.rishabhsoft.com/blog/mobile-app-development-for-the-tourism-industry>)

Tourism Mobile apps help tourists for planning travel, ticket bookings, accommodation bookings, route mapping, car booking and so on. Some more tourist services are delivered with the help of mobile apps like:

- Navigation – GPS services, route planning and maps
- Social – Travel updates, reviews, picture galleries, free communication etc.
- Mobile Marketing – Contests, discounts, and offer alerts

- Security – Medical, Emergency calling & Information about local & international health agencies
- E-commerce – Ticket booking, overseas banking, reservations, shopping

Several new trends and technology will shape the future of tourism. For example, car rental app has captured major share in tourist transportation, ride sharing is a widespread phenomenon now a days. Tourists are also opting for cashless options as a safer means to travel. Some of the technology innovations and trends that influence tourists are,

1. Real-time tracking

Real-time travel tracking apps are increasingly used by tourist today. Most private modes of transport already offer this service as people can track the motion of their cars, buses etc. This service will get better in the future as all transport services will depend on live tracking. Public transport agencies have started using Internet technology and GPS devices to provide live information about buses, trains etc.

2. Cashless travel

Theft and the hassle of cash is a big security concern for tourists visiting new countries and regions for the first time. The benefit of a digital economy is that now there are several apps that let you travel cashless and facilitate all kinds of payment with a click.

3. Tailor-made travel apps for tourist needs

With web sites becoming smarter and more user friendly, tourism apps are bound to be smarter and cleverer. More sophisticated travel apps will now be custom-made for specific travel routes, time, budget and means of transport. Using tourist travel history, preferences, and feedback, these apps will be able to recommend and plan better trips for them.

4. Social network influence in travel planning

This combines new technologies with user recommendations. These apps help tourists view the suggestions and favorites from friends and family, expert tips and consumer reviews – all combined to make informed decisions about their travel and tourism choices – including destinations, vendors, bookings etc. The integration of social network and reviews, tourism companies can offer applications that offer enough social proof to prospective travelers.

5. Recommendations

Travel apps can enhance the tourist experience by offering suggestions and deals/offers to travelers – based on their location and preference. The use of auto-fill user profiles, purchase history and location information are utilized for the same.

The travel app industry has a high potential for revenue generation. Many travel mobile apps are available today, offering wider choice to tourists and making them smarter. From cultural dos and don'ts to national holidays, international dialing codes, it includes all the useful information pertinent to travel all over the world.

Many times, it is left to third-party to provide the necessary information to tourists; however, there is a great opportunity for tourism organisations to connect their official capacity to achieve tourists to encourage long-term advocacy of destination.

For modern tourists, it is important to ensure that the information offered with the help of technology is easy-to-use and content is structured intelligently. It also needs to work offline, as international travellers may not always have access to wi-fi or any other mode of internet facility. A dedicated destination app should draw the most desired information, based on thorough insight into tourist requirements. This will greatly enhance their experience and they are more likely to become long-term advocates to friends and family to encourage visits to a particular destination. At the same time it increases the chances of tourists returning themselves at the same destination again in future.

Even after an individual has returned home, an app can play an important role in maintaining an open channel of communication. Push a notification, for example, use of messaging to ensure new information is always sent to tourists is a great way of maintaining long-term relationship with tourists.

Majority of tourists today rely on technology and apps to make their travel plan more flexible as per their convenience or leisurely. Tourists becoming smarter by using information available on website while planning their itinerary. Use of technological advancement saves their time and money. Beyond that they can opt for paying for their bread and accommodation at the time of arrival at destination. On the other hand, technological advancement also creating a large data of tourists which is used by various marketing firms for enormous purposes. Most of the time you keep on getting involved in to the social network unnecessarily is the major disadvantage.

Web References

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