

5 technology trends that will define travel in 2022



The power of personalization in meeting traveler expectations

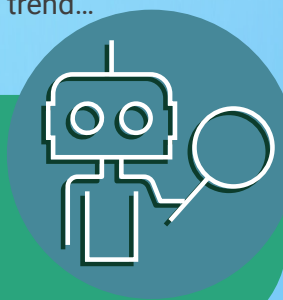
01



The travel industry is going through a big transition, recognizing that people are not travelling because they want to sit on an aircraft or sleep in a hotel bed, they have personal aspirations about what they want from their travel experience.

The industry is responding to this demand by creating more personalized offers for customers, to help meet their expectations for their travel experience. Travel in 2022 is much less uniform than 15-20 years ago, due to the scale of content available and unpredictability of the market. There is therefore a big technology effort to enable this personalization – for the inspiration period, the booking experience and then for the fulfilment process during the trip. In order to achieve this personalization, we must first recognize different customer segments and understand customer behavior, and then create bundled offers targeted to the specific segments, including more auxiliary services in the offer.

AI is one of the key enablers for this personalization, which takes me to my next trend...



02 Adoption of more and more AI and ML technologies in the travel industry

AI is key to offering a relevant travel experience at a great scale, it goes beyond personalization as it enables the analysis of a huge amounts of data, recognizes the patterns and then identifies the responses – either recommendations, insights or predictions, which will help to support multiple business process in retailing, distribution, and fulfilment domains of the travel industry.

The pandemic has meant that travel providers have had to learn to be much more flexible and respond much more quickly for example to restrictions, to ever-changing demand and to evolving preferences/concerns. Technology is needed to support these flexible processes, and AI and ML allow this tech to be much more dynamic. There is no longer a need to work offline and then provide static recommendations - we can respond to the environment more quickly and learn from the reaction of the environment more dynamically, and hence bringing more flexible technology to the travel industry.



The move to the cloud is going strong - and it will only accelerate

03



Across both the travel industry and many other industries, companies are migrating to cloud providers such as Google, Amazon and Microsoft. I believe this trend will accelerate in 2022 and beyond.

There are many advantages to cloud migration, including cost reduction, effortless scalability, and improved response time. The cloud

also offers easier access to data, for example, if a particular project involves several major players and they all use different systems in their own environments, access to the data becomes very complicated. However, if the data is available in the cloud many technological challenges disappear as long as data privacy and security are properly managed.

The Cloud also enables the democratization of technologies such as AI. It is not just a place to source data, it offers a range of data and analytics, and capabilities such as automated machine learning and controlled experimentation. This means that these technologies are no longer the exclusive purview of large companies with the in-house resources to drive the technology forward, they become available to a much wider range of players.

At Sabre, we started our migration to Google Cloud two years ago. Google Cloud's data analytics tools are enabling us to enhance the capabilities of current and future products. It also provides us with insights to help us improve operational efficiency and create and optimize travel options, improving both loyalty and revenues for our customers.



04 Partnering for success and the rise of the marketplace

Increasingly, different providers and enterprises are 'speaking' to each other and creating an open architecture to use each other's services and APIs. Industry players are recognizing the benefits of open systems, so that they can enable not just their own capabilities but the capabilities of partners. It is impossible to build everything on your own, so integrating with partners is of huge benefit for the travel ecosystem.

This is, to some extent, connected to personalization. Consumers don't want to spend a lot of time planning for a trip and visiting multiple websites – they want the total travel experience available at once. The integration of multiple travel systems can allow a smoother and seamless experience for the traveler, and a reduction of costs in exchanging data for the tech providers.

This is one of the initiatives that Sabre is working on – creating an environment that allows people to travel more conveniently and plan for travel more easily. Our goal is to create a travel marketplace where multiple suppliers of travel services and products can bring their offers, and multiple distributors like travel agencies, TMCs or OTAs can source the offers and distribute them to consumers via packages. This requires the integration of multiple systems that support the global travel industry.



Small screens are the big screens – there is more to mobile than consumer communication

05



Small screens are the new big screens. In fact, according to the latest Digital 2021 April Global Statshot Report there are 5.27 billion unique mobile users around the world, which means that more than two-thirds of all the people on Earth now have a mobile phone. This mobile communications behavior is changing customer and business engagement dynamics in every industry. Mobile already delivers real-time traveler access and addresses challenges such as language translation and authentications that may otherwise be challenging, but there are definitely many more opportunities for mobile technologies in the travel industry.

Mobile communications and the emergent devices and technologies following, such as augmented/ virtual reality, Internet of Things (IoT), AI/ML, affect the interfaces and the capabilities we can use – for example with

the tracking of mobile geosystems – and as such will have a growing role in technology development in the travel industry.

In addition to interacting with consumers, mobile technology can also be used to communicate with workforce (at Sabre we have products for pilots and air attendants), and even with the Internet of Things (IoT). Mobiles do not have to sit just with humans, but also with tech components for example monitoring aircraft performance data for preventative maintenance, tracking checked-in bags, reporting on aircraft turn activities, etc. The scope for mobile is huge in this fast-evolving world.