

3 travel trends you need to know

Ideas & analysis to stay ahead
in hotel marketing for 2016



INTRODUCTION

How to keep up in a changing world

There's no doubt, 2015 was an exciting year for the travel industry. Several new players entered the game which has caused quite the disruption as travelers are presented with new booking options and OTAs / Metasearch sites have been through massive consolidation and UX changes that have rolled out new features and made instant bookings seamless.

With all of the changes that took place in 2015 – what does 2016 have in store for the travel industry? Our top predictions include further disruption in the OTA space, the emergence and growth of several new travel segments, and lots more mobile mayhem.

FAST FACT

83%

of people will not book without first reading a review.

Guests are also 4 times more likely to leave a review if they have a negative experience vs. those with a positive experience.



TREND #1

Disruption in the Online Travel Agent Space

There is no disputing that 2015 was the year of disruption in the hotel booking space, particularly with online travel agents. Massive consolidations have resulted in the creation of several mega-corporations while new booking options continue to pop up every few weeks. Here is what 2016 has in store for OTAs & Metasearch sites:

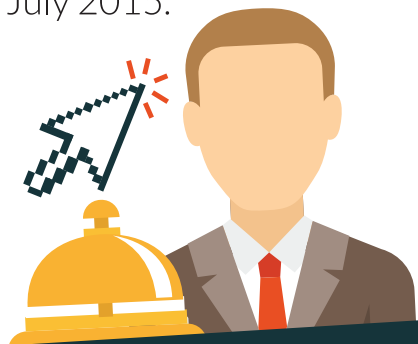
Direct Booking Push

Hotels are tired of being pushed around by greedy OTAs and are using creative marketing campaigns to reduce reliance on these revenue gobblers. Tactics include clever marketing campaigns to tout the benefits of booking direct, offering special perks to direct bookers, utilizing native apps to encourage brand loyalty, and even using new technology like TripTease that allows the consumer see competitive pricing before checkout.



Instant Book

OTAs are continuing to think of more ways to persuade users to book via their websites and the rollout of “instant book” features proves just that. TripAdvisor rolled out their instant book feature in November 2014 and Google followed suit in July 2015.



The Sharing Economy

The concept of sharing in the travel space can credit exponential growth to a small sub-set of companies that coordinated brilliant and highly successful marketing campaigns that are truly changing the way that people think about travel. If you're not up on these innovators, here's a few you should follow:



TREND #2

Emerging Travel Segments

Millennials, baby boomers, and business travelers are all segments that hotel marketers are familiar with. These customers have been in the spotlight in recent years and remain important to all travel marketing professionals. However, in addition to these well-worn segments, new preferences continue to emerge, creating growing groups of frequent travelers that are blurring the lines of traditional travel behaviors. Here are three of the newest travel segments to watch out for in 2016:

Bleisure

Formally referred to as the **business leisure traveler**, this segment likes to mix work with play and is known for extending business trips to include time for more enjoyable activities like sightseeing and absorbing local culture.

FAST FACT

60%

of business travelers have taken at least one "bleisure" trip



Soft Adventure

Grandma and grandpa are no longer just chilling by the pool while the kids hit the waves. Rather, baby boomers are adventure seekers and are looking for a more adventurous experience like kayaking, fishing, cycling, or horseback riding — to name just a few.



Health & Wellness

Travelers are becoming more health conscious every single day and are looking to carry their personal habits at home on the road with them when they travel. On-site exercise facilities, health conscious dining options, and on-site spa or health services are just a few ways to cater to this growing niche.

FAST FACT

12%

percent growth in health & wellness since 2015



TREND #3

Mobile Domination

Are you tired of hearing about mobile yet? Too bad. Mobile is on the move in several ways that could impact your hotel bookings directly. Learn how the mobile atmosphere is expanding and what your hotel needs to plan for in 2016:



Mobile Tipping Point

In 2015, Google announced that more than **50% of searches are now performed on a mobile device**. The influx of mobile searches and mobile devices flooding the market means one thing: having a “mobile-friendly” website is no longer an option for hotels. A new mobile algorithm update from Google and user experience are just a few reasons why having an outdated mobile website is no longer a back-burner priority.

Wearable Technology

“Mobile” is no longer specific to just a mobile phone. Tablets, wearables, and essentially anything else electronic that can easily be transported can fall into this category. What does this mean for travel? The limited screen space could provide several challenges and will make simplicity key for a pleasant user experience.



FAST FACT

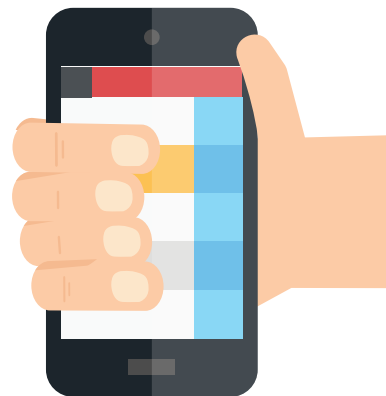
1 in 6

people currently own and use a smart watch

FAST FACT

54%

percent of digital time is spent on mobile apps



Dedicated Apps

Mobile apps are all the rage and several corporate hotel groups began jumping on the bandwagon in 2014 and 2015. This trend is expected to continue as existing hotel apps continue to evolve and improve and as new hotels, particularly independent hotels, begin to enter the app market.

WANT MORE INFO?

We're at your service!

Whether it's the latest travel trends, advice on how to get started with your own mobile app or consultation on your hotel marketing strategy, we're here to help!

Be sure to check out our website at **fueltravel.com** or drop us a line at **info@fueltravel.com** with questions or to get your free hotel marketing evaluation to prepare for all these exciting industry changes!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Meisha is a graduate of Anderson University that deals primarily with pay per click advertising (PPC) and search engine optimization (SEO), though I dabble with social media marketing and account management as well. I have a heart for the hospitality industry and the small "mom and pop" type businesses of the world that can't necessarily afford a full time marketing employee or agency. I am also a proud member of Leadership Grand Strand (LGS) Class XXXVI, the American Advertising Federation (AAF) Coastal Carolinas Chapter, the Myrtle Beach Area Hospitality Association (MBAHA), and GSS-cene Young Professionals.



FAST FACT

36%

of people visit a hotel's Facebook page before booking.

