

Case Study: Consumer Travel Technologies:

Self-Planning vs Travel Agent

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Foundations of Information Systems (IS 200)

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Total Budget: \$8,500 1 person

Cost of a travel agent: \$250.00

Cost of Self Planning: \$20.00/h

May 27th:

Leaving NYC to Lisbon, Portugal: \$737 Nonstop Flight United Airlines

Hotel: Lisbon Marriott Hotel \$368.20

Food: \$50.00 (Dinner)

May 27th:

Food: \$75.00 (Breakfast, lunch, Dinner)

Souvenir: \$20.00

Tour Lisbon: neighborhood/architecture sightseeing, Aquarium: \$20.00

May 28th:

Check out hotel early morning at 12:00pm

Fly to Madrid: \$60.00 via Air Europa

Food: \$50.00 (Dinner)

Hotel: \$245.00 Hotel Puerta America

May 29th:

Tour Madrid: Prado Museum: \$20.00, National Archaeological Museum: \$5.00, Free Sightseeing

Food: \$100.00 (Breakfast, lunch, Dinner)

Souvenir: \$40.00

May 30th:

Check out hotel 12:00pm

Travel to Barcelona: Vueling airline: \$55.00

Food: \$50.00 (Dinner)

Hotel: Golden Tulip: \$375.00

May 31st:

Tour Barcelona: Free sightseeing, Sagrada Familia church: \$30.00

Food: \$100.00

Souvenir: \$100.00

June 1st:

Check out hotel early morning 12:00 pm

Fly to Rome: \$60.00 via Vueling Airlines

Food: \$50.00 (Dinner)

Hotel: \$450.00

June 2nd:

Tour Rome: Sightseeing, Colosseum/Roman Forum: \$20.00, Castel Sant'Angelo: \$12.00

Food: \$150.00

Souvenir: \$100.00

June 3rd:

Check out hotel

Fly to Interlaken Switzerland: \$100.00 Swiss

Hotel: Lindner Grand Hotel Beau Rivage: \$620.00

Food: 50.00 (Dinner)

June 4th:

Tour Interlaken: Paragliding: \$190.00, Harder Kulm: \$38.00

Food: 100.00 (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Souvenir: \$50.00

June 5th:

Check out hotel morning

Fly to Paris: \$170.00

Hotel: The Hoxton: \$650.00

Food: \$30.00 (dinner)

June 6th:

Tour Paris: Eiffel tower: \$20.00, Louvre Museum: \$20.00

Food: \$150.00

Souvenir: \$50.00

June 7th:

Fly to London: \$90.00 via British Airways

Hotel: The Hoxton: \$512.00

Food: \$30.00

June 8th:

Tour London: Free sightseeing

Food: 200.00

June 9th:

Fly Home: London to NYC

Norwegian Air UK – \$540.00

Total Trip expenses: \$7,000

1,500 dollars remaining as a margin of error, such as emergencies, transit/local transportation fares

Total time planning: 6 hours = \$120.00

Planning out a two-week dream vacation is definitely a great experience. It is not as easy as it sounds but it is an experience that I would not trade for with a travel agent. Breaking down my planning briefly, I used a total of \$7,000 for the entire trip. These \$7,000 were spent primarily on flights, hotels, food for breakfast lunch and dinner, some paid tourist attractions and souvenirs. Which leaves me with \$1,500. I am dedicating \$500 public transportation/Uber/taxi, and any money leftover will be combined with the remaining \$1,000 in which I will use for emergencies. These emergencies can include things like flight changes (if they are not honored), currency exchange fees when I take out cash, although I will mostly be using a card with \$0 conversion fees. Secondly, without breaks and distractions, the total amount of time spent on planning was 6 hours. I rated myself at \$20.00 an hour because I believe that I do put effort into my research about things that I like to do, also the average agent makes between \$15-\$20. So, for 6 hours that is a total of \$120.00 which falls just under the \$200 cost of a travel agent plus any other fees or tips you would include at the end of the bill. I will say though, given that it took me 6 hours to complete this planning, I will go as far as adding additional hours of further research and finding better deals as traveling is very expensive. Not only is this the benefit in my opinion of self-planning, but it gives you complete control of what you want out of this trip. You can cycle through the various types of hotels and tourist attractions and pick what you like and interests you as well as having the expectations of what you will see. Nonetheless, it can be a time consuming and tedious task. You will find that some hotels are booked on the days that you need them and need to find backups, and that can be a bummer when you have a place already in mind. This makes booking a travel agent not a bad deal. They can take all the work away from you especially if you have a very busy schedule or do not have the patience and knowledge to navigate the web to plan out the trip. Travel agencies do have a

place and serve a purpose in my opinion. The better value really depends on you and the type of person you are. For me, I personally choose self-planning.

Thankfully, self-planning nowadays is a lot more possible due to our technology accessible today and that is the vast universe of the internet web. I was able to find everything I needed to plan this trip through Google, Google maps, sites like TripAdvisor, Kayak, Hotels.com, thecrazytourist.com, and other sites accessed through Google. Sites like google can grab flights anywhere I go and direct me to the airline's website. They allow me to specify the originating city, to destination one way or round trip, flight date and flight times, connections or nonstop and the prices.

The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "One way flights from madrid to barcelona". Below the search bar, the "All" tab is selected. The search results show "About 31,500,000 results (0.73 seconds)". A sponsored result for "Flights from Madrid, Spain (MAD) to Barcelona, Spain (BCN)" is displayed, with the URL "www.google.com/flights". The flight search interface shows the origin as "Madrid, Spain (MAD)" and the destination as "Barcelona, Spain (BCN)". The departure date is set to "Thu, May 30", and there is an option to "Add return date". A table of flight options is shown, listing airlines, flight times, and prices. The airlines listed are Vueling, Iberia, Air Europa, Renfe, Tap Air Portugal, Brussels Airlines, and Other airlines. The flight times range from 1h 15m to 7h 55m+. The prices range from \$49 to \$150. The table also indicates whether the flight is nonstop or connecting. A note at the bottom right of the table states "Prices are for one way".

Google

One way flights from madrid to barcelona

All Flights Maps News Images More Settings Tools

About 31,500,000 results (0.73 seconds)

Flights from Madrid, Spain (MAD) to Barcelona, Spain (BCN) Sponsored ⓘ

www.google.com/flights

Madrid, Spain (MAD) Barcelona, Spain (BCN)

Thu, May 30 < > Add return date

Vueling	1h 20m	Nonstop	from \$49
Iberia	1h 15m	Nonstop	from \$53
Air Europa	1h 15m	Nonstop	from \$58
Renfe	2h 30m+	Train	from \$66
Tap Air Portugal	4h 0m+	Connecting	from \$113
Brussels Airlines	7h 55m+	Connecting	from \$121
Other airlines	5h 0m+	Connecting	from \$150

Prices are for one way

The crazy tourist is an interesting website, in a style like a blog where you pick any destination you are going to and will give you an article containing the many different things available in the city. This is a great place to go for a starting point once you have your flight and hotel booked. While the website would not show attractions prices, it will give you an idea of the many things you could be interested in.

Search Results for: things to do in Paris



75 Best Things to Do in Paris (France)



15 Best Things to Do in Louth (Lincolnshire, England)



TripAdvisor is a great website, like TheCrazyTourist, except the website provides plenty of reviews of restaurants, hotels, and the attractions that you were interested in seeing when you saw them in TheCrazyTourist. TripAdvisor also provides many tourist group activities such as the paragliding activity

I chose to do for Interlaken. You will see reviews, prices and even buy the tickets for such activities on the website itself.

The screenshot shows the TripAdvisor website for London, United Kingdom. The header is green with the TripAdvisor logo, a location dropdown set to 'London', and navigation links for Trips, Inbox, and Profile. Below the header is a 'Travel feed: London' section with links to Hotels, Things to do, Restaurants, Flights, Vacation Rentals, Shopping, Vacation Packages, Cruises (marked as NEW), and a partially visible 'R' link. A breadcrumb trail reads: Europe > United Kingdom (UK) > England > London Tourism. The main heading is 'London, United Kingdom' with a note '6,321,022 reviews and'. Below this is a large image of a building silhouette against a blue sky with clouds, featuring a 'TRAVELERS' CHOICE' award badge and a '(Getty, Oct 2018)' credit. To the right of the image is a list of travel categories with their respective counts and review numbers:

Category	Count	Reviews
Hotels	1,117	1,490,296 Reviews
Vacation Rentals	5,996	9,990 Reviews
Flights		from \$311
Things to Do	2,118	1,593,082 Reviews
Restaurants	18,806	3,012,665 Reviews
Forum		139,620 Posts

Kayak is a great website that can do some great things almost impossible to do without it. Kayak finds deals for many flights, hotels and car rentals services for you to use anywhere you go. It is a great place to book hotels from as Kayak can pull many hotels all at once and pull in the price of nights being

stayed at for the specific dates you are choosing. In this case I was able to choose a five star rated hotel for 179 dollars. Occasionally though, the price would not 100% match what actual price will be at checkout. At checkout you can encounter certain fees the hotel likes to charge and taxes.

The screenshot shows the Kayak website's search results for hotels in Interlaken, Switzerland. The search parameters are 1 room, 1 guest, from Monday 6/3 to Wednesday 6/5. The results are sorted by Recommended. The first result is the Lindner Grand Hotel Beau Rivage, a 5-star hotel with an 8.3 rating and 1,306 reviews. The price is \$179 on TripAdvisor. The page also includes a map, a sign-in prompt for private deals, and filters for stars and review scores.

KAYAK Flights **Hotels** Cars Packages Cruises Deals More ▾

1 room, 1 guest ▾

Interlaken, Switzerland Mon 6/3 Wed 6/5

Go to map

Sign in to unlock up to 35% savings with Private Deals. [SIGN IN](#) ×

1 of 161 hotels and homes Sorted by Recommended ▾

Stars [Reset](#)

0+ 2 3 4 5

Review score

0+ 2+ 4+ 6+ 8+

Book Now

Lindner Grand Hotel Beau Rivage
★★★★★

8.3 Excellent 1,306 reviews

Nearby
Casino Interlaken
Jungfrau Park

Price Trend: Rising
\$179
TripAdvisor

otel.com \$187 AMOMA.c... \$201 Hotels.com \$296 11 more sites ▾ \$218

[View Deal](#)

I believe that with our current technology there are almost no technological limitations to traveling. We have online websites that can book us hotels and flights anywhere in the world. Even

without a computer we can do this through our phones. Our current technology has made it easier than ever before, with guides, maps, hotels, flights all in the palm of your hand. One thing I could think of regarding a limitation would be in how currency works. Right now, with many types of currencies it can be difficult keeping track of it and you are only able to get different currencies at exchange places, which is not great because they charge conversion fees. Although banks are doing great combating this issue, allowing you to use a debit/credit card overseas without charging you conversion fees. Though there is still a limitation with this when you are forced to use cash for certain areas in a city such as street vendors, local shops and other places that do accept cards. Hopefully in the future all we would need is just our phone or a special card to do all our transactions anywhere we go without the need to carry cash.

To conclude, without the Internet and all these sites, it would make it almost impossible for the average person to plan this trip out. Travel agencies seemed to have been a very valuable and useful place for people traveling over a decade ago. I could understand at some point that it required a skill to be able to schedule flights and phone in hotels to book, look through catalogs and travel guides with up to date information. Certainly, a valuable service up until the year 2005. With our current technology travel agencies are becoming more obsolete as people can research and book everything themselves with just a couple of clicks. However, there are many people who are actual travel agents for a living or as side gigs. You can find these travel agents online and will come to find out that they are experienced travelers themselves. And what better to get your travel planning done for you then from someone who has traveling experience and does traveling as a living? Honestly it is up to someone to decide whether they would like to do it themselves or book a travel agent. Travel agents can still have a place in this world, but self-planning can be an experience in itself and can make you learn from your experiences to plan better next time, thus never needing a traveling agent in the future. In all there are benefits to both and cons to both.

Links:

Lisbon:

<https://lisbonlisboaportugal.com/lisbon-sights/Lisbon-Aquarium-Oceanarium.html>

<https://www.raileurope.com/train-tickets/journeys/article/lisbon-madrid>

Madrid:

<https://www.hotels.com/ho229641/?q-check-out=2019-04-30&tab=description&q-room-0-adults=1&YGF=0&q-check-in=2019-04-28&MGT=2&WOE=2&WOD=7&ZSX=0&SYE=3&q-room-0-children=0>

<https://www.google.com/search?ei=QErFXLx1kLmCB86nueAP&q=national+archeological+museum+madrid>

https://www.google.com/maps/reserve/merchant?c=zZHqqAFkQOI&source=pa&gei=lkrFXIbjK8-q_QbGxpjABQ&sourceurl=https://www.google.com/search?q%3DMuseo%2Bdel%2BPrado%26stick%3DH4sIAAA%26biw%3D1366%26bih%3D657&hl=en-US

Barcelona:

<https://www.raileurope.com/train-tickets/journeys/article/barcelona-madrid>

<https://www.hotels.com/ho596395648/?q-check-out=2019-06-01&tab=description&q-room-0-adults=1&YGF=14&q-check-in=2019-05-30&MGT=2&WOE=6&WOD=4&ZSX=0&SYE=3&q-room-0-children=0>

https://www.getyourguide.com/sagrada-familia-l2699/sagrada-familia-skip-the-line-ticket-t50027/?partner_id=AS1RATG&cmp=barcelonasagradafamilia

Rome:

https://booking.ericsoft.com/BookingEngine/book.aspx?idh=B25645F52A397F86&lang=en&cur=EUR&arrival=2019-06-01&departure=2019-06-03&pax=1_0&acmp=RT0

<https://www.coopculture.it/en/colosseo-e-shop.cfm>

Interlaken:

https://www.tripadvisor.com/AttractionProductReview-g188081-d11457557-Tandem_Paragliding_Experience_from_Interlaken-Interlaken_Bernese_Oberland_Canton_o.html

Paris:

<https://thehoxton.com/booking/rooms-available?stayId=91bb5edf-d1c2-4a2f-a4a2-7ea91de740c0&hotel=paris&preferredRoom=>

<https://www.tou Eiffel.paris/en/rates-opening-times>