**“Conversations On Turning 20”: Laura Houldsworth on Corporate Travel, AI and Utopia**

When you get to the ripe young age of 20, you’re bound to collect lots of stories – not only about the past but lessons for the future.

As WiT marks its 20th year in 2025, we turn the spotlight on our community, our tribe pioneers and leaders, to tell their stories and share their views on the evolution of online travel and technology.

We ask them to look back on the past and their early days, reflect on the present and why this moment is pivotal for online travel and get them to imagine the future, the next 20.

This special WiT Studio series, “Conversations On Turning 20”, is the collective story of WiT.

As a Chinese saying goes, 以古为鉴，可以知兴替

“By using history as a mirror, one can understand the rise and fall of things.”

**Episode 7: Laura Houldsworth, Managing Director, Asia Pacific, Booking.com**

**Laura Houldsworth on the Next 20 Years of Travel: Frictionless Journeys, Inclusive Experiences, and a New Era of Inspiration**

If you want a glimpse into the future of travel, **Laura Houldsworth**, Managing Director, Asia Pacific at **Booking.com**, paints a vivid — and optimistic — picture: one where technology removes friction, where travel becomes more inclusive, and where discovery is not driven by necessity but by curiosity.

In a wide-ranging interview, Houldsworth reflected on her journey through the evolution of corporate travel, the seismic shifts post-pandemic, and the technology trends shaping what she calls a "travel utopia" for the next 20 years.

**Breaking Down Borders: The Evolution of Corporate Travel**

Looking back to her early days at BCD Travel and Concur, Houldsworth recalled a slower pace of technological change than many expected.

"At the time, we thought technology was moving fast, but the reality was country-by-country nuances — like payment options, GDS setups, and low-cost carrier access — slowed real progress," she said.

Online booking tools represented the first major shift, but the real acceleration has only come in the last few years, especially with the rise of **next-gen AI**.

"Finally, for the first time, it feels truly game-changing," she noted. "AI is allowing us to remove the friction points that held us back for decades."

**Hybrid Travel Is Here to Stay — But in What Form?**

Another transformation reshaping the industry is the **blending of work and leisure travel**, a trend long talked about but turbocharged by COVID-19.

"We used to call it 'bleisure', but honestly, let's just call it what it is — it's travel," Houldsworth said. "Today, travelers expect flexibility. I’m a classic example — if I travel for work, I’ll tag on a weekend to enjoy the destination."

Yet, she warned the future of hybrid travel isn't guaranteed. As some large corporates return to full in-office policies, the endurance of "work-from-anywhere" flexibility remains uncertain.

**SMEs Lead the Corporate Recovery — and OTAs Are Gaining Ground**

While multinational corporations slashed travel budgets, it was **SMEs** that powered corporate travel's faster recovery.

"For SMEs, relationships are critical. They'll spend the time and money to be in front of customers, even if it means traveling at lower cost," Houldsworth explained.

This has opened the door for **OTAs like Booking.com** to carve a larger role in business travel, offering simpler, scalable solutions compared to traditional corporate travel providers.

"The rise of OTAs supporting business travel is real — and it’s reshaping how smaller companies manage corporate trips."

**AI and the Great Expectations Shift**

Houldsworth is unequivocal about the most exciting force shaping travel's future: **Artificial Intelligence**.

"AI is no longer just a tech team problem. It's everyone's responsibility. It’s advancing so rapidly that it changes customer expectations almost overnight."

Travelers today expect the same seamless, personalized experiences across every platform they touch — from flights and hotels to destination inspiration.

**From "Know Where You're Going" to "Inspire Me"**

Historically, Booking.com excelled at servicing travelers who knew exactly where and when they wanted to go. But that's changing.

"Now travelers come in saying, 'I have a free weekend. Where should I go?' Maybe they want a beach. Maybe cooler weather. Maybe unique food experiences."

This **shift from specific booking to inspiration-first discovery** is transforming how platforms like Booking.com must engage with users — moving from reactive service to proactive inspiration.

**The Rise — and Risk — of "Taggable Tourism"**

One fascinating — and concerning — trend Houldsworth flagged is **the influence of social media on destination choice**, especially among younger travelers.

"Over 50% of Gen Zs and Millennials say they wouldn't travel to a destination unless it's 'taggable' — meaning it’s Instagram-worthy."

While this can drive discovery, it also risks **over-concentrating travelers** at a handful of "perfect photo spots," exacerbating issues like over-tourism.

"We’re not just inspiring people to travel — we're unintentionally funneling them to the same place, the same shot, the same experience."

The challenge for the industry will be to leverage technology not just for inspiration, but to **disperse travelers more sustainably**.

**Breaking Language Barriers and Building Inclusive Journeys**

Another hidden friction point technology is solving? **Language barriers**.

"Google Translate and similar tools mean travelers are no longer limited by language fears. This opens up the world for so many more people."

Yet Houldsworth is passionate that **inclusion must go beyond language**. Through Booking.com's *Travel Proud*program, the company educates accommodation providers on how to create welcoming environments for all travelers — including LGBTQ+ travelers, solo female travelers, and beyond.

"Travel should be for everyone, everywhere — and not everyone today has the same experience. We must change that."

**A Travel Utopia: Frictionless, Borderless, Inclusive**

Despite the challenges ahead, Houldsworth remains **resolutely optimistic** about travel’s future.

"I imagine a future where visas are gone, where your face is your passport, where traveling long distances is affordable and accessible to everyone."

In her vision, **technology removes friction**, **sustainability protects destinations**, and **travel becomes a universal, inclusive experience**, not just for the privileged few.

"Travel is emotive. Whether for business or pleasure, it’s about enjoyment — and everything we do should make that journey as seamless and meaningful as possible."

**Final Word**

Laura Houldsworth’s vision is clear: if the industry can harness technology thoughtfully, protect communities, and create experiences that resonate emotionally, the next two decades could usher in the most **open, inspiring, and inclusive era of travel yet**.

Or as she puts it:

"**We need to make the world worth experiencing — and make it easier for everyone to experience it.**"

**THE EARLY DAYS OF CORPORATE TRAVEL & THE BIGGEST SHIFT**

04:27.04

Laura Houldsworth

Yeah, you know, as we talk about technology advances, I think back to those days, 2008, when I joined BCD, 2010, when I first came to WIT, and we talking about the speed of change of technology.

04:38.76

Laura Houldsworth

But honestly, at the time, not changing as fast as maybe we thought it was. I remember, you know, we would look country by country, what we could offer to our customers. And, you know, and these were typically the very large corporates.

04:52.17

Laura Houldsworth

And it was very nuanced by country, whether we were type of, and Payment options were available, what the GDS setup was by country, whether low-cost carriers were involved or not.

05:04.88

Laura Houldsworth

So it was it was quite nuanced. And I don't know that over those few years, or maybe even over the last 10, it advanced as much as everything has in the last five, i would say, two to three to five years.

05:20.57

Laura Houldsworth

it's It feels like a lot of the limitations that we had back then are probably not necessarily gone on when I went into Concur. Obviously then it's the software that we were selling, but the the supporting infrastructure behind to support corporate travel was the same. So still fed by the GDS and other supplies like booking.com.

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Laura Houldsworth

um but we didn't necessarily move because we still had limitations by country. um And I think what we're seeing over the last couple years, and what hopefully we'll see accelerated in the next few years, is that limitations or the nuances by country start to remove and the friction start to remove. It's not that you can get this in in India, but you can't get in China, or you can get this in Singapore, but you can't get in Australia. So that kind of shift, I think, didn't happen as fast as we thought.

06:05.61

Laura Houldsworth

remember we were writing, you know as we were talking to customers, either writing the sales pitches or talking to customers out there that we're looking for, wasn't changing that much year on year. But I think we thought it was, and technology was definitely advancing. And moving to online, for sure, was probably the biggest advancement at that time.

06:23.38

Laura Houldsworth

The use of online booking tools versus traditional servicing um was probably the biggest shift, but it was still very nuanced. And I think now, being in the online space with booking, um we can see the advance of technology. And obviously, the last years, two years, where the next gen AI, it's in now it's game changing, I feel really for the first time, whereas before it's been incremental change.

**TRAVELLER BEHAVIOR ALSO FUELLED THE CHANGE**

07:22.05

Laura Houldsworth

yeah I think that's probably been the biggest change ah throughout my kind of journey, either as a corporate traveler or as ah as a leisure traveler. And as you said, the the blending of the two has become more and more prevalent.

07:34.56

Laura Houldsworth

but We were just touching on the kind of the hybrid space of events during that time and how the technology advanced Now this is kind of the hybrid use of time and time when spent traveling.

07:46.25

Laura Houldsworth

So people having the good that came out of COVID ultimately was this kind of flexibility and work that has allowed people to now travel potentially for longer um in destinations and enjoy it more for for leisure purposes. And I know I'm a classic example of that.

08:01.31

Laura Houldsworth

If I am traveling for work, then I would normally tag on at least one of the weekends either side, depending on the timing that I have. And I think that more and more ah seeing that um and the corporate travel behavior has generally changed. i think large corporates have reflected on their budgets and have probably reduced quite significantly, whereas the smaller SME organizations are traveling probably more and have recovered quicker than, because there's big budgets, there's not the appetite to spend them as much in the large corporates as would spend,

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Laura Houldsworth

hundreds of millions um a year. So definitely the budgets corporate desire has changed. And then the consumer themselves when traveling ah certainly changed. I think we will continue to see more and more of that. i mean, we talked about the term pleasure actually came out way before COVID.

08:50.58

Laura Houldsworth

um And we were trying to support that as well in whichever organization I've been in That's been ah a phrase for a while, but it truly came true. I would say post COVID and the flexibility of work now as companies start to move away little bit from that flexibility that has been there for the last five years what that does next um i think we have yet to see but um you know a lot of companies are keeping this hybrid working mode and therefore hybrid travel i think will continue for them but there are a lot of these big organizations that are going back to fully in the office so i think we'll time will tell a little bit on how big this stays

**CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, IT’S STILL TRAVEL**

09:48.61

Laura Houldsworth

Yeah, I also don't like pleasure at all, but i yeah I don't know what a better word is. Just call it travel, call it what it is. um but Whatever you're there for, you're having an experience, whether you're there for ah for work or pleasure. So ah last week say I was in Hong Kong and it was really great for me to be back.

10:06.38

Laura Houldsworth

I used to go multiple times a year. haven't been for the last since 2019. So that, but I was there purely for work, but I got one evening to myself, spent some time walking around.

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Laura Houldsworth

So for me, it was travel.

**THE ROLE OF SMES AND OTAS IN CHANGING CORPORATE TRAVEL**

11:15.17

Laura Houldsworth

Yeah, SMEs definitely travel recovered quicker for them in in the corporate travel landscape. Mostly, I think, and again, this is a bit of a hypothesis on my side, not really a bit of any facts, but because as I mentioned for multinationals, big budgets were cut and the appetite to bring them back was really just not there.

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Laura Houldsworth

Whereas for the SMEs, relationships are critical typically. um And so they will spend the time and the money and not necessarily allocating big budgets to it, but will find ways to travel at a lower cost, but they see the importance of being in front of their customers, meeting their partners.

11:53.09

Laura Houldsworth

I know we always joke that we would, know, we won't travel anymore until you your competitor goes, right? And then your competitor's in front of your customer or your partner, and then you go, and it starts to kind of yield this no momentum again.

12:06.97

Laura Houldsworth

And I think we see that much more prevalently in the SME space, where relationships become absolutely critical. In the MNC space, we're seeing it much more in the getting together internally more, um because the with people hybrid, if they are,

12:23.16

Laura Houldsworth

um getting them together became very important. That was kind of the recovery to start with through COVID. But I do think that, yeah, with the SMEs recovering more, looking to travel more, but at a lower cost, typically, um then there's the rise definitely of the OTAs supporting business travel.

12:39.23

Laura Houldsworth

And we are seeing that more and more, yeah, all across the region. Obviously, we have a booking for business arm, but many of the OTAs have a mechanism to support because it requires something slightly different. I mean, you can, everybody could use just a regular OTA, but when it comes to data, um reporting, security, and then there are different things that a corporate is looking for than an individual traveling. So that is rising. I think we will continue to see that grow. And and then the online, the typical online booking tools are having to shift also because it's much easier now to just sign up with an OTA for business.

13:15.79

Laura Houldsworth

um than it is to go for a full-fledged service because they're still targeting typically the MNCs because that's obviously where the money is um for a full-service agency with an online booking tool support.

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Laura Houldsworth

So I think it's a space to watch. I think it's something that we are we continue to invest in. um It's something that we see yeah extending quite heavily, but it's still, to the point earlier, it's still a little nuanced um by country in some cases, and that's what we need to move past.

**HOW AI WILL REMOVE FRICTION POINTS & RAISE CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS**

14:18.64

Laura Houldsworth

Yeah, I think the most exciting, and I'm not going to be the only one to say this to you, I'm sure, is the the new technology, is the next-gen AI, because this allows us to do all of those things that have been restricting us for all the years. When I mentioned the nuances by country, for example, we should start to remove some of these friction points by using this technology. And it's advancing at rapid rates, which means that for all companies, we need to stay on top of it. In booking, we've got this very clear mandate to democratize ah AI to make sure that everybody is looking at different use cases because nobody's the expert in it yet because it's changing so fast.

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Laura Houldsworth

It's not that we can leave it to the tech team or the product team or um the infrastructure team. It really has to be a little bit of everybody. thinking about what we can do to maximize it, not just for our inefficiency or just for our travelers experience, but all across everything that we do.

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Laura Houldsworth

So that's for sure the most exciting. um As I mentioned earlier, it's if we talk about this the speed of trouble ah speed of technology change, like say for all the years I was working in and BCD, selling this not that too different a thing, honestly, even though we saw technology advancing now, we are...

15:34.08

Laura Houldsworth

There's a completely different model that customers are looking for and their expectations as technology advances, their expectations grow. Cause the minute you have a sophisticated level of engagement with a platform, you expect that everywhere you go.

**THE SHIFT IN HOW TRAVEL INSPIRATION AND PLANNING**

27:14.31

Laura Houldsworth

ah Yes, I think the the key thing that we are seeing our side, because traditionally, booking has been a platform where you need to know when and where you're going. So I'm going for a weekend in Bangkok on these dates.

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Laura Houldsworth

Then we can give you everything and we can get very personal based on what we know about you. and There's a lot of search filters, so you can get quite specific about what you want using the map. Now, travelers are able to use our platform and many others to actually look for inspiration.

27:39.95

Laura Houldsworth

I've got this weekend free. I want to travel for no more than three hours. Um, food is very important for me. I'd like to be by a beach or not. Uh, I'd like to go to cooler temperature. So actually then people can look for inspiration on these platforms and start to think, okay, I don't know where I actually want to go. I just know I've got some free time and I want to go somewhere and I want to, maybe I want a unique experience. Maybe I want to go everywhere I was going and what's the most popular place.

28:04.64

Laura Houldsworth

So that I think is the difference now on the way that people are using travel platforms. um to actually get ideas versus just coming when you're already gone beyond that stage of the funnel and you actually just know exactly what you want. You might not know where you're going to stay, but you know I'm going to Phuket and I roughly know which beaches I typically like um and so I can be quite specific. Now you don't need to be specific. You can start very big and and filter yourself down um versus already coming in at that point. And that's, that will continue. And together with not knowing to a truly personalized experience um can really make it an incredible experience for people.

**THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT OF INVISIBILITY: HOW SHOULD SUPPLIERS RESPOND?**

29:14.52

Laura Houldsworth

and The key is making sure that what they offer is very clear um because it would be, I've got a king room, a twin room, a suite, a deluxe, smell that it and you put the pictures on because you want to make sure you differentiate between the b rooms.

29:30.03

Laura Houldsworth

But I think it's really important now that people are the our partners and the accommodation providers are showing what's unique or what's what kind of experiences someone will have when they come to the property.

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Laura Houldsworth

So it's much less about the functionality of it and much more about the experience and the feeling that someone will get when they're there. um you know That's been now prevalent, I guess, for a while, where we're trying to inspire people to come to a property, but we can see that much more in a platform like ours, and where Yeah, like say, people are starting at a different funnel place while coming in. So they need to make sure that they understand more than just the other location on the map.

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Laura Houldsworth

Does it have a restaurant? Does it have a gym? You know, that's a almost table stakes now and you need much more.

**THE PITFALLS OF “TAGGABLE TOURISM”**

15:47.86

Laura Houldsworth

And so I think that that's something that we need to make sure that we are yeah very much on top of. And I think what is also changing and will change continue with this technology, it's not just the personalization of it, but it's about how people look for how people get inspired for travel and what was really a crazy stat for me i realized we in the research that we did we do the travel predictions um every year and in this year the gen z's and millennials will travel the stat is 50 just over 50 but will not travel to a destination that's not taggable

(ARVINDH, THIS IS WHERE SHE USES THE WRONG STAT – SO NOT SURE HOW YOU EDIT IT)

16:25.99

Laura Houldsworth

meaning that they will only go if it's a place that they can then post um and promote and be proud of where they are with that particular picture. Now, if you think that's over 50% of the younger generation, as that generation continues to grow and the younger ones come through, that's going to change the way that people travel.

iNSERT

22:49.39

Laura Houldsworth

DELETE But it's that particular spot that you need to be in. And this is what I also learned in Hong Kong. And I think it's becoming even more prevalent in China. Yeah, is it? Little Red Book. There's a, yeah, this app that tells you

22:57.32

siew hoon

Yeah, yeah, Xiao Hong Su, yeah.

23:00.91

Laura Houldsworth

come out of the MR or and MTR in, ah in Hong Kong at this exit, take four steps to the left, look up, hold your camera exactly this angle and you'll get the perfect shot of whatever it was that you were there for.

23:13.02

Laura Houldsworth

But I mean, it's very specific. So that's not a just, Oh, this is a great tagable location. Make sure you go to see the staff area or the peak. You know, that's a, it's a totally different thing now.

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Laura Houldsworth

um So it's going to change what they're looking for from platforms like us, but it's also going to change destinations in themselves. And we talk about over-tourism. and how technology actually can help us to disperse travelers.

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Laura Houldsworth

At the same time, we're sending travel very clearly to the same place, exactly the same spot, to take exactly the same picture um because it needs to be taggable. this meant So the technology, I think, it will enhance a lot, can help a lot, but also can potentially um have this limitation of, or this potential downside of driving everybody to exactly the same spot. And I think this is something we need to watch carefully and think about as an industry how we yeah we don't get trapped in creating more problems, um which we already recognize is an issue in the industry over tourism. And so how do we spread that around to protect the landscapes, protect communities, spread the travel budgets, ah dollars around?

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Laura Houldsworth

So it will be interesting to watch, I think.

**TRAVELLING AGAINST THE TIDE OF “TAGGABLE TOURISM”**

19:43.71

Laura Houldsworth

Yeah. Okay. Yeah. I think for me, when I think about these tangible destinations, well, first of all, I'm not Gen Z or millennial, so I'm ah not in the same platform, so I'm not getting the same level of inspiration, um but that's, but that's okay. But then i do want to go to destinations that are unique. A couple of years ago, the fortune to go to Antarctica, which at the time, I think I only knew one person who had been before, um,

20:11.54

Laura Houldsworth

And in the last two years since I've been now, I can track many friends and more and more people that have also got, not that I inspire them at all, ah but more just that these off the beaten places are becoming very important. and people are starting to think, um myself included, I want to go while I still can and while there is still something worth experiencing. I mean, again, at booking, we talk about the world needs to be worth experiencing if you want to make it easier for everyone to experience the world so that was a destination that i thought you need to go now and before it changes in a very sad and negative way but i have to say when i got there i was incredibly impressed with the preservation that they do um so i'm now more confident that it's well looked after and the all the tourists that go ah there to protect as well as um just to take those pictures but i do think that the

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Laura Houldsworth

we need to encourage people to go to different destinations, but the minute it becomes taggable, you know, then everybody goes again. So we keep getting further and further. And at some point, again, all of these, what are unique destinations or preserved destinations become the hotspots and everybody's there. So I think we need to find a way to think about how do we prevent that, um particularly as this will continue to rise um as the young generations, if that becomes it. ah At some point, does everybody say, you know what, social media is not important to me and there's a whole generation of going offline.

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Laura Houldsworth

And maybe then it it changes things in ah in a different way again. There's maybe a bit like kind of the young generation are this youngest generation now are the least drinkers of alcohol, for example.

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Laura Houldsworth

um and you know, when you would have thought that was a trend that would always continue. And it's it's not. So maybe there's also a place where people say, you know I want to be offline and I don't want to post my pictures. Maybe I don't know. Let's, let's see. But I think that we need to be careful.

**THE NEXT 20: BREAKING BARRIERS**

24:33.78

Laura Houldsworth

I, I hope, I guess, more than I predict, but I, I hope that travel does become more frictionless and that we it should. i mean, now we're already seeing if you think about coming into Changi Airport, for example, now it's passportless.

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Laura Houldsworth

um So not so that even is even, and we always thought Changi was amazing. And you could be home very quickly and get through the airport but that you know all these type of enhancements do make the experience nicer the booking experience is getting better and better and ah booking we're certainly trying to make sure that we remove as much friction as possible from all the different verticals we're not alone in that pursuit everybody wants to make that because travel is ultimately very emotive it's We do it for, mean, when you say whether you do it for corporate, for business or for pleasure, but ultimately we want to make it as seamless possible because ultimately it's about enjoyment.

25:26.96

Laura Houldsworth

um So regardless of why I'm going, I want to make sure I enjoy the the process of booking it, getting there and getting home safely. So I think that there's ah there' a space there that will improve over the next 20 years at a much rapid rate than it has in the last 20. And we will continue to see more and more startups or scale-ups or organizations, even as large as booking, where we can plug gaps that have been there.

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Laura Houldsworth

I think that there will be a lot more in the technology for actual travel. So planes, trains will continue to improve. And so things will get quicker.

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Laura Houldsworth

That's something, you know, we've seen the rise of the long distance flights over the last 20 years. and i remember when new york Singapore in New York was launched. and that was the longest flight in the world.

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Laura Houldsworth

Now I think it's number three, launching Sydney, London. So the technology is advancing that we can do these long distance, but I think it will get even better where maybe it's not even planes anymore that will get you from Sydney to London. But I don't know if that's in the next 20 years, but certainly The ability to travel distances at shorter times will come, um which gives opens up a whole new world for people um to go to places that they never even would have considered going to.

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Laura Houldsworth

So I do think or hope that that also continues. And we've got flying cars and all kinds of things going around. then um And the world will be a great place to be traveling in.

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Laura Houldsworth

I don't know if it's an untold story, but I do think that the technology will also allow, we talked about how people can travel different distances and it's becoming more affordable potentially to get to different locations.

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Laura Houldsworth

But I think language barrier has also put a lot of people off traveling. um I think it's made people nervous ah of traveling, certainly the older generation, if their language capabilities were limited to their own.

31:06.18

Laura Houldsworth

And I'm very fortunate. and say very fortunate, no, I don't actually very unfortunate, I think because by being English become very lazy in languages. um Because English has percolated throughout the world. And as long as you can kind of get by a little bit, people are managing.

31:19.72

Laura Houldsworth

Whereas imagine if my language was only ah smaller language that I didn't understand others, I would be i would feel more limited about where I could go. um Or even as an English person go into a destination where English is not widely used.

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Laura Houldsworth

So I do think that the rise of technology to support languages, um so you know Google Translate where i can just speak in taxi driver can, it can speak back to them and restaurants. So it means that I think we've removed already that friction and that fear for people of going to any destination in the world because the capability of communicating um has, as that friction point I think has gone um and that's opens up so That's not very unique or untold, but I do think it's something that's important.

32:38.76

Laura Houldsworth

yeah I think it's super important if we think about travel, whether it is language um or different um preferences of travel, that we provide inclusive travel. And that for us, ah booking is certainly very important. For me personally, it's incredibly important. So um yeah, I'm wearing travel proud t-shirt because we believe that travel should be for everybody to everywhere.

32:59.21

Laura Houldsworth

So it should nobody should feel limited um and nobody should feel excluded. So whether that's me traveling as a female on my own, um whether it's a... yeah two men as a couple traveling, they should have the same experience. And we know that's not true today.

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Laura Houldsworth

We know from our research that um if you are LGBTQ+, your experience when traveling is very different um to a normal man and wife traveling to a destination.

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Laura Houldsworth

it's It's very different. So I think that we we have an obligation. um if we are making it easier for everyone to experience the world, that we're making it easier for everyone to have the same experience where they are in the world.

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Laura Houldsworth

And like I say, our research shows that that's absolutely not the case today. So I think that as we also help to educate accommod our accommodation providers, and that's what Travel Proud is all about, it's really, it's not just about saying that we're about inclusivity, it's about educating our accommodation partners on how they can provide an exclusive experience.

33:58.06

Laura Houldsworth

And we provide this training for free to make sure that they understand the differences. And it can be very well-meaning sometimes, but it can come across ah to somebody very awkward or very uncomfortable.

34:09.31

Laura Houldsworth

And so we want to try and make that easier. And by doing so, again, it's not just about LGBTQ communities. It can be single females traveling by themselves, single males traveling by themselves.

34:20.66

Laura Houldsworth

It comes with different connotations and different experiences. And I think we want to make sure that properties or any kind of travel provider understands that and understands the nuances that come with being fully inclusive.

**SMELLS LIKE UTOPIA SPIRIT**

34:51.10

siew hoon

but so So can you define the utopia? Because we're not going to use my so, you know, so so for the next 20, I, you know, you can see that I'm a very optimistic person and I imagine a travel utopia.

35:03.29

Laura Houldsworth

um for the next 20 years i can certainly imagine uh travel utopia and yes maybe i'm ah a little on the positive side talked earlier about the not so rapid um enhancements but now i'm ah i'm a true believer that i think that everybody will be able to go everywhere they will not be limited by and i think hopefully we also start to see like visas do they even exist at some point? um I mean, yes, for some cases, but frictionless, borderless and travel hopefully becomes easier, even though right now the world is probably going a bit the other way.

35:36.21

Laura Houldsworth

still think optimistically we will get to a place where it's easier. Travelling with your passport will not even be required. Your face um will be enough wherever you go. Your language skills will not be needed.

35:49.56

Laura Houldsworth

um your I can get to I can get to London very quickly, for example, or the other side of the world at an affordable cost. So yeah, I am very positive about the experience going forward and it will be inclusive for everybody. And whoever I am, or whoever you are, will feel that you have the same experience.

36:07.36

Laura Houldsworth

And that's obviously sustainability is critical piece because we want everybody to experience the world, there needs to be a world worth experiencing. And we continue to protect the communities from, um yes, the the risks of tagable tourism and the potential dangers of it and everybody going to the same place um and spread the tourism dollars to the communities that need it as well.