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By

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HappyTravel

Tourism Technologies

## Introduction

The way we travel has changed immensely in last 10-15 years. Latest travel search engines like Travelocity, Expedia and Tripadvisor make it easy to plan trips beforehand. Reviews by users for every travel destinations, hotels, places also give us confidence and makes us feel safe to visit the location we have never visited before. Travelers and visitors frequently consult various travel planning websites and travel agencies these days. Although some of these services are fully-fledged, often they fail to provide a feasible solution meeting the demands of people. Also, it still has a less impact on where we travel. Other than planning and booking for flights and tickets, the existing technology in tourism business comes to little help in decision making of millions of travelers travelling every year. Therefore, we strive to analyze the existing distance between ‘what people want’ and ‘what they get’. “There are several challenges that currently exist in tourism technology:

* Understanding the main trends that are affecting supply and demand
* Managing changes in the external environment while evolving at the same rate.
* Improve the capacity for tourism organizations to respond to demand through policies that better integrate diverse interests, taking into account the whole range of a destination’s potential.”

We are planning to create a questionnaire for people that will have a series of questions related to the way people travel and what factors and online technologies/search engines influences their travel plans. Questionnaire will include questions like but not limited to:

*Have you travelled recently?*

*Was it for business or pleasure?*

*Travelled alone or with family/friends?*

*Which websites/search engines/online communities they have used to make the travel plan?*

We will work on questions and narrow them down to get the helpful data set that we can analyze. In an interview we also wish to ask questions like “Is there a way to make lives better? How existing technology can be augmented to better support?” Depending on the feedback that we get from the interview, exhaustive surveys will be conducted which will help us understand the situation better and make further statistical analysis.

We intend to perform an in-depth research and read available articles and scholarly papers on tourism technologies. Currently our target population is adults over the age of 18 who travels and uses online help.

## Existing Technology

With the rapid growth of technology including websites, mobile apps, online travel agencies etc., and modern travels have become tech-savvy more than ever before. Recent study shows the internet has revolutionized the tourism industry more than any other factor in the last few decades. Besides, with access to the vast pool of information available online and information sharing among online travelers, an increasing number of travelers are seeking information via the internet prior to making any travel decisions.

Technology is helping people plan and travel in various ways. “*For example, the Mondrian Hotel in New York City's Soho neighborhood provides each of its 270 rooms with an iPad specifically for guests to use as a means to order food, plan their travel and coordinate transportation. The Roadside America app helps travelers uncover hidden gems and roadside attractions during their road trips, and social networking campaigns like the one launched by Mayor Buckhorn in Tampa Bay, Florida, use social media to engage tourists. What's more, photography innovations such as the Tamaggo 360-Imager allow consumers to capture their vacation experiences like never before.*”

Some websites and apps currently used are as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| *Website and/or app* | *Purpose* |
| SeatGuru | Pick a good seat in flight |
| Points.com | Track your status |
| Worldmate Gold | Keep track of itinerary |
| Hipmunk | Stay at desired holiday location |
| Priceline | Cheap booking and deals |
| TripAdvisor | Get other travelers review |
| Flight+ | Track your flight |
| Google maps | Navigate the roads |
| Roadtrippers | Plan roadtrips |
| Expedia | Plan trip and booking in advance |

The experiences and practices of travelers were previously ignored in different tourism literature. Most of the works have focused on the effects of tourism. Therefore there is a significant difficulty in understanding and designing tourism technologies which meets the demand of travelers. This motivated our choice of quantitative and qualitative methods to look in depth at how tourists arrange their activities and support their requirements accordingly with assistive technology.