HCI - HappyTravel

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# ABSTRACT

With the rapid growth of technology including websites, mobile apps, online travel agencies etc., modern travelers use tech­nology more than ever before. Recent study shows that the Internet has revolutionized the tourism industry more than any other factor in the last few decades. 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 Internet prior to making any travel decisions.

Travelers frequently consult various travel planning websites and travel agencies. 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, we are not sure how much personal impact it has on our decisions to travel to certain places. The existing technology in tourism business comes to little help in decision making of millions of travelers travelling every year.

We intend to perform an in­-depth research and read available articles and scholarly papers on tourism technologies to further understand this subject better.

In HappyTravel project we have interviewed travelers to learn and understand the thought process behind choosing a particular location to visit and its influencing factors. Based on the interview intentions for visits and the satisfaction rate, we created and sent a survey out which resulted in 100 people responding. After analyzing the data and taking into consideration the tools that travelers want to see available online we will create a wireframe for a website portal which will be evaluated by a group of travelers.

## Keywords

Travel tourism; Data analysis; Affinity diagram; hypotheses; Influences

# INTRODUCTION

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 it’s guest an iPad in a room to use 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. Social networking campaigns like the one launched by Mayor Buckhorn in Tampa Bay, Florida, uses 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 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 and places also give us confidence and makes us feel safe to visit the location we have never visited before. Although travel tourism online industry makes it very easy to plan trips ahead of times and saves great deal of money doing so we wanted to see how much influence it really has on deciding where to go and what type of experiences to get.

This motivated our choice of interview and survey questions to get some answers about how travelers arrange their activities and support their requirements accordingly with technology available today. We have analyzed traveler’s responses about existing systems and whether there is a need for more information. 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.

# Research Methods

## Interviews:

## We have interviewed 16 travelers who have travelled recently or are planning to take a vacation in near future. Questions asked included questions like but are not limited to:

* Have you travelled recently?
* What was the nature of your travel?
* Did you use any websites/search engines to come up with the location?
* What type of experience are you hoping to get with this vacation?
* Which websites/search engines/online communities you have used to make the travel arrangements?
* Is there anything you feel should you have known before the travel experience would have been more pleasant?

Based on the interviewers responses we have come up with the survey.

## Survey: Depending on the feedback we received from the interview, a survey has been conducted. We have received 100 survey responses, which will help us understand the situation better and make further analysis. Majority of travelers who took the survey were between the ages of 25-44. Expedia and TripAdvisor came at top when making travel arrangements. For one of the question in our survey, “Is there anything you would like to see online that will help you get more satisfying travel experience? “, besides 50 % of travelers saying NO at least 16% of travelers provided comments about what they would like to see more of when searching for travel information online, which we will further review.

## System Evaluation: Based on our hypotheses we will create a wireframe for a web-portal, which will then be evaluated by students in the class.

# Participants Recruitment:

Currently our target population is adults over the age of 18 who travels and uses online help. We have interviewed mostly friends and colleagues who travel for business or for personal reasons (16 travelers). Survey had been posted on social media and in Piazza and 100 responses have been received. We will do group evaluation of our hypotheses with the help of students.

# Research instruments

In order to better understand the influences or lack of influences of existing travel search engines and technologies we planned to conduct a comprehensive interview with students, family and friends. In our research we have interviewed 16 travelers. The interviews were face-to-face. Based on the interviews most travelers visit places for family vacations. The decision made to visit these places mostly is influenced by friend’s suggestions or the previous knowledge of the place. It is also influenced by the personal interest weather its seeking adventure, visit a family or just have relax time on the beach.

We then surveyed 100 travelers by posting the survey on social media and other similar places.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/summary/PddQUFn8pUflYgcLzEUF5Z68HPPsm1P119xCBacxfzY_3D>

# Data Analysis

We will use following techniques to consolidate our data into useful information.

## Affinity diagramming:



## As we interviewed travelers we took notes. We then transferred those notes on the post-its. We now will analyze our survey data and group those answers in a similar way to interview questions. We are in the process of grouping these notes into key ideas. Which will probably help us focus us into key findings.

## Vision:

We will use the key ideas gathered from the affinity diagram technique used to come up with the design ideas to better serve the travelers needs. We will conduct a workshop with few of our friends and travelers to discuss design ideas and based on there feedback will create a prototype (wireframe) of a web-site portal which can help travelers better prepare for their travel based on their interests. We will evaluate a prototype (wireframe) with the group of students in our class.

## References and Citation

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