

RESEARCH

Luxury travelers most likely to book on mobile device: report

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SPG Pro promotional image

By SARAH JONES

Fifty-two percent of luxury travelers say they are likely to book a trip on a smartphone within the next year, compared to the average 29 percent across all segments of travelers, according to a new report by Expedia Media Solutions and comScore.



Even with the proliferation of mobile usage, travel brands can't discount other forms of digital marketing, including desktop Web sites and placement on publications. This is especially true for luxury consumers, who use the most number of types of resources to make their plans.

"One of the biggest things we're seeing is the clear impact of mobile on travel content engagement, and just how much time consumers are spending researching and shopping across a variety of devices," said Matthew Reichel, senior director, product & site planning, [Expedia Media Solutions](#), Bellevue, WA.

"We know consumer experience has always been key to driving engagement, but the growth and scale of today's mobile audience further illustrates the need for brands to implement a diversified cross-platform marketing strategy to effectively engage key

audiences across devices throughout the travel planning process," he said.

"Understanding what keeps the luxury audience engaged on mobile – like ease of use or relevant content and offers – will help luxury travel brands provide the best possible shopping experience."

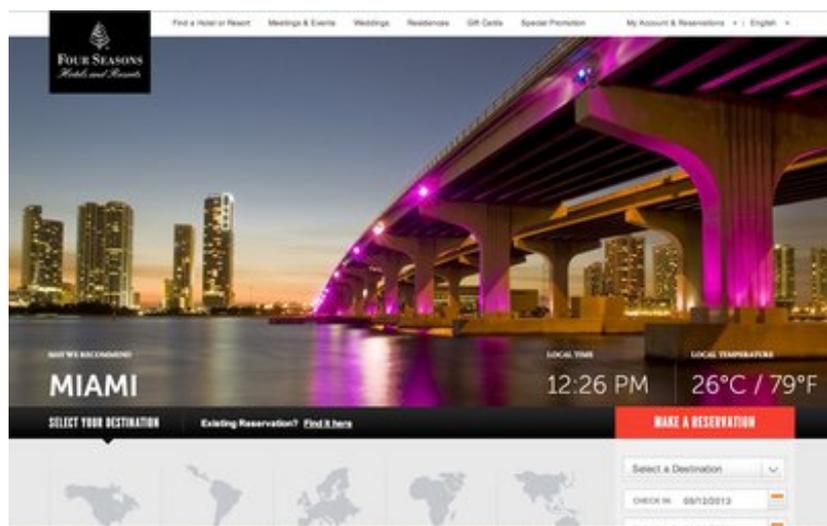
For “**Travel Decisions in a Multiscreen World**,” comScore blended behavioral data with statistics gleaned from a custom survey of United States adults who made an online purchase or booked travel in the past six months and own a smartphone or tablet.

Cross-platform approach

In 2014, 156 million consumers had engaged with digital travel content in the past year, up 11 percent from 2013. Increasingly, the percentage of consumers accessing travel sites exclusively on mobile devices is growing, reaching 62 million in 2014.

Out of the 104 people viewing travel content on their smartphone, 92 percent are using a browser rather than an app.

Desktop still represents a large portion of travel site views, particularly in the planning stages, and consumers using a PC tend to make more visits per month and spend more time, due to higher engagement.



Four Seasons Web site

Across devices, browsing travel sites peaks at 8 p.m., driven mostly by a surge in tablet use.

Compared to the average 2.70 digital resource categories consumers use when planning a trip, luxury customers use an average of 3.96 types of sources. These can include Web sites for hotels, airlines, car rentals and travel publications, OTAs, search engines and personal recommendations.

Before leaving for a trip, luxury and business travelers also engage more than other consumers with travel content on a smartphone, particularly for shopping for airfare or a hotel and planning their activities.

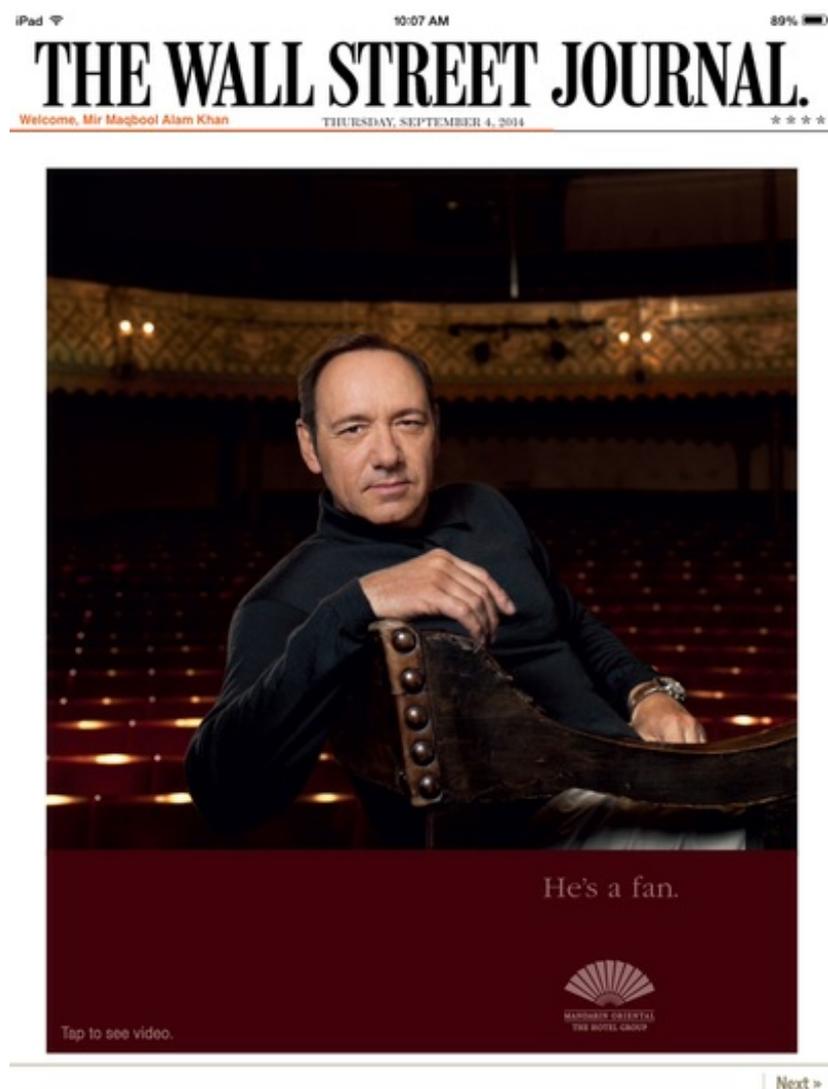
Besides trip planning, luxury consumers are also looking just for fun. Compared to other

types of travelers, accessed travel sites as a form of entertainment with the most frequency, with 33 percent looking for travel content weekly.

Mobile messaging

Knowing that luxury customers are booking more on mobile, it makes sense for hotel brands to advertise in this space. However, not all mobile ads get equal results. Consumers are more likely to click-through an ad on a tablet than a smartphone, whether intentionally or unintentionally. For those who deliberately click, the statistic evens out, with 50 percent clicking on each type of device.

Mandarin Oriental highlighted its “He’s a Fan, She’s a Fan” campaign through a mobile advertisement on the Wall Street Journal’s iPad application.



Mandarin Oriental ad

The full screen ad featured actor Kevin Spacey’s “He’s a Fan” video, a link to other fans and the option to see the brand’s Web site. This in-app advertisement is likely hoping to attract like-minded iPad subscribers of the Wall Street Journal, especially those who may be interested in celebrities or Mr. Spacey’s work ([see story](#)).

The good news for advertisers is that luxury travelers are the most likely to intentionally click on an ad, regardless of device.

"The study showed that across both tablet and smartphone, the top reason for clicking on a mobile ad was because it caught the user's attention, followed by an offer the user was interested in or a product/service the user was interested in," Mr. Reichel said. "We also found that luxury users were the most likely to intentionally click on mobile ads on smartphone and tablets.

"This speaks to the importance of targeting your key audience with relevant content and integrating a multiplatform marketing approach."

Connected stay

Knowing luxury consumers' interest in mobile connectivity, hotels can also enhance their properties with touchpoints.

Many hotel brands are leveraging tablets in useful ways to enhance the guest experience.

From digital lecterns to immersive apps that compel repeated interaction, tablets have broad application for hotel brands, which tend to be more user-friendly than smaller devices. Also, mobile booking is changing how many brands bring consumers to their properties in the first place ([see story](#)).

Having mobile touchpoints along the way can help a brand reach consumers on whatever device they prefer, whether desktop or smartphone.

"Travelers may be engaging with different types of resources on different platforms – they could be looking at in-market activities on a desktop, or airline fares on mobile – so this goes back to the importance of using an integrated marketing approach across platforms," Mr. Reichel said. "There's an incredible opportunity to reach them across devices and throughout the travel planning process, but you have to understand those use habits and variances.

"The Multiscreen Study helps illustrate those nuances and provides luxury marketers with insights into how and where best to reach their audience."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/8wV3IdHn2bk](https://www.youtube.com/embed/8wV3IdHn2bk)

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