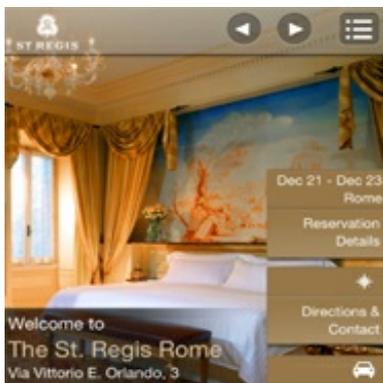


RESEARCH

52pc of consumers used a mobile device when booking travel in the last 90 days

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By CHANTAL TODE

Growing use of smartphones and tablets is influencing travel research and purchases, with 52 percent of consumers having used a mobile device to book travel in the last 90 days compared to 48 percent on a laptop, according to a new report from JiWire.

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Understanding how user behavior across multiple devices is important for advertisers and content developers as they look to engage their audience going forward. JiWire's quarterly Mobile Audience Insights Report reveals that multi-device usage is rapidly increasing for travel-related research and purchases.

"Mobile is important for the travel industry," said David Staas, president of JiWire, San Francisco. "Consumers are relying on smartphones and tablets more than ever to research and make travel-related purchases.

"And while we're seeing growth of mobile usage for the travel industry, we're also seeing cross-device behavior, with people researching on one device, but booking on another," he said.

"One interesting finding that may surprise the industry is that a majority of mobile

consumers book travel while they're traveling.”

On-the-go booking

Travel brands typically expect consumers to research, plan and book travel prior to their trip.

However, mobile and cross-device adoption may be changing consumer behavior, with JiWire’s research indicating users research and book travel for both their current trip and future trips while traveling.

The report examines mobile usage and location behaviors when booking travel-related services, in addition to cross-device adoption and Wi-Fi usage trends.

Key findings include that 44 percent of consumers are willing to spend over \$500 when booking travel from a mobile device while nearly 50 percent of active mobile users use their smartphone and tablet for travel research.

Additionally, mobile apps are the preferred resource over mobile sites for travel research and purchasing with brand airline and travel aggregator apps the preferred choice among 32 percent of mobile users for booking travel.

More than 55 percent of consumers book travel-related reservations for both current and future travel plans while traveling.

Wi-Fi connections

The report also found that smartphones and tablets are leading the way for public Wi-Fi connections, with 60 percent of all public Wi-Fi connections accessed by mobile devices, up 33 percent growth year over year

In particular, tablet usage growth surpassed laptop and smartphone use for the second quarter in a row. Tablet use is highest at airports at 28 percent of mobile users, while tablet growth was highest at hotels, up 64 percent and cafes, up 44 percent.

In restaurants, smartphone public Wi-Fi access is highest at 81 percent.

Other findings include that leisure travelers are more influenced by discounts and promotions when booking travel, while business travelers are more influenced by loyalty rewards programs.

“Understanding their mobile audience is critical for achieving campaign success – brand and/or direct response,” Mr. Staas said.

“Marketers need to figure out where and when their customers are researching and booking, and what devices they're using to do so,” he said.

“Reaching audiences based on how they're engaging with travel-related decisions is crucial for brands.”

Final Take

Chantal Tode is associate editor on Mobile Marketer, New York

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