Race on for intuitive mobile travel apps

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The wealth of consumer data continues to build behind the scenes in the travel industry as consumers freely share personal information via online forms, social networking, customer service interactions and other digital communications.

As a result, travel organizations are being challenged to make better use of both historical and real-time data, significantly improve usability and open up previously closed silos that existed between various sectors when developing mobile applications.

The sharing of customer data is set to create more intuitive industry conversations this year to the benefit of travelers and developers alike.

As demand for more personalized services persists, how this data is applied and individually customized for mobile travel applications will be a key factor in determining which travel apps soar and which plummet in 2013.

Bridging the Big Data gap

Consumers can expect a more seamless transition of their past and current data, including Web information, when conducting mobile travel transactions in the coming year.

Linking personal data to individual transaction models will become a necessary selling point for consumers making bigger decisions through mobile devices such as booking activities and excursions.

To do this, more organizations will collaborate with each other to share consumer information, including flight bookings contrasted to data on activities, accommodations and other hospitality areas.

Integration between systems and back office communication will be a major factor as the contextual experience, particularly the expectations that the mobile experience will be the same as the Web, grows in demand.

Personalizing apps

Real-time "excursions" will also increase the demand for personalization in mobile travel apps as providers look to mirror experiences one would typically experience during individual tourism activities.

Such real-time information will reflect booking experiences that may be affected by the weather, individual country holidays and other factors via mobile apps.

Consumers are emotionally invested in their mobile device, and travel companies should not expect a change in this device loyalty during vacations.

Consumers expect updated, real-time apps tailored to their preferred mobile device, so travel service providers need to take this into account and ensure what they are offering, in terms of a mobile environment, is what individual categories of customers actually want and can even view.

Applying for the future

Travelers today want apps that offer a more well-rounded travel concierge experience using and include both current and historical consumer data.

From emailing within apps to multi-language translation options, global travelers now expect mobile solutions that offer a new level of on-the-go ease features, functionality, sophistication and consistency, and are more sophisticated than ever, combining that with the familiarity and consistency of their traditional Web experience.

The race for intuitive mobile travel apps is on, and travel service providers need to quickly adapt to advancing app demands as new devices are introduced – all while leveraging exploding amounts of consumer data to create a truly personal experience for the most seasoned traveler.

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