

salesforce

Key Trends that Will Shape the Future of Travel & Hospitality



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Introduction

Reignite the Magic of Travel

Not so long ago, travel was considered a luxurious occasion. People dressed up for their journeys. Travelers felt pampered, and the outing was tinged with excitement. Over the years, however, as travel has become more accessible and the number of travelers has grown exponentially, people's feelings about the travel experience have changed.

What was once an indulgence enjoyed by few is now a frustration endured by many. Inconveniences like long wait times, added fees, and new security regulations are creating new stresses for travelers

and new demands for service providers. After all, travel represents a significant investment of time and money, which is why more and more travelers expect a higher level of service. And the more they receive it in other industries, the more they expect it in their travels.

Salesforce is passionate about providing the travel and hospitality industry with the tools it needs to meet travelers' changing needs. We recently reached out to industry influencers, who laid out some ideas about what the future of travel might look like.



Travel Gets Smart in the 4th Industrial Revolution

Over the last 300 years, our world has seen incredible innovation and unprecedented technological change. Today, we're entering the Fourth Industrial Revolution—where artificial intelligence, robotics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are transforming the customer experience.

Travel is being transformed at an equally rapid and impactful pace. New tools and technologies are also making it possible for travelers to create extraordinary new experiences, explore new worlds, and embrace new cultures. The travel and hospitality companies that embrace new technology are getting a distinct competitive advantage: The ability to deliver the personalized service of the past with the flexibility and customizations of the future. In fact, nearly seven in 10 service teams in the industry, for example, have increased their focus on providing personalized service interactions to better meet travelers' expectations.

Satisfying the modern travelers' needs and demands will require a better understanding of their interests and behaviors. Equipped with the right technology stack, travel and hospitality providers can leverage digital and cloud capabilities to personalize each guest's experience and serve them best—proactively and reactively—at every step of their journey.



Early travel experiences may carry a certain nostalgic charm, but time has also brought technological advancements. Here are just a few of the ways technology has greatly improved the travel and guest experiences in recent years:

- Apps for real-time baggage, queue, and flight information
- On-demand in-flight entertainment
- Kiosks for check-in
- RFID bag tags for tracking luggage
- Smartphone room key service
- TSA PreCheck
- Virtual hotel room tours

Trend 1

Adapting Industry Standards to Societal Changes

From airlines and hotels to car rental companies and travel agencies, travel and hospitality spans many verticals. Standing at the precipice of historic changes in transit and technology, the industry faces new challenges in serving its billions of fickle, semi-disgruntled customers. But such big industry changes present tremendous opportunities for businesses to work new magic to disrupt and dominate the market. In fact, in a recent State of the Connected Customer study, 50% of surveyed customers said that they would be likely to switch if a company didn't anticipate their needs, while 52% would be likely to switch brands if a company didn't make an effort to personalize their communications. The players most knowledgeable about their customers' wants and needs will be the ones who will flourish in their new marketplace in the end.

“Travelers are more concerned with their experiences than with the best deal.”

“Multi-National Travel Trends—Connecting the Digital Dots: The Motivations and Mindset of Online Travelers,” 2017, [Expedia Media Solutions](#)



Meeting Traveler Needs in an Expectation-Driven Economy

To differentiate themselves from competitors, travel and hospitality brands must interact in ways that are personalized to each traveler's preferences.

But what does that travel experience really look like today, and what will it look like in the future?

To get a clear picture of customer travel preferences, we asked more than 500 business and leisure travelers to tell us about their recent interactions. After talking with these travelers, we saw some very specific trends emerge.



Based on our findings, the future of travel will be:

On Demand and Anticipated

Plans change, so securing alternate options in real time is nice. But it can be fun to plan something you're looking forward to, as well.

Personalized and Contextual

Travelers want to be treated like they are known, not like strangers. And they want it to feel natural when their needs change in different travel situations.

Seamless and Surprising

The travel experience should feel as smooth as possible, leaving room for moments of discovery and delight along the way. After all, that's what makes it an adventure.

As non-travel brands continue to raise the bar for customer experience, consumers naturally come to expect a new norm. As such, the travel and hospitality industry's greatest potential lies in the ability to meet the needs of technology-savvy travelers of all ages, incomes, and interests who are using apps and social media to book their getaways.

Trend 2

Curating a More Personalized Encounter

Today's travelers are connected consumers who take to social networks to plan their travel itineraries and vacations. Preferring personal recommendations, they put more stock in other travelers' recommendations and reviews than in general advertising. And as they travel, they share, like, and tweet out their experiences (good and bad) and deals with their social friends. Once they return home, they rate and recommend their travel experiences—then start planning their next adventures.

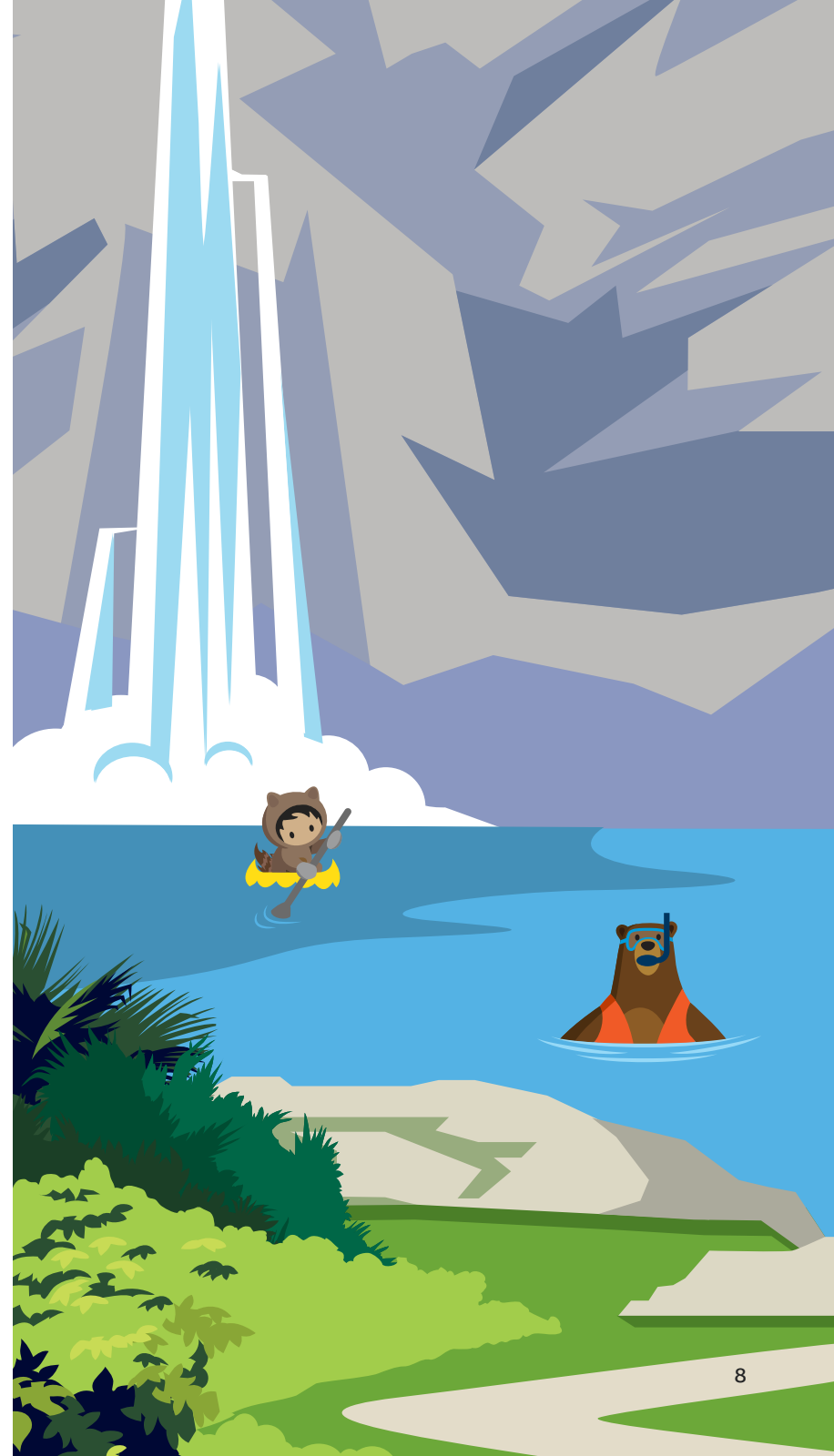
To keep up with the conversation and stay ahead of the chatter, travel and hospitality companies must participate in these conversations. It comes down to this: If you don't provide a proactive, contextual customer service experience, you risk losing their business.



Creating Predictive and Personalized Travel Experiences with the World's #1 CRM

The Salesforce Platform creates the room for businesses to focus on doing what they do best—connect with their customers and communities—rather than manage complex hardware and software infrastructure. By harnessing the data you've collected about your customers' interests and behaviors, you can personalize peoples' travel options by infusing artificial intelligence for in-the-moment recommendations and creating guest services designed to ensure complete satisfaction. Salesforce for travel and hospitality makes it possible for you to make your guests' journey a frictionless experience.

Using Salesforce, you can inspire, respond to, and delight travelers and guests by providing individualized and intelligent customer service. With the Salesforce Service Cloud, travel and hospitality companies can deliver an omni-channel customer experience: connecting every channel with a platform that delivers cloud-based customer support software for consistent, convenient service.



Trend 3

How Marriott and Jetstar Transformed the Traveler Experience

Our travel and hospitality partners' results speak for themselves.



Making each guest's stay feel like a home away from home

At leading global lodging company Marriott International, bringing personalized experiences to life in all channels is the main focus. Thanks to historic expansion resulting from a merger with Starwood Hotels and Resorts, the company's portfolio now includes more than 1.2 million rooms at 6,400 properties in 126 countries and territories. Not to mention, Marriott is also making significant investments in lifestyle brands and boosting its rewards programs.

In recent years—as other consumer brands have begun to set a high bar for meeting customer expectations and upstarts have threatened to disrupt the marketplace—Marriott has sought new solutions and partnerships to help engage customers on a more personalized level. Marriott engaged Salesforce to create a frictionless ecosystem rooted in big data: a 360-degree view of its customers, available everywhere along the journey to create relevant guest experiences.

Understanding that anything one group does affects other areas in the corporate ecosystem, Marriott is working to ensure that all channels and all stakeholders work together seamlessly. Now, all stakeholders (booking agents, sales teams, on-property personnel, and the ownership community that buys Marriott brands) can communicate with one voice and engage guests in new ways.

Marriott continues to grow and innovate, seeking emerging technologies and game-changing innovations that promise to add value within the Marriott travel system.

“We intend to create raving brand fans through customer experiences. We’re using Service Cloud in engagement centers, on property, with our sales teams—leveraging the personalization elements of our mobile services app and using that suite to support the omni-channel perspective.”

Adam Malamut, Chief Customer Experience Officer,
Marriott International





Soaring to new heights
of customer satisfaction

Travelers expect their hospitality providers to know who they are and what they like. With Salesforce, transportation providers like Jetstar are able to inspire, respond to, and delight their guests through a transformed, personalized, and intelligent customer experience.

Jetstar is a subsidiary of Qantas, serving Australia's low-cost travel market. Launched in 2004, the airline now boasts 37 million customers and operates in an extensive domestic market, as well as regional and international services in Australia and sister airlines serving travelers in Japan and Vietnam.

In 2004, 35 million people traveled in Australia annually; in 2017, that number grew to 65 million. In a country with a 15% population growth rate, that means increased accessibility and affordability were major factors contributing to that increase in travel.

Jetstar is a key player in this uptick in travel because their low fares make it possible for more people to travel to more places, more often. The company recently announced that two-thirds of all Jetstar fares sell for less than \$100.



Although price has always been a key differentiator for the company, Jetstar needed to step up its efforts to meet a growing customer base in a cost-effective way. In a world where technology has upped customer expectations, these efforts needed to be service-oriented and personalized.

Service Cloud enables Jetstar agents to manage customer issues both proactively and reactively by providing agents with contextual information so they can serve their customers on a mass scale in a personalized way. New tools improve service workflow, like opening service tickets directly from social platforms and resolving them in real time. With Salesforce, Jetstar isn't just eliminating pain points in their travelers' journeys; they're also creating memorable experiences to bring customers back on their next trip.



*“Customer expectations are high. Customers are hyperconnected. [...] We had to find really neat ways of servicing our customers in a really smart way. Salesforce helps us do that (with) **Service Cloud**, Live Chat, and Messenger. We take Social Studio to move customers through cases and solve problems that they have when they do one-line tweets or messages on Facebook.”*

Cathryn Arnold, Head of Digital, Jetstar

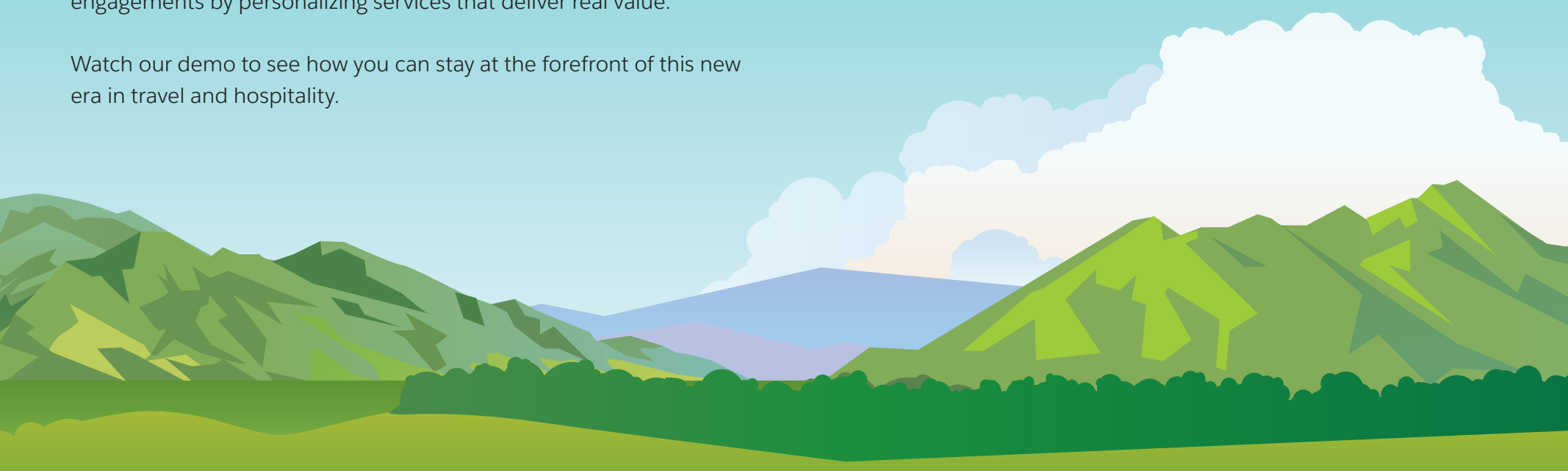
Conclusion

Creating an Experience to Remember



Increasingly, today's consumers are seeking unique travel opportunities tailored to their preferences and needs. As the industry moves further into this era of exceeding expectations, travel companies will need to know their guests on a deeper level in order to provide that tailored experience. Salesforce can help companies meet travelers anywhere from social networks to live, in-person engagements by personalizing services that deliver real value.

Watch our demo to see how you can stay at the forefront of this new era in travel and hospitality.



SOURCES:

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