

2019 TRAVEL TECH FORECAST: THE FUTURE IS... AUTOMATED

Monday 7 January, 2019

AI technology to dominate travel tech in 2019 with increasing investment in chatbots, automated content and machine learning.

A recent poll, conducted by Travel Technology Europe, found that AI is the technology that travel industry professionals are "most excited about" going into 2019, thanks to the opportunity it offers for more interaction and personalised solutions.

When asked which specific AI technologies travel companies were planning to invest in over the next 12 months, Chatbots topped the list (36%), closely followed by Automated Content (35%), Machine Learning (32%) and Voice Recognition (29%).

This reflects the growing recognition that personalisation and tailored experiences are key within travel marketing, with Sagittarius CEO and Advisory Board Member for Travel Technology Europe, Paul Stephen explaining:

"Customers will not tolerate generic, irrelevant marketing. Through the use of chat, voice and machine learning a traveller can look forward to a more interactive and relevant conversation with travel brands that have recognised that, to be successful, they need to embrace these emerging technologies now."

Whilst technology presents many opportunities for travel brands when it comes to matching consumers to their perfect product, it is not without its challenges. Behind the scenes, travel professionals are still struggling to find the right systems to help them fulfil customer desires, with booking / reservation systems and payment systems cited as their most significant technological 'challenges'.

The findings suggest that the opportunities and challenges presented by technology, have prompted travel companies to increase their tech budgets, with 59% planning to spend more in 2019 than they did in 2018. 34% of respondents indicated that they were willing to spend in excess of £100,000 +, compared to 18% in 2018.

Commenting on the poll findings, David Chapple, show director, Travel Technology Europe said:

"Talk to anyone in travel marketing and they'll all agree that, these days, their job is to deliver travellers with 'experiences'-the creation of which relies very much on understanding customers better so that they can offer them tailored, relevant product. It's really exciting to see travel brands embracing AI technology and putting plans in place to implement it within their organisations as opposed to viewing chatbots or virtual assistants for example as passing fads".

Travel Technology Europe, taking place on 20-21 February at Olympia London, features a number of sessions on AI, including "The Art of the possible-innovation in AI and Machine Learning", with panelists from ETOA, Inspiretec, Musement and Sonata Software discussing the ways in which these technologies are being deployed in the travel industry at the moment.

View the full conference agenda or register for free tickets to the show at www.traveltechnologyeurope.com.

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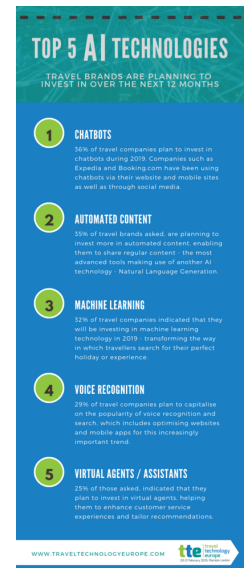
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