Three reasons BYOD dominates in tourism

By Wynand Smit   12 Apr 2018

In many professional sectors, bring your own device, or BYOD, is frowned upon, with legitimate fears around data security and the potential to compromise IT infrastructure when employees bring their own devices into the workplace. That's also true within large hospitality-based businesses, but companies should not ignore the fact that their market is dedicated to a culture of BYOD. With this in mind, this should be taken into consideration when mapping the experience across all customer service touch points.

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Visitors are researching, booking and paying for trips via their devices and then using those devices in a destination to explore, record, curate, review and share information with their social media communities. At times, this impacts how companies should present their customer service offerings.

Why does BYOD matter in tourism?

If your company hasn't yet embraced the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and shifted operations to be digital-inclusive, you're effectively losing opportunities – your market is largely engaging with their preferred companies via devices across a variety of channels – voice, chat, online, video, social media, email, etc.

If your sole contact point is voice, you might not be operating according to their preferences. In travel, this is particularly important, since customers who are on the road, perhaps even in another country, may not have the means to call your company for support. Not all travellers have access to voice calls, but they may be able to use data to call over WhatsApp or interact via another digital medium (such as chat, social media or email).

The travelling customer won't want to spend half an hour on hold with roaming data charges or at international call rates – are you giving them the means to get in touch that isn't leaving them out of pocket?

The BYOD phenomenon in travel translates to the need for a multi-channel customer service platform for companies with contact centres or within customer service departments. The channels included in your portfolio should allow for a seamless approach so that the customer can shift between channels according to their/your requirements without having to repeat entire interactions.

If you've ever travelled and lost access to your bank account or credit card or, worse yet, bank account and passport, you'll understand just how important the need is for your customers to have the means to interact with companies. What would be an inconvenience at home can become a catastrophe if you can't sort out a crisis.

Marketing to a BYOD audience

It makes sense to tap into the data produced in digital interactions to extend your marketing reach. This data can be used to develop highly-sophisticated campaigns based on your customers' preferences, such as when they're most likely to travel and for how long. Insights gained from data analytics can allow your company to build campaigns aimed at those customers for business and leisure travel, and, since they're likely to be "always on", you're reaching them where they are with personalised service that translates to great customer experience.

This can be extended to value-adds such as special offers, after all, reduced travel and accommodation rates can be the impetus that inspires a well-travelled person to take their next trip.

The power of feedback

Finally, the BYOD customer can give your company feedback while on the move: is your company providing the means to do this via a mobile app, for example? If you do, it allows you to correct any mishaps relating to customer service with relative immediacy rather than after your customer is back home and it's too late to resolve an issue.

The golden rule is to give your customer options according to their preferences in customer service, and this can result in great visitor experiences and repeat transactions.

ABOUT WYNAND SMIT

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