

What does the travel store of the future look like?

 By [Jannine Adams](#)

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Did you know that most travellers between the ages of 20 and 30 years have never set foot in a physical travel agency before? But if you think this means the end of the travel agent, think again...



Jannine Adams, senior marketing manager, Amadeus Southern Africa

But if you think this means the end of the travel agent, think again. The reality is that the future has some of the most amazing travel shops in store for us.

Do you go to the Apple Store when purchasing an iPad or iPhone or do you go online? Some of you may answer online, but many still go to the Apple Store. Why? Because it's a convivial place where you have access to experts who can give you all the information you need before making a purchase. It's all about enjoying the experience, according to Amadeus' whitepaper, [The Travel Retailer of the Future](#).

Like Apple stores, travel retailers will also need to rethink their business, to reinvent themselves. They must engage with younger generations in a way that appeals to their lifestyle, and do so throughout the entire travel cycle – from inspiration, planning, during the journey and after it's over – and with a truly collaborative approach.

“ ...the best way to predict the future is to simply create it... ”

Blending human touch with digital technologies

What we at Amadeus have found is that new generations want to be informed and inspired by real experiences – not by glossy brochures with 'photoshopped' imagery. They want travel agencies with a modern look and feel coupled with new technology.

The travel agency of tomorrow will blend a personal and human touch with digital technologies. Your experience as the traveller will start as soon as you walk into the store: it will be as though you're walking on the beach in Hawaii, snorkelling in Australia or skiing in the Alps.

Sounds tempting, right? Within the store, you'll find sitting areas with hammocks, for instance, and discover an interactive and sensory library which mixes sight, smell and touch to engage customers in a fun way. With interactive screens, you can share photos and organise your journey with your friends and your travel advisor, all in a cosy meeting place. The travel agency of tomorrow will offer a place where people can relax, meet others, hang out, read books, or even work.

The travel agent of tomorrow

Instead of travel agents, we'll see the emergence 'designers of travel experiences' who are passionate, dedicated, reliable, friendly and hyper-connected. They'll reach out to travellers with mobile applications and will meet up with their clients at different locations. They could meet students at the library during their lunch break or at a coffee shop.

“ *If digital natives don't go to the travel agency, why would the travel agency not go to them?* ”

The possibilities for innovation are limitless. Imagine a tiny travel agency in a solar-powered capsule that provides a virtual 360-degree experience, attracting your attention from the street thanks to interactive screens from the outside. These can be located at concerts or on a university campus.

Or, what about a 'Take me Along' van that travels from a university to the nearest train or bus station? Students gather a group of friends, and the van will take them on both a physical and virtual journey. Inside the van, they'll discover panoramic screens with different atmospheres and different destinations.

All of this may sound very futuristic, but at Amadeus, we believe that the best way to predict the future is to simply create it, so we're ready to step in and shape the future of travel together with travel agents.

ABOUT JANNINE ADAMS

Jannine Adams is the senior marketing manager at Amadeus Southern Africa, with over 20 years' experience in the travel industry. What drives Adams is being able to bring creative, innovative and forward-thinking solutions to the 10 Southern African countries she oversees.

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