

Trends that will shape travel experiences in 2020

By  [Adrian Roodt](#)

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Through independent research with thousands of global travellers - including 500 in South Africa, hundreds of travel professionals and interviews with leaders of some of the world's biggest travel brands, we at Travelport discovered the major forces that will become the technology enablers of travel over the next decade.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Customers in control

Several trends highlight that customers are moving towards self-service options, with 61% of travellers in South Africa surveyed preferring to hear about travel disruption via digital communications (e.g. push notifications on an app; mobile chatbots; or instant messaging apps) rather than speak with a person on the phone.

This is especially important when it comes to Gen Z, the future business traveller, and managing their high expectations through technology.



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Mobile takeover

With the threat of super app domination, OTAs must disrupt or risk being disrupted. Contextual messaging across the journey will help. Super app tech giants such as WeChat give their users a one-stop-shop to communicate, shop online, book travel, bank, find a date, get food delivery, and pay for anything within a single, unified smartphone app.

Travel brands that want to deliver holistic mobile customer experiences need to think about how they engage travellers within these super apps as well as in their own mobile channels.

Retail accelerated

In the next year, research shows we will see an accelerated rate of change in the way travel is retailed and purchased online. This includes wider and more complex multi-content reach, more enriched and comparable offerings, more focus on relevance than magnitude, and increase in automation that enables customer self-service.



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How customers engage with their travel experience – for instance by interacting with digital 'bots' and expecting offers better personalised to their needs – is changing rapidly. We in the travel industry need to understand and keep pace with these forces to make sure we're continuing to make the experience of buying and managing travel continually better, for everyone.

ABOUT ADRIAN ROODT

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