

The 2010

TRAVEL WEB

Is it more than a place to shop and book travel?

The second decade of the 21st century has arrived and solid trends are driving consumer travel shopping and buying behavior. Want 20/20 vision for the year 2010? Find out how the Web, technology, social networking and specific demographic factors are shaping consumer habits.



As the travel Web evolves, its reach and influence will continue to expand in 2010, heavily influencing travel shopping and buying behavior. Here you'll learn how consumers are using the Web as more than a way to shop and book travel – along with other travel buying and economic trends expected to impact the industry this year.

1. The Research Online – Purchase Offline trend will continue as a growing phenomenon

The Web will continue to evolve in 2010 in its influence on consumers who explore the Web for travel information, yet prefer to purchase travel offline. As a result, the online and offline channels will become more closely intertwined, with developments in the online space shaping developments in the offline channel. Forrester Research, an independent research company, projects that by 2013, one in five travel purchasers in the United States will research online and purchase offline – driven largely by dissatisfaction with the online booking process.

2. Socioeconomic factors will influence personalized travel choices that are being researched online

Consumers retiring with healthier pensions and fewer time constraints are creating demand for more specialized holidays, such as health and wellness journeys, cultural tours and cruises. This trend is expected to intensify as the world's population over age 60 expands. In contrast, for much of the working population, time is more pressured, creating demand for shorter, more frequent trips and a need to pack more experience into holidays. For both groups, much of the research will continue to be conducted online, and will include a growing use of social media to share trip planning with friends and family.

3. Consumer expectations of content-rich and informative sites, improved planning tools and ways to search the Web will continue to grow

Online travel technologies have evolved, enhanced multimedia content has grown and consumer demand is evolving. As a result, social networking, comparison shopping, travel review, inspiration and travel planning Web sites are expected to further come into their own in 2010. More consumers will look to the Web for inspiration and innovative tools to search and organize information, simplify their lives, and look to people they trust for reviews of destinations and hotels.

What about the economic outlook for 2010 – for the world and the travel industry?

The world economic outlook is increasingly positive. The United States, Eurozone, China and South Korea all recently posted strong economic gains. World Gross Domestic Product, expected to have declined 2 percent in 2009, is now projected to increase by 2.8 percent in 2010, according to Global Insights, a leader in economic forecasting.

This is good news for the travel industry. Travelport saw a turning point starting in the fall of 2009, where the industry (as measured by the data-sharing GDSs) turned in an aggregated industry positive growth number of about 1 percent. The return to growth is broad-based, with Asia (excluding Japan) turning positive earlier than other regions. North America, South America and the Middle East turned in growth performances starting in November 2009.

Travelport saw air traffic go up during the last quarter of 2009 compared to the previous year, although the overall growth was driven by strength in the non-premium sector. As we move into 2010, Travelport looks forward to seeing these trends continue and hopes to see more premium traffic recover to previous year levels.