

A hand is reaching out from the bottom left towards a yellow and black Skift pillow. The pillow is positioned diagonally across the frame. In the background, there is a wall with a pattern of glowing blue circles and yellow tags with the word 'SKIFT' on them. The setting appears to be a modern event space with large windows and industrial lighting.

LESSONS FROM
SKIFT GLOBAL
FORUM 2015:
**DEFINING THE
FUTURE OF TRAVEL**

SKIFT GLOBAL FORUM





SKIFT
GLOBAL
FORUM

INTRO

Over two days in October of 2015, nearly 800 people gathered in a Brooklyn warehouse overlooking the East River to discuss the future of travel. The lineup of brands represented on stage and in workshops included top leaders from MasterCard, Airbnb, Trump Hotels, Virgin Atlantic, Hyatt Hotels, Delta Air Lines, Wyndham Hotels, Gogo, Zero Point Zero, NYC & Company, InterContinental Hotels Group, Brazil's Embratur, and more.

As in our inaugural Skift Global Forum in 2014, speakers delivered concise, targeted, and jargon-free messages about areas of their expertise in a TED-like atmosphere. No panels, no droning talking heads.

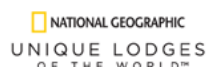
Just good ideas.

We've distilled some of those ideas below in easy-to-digest nuggets. For more highlights from the Forum, visit skift.com/tag/sgf2015. We'll be also be posting videos of all the presentations on [our YouTube channel](#) over the next two months.

Happy Skifting

- JASON CLAMPET

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR 2015 SPONSORS WHO MADE THE SKIFT GLOBAL FORUM POSSIBLE



THEME

MARKETING



FRED DIXON

**PRESIDENT AND CEO,
NYC & COMPANY**

FUTURE OF TOURISM MARKETING FOR ICONIC TOURISM BRANDS



The challenge with promoting an iconic destination brand is the target audience develops a brand familiarity, which breeds complacency. People think they know a city and what it has to offer based on various media, but they don't necessarily know what's new and what's beyond the iconic attractions.

Bureaus can break through that complacency by creating a level of immediacy and urgency.

Tourism bureaus promote themselves as the "official" experts of their destination. But what does that even mean anymore, and who really respects it? Millennials certainly don't. Instead, Dixon says bureaus should call themselves "authenticity experts."

Destination marketers need to let go of their brand image and their brand voice. In today's connected world, you can't control your brand messaging anymore, and trying to do so is a disservice to the community.

The bureau is actively partnering with big-name personalities such as Taylor Swift, who moved to New York and wrote a song about her first impressions of the city. Swift then gave the song to NYC & Company for free to use for promotional purposes.

New York City is replacing all phone booths with new, 11-foot LinkNYC high speed Wi-Fi stations, delivering bandwidth 20 times faster than household Wi-Fi. By the end of 2015, there should be about 100 LinkNYC stations in place.

Dixon said the goal is to have 7,000 LinkNYC stations running within three years so people no longer have to huddle in Starbucks or museums to access free Wi-Fi.

The new LinkNYC stations will provide a lot of new opportunities for self-guided tours in the city using more varied media. NYC & Company is also developing new apps to leverage that rise in available free Wi-Fi.

ISSAM KAZIM

CEO, DUBAI CORPORATION
FOR TOURISM AND
COMMERCE MARKETING

THE FUTURE OF CITY BRANDING



VISIT DUBAI WANTS TO DEVELOP
ITS NETWORK OF SHARING
ACCOMMODATIONS AND
ALTERNATIVE LODGING TO
EXPAND THE BREADTH OF THE
DESTINATION EXPERIENCE.

Visit Dubai is focusing more on creating and promoting experiential, personalized and local travel experiences.

Visit Dubai is focused on mobile as the primary engagement platform to connect with travel consumers.

The residents of Dubai are the best marketers of the brand. According to Kazzim, they are the brand.

The #MyDubai hashtag campaign was one of the first such social media promotional initiatives in the global tourism sector. Kazzim said the campaign creates “a biography of the city” created by locals, which in turn builds a community around the brand.

After 20 months since the launch of #MyDubai, the hashtag has been used 9.78 million times on Instagram and 632,000 on Twitter.

Visit Dubai wants to develop its network of sharing accommodations and alternative lodging to expand the breadth of the destination experience.

EDIE RODRIGUEZ

PRESIDENT AND CEO,
CRYSTAL CRUISES

REINVENTING CRUISES THROUGH EXCLUSIVITY AND CUSTOMIZATION



WHILE SERVING 22.1
MILLION PASSENGERS
ANNUALLY ON 411 SHIPS,
THE CRUISE INDUSTRY IS
STILL IN THE INFANCY OF
ITS DEVELOPMENT.

Cruisers come from all market segments and locations around the world.

"The cruise industry should not get shoved into one market segment," said Rodriguez.

Understanding a luxury traveler comes down to being aware of changing needs and expectations; travel agents book 96 percent of Crystal's cruises.

Luxury is all about personalization. Every member of a luxury company needs to understand the brand's ethos and deliver that experience.

In the luxury market, 11 percent of sales come from online and mobile channels.

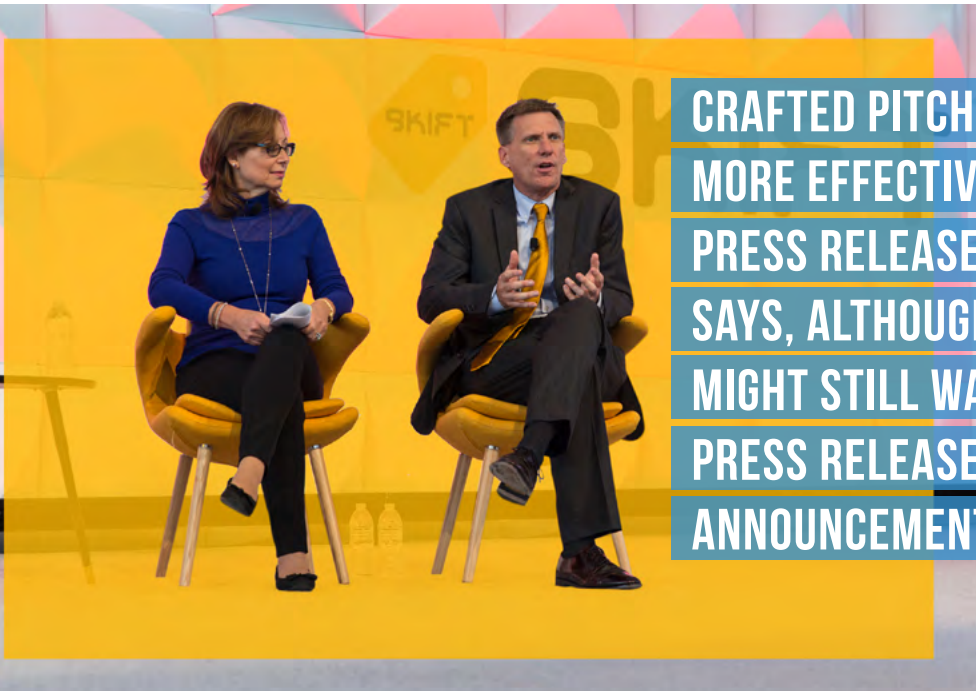
Crystal Cruises has bucked the cruise industry trend of relying on the schedule of shipyards by purchasing a shipyard to solely build its vessels. "The shipyards out there were not giving us the delivery dates we wanted so our chairman bought the shipyard," said Rodriguez.

KEVIN SHINKLE + NANCY J. FRIEDMAN

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER,
DELTA AIR LINES

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, NANCY J.
FRIEDMAN PUBLIC RELATIONS

CHANGED NATURE OF TRAVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS IN A DIGITAL-FIRST WORLD



CRAFTED PITCHES CAN BE
MORE EFFECTIVE THAN
PRESS RELEASES, FRIEDMAN
SAYS, ALTHOUGH COMPANIES
MIGHT STILL WANT TO ISSUE
PRESS RELEASES FOR MAJOR
ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Friedman says public relations' fundamentals, including consumers' more limited attention spans, the rise of Twitter as a news source, the diminishing impact of press releases and the declining numbers of journalists, have radically changed, but the basics such as public relations representatives needing to forge relationships with reporters for effective coverage, remain consistent.

When conducting job interviews, Friedman used to test candidates on which day The New York Times food section was published or whether they knew what the New York Post's Page Six was, but today she tests potential employees on strategic thinking such as how would they handle a particular story.

Shinkle says CEO Richard Anderson doesn't need to be on twitter because Delta has a vibrant social media team. Friedman and Shinkle agreed that Twitter requires authentic voices and not every CEO should tweet.

Shinkle says Delta wants journalists to "steal" content, including press releases, stories and videos, from the new Delta News Hub and some journalists do.

Shinkle says Delta CEO Richard Anderson told him one reason Anderson wanted to hire Shinkle, formerly the Associated Press's business editor, is because Delta's storytelling needed to get better. Shinkle said Delta's evolution, from bankruptcy in 2005 to \$2.2 billion in pre-tax profit in the third quarter of 2015, is one of the greatest turnaround stories in corporate history.

SASHA HOFFMAN + GILLIAN MORRIS

CEO,
FUZZY COMPASS

FOUNDER AND CEO,
HITLIST

THE GROWTH HACKS THAT TURNED STARTUPS INTO GIANTS



Startups can take more risks than established, global brands and push out experiments much faster. In these tests, the products don't have to be perfect. The downside is low and the upside potential can be tremendous, Morris says.

Hoffman and Morris agreed that when dealing with travel influencers or consumers it can pay to play to their vanity to facilitate engagement with the startups.

Morris says that startups should consider offline events as a way to promote their apps, although successful offline events can be difficult to pull off.

In fact, Morris says, it is very difficult to predict which experiments will succeed and which will fail and that's one of the reasons startups need to innovate quickly.

VINICIUS LUMMERTZ

PRESIDENT,
EMBRATUR

BUILDING A TOURISM BRAND AROUND BIG EVENTS

ATTRACTING INVESTMENT IS
A KEY FOCUS OF THE
BRAZILIAN TOURISM BOARD.
BRINGING MORE PRIVATE
INVESTMENT TO THE 2016
OLYMPICS, WHICH SO FAR HAS
60% PRIVATE INVESTMENT, IS KEY.



Plans to build a \$2 billion aviation hub in northern Brazil will be announced later this year. Lummertz wants to bring more familiar American brands to the country for U.S. travelers.

Lummertz wants to expand the visa waiver process to Americans beyond the 90 days for the Olympics next summer. Americans spend \$1 billion in Brazil but Brazilians spend \$13 billion in the U.S.

Lummertz became president in June of an organization charged with modernizing Brazil's brand for the world's largest global event—The 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Attracting investment is a key focus. Bringing more private investment to the 2016 Olympics, which so far has 60% private investment, is key.



THEME

CREATIVE

GEOFFREY KENT

FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND CEO,
ABERCROMBIE & KENT

UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF TRAVEL ON SOCIETIES

SUSTAINABILITY IS VITAL TO THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL. “WE’RE LOSING ONE ELEPHANT EVERY FOUR HOURS; WE’RE LOSING A RHINO EVERY EIGHT HOURS,” SAID KENT. THE MARKET FOR RARE ANIMAL PARTS, SPECIFICALLY IVORY, NEEDS TO BE DISRUPTED TO PROTECT ENDANGERED ANIMALS.



Safaris were all about hunting when the company was founded in 1962. “Everyone else was hunting, and I wanted to be a photographer,” said Kent. This led the company to develop safari itineraries that avoided violence.

Tour operators need to look at how local communities will benefit from facilitating their tours. It shouldn’t only be about generating profit. “The funds should go to the community, and not just the government,” said Kent.

Low-impact tourism needs to have high profit margins to be successful. High volume can affect the environment and community in adverse ways.


The Kenyan government had no idea about the potential of tourism back in the 1960s, but Kent encouraged it to look at tourism as a private sector export for the first time.

RICK WISE

CEO,
LIPPINCOTT

THE HAPPINESS HALO:

THE UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF APPLYING BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE TO EXPERIENCE DESIGN



EMOTIONAL CONNECTION IS
WORTH A LOT. AN EMOTIONALLY
CONNECTED CUSTOMER IS
WORTH NEARLY TWICE AS
MUCH AS A CUSTOMER WHO
IS SIMPLY SATISFIED.

Anticipation is typically stronger than the interaction itself during travel, and it's more impactful and powerful than actually taking the trip itself. Our wanting system is stronger than our liking system.

Our brains tend to think and remember most strongly peak events and end events most strongly. Experiences that can be encapsulated in a story are the ones that are remembered the most.

We are driven by a wanting system that makes anticipation very strong and that seeking function very, very strong. The other side of the Anticipation is often very idealized whereas interaction isn't. You can idealize this beautiful, flawless beach - no crowds, cool sand. When the reality is very different: sand in your shorts, you're sunburned, etcetera.

Memories are all we get to keep from our experience of living. In decision-making, the experiencing self doesn't have a voice. The remembering self is sometimes wrong, but it is the one that keeps score and it is the one that makes decisions.

JEREMY JAUNCEY

FOUNDER AND CEO,
BEAUTIFUL DESTINATIONS

WHY VISUALS ARE THE NEW LANGUAGE OF ENGAGEMENT FOR CONSUMERS



IF BRANDS WANT TO
BE SUCCESSFUL ON
INSTAGRAM, THEY NEED
TO DETERMINE WHICH
FACTORS DRIVE THEIR
ACCOUNT GROWTH.

Instagram has more than 400 million users per month sharing more than 80 million images every day, second only to parent company Facebook. Jauncey said about 353 million pieces of content on Instagram are travel-related.

The travel industry has been the second-slowest sector after financial services to adopt Instagram, which Jauncey said is very confusing. Because Instagram is social and inspires travel, every brand should be active on Instagram, he says.

Facebook launched an ad platform for Instagram four months ago with clickable links in the ad units.

Travel brands have to create authentic, engaging and social-first Instagram content versus advertising content to be effective.

The best Instagram travel content shows a unique perspective of a destination or travel experience.

Choosing to partner with Instagram influencers based on the size of their following alone is wrong. Brands need to work with influencers who have great content, like your content, comment on your content, shout out your brand, and tag your brand in their content.

ZIM UGOCHUKWU

FOUNDER,
TRAVEL NOIRE

THE GROWING COMMUNITY OF BLACK TRAVELERS



**\$48 BILLION
IS SPENT ON
TRAVEL BY AFRICAN
AMERICANS IN
AMERICA ALONE.**

17% of African Americans take one or more international trips annually.

Following college, Ugochukwu traveled through Asia and created the Travel Noire media and tour company, because she says mainstream media rarely speaks to her as a woman of color.

Only 2.6% of travel ads focus on African Americans.

People of color are 38% more likely to make a purchase if advertisements are reflective of them.

Ugochukwu launched a series of eight group tours called Travel Noire Experiences, which all sold out within 90 minutes of their announcement.

NICK GRAY

FOUNDER AND CEO,
MUSEUM HACK

CREATIVE CHAOS: THE NEW FUTURE OF TRAVEL



MILLENNIALS WANT
SPONTANEITY, COMMUNITY
AND AN AUTHENTIC
EXPERIENCE. THEY'RE
GOING TO TRAVEL THE WAY
THEY WANT TO, REGARDLESS
OF HOW LEGACY TRAVEL
BRANDS WANT THEM TO.

To Gray, hacking is understanding a system so well you can reorganize it to do something new. "We're like the Cirque du Soleil of museum tours," said Gray.

Gray and his team went on a Costa Cruises repositioning voyage from Vancouver to Tokyo. They hacked the vacation, creating a local intranet for guests to use, a custom newsletter for unsuspecting passengers and irreverent awards for their fellow passengers.

Gray aims to make museums fun for millennials and those who are bored by the traditional museum experience.

Millennials want spontaneity, community and an authentic experience. They're going to travel however they want to, regardless of how legacy travel brands want them to.

CRAIG GREENBERG + ALICE GRAY STITES

**PRESIDENT,
21C MUSEUM HOTELS**

**CHIEF CURATOR,
21C MUSEUM HOTELS**

ART, CULTURE AND THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY: LEARNING IS THE NEW LUXURY



Greenberg and Gray Stites argue that curiosity about what is new and what is next is nearly universal, and when peaked, practically insatiable. Sharing a discovery experience deepens our relationships to the people, places, and ideas that we encounter and then remember.

Experiential innovation is far more important than incremental innovations, embedding technology or other traditional focus areas for hotels.

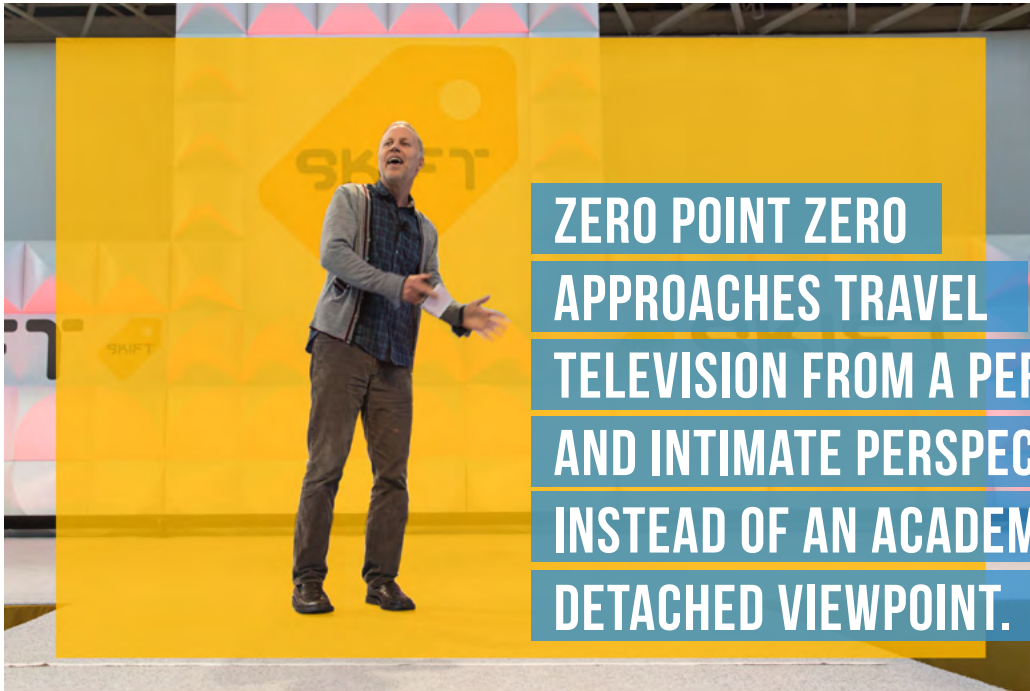
Travelers want to learn, yes. There are still many people who just want a comfy bed, free breakfast and a lot of loyalty program points, but there are a growing number who want to see something they've never seen before, have an authentic experience and meet new people.

The foundations of the thriving hotel business for tomorrow may be built on ideas that go beyond art, beyond design and beyond new technology. Hotels built upon products, services, themes, or approaches to hospitality that have not yet been tried..

CHRIS COLLINS

CO-FOUNDER,
ZEROPOINTZERO

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TRAVELOGUE, 1950'S AND INTO THE FUTURE



**ZERO POINT ZERO
APPROACHES TRAVEL
TELEVISION FROM A PERSONAL
AND INTIMATE PERSPECTIVE,
INSTEAD OF AN ACADEMIC AND
DETACHED VIEWPOINT.**

Collins pitched his first show with Anthony Bourdain, *A Cook's Tour*, as a man's quest to have the perfect meal.

Collins and Zero Point Zero approach travel television from a personal and intimate perspective, instead of an academic and detached viewpoint.

At first, Bourdain was a "deer caught in the headlights." The chaos created at the beginning of the partnership between Bourdain and Collins created authenticity. "We can highlight any number of things, but it's someone's point of view on a place that viewers are willing to listen to and be entertained by," said Collins.

The people in a place make it what it is. "We succeed and fail based on that," said Collins. "It is a testament to the location and people we work with that are so integral in telling a story of a place."

THEME

STRATEGY



MARK HOPLAMAZIAN

CEO,
HYATT HOTELS

REVERSING YOUR POV: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

A photograph of Mark Hoplamazian, CEO of Hyatt Hotels, standing on a stage and speaking. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and glasses. He is gesturing with his hands. The background is a large yellow wall with a faint Hyatt logo. In front of him are two yellow chairs and a small table. The text "SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH OTHERS' EYES IS EXACTLY THE KIND OF REVERSE PERSPECTIVE THAT THIS INDUSTRY NEEDS." is overlaid on the right side of the image in white text on a blue background.

SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH
OTHERS' EYES IS EXACTLY THE KIND
OF REVERSE PERSPECTIVE THAT THIS
INDUSTRY NEEDS.

What if hotels treated guests like hosts?
What if hotels checked into guests' lives
instead of guests checking into hotels?

Seeing the world through others' eyes is exactly the kind of reverse perspective that this industry needs. When people think about applying empathy in the travel business, they need think about it as the essential capacity to bring humanity back into hospitality.

For anybody who understands what the meaning of empathy is, you know that impact can only come through action because when you act on an empathetic insight or impulse, it is the purest form of humanness. It is something that you do to anticipate a need or alleviate a burden in some way, and you can do it in a way that only enhances the bottom line, and not just the financial bottom line but in the impact you can have on the people's lives you touch every day.

By changing your point of view you can reimagine your relationship with your customers, your employees and with your community. We can create a world in which hotels are the guests in others' lives, where employers are working for their employees as much as the other way around, and where the communities are becoming a part of who you are and what you stand for and how you do what you do.

MATTHEW UPCHURCH

CEO,
VIRTUOSO

WHY THE RIGHT KIND OF TRAVEL AGENT SURVIVED AND THRIVED

TRAVEL ADVISORS DESERVE
RESPECT, AND MANY ADVISORS
HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR
DECADES. THEY'VE THRIVED
DUE TO THEIR DESIRE TO
COLLABORATE TO CREATE
BESPOKE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES
FOR THEIR CLIENTS.



Travel advisors are thriving incredibly, according to Upchurch. Virtuoso alone made 19 billion consumer impressions this year.

The role of travel agents has been shifting since 1976, when Sabre started installing its systems in travel agencies. Another major change occurred in 1995 when Delta Air Lines stopped paying commission on air bookings.

Transactional travel agents, who provide no service besides booking trips, have fizzled out. “The difference between the travel advisor and the transactional travel agent is the conversation after the trip,” said Upchurch.


Loyalty is created on two fronts: emotional and structural. The best travel advisors deliver feelings of structure related to the trip and emotional experiences. Travelers want deeper experiences involving inspiration and self-discovery.

Travel advisors deserve respect, and many advisors have been in business for decades. They’ve thrived due to their desire to collaborate to create bespoke travel experiences for their clients

DARRELL WADE

CEO,
INTREPID TRAVEL

REINVENTING THE BUSINESS OF TOURS FOR THE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVELER



IT'S REALLY TOUGH
FOR BIG MAINSTREAM
OPERATORS TO
REALLY GET INTO THE
EXPERIENTIAL SPACE;
IT'S NOT REALLY
WHAT THEY DO.

Hotels spend an awful lot of time and money to make sure the experience [for guests] is the same as the last time they were there and that it'll be the same the next time they're there. We're almost the exact opposite, we have a formula for our values but we're thinking how can we make things different each time.

People don't really care about traveling responsibly at the beginning of a tour but by the end of the tour they say this is one of the top three reasons for what's most important when they travel.

Wade said it's difficult to discern which tours and activities startups will succeed and which ones will fail, citing the success of Intrepid Group's Urban Adventures brand and the fizzling of Adventure.com.

CRAIG KREEGER

CEO,
VIRGIN ATLANTIC

HOW TO BUILD AN AIRLINE BRAND BY NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE PREMIUM RAT RACE

**VIRGIN ATLANTIC HAS TO
COMPETE IN THE WAY ITS
CREW DELIVERS SERVICES ON
BOARD AND THROUGH ITS
ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS.**



On luxury and premium cabins, Kreeger realizes Virgin Atlantic can't compete with the Gulf carriers in terms of leadership in the category because of Virgin Atlantic's relative lack of resources. Instead, Virgin Atlantic has to compete in the way its crew delivers services on board and through its entertainment offerings, for example.

Virgin Atlantic encourages its onboard crew to make decisions and is willing to live with some inconsistency. Other CEOs ask him how to develop that customer service "magic" and Kreeger believes it comes from empowering employees and being willing to back them up.

Google Glass was the winner over Samsung's Smartwatch in a test to get more interaction between Virgin Atlantic's customer service personnel and premium customers at Heathrow. Smartwatch didn't work as well because people looking at their watches is "actually the universal signal that I'm bored with you."

Virgin Atlantic conducted a two-month test of boarding through Heathrow's holding areas, which resembled what Ellis Island must have looked like, Kreeger said. By calling customers to the gate 15 minutes later, it enabled customers to board the planes right when they arrived at the gates and satisfaction scores increased 25 percent.

Delta, which owns 49 percent of Virgin Atlantic, doesn't want the brands to become more like one another and wants Virgin Atlantic to keep differentiating so it can better compete against British Airways. Virgin Atlantic, meanwhile, can learn from Delta about scaling automation and technology, including for maintenance issues.

IVANKA TRUMP

EVP DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITIONS, TRUMP ORGANIZATION

WHY OBSESSING OVER DETAILS IS THE ONLY WAY TO BUILD A HOSPITALITY LUXURY BRAND

PEOPLE IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY
NEED TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND
WHAT THE CUSTOMER VALUES AS
WELL AS HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING
OF WHERE MONEY IS WELL-SPENT
AND WHERE IT'S NOT WELL-SPENT.



Trump says, "There are a lot of tremendous advantages to the fact that we are also developers. When we are working with our partners, they trust us and appreciate the construction and development feedback that we are giving them. It isn't critical for the sake of bring critical; it is collaborative. We like to get in from the beginning and help them articulate something that works."

It is key for developers to speak the same language -- in a business sense -- as third-party owners.

The Trump team thinks of itself as working on each project not in accordance with some overarching standard but knowing what is appropriate for that particular market while also having a very clear compass about the nature of luxury.

Getting creative is important to developing beautiful aesthetics. It's possible to have fun with luxury and really push it to the next level if you are willing to.

An owner looking for an operator wouldn't be fond of hearing that an operator doesn't like owning the real estate. Owners like the fact that companies like Trump share their perspective on the long-term value of real estate in this particular category.

Increasingly, authenticity is everything in brand-building. People appreciate personality in brands when there is a deep sense of authenticity.

Developers and operators often have a conversation about projects "a little too late." It's more beneficial to get involved on a project early rather than policing a standard after the fact.

ERIC PEARSON

CIO,
INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP

THE RIGHT WAY TO TALK TO DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHICS ACROSS THE GUEST JOURNEY



THE GROWING PROSPERITY
OF THE GLOBAL MIDDLE CLASS
AND CONTINUING ACCESS
TO NEW MARKETS IS DRIVING
THE DEMAND FOR MORE
PERSONALIZED HOTEL STAYS.

China's 67 million outbound travelers surpasses those of the U.S., and that number is expected to grow to 100 million in a few years.

That kind of growth is spurring the need for micro-segmentation of guest demographics and their demands.

The surging shift to mobile offers expanded opportunities to customize the guest experience. One in five IHG guests book with mobile, and 30% of those bookings are within less than 24 hours of arrival at the hotel.

Real-time pricing and availability is paramount for all brands because of the rise in on-demand everything.

The Internet of Things, where everything is digitally connected in daily life, is beginning to become more popular in people's work and domestic lives, so consumers are going to expect it in the travel industry.

"Big doesn't beat small anymore. Fast beats slow."

Travel brands can't just focus on demographics anymore because they are not true predictors of consumer intent. IHG focuses more on travel "occasions and needs."

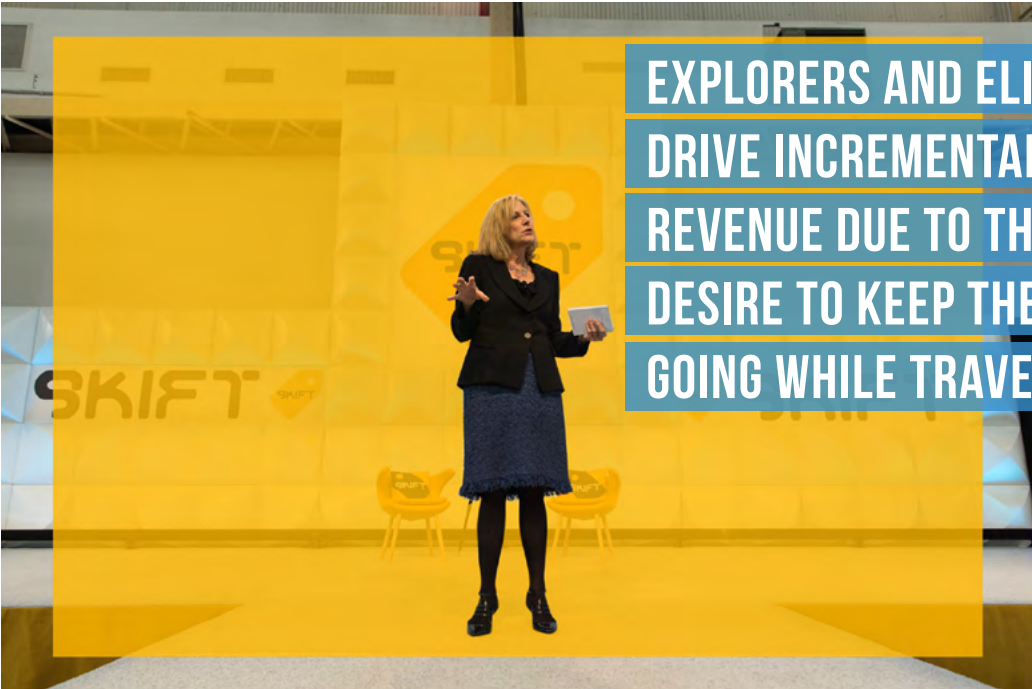
IHG is implementing more beacon technology to understand guest behavior and engage guests with services they are likely to want.

Travel brands need to engage guests throughout the entire guest journey, while focusing on three core brand principles related to guest communication: Make it meaningful, respectful and relevant.

KIM DAY

CEO,
DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

BUILDING AN AIRPORT FOR THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL



EXPLORERS AND ELITES
DRIVE INCREMENTAL
REVENUE DUE TO THEIR
DESIRE TO KEEP THEIR LIFE
GOING WHILE TRAVELING.

Airport amenities have evolved from the early days of aviation. Hot dog stands and black coffee have given way to boutique eateries and sophisticated cafes. Today, the airport itself has filled in the customer service gap abdicated by airlines, which now focus solely on their aircraft operations.

Day is working to further develop this boutique airport in Denver. Unique eateries, diverse shops and even an outdoor dining area are on the way. In two weeks, therapy dogs will roam the terminal (with handlers) to help relieve stress among flyers.

Technology will soon revolutionize the flyer experience while in airport terminals. Smart notifications, pre-purchasing and personalized flight notifications will make the travel experience less stressful for tech-savvy travelers.

Explorers and elites are the focus of Denver International Airport's flyer experience due to their comfort spending more for finer amenities. They drive incremental revenue for the airport, due to their desire to keep their life going while traveling.

THEME

TECH AND DIGITAL



DIEGO SAEZ-GIL

CEO AND CO-FOUNDER,
BLUESMART

BUILDING A TRAVEL COMPANY USING CROWD FUNDING



**WHEN YOU MAKE PEOPLE
PART OF YOUR PROCESS THEY
NOT ONLY PARTICIPATE BUT
CAN BECOME ADVOCATES.**

Crowds are very powerful today online, and the Internet is the tool of the crowds.

We feel that our story represents a fundamental shift in how products, services and companies are going to be created in the future. We have entered into an era of democratization of innovation, and this is going to affect small and big companies alike.

Be transparent. Young people prefer brands that take themselves less seriously, and when you open yourself up you can make people part of the process, and they not only become your customers, they become your allies.

What the Internet changes is that now our ambitions are not confined to a city; we can reach the world for free.

Innovation is no longer going to happen in a closed corporate boardroom, where companies decide what companies want. Innovation is going to come from unexpected places.

LOUDSOURCING, THE INSIDE WORLD OF ONLINE REVIEWS



The word “good” is common in many negative reviews, often more common than the word “bad.” That’s because reviewers who write the most enlightening reviews tend to be objective and point to the good and bad.

Contrary to popular wisdom, it might not be the worst thing for a business to not respond to a negative review because there are a wide variety of types of review responses by companies. Some companies totally miss the mark and will even disparage the writer of the original review and that is very counter-productive.

The best management responses to negative reviews come from companies that view them not as merely solving a problem but view the written management response as a way to reinforce the brand.

Loyal customers often police negative reviews themselves, pointing out if the criticism is warranted or not. Companies, though, should not leave the response to negative reviews solely up to loyal customers.

Review writers might represent just 10 percent of a company’s customer base so they are not necessarily typical, but they are highly engaged, tech-savvy and influential.

Whether it is TripAdvisor, Yelp or Amazon, reviews skew toward the positive, not negative. All things being equal, there will be more five-star reviews of a hotel than one-star reviews.

JONATHAN MILDENHALL

CMO,
AIRBNB

BUILDING A CULTURALLY RELEVANT BRAND BY CHANGING THE DISCUSSION

AIRBNB'S MARKETING CAN
TELL ONE NARRATIVE, BUT
THE PRODUCT ALSO THRIVES
BY WORD OF MOUTH BECAUSE
PEOPLE EXPERIENCE IT EVERY
NIGHT AS THEY CHECK INTO
HOMES AND APARTMENTS.



Australia is Airbnb's most established market but only 6% of outbound Australian travelers will try Airbnb.

Airbnb is looking far outside of travel for inspiration on building a superbrand. That means taking inspiration from everything from Coca-Cola to PlayStation.

Mildenhall believes traditional media is a huge way to drive credibility, saying German travelers trust Airbnb more if he can say that the brand was "seen on" TV.

The review system, which covers guests and hosts, is one of the most valuable aspects of the Airbnb site.

Airbnb thinks of host recruitment as employee recruitment because in many ways hosts represent the brand.

WHY CONVERSION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT METRIC IN TRAVEL



A photograph of Paul Hennessy, CEO of Priceline.com, sitting in a yellow armchair. He is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored shirt and khaki pants. He is looking towards the left of the frame. The background is a bright yellow wall. Overlaid on the image is a blue banner with white text that reads: 'SIMPLICITY AND PERSONALIZATION ARE THE ANSWERS TO UNLOCKING THE FUTURE OF CONVERSION ON THE MOBILE WEB EXPERIENCE'.

SIMPLICITY AND PERSONALIZATION ARE THE ANSWERS TO UNLOCKING THE FUTURE OF CONVERSION ON THE MOBILE WEB EXPERIENCE

Be transparent with the conversion process and keep customer focus at the center of your efforts. Serving customers geo-relevant deals and offerings are key.

Younger generations not watching as much TV but that doesn't necessarily make Priceline.com more reliant on Google because Priceline will advertise on whatever platforms travelers are using.

Hennessy strives to run his brand autonomously while focusing on the customer rather than the competition. The brands within the Priceline Group share knowledge of best practices but they also compete with one another.

"As far as SEO [Search Engine Optimization] is, my view on that is it's more of a desktop thought because as the devices get smaller and smaller and smaller, the number of choices from an SEO perspective on mobile decline dramatically," Hennessy says. "And so I believe it is a paid world. Google is an advertising engine and they drive paid traffic to advertisers. And I think that's going to continue for quite some time. We will do our best to play in that environment."

JOSH LESNICK

CMO,
WYNDHAM HOTEL GROUP

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MIDDLE AMERICA THAT TRAVEL BRANDS IGNORE



Experts say there are currently 2 billion people in the middle class, but in the next 15 years, that number will grow to 4.9 billion, and many will travel but have limited economics to do so.

The industry can learn from Ikea, Target and JetBlue, three brands that focus on delivering value to their customers, and they have done it well.

There is tremendous opportunity to innovate around the economy space, and there is a huge amount of demographic data to focus on.

Economy travelers have huge travel aspirations, but their loyalty programs are not really working hard enough for them. These economy travelers need to spend a lot of money or work really hard to get redemptions.

All economy hotels are not created equal. Customers believe there are multiple categories within the economy space, a notion that helps create great growth potential for hotels looking to explore the economy sector.

NINAN CHACKO

CEO,
TRAVEL LEADERS GROUP

EMERGING WORLDS OF CORPORATE AND LEISURE TRAVEL

THE BIGGEST TREND IN
TRAVEL DISTRIBUTION IS A
“MUCH WIDER RANGE OF TOOLS,
CAPABILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY,
AND MUCH MORE-EMPOWERED
CONSUMERS WHO ARE HIGHLY
EDUCATED ABOUT THE
TRAVEL LANDSCAPE.”



The Travel Leaders Corporate Division is responding to today's market opportunities in corporate travel with a new business unit called Financial Solutions, which is “primarily in the business of analytics and visualization around travel spend.”

Chacko said there's a tension between business travelers and their desire to use these amazing sets of tools and capabilities that are available to them, while still trying to comply with a corporation's perspective on policies and rules for booking travel.

The redefining of work and workplace culture today based on technological advances is driving the rise in “bleisure” travel, where people combine leisure and business pursuits. This is especially attractive to Millennials.

To reduce that tension surrounding bookings outside corporate-authorized channels, there needs to be more transparency about the processes involved and more defined roles of responsibility for both employees and employers, based on better data collection and delivery.

If something goes wrong when a corporate customer books a sharing-company service like Uber or Airbnb, there needs to be a clearer understanding and expectation of who's actually going to solve the problem.

Better mechanisms are required for how companies collect sharing-company booking data for travel-reporting purposes.

Chacko said, “35% of OTA (online travel agency) travelers would book offline if they could find a competent agent.”

Historically, travel agents have relied on word of mouth. However, the future is based on technology that can connect consumers with nearby local agents specializing in specific areas of expertise. The Travel Leaders Franchise Group Division has rerouted over 50,000 leads in this manner to its 350 franchisee members.

Chacko said the planning phase of the travel journey should be considered part of the overall travel experience.

MICHAEL SMALL

CEO,
GOGO

THE DIGITAL HABITS OF AIR TRAVELERS AND WHAT BRANDS CAN LEARN FROM THEM

THE NEW TECH WOULD
BETTER-CONNECT PASSENGER
AND CREW ON THE PLANE AND
ENABLE AN AIRLINE TO MONITOR
FLIGHT PERFORMANCE AND OTHER
OPERATIONS FROM THE GROUND.



Small believes that the company's new and proprietary 2KU satellite tech would deliver Wi-Fi at twice the speed of its air-to ground system and at a lower cost.

The new tech would enable a bevy of new apps, although Gogo has no intention of getting into the apps-creation business. It will leave that to the experts in each field but will help enable them to build efficient apps on Gogo's platform

What's ahead for travelers with satellite-based Wi-Fi, which works over land and sea? Small points to the ability to rebook upcoming flights while airborne as well as making restaurant reservations during flights; other developments include more efficient browsing and video streaming.

Smartphone use on planes is growing much faster than laptop and tablet use perhaps because of airlines sticking more seats in planes, Small says.

What is not coming with advances in satellite-based Wi-Fi in the U.S? Phone calls, says Small, who notes that voice calls become less important as travelers communicate more frequently by email and text.

Gogo supports multiple business models for airline Wi-Fi including fee-based and free/sponsored models, says Small. "Bags fly free or they don't," Small says. "Most airlines like getting a check more than writing a check."

SKIFT GLOBAL FORUM
WILL RETURN TO
NEW YORK CITY
IN OCTOBER 2016

[FORUM.SKIFT.COM](http://forum.skift.com)

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