



# Are you relevant?

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*When booking a flight today's travelers are faced with so many options that it can often be a case of too much information. Travel agencies need to start providing fewer, but much more relevant travel search results.*

There's no disputing that flight options available today are extraordinary in both their range and diversity. The trouble is, with so many search results to consider, travelers can be left feeling both swamped and frustrated.

Imagine how much easier it would be if you were searching for a flight and were presented with just a dozen highly suitable alternatives rather than a list of several hundred which, on first glance, appear to be uninspiring. It's not a question of quantity; it's a question of travel quality.

## Relevant is a relative term

Many travel agencies, I would argue, could make significant improvements to their business simply by ensuring that they deliver far more relevant – and that would inevitably mean shorter – lists of search results.

But one of the issues surrounding relevancy is its inherent complexity; what's relevant for one person, may well be very different for someone else.

For example, a business traveler flying from London to New York to attend a conference is more likely to be driven by time and convenience. In comparison, a backpacker on a round-the-world trip taking the same journey is more likely to be driven by price.

These contrasting examples tell us something about the importance of customer profiling in travel. To offer search results that are more relevant to their travelers – whether that's via their websites or their agents' desktops – travel agencies must begin by understanding their customers' behavior. Every day, travel agencies create huge volumes of booking and profile data – and by using today's Big Data technologies, such as Travelport Booking Feed they can analyze this information to gain valuable customer knowledge.

## Delivering a more relevant search experience

Once travel agencies have gained a thorough insight into their customers' needs, they can use techniques and technologies such as the Travelport Search Control Console to tweak search results to suit their customers' requirements.

As in the example discussed, an agency specializing in business travel might configure the search results to show only direct flights or preferred routes and carriers from London to New York. A leisure travel agency offering budget travel options may choose to include flights with a stop-over – but limit the maximum connection time to four hours to maintain a focus on convenience and quality.

Travel agencies can use their customer insight to tweak search results that take into account their own personal experiences. For example, they might be aware that a particular flight route includes a stop-over at an airport where the transit experience is poor and therefore they may wish to de-prioritize or even exclude this location to protect the quality of their travelers' experience.

There will be situations where travel agencies will need to respond quickly to time critical incidents. For example, if any issue arises on a particular flight route; a snowstorm is heading towards Chicago – itineraries connecting via that city are likely to experience delays or cancellations. By simply tweaking the search results, no affected flights would be shown throughout the entire business.

Many agencies are looking for ways to efficiently manage their supplier targets. If they have met their target with one airline, they may wish to re-prioritize the search results in favor of another whose target they are yet to meet. From a commercial point of view, it's clear from this example how controlling search can make a business far more profitable.

## Control cost efficiency and the power to drive sales

All of these examples highlight the value of Travelport Search Control Console. It is the only web-based solution of its kind that enables agencies to quickly and securely configure their air shopping search parameters by adding and adjusting shopping rules. Reliance on manual instructions to sales staff and costly, complex and time-consuming software development to control what itineraries are displayed to travelers is greatly reduced, and governance over what content to offer is passed directly to more travel-experienced operational minds.

There are an extensive range of search rules that can be controlled when searching for flight itinerary options including, overnight itineraries, prohibit a specific connection point and travel effective and discontinue dates. It is a fast, efficient and cost-effective way to control search results across all sales channels.

What's clear is that by tweaking search results based on their travelers' requirements, their travel agents' knowledge and their business goals, agencies can deliver the right travel options that are relevant for customers and right for business. Which means everyone wins – and profits grow.

For more information about Travelport Search Control Console [visit](#).

For more information about Travelport Booking Feed [visit](#).

To learn more about search, [download](#) 'The Art of Search' white paper.

