



Research: Trust building crucial to accelerating travel industry recovery in India

New Delhi, India, 30 June 2021: Trust levels in travel suppliers and travel agencies in India will directly influence the speed and significance of the local travel industry's recovery, according to new independent research commissioned by worldwide leader in travel retail, [Travelport](#). The research, released today, also revealed three key areas that travelers in the country say have the biggest influence over their trust: COVID-19 health and safety measures, price transparency and information credibility.

Enabling Retail

The study of 11,000 travelers across 10 countries, including 2,000 in India, was conducted by [Edelman Data & Intelligence \(DxI\)](#), the research and analytics arm of [Edelman](#), which has studied trust for over 20 years through the [Edelman Trust Barometer](#). It uncovered clear evidence that, in India, trust directly influences traveler purchasing behavior. Due to COVID-19, for example, half (50%, versus a global average of 46%) of travelers in the country said they prioritize trust over all other factors when choosing a travel supplier (such as an airline) – one of the highest proportions amongst the countries studied.

Many travelers in India also stated, when trust is in place, they will consider purchasing multiple travel-related items (47%), upgrading their package (47%) and buying non-travel-related items such as credit cards (42%) – putting India amongst the countries with the strongest link between trust and purchasing propensity.

“The Indian travel industry has a golden opportunity to come out of COVID-19 strongly”, said **Sandeep Dwivedi, Chief Operating Officer of InterGlobe Technology Quotient**, Travelport's official partner in India. “It's clear that building consumer trust can lead to commercial success. By focusing on the most important issues for consumers in India, we can accelerate industry recovery.”

The Three Key Trust-Building Areas

1) [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#)

The most important trust-building area¹ for travelers in India was whether a travel company had implemented COVID-19 health and safety measures, with 42% naming it a top priority. Going forward, however, around half said they would like more reassurance on how robustly some measures are being enforced, in particular, improved air filtration, contactless services, as well as managed boarding and queuing².

Martin Herbert, Senior Commercial Director – Operators at Travelport said: “The travel industry should be proud of how quickly and effectively it responded to COVID-19. What we learned from the study, however, is that travel suppliers and agencies will benefit from being clearer in their communication on certain measures, such as air filtration.”

2) [Price Transparency](#)

Another top trust-building area for travelers in India was having ‘no hidden costs’ (36%), which came in just behind ‘long-term safety track record’.

“The importance of price transparency can't be overstated”, continued Herbert. “To put it into context, having no hidden costs has almost the same impact on trust as an airline's long-term safety record does. The request from consumers here is clear; the time has come to eliminate hidden fees and improve the overall transparency of pricing and communication.”

¹ Also see Table 1: Trust-building factors in ‘Notes to editors’ section.

² Also see Table 2: Trust in COVID-19 safety measure enforcement.

3) Information Credibility

The most trusted sources of travel-related information³ that travelers in India use when researching a trip are those perceived to have aligned interests: friends and family (59%) and review websites (51%). However, they were also trusting of other sources such as travel companies (49%, versus the global average of 45%) and traditional media like travel TV shows, travel magazines, and newspapers (48%, versus the global average of 38%).

When it came to trust in different types of travel-related information⁴, customer ratings (55%) and written customer reviews (52%) were the most trusted, coming ahead of information like third-party certification (42%) and third-party ratings such as hotel star systems (42%).

“Reviews are a big part of the modern retailing experience”, pointed out Herbert. “You wouldn’t buy something off Flipkart without reading the reviews, yet there is no review functionality for the most part on online travel agency sites even though the data shows that’s the information travelers trust most.”

“Trusted companies make better retailers”, Herbert concluded. “When trust is combined with cutting-edge technology and effective sales, it becomes a powerful proposition. At Travelport, we will continue to invest in each of these areas in a bid to not only help the industry rebound from the pandemic, but come out the other side more agile and stronger.”

For additional trust in travel insights from Travelport, please visit travelport.com/trust.

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Notes for Editors

- The survey was conducted online with Edelman’s Data and Intelligence unit from 19-29 March 2021.
- The research sample consisted of 1,000 consumers each from Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Italy, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States; and 2,000 in India.

Table 1: Trust-building factors

“What are the most important factors when it comes to establishing your trust in travel companies?” <i>[Selected factors only]</i>		Global	India
1	No hidden costs	55%	36%
2	Offering fully flexible or refundable products	45%	29%
3	Has implemented COVID-19 H&S measures	44%	42%
4	Long-term safety track record	39%	37%
5	Consistently meeting expectations	39%	24%

Table 2: Trust in COVID-19 safety measure enforcement

“When travel suppliers have advertised or stated they have implemented COVID-19 safety measures, how much do you trust them to robustly enforce each of the following?”			
		GLOBAL	INDIA
1	Mandatory wearing of face masks	61%	58%
2	Access to sanitizing gel/wipes, face masks and gloves	58%	56%
3	Plexi-glass at check-in	54%	53%
4	Temperature checks	53%	55%
5	Pre-flight COVID-testing	53%	56%
6	Contactless services	52%	52%

³ Also see Table 3: Trust in sources of travel information.

⁴ Also see Table 4: Trust in types of travel information.

7	Social distancing	50%	55%
8	Managed boarding/queuing	50%	53%
9	Improved air filtration	46%	52%

Table 3: Trust in sources of travel information

“When you are researching information about a trip, how much do you trust each of the following sources of information?”						
	Total, global	Total, India	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby boomers
Reviews / word of mouth (Family and friends)	58%	55%	50%	61%	62%	58%
Tourist board/official tourist information offices	49%	51%	39%	51%	52%	51%
Travel companies	45%	49%	38%	49%	48%	41%
Traditional media (TV, magazines, newspapers)	38%	48%	32%	43%	42%	31%
Celebrities and social media influencers	27%	42%	29%	35%	25%	9%

Table 4: Trust in types of travel information

“When you are researching a trip, irrespective of the source it comes from, how much do you trust each of the following types of information?”			
		GLOBAL	INDIA
1	Customer ratings	54%	55%
2	Location (e.g. hotel/destination address, map location etc)	53%	53%
3	Written customer reviews	51%	52%
4	A detailed table of product attributes and features (e.g. hotel amenities, flight amenities, change fees....)	49%	50%
5	Photographs of the product (e.g. airline seat, hotel room...) shared by other customers	47%	49%
6	Prices (e.g. that they are inclusive of extra charges, VAT etc)	46%	46%
7	Side-by-side attribute comparisons with other products	44%	48%
8	Third-party ratings (e.g. hotel star ratings)	43%	42%
9	Photographs of the product (e.g. airline seat, hotel room...) provided by the travel company	42%	47%
10	Third-party certification	39%	42%

About Travelport

Travelport is a worldwide leader in travel retail. Our next-generation marketplace. Travelport+ connects buyers and sellers that share our passion for delivering exceptional travel experiences. Unconflicted and independent, we are reinventing a simpler future for travel’s complex ecosystem. We are a truly global company, operating in over 180 countries. Our headquarters are in London, United Kingdom.

About ITQ

InterGlobe Technology Quotient (ITQ), a strategic business unit of InterGlobe Enterprises, holds leadership position in travel technology industry with its avant-garde travel technology solutions. Bringing nonpareil inventory options to travel agents’ desktops and mobile phones, ITQ renders the process of travel booking and agency management, seamless. As sole distributor of Travelport in India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan, ITQ invigorates the connection between travel agents and airlines through a vast network of data.

With innovation fuelling its operations since 2005, ITQ has been technologizing travel agents with inventory, interface and intelligence by being the neural system of travel agencies in India. Connected to nearly 200,000 agency terminals, ITQ serves over 13,000 customers, including travel management companies, online travel agencies and retail agencies, in almost 400 cities while providing unparalleled assistance through 24X7 helpdesk.

Travelport Official Partner

InterGlobe Technology Quotient is an independent Official Partner appointed by Travelport in India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan, connecting buyers and sellers to industry-leading travel content through a single platform. Together, Travelport and its Official Partners are on a mission to power the future of travel. By focusing all our energy and expertise on connecting buyers and sellers of travel through a single, independent, unconflicted marketplace, Travelport is reinventing a better future for our industry.

For more information on ITQ and its business and financial solutions, visit www.itq.in
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