

## Travel Bookings: Rich Media Trumps Traveler Reviews

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When it comes to making travel purchasing decisions, most American travelers would rather see the options for themselves than simply act on the recommendations of others. In fact, travelers want to view the options in detail via pictures, online maps and video.

"For travel shoppers, seeing really is believing. The fact that travelers find these visual tools to be so influential suggests that online rich media, including content-rich, three-dimensional maps, will be an increasingly important part of the travel-planning process," said Cathy Schetzina, director, research at PhoCusWright. "Traveler review sites that incorporate these visual elements are likely to be more appealing."

The growth of Web 2.0 technologies has garnered a great deal of attention in the past several years and has been accompanied by a parallel phenomenon in travel, known collectively as Travel 2.0. The term Travel 2.0 was first coined by PhoCusWright Inc. in late 2004, and The PhoCusWright Travel 2.0 Consumer Technology Survey is part of the organization's ongoing efforts to trace Travel 2.0's development throughout the travel industry.

The PhoCusWright Travel 2.0 Consumer Technology Survey assesses a range of technologies, including social networks, rich media, blogs, RSS, podcasting, mobile technology, tagging and online maps. The survey's analysis identifies technology adoption rates, overall trends associated with various demographic factors, and patterns of influence during the travel shopping and buying process.

Also among its findings:

More Americans have used Web 2.0 technologies overall than have used them in the process of shopping for travel.

Most travelers visit between two and five Web sites when shopping for travel online, and comparing prices is by far the most common reason for visiting multiple sites. At the same time, travelers who visit the most sites are likely to be motivated by a desire to read traveler reviews, research destinations, and purchase tickets to events or attractions.

Nearly everyone is familiar with online maps, but RSS and tagging go largely unnoticed. Fifty-nine percent of Americans are unfamiliar with RSS and 55% are unfamiliar with tagging.

Half of people who read blogs read travel blogs.

Five Data Point publications have been produced that highlight the findings from the larger research initiative of The PhoCusWright Travel 2.0 Consumer Technology Survey, an abstract for each is [available](#).

The PhoCusWright Travel 2.0 Consumer Technology Survey is one highlight of PhoCusWright's Research Subscription: Technology Edition. The Technology Edition is a syndicated information service focused on technology for the travel business. The annual subscription features ongoing research that allows travel executives to dig deeper into the innovations and applications that impact the growth of their businesses and their ability to connect with customers. The Technology Edition leverages PhoCusWright's unique travel intelligence to illuminate the technologies, products and companies that are driving change in our industry.

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