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How to Fix the 4 Most Common Online Traveler Frustrations

20 actionable UX tips for travel and hospitality brands

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Thanks to digital advancements, travel and hospitality brands now have more opportunities than ever before to create exceptional, seamless digital experiences from search to conversion. However, that also comes with more potential for user frustrations along the way.

By understanding what makes your visitors click, and empathizing with their wants, needs and frustrations, you can increase online bookings and create happier customers who return again and again.

In this guide, you'll find 20 UX tips to help you solve your customers' online frustrations and provide better digital booking experiences.

Customer frustration #1
Struggling to search

Customers often start looking to book a trip without knowing details like location, dates or times. However, booking and search engines often require many of these details to start searching.

Travel brands must make it easy and intuitive to browse search results and create exploratory paths for more flexible or undecided users.

UX tips to improve the search experience

1. **Maintain prominence of the booking engine.** Ensure the booking engine or search bar is the primary focus on the page and as users scroll, keep the search bar static at the top of the page.

2. **Pre-fill the user's location.** Make searching faster with pre-filled information based on the user's location and allow previously searched locations and dates to auto-fill.

3. **Indicate pricing trends using colors.** Color code price ranges in contrasting colors to differentiate whether an option is affordable, normal or expensive.

4. **Allow users to search multiple products.** Use tabs to adjust the booking engine and search for different product types or groups.

5. **Allow users to apply common advanced settings.** Let users apply advanced search settings to narrow down things like seat type, refundable, flexible dates and more.

Allow users to search multiple products using tabs within the booking engine.

Source: jetblue.com

Finding the right experience

After selecting their preferences, customers often get inundated with results which can make it difficult to determine which option is right for them.

Travel brands must create clear and concise ways to display search results and provide filters or shortcuts to help the user navigate through the customer journey quicker and more efficiently.

UX tips to improve the browsing experience

6. **Ensure search parameters are visible at all times**. Keep search filters static at the top of the page as users scroll. Add clear labels to help users identify the best, cheapest or quickest results.

7. **Expand detailed options only when the customer has shown intent**. Only display detailed information and options once the user chooses and expands an option.

8. **Allow users to browse images of results.** Keep images clickable so customers chan choose the right option in the least amount of clicks.

9. **Use tabs to let users separate search results by type.** This helps users narrow down results that they are interested in and avoid getting overwhelmed by irrelevant options.

10. **Create a clear hierarchy of key information.** Offer expanded information using indentation and a hierarchy to indicate that there are multiple results within a result type.
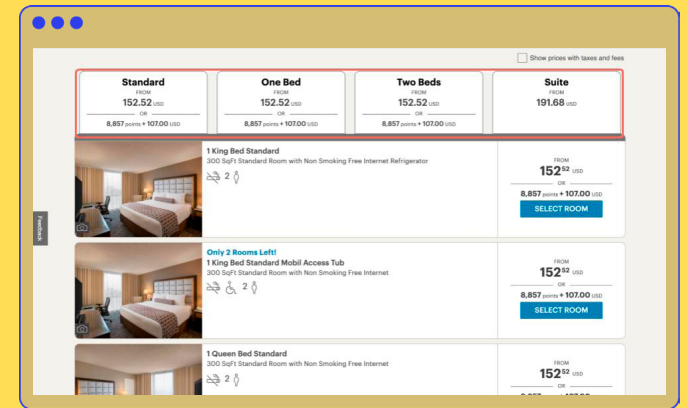
Use tabs to let users search results by type to quickly narrow down relevant results.

Source: GreatWolf.com

Irrelevant value propositions on the homepage

When customers land on your homepage, you want them to receive an experience that's right for them. However, the content targeting new visitors is often irrelevant to your returning customers and vice versa.

Your content must be relevant—no matter who's visiting your website.

Brands must explore content experiences that cater to both new and returning users and better understand the content that compels users to engage and come back.

UX tips to improve your homepage experience

11. **Cater to different audiences' needs on the homepage.** Allow both new users to book new experiences and accommodations and returning users to check in or manage their booking.

12. **Personalize homepage recommendations based on previous behavior.** Use previous searches to display listings or recommendations that the user might want to revisit.

13. **Anticipate other unexpected needs and actions from your customers**. Make other information proactively available for things like checking regulations, changing or canceling bookings and other trip planning resources.

14. **Provide "quick links" to common actions and information.** Provide a list of common actions and information available below the booking engine. Possible links include check-in and status, refunds, rewards, gift cards, travel notifications and more.

15. **Encourage cross-sell and upselling between different products and services using cross-domain buttons.** Tab buttons like "Flights" and "Flights + Cruise" can help indicate to users that there are other product families available to explore.

Anticipate other needs and actions from your customers and make them available on your homepage to simplify the user journey.

Source: Delta.com

Information blindside at checkout

When customers go to check out, they're often surprised with new information regarding their booking and pricing. Too much information at the wrong stage of the funnel can cause visitors to become disgruntled or confused—and that means they'll bounce.

Travel brands need to surface reassurances about bookings earlier in the funnel so key questions are answered promptly throughout the journey. Being transparent and upfront with your customers from the beginning will help you avoid frustrations later down the funnel which may lead to lost conversions.

UX tips to improve transparency

16. **Progressively disclose each step of the booking process.** Use headlines and progress bars to indicate where the user is in the funnel, what they need to do at each step and what step comes next.

17. **Adjust the CTA copy to provide information on the next step.** Avoid confusion or information overload when there are multiple steps. Try "Next: Traveler Details" instead of just "Next."

18. **Ensure users understand key pricing and policies.** Surface key information or policies customers should know about before they complete their booking.

19. **Keep a summary of the booking visible or easily accessible.** Continue to remind users what they've chosen and keep the pricing summary accessible throughout the checkout process.

20. **Ensure the last step of the funnel is a review of the entire booking.** Confirm everything the user has selected before conversion.
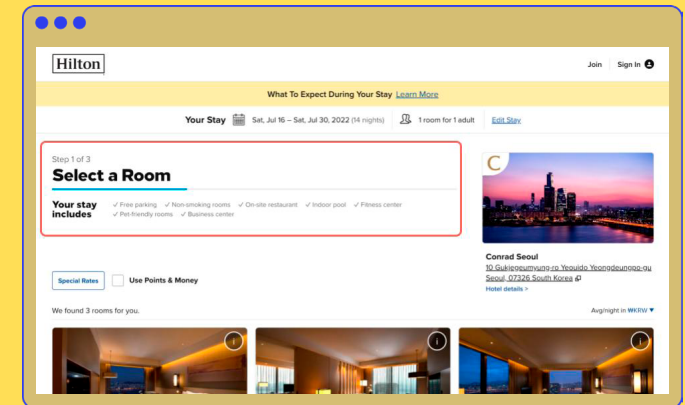
Use headlines to describe the action to take and a progress or status bar to display where the user is within the customer journey.

Source: Hilton.com

For more tips and advice on elevating your customers' digital experience, check out The Digital CX Playbook for Travel Brands.

Want to create better booking experiences?
Try Contentsquare.

Contentsquare's platform provides travel businesses with a complete picture of travelers' rapidly changing attitudes and behaviors and their reactions to experiences during a quickly evolving and uncertain travel environment. With Contentsquare's real-time detailed insights, travel businesses can optimize the right experiences for the right audience at the right time and create new and innovative experiences for an emerging post-pandemic traveler.

Short on time? Our on-demand travel product demo sums us up nicely—all in just 6 minutes!

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