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UNIFIED DATA

Big Data Takes a Holiday



John Edwards, Technology Journalist & Author
5/13/2013
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Along with cloud computing, big data is increasingly viewed as a promising way for travel companies to gain a competitive advantage by boosting sales and creating more satisfied customers.

Travel businesses -- including airlines, hotel chains, resorts, restaurants, cruise lines, rental car companies, vacation packagers, and various types of attractions -- are ideally positioned to collect data about past and present customers (including ages, residences, preferences, and behaviors). They can then use this information to fine-tune pricing, enhance services, and increase profit margins.

Service personalization

Travel companies can leverage big data in an almost unlimited number of ways. Trip-planning website operators can dip into the data pool to deliver highly personalized services. Trip dates, airline selection, flight times, hotel selection, rental cars, and other options can be tailored to meet a customer's expectations based on the person's location, past purchases, age, sex, marital status, family size, credit profile, and preferences expressed in social media services or in online interactions with the provider.

Big data can also help industry players make **rapid-fire price changes** on flights, hotel rooms, cruises, and other offerings in lockstep with demand, inventory, customer location, weather, and other market factors.

Innovative services

Big data fosters innovation, helping travel businesses create unique services based on the ability to access different types of information quickly. An airline might allow customers booking long-distance flights to request specific types of seatmates -- chatty, quiet, male, female, old, young, etc. Customers who agree to let the ticketing service access their accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social networks can choose potential seatmates from a list generated by the service provider's analytics software.

Emerging geolocation technologies, like **geofencing**, allow hotels, restaurants, taxi services, and tourist attractions to know when past customers and other individuals who have expressed interest in their services are nearby. Using this knowledge, a company can send coupons or check-in offers to likely customers whenever they enter a predefined area.

Customers aren't the only big data generators. Airlines, cruise ship operators, and other service providers can analyze the information generated by baggage operations, vehicle maintenance services, fuel and food suppliers, and other business sources to spot opportunities for savings and service improvements. Hotels, theme parks, transportation providers, restaurants, arena and stadium operators, and other travel-related businesses can study various segments of their operations to spot opportunities.

Big data creates infinite marketing, management, financial, and customer service possibilities for a travel industry that's always encountering challenges and searching for innovative ideas.

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MDMConsult, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
6/6/2013 | 8:22:39 AM

Re: Big Data And Travel

Today's travel companies capitalize in advanced analytics. Benefits for growth, speed with analytics and digital marketing strategies implemented across the organizations will define how the company is transforming returns on development of the company's data culture.

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Susan Fourtané, User Rank: Blogger
5/21/2013 | 12:15:19 PM

Re: Big Data and Travel

SharCo,
Ha! And you got home. Imagine if you would have been travelling those four hours plus the time at the airport, etc, to get straight to a two or three hour business meeting. :O

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Maybe we should start a campaign promoting these ideas among the developers. :D Next time you could have a peaceful flight back home.

-Susan

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SharCo, User Rank: Petabyte Pathfinder
5/21/2013 | 11:24:28 AM

Re: Big Data and Travel

I just got home from a particularly grueling plane ride. I never wished harder for such an app to be real than today, when in those four hours, I had to endure so much noise because a mother could not be bothered to quiet her toddler.

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Debera Harward, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
5/18/2013 | 10:32:30 PM

Re: Big Data And Travel

Mike that is what i am trying to say If Us Airlines would have done analysis they would have come to know that customers are not liking the food offered by them . Big data is very valuable asset if used accordingly . Because it makes you aware about yor customer and you can provide better services because of this awareness.

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Mike Lata, User Rank: Blogger
5/17/2013 | 3:29:37 AM

Re: Big Data And Travel

"Intelligent travel organisations are not using this data for just increasing the revenue directly by improving the services but they are trying to add value to there services in order to facilitate the customer and retain him for his life time."

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I agree, hence why U.S. airline companies should not have eliminated food for travelers just because it saves them money and most people don't like what they are offering anyway. They should have, instead, offered better quality of food service and looked at customer data to figure out what people actually want to eat on their flights (maybe analyzed the regions they are traveling to or customer backgrounds).

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Debera Harward, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
5/16/2013 | 7:51:42 AM

Big Data And Travel

Yes Big data is the incoming revolution and industries are trying to use it most so as to increase the revenue . Travel Organizations are finding Big Data very usefull because with this they can improve there services and can easily provide total customer satisfaction to all customers having different nature .

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Intelligent travel organisations are not using this data for just increasing the revenue directly by improving the services but they are trying to add value to there services in order to facilitate the customer and retain him for his life time .

By maintaining records of all employees why they are travelling the organisation can help them out after there flights like getting taxis , if they have come to visit someone special they can provide some present for that specific person and so on. Inshort travel industry has very large scope by using Big Data.

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Susan Fourtané, User Rank: Blogger
5/15/2013 | 2:10:46 PM

Re: Big Data and Travel
legalcio,

"If someone created the "Don't Sit Me Next to the Screaming Kid" app, maybe, but ultimately air travelers are looking for the cheapest, quickest way to get somewhere."

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Yes, that's true. The "Don't sit me next to the screaming kid" app could be especially useful in an eight-hour long flight or more, and you want to sleep.

The problem I see is that airlines like Virgin Atlantic, that are offering a kind of social service matching passengers, and allowing passengers to send drinks to other passengers, are going a bit too far in the "socializing" aspect. I don't see a great future in this kind of service. Of course I may be wrong.

-Susan

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Saul Sherry, User Rank: Blogger
5/15/2013 | 12:50:07 PM

Re: Big Data and Travel

Ah good angle Alpha edge! Dynamic pricing could certainly play a bigger role here, fighting for that optimized line between revenue and empty seats.

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Saul Sherry, User Rank: Blogger
5/15/2013 | 12:47:21 PM

Re: Big Data and Travel

Would be interesting to turn the focus on flights alone legalcio. There are the obvious UI and flight surfacing benefits for customers (especially on price comparison websites)... but yes, given all that data generated from one jumbojet, how much of it is focused on the customer (apart from their safety?)

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AlphaEdge, User Rank: Exabyte Executive
5/14/2013 | 9:25:19 AM

Re: Big Data and Travel

There is one thing in common between hotels and airlines, they both are offering perishable products/services. Once they lose the opportunity to grab customers, they have to either let the hotel rooms wasted/ seats empty. However, the general fixed cost does not change much. With data integration and capability of handling large amount of data, I am sure big data can help these companies to operate more efficient and effective.

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