

Booking.com best in the UK travel sector for mobile experience

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Booking.com offers the best mobile experience within the online UK travel sector, closely followed by Expedia, according to a new travel benchmark report published today by EPiServer. The study of the UK's most popular travel sites* reveals that the sector is embracing mobile, offering mobile sites alongside multiple smartphone and tablet apps. However companies are failing to unify their approach and deliver consistent high quality cross-channel customer experiences.

The EPiServer UK Travel Benchmark Report examines the mobile experiences that are being delivered by the UK's ten most popular travel sites, scoring them on 25 ranking factors across iPhone, iPad and Android apps (both tablet and smartphone) and mobile websites. The in-depth examination focuses on whether the brands were meeting consumer demand for rich, personalised experiences and seamless journeys from browsing to booking.

Booking.com pipped Expedia to the top spot with a score of 72%, proving to be a rare exception in its ability to provide a seamless and quality experience across its site and range of tablet and smartphone apps. The brand offers clear navigation and design, scoring highly for ease of use, the ability to find essential information and support for touchscreen gestures. All of the apps provided some degree of personalisation and Booking.com's mobile presence matched its desktop site well in both design and layout.

However, all of the travel companies assessed fell short of maximising the opportunity to reach and convert a significant audience through their mobile strategies. One in five UK adults use their mobile devices to book or arrange travel, making these transactions one of the most common purchases made on a mobile. But rather than treating the different mobile platforms as complimentary aspects of a holistic marketing approach, the travel brands are focusing attention on just one or two devices and giving far less than satisfying customer experiences to others, particularly Android tablets.

Device diversity is increasing, so it is becoming more critical for brands to deliver consistently good experiences across any device or platform. EPiServer research has revealed that while iOS devices are the top choice for buying on via a mobile, commerce across other devices, including Android and Windows, is increasing. Consumers are also using both tablets and smartphones to shop across apps and mobile sites.

Scores from the 10 travel companies varied from 72% to 31%, with an overall average score of 54%, indicating significant differences between the mobile experiences delivered across these brands and showing there is room for improvement for all those benchmarked.

The scores for the ten travel brands:

1. Booking.com - 72%
2. Expedia - 71%
3. TripAdvisor - 67%
4. Thetrainline.com - 54%
5. LateRooms - 52%
- =7. easyJet - 51%
- =7. SkyScanner - 51%
8. British Airways - 49%
9. lastminute.com - 40%
10. Ryanair - 31%

David Bowen, eCommerce Product Manager at EPiServer, comments: "Mobile has become a disruptor in the digital commerce sector. In order to differentiate in what is fast-becoming a mobile-first sector, travel brands must connect their content with the commerce experience, leading visitors seamlessly through the entire customer journey from search, to reviews, to transaction. There is a thirst among consumers for researching and booking travel via a range of mobile devices. The challenge for brands is to deliver personalised content for every visitor, and efficiently being able to provide the same, quality experience regardless of whether they visit you through an app, mobile site or desktop to keep them engaged on the path to purchase."

To download the free EPiServer report, visit <http://www.episerver.com/knowledge-base/research--reports/uk-travel-benchmark-report-2014/>