The global leisure travel market is projected to exceed 1.3B by 2028 and grow at a cumulative rate of 9% between now and then. Over the same period, business travel is expected to grow at a 7.6% CAGR to $1.5T. This is clear evidence that the industry is firmly operating on the other side of the pandemic and that consumers and corporate warriors are now traveling more than ever. Travelers who’ve been sticking close to home since 2020 are hungry for adventure and willing to spend.

Furthermore, millennials and Gen Z travel more than other generations and are likely to dominate travel trends in the years to come. To make a good impression on these digital natives, travel and hospitality brands need to take an honest look at their customer experience (CX) and prioritize needed changes to modernize the experiences that they deliver to their customers. Conversational service, personalization, and AI can also help drive efficiency while these companies provide high-quality service. For those who succeed in modernizing, there’s an opportunity to nurture relationships with high lifetime value customers.

Apps are also increasingly important in the way travel destinations manage the services that they provide to their guests. Since the pandemic, digital and contactless services have continued to gain momentum and technology is playing an increasing role in the evolution of guest-facing services. For instance, mobile check-in and contactless payments have become the norm rather than the exception.

To pull off this transformation, travel and hospitality brands must enable everyone within their organization to deliver VIP-level experiences to each and every traveler or guest with whom they interact. From frontline customer support agents and service staff to backend operational staff who help keep it all together behind the scenes, these brands can set themselves apart by surprising and delighting their customers throughout their journeys.

But getting there isn’t simple. Travel and hospitality companies face challenges that impact CX, including:

**Labor shortages:** Like most industries, travel & hospitality companies struggle to maintain staffing levels to pre-pandemic levels, including customer service.

**Rising service costs:** Backend operational costs are forcing the industry to charge more. Yet, travelers are not getting more in return. Travelers may have given travel suppliers a pass on the price-versus-experience equation due to the pandemic, supply chain issues, global economic conditions, etc. But this will not last. Travelers will begin to demand more for their dollar.

**Digital transformation:** In the absence of a complete rip-and-replace approach across their IT infrastructures, travel and hospitality companies need to figure out how to modernize their services while maintaining some level of integration with legacy systems.

**Hyper-personalization:** Today’s travelers have grown to expect to be recognized and treated as individuals. Standardization is no longer the norm.

Right or wrong, the travel and hospitality industry has recently gained a reputation for delivering a frustrating set of traveler and guest experiences, from long wait times to cancellations or delays to a reduced set of guest services. This is in sharp contrast to the top-tier customer service that travelers are accustomed to receiving from consumer brands. That said, customers are eager and willing to spend with companies who treat them right.

67% of customers are willing to pay more for a great experience.
Transform CX to deliver 5-star service

Because of legacy infrastructure, travel and hospitality companies have unique challenges to consider when choosing a CX platform. Zendesk offers an extensible solution that allows you to integrate and take action across different systems—including telephony systems—so you can deliver exceptional experiences without disrupting your existing infrastructure. At Zendesk, we empower you to drive modern CX that is adaptable to your use cases.

With Zendesk, you can:

- Use open APIs to integrate data from disparate systems, including industry-standard booking engines, loyalty programs, housekeeping systems, etc.
- Deliver conversational travel experiences across web, mobile, SMS, and social apps like WhatsApp, Messenger, and Instagram
- Use AI chatbots and custom help centers so travelers and guests can self serve 24/7, no matter where they are
- Add custom interactive apps like seat/cabin/room selectors or in-message upgrade/add-on/SSR widgets to stay a step ahead of customer needs
- Embed customer support into your mobile app and booking webpages using Zendesk Messaging and mobile SDKs
- Use proactive messaging to deliver targeted and personalized experiences that drive upsell and cross-sell opportunities
- Use group messaging to extend conversations across customers and service staff
- Grow lifetime customer value by treating every customer like a VIP and building brand loyalty
- Use Zendesk ticketing to deliver operational agility and service optimization across the service staff
- Apply advanced analytics to traveler preferences and past buying behavior to deliver personalized offers, promotions and travel services
- Optimize the performance of your customer service team using real-time insights

Use cases:

- Traveler and guest CX (reservations, etc)
- Loyalty programs
- Staff scheduling and management
- Facility operations and maintenance
- Housekeeping
- Vendor management
- Employee help desk (e.g. IT, HR, etc)
How does Zendesk for Travel & Hospitality work?

1. Emily books a package vacation through an OTA, including air transportation and a one-week stay at a beach resort. Through an embedded AI-powered chatbot on the OTA website, she is able to easily make changes to her itinerary, upgrade her seat and order a special meal for the flight in advance of her trip.

2. Due to weather delays, Emily’s flight is scheduled to arrive an hour late. The travel alert from the airline is picked up by the OTA and, subsequently, by the concierge at the resort. He sends a multi-party notification to both Emily and the driver with the adjusted pickup schedule.

3. A couple of weeks before the trip, a customer service rep at the resort notices that Emily has not booked transportation from the airport to the resort on the day of arrival. The resort proactively messages the customer and offers a courtesy car for the 30-minute trip.

4. It’s been a long trip, and Emily is tired and hungry as she settles in for the drive to the coast. Through the resort’s concierge app, she’s able to book a table at one of the restaurants. She also orders an extra pillow for her room. Her request triggers a ticket within the backend housekeeping system.

5. It’s been a fantastic trip and Emily decides that she would like to extend her vacation a few extra days. The Live Chat agent at the OTA has 360-degree visibility to Emily’s travel itinerary and preferences and is able to easily update airline and hotel reservations. The resort’s concierge, transportation team and housekeeping team are all notified that Emily’s checkout date has changed and Emily’s guest itinerary is updated accordingly.
Modernize your CX and stay a step ahead

Deliver seamless support for travelers on the move
Enable customers/guests to easily and seamlessly connect to you through any channel wherever they are – before, during and after a trip or visit

Provide concierge services at their fingertips
Deploy self-service and advanced messaging tools to deliver innovative, contactless services that surprise and delight

Do more with less
Enable agents and service staff to optimize services and efficiently deliver VIP-level experiences

Personalize travel services with 360-degree views
Centralize customer data and apply real-time analytics as the ticket to delivering personalized services and driving brand loyalty

Act on customer insights
Discover actionable insights that help you anticipate traveler needs and offer proactive support
Accor is one of the world’s largest hospitality networks, offering premium travel experiences and a loyalty subscription program, Accor Plus, that provides access to exclusive travel, dining, and lifestyle benefits at more than 1,000 hotels in 20 countries. A desire to improve its customer journey led the company to partner with Zendesk to implement a more flexible, omnichannel CX platform that features messaging and AI-powered bots. Today the team uses Zendesk to create an omnichannel conversational experience over email, web, help center, as well as social through Facebook and WhatsApp. Accor has created a true customer-first experience that meets travelers where they are and provides them the personalized service they need.

“We wanted to invest in a CX system that could drive efficiency and productivity, while creating an exceptional omnichannel conversational experience to meet customers where they are. Our agents can quickly view member interactions across multiple channels and personalize every conversation.”

– Christopher Douglas, Director of Member Services, Pacific at Accor Plus

✓ 352% improved response time with AI and messaging
✓ 220% improved resolution time
✓ 20% increased CSAT
✓ 20% increased inbound sales revenue
✓ 11.9 FTE savings due to self service

Why Zendesk?

Travel is stressful enough as it is. Take the edge off by delivering five-star customer service that meets travelers where they are, gets them where they want to go and helps them relax once they get there.

→ See how other travel and hospitality companies are delivering innovative experiences through transformative CX and guest services.

→ Talk to a sales rep