

Discussion Questions

1. What technological advances have made the most significant changes in the tourism industry?
2. How can technology be used to enhance productivity?
3. How can technology be used to improve both internal and external communications?
4. How has the Internet changed the delivery of tourism services?
5. How can technology be used to enhance customer service?
6. How can revenue management be used to improve financial performance?

Applying the Concepts

1. Make an appointment to visit the manager of a local hotel, resort, or restaurant. During your visit, find out how technology is being used. Make a list of the names of products, systems, and/or programs being used and describe the functions they perform.
2. Browse the Internet for POS suppliers. Develop a list from your search of three companies that supply this technological application along with a description of the services they offer.
3. Browse the Internet for PMSs. Develop a list from your search of three companies that supply this technological application along with a description of the services they offer.
4. Using your favorite search engine, type in “travel blog.” Based on the results, select one blog and summarize your findings for that site.
5. Using Expedia, Travelocity, or Orbitz, search for airfares between Atlanta and Los Angeles on three different dates. The first date for your search should be at least 30 days from today’s date. The second date should be 15 days from today’s date. Your third date should be five days from today’s date. Prepare a list of flights and rates. Are the prices the same? If they are different, explain why there is a difference.
6. Use the various channels (e.g., hotel’s own website, online travel agencies, hotel’s reservation telephone hotline, local travel agency) to obtain rates for a hotel stay on a particular night. Are the rates the same or different? Why do you think they are the same or different?

Glossary

Available seat miles (ASMs) The distance traveled multiplied by the number of seats available.

Blogs Online journals composed of links and postings in reverse chronological order.

Data Facts and figures.

Data mining Analyzing information stored in computer databases with the help of statistical techniques to uncover hidden relationships and patterns.

Enterprise resource planning (ERP) system A system designed to combine all information sources, subsystems, and processes from various locations into one unified system.

Enterprise systems Computer systems that provide for collaboration and communication of data storage and retrieval across multiple departments and organizational units.

Folio A form used to record a guest’s hotel.

Information technology Computer systems that provide for the storage and retrieval of data.

Learning curve The rate at which people learn over time.

Leg The segment of a flight between two consecutive stops.

Load factor The number of revenue passenger miles (RPMs) divided by the number of available seat miles (ASMs).

Management information systems (MIS) Computer-based systems designed to collect and store data and

then provide information for planning, decision making, and problem solving.

Night Audit An accounting function performed in hotels at the close of each business day to ensure the correct posting of all revenues.

Point-of-sale (POS) systems Systems designed to record and track customer orders, process debit and credit cards, manage inventory, and connect to other systems in a network.

Property management system (PMS) A unified system used to manage sales and marketing, reservations, front office operations, POS systems, telecommunications, back office operations, and revenue management.

Revenue management (yield management) The process of allocating the right type of capacity to the right kind of customer at the right price so as to maximize revenue or yield.

Revenue passenger miles (RPMs) One seat on an airplane, railroad, or motorcoach traveling one mile with a revenue-producing passenger.

Social networking Individuals tied together by a common interest or theme who share bookmarked Web links and conversations.

Technology The use of new knowledge and tools to improve productivity and systems.