

OgilvyRED

OgilvyRED is a strategic consulting partner for businesses who want to transform, innovate and grow through digital.

Our focus is Digital Transformation, Marketing Transformation, Brand Transformation and Growth, leveraging core domains which include Business, Brand, Customer Experience, Influence, Commerce, Martech and Data expertise.



ILTM (International Luxury Travel Market) is a collection of global, local and specialist luxury travel events taking place in some of the world's most fascinating destinations—Cannes, Cape Town, Dubai, the Riviera Maya, São Paulo, Singapore, and Shanghai.
Each event introduces an unrivalled selection of luxury travel brands to ILTM's network of handpicked luxury travel advisors, through bespoke appointment programmes and networking sessions. As invitation-only events, dedicated teams in London and São Paulo vet all attendees. For the leaders in the world of luxury travel, attending ILTM events is a must, if they are lucky enough to be selected.

LUXURY TRAVEL BUT NOT AS WEKNOWIT.

The contemporary Asian traveller is emerging from markets and maturing from generations that are reshaping and stretching the definition of what we conventionally understand 'luxury' to be. As a result, they are bringing their own needs and expectations.

INTRODUCTION

by Lucy McCabe, President, Ogilvy RED Consulting - Asia Pacific



The typical definition of luxury is that it is an indulgence rather than a necessity. However, in Asia as is the trend globally, luxury travel is no longer about conspicuously high prices and conventional badge value; it is evolving and we must therefore redefine luxury in new terms for a new generation of traveller.

This generation eschews the elaborate and ornate and looks for more specialised, intimate experiences. They are discerning travellers who not only like things to look good, but to feel good. Understated, gilt-free and guilt-free luxury, together with personalised experiences, have become the cornerstone of the luxury travel market.

We believe that nowadays this market is defined through the combination of the richness and uniqueness of the travel experience itself, not just the hotel brand or the flight class. Accordingly, this experience must also deliver a level of social bragging rights that allows travellers to express their individuality. It needs to be aspirational, enviable - and, above all, Instagrammable.

3 KEY OBSERVATIONS IN OUR REPORT

GROWTH IS NOT ALL ABOUT CHINA; THERE IS AN EXPONENTIAL RISE FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA THAT WILL COME WITH VERY DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS FOR BRANDS.

EVER BLURRING LINES IN THE 'LUXURY MARKET'; BETWEEN MASS AND AFFORDABLE LUXURY, AND BETWEEN TRAVEL STATES, SUCH AS BUSINESS AND LEISURE.

NEW GENERATION OF AFFLUENT TRAVELLERS ARE COMING OF AGE, AND WILL FUEL CATEGORY GROWTH; THESE TRAVELLERS BRING VERY DIFFERENT DEMANDS, NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS.

In this report we identify three key trends and look at shifts in how the luxury market is currently defined. These are all driven by consumer demands and have begun to reshape the industry model. For brands, the immediate necessity is to define what a unique 'experience' really is, and how you create offerings, services and platforms that deliver individualism at scale.

In this report we share insights from our research and analyse the type of travel experiences consumers want now, the reason why they want them and how, ultimately, they expect them to be delivered. We also share our view on how agencies and brands can keep up with behavioural and attitudinal shifts and reimagine themselves through platforms, partners and the use of data to create truly personalised unique experiences that put the consumer at the centre of their business models.

We've combined market research, market leader interviews, together with a field study conducted with over 1,000 Asian 'Luxury Travellers'.

THE CONVENTIONAL DEFINITIONS OF LUXURY TRAVEL HAD CLEAR LINES DRAWN BETWEEN THEM.

Ultra Luxury

Conventional Definition

Traditional 5-star (plus) luxury where more money and stars equals more luxury. Terms such as opulence, prestige and exclusivity come to mind. The expectations of ultra luxury have changed over the years, but the image and key institutions remain the same.

Affordable Luxury

Conventional Definition

Affordable luxury targets travellers who cannot afford ultra luxury, but expect more than the limited and standard service offered by budget and midmarket hotels. Luxury can be found in many tangible and intangible details throughout the stay.

Mass Market

Conventional Definition

The mass market in lodging has grown strongly in recent years, particularly through budget hotels and short term rentals. Mid-market hotels also cater for this space. A limited, standard and unanimous service offering is attractive to many travellers.

THESE LINES ARE BLURRING.

Through our study, experience and industry partners, we would argue that the lines between ultra and affordable are becoming increasingly blurred and in both cases the shift is to authentic and unique experiences. Luxury travel, in this new context, is about the enjoyment of the opportunities life has to offer. From this perspective, it can be seen as an investment in personal well-being, a celebration of the individual.



GENERATION ME

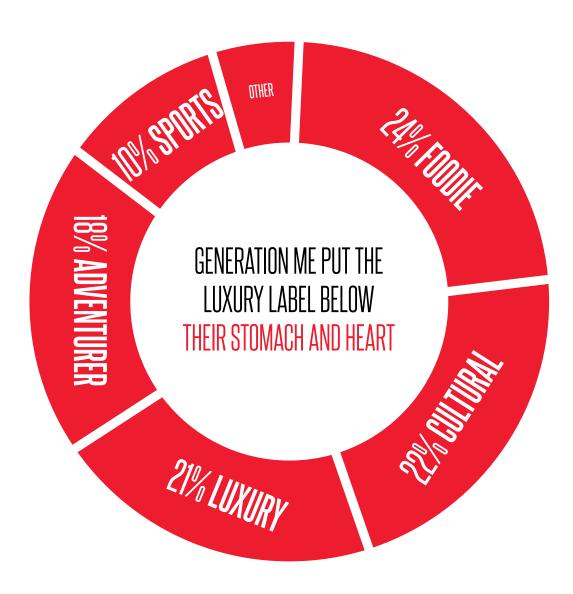
There are about 1 billion Asian Millennials today, constituting approximately a quarter of Asia's total population. Approximately 60% of the world's Millennials reside in Asia, of which almost a third originate from either China or India. [5] However, the luxury travellers amongst them also include Gen Z who will, over the next decade, enter their peak earning and spending years, creating a tremendous opportunity for the travel industry.

Given what our research has shown about their likes, dislikes, aspirations and inspirations, we collectively refer to them as Generation Me.

Driven by income growth, these emerging affluent Asian consumers are coming of age and fuelling the growth of international luxury travel, with spend expected to increase by 1.6X to \$340 billion by 2020. [5] Are you ready to cater to their very different demands and desires?

THEY DON'T RESONATE WITH CONVENTIONAL LABELS

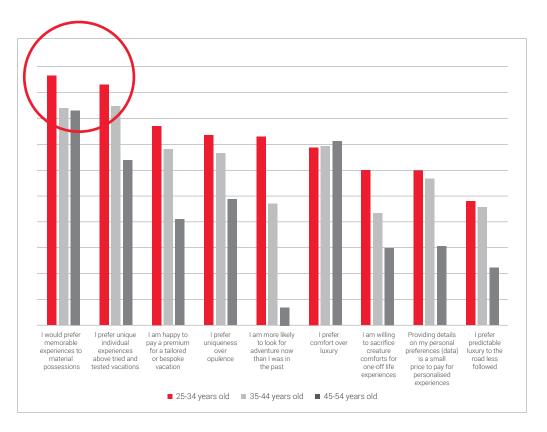
Whilst most of us like neat labels, Generation Me most certainly do not like to be labelled conventionally. Our survey asked a series of questions which show that, instead, almost half of them prefer to label themselves as foodies, cultural tourists or adventurers, with the luxury label coming third. This insight shows that new luxury Asian travellers care most about expressing their individuality as a persona, not as a badge.



THEY WANT UNIQUE, INDIVIDUAL MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

Travellers prefer a memorable experience to material possessions. Moreover, younger travellers (Generation Me and Generation X) prefer uniqueness over opulence. They are keen to have a unique individual experience rather than tried and tested vacations; and they are more willing to pay a premium for a tailored or bespoke vacation. However, they have a tendency to choose predictable luxury to the road less followed.

Research results also reveal that, in general, luxury travellers prefer comfort over luxury. Generation Me are looking for adventure now, more so than in the past, and they are more willing than other age groups to sacrifice creature comforts for one-off life experiences. Additionally, younger travellers are more open to providing their own data for a personalised experience, whilst the Baby Boomers are more reserved in this area.



THEY'RE HUNGRY FOR INFORMATION

Generation Me are digital natives, and perhaps the first truly global generation to have been brought together by the internet. They are discerning, hyper-connected, educated consumers, willing to put in the time and having the know-how to conduct extensive research before making purchases. They attach great importance to individuality and self-expression, often sharing their opinions through the internet, particularly on social media sites. Furthermore, they continuously seek authentic, word-of-mouth information through the same channels, not just from family and friends, but also anonymous reviewers and bloggers.

One brand we spoke to, NowBoat.com, taps into the platform economy by providing unique travel experiences and adventures at sea, from a romantic sail in the gulf of Thailand to kitesurfing in Italy. They connect charter agencies and professional operators with travellers from all over the world, and by providing software as a service (SaaS), they help the whole industry digitally transform.

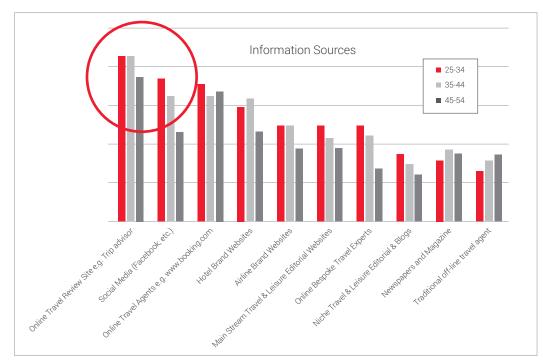


experiences is exploding and we've grown rapidly as a result – we've handled over 30m USD of booking requests since our launch, with 12.5M of these in the last quarter alone. Responding to travellers, we now have over 550 unique adventures, catering to a wide array of needs, ensuring every guest leaves us with a unique memory and personal story."

GIULIA LINA CALLEGARI, MARKETING DIRECTOR added "our Asian guests send us the highest value requests, in some cases comfortably spending 20,000 USD or more – but conversely, compared to their Western counterparts, they have a greater degree of online trust and are natively digital, rarely enquiring about reviews or payment guarantees, directly with us. They also tend to focus on the experience itself, not the features of the boat, such as the local quiet port, and get introduced to truly local restaurants and immersed in the culture. This is absolutely a continuing appetite and trend from Asian Luxury Travellers."

THEY MIX AND MATCH ON THEIR TERMS

As the saying goes, "desire creates power", and with Generation Me's desire for flexibility and digital enablement, we see a rise in 'mix and match' behaviour where consumers book their luxury experiences à la carte to curate something unique, something not available to the masses. This is the 'Insta-generation' that has grown up curating and creating their own experience online. They do not expect you to tell them the best bar in town or best restaurant, as they have done extensive research and gained tips from their Facebook and Instagram friends. But what they do want you to do is get them the best table in a restaurant with spectacular views, a seat at an iconic chef's table or a place at a botanical tasting event.





oliver bonke, President and coo, Shangri-La international hotel management LTD., told us, "Luxury travellers coming of age now have multiple dimensions to their persona. This challenges us to think deeply about their needs and how to cater to them. Today's generation of affluent travellers live a mobile, fluid lifestyle, and their travel and hotel choices are shaped by what they want to experience at that time or seek to accomplish. People mix and match experiences—flying economy but staying in a five-star hotel suite. This means the fashionista travelling on a fashion weekend can next be found on a romantic adventure holiday or exploring cultural parts of a city with family or friends. Service that is proactive and empathetic remains the constant for them while exploring the world through high quality and diverse culinary offerings that span price points. The only givens are the speed and ease with which they want to book travel on their mobile and the desire to share and validate their experiences on social media"

In general, online travel review sites and online travel agents are the most common channels used by travellers to source information. Social media is the preferred choice of Generation Me, with hotel brand websites offering an alternative source for Generation X, whilst Baby Boomers are more likely to source information from traditional offline travel agents.

These results come as no surprise. Young travellers are the Instageneration who have grown up with digital and regard it as a faster and easier way to source information. In addition, authenticity is also an issue that matters to travellers nowadays and online travel review sites contain pictures and reviews from travellers that unveil the real conditions of accommodation, as well as other components of the total travel experience.

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THEY DESIRE PERSONALISED CURATION FROM BRANDS

A survey on Global Travel Intentions Study also reveals that, across all four countries surveyed in depth (China, India, Indonesia and Singapore), Generation Me voiced a desire to have greater control and autonomy over their travel experience; essentially to do what they wanted, when they wanted, and how they wanted. Their notions of luxury are different from the old style ostentation of five-star hotels, pool villas, fine dining and private transfer which used to define the mainstream division of luxury.

They expressed strong aversion to being forced into 'military style' schedules that required early wake up calls and a race to cram as many attractions as possible into a single day. 64% of the respondents reported using free and easy or wholly independent travel arrangements on their last leisure trip, while only 22% used a packaged tour where the entire trip was minutely organised down to the last detail. [5]

As research shows that most Generation Me luxury travellers are newly affluent, with notions of luxury that differ widely from the conventional, we should understand their preferences before making any marketing plan. They are not about having caviar and champagne in a private jet; caviar and champagne may well still make an appearance, but in the context of a unique picnic at the Pyramid of Khufu.



LUXURY OPERATOR, SCOTT DUNN, which has recently acquired Country
Holidays* for its expertise in Asia, also describes a clear
movement from group to private travel for the new generation
of high-end Asian travellers. It is not driven solely by an increased
confidence and affluence but also the desire to express individuality
through travel as a world adventurer, a taste maker, a discoverer
of the new and a world citizen, a trend in which social media,
notably Instagram, plays a huge role.

SIMON RUSSELL, GROUP CEO said "people's personal 'brands' are being defined by where they've been and where they're seen" and pointed out that Asian luxury travellers favour spending on travel experiences over other assets and this is fuelling the travel market with a new generation of luxury travellers. He also agrees that they are now looking for beyond branded five-star hotels, premium air travel and haute cuisine.

BUT THEY ALSO SELF CURATE

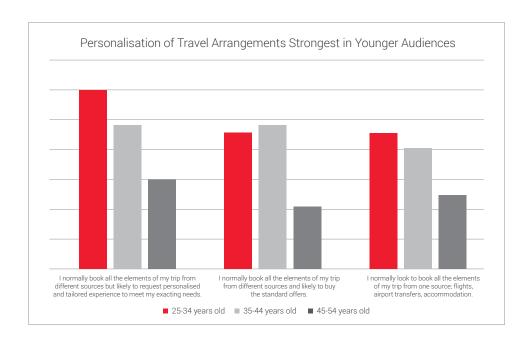
They can ask for the high life today but a simple guesthouse and local life tomorrow. And they don't necessarily need inbound agencies for what they want. There are plenty of young Asian online startups, such as Thailand's Local Alike, whose tagline is 'Going Local is the New Luxury'.

They are also not shy in turning to technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a way of curating travel experiences (63% respondents are comfortable interacting with AI for research and booking travel), including the use of digital assistants, generally pre-trip, reverting to the social human element during the trip itself. [6]

And they want it in the moment, and on their primary screen. Klook, a Hong Kong-based company that sells travel activities across Asia, reveals that half of their users book a tour, activity or attraction upon arrival, and 70% do so via mobile. [6]

This result proves that flexibility is key to Generation Me. They prefer to mix and match different sources when making travel bookings; hotel accommodation from online travel agents, air tickets from airline brand websites and local activities through travel platforms, for example. In this way, they can create something unique for themselves.

Whilst Generation X also prefer to book their travel experiences from different sources, they are more likely to buy the standard offers and/or packages than ask for a personalised product.





PEGGY FANG ROE, CHIEF SALES AND MARKETING OFFICER OF MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL ASIA PACIFIC has a view that, Personalized Fulfilment is the Future of Luxury. She told us, it is often said that the only thing you buy that makes you richer is travel and that succinctly sums up what we see in our guests today. The modern traveler now seeks meaningful and purposeful experiences that help get them in touch with themselves.

Increasingly, we see women on soul searching retreats – alone or with their girlfriends – enjoying a sunset yoga session overlooking the Ayung River at the Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve in Bali Indonesia. We also find families who want quality time to relax against a breath-taking tropical backdrop such as The St. Regis Maldives with kid-friendly programs that promise hours of entertainment or The Sanya EDITION for its private ocean – a water sports paradise for everyone. For fun-lovers in pursuit of eclectic experiences, they look to the W Shanghai for insider access like getting front row seats to an exclusive luxe pyjama fashion show inspired by the hotel.

The number one priority for luxury travelers today is transformative travel and authentic experiences that provides a new perspective on the world. This was the strongest theme coming out of our global luxury study conducted at the end of 2017 in partnership with Skift.

With a new lens on luxury and focus on the fast-evolving aspirations of the global traveler, we are elevating travel with highly contextualized, nuanced brand experiences that signal the future of luxury. Gaining unique access to curated experiences is the launchpad for authenticity, and our brands serve as portals to diverse cultures and one-off travel moments.

In everything we do, we consider how we can bring new experiences to our members and customers. Our new combined loyalty program will bring over 8,000 members-only experiences, called "Moments" and here in China, our joint venture with Alibaba is helping us design a more compelling travel experience for Chinese consumers travelling domestically or abroad.

TRAVELLERS SAID PERSONALISATION IS ONLY PERSONALISATION WHEN IT'S RELEVANT.

GIMMICKS THEY SAID RILE THEM

"Personalised toiletries"

"Automated toilet bowl with music, warmer and auto water jets."

"Personalised elevator music or ringtones"

"Personalised coffee cups with horrendous messages on them."

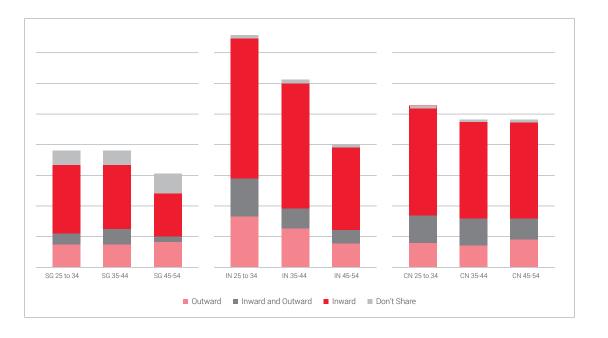
"Providing too many city comforts at an island resort"

THEY USE TRAVEL TO BUILD INDIVIDUAL BRAND

When sharing opinions of their own experiences, most of the travellers feel they are helping others with valuable information. However, what is equally valuable to them personally is the use of these channels to help their friends and followers get to know them better. Generation Me and Generation X also use the sharing of information as a vehicle to improve their social media profile.

We categorised responses into outward focused (i.e. helping others, contributing content etc.) with inward focused (i.e. imporving my social profile, people think better of me etc.), and everything inbetween.

Interestingly it seems that the differences are not only split by age, but are also governed by country. Young Indian travellers want to portray themselves as tastemakers by sharing opinions of their experiences, for example, whereas the main purpose for young Chinese travellers appears to be that of improving their personal brand on social media. Younger Singaporeans, on the other hand, want their friends and followers to understand them more deeply through this activity.



WHAT GENERATION ME SAY

- Luxury is a state of mind something that brings satisfaction
- Tension free times for my body and mind
- A personalised and customised service or product tailored for me
- It's being carefree while travelling
- A unique experience that is rare and memorable

WHAT GENERATION ME DO

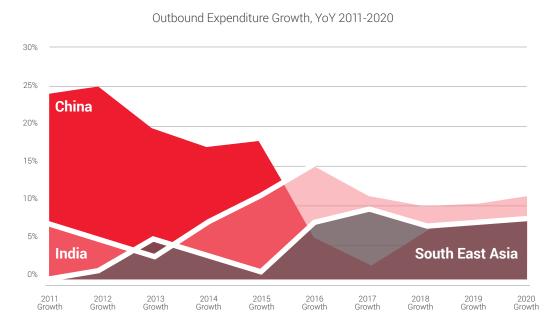
- A once-in-a-lifetime experience like a helicopter over the Grand Canyon
- Find authentic places, talk to local people, understand local culture
- Discover the good things in life, like the best street food in Montmartre
- Enjoy my favourite food, deodorant, TV channels, drinks and songs pre-arranged at check in



WHERE IS THE 'LUXURY' MARKET? CHINA (STILL) A POWERHOUSE FOR GROWTH

The late (and great) Hans Rosling wrote that the pin code of the World is 1-1-1-4, representing the population in billions from left to right on a global map, meaning that almost 60% of the world's population sits in Asia Pacific. So it should come as no surprise that the region also represents 40% of the World's tourism expenditure. Given though, the large income disparity in many markets in Asia compared with America and Europe, this speaks volumes to the appetite for and growth of luxury travel. While China represents 50% of this expenditure, Southeast Asia has seen double the regional growth, at 12%. And with this growth comes a new type of consumer with new needs and expectations.

Since 2007, China continues to lead global outbound travel after recording double-digit growth year on year in tourism expenditure, contributing to the inbound growth in many destinations in Asia and the Pacific, as well as the United States and Europe. [1]



(Chart) Euromonitor. Post-luxury travel Part 1: Lodging reimagined, April 2017, (1) World Tourism Organization, Asia Tourism Trends 2017 Edition

While China represents over 50% of expenditure, it additionally represents 34% of the population, with India and Southeast Asian Markets (Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines) collectively representing 42%. And, as more and more of the population of these markets move into higher income brackets, we expect, from now until 2025, that the number of luxury trips from India and Southeast Asia will increase significantly. For example, India shows some of the fastest growth in the Asia Pacific luxury travel market due to the significant growth in compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in luxury outbound trips. India's CAGR is expected to reach 12.8% - higher than any of its neighbours - and their middle class presents enormous potential for luxury travel investment over the coming decade. Of course, these travellers too will bring their unique needs and expectations along with them.

INCOMES HAVE GROWN QUICKLY IN ASIA; SO HAS THE NUMBER OF MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSEHOLDS

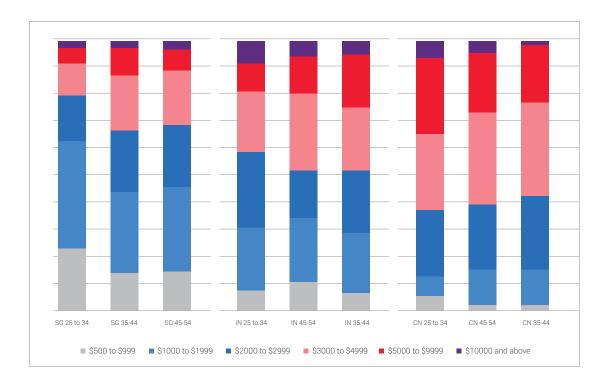


 Average Annual Growth in Households with Incomes between US\$ PPP 20-200K (at 2012 normalised prices (2005-14) Average Annual Growth in Real Disposable Personal Income (2001-16)

(Chart) Oxford Economics, Deloitte Services LP economic analysis, university press. Note: Figures for India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand; 2015 Figure for Vietnam; and 2016 figures for all countries are estimates by Oxford Economics.

A WEEK'S BUDGET IN PERSPECTIVE

Overall, the length of holiday will determine the holiday budget. Results indicate that a 1-week holiday is the most popular type of holiday, and show that Singaporeans spend less on their one week's holiday compared to others. In fact, Chinese travellers seem to be the biggest spenders. Over 90% of Chinese aged between 25-34 now spend over US\$2,000 for a week's holiday and we also clearly see our Generation Me in China outspending their older peers, in the \$5,000+ space, which is the opposite of what we see in India. However, we do see younger travellers in India, spending between \$1,000 to \$2,999, which indicates a large and emerging mid-market.





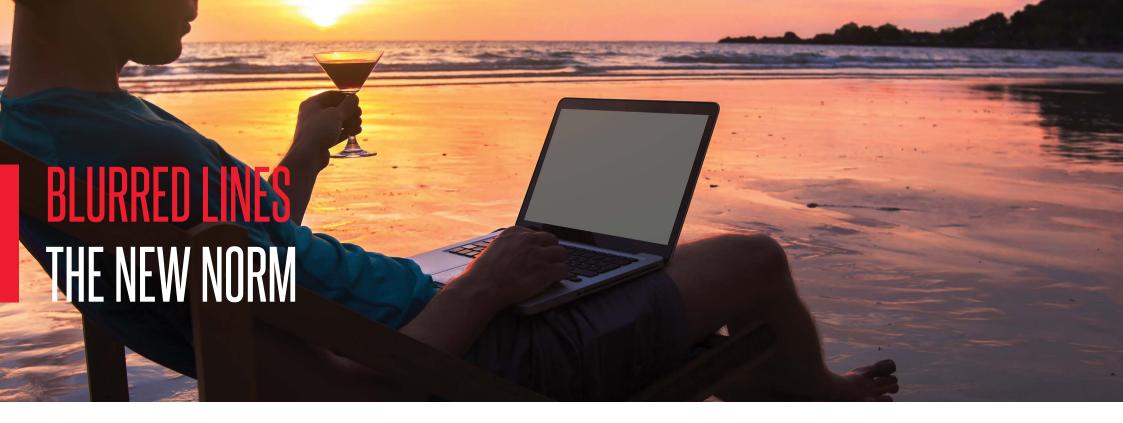
ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

As previously shown, in Southeast Asia the luxury travellers of Generation Me are comfortable with blurring the lines in their itineraries, and also stretching this to their travel types. They are no longer confined by the price, class, or room type.

Indeed, other than geographical change, the travel market is no longer a dichotomy between mass and luxury. Premiumisation has created a bridge between the desirability of the luxury world and the function and necessity of the mass market, with affordable luxury products becoming available to the latter. In correlation, the mass market in accommodation has grown

strongly in recent years, particularly through budget hotels, short-term rentals and mid-market hotels that also cater for this space. A limited, standard and unanimous service offering is attractive to many travellers, and there has also been a shift by way of anti-premiumisation, which has made more exclusive luxury services available to the mass market. [3]

However, travellers who cannot afford ultra-luxury still demand more than the limited and standard service offered by budget and mid-market hotels. Luxury is looked for in many tangible and intangible details throughout the stay, and it is these details which play a key role in making the stay immersive, absorbing, and memorable.



BLUXURY AND BLEISURE

Travellers with rising incomes and rising careers will likely have greater autonomy over making the decision to extend their travel to include leisure time after business trips and are therefore more likely to combine business travel with luxury leisure travel. We call them Bluxury Travellers.

For luxury travel brands, understanding the Bluxury mindset is key. In some cases, these travellers will have the option to fly home on a Friday night at the end of their work trip, but will instead take the opportunity to spend another 1 or 2 days in a destination, then fly back later for the same or similar price. Once they have made the decision to extend their trip, the Bluxury Traveller may come to a travel provider for advice for 24-hour guides to a city, or for last-minute tickets to a concert or sports event happening over the weekend.

These travellers have travelled to fulfil a business obligation, worked hard and are now seeking a reward and some well-deserved downtime. Their expectations transfer from needing to get their job done as easily as possible to wanting to indulge in a destination now that work is over. [2] Nonetheless, they may still be somewhat restricted until companies begin to build bleisure (those combining business with leisure travel) or bluxury practices into their corporate travel policies. It isn't happening widely yet, but according to a study from the Bridgestreet Bleisure Report, 60% of the respondents have taken leisure trips, with most of the respondents adding 2 days of holidays on to business trips; 20% of respondents have not taken bleisure trips but would like to. This indicates a rich vein of potential that the industry should most certainly mine in the future. [4]

A study shows more travellers will combine business and leisure compared with the previous year.

THE LOCAL NETWORK

However, the growth of collaborative consumption is not just about cash-strapped travellers settling for a less luxurious option. In fact, it is growing in popularity for high-end consumers. Trust in strangers, and a desire to travel like a local rather than a tourist is also on the rise. Sharing and communing with locals can be part of the personalisation and customisation of a unique travel experience.

This trend has serious implications for hoteliers, rail, short-haul airlines, tour guides and destination marketers. To stay relevant, it is key that they incorporate the best of the sharing economy in their offering and, instead of trying to lead traveller behaviour, become led by it in turn.

HOW?

TRANSFORMING BUSINESS AROUND TRAVELLERS.

The uprising of Asia's Generation Me Travellers (GMTs) offers both luxury travel brands and buyers tremendous opportunity. However, they will have to adapt quickly if they want to capture this nascent market. And now is the time to do so, to influence and help shape how Generation Me travel, whilst still discovering and solidifying their consumption preferences.

Generation Me travellers are used to and demand the convenience of digital; therefore the challenge of travel agencies and brands is to excel in making use of this convenience.

Given this, it is evidently important that agencies and brands leverage digital expertise to unlock platforms, partners and data to create truly personalised experiences for this highly demanding new generation of luxury travellers.

It is equally important to bear in mind that the global economic downturn, together with increasing trust of the internet and online payments, has led to a major shift in attitudes about access to and ownership of both information and services. The travel industry is the sector most affected by the meteoric growth of sharing and collaborative consumption. This 'sharing economy' is not new, but increasingly efficient online payments and increased trust in e-commerce have transformed it into a highly viable alternative for the mainstream. Startups like Airbnb, Carpooling and Lyft have enjoyed tremendous growth. They now operate on such a scale that they are matching mainstream hotels and transportation companies in convenience, and usually beating them on price.



INVEST IN THE GUEST

Invest in the entire guest experience ecosystem...starting with the guest. Generation Me luxury travellers are digital natives and always connected. Their favourite devices, apps and services influence them every day and affect how they value brands, products and services. Success comes from tracking how emerging technology trends impact their behaviour.



ENGAGE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Turn luxury travellers into fans. Social media is best used when it is not selling but connecting, so engage travellers with insights and tips and by being helpful with your knowledge.



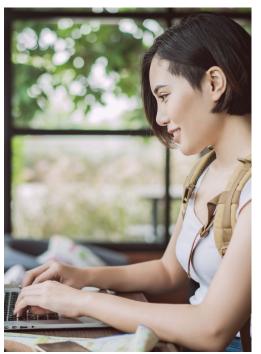
LEVERAGE AUTOMATION

Leverage automation in geolocation, room service, and transport systems to improve traveller experience, and make logistics and service delivery easier.



DO NOT SELL DEALS

It is extremely difficult to beat deals on the internet, and will be even tougher going forward. Attitudes have moved from starting from the basis of price to treating price as the cost of falling in love with an experience. Focus your platforms and messaging on promoting personalised services and experiences.



BE RESPONSIVE AND REACHABLE

Remember, alternatives are only a click away. Ensure that you are extremely responsive through voice, email, and social media at all times.



CURATE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES AND ACCESS

For Generation Me, luxury travel is all about experiences. The more unique you can make them, the more value you will add. In addition, the more you can get travellers access to special events or people, the more differentiated you are.

CONTACT US

Contact OgilvyRED Consulting to discuss how you might shape your business around Generation Me.

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