INDUSTRY WEEKLY DIGEST

YOUR WEEKLY DIGEST OF CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRY TRENDS

MAKING WAVES

Cruise Technology and Digitisation for the Silver Market

Age influences technology and travel in the cruise industry. Younger generations drive tech innovation, favouring digitalisation and connectivity. Older travellers often seek social or wellness-focused experiences. As multigenerational travel grows, inclusivity measures require prompting. Both technology integration and diverse travel offerings will need to adapt to age-related demands to capture the full market potential.

In this digest, Marco Ciraulo explores this topic further and puts out a call for potential industry collaborators to a planned research project on this topic.

Have a great weekend!

THE CRUISE SHIP SILVER MARKET AND THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THEIR BUYING BEHAVIOR

Marco Ciraulo

Recent articles by OAG.com and Dori Saltzman (Cruise Critics.co.uk, 2023) suggest that Cruise lines are making deliberate investments in cutting-edge onboard technologies to enhance the guest experience and to be more competitive. These advancements include high-speed internet connectivity, mobile apps for activity booking, virtual reality experiences, and smartphone-controlled cabin amenities. At the University of Surrey, researchers are keen to better understand on how these technological integrations intersect with age demographics to shape passenger access and satisfaction in the cruise industry.

Of particular interest is the examination of potential hurdles faced by older generations, often termed the "silver market", when engaging with technologically driven cruise products. These barriers encompass a range of factors such as unfamiliarity with digital platforms, concerns about complexity and security, limited internet access, and a preference for more traditional booking methods. The hypothesis might suggest that some older adults may feel daunted by the rapid pace of technological evolution, impacting their confidence in utilising online booking systems, onboard booking processes i.e.: for restaurants and shows, and onboard technological amenities (Emma Smith, Cruise 118.com, 2019)

In response to the imperative of accessibility and inclusivity, some cruise lines started thinking about solutions to overcome these barriers and enhance the onboard experience for older passengers i.e.: Comprehensive training programs are being rolled out, both pre-cruise and during the voyage, aimed at familiarizing older individuals with onboard technology and ensuring a seamless user experience.

Additionally, efforts are underway to foster intergenerational interaction through technology-related workshops and social events, creating a collaborative learning environment onboard. The onus is on the Cruise Line companies to engage and facilitate the accessibility and to break down barriers. Equally, emphasizing the benefits of onboard technology is crucial in fostering acceptance and enthusiasm among older passengers. Highlighting advantages such as real-time information access, connectivity with loved ones, and overall experience enhancement serves to motivate older demographics to embrace digital tools during their cruise experience (Krisztina Kolos, tandfonline.com, 2022)

The research initiative at University of Surrey is committed to exploring further opportunities for enhancing the accessibility and usability of technology within the cruise industry. Collaboration with industry stakeholders is encouraged to drive forward this research endeavour. As demographic shifts persist and technology continues to evolve, cruise lines must remain adaptable, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of travellers across all age brackets. Through ongoing research and strategic innovation, the industry can uphold its commitment to inclusivity and satisfaction for passengers of all ages.

Are you an industry leader willing to invest in this research and able to support us? Please get in touch with us. Click here.