POST-COVID-19 - NAVIGATE YOUR NEXT WITH INFOSYS PERSONALIZED SMART VIDEO (PSV) FOR THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY
The travel industry is under tremendous pressure from the pandemic even as we enter the second year of travel restrictions. However, as vaccinations kick in, domestic travel is picking up with safety precautions. Even as passengers overcome their reluctance, the industry is thinking up ways to enhance safety and bring the fun back into travel.

The domestic travel industry has been gradually opening over the last six, and there are signs that it is slowly recovering. A spike in travelers is expected post lockdown and vaccination. In the changing travel scenario, how does the airline industry inform travelers about country restrictions, new safety requirements, luggage restrictions, and stay procedures?

Traditionally, pre-travel communication on flight timing, check-in, security, safety precautions, and others was shared with the traveler through SMS, chat messages, or mail. The effectiveness of this communication was marginal, but in a post-pandemic world where the industry needs travelers to make the right decision, preparation, and ensure mandatory protocols, it needs a tool through which it can personalize messaging. The travel industry needs to craft content keeping in mind the short attention span of content consumers and deliver it in a format that most other information is consumed. Could the answer then lie in a hitherto little utilized channel like a personalized smart video? These personalized videos are rich content, communicate smartly, and are likely to result in higher information retention.

**“Personalized video is an under-utilized tool and worth testing. From our experience, generate 50%+ email open rates and 40% +CTRs (Click Through Rate). The results speak for themselves.”**

- Jon Mowat
  - Author and MD, Hurricane – a video making agency

**“A video is 50x more likely to land on the first page of search results as opposed to a text-based page.”**

- Forrester

Through the viewfinder: What are Personalized Smart Videos?

Personalized content-rich campaigns have become increasingly important in the last few years. The key aspect of this personalization lies in how quickly an enterprise can churn out content and deliver it to targeted customers. Imagine, the world of opportunities that would open if an enterprise delivered their new product messaging across millions of users, tailored and customized to each of them.

We at Infosys offer Infosys Personalized Smart Video (PSV) platform that curates and delivers endless personalized videos in no time. It is a highly scalable real-time video personalization platform that leverages dynamic text, images, charts, and call-to-action buttons to transform a generic video template into a personalized video communication. The platform provides a dynamic way to create content—interactive videos that contextualize the customer’s information. PSVs enable the travel industry to assemble lean-in personalized storytelling that is relevant to passengers and reimagine the engagement experience. PSV works by following a video template-based approach and provides a simple mechanism to embed the dynamic content by overlaying customer data on top of a template video. PSV reuses the same generic template video and eliminates the need to create one video for each person. As a result, there is a drastic cut in video storage costs and time required to generate a personalized video for each user.
Wide Angle: Possibilities Offered by Personalized Video

As countries learn to better manage the COVID-19 pandemic, personalized videos could be a good medium to communicate to wary travelers and take several forms.

Travel Inspiration
Airlines and travel service companies know what trips their customers planned and canceled due to the pandemic. As destinations prepare to welcome guests, the travel industry can send inspiring short videos informing customers about the opening up of their favorite destination, the safety procedures followed, etc. If the travel destination has not yet opened, the industry can still mail prospective travelers based on previous trips they have made. The objective for each airline is to draw in travelers rather than letting them book with competitors. Inspiring the traveler early will also revive the industry early.

Travel Advisory
Another aspect that personalized videos can help with is reducing the anxiety of travelers regarding safety and security. A short video that prepares travelers on what to do and not do at their holiday destination and the precautions to be taken can easily bring the thrill back in travel.

Travel Checklist
For those with existing travel plans, a video describing the documents they need to carry, things to do ahead of travel, or general information such as how to exchange money when they arrive, can also be shared. This will ensure the traveler has completed the prerequisites and is ready to travel.

Travel preview
A travel preview is an end-to-end preview of the journey the traveler is likely to experience. It could have information such as the route, the various inflight activities available, the food they could buy, the cost of wi-fi, and offers they could receive on in-flight purchases. Some of this information can be based on the travelers’ interests. These videos could showcase ancillary activities the person can do and turn into revenue opportunities or even opportunities to cross-sell a service. For instance, a preview of the revamped lounge at the airport or the preview of the new premium economy class. The travel preview video with the advisory and checklist videos will ensure the traveler is informed in advance and thus have a pleasant experience.

Destination preview
Another option could be a destination preview. This could be a short video focused on the safety protocols, things to do, places to visit (general as well as based on the interests of the traveler), weather conditions, a summary of the advisory, etc. at the destination. The language of the video can be personalized and services can be cross-sold by sharing information on airport transfer, verified taxi services, guided tours, tickets to shows, personal assistants, etc.

Turning the spotlight on the backend
It would be possible to create a single PSV platform that connects the CRM, reservation, schedule, weather, travel content services, marketing systems, retail systems, and others to create a plug and play platform for the PSV content and distribution with less effort. If integration with all these systems is a challenge, then the PSV platform can also receive and process text/XML-based offline content on the passenger, travel, and other information.
The Infosys Personalized Smart Video platform can create the entire range of videos mentioned above. This solution is specifically crafted to enhance the customers’ experience. The PSV platform can seamlessly integrate with industry-standard data sources such as CRM and use that user data information to embed in the template video at run time. The personalized video plays on standard browsers such as Firefox, Safari, Chrome, Internet Explorer across device formats.

In summary, airlines, hotels, and tour operators need to engage their current and potential travelers/customers with increased one-on-one communication, and personalized smart videos are an effective option.

As travelers increasingly consume visual data, videos have the potential to send the message across quickly, clearly and make traveling an engaging and memorable experience.

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Pankaj Negi is a Principal Consultant at Infosys Center for Emerging Technology Solutions. He has 15-plus years of experience and has worked across diverse consulting engagements on emerging technologies-led innovation and business transformation programs for various industries. Pankaj holds a bachelors' degree in electronics engineering and an MBA from SP Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai.

References

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