

**Booking.com** business

# How to attend to the needs of your millennial travellers

Travel Trends 2018  
Global Survey Report



# Travel Trend 2018 Global Survey. Key Findings



## Flexible

Compared with the older generations, millennials prefer being flexible and connected when planning and travelling.



## Risk

Millennials are more aware of travel risks associations with digital and technology tools.



## Info

Compared with the older generations, millennials seek different types of information regarding accommodation and destination

## Work trip enjoyment

Millennial travellers are more likely to enjoy their work trips and combine business and leisure.

*They give their enjoyment a rating of 3.4 (out of 10) compared to the 1.98 rating of the over 55 years old.*

MILLENNIAL TRAVELLERS



55+ TRAVELLERS



## Cancellation policy

7% of millennials and post-millennials want to know the cancellation policy compared to only 3% of 55+ travellers

MILLENNIAL TRAVELLERS



55+ TRAVELLERS



## Explore

In 2017, 30% of millennials extended their business trips to explore their destinations.

## Safety

Millennials worry about the safety of credit card transactions 1.5 times more than business travellers over 55+



## Important information

Free WiFi, wellness facilities, local attractions are among the top most important information for millennials

## Attractions

Destination top attractions are more important to millennials and post-millennials than business travellers over 55.



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# Report Overview

In the report, we highlight the differences in travelling attitude and behaviours between millennials and the older generations - post-millennials and over 55. The data come from Booking.com's Travel Trend 2018 Global Survey.

## Key Findings

- Millennial travellers are more likely to enjoy their work trips and combine business and leisure. They give their enjoyment a rating of 3.4 (out of 10) compared to the 1.98 rating of the over 55 years old.
- In 2017, 30% of millennials extended their business trips to explore their destinations.
- Compared with the older generations, millennials seek different types of information regarding accommodation and destination
- Free WiFi, wellness facilities, local attractions are among the top most important information for millennials
- 7% of millennials and post-millennials want to know the cancellation policy compared to only 3% of 55+ travellers
- Millennials are more aware of travel risks associations with digital and technology tools.
- Millennials worry about the safety of credit card transactions 1.5 times more than business travellers over 55+
- Compared with the older generations, millennials prefer being flexible and connected when planning and travelling.
- Destination top attractions are more important to millennials and post-millennials than business travellers over 55.

## Practical Implications in Travel Management

With a better understanding of millennials and their travel preferences, travel managers can adjust and re-design travel policy and cater to the specific needs of this growing demographic. Changes could involve more information transparency, higher flexibility in travel planning and secured online transactions.

## Study Background

Booking.com's Travel Trends 2018 survey includes 56,727 respondents across 30 markets. Participants either travelled for business in 2017 or were planning a work trip in 2018. They were the primary decision maker or involved in the process of planning.

Travellers have their preferences, wants and needs, as well as concerns. To better understand them, we carried out a global survey asking questions about the past as well as the future. We wanted to know the travel patterns in 2017 and the various plans for 2018.

Our findings revealed travellers' intentions, attitudes and wishes. We see a big difference in the way millennials travel and the way the older age groups go about their business trips. All over the world, millennial business travellers tend to want specific things regarding their travel plans and destinations. The information they need also differs from that of their older counterparts. And they have their own worries.

Travel managers need to pay particular attention to these differences as millennials are becoming the most influential group of business travellers. According to a Deloitte's survey, they will represent 75% of the global workforce by 2025.

In this report, we will share with you our findings as we hope to help you better attend to the need of your millennial travellers.

# The enjoyment of business travel

## Key Findings

- **More young business travellers reported enjoying their business trips than those over 55.**
- **In 2017, 30% of millennials extended their business trips to explore their destinations.**

## How travellers feel about their business trips

Question: How much do you enjoy traveling for business? (Scale ranges from 1 to 10)

		AUS	CN	FR	PT	US
<b>Business Travel Enjoyment</b>	Av A. Millennials	3.20	5.66	3.03	2.09	3.14
	g B. Post Millennials	2.07	6.02	2.46	2.19	2.71
	R C. 55+	0.72	3.19	0.84	1.78	0.99

## Global responses

<b>Business Travel Enjoyment</b>	A. Millennials	3.40
	B. Post Millennials	3.62
	C. 55+	1.98

When being asked to rate how much they enjoy travelling for business on a scale from 1 to 10, most millennial travellers gave a higher rating than their post-millennial and 55+ counterparts. Among the US participants, the scores are 3.14 given by millennials, 2.71 by post-millennials and 0.99 by the over 55 business travellers. A similar trend can be seen among Australian and French travellers. These statistics raise the question of WHY. Do millennials like work trip more because they love travelling or because they are more productive on the road?

In the data we collected, business travellers from China are the ones who most enjoy a work trip, with the highest average score of 6.02 (from post-millennials) and lowest score 3.19 (from travellers aged over 55). Chinese millennial business travellers reckoned that their enjoyment was as much as 5.66 out of 10.

Globally, the statistics are 3.40 (Millennials), 3.62 ( Post Millennials) and 1.98 (55+).

## How often business travellers have the chance to enjoy a destination

*Question: When you travel for business how often do you get a chance to enjoy the destination?  
(Scale ranges from 1 to 10)*

		AUS	CN	FR	PT	US
Av	A. Millennials	3.02	5.44	2.72	1.95	3.02
g	B. Post Millennials	1.90	5.70	2.16	2.03	2.59
R	C. 55+	0.66	3.02	0.73	1.73	0.96

### Global responses

A. Millenials	3.37
B. Post Millennials	3.55
C. 55+	1.92

Among the Australian travellers whom we asked, the millennial group rated their chance of enjoying a destination while on a business trip 1.5 times higher than the post-millennial group and 4.5 times higher than travellers over 55 years old.

A similar difference among the three age groups repeats in respondents from France and the United States of America.

On a global scale, older travellers aged 55 and above rated their chance to find pleasure in the location of their work trips less than 2 out of 10. The two younger groups both considered their opportunity higher than 3. Travel managers could consider the reasons behind this trend.

Question: In 2017 did you extend a business trip in order to spend time enjoying the destination?

		AUS	CN	FR	PT	US
<b>Yes I extended a business trip</b>	Av A. Millennials	25%	53%	19%	13%	21%
	g B. Post Millennials	11%	51%	11%	10%	14%
	R C. 55+	3%	25%	5%	10%	3%

### Global responses

<b>Yes I extended a business trip</b>	A. Millennials	30%
	B. Post Millennials	29%
	C. 55+	13%

Perhaps millennial chances are higher because they are flexible and more open and informed for when opportunities arise.

We also asked business travellers if they extended a trip to spend times enjoying the destination in 2017. 30% of all millennials participating in our survey said "yes." 29% of the post-millennial group also confirmed business trip extension. Within the group of travellers from the age of 55, only 13% responded with a "yes."

We see even more significant differences among three age groups in country samples for the United States of America, China and Australia. More than 50% of both Chinese millennial and post-millennial business travellers had extended their work trips in 2017. The numbers were 53% and 51% respectively, in comparison with 25% of the oldest age group. Only 3% of both Australian and American travellers over 55 years confirmed that they extended a business trip last year. For millennials and post-millennials in both countries, the percentages are above 20% and 10%.

## Takeaways

From the feeling to perceived opportunities to the actual action, millennials showed their strong tendency to enjoy business trips and make the most out of them.



Our findings resonate with the rise of the Bleisure trend among younger business travellers. The question is how we, as travel managers, should translate the data into concrete strategies so that we are not the only ones who go against the current.

### **Here are some tips to consider:**

- Pay attention to the leisure aspects of business travel  
It might be the time to include some flexibility in your travel policy like allowing a colleague to take his family or a partner. You should also provide information and advice on what to see at the destination as a tourist. You can for example use the [Booking.com Travel Guides](#) to discover things to do, the best time to visit, and reviews from travellers.
- Encourage, or at least do not restrict, combining business with leisure in your travel policy  
If a colleague wants to take a day off at the end or the beginning of a business trip, make it easy for him or her to do so.

On how to turn Bleisure into Business as Usual, check out our ebook [Who Runs the New Business Travel World](#).

# Information to feed to millennials

## Key Findings

- **Millennials care about information necessary for an enjoyable and seamless business trip like free Wifi and wellness facilities.**
- **Destination top attractions are more important to millennials and post-millennials than business travellers over 55.**

Millennials are information hungry. Our survey shows that they tend to want to know more about the different aspects of their trips, though not all information is equally important to them.

*Question: Other than price and location what information would you like to know? (Business travel)*

			AUS	CN	FR	PT	US
<b>Bed size information</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	5%	9%	6%	2%	7%
		B. Post Millennials	7%	6%	5%	1%	5%
		C. 55+	2%	4%	2%	1%	4%
<b>Cancellation policy</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	10%	10%	11%	9%	8%
		B. Post Millennials	8%	9%	12%	11%	12%
		C. 55+	4%	4%	6%	11%	6%
<b>Facilities (e.g. swimming pool fitness room spa food services)</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	15%	25%	13%	9%	13%
		B. Post Millennials	11%	24%	11%	11%	15%
		C. 55+	4%	8%	4%	8%	5%
<b>Floor plans</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	6%	5%	6%	1%	4%
		B. Post Millennials	3%	6%	6%	1%	3%
		C. 55+	1%	3%	3%	1%	1%
<b>Free WiFi</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	27%	33%	19%	22%	26%
		B. Post Millennials	20%	32%	18%	22%	24%
		C. 55+	9%	20%	8%	16%	13%
<b>Information about the destination including sites and attractions</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	7%	16%	7%	6%	7%
		B. Post Millennials	5%	15%	6%	6%	9%
		C. 55+	2%	6%	3%	5%	3%
<b>Local courses offered (e.g. opportunities to learn a new skill such as painting or cooking)</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	5%	7%	2%	2%	3%
		B. Post Millennials	1%	6%	1%	1%	1%
		C. 55+	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%
<b>Opinions of family and friends</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	6%	7%	7%	3%	3%

## Global responses

<b>Bed size information</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	6%
		B. Post Millennials	5%
		C. 55+	3%
<b>Cancellation policy</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	7%
		B. Post Millennials	7%
		C. 55+	3%
<b>Facilities (e.g. swimming pool fitness room spa food services)</b>	<b>Important</b>	A. Millennials	15%
		B. Post Millennials	16%
		C. 55+	10%

# Accommodation

## Free WiFi

*Who wants free WiFi while travelling?*

Almost everyone, it seems.

High percentages of travellers, from different age groups and countries, indicated that it is crucial for them to know about the availability of free WiFi. So make sure your travellers can see this information while booking an accommodation.

The data from our survey shows that the younger a business traveller is, the more likely that they appreciate knowing that they can be connected to the world wide web for free.

In the samples from four countries: Australia, China, France, and the United States of America, we see the same pattern. The youngest demographic group has the highest percentage of travellers who think information about WiFi is necessary. From Australia, for example, 27% of millennial respondents picked Free WiFi besides price and location as an essential indicator. The numbers for the post-millennial and the 55+ groups are 20% and 9% respectively.

## Facilities

Findings in this area match those regarding the feeling of enjoyment in business travel. Higher percentages of millennials and post-millennials, who find business trips much more pleasurable than those of older travellers, unsurprisingly consider wellness facilities essential.

Among all Chinese business travellers who participated in our survey, 25% of the millennial group said that they would like to know about facilities like swimming pool, fitness centre, spa and food services at the location. 24% of the next age group indicated the same thing, and only 8% of travellers over 55 picked this option.

We also see the similar pattern play out among business travellers from Australia and France. In Portugal and the US, the oldest age group is similarly least interested in such facilities.

## Cancellation policy

The younger business travellers are, the more of them want to know how flexible the cancellation policy is, our survey revealed. It could be that millennials are more cost-conscious or like to stay flexible and open for better options like last-minute deals.

In responses that we collected globally, 7% of both millennials and post-millennials want to know this policy while there is only 3% of over-55 business travellers consider cancellation options important. In the Australia sample, we see 10%, 8% and 4% of three age groups, from the youngest to the oldest, indicating that cancellation policy is essential information when travelling for business.

We also have data about such information as floor plan and bed sizes, but the percentages are less than 10% in age groups globally. Though hotels traditionally emphasise the luxury of a king-size bed, the size of the bed doesn't seem to be significant to business travellers. Globally, only 6%, 5%, and 3% of millennial, post-millennial and 55+ business travellers expressed their wishes to know the size of the bed.

# Destination information

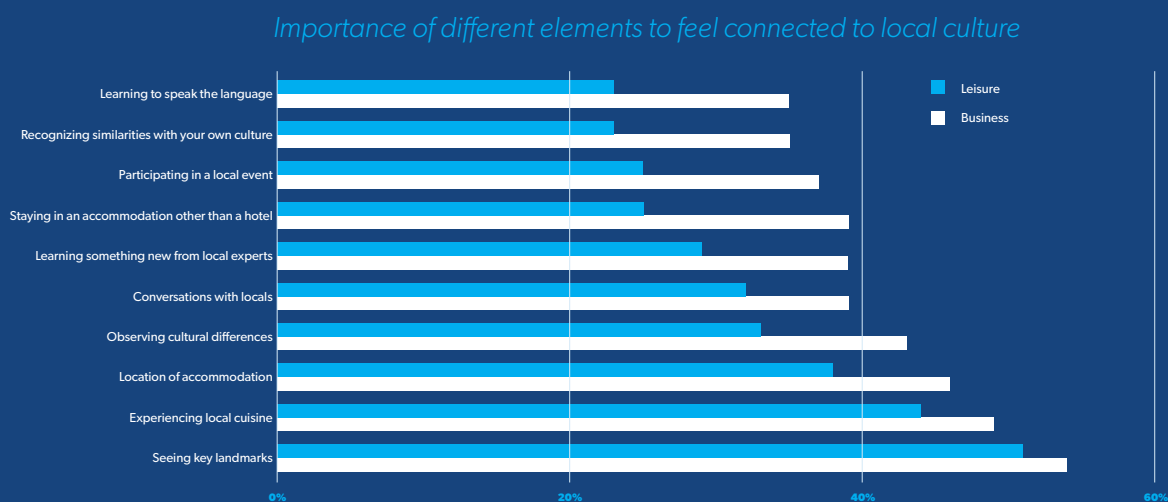
We also asked business travellers about their preferences when it comes to knowing destination information like top attractions or available local courses.

In our samples from US, Australia, Portugal and France, the percentages of millennials and post millennials who indicated that such information is relevant to them and their business trips, are significantly those of the 55+ travellers.

In our data, Chinese millennial business travellers have the highest percentage of the interested parties. 16% and 15% of millennials and post-millennials respectively responded that they would like to know about site attractions at the location of their business trips. That number is one 5% regarding the older Chinese businessmen and businesswomen.

This finding echoed another survey we did in 2017 when business travellers showed a higher interest in the local culture.

## Survey from 2017



## Takeaways

From the data we collected and analysed, it is evident that millennials find specific information more critical than their older counterparts. As a travel manager, here is something you can do to attend to that need of your millennial travellers:

- Choose an appropriate user-friendly booking system or a booking site that offers similar values  
You want to make sure that there are filtering options based on the essential information. Because the availability of the right facilities, for example, is a priority for millennials, your system should be able to show them the list of accommodation with such facilities.

- Go the extra mile with the information you provide  
Design a destination package or get your travel service partners to help you. By giving millennials extra information, you empower them to make informed decisions and enjoy their business trips even more. An example of useful information would be roaming policy for trips around Europe.

Have a system where employees would be able to see each other favourite places to stay and things to do there. Google Maps is a free tool that you can encourage your travellers to use so that they can share their tips with their like-minded colleagues.

# Travel concerns

## Key Findings

- **Millennials are more conscious of travel risks associated with online planning.**
- **Compared with older generations of business travellers, millennials are more concerned about security and privacy.**

Travel has its risks. In the current climate worldwide, international business travel faces all sorts of threats from natural disasters to political unrests as well as other security and safety matters on the road and in the destination. As far as the duty of care is concerned, travel managers need to prepare their travellers for all possible risks. However, it is fascinating and helpful to know which scenarios affect the state of mind of your travellers the most.

We asked business travellers to rate some scenarios out of 5 to show how worried each of those situations makes them. 5 signifies the most-worried-about problems.

In the answers we received, we notice the differences between three age groups: Millennials, Post Millennials and 55+ regarding various scenarios. Let's have a look at a few of them.

*Question: How worried do each of these scenarios make you? (Business travel) (Scale ranges 1 to 5)*

		AUS	CN	FR	PT	US
<b>Accommodation and transportation providers might give better deals or more perks to travelers who contact t..</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.43	2.31	1.32	1.05	1.28
	g B. Post Millennials	0.94	2.34	1.15	1.07	1.21
	R C. 55+	0.37	1.14	0.40	0.82	0.47
<b>Because of the amount of choice in accommodation online i might not pick the right place or get the best deal</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.44	2.41	1.43	1.11	1.36
	g B. Post Millennials	0.95	2.39	1.17	1.15	1.23
	R C. 55+	0.40	1.18	0.43	0.87	0.48
<b>Credit card transactions might not be secure</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.59	2.48	1.49	1.26	1.43
	g B. Post Millennials	1.01	2.40	1.24	1.25	1.29
	R C. 55+	0.45	1.22	0.49	0.95	0.50
<b>If things do not go according to plan ther might not be anyone to hold accountable</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.51	2.67	1.45	1.22	1.33
	g B. Post Millennials	1.00	2.58	1.27	1.24	1.21
	R C. 55+	0.40	1.33	0.47	1.01	0.50
<b>My personal details could be stolen</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.59	2.72	1.55	1.26	1.48
	g B. Post Millennials	1.07	2.60	1.25	1.27	1.30
	R C. 55+	0.45	1.38	0.47	0.98	0.54
<b>Online reviews of accommodations might not be real and might lead to unrealistic expectations</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.51	2.59	1.45	1.13	1.37
	g B. Post Millennials	0.98	2.59	1.23	1.17	1.27
	R C. 55+	0.41	1.31	0.46	0.89	0.50
<b>The online photos of the accommodations may be misleading</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.56	2.61	1.51	1.20	1.41
	g B. Post Millennials	1.01	2.55	1.29	1.19	1.30
	R C. 55+	0.42	1.28	0.47	0.93	0.51
<b>When I arrive the accommodation or</b>	Av A. Millennials	1.56	2.55	1.55	1.28	1.45

<b>Accommodation and transportation providers might give better deals or more perks to travelers who contact t..</b>	A. Millennials	1.56
	B. Post Millennials	1.67
	C. 55+	0.99
<b>Because of the amount of choice in accommodation online i might not pick the right place or get the best deal</b>	A. Millennials	1.63
	B. Post Millennials	1.72
	C. 55+	1.02
<b>Credit card transactions might not be secure</b>	A. Millennials	1.72
	B. Post Millennials	1.82
	C. 55+	1.12

## Miss out on the best deals

It is a concern of business travellers that they do not get the best deals on accommodation and transportation as well as other perks because they book through a corporate system. Many believe that other travellers who directly contact the service providers, like a hotel or a carrier, would get a lower price or more add-ons.

Global responses to our survey indicate that millennials and post-millennials worry about this scenario more than the older business travellers. The most worried group is the post-millennials from China. Among Australian business travellers, millennial participants rated their chance of missing out on the best deals almost four times more worrying than their country's over-55 participants did.

The statistics seem to reflect the obsession with freedom of choice among millennials. You can [read more about millennial travellers](#) in one of the ebooks in our collection.

## Overwhelmed by online choices

Metasearch engines offer business travellers a lot more choices, including accommodation options. A travellers' concern is that they would be too overwhelmed to pick the right place or opt for the best deal.

Millennials from Australia, China, France and the United States of America are all more worried about this scenario than the post-millennial and the over 55 years old. Again, Chinese travellers worry the most. While on average, millennials in the survey rated this problem 1.63 out of 5, Chinese millennials gave it an average rating of 2.41.



Information overload is a problem shared by many, especially the digital natives, which are also millennials. It makes making decisions more challenging and leads to decision makers taking the shortcuts that might not be the best for them. This is the one area that travel managers can step in and support their travellers by guiding them to the right direction with the right tools.

## **Misleading online reviews and photos**

Here are more problems of the digital age: misleading online reviews and photos.

We see similar stories in these areas. Millennials concern themselves quite a bit with these scenarios while post-millennials and especially travellers over 55 do it much less.

Let's look at our country sample of France as an example. Millennials gave an average rating of 1.45 out of 5 to indicate how worried they are that online reviews of accommodations might not be real and might lead to unrealistic expectations. Regarding similarly misleading online photos, they rated their concern 1.51 out of 5. Those numbers for post-millennials are smaller, 1.23 and 1.29 respectively. Business travellers over the age of 55+ are even less concerned about these two scenarios.

This finding reminds us of the importance of real photos and approved reviews provided by verified travellers. Booking.com is one of the platforms that is trusted by users thanks to upholding this practice.

## **Insecure credit card transactions**

Our data from five countries: The United States of America, Portugal, France, China and Australia show that insecure credit card transaction is most likely a cause for alarm for millennials. Within these five countries, as the age increases, the worry about this scenario decreases. The differences in the average ratings are smallest among the three groups from Portugal, only 0.3 and 0.01. They are more significant in countries like Australia and China.

On average, millennial business travellers from China associated their worries about credit card transaction not being secured to a 2.48 rating on the scale of 5. The global average is 1.72.

## **Data theft**

Here is another security concern: business travellers worry that their personal details could be stolen at one point or another during a work trip. While this is a legitimate concern due to the worrying trend of data breaches, not all age groups take the problem to a similar level of seriousness.

Millennials from country samples, including Australia, France and the United States of America, the age group that worry the most about this scenario. It could be that they are also the most technology-savvy travellers who have many of their personal data stored in the cloud.

## **An accountable person when problems arise**

Things can go awry when one travels for work, especially abroad. Nobody wants that a travel plan doesn't pan out, but it happens. So, who is to blame?

Being on the road, travellers might not know which person they should hold accountable when things do not go according to plan. It concerns them. And our data shows that the younger a traveller is, the more likely this scenario worries him or her.

Millennials and post-millennials rated, on average, higher than over-55 travellers regarding how worried the lack of accountability makes them. The order goes millennials - first, post-millennials - second and over 55 - third in country samples of Australia, France, China and the United States of America. On average, Chinese millennials worry the most and over-55 Australian travellers worry the least about this scenario.

## **Takeaways**

Our survey indicates that despite being the youngest, millennials are not the most worry-free business travellers. They have concerns about

their decisions, whether or not they gather the right information to make the best decisions for their business trips. They also take security and privacy seriously, slightly more so than the older generations. The reasons for this could be that millennials tend to spend a lot more time online and might have more experience with technology risks. Knowing what worries your millennial travellers and at what extent, you have the tool to [design your travel policy better](#) and meet their needs.

## Here are some tips for you:

- Hold feedback sessions and focus groups: your chance to discuss what worries your millennials the most when travelling for work. You can also make use of our pre-made feedback forms that are part of [this toolkit](#).
- Create an environment of information transparency to empower millennials to make informed decisions
- Have a simple and visual travel policy. [Our visual policy builder](#) is a useful tool to create an engaging and transparent policy for your travellers.
- Provide checklists of potential security and privacy risks and how to avoid them
- Upgrade security protection for your travellers from encrypted options to backup solutions
- Have a 24/7 support line of communication for when problems happen to your travellers on the road

## Conclusion

You can see now that millennials have different wants and needs compared to older generations of business travellers. By understanding the differences among age groups, you will be able to accommodate your travellers better with a well-thought-out and highly-customised travel policy.

## About Booking.com Business

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### Cost-effective

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