

# How Digital Has Transformed the Way People Travel

Digital travel platforms have become an important source for travelers worldwide

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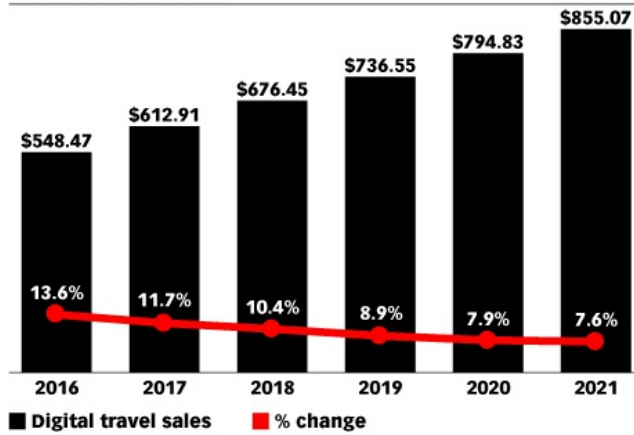
**eMarketer Editors**

Digital has transformed the way consumers across the globe travel. Today, most use digital channels during at least part of their travel path to purchase, whether for researching, planning or booking a trip.

Travelers worldwide use online travel agencies (OTAs) such as Booking.com and Expedia throughout every stage of the travel path to purchase. However, direct booking platforms are slowly gaining ground for travel purchases, particularly in Europe and North America.

### Digital Travel Sales Worldwide, 2016-2021

billions and % change



Note: includes leisure and unmanaged business travel sales booked via any device, regardless of the method of payment or fulfillment  
Source: eMarketer, July 2017

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In terms of reach, TripAdvisor is the leading digital travel platform in most countries covered by eMarketer. Though predominantly a travel review site, TripAdvisor also offers metasearch services, making it an important tool for trip research and planning.

Meanwhile, interest in the sharing economy for accommodation services like Airbnb is growing, though most travelers worldwide have yet to use them. Sharing transportation services like Uber and other ride-hailing apps have made greater headway, partly due to their lower barrier to entry.

These insights are drawn from eMarketer's latest report, "Global Digital Travel Platforms 2017: A Country-by-Country Review of the Top Travel Sites." The report provides a country-to-country overview of the top digital travel platforms, digital and mobile travel buyer penetration rates and the use of sharing economy services for travel in 22 countries. eMarketer PRO subscribers can [read the full report here](#). Nonsubscribers can [learn more here](#).