

Smart Technology In The Cities

New technologies like big data, sensors, mobile, smart grids are changing the way cities operate.

Cities want to help you find parking spaces, avoid traffic jams, get instant help when emergencies happen.

Some cities are really leading the charge with super cool projects that show just how wonderful city life can be.

Here are seven really smart projects that certainly have a great impact to improve the tourism of these cities.

San Francisco offers free EV charging stations.

San Francisco provides its citizens with lots of smart projects. One of the best is a bunch of city-owned electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.



There are three "showcase" chargers in front of City Hall; 26 stations in 12 city-owned, public parking facilities; and 23 more at the airport and on Treasure Island.

Los Angeles is making parking easier, smarter.

No matter what city you live in, parking is always a huge problem. A few cities have been testing "smart parking."

These use sensors embedded into parking spaces that talk to mobile apps. These help people find an open parking spot.

For instance, a one-year project in Los Angeles called LA Express Park launched last May. Using wireless sensors, it tracks down open parking and lets people pay the meter from their smartphones.

New York smart cabs are paid by smartphone.

New York wants to turn cabs into smart cabs.

The city's Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) is now accepting proposals from software developers. It wants those apps to let passengers pay for their cab



rides with their smartphones.

The city also wants apps that use a points system that rewards frequent riders and ridesharers.

Amsterdam offers smart shopping on a smart street.

Amsterdam is known for its many smart city projects. One of them is called Climate Street where it has turned one of its busiest, most popular streets into a model of green shopping.

The city outfitted the street with sustainable street lighting, more tram stops, and solar-powered



trash compactors, garbage cans. Shopkeepers do their part, too. They use low-energy lighting, recycle and use smart plugs. These help shops throttle down on electricity use.

(Source: Business Insider, March 20, 2013)

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SME Opportunities in Emerging Markets

How can SMEs in the emerging markets make the most of growth opportunities? Senior managers of SMEs in Brazil, Russia, India, China and Mexico share their insights.

Can small and mid-size enterprises (SMEs) in emerging markets keep growing despite economic uncertainty? To find out, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) surveyed over 500 senior managers from SMEs in Brazil, Russia, India, China and Mexico.

Unwavering confidence persists.

Despite widespread expectations that economic conditions will worsen, managers at SMEs in emerging markets appear confident about their firm's prospects over the next 12 months. Sixty percent of respondents believe the overall business environment has become much more difficult over the past three years. Yet 78% of those same managers expect their turnover to increase during the next year. Additionally, 72% expect to boost their company's workforce in the next 12 months.

Top priorities: growth, efficiency, technology.

SME executives shared the following business priorities for the next year:

- Growing sales and earnings (55%)
- Greater efficiency (55%)
- Using technology more effectively (50%)

Senior Solution is an example of the rapid growth experienced by SMEs in emerging economies. When this Sao Paulo based specialist software developer has its initial public offering (IPO) in 2013 on Brazil's Bovespa Mais market for high-growth companies, CEO Bernardo Gomes expects to invest

the proceeds into acquisitions for more growth. In the past six years, the firm's revenues have increased an average 28% annually—far outpacing its own sector, as well as the Brazilian economy. If the IPO is a success, Gomes predicts even higher growth rates for his company.

Technology powers efficiencies and growth.

Sixty-four percent of survey respondents are automating more tasks and functions now than three years ago. A senior manager at a Russian healthcare, phar-

maeuticals and biotechnology firm describes the firm's biggest single opportunity in the coming 12 months as "improving performance with new, innovative technology that helps cost reduction." Another example came from Okto-go.ru, an online travel agent founded in Russia in 2010. While the firm's business model is web-based, it also now offers access through mobile platforms for both customers and suppliers. "Mobile is quite big in Russia and the penetration of smart phones is very high," explains CEO, Marina Kolesnik. "The company is also investing in social media to build its brand, strengthen client loyalty, and grow sales." Executives agree that greater efficiencies are a must in the face of increased wage costs and relatively high commodities prices. "We have to work harder to improve efficiencies in our operations, to mitigate the increase in costs," says Arvind Singhania, the chairman of Ester Industries, India's leading producer of polyester films and engineering plastic compounds. "We are looking at manufacturing processes to see where we can reduce our costs and improve efficiencies to boost productivity, quality, and turnaround times."

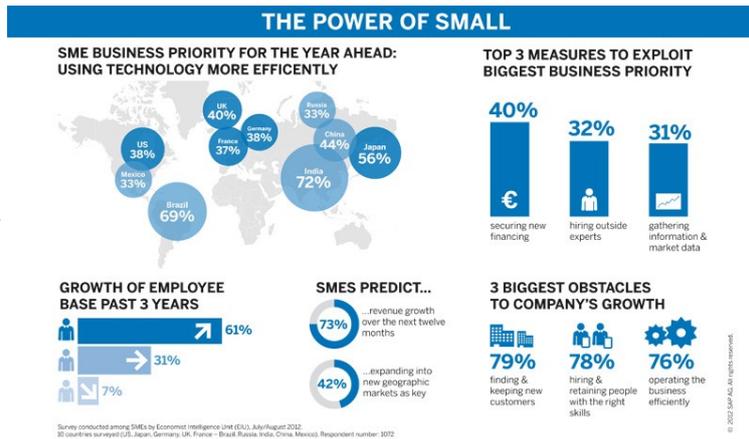
The world economy depends on SMEs.

Few would argue that small businesses aren't significant drivers of growth, job creation, competition, and innovation. In emerging economies, SMEs account for 45% of total employment, according to the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion. Unfortunately, SMEs in emerging

markets have a higher failure rate than those in developed economies according to The Global Business Failures Report published by Dun & Bradstreet.

In the developed economies tracked by the report, its proprietary Insolvency Index fell from 100 in Q2 2010 to 91.1 by Q4 2011, marking a sharp drop in the number of business failures. In emerging markets the index rose to 101.3—meaning more businesses are failing in emerging than in developed markets. SMEs need more than their unwavering confidence to success. Governments and large enterprise must foster a more supportive climate that helps SMEs thrive for the good of the entire economy.

Source: <http://blogs.sap.com/innovation/innovation/sme-opportunities-in-emerging-markets-eiu-study-020816> ; November 2012



How Will Tablet Growth Impact Tourism in the Next Five Years?

The fact that tablet ownership will grow is not really big news. However, latest research in the industry reveals that in the next five years tablet ownership in Western Europe is predicted to quadruple. This really is an enormous growth and without a doubt will impact the way in which organizations and Tourist Boards will be planning their future digital marketing strategy.



The Think Tank Team closely monitors latest trends and as mobile is one of the key trends of 2013 it is important to keep track of changes and developments that will have an impact on destinations and the wider tourism industry. Tablets as one part of mobile has been neglected by some destinations that solely focus on Smartphone apps. The fact that tablets are growing so strongly implies that destinations need to change their focus from mobile apps and think about tablet solutions.

At the moment, one in seven Europeans own a tablet in order to access content online, search, browse and use it for all kinds of enter-

tainment purposes. Predominantly the younger generations own tablets at the moment – but the predicted growth indicates that more and more Europeans of all age groups will own a tablet in the future

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR TOURISM?

Tablets can be considered as highly social devices and are used in a variety of ways. Still, Tourist Boards or tourism organisations are rarely offering mobile applications to consumers in order to inform, facilitate and engage with travellers.

However, with the immense growth in tablet ownership in mind, destinations and tourism organisations really need to consider the importance of adapting content and applications to tablets.

USAGE OF TABLETS AS BASIS

The next crucial step for tourism destinations is to think about the way in which users actually use tablets. Finding out the main purpose of use is the basis for planning potential tablet apps, as travellers love to use tablets at home and they very often share them with other household mem-

bers.

If travellers are using it mainly to inform themselves then the content needs to be adapted to that – if it is all about having fun and inspiring people then the app should reflect that and be image rich while engaging people to share it with friends.

FITTING TABLETS INTO STRATEGY

One very important thing to remember in tourism is that destinations should not follow an approach where they try and aggregate a number of mobile and tablet apps just for the sake of having apps for potential travellers. Everything that destinations do should follow an overall digital strategy. How mobile and tablet apps fit into this strategy should be decided on the basis of achieving the general goals of the destination. This could be to encourage more travellers to engage with the destination, increase visitor numbers or increase traffic to the website. For mobile and tablet it is crucial to ensure that the approach taken fits into the overall strategy and fits a purpose.

The growth in tablet, which should always be in line with the destination's overall strategy in order to sophisticate the way in which technologies such as apps are used.

(Source: <http://blogs.sap.com/innovation/>)

Spanish “Trending Toppic”

Facebook remains the social network for excellence in Spain. In fact, 96 percent of Spanish Internet users have a profile on this platform, according to data from the Fourth Annual Study Social Networks, which was done by Spain Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB). Followers Youtube, with 64% of users, and Twitter, with 46%.

The social network created by Mark Zuckerberg is being visited more frequently: 49% of users connecting

to your Facebook profile several times a day, followed by Twitter, with 26% of users enter more than once, reveals the study.

From IAB Spain indicate that the use of social networks in Spain increased in 2012 by 5 percent even suggest that these platforms are reaching a point of maturity. The greatest growth was experienced last year LinkedIn with 50% going from 12 to 18% of users, Google+ with an increase of 45% (from 20 to 29% of

users) and Twitter, which experienced an increase of 35% (increased from 34 to 46%). Otherwise, MySpace was a setback, from 11 to 9% of users.

(Source: www.preferente.com/)
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Generation Y and New Technologies: Tourism 2.0

Generation Y is an especially interesting target for the tourism industry. These digital natives (15-30 years old) are the first to adopt new technologies, and they automatically turn to social media and Web 2.0 services to get information, plan their trips, and discuss their experiences.



Always connected, Gen Y'ers interact and share their stories with a variety of online communities. They are extremely mobile and want constant access to their interests and online worlds.

Since Gen Y has a gre-

at capacity to influence and relay information, tourism professionals have to improve their analysis of this segment's behavior in order to better understand its needs and boost their companies' visibility.

Opinion leaders championing 2.0 services and m-tourism

This hyper-connected generation has used social tools and new technologies to transform tourism into a multidimensional experience. Consumers can now:

- Plan trips better and find the best deals: 2.0 tourists are plugged in to traveler communities, so they can share tips and deals to better plan trips. They have access to transparent information for finding the best offers via price comparison services.

• Get i n f o r m a -

tion anytime, anywhere: new smartphone features now enable travelers to use their mobile devices as modems in order to optimize their experience by surfing on their PCs. Using mobile Web networks, tourists can not only book tickets, but also get real-time information about their travel environment, translating into a free and easy travel experience.

- Share their experiences: Gen Y travelers share stories and details from their trips using social media and blogs.

• Social networks: understanding and helping tourists throughout their trips

Social networks are new distribution channels that offer travel companies a wealth of possibilities:

- Improved knowledge of consumers and trends
- The ability to anticipate performance through detailed feedback and models correlating different social media in order to measure their impact
- Potential revenue through new travel-related products sold on social networks
- Control of online brand image
- Direct contact with consumers to better understand their needs

It can be challenging, however, to understand how to use these tools effectively.

Article by: Jeromme Bassaler. (Source: <http://www.orange-business.com/>) October 2012.

Contact: List of partners



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