

# Chapter 7

## The Evolution of Travel Booking: From Traditional Methods to Blockchain Solutions

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter examines the evolution of travel booking, highlighting key developments from traditional methods to blockchain solutions. Initially reliant on brick-and-mortar travel agencies and phone reservations, the industry was transformed by the internet and Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), which offered increased convenience and real-time updates through mobile technology. Social media and metasearch engines further influenced booking behaviour, while AI and machine learning enabled personalized recommendations and predictive analytics. The rise of the sharing economy introduced peer-to-peer platforms like Airbnb and Uber. Recently, blockchain technology has promised enhanced transparency and security. Despite these advancements, challenges such as security concerns and user adoption persist. Future trends, including augmented reality (AR), voice-activated bookings, and sustainable travel solutions, are poised to shape the industry's future.*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Travel booking has undergone a remarkable transformation from its early days of manual reservations and in-person consultations to the sophisticated, digital-driven processes we see today. Initially, travellers relied heavily on traditional methods such as visiting brick-and-mortar travel agencies, making phone reservations, and using printed travel guides. The introduction of the internet marked a pivotal change, leading to the rise of Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) and mobile applications, which provided unprecedented convenience and access to a plethora of travel options. Social media platforms, metasearch engines, and the sharing economy further revolutionized the industry, making travel booking more personalized and accessible. Recently, blockchain technology has emerged as a promising solution for enhancing transparency, security, and efficiency in travel bookings. (Thees, Erschbamer, & Pechlaner, 2020) Technological advancements have been crucial in shaping the modern travel booking landscape. The internet's arrival made it possible to book flights, accommodations, and other travel services online, democratizing access to travel information and deals. Mobile technology and travel apps have enabled travellers to book and manage their trips on the go, offering real-time updates and seamless experiences. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) have introduced personalized recommendations, predictive analytics, and virtual assistants, improving user experience and operational efficiency. The sharing economy, powered by peer-to-peer platforms like Airbnb and Uber, has expanded travel options and fostered a more connected global community. Blockchain technology, with its potential to enhance security and transparency, represents the latest frontier in travel booking innovations. These technological advancements not only streamline the booking process but also provide travellers with more choices, greater convenience, and improved security, ultimately transforming how we explore the world. (Balasubramanian, Sethi, Ajayan, & Paris, 2022)

## 2. TRADITIONAL TRAVEL BOOKING METHODS

### 2.1 Historical Perspective on Travel

Travel, as we know it today, has deep historical roots. Initially, travel was primarily for trade, exploration, and pilgrimage. Over time, it evolved into a leisure activity. The early 20th century saw the rise of organized travel, with railways and steamships making distant destinations more accessible. Travel during this period was often a luxury reserved for the affluent, facilitated through personal connections and bespoke arrangements. (Elhaj, 2012)

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