

How has the development of technology affected global tourism?

By Ryan Moden

The development of technology is one of the most important factors that have affected global tourism in the last 50 years. As technology has developed, the opportunities for tourism around the world have expanded dramatically.

The first, and probably the most important, factor is technological improvements to transport. The development of air travel has allowed for holidays to parts of the world that otherwise would have required considerable time and wealth to complete by boat, and so this has dramatically increased global tourism. This then led to further developments in planes so that more passengers could be transported faster and more cheaply by jumbo jets. Cheaper flights meant that anybody could now afford to travel to virtually anywhere in the world. This caused global tourism to become much wider spread, rather than travelling to nearby areas people could travel to other countries and other continents instead. As flights became faster this improved opportunities for travel to more and more exotic places, and so areas with a small population were dramatically affected; before tourism would be mainly people from the surrounding area but with technology allowing people to visit from anywhere in the world this resulted in mass tourism to countries, and so provides an important part of their economy. Another technological advancement that has influenced tourism is things like the Channel Tunnel. This allows for fast, easy travel between England and France and so more people will be encouraged to go from one country to the other. This will result in increased tourism. Within Britain the development of cars has led to increased tourism. People now do not even need to arrange transport to a place, they need only arrange accommodation and they can travel there themselves. This has greatly improved tourism within Britain, and within other countries. It also is a much more important factor in Europe as it is possible to travel across countries, which in Britain is possible but there are far fewer countries to travel to.

Another form of technology which has influenced tourism is media and communication. TV has provided a format not only for travel and holiday advertisement but also for programmes devoted entirely to advertising a foreign country. A more subtle form of TV advertisement is through documentaries. As people see foreign countries portrayed in the favourable light of television they can feel inspired to visit that country. With the development of computers and the internet this has provided countless other ways of increasing tourism. Not only is it now far easier for people to research and book holidays through dedicated web sites for this purpose but also it is far easier for them to be advertised to. This has resulted in a large increase in global tourism. The internet also allows for people to book tickets online and to check in for flights. This means that queues in airports can be reduced. This may seem like a small improvement but by making it easier and more comfortable for people to go on long distance holidays people will be more willing to travel by plane and so tourism will increase.

Also, as it is easier for people to travel people are exposed to more places. This results in people wanting to either live or work in another country. This has been greatly increased by the European Union, and means that the families of these people are likely to go and visit them, bringing tourism to the area.