



# LISTEN TO THE KIDS – APPARENTLY KANYE WAS RIGHT ABOUT BUSINESS TRAVEL AS WELL

News / Business aviation



We all know the stereotype of a business traveller – a white-collar middle-aged manager with a small black briefcase rushing the streets of a megalopolis whilst negotiating the next make or break deal on his cell phone. However, this perception is actually changing and it's changing extremely fast. The tech-savvy, Kanye-following millennials, often collectively referred to as the generation Y, are taking this world by storm and, unsurprisingly, every business from a catering establishment to a private jet company is more than willing to shape their services to match the needs of what we earlier referred to as 'just kids'.

If you are one of the many thousands of business travellers who visited the unofficial European capital Brussels over the past years, you are in for a big surprise. One of the most renowned hotels in the city – the Radisson Blu EU – is undergoing a complete makeover. The anticipated result – an establishment which looks 'cool' and feels 'edgy'. The latter adjective perfectly describes the business traveller of tomorrow and, in fact, the typical one fits the key characteristics already today.

Nowadays business travellers aged 15-34 account for more than a third (38%) of all people who travel for business on a regular basis and this percentage will definitely increase in the future, says Boston Consulting Group. According to Hartford Business, gen Y will comprise 75% of the global workforce by 2025 and by 2020 they will constitute more than a half of all business travellers.

“Spontaneity, companionship and smartphones – these are probably the best 3 words to describe this swiftly growing segment. Experts note that they are far more likely to travel with someone and book a trip or change their travel plans at the last minute. These habits are perfectly in line with what business aviation can offer to the new gen of travellers,” says Vitalij Kapitonov, the CEO of KlasJet. “While commercial airlines, enormous hotel chains and other integral parts of the travel industry are now faced with the pressing need for costly facelifts, all that most private jet companies must do is shift the attention towards a yet another age group and become even more digital. For instance, one of the most relevant concerns at the moment is the ability to embrace and make the most of new digital solutions whilst maintaining the highest quality of services with a personal touch every single time.”

According to the executive, failure to satisfy the digital cravings of this generation is not an option. As more than 75 % of the millennials use digital tools to plan and book their travels, appearing on the screen of a gen Y manager is now one of the top priorities of all operators. Moreover, this generation shares their travel photos on social media twice as much and almost 60% of them update their social networks whilst travelling. In the simplest of terms, what it truly means for operators is that (a) finding your business should be really easy and (b) scrolling on Facebook must be convenient whilst sitting aboard a business jet.

In addition to the digital side of the story, this generation is way more focused on the quality of services which cannot be anything but the best, every single time. According to a recent survey published by Expedia, an overwhelming 80% of the gen Y representatives consider online reviews as important when planning a trip.

“It is of the essence when you keep in mind that they are the most common travellers, averaging around five business trips a year, compared to just two made by those aged 35 years and up. Client reviews as well as the feeling that a traveller is left with the minute he or she steps out of the business jet is the moment that the decision with regard to a potential repeat business is made. There is no room for error,” comments the CEO. “As the older millennials are expected to reach their peak spending years by 2017, most of the business aviation companies are looking for ways to slice a bigger piece of the gen Y pie. Nevertheless, those who already maintain exceptionally high standards of quality and offer client-tailored services which are of great value today will definitely be amongst the winners of tomorrow.”

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