

2.2_Closure

There's no denying that Insta-holidays are on the rise.	With over 140 million pictures on Instagram with the hashtag #holiday (and nearly half a billion #travel), our favourite photo app plays a role in every step of the journey: shopping for clothes and accessories, packing bags and even choosing itineraries. In fact, a recent survey conducted by Schofields Insurance found that more than 40% of travellers under 33 consider 'Instagrammability' the most important factor when they choose their holiday destination.
There are very good reasons to make your phone your travel companion.	Apart from making family and friends aware – and jealous! – of your whereabouts, you end up with a terrific record of all the fun you had, which you have access to any time you want. It can also pay off to check out the accounts of other users to get inspiration for your next trip or decide what to pack.
Needless to say, Instagrammable hotspots are also riding this wave.	In the five years between 2009 and 2014, the number of visitors to Trolltunga, in Norway, skyrocketed from 500 to 40,000 annually – an increase generally attributed to social media. As in other places, this brought a welcome boost to the local economy, helping businesses and generating jobs.
These economic benefits are not limited to the destinations themselves.	With the perfect poses in mind, wannabe influencers tend to splash out on clothes and cosmetics to make sure they have everything they need when they get there. The Guardian recently published the revealing statistic that only 70% of the swimwear sold by ASOS, the online fashion retailer, is actually used for swimming.

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That's not to say that trending on Instagram doesn't come at a cost.	Everyone wants exactly the same Insta-'must-have', creating endless queues and testing the patience of holidaymakers who just want to enjoy the scenery. There is also an environmental effect: tourists are often seen offering food to wild animals to lure them into a frame. In an echo of colonial attitudes, creatures such as tigers and elephants are now 'exotic' material for influencers to display on their feed and for ruthless entrepreneurs to cash in on.
The situation has deteriorated to such an extent in some popular destinations that their travel boards have been forced to take action.	Vienna has recently launched a campaign that urges visitors to put down their phones and enjoy the landmarks without self-interruption. The campaign, called Unhashtag Vienna, has displayed the slogan 'See Vienna. Not #Vienna' on websites, magazines and baggage carousels at the country's main airports.
There is also an increasing awareness of the negative psychological effects of always being on the lookout for the next photo.	Contrary to one of the main purposes of travelling, which is to relax and reset your head before going back to work or studies, the obsession with taking and posting photos – and raking in the likes – can increase levels of anxiety. There's even a name for it: alongside the already famous FOMO (fear of missing out), now stands FOMAP, or fear of missing awesome pictures!
Whether you love it or hate it, it seems that Instaholidaymaking is here to stay – but how can tourism professionals tap into it?	The technical side is the easy part: it is estimated that you are never more than ten clicks away from seeing an Instagram holiday picture and purchasing a ticket to go to the location. However, reproducing the appeal and apparent realism of social media images often proves tricky, and that's the main challenge for tour operators in order to turn this trend into a profitable marketing tool.