



## Initiative

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# Accor unveils the online habits of travelers in Asia Pacific

Accor has released the results of the inaugural Accor Hotels Asia Pacific Social Media Monitor, highlighting interesting differences in the **social media habits** of travelers from across Asia Pacific, with **Thai** and **Chinese** respondents taking the lead as the region's most active social media users, and Australians and New Zealanders coming in last.

Accor worked with ORC International to survey over **5,400 travelers** across **11 countries in Asia Pacific** (APAC) who had stayed in a hotel at least once in the past 12 months and who use social media at least once a week. The research sought to discover how social media impacts the way people research, experience and review their travel, before, during and after their trips.

With a fast-growing network of more than 560 hotels in 16 countries within APAC, Accor is uniquely placed to uncover the social media habits of travelers across the region. 45% of those surveyed were Accorhotels subscribers or members of Accor's powerful loyalty program, Le Club Accorhotels, which offers free membership and strong rewards and recognition at more than 2000 hotels globally.

### Most plugged in

The most active social media users during their last trip were the **Thais** and **Chinese**, with **95%** and **91%** respectively having interacted in some way.

Conversely, 32% of New Zealanders and 25% of Australians surveyed said they did not interact at all during their last trip — the least active of all the countries surveyed.

### Facebook is king

**Facebook** is the **most** universally **used social network** in APAC, with the top users being **Thailand** (72%), the **Philippines** (60%) and **Singapore** (55%). It's only challenged by strong local players in some specific markets: WeChat and Sina Weibo in China, and Line in Thailand.

Even in China where Facebook is not readily accessible, 15% of respondents said they used it and checked it several times a day, almost as often as local site RenRen.

Interestingly, **Google+** is gaining traction in the region, landing in second place, with 24% of respondents using it multiple times daily. Despite this overall growth, its usage remains very limited during (13%) and after (4%) trips.

**Instagram** gained surprisingly low scores, with just 12% of overall respondents saying they use it at least once a day.

### Brand friendship

In terms of brands followed online, hotels, airlines and travel-related brands are the most popular in the region, with Chinese and Thai respondents the most fervent fans and the most likely to follow several brands.

The key motivation to follow hotel brands online is to get discounts and special offers (77%), especially for respondents from the Pacific, China and Singapore.

### Customer trust

Across all countries and age groups, travelers favoured hotel websites for pricing (47%) and location (57%) information over online travel agencies.

*"These results echo confidence in [www.accorhotels.com](http://www.accorhotels.com) and its best price guarantee,"* said Jens Uwe Parkitny, Vice President of Digital Marketing & Distribution – Asia Pacific. *"We are constantly looking at ways to make it easier for our guests to book directly with us, no matter where they are or which language they speak. For example, we learned that Chinese guests tend to use more online travel agencies, rather than booking directly with hotels. We continue to develop more local versions of our booking channels, including in Mandarin."*

When considering reviews, social media sites and online travel agencies are equally trusted (40%); far beyond hotel supplier sites (13%).





### Let's talk about it

Half of respondents post status updates when they travel, with 36% of travelers posting photos of their hotel room. By far the most voracious sharers are the snap-happy Thais at 51%.

Across the board uploading pictures is the number one activity when back home.

### Connectivity is key

During their trip, respondents rely heavily on **hotel Wi-Fi** (52%) to get online, preferring it to using data roaming or a local SIM card (both 15%).

### Hear me roar

Indian guests are the most likely to interact with hotels after their stay (79%), while people from North Asia, Hong Kong and the Pacific are the least likely.

Completing **guest satisfaction surveys** is still the most popular after-stay interaction (29%), with comment cards not far behind at 19%, especially for older guests. Only 14% of respondents actually posted a review online, with Indians and Singaporeans the most likely to do so.

Overall though, direct communication with hotel staff is the preferred way of interaction with hotels, whether for a negative (34%) or positive (28%) experience.

### Travel trends

In addition to uncovering the secrets of social media usage, the survey also revealed some interesting travel trends and preferences amongst travelers from different countries. For example, it showed that **Indian** and **Chinese** respondents travelled **least for leisure purposes**; that Indonesians are the most price-sensitive and most likely to stay in economy hotels (47% vs. 31% overall); and that Indonesians are the most likely to research and plan their trips online (68%); while the New Zealanders are the most likely to go with the flow, with only 37% saying they plan their sightseeing and activities online.

It also revealed that Indian travelers are the most interested in the latest design trends (27% vs. 14% overall) and that Indian and Chinese travelers are the most likely to pay more for environmentally friendlier hotels (both at 29%) while only 5% of New Zealanders said they would pay more for a 'green' hotel. The survey also showed that travelers across the region are very interested in food, with 40% saying they wanted to **discover local gastronomy** – especially the Chinese, of whom 59% say food discoveries are a **key consideration** for them when choosing a hotel.

Overall, the survey will help Accor to **better target messages, cater services** and **engage with customers** in different regions. The Group has committed to undertaking the survey annually, to closely track developments in the burgeoning and rapidly changing social media sphere and to gain valuable insights into the market.

### Survey methodology:

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