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The Future Of Travel

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I. Introduction

Imagine this scenario for a minute.

Ten years from now, you're sitting on your couch at home, feeling a little burned out from the 60-hour week you had at work.

Then, an app installed on your watch, contact lenses, or glasses tells you that you need to get away from everything. Siri has also noticed that you're burned out from all of your hard work the past week and begins compiling, without any instruction from you, journey possibilities that she knows you'll love. Perhaps a trip to Hawaii, a new underwater hotel, or even space.

Then, after you've chosen your destination, Siri pulls up a stream onto your third-generation Glyph TV of inspiring words, images, sounds and prices calculated to get your juices flowing. You see an image of a stunning space hotel in orbit over the heart-stopping view of Earth and decide to tell Siri to book you a seat to that hotel.

This is the type of picture that was painted by *The Future of Travel*, a report compiled at the behest of travel-booking site Skyscanner using a team of 56 editors, researchers, and futurists.

What's the point of this scenario, you ask? The point is that this is the type of scenario that we will see in our future when it comes to travel due to our technologies that already exist, or are already in development.

Also, in a world of rapid technological innovation, our businesses must anticipate and innovate with great velocity: staying one step

ahead of our customers to cater not just to their needs today, but to their needs tomorrow and the trips they will book in the future. Collaboration is critical, as our businesses connect travellers with our business partners.

Fortunately, space travel and the future of travel isn't quite a reality yet, but travel technology has come a long way, especially with crowdfunding and new technology providing us with a few mediums in which we can change our future.

As technology continues to improve, it's worth asking: What will travel look like in the future?

In this report, we hope to help paint that picture for you a little bit more.

II. The Future Of Travel As We Know It

A. Travel To Space

In a recent interview with Bloomberg, Virgin Group Founder Richard Branson talked about the future plans for space tourism

"I am fascinated by space," Branson says. "We are this tiny dot. Space is there to explore, and it has so many possibilities. And not just the possibilities of putting people into space, but what we can do with satellites from space; how that can transform things back here on Earth and what we can do one day with intercontinental travel. The sky's not the limit."

Branson also talked about the Virgin Galactic project and its recent tests.

“We think all of the hurdles have been taken care of now,” Branson says. “We had another rocket test yesterday that went really well. So, we are very hopeful that we’re almost there, but we’re not going to go until it’s 100% safe. But, I’d be very disappointed if it didn’t happen this year.”

What does this all mean, you ask? It means that space travel may be here much sooner than you think and, as Ferris Bueller famously said, “If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.”

B. Self-Driving Cars

As recent as August 2012, Google engineers announced that their fleet of self-driving cars have logged a combined total of 300,000 miles. Also, within the last few years, California’s legislature approved a bill that would allow self-driven cars on California highways.

According to the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), self-driving cars will make up 75% of all cars on the road in less than thirty years.

Can you imagine letting your car drive you to where you want to go – and having that on your car in the next 10 years?

That’s pretty scary and exciting at the same time.

C. Fuel-Free Travel

In a recent interview with Virgin Group, Solar Impulse President Bertrand Piccard commented on his predictions in regards to fuel-free travel.

“Will commercial aviation soon be able to transport passengers on solar power only?,” Piccard says. “I would be crazy to answer yes and stupid to answer no! The technology for it doesn’t exist today, but it was also impossible to transport passengers with fuel when the Wright Brothers did their first flights in 1903.

“This is why I believe in the developments made by my friend Richard Branson for a cleaner aviation. Biofuel of third generation to decrease the consumption of fossil energy, but also another project I follow with high interest: Virgin Galactic. Not only to bring tourists to the edge of space, but to prepare suborbital air transport.”

“We’ll witness the emergence of cleaner aviation: lighter airplanes, more direct routes, constant descent approaches, and electric motors. I bet that battery driven airplanes with two to four seats will be available in five years’ time,” Piccard says.

To summarize what Piccard said, fuel-free travel is just like space travel: it will be here much sooner than you think and is not impossible to create.

To read all of Piccard’s comments about fuel-free travel and the future of travel in general, go to <http://www.virgin.com/travel/the-future-of-fuel-free-travel-some-predictions-with-solar-impulse>.

D. Time Travel

Like travelling to space and fuel-free travel, you can't forget the real possibility of time travel in the future. Especially with our advances in technology each and every day. I mean, if Doc Brown can do it, why can't we?

E. Virtual Reality

This is something that you're already seeing in our world today. For example, Oculus, a recently founded firm bought by Facebook for \$2 billion, is developing virtual reality visors that will enable wearers to explore popular destinations and entirely new realms without leaving their homes.

One of Oculus' current devices, the Oculus Rift, screens computer-generated environments in a place of his or her actual surroundings. And, at the flick of a switch, can transport you from eastern Indiana to a wooden-beamed Italian hideaway, with rolling hillsides and fluttering butterflies visible through old stone windows.

Now, virtual reality probably won't replace travel, but it may be a great way for hotels and destinations to show travelers exactly what experience they can book.

Pretty cool when you think about it.

III. When To Expect These Changes

As mentioned above, most of these changes in the way we look at travel are either already here or being developed as we speak. So, to answer the question, the future of travel is now, and if you ignore these important trends, you could risk being left in the dust.

IV. How New Ways Of Travelling Will Affect Our Future

There are certainly some scary things that can happen as travel technological advances continues to advance. But here's the great news. These innovations in travel also mean that there are incredible opportunities for each and every one of us to capitalize on.

With each of these innovations, our way of travelling becomes much easier, saving us more money as well as our much needed time and energy.

So be excited about what the future holds, and make sure that you are always looking for ways that you can build the next exciting travel innovation for us all to enjoy.

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