



WHY AIRLINES NEED TO UNDERSTAND ANONYMOUS USERS

What you don't know can hurt your business. From our experience, up to two-thirds of visitors to airline websites are unknown - and this number is likely to rise as **cookies are phased out** and more people place a premium on their online privacy. With so many unknown visitors browsing, airlines need to understand their anonymous users to be able to form meaningful connections and grow their business.

By developing a sales funnel for anonymous users - one that can deliver a personalized experience that captures their individual interests - airlines can convert the unknown window shoppers into loyal customers. To do so in real-time and at scale requires the assistance of AI-driven personalization.

The importance of understanding anonymous users

As people continue to place a fence around their personal details, sharing those just with the brands they trust and feel connected with, e-commerce statistics will reflect an increasing number of anonymous website users.

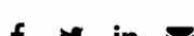
The paradox for airlines is how to respect the wishes of those who value control of their data whilst forming a connection with them. Many websites are optimized for the average user; the content shown reflects a wide "catch-them-all" approach to a company's known audience. If an airline knows that most users visiting its website in Europe are looking for flights to North America, it will tailor the homepage to highlight relevant destinations.



You need to understand all your users individually - even those who are anonymous.

Andy Owen Jones - BD4

Share this quote



But what happens to those who want to fly to the southern hemisphere for an extended holiday? Or are looking for a short-haul business class trip? Or even make a specific ancillary, like affordable extra baggage allowance, a decision point? By optimizing your website for the average user, you are alienating those with differing interests and intentions.

There is no such thing as an average user. By treating website visitors as "average," companies are in fact creating sub-optimal sales funnels, forcing users to search more for relevant content or, as is more likely, leave your site as they feel unseen and undervalued.

To try and overcome this, some marketers and e-commerce teams create segments, loosely categorizing people based on geography, time they visit the site and dates they search for. Rules are then applied, based on assumptions and business priorities. It's no wonder this is ineffective. For example, looking for flights during a busy school holiday period? You may be bucketed in with those searching for a family getaway, when in reality, you want a business class day-return to Brussels for meetings.

Segments are a blunt knife. People rarely fit nicely into boxes, moving from one to another in a more fluid manner than segmentation allows. This is why 1:1 personalized interventions are needed. And to do that, you need to understand all your users individually - even those who are anonymous.

How to understand anonymous users

Tracking anonymous users is still possible even with cookies, if they are first-party cookies. For each session, you can generate individual user profiles which allow you to better understand each visitor's needs and wants. But for a truly individualized experience - one that will enable you to grow your market share - a website needs to utilize the power of artificial intelligence.

AI is able to profile users in real-time, enabling 1:1 personalized interventions in the blink of an eye. Optimization powered by AI can boost ticket sales, ancillary cross-selling and build loyalty. An effective decisioning platform can also help increase revenue by intelligently incentivizing users. Technology can identify those lookers who need a small nudge or incentive to convert into bookers. In a nutshell, AI-driven individual use profiling opens a world of optimization possibilities for airlines.

It is a no-brainer: Converting more existing traffic is the most effective way to grow business. You do not need to increase your marketing spend to try and drag people in at the very top of the sales funnel, but rather focus energy on enticing those already interested in your brand and products.

By delivering a personalized experience that taps into their interests and communicates directly with them, making them feel valued, you are more likely to convert at a higher rate, giving you a greater chance to grow your customer base, revenue and market share.

Get a dose of digital travel in your inbox each day

Subscribe to our newsletter below

YOUR EMAIL

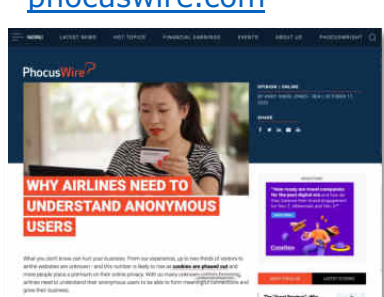
SUBMIT

I accept the [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

About the author...

Andy Owen Jones is CEO and co-founder of BD4.

[Access the article on phocuswire.com](https://phocuswire.com)



[Find out more on BD4 on bd4.ai](https://bd4.ai)

