

Amadeus creates new, highly usable travel booking flow

Amadeus Quick Shopper optimally blends individual preferences and corporate travel policies

Amadeus is a world leader in IT solutions for the travel industry. Its products for managing the distribution and selling of travel services are used worldwide in 83,700 travel agent locations and over 1,000 corporations. Amadeus processes more than 366 million transactions per day, making it the world's second largest e-commerce travel site.

To improve the value its travel booking systems deliver to corporations, Amadeus recently developed a new feature called *Amadeus Quick Shopper*. This feature sits atop the Amadeus e-Travel Management platform and allows companies to serve up faster, optimized results for the vast majority of business trips. When employees input the date and destination of their trip, Quick Shopper simultaneously returns flight, car and hotel options that match both employee requirements and the company's policy criteria. Amadeus developed a Quick Shopper prototype and pre-validated the idea with key customers, which confirmed the new feature's value.

Amadeus then engaged Human Factors International (HFI) to conduct an Expert Design Review, based on HFI's global usability expertise and extensive experience in the travel domain. This review included:

- online booking behavior analysis
- prototype and specification review
- competitive assessment
- graphically treated wireframe design alternatives

“HFI's review and recommendations made a dramatic impact. It improved more than just the usability of our new QuickShopper tool. Their insights shifted our approach for designing the best possible user experience on our e-Travel Management platform. HFI made it clear how to deliver the greatest value to both our corporate clients and individual travelers—our ultimate end-users.”

— Rand Curry
Director SME Programs
Amadeus North America

Challenges: increasing user adoption

Before delving into the design review of Quick Shopper, HFI began by reviewing customer feedback, traveler usage of existing functionality, and Quick Shopper objectives. HFI also interviewed multiple stakeholders within Amadeus to illuminate the business context and define success criteria. Based on this research, HFI identified two main challenges:

- *Increasing user adoption* within large enterprises, which is driven by corporate culture, travel policy, ease of product use, and trip complexity
- *Differentiating* Amadeus e-Travel Management from its competitors, even though customers may perceive all travel platforms as offering similar capabilities

HFI's recommendations: make it clear and simple

Amadeus' main objective was to develop the breadth and depth of product adoption for each customer's travelers. Customers maximize their cost savings when adoption approaches 100%, meaning:

- All employees use the Amadeus e-Travel Management online booking site for every trip
- All elements of a trip (flights, car rentals and lodging) are booked online

While Amadeus e-Travel Management search results already presented prioritized options, the search and selection process for flights, then hotels, then cars required multiple steps. Upon introduction of Quick Shopper, the Amadeus site enabled a clean, efficient approach to travel planning that returns optimized flight, car and hotel options from a single, user-directed search. The design was enhanced significantly by HFI's layout, user interaction and informational recommendations.

HFI's recommendations also helped the Quick Shopper design reinforce how optimized search results satisfy both user preferences *and* company guidelines. It provides an easy-to-follow booking flow that works for both new and experienced users. This is achieved with a system that will eventually learn from its users and capture traveler profile information, yet without feeling intrusive.

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By leveraging underlying business rules and offering intelligent choices based on travelers' booking patterns, Amadeus e-Travel Management now offers users the quickest path and fewest decisions needed to book their trip. This ease of use translates directly to increases in user adoption.

HFI next conducted a usability study among real travelers to confirm that the improved design and flow achieved its goals. The response was very positive and generated practical feedback to further refine the design. The study confirmed that Quick Shopper was a winner and would positively impact user adoption.

Outcomes & Benefits: for travelers *and* companies

Ultimately, user confidence in the system is the key factor that leads to adoption. Amadeus Quick Shopper now engenders user confidence by providing:

- an environment that is predictable and comfortable
- clear decision points throughout the booking process
- a transparent, optimized balance between business rules and personal preferences

For example, missing profile data is subtly captured as part of the booking task flow, users will be allowed to save their settings

as a template after booking, and preference collection will be integrated into a post-travel follow-up feature. Furthermore, the new Amadeus Quick Shopper leverages current technologies like AJAX to aid users in the booking process with suggestion tools and more.

This intelligent design makes Quick Shopper more than just an aggregation of travel components and simplifies the steps necessary to book a trip. These improve adoption and benefit all parties:

- **Users** enjoy an efficient booking process that generates an itinerary which meets their needs
- **Companies** save money on travel through increased user adoption of the online tool (which costs far less than transactions involving a travel agency representative), while ensuring that travel reservations conform to corporate policies
- **Amadeus** solutions continue to evolve to meet the needs of current and future customers, driving incremental implementations and product enhancements that reduce customers' travel costs

HFI's collaboration with Amadeus has resulted in a user-centered, intuitive Quick Shopper feature that deftly meets the needs of both travelers and corporations.

Before: Previously, the search and selection process for flights, hotels, and cars required multiple screens.

After: With Quick Shopper, the Amadeus site now returns optimized flight, car and hotel options from a single, user-directed search.

Human Factors International (HFI) helps customers design websites, applications, and intranets that are intuitive and easy to use. For more information on how HFI can identify your site's strengths and weaknesses, visit www.humanfactors.com.