

The reckoning of 2023

 By [Paul de Waal](#)

9 Jan 2023

From exploring the metaverse to being able to work from anywhere in the world, business bonding opportunities are all predicted to transform the travel and tech industries in 2023.



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The balance between human and digital

A genuine human connection has a greater impact on spend and loyalty than operational efficiency delivered by automation, but today's consumer wants it all. Online-only brands are in for a reckoning in 2023: Develop a physical presence of some kind, or stumble. As we look towards 2023, the challenge no longer revolves simply around digital transformation but rather the personal transformation that every individual must go through.

There has been a shift in conversation among those in the technology business that now includes the importance that people play in this ever-evolving 'digital' world. Previously, travel-tech shows placed emphasis on role automation, AI, machine and machine learning, and although this is still a major focus, there has been no acknowledgement given to people. We believe that while technology is crucial, it should enable people and not disintermediate them.

In the rush to digitise and drive operational efficiency, humanity took a back seat. However, when it comes to driving satisfaction, human connection will always trump operational efficiency. Consumers want companies to really listen to get a better understanding of how they feel, which tasks they wish to execute online, and which they would prefer to engage with an empathetic human being – and then they want you to respond in the right way. There's a time and place for digitisation.

When you need technical support, nothing beats human interaction. If the transaction is repetitive and simple from a self-service perspective, automate it. Automation is the only solution for continued labour shortages and brands will have to invest more strategically in this next year.

In 2023, people will still spend on travel. They will be pickier. They will seek fewer, richer experiences. They will demand the level of digitisation they enjoyed during the pandemic. But they will also crave human connection.

Revolutionising the digital space once more

Technology has been the great remote-work enabler, fast-tracking a way of working that used to be a luxury, now a trend, ultimately connecting humans, devices and machines – the digital landscape will be revolutionised once more.

The way that we work has changed forever, with many corporate and office workers firmly settled into their new hybrid, or work-from-home routines. Whilst most employees are content to work from their kitchens or home offices, a new trend has been gathering pace – the “workcation”.



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The “working from roam” trend will see remote workers experiencing a more nomadic lifestyle as more corporations formalise their “work from anywhere” policies. Digital nomads will only be increasing in 2023, so watch this space. Ultimately, the traveller’s experience is paramount, and by building a network to bring together and enable the players who can contribute and add value, individual businesses can progress and grow, as well as the collective.

Experts say remote working is set to increase in the coming year, with technology allowing more sectors to embrace the trend. Travel businesses harnessing the opportunities to market and sell in this space are set to prosper – but much more can be achieved through collaboration.

2023 will be a year filled with opportunities. Forming the balance between human and digital is imperative for success in a tech-heavy world, and technology will only develop further in the years to come.

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