

Consult

"The relationship with Zolv goes way beyond the initial delivery; they're always there to support our business"

Design

"Zolv were able to come up with superbly elegant solutions to grisly problems"

Build

"Zolv took a daunting task and showed us that it really didn't have to be complicated"

Deliver

"Zolv delivered with the expertise and approach of a larger consultancy, but in a small agile company package"

Who are Zolv?

We are an experienced team of technologists, designers and thinkers who help travel companies unlock potential, realise ideas and develop revenue streams.

We create custom software, tools and websites for the travel industry, delivering user-friendly, business-focused and commercially viable solutions. By giving our clients the tools they need to engage with customers, we allow them to react to opportunities as they arise and always keep them one step ahead of the competition.

We specialise in delivering simple, elegant and clever solutions to the most complex problems, such as:

- ▶ **Back office and CRS migration projects** - all change without dropping a sale.
- ▶ **Integration, configuration & development** of systems and processes.
- ▶ **Booking flow design & usability** removing blockers, increasing conversion.
- ▶ **Product & content management** custom tools to fit every business, perfectly.
- ▶ **Infrastructure scaling & cloud development** delivering savings and reliability.
- ▶ **Personalised post-booking portals** servicing customers 24/7.

Zolv's Timeline

- 1995** As new-media director at Arkima, Olly creates the world's first interactive holiday brochure for Virgin Holidays, The Ski D Rom
- 1998** Olly develops Virgin Holidays' first website, the first of eight major and countless minor versions over the next 18 years
- 1999** Online booking functionality is integrated with Virgin Holidays' website
- 2002** Olly founds Zolv to focus on web development
- 2002-09** Zolv wins an increasing number of travel clients, including Olympic Holidays, Teletext Holidays, Amathus and Shearings
- 2008** Launch of the Web Travel Platform, Zolv's CMS, web and product management suite
- 2010** Clare Watson joins Zolv as operations manager, later becoming director
- 2013** Launch of Full Picture (formally Sales Assist), a call centre sales tool that won both the Travolution Best Technological Innovation Award in October 2013 and the Globes Best Technological Innovation Award in January 2014 (getthefullpicture.com)
- 2015** Nearly a billion euros pass through Zolv-developed websites in 12 months
- 2016** Launch of next-gen Web Travel Platform - optimised for travel

Read our latest white paper:

Designing a Modern Travel Website

This 12-page report looks at several common design methodologies and concludes with five key considerations when writing a design brief and assembling a design team. The white paper makes the case for a pragmatic and multi-disciplinary approach to modern, travel web design.

Download it for free at zolv.com



TRAVOLUTION 10TH BIRTHDAY: PARTNER SHOWCASE



supporters of

ZOLV





**OLLY
WENN**

**managing
director**



WITH OLLY

Apple or PC? PC.

Which of your gadgets do you most worry about losing? My laptop.

How many Twitter followers do you have? Personally, only 100 or so.

What was your first online travel purchase? An accidental booking of a dozen Upper Class flights to New York while testing Virgin Holidays' new API.

We didn't realise it was live!

Who makes the best smartphones?

Apple, still. But they need to up their game.

Atari or Sinclair Spectrum?

Speccy – I was a coder, not a gamer.

What's your favourite travel app?

First Bus mTickets – I use it every day.

How many travel apps have you downloaded to your phone? 11.

Who or what has had biggest impact on travel in the past decade? OTAs.

What was the last Instagram picture you posted? That's not my thing.

Q. What or who has been the biggest disruptive influence in travel over the past decade?

A. Without doubt it has to be the continuing dominance of the internet. In so many ways it has redefined how we source, distribute, market, transact, consume and record every aspect of travel. Entire businesses worth billions, both B2B and B2C, exist only online. Connectivity between suppliers, intermediaries, tour operators and agents is over the internet. We use e-tickets and digital money abroad, we engage with customer services over social media and we have even replaced the holiday postcard, bragging on Facebook and Instagram instead.

Q. What or who do you think will be the biggest disruptive influence in travel in the coming decade?

A. More of the same, I think. Technology isn't slowing down any time soon.

Q. What about the travel industry today surprises you most, given predictions made about what we should expect 10 years ago?

A. I think it was around 2006 that

the term Travel 2.0 was coined. Web 2.0 was all about the rise of user-generated content, web blogs and online communities, and the prediction was that the travel industry would leverage those early-days social media platforms, integrating customer advocacy with marketing. Many of us were certain that social was going to be A Thing, and it would have significant impact on travel, but the scale and influence of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest today is way beyond the predictions of 2006.

Q. Do you think the pace of change will quicken in the coming decade compared with what we have seen in the past 10 years, and what will influence the speed of change?

A. Absolutely. There are thousands of aspects of online travel that can be improved upon – made faster, cheaper, more intuitive, predictive, personalised – and so on. And tomorrow entirely new things will appear that will create opportunities that can be further improved upon. It's never going to slow down.

Q. How do you think travel rates against other areas of business and commerce in terms of how it has met the challenges of the digital era?

A. I think travel has been uniquely placed to thrive in the digital space. The online product isn't something physical that has to be stocked and shipped, with returns and exchanges to worry about. It's just a digital proxy for a future experience, portrayed with words, pictures, video and, increasingly, VR [virtual reality]. The fact that there is not more and better quality content in

use today is, if not a failure to meet a challenge, certainly a failure to make the most of an opportunity.

Q. Do you think travel is well placed to meet the challenges of the coming decade? If so, what gives you that confidence?

A. If you mean technological challenges, then I am not sure what the alternative would be if it doesn't – things will just be a bit rubbish for a while. People aren't going to stop travelling and taking holidays just because online checkout doesn't support their VR headset, or they can't pay in Bitcoin. Travel technology will continue to develop at a pace, although never as fast as we would like – tomorrow's tech can't come soon enough. I am more fearful that geopolitical events will present challenges that we can't overcome as easily.

Q. What has been the most disappointing aspect of the travel industry over the past 10 years?

A. That we still don't have instant, real-time price and availability functionality across the board. Ten years ago, it could take 30-40 seconds to get results from a travel search. Today there are numerous caching solutions that give the appearance of fast search, but they are just caches of data from one, four, eight or even 24 hours ago. A live price and availability is still a 30 to 40-second API call away. Imagine the amazing, real-time customer experiences we could be creating if we could slice-and-dice in real-time, especially when joining that up with what the predictive analytics folks are doing.

Q. What has excited you most about the industry over the past 10 years?

A. As a techy, I tend to get excited about advances in the low-level technology that allows developers like us at Zolv to introduce faster and more-efficient software and processes to our customers in the travel industry. What's most exciting is when a new technology gives rise to a completely new product, as happened a few years ago when Microsoft released a new messaging technology which inspired Zolv to develop Full Picture – our 'visual conversation' platform for call centres.

Q. Has the internet proved to be a broadly positive force for travel intermediaries or are the forces of disintermediation still at work?

A. I think the internet has created numerous opportunities for intermediaries from both ends of the supply/demand equation. Whether it's helping vendors package and distribute product to wider markets, or consumers to compare and find the best deals, the internet has created business opportunities, and businesses, that could never have existed pre-web. However, as the supply chain lengthens, cutting out the middleman is tempting, so it's understandable that we see customers, once they are aware of a product or deal, look to purchase it direct at the best price. From the other direction, vendors want to own the transaction and the customer relationship, so they are making it easier for customers to engage direct.

Q. If you were given £1 million to invest in a travel start-up today, what would you look for?

A. One thing I have learned as an outsider coming into the travel industry is that it's a vertical built on personalities and relationships. So I'd look for a confident and connected management team that could quickly establish the business as a key player and open up opportunities for growth. I've got the tech covered, of course; Zolv would supply that.



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