

Why e-visas are emerging as a smarter choice for the global traveller

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As overseas travellers continue to grow by leaps and bounds each year, in the present digital era, technology plays a major role in determining the way travel is planned and decisions are made. We are now able to make travel decisions faster, whether related to transport or living arrangement or guided tours, with the help of tools and apps available at our fingertips.



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Breakthroughs in technology coupled with improved internet connectivity and speed are allowing 'armchair booking' of visas, flight, hotels at the click of a button. Airports are upgrading their technological solutions to ensure biometric check-ins of travellers in the near future. Even in the case of visa services, E-Visa services allow customers to submit their visa applications using just a mobile phone as it does not require a visit in person to the Application Centre as part of the submission process.

Today, 44 countries around the world offer E-Visas or some form of electronic visa solution for travellers – and we expect more to follow. E-visas allow the secure management of the visa application process to take place entirely in an online environment, increasing time and cost efficiencies for the end customer and the concerned government as a convenient solution for pre-travel authorisation.

As improving technology continues to facilitate other newer applications in the travel and tourism industry, the potential for benefit to global traveller is extensive, i.e. he or she will find a range of customized services tailored to specific requirements, irrespective of country of origin or destination, all available in a smoother and more enjoyable experience.

Some of the **reasons why e-visa services are being preferred by the modern-day travellers while deciding on their travel destinations are:**

- Apply on the go with the globally accessible and user-friendly websites;
- Simplified payment options- mostly online in nature;
- Quicker turnaround time of decision making and;
- No more paper form filling or carrying copies of documents to be submitted on arrival;
- Time and efforts saved from not having to visit the Consulate or Embassy in person for a visa;
- Track application status online; and
- Reduced waiting time at airports for select categories.

The electronic visa (e-visa) is emerging as a convenient and revolutionary service in the travel domain as it now offers the customers the unmatched convenience of applying for their visa from the location of their choice by leveraging on the highly secure and smart solution developed by VFS Global. The company is the only one with a full end-to-end e-visa solution for governments.

Transforming traditional offline visa applications

With an intuitive online application form filling support that leverage artificial intelligence and quality checks to ensure all details submitted and documents uploaded are as per the requirement of the mission, our e-visa solutions, for example, makes it simpler and convenient for governments to make the decision on the visa application in a secured (GDPR compliant format) to deliver an end-to-end seamless service.

As a company, we have made significant investments towards providing a seamless online customer journey to our customers. One of our recent initiatives was developing the Thailand eVisa On Arrival (eVOA) solution along with the Immigration Bureau of Thailand that allows eligible travellers to get fast and easy immigration clearance at select Thailand airports, through a completely online process that addresses over 10 million travellers to Thailand with visa on arrival each year.

In fact, for those travellers who have even been considering Thailand as a getaway option for the next long weekend, for example, this solution ensures you get a visa easier and caters to urgent visa requirements to travel to Thailand with options like Express eVOA service for quicker processing.

Since commencing this service in 2002, we now offer innovative and highly secure online visa solutions accessible by customers anytime, anyplace for both locations (Thailand, Suriname, etc.) and airlines (Emirates) as the destination or travel partner of choice. For Emirates, we process Dubai e-visa applications annually across 180 locations worldwide.

More and more governments are looking into a solution that transforms the traditional offline visa application process into a digital visa model. While one part of the application process can be fully digitised, the biometric enrolment will still happen at a nearby visa application centre. This is primarily because physical enrolment of biometrics continues to be an important aspect of border control norms today.

Yet, the interest in e-visas will not wane for travellers but on the contrary continue to steadily rise globally considering its ease in application, especially for those who seek shorter duration stays or trips, which is very significant. Especially when there is a growing interest amongst governments across the world who aim to liberalise their visa regimes to make their respective countries both tourist-friendly and business-friendly destinations in this digital day and age.

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