Meylah Case Study

Meylah brings Smart City Tourism IoT solution to Grays Harbor with help from Microsoft, HPE and other partners

Saving travelers time with AI and IoT technologies

The way 21st-century travelers experience, consume and share information has changed drastically from the previous decades. With an increase in mobile penetration and technological advancement, the tourism industry is ready for a new wave of digital transformation. According to Meylah co-founder and Chief Marketing Officer Chaitra Vedullapalli, smart tourism is the next evolution that will bring this wave of revenue and business opportunities, even to less developed cities.

Meylah Corporation, a US-based cloud service provider and Microsoft Gold Partner, sees this as a perfect opportunity to leverage cloud, AI and IoT technologies to drive digital access, economic prosperity and job creation in local communities in cities. The new Smart City Tourism Internet of Things (IoT) solution Meylah helped create is "about putting the tourist at the center of the experience, making the traveler smarter and saving them time by using artificial intelligence (AI) technology," Vedullapalli said.

A collaboration between Meylah, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), Bosch, and several other companies, the Smart City Tourism IoT solution features a fully digital and IoT-enabled infrastructure, including smart WiFi, parking meters, smart cameras, retail endpoints, kiosks and more. In addition to using the Microsoft AI platform, the solution also features Bosch cameras, HPE Aruba access points, and parking meters with HPE Edgeline servers that connect through Azure IoT Hub and Meridian Kiosks.

"The Smart City Tourism IoT solution is about solving digital access challenges for tourists and local merchants and then using Intelligent Edge and Intelligent Cloud with AI to design an elegant, highly personalized and smart travel experience," Vedullapalli said. "Tourists can now easily plan their travel using Smart Itinerary Builder that can be accessed via mobile, web or onsite kiosks. HPE Smart Parking make it easy to find a parking space. Aruba Wi-Fi hotspots enable visitors to digitally engage with local businesses. The online marketplace has made it possible for local merchants to access local and global customers."

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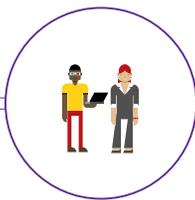
The seed for the project was planted in 2017 at Microsoft Inspire, the company's annual conference for its partner community. "We were listening to the keynote speech from (Microsoft CEO) Satya Nadella and he talked about how the future of cloud computing was in Intelligent Edge combined with Intelligent Cloud and AI, and that as US partners, we needed to think about how to combine these capabilities to create a solution."

Vedullapalli and her team at Meylah took up the challenge and travelled to cities around Washington State and asked what problems could be solved using WiFi and broadband. "Merchants were telling us they needed access to customers. Citizens were asking for WiFi so they didn't need to go to library. Tourists were telling us they didn't go anywhere where there wasn't WiFi."

Grays Harbor faces challenges to growing its tourist economy

The joint team of Microsoft, HPE and Meylah introduced a Smart Tourism Transformation roadmap to local political and business leaders in Washington State. They quickly attracted the interest of Greater Grays Harbor, Inc. (GGHI), a nonprofit org that promotes the Grays Harbor region, which is located in the southwest corner of the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State. GGHI was eager to increase the revenue potential of the lucrative tourism industry and lobbied to be selected by the Washington State Department of Commerce to be the pilot for the state's Smart City Tourism IoT project.

GGHI knew that tourism represented massive revenue potential, yet locally they faced several challenges preventing them from growing the tourist economy. Only two out of 100 local merchants had an online presence. Also, since WiFi was not available in most places, the mobile experience for visitors was frustrating and the opportunities for local merchants were limited.

"Visitors want ease of planning in their recreational activities," says Dru Garson, CEO of Greater Grays Harbor, Inc. "They want to see and feel what's available, how to get there, and where to park, and they expect technology to make it easier and less stressful."

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"The smart itinerary planner uses AI technology to help tourists plan their itinerary and access special offers. The smart public WiFi instantly activates the moment a tourist enters the City of Westport and connects to activities, merchants, and highlights," Vedullapalli said. "Meanwhile, merchants have access to marketing data and tools and real-time insights and traveler demographics using Microsoft Power BI."

Scott Guettinger, Strategic Accounts Lead at Microsoft, is excited about their collaboration with HPE and Meylah. "This is a truly innovative smart solution that will help increase tourism and economic growth in communities around the world. HPE is combining hybrid IT solutions such as WiFi, along with a host of Microsoft capabilities including Azure IoT Edge, Time Series Insights, Stream Analytics, Notification Hubs, and Azure Maps to deliver Smart City Tourism IOT solutions to places like Grays Harbor in Washington State, USA. The solution, which is marketed and sold through HPE and Microsoft marketplaces, can be easily replicated in many other cities."

Vedullapalli said Microsoft played a significant role in helping the Smart City Tourism IoT solution come to fruition. "Without Microsoft we couldn't have developed this," she said. "In the case of Grays Harbor, we had over 100 collaborators across ten organizations that had to work together to support this engagement. The partnership was very important, and working with Microsoft, partnerships were much easier to form. We also received funding from various stakeholders, including the Microsoft IoT Solution Accelerator Program for software development."

Future opportunities with destinations around the world

As word has spread about the smart tourism solution, organizations from other destinations around the world have begun to contact Meylah. In addition to rolling the solution out to the remainder of Washington State, Meylah is now in discussions with 14 other popular destination organizations in several countries, including Mexico, Jamaica, Australia, Thailand and Brazil.

"One of the most exciting opportunities we have is with heritage cities in India such as Agra, Amarvati and others. We are closely collaborating with the right stakeholders to share our solution footprint to create a positive experience for tourists and we are excited to make this opportunity realized," said Vedullapalli. .