

TRAVELING WITH TECHNOLOGY

A Guide for Organizations in the Digital Age

WHY DIGITAL DISCIPLINE MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

The surge of global travel in recent years has been met with a wave of digital risks that often go overlooked. While many travelers are savvy when it comes to packing, planning, and personal safety, their digital behavior—what they post, swipe, or download abroad—can just as easily shape the outcome of a trip. This guide from On Call’s Security Team is designed to help organizations and their travelers mitigate technology risks in today’s evolving risk landscape.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

WHAT’S ONLINE ISN’T ALWAYS “OFFLINE”

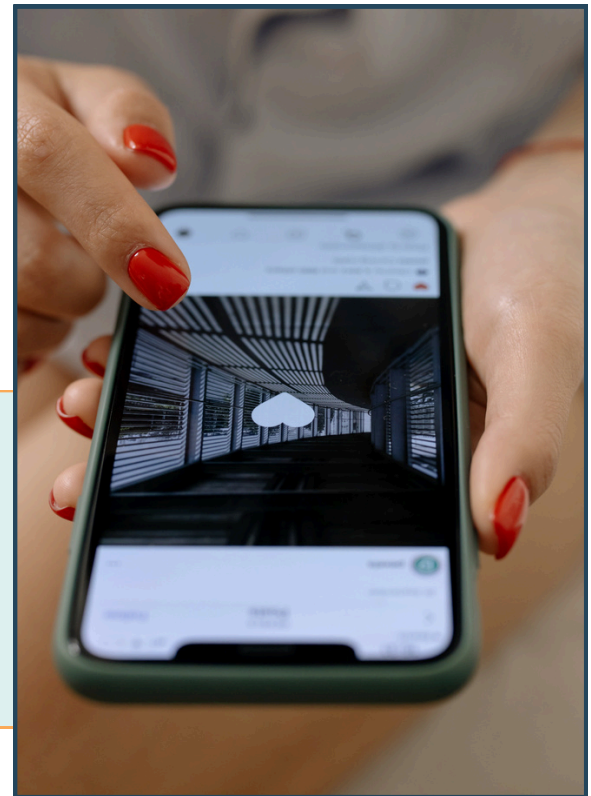
Social media posts can resurface at the most inopportune times. In some jurisdictions, content critical of government institutions, political figures, or cultural norms can trigger investigations or detention, even if the post was made years prior and later deleted.

SITUATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Multiple travelers have faced legal complications in regions of the Middle East and Southeast Asia due to prior social media posts that were flagged during immigration checks or local investigations. In some cases, content was retrieved from cached pages or screenshots.

BEST PRACTICE

Travelers should perform a quick pre-trip social media audit, reviewing public content for political commentary, controversial humor, or location-tagged images that may be misinterpreted. Employers can help by offering communication and social media guidance as part of their pre-travel briefing process.





DATING APPS: MORE THAN JUST A SWIPE

Dating apps remain a common tool for connection, but in some destinations, they're also used by scammers, blackmailers, and even security services to entrap users.

SITUATIONAL SNAPSHOT

LGBTQ+ travelers have reported incidents of entrapment in countries where same-sex relationships are criminalized. AI-generated profiles have also played a growing role in romance scams, tricking users into sharing sensitive information or transferring money to fake profiles.

BEST PRACTICE:

Stick to well-known apps with safety features such as location masking and user verification. Always meet in public places, inform a trusted contact of your plans, and avoid sharing accommodation details. If you're unsure about the local legal context, err on the side of caution and consult your organization's travel security partner for advice.

VPNS AND INTERNET ACCESS: NAVIGATING THE GRAY AREAS

While VPNs (Virtual Private Networks) are often recommended to protect personal data on public Wi-Fi, their use can be illegal in some countries. Travelers in regions with strict internet censorship laws can face fines or worse for attempting to bypass government firewalls.

SITUATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Some travelers have been stopped at border checkpoints or questioned after their VPN usage was flagged by internet providers. As countries tighten control over digital infrastructure, what seems like a basic privacy tool at home may violate local law abroad.

BEST PRACTICE

Before traveling, research local restrictions on VPNs and online content. Organizations should offer region-specific guidance on digital access tools, and travelers should only use software permitted by local law.



MESSAGING APPS:

WHAT YOU USE AT HOME MAY BE BANNED ABROAD

Some messaging apps are banned, blocked, or heavily monitored in several regions, including parts of the Gulf, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe. Travelers relying on these platforms could find themselves unable to communicate or subject to local monitoring.

SITUATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Travelers have reported receiving alerts or warnings simply for downloading restricted apps or attempting to use banned features while connected to local networks.



KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR TRAVELERS & ORGANIZATIONS

- Audit your social media and digital history before departure.
- Research local laws on VPNs, dating apps, and social media platforms.
- Use only legal, secure, and locally permitted communication tools.
- Educate travelers on region-specific digital risks before every trip.

BEST PRACTICE

Always confirm which apps are legally accessible in your destination.

Organizations should provide an approved app list for communication, and travelers should consider region-specific alternatives as part of their trip preparation.

MOVING FORWARD: A SMARTER APPROACH TO DIGITAL SAFETY

More organizations are now embedding digital risk education into their broader travel risk management plans, treating online behavior with the same care as physical safety and health.

The digital world travels with us, and knowing how to navigate it is just as important as booking the right flight or packing the right gear.

Want even more travel risk management resources and planning tips? Subscribe to our [quarterly e-newsletter](#) or contact us at tmsolutions@oncallinternational.com.