With the number of international arrivals expected to grow 50% by 2030, travellers need seamless ways to cross borders that also protect national security while protecting their personal data. The Known Traveller Digital Identity, or KTDI, is a public/private collaboration that enhances security efforts, while enabling a connected journey for today’s international traveller.

The KTDI is the only global travel initiative of its kind. Travellers can share documentation and information from one verified identity with partners including government authorities, airlines and hotels. The KTDI allows travellers to play an active role in travel security efforts by sharing their information proactively. Travellers always retain control over what, where and with whom they share their information. Each data element shared by the traveller is verified, accurate and consistent every time. This is made possible by the technologies of distributed ledger, cryptography and biometrics. As more data and information is added, travellers build more enriched profiles that build trust with each partner interaction.

Let’s follow one example for what a journey could look like for future travellers. After travellers download the KTDI app and create their profile, governments provide and authenticate the traveller’s identity data based on their passport or government issued digital ID. Biometrics will link the digital identity with the physical person and the national identity document. When approved, profiles are securely stored and encrypted in individual identity wallets. These contain the original government attestation, and additional attestations as proof of the travellers history of border crossings, plane trips and hotel check-ins.

When a traveller shares required identity information, the attributes they share are checked and validated through encrypted links to their source information. Whether the traveller is booking a flight, boarding a plane or entering a destination country, the travel provider or government authority can be sure that the information shared is authentic and verified by the issuing organization.

Travellers can also send their information to authorities in advance of departure allowing travellers that are deemed low risk to be screened sooner and processed faster. Hotels could offer self-service check-in via facial recognition to ensure travellers are who they say they are. Throughout the journey the Known Traveller Digital Identity creates one
connected process to build trust, encourage travel and allow precious security resources to focus on the areas of greatest need.

Components of the Known Traveller Digital Identity will be championed by the governments of Canada and the Netherlands. Additional partners include Air Canada, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Montreal Trudeau International Airport, and Amsterdam Airport Schiphol. In collaboration with the WEF and Accenture, the KTDI will be piloted this year. Unlocking the power, change how we travel.

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