

For Americans Logging Miles, Soaring Frustration

2008-05-05

Access America's national survey finds 88 percent of American travelers frustrated with the price of gas

Reflecting Americans' increasing exasperation at the pump, the latest Access America Travel Frustration Index -- a quarterly barometer that tracks a range of factors that impact both business and leisure travelers -- jumped three points in the first quarter of 2008. Almost nine in 10 respondents to the national survey (88%) reported frustration with gas prices, up from 78 percent in late 2007. The increased frustration prompted a three-point jump in the aggregated Index hassle-factor.

Among leisure travelers, a whopping 90 percent reported frustration with gas prices during the first quarter of 2008. Business travelers were not far behind at 86 percent. Those who said they were "very frustrated" with gas prices is up nearly 20 percentage points overall, rising from 57 percent in late 2007 to 73 percent in the first quarter of 2008.

"Americans are feeling the pain at the pump," said Mark Cipolletti, vice president of communications for Access America. "The travel index measures 10 factors that impact all kinds of travelers and so is, by design, very stable. In order to move the needle three points, as we've seen in the past quarter, there has to be a major shift in emotion. We're seeing that shift in a big way. It's hard to believe Americans could get more annoyed, but summer is still weeks away and gas prices continue to rise."

Among households with more disposable income (\$75,000+), 85 percent report being frustrated with gas prices. That's up 10 percentage points from November 2007 when 75 percent of those households reported frustration, and from August 2007 when 76 percent of those households reported frustration with gas prices.

Among middle-income households, those in the \$25,000-\$50,000 range, the trend is steeper:

Quarter 3 2007: 81 percent of middle-income households reported frustration with gas prices

Quarter 4 2007: 83 percent of middle-income households reported frustration with gas prices

Quarter 1 2008: 95 percent of middle-income households reported frustration with gas prices

For travelers impacted primarily by driving issues and not by air travel, the aggregated Index score is up more than three points from last year. With a mean Index score of 42.7 out of a possible 100, the "driver's" frustration score registers at 44.7 for the first quarter of 2008 compared with the last quarter of 2007 where driving frustrations registered at 41.4. In the third quarter of 2007 (the other period for which data is available), driving frustrations were at 42.3.

Among travelers impacted by air travel issues only (airfares, airline service, homeland security issues, etc.), the overall frustration level was relatively flat compared with the third and fourth quarter of 2007. With a mean score of 36.8 out of 100, the air travel frustration score for January-March 2008 registered at just slightly above neutral at 37.4.

Weather conditions and illness or injury that causes cancellation or interruption of a trip contributed modestly to the overall rise in frustrations on the Index scale this part quarter. Both of these factors are seasonal, with storms across the Midwest and Northeast contributing to delays that cause headaches for thousands of travelers and the cold winter weather contributing to seasonal colds and the Flu that can result in cancelled plans.

"Unlike the cost of gas, those numbers are likely to go down again as we head into the warmer summer months," Cipolletti added.

The Travel Frustration Index was developed and launched in 2007 by Access America, in partnership with Ipsos Public Affairs, and monitors common areas of frustration among travelers, such as service issues, weather delays and prices. The next Index will launch in June 2008.

About the Survey

The Access America Traveler Frustration Index was conducted April 7-14, 2008 by IPSOS Public Affairs, an independent global, survey-based research company owned and managed by research professionals. As part of its weekly U.S. Telephone Omnibus Study, IPSOS interviewed 876 adults ages 18 and older, who indicated they had traveled for business or leisure at least once during the previous three months. The margin of error for the entire survey is 3.3% at a 95% confidence level.

The quarterly frustration index was created by first asking each of ten individual potential frustration items on a four point frustration scale to past three month travelers. The responses were then summed by each respondent. The sums were then aggregated and recalculated to a ten point index scale across all respondents.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article32438.html>

© 1998 - 2008 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html