

Business Travelers Changing Behaviors in Current Economy

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Orbitz for Business and Business Traveler Magazine Team Up to Survey Travel Trends

Inaugural Survey Concludes Business Travelers Changing Behaviors in Current Economy

68% Now Staying at Less Expensive Hotels, 79% feeling pressure to cut travel expenditures

CHICAGO, June 10 /PRNewswire/ -- With a lagging economy causing many travelers to change their ways, more than two-thirds (68%) of those surveyed this month by Orbitz for Business (<http://www.orbitzforbusiness.com/>) and Business Traveler Magazine say they are now staying at less expensive/lower star-rated hotels to save on travel costs. Additionally, a large majority of business travelers and corporate travel managers, 79%, are feeling some degree of pressure to cut travel expenses, leading to myriad changes in traveler behavior in the corporate travel marketplace.

These are among the key findings of the first ever Orbitz for Business/Business Traveler Magazine Quarterly Trend Report, which examines the most prevalent issues affecting the corporate travel industry today.

While the report shows that many business travelers are in fact traveling differently, they aren't necessarily cutting back -- as more than half (60%) say they are conducting as much, if not more business travel in 2008 compared with 2007.

"This report reinforces what we've been hearing from our customers: Most clients aren't cutting back on travel, rather, they continue to look for ways to become more cost effective with their managed travel programs in a cost-conscious economy," said Dean Sivley, senior vice president and COO, Orbitz for Business. "It's our mission to give businesses and business travelers the tools, resources and strategic direction they need to manage an efficient travel program during these challenging times."

A significant segment where companies and travelers alike are cutting back is trade shows and conferences. Almost half (44%) report that they, or their company, are planning to attend fewer trade shows this year, or will simply send fewer employees to those events that are being attended.

Another notable trend is that of business travelers taking more day trips. Twenty-five percent of respondents say that when possible, they are now flying in and out of a business destination the same day more often, rather than spend a night in a hotel.

The report found that companies are implementing a number of different strategies in an effort to be more operationally efficient.

41% are tightening their travel policies and implementing more restrictions on travelers for hotels and dining

Nearly half, 47% of those surveyed, indicate changes to their company's rental car policy, including requiring employees to rent smaller/least expensive car available (38%) and return vehicles with a full tank of gas to avoid costly surcharges (20%)

42% are exploring alternatives to travel, including video/web conferencing

One-third, 33% of respondents, are urging more travelers to use an online booking tool

International Travel

International travel is another area where some companies are scaling back. Thirty-three percent of those surveyed say their companies are currently doing less international travel as a way to save.

Additionally, the Orbitz for Business/Business Traveler Trend Report found that of those who do travel internationally, 56% say they are allowed to fly business class for long-haul flights. Of the 44% who are not, 10% say their company policy has changed in the past year.

This supports a recent International Air Transport Association report, which found premium air traffic shrank 3.9% in March compared with the same month last year, as the number of international air travelers flying in business or first class fell by its largest amount in five years.

Other report findings include:

67% of respondents are more apt to stay at a less expensive hotel if it offers amenities like free Wi-Fi and/or continental breakfast, over a more luxurious hotel that does not offer these perks

32% say the area in which they are most limiting or keeping an eye on spending is air.

17% of those surveyed say their company's per diem spending for meals has decreased in the past year

METHODOLOGY

The Orbitz for Business/Business Traveler Magazine Trend Report was conducted online from 5/15/08 through 5/23/08, through a MarketTools survey of 610 Business Traveler Magazine subscribers.

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