

**Modern Business Traveller: mini white paper (20 April 2017)**

**Checking in: serving the multifaceted modern business traveller**

**In 2016, a research study by ACTE, underwritten by American Express Global Business Travel (GBT), introduced the modern business traveller.**

This new breed of corporate traveller lives in a world of multi-channel hyper-connectivity, personalisation, customisation and consumerisation. Concerned about quality of life issues, they want to integrate travel into their busy lives. They are also keenly aware of the risks associated with travel in an era of unprecedented geopolitical uncertainty.

In March 2017, ACTE returned to its global membership of travel buyers to understand how the modern business traveller phenomenon had developed in the intervening period.

*This document is a companion to the ‘Serving the multifaceted modern business traveller’ infographic and contains additional data points and context. Direct comparisons between the September 2016 and March 2017 data sets is not always possible as some of the later questions differ; nonetheless, patterns can be seen and these are noted.*

**The evolving traveller: quality of life remains a core concern**

The latest study finds the behaviours revealed in the 2016 research are becoming trends. Six months on, quality of life remains a core concern with today’s travellers, with many buyers also reporting increased interest in adding leisure to business trips. Almost a third of buyers saw more traveller enquiries about work-life balance – but, equally, the same proportion saw fewer enquiries or received no enquiries about work-life balance over the same period.

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|  | **March 2017** | | | Sept 2016 |
| **Increased number of enquiries (in previous 3 months)** | **Stayed same** | **Decreased enquiries / no enquiries** | Increased interest |
| **Add leisure to a business trip** | **43%** | **46%** | **11%** | 42% |
| **Work-life balance** | **31%** | **39%** | **31%** | 48% |
| **Take a family member** | **19%** | **61%** | **21%** | 28% |
| **Flexibility to explore** | **20%** | **52%** | **28%** | n/a |

**The evolution of traveller enquiries about quality of life issues**

**Security an issue of growing traveller concern**

Traveller concerns about security, very prominent in the September 2016 poll, remain a live issue. Travel to and from the USA – a new question that examined traveller anxieties about visa and immigration issues – generated increased enquiries in 54 per cent of corporations.

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|  | **New / heightened traveller concerns\*** | **Same level of traveller concerns\*** | **Reduced / no traveller concerns\*** |
| **Personal Safety** | **56%** | **37%** | **6%** |
| **Air travel experience** | **44%** | **53%** | **4%** |
| **Travel to and from the USA** | **54%** | **38%** | **9%** |
| **NB: In September 2016, 65% of buyers reported receiving increased volumes of traveller enquiries about personal safety fears.** | | | |

\*Previous 3 months

**Traveller concerns about safety**

**Buyers respond to traveller appetite for flexibility**

The 2017 research finds buyers continue to prioritise the use of technology tools to improve the traveller experience by making it easier to manage work-life-travel routine. Most buyers have deployed or will deploy apps to help travellers book travel, access trip information or manage T&E spend.

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|  | **We have introduced** | **We will introduce next 1-2 years** | ***Total - introducing*** | We have introduced (2016) | We will introduce next 1-2 years (2016) |
| **Apps for booking** | **44%** | **19%** | ***63%*** | 41% | 26% |
| **Trip information apps** | **46%** | **20%** | ***66%*** | 55% | 21% |
| **Apps for T&E management** | **42%** | **16%** | ***58%*** | 41% | 21% |

**Tools to improve the traveller experience: focus on technology**

Buyers are intensifying their usage of policy to give travellers more flexibility over their travel arrangements versus six months ago. One fifth (20%) have introduced, or are interested in introducing, policy and insurance arrangements that allow travellers to add leisure to their business trip (although it is interesting to note that double this proportion of buyers – 46 per cent - say they have no plans to adjust policy).

Non-traditional hotel booking is another area where buyer interest has grown since ACTE and GBT investigated the topic in September 2016.

One new topic in the March 2017 study is the use of unique perks to improve the traveller experience. Here, 34 per cent have introduced targeted benefits for frequent or senior travellers, including items such as TSA Pre-Check and lounge access.

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|  | **We have introduced** | **We will introduce next 1-2 years** | ***Total introducing*** | We have introduced (2016) | We will introduce next 1-2 years (2016) |
| **Policy and insurance for ‘bleisure’** | **17%** | **3%** | **20%** | 10% | 4% |
| **Non-traditional hotel bookings** | **17%** | **4%** | **21%** | 10% | 6% |
| **Unique ‘perks’** | **30%** | **4%** | **34%** | 33% | n/a |

**Initiatives for improving the traveller experience**

**Traveller safety is the priority for buyers**

As noted, personal safety is the most pressing issue for travellers, measured by the sustained increases in traveller enquiries. The 2016 study revealed more than half (54%) of buyers had already tightened policy; a further 36 per cent were considering changes to policy in response to these concerns.

The 2017 poll looks at how buyers are using training to address traveller concerns: a majority has either introduced (33%), will introduce (14%) or is discussing the introduction (44%) of more safety training for travellers.

Looking deeper at policy and security, the 2017 poll finds that few buyers are using traveller safety as a reason to create policy rules against ‘bleisure’, bringing family members on trips or the use of approved sharing economy ground transportation. That said, sharing economy accommodation appears to be seen as an unacceptable risk by a significant proportion of buyers.

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|  | **Permitted in policy** | **Policy does not permit on safety grounds** |
| **Travellers can extend trip for leisure** | **58%** | **1%** |
| **Bring a family member along on trips** | **49%** | **4%** |
| **Use of sharing economy ground transportation** | **49%** | **5%** |
| **Use of sharing economy accommodation** | **24%** | **23%** |

**Using policy to improve the traveller experience**

**Spotlight on data security**

With the emergence of stronger security protocols around traveling with devices, the 2017 poll looked at attitudes to data privacy. Almost a third (31%) of buyers report increased concerns about data privacy among travellers. However, few corporations as yet appear to be addressing data privacy and device usage in policy. An exception is the use of non-purged laptops or smartphones, where 15 per cent of corporations have ruled out usage on data security and privacy grounds.

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|  | **Permitted in policy** | **Policy does not permit on security grounds** |
| **Use of personal devices for business communication** | **58%** | **6%** |
| **Use of public Wi-Fi with business devices** | **64%** | **6%** |
| **Use of non-purged laptops or devices** | **47%** | **14%** |

**Travel policy and data security**

**Travelers continue to mix and match travel options**

The 2016 study asked buyers to describe how traveller behaviour had shifted over the three years from 2013. This poll revealed a dramatic increase in the use of non-traditional travel options: big winners were app-based ground transportation companies (79% of buyers saw increased usage), low-cost carriers (49%), ride-share services (48%) and sharing economy accommodation (40%). Travel modes that saw a decline in usage over the period included traditional car hire (24% of buyers saw a decline in usage) and premium black car (34%).

Looking over the last six months from the perspective of March 2017 reveals a more complex picture. Non-traditional ground was a clear winner: over half (56%) of buyers saw increased usage of app-based ground transport. Half saw increased usage of ride share services - while strong declines were visible in traditional ground transportation.

Buyers saw a net increased usage of all other transport and travel options. Usage grew for low-cost carriers and high-speed rail – while traditional network carriers also registered growth.

One topic to note is sharing economy accommodation: 25 per cent of buyers saw increased usage here – while 9 per cent saw a decline. This relative lack of enthusiasm for sharing economy accommodation suggests the policy restrictions on this kind of lodging may be impacting usage.

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|  | **Decreased usage last six months** | **Increased usage last six months** |
| **App-based ground transportation** | **3%** | **56%** |
| **Ride-share services** | **6%** | **50%** |
| **Premium black car** | **38%** | **6%** |
| **Traditional car hire** | **28%** | **10%** |
| **Traditional network airline** | **11%** | **22%** |
| **Low-cost carriers** | **10%** | **29%** |
| **Basic economy fares airline** | **20%** | **23%** |
| **High-speed rail** | **6%** | **22%** |
| **Traditional business hotel** | **9%** | **26%** |
| **Sharing economy lodging** | **9%** | **25%** |

**Traveller usage of key modes and services**

**Methodology**

ACTE polled 239 travel buyers from around the world (North America 63%, EMEA 24%, Asia Pac 13%) between 9 – 28 March 2017.

**Notes**

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