

BTN

BUSINESS TRAVEL NEWS

June 12, 2023



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2023 IN-PERSON EVENTS

BUSINESS TRAVEL trends & forecasts

WASHINGTON DC
March 21

ATLANTA
June 14

ASIA PACIFIC
17 July

CHICAGO
September

PHILADELPHIA
September 28

TORONTO
September

BOSTON
October

MINNEAPOLIS
October

SEATTLE
November

NEW YORK
November

SAN FRANCISCO
December

DALLAS
December 12

entertainment TRAVEL SUMMIT

NEW YORK / June 6

LONDON / November

LOS ANGELES / Dec. 14

15th ANNUAL BUSINESS TRAVEL SUMMIT

PEBBLE BEACH
June 20-23

STRATEGIC MEETINGS SUMMIT

SAN FRANCISCO
June 5

NEW YORK
June 12

LONDON
October

CHICAGO
November 6

10th ANNUAL innovate advancing business travel

NEW YORK
October 2

BTN 39TH ANNUAL TRAVEL MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

DALLAS
August 15

GOVERNMENT TRAVEL SUMMIT

WASHINGTON DC
October 23

12th ANNUAL BUSINESS TRAVEL HALL OF FAME

NEW YORK
December 6

BUSINESS TRAVEL SHOW EUROPE

LONDON
June 28-29

BUSINESS TRAVEL TECH TALK

CHICAGO
May 1

FRANKFURT
September

SAN FRANCISCO
September

LONDON
November

AMSTERDAM
Q4 TBD

PARIS
Q4 TBD

16th ANNUAL The Beat live

NEW YORK
December 5

BUSINESS TRAVEL LODGING SUMMIT AMERICAS

AMERICAS
September

BUSINESS TRAVEL ACCOMMODATION SUMMIT EUROPE

EUROPE
September

BUSINESS TRAVEL SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT & AWARDS

AMERICAS
May 8

EUROPE
22 May

BUSINESS TRAVEL AWARDS EUROPE

LONDON
October 30

2023 VIRTUAL EVENTS

3rd ANNUAL Travel Procurement VIRTUAL WORKSHOP SERIES

March 7

March 14

March 21

March 28

April 4

April 11

GLOBAL TRAVEL RISK SUMMIT

AMERICAS
September

EUROPE
September

BTNGROUP SYMPOSIUM Advancing Traveler Health & Wellness

October

business travel intelligence summit

EUROPE
October

AMERICAS
November

BUSINESS TRAVEL SHOW AMERICAS

April 20

BTNGROUP SYMPOSIUM Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Series

October

BUSINESS TRAVEL SHOW EUROPE KICK OFF

23 February

EDITOR'S LETTER

Empowering Business Travelers to Take Action

More than 70 percent of travel managers surveyed in BTN's 2023 Sustainability Survey were personally concerned about their company's carbon footprints. Not all, however, are tasked to take action. Nearly twice as many travel managers whose companies are located in Europe are officially engaged in business travel sustainability initiatives compared to travel managers for companies that are headquartered in North America. The drive toward sustainable business practices, in general, has proven stronger in Europe overall, given a stronger regulatory environment around the issue that has gained steam in the last two years (see pages 8 and 9 for more details).

Yet there is some evidence in both Europe and the United States that individuals feel disempowered—and possibly uninspired—to make a difference when it comes to traveling more sustainably. This can even be the case when Environment, Sustainability and Governance (ESG) is demonstrated as part of the corporate culture at a larger scale. The feeling may be, “I’m glad to work for a company that does X”—fill in the blank: makes large sustainable fuel purchases, invests in carbon sequestration and removal projects, etc.—“but what can I do as an individual?”

The big takeaway from the case studies in this issue—all of

which qualified as finalists in BTN Group's inaugural Sustainability Awards competition—is that business travel is a very visible and actionable function across large groups of employees. Among companies profiled, employees have responded positively to sustainability when they are educated with relatable data and empowered to make smart choices. And while many programs featured in this issue show big moves on the corporate level, they also concentrate on what business travel can deliver every day through empowering employees to travel smarter and make sustainable decisions for themselves and the planet.

I trust you will find valuable strategies and advice in this special issue, along with the trends and data that can help you formulate a business case to build a sustainable business travel program.



Enjoy the issue,

Elizabeth West

Editorial Director, BTN Group

BTNGROUP

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & GROUP PUBLISHER

LOUIS MAGLIARO
lmagliaro@thebtngroup.com • 973.769.0028

VICE PRESIDENT SALES
LINDSAY STRAUB
lstraub@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6274

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS
RICH MARKUS
rmarkus@thebtngroup.com • 301.944.4324

MICHELLE LUPO
mlupo@thebtngroup.com • 973.902.6728

EVENT MANAGER
CLAIRE LAVELLE
clavelle@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6271

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONFERENCE CONTENT
& STRATEGY
DAVID MEYER
dmeyer@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6246

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONTENT SOLUTIONS
MARY ANN MCNULTY
mmcnulty@thebtngroup.com • 630.519.4510

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF CONTENT SOLUTIONS &
CONFERENCES
JEN BANKARD
jbankard@thebtngroup.com • 717.460.1091

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
BRITTANY BALLETTA
bballetta@thebtngroup.com • 631.626.9263

GROUP DESIGN MANAGER
MARIZA MOREIRA
mmoreira@ntmlc.com • 201.902.1965

SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER
ANGELICA MUNDRIK
amundrick@ntmlc.com • 973-897-4425

MARKETING MANAGER

MAX BZDYK
mbzdyk@thebtngroup.com • 646.346.5676

SENIOR DIGITAL DIRECTOR
ALEXANDRA MANCINI
amancini@thebtngroup.com • 201.902.1984

PRODUCTION MANAGER
MICHELE GARTH • mgarth@ntmlc.com

PRODUCTION SPECIALIST
LISA GONZALES • lgonzales@ntmlc.com

NORTHSTAR TRAVEL GROUP

301 Route 17 North, Suite 1150 • Rutherford, NJ 07070
www.northstartravelgroup.com

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
JASON YOUNG

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
LISA COHEN

CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER/PRESIDENT,
TRAVEL GROUP
ROBERT G. SULLIVAN

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & GROUP PUBLISHER
DAVID BLANSFIELD

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
ARNIE WEISSMANN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES
JANINE L. BAVOSO

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT & PRODUCTION
ROBERTA MULLER

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, TECHNOLOGY
ANKEET PATEL

VICE PRESIDENT, DATABASE PRODUCTS
ELIZABETH KOESSER

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
ELIZABETH WEST
ewest@thebtngroup.com • 732.207.6318

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, THE BEAT
JAY BOEHMER
jboehmer@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6249

MANAGING EDITOR
CHRIS DAVIS
cdavis@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6248

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
MICHAEL B. BAKER
mbaker@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6250

SENIOR TRANSPORTATION EDITOR
DONNA M. AIROLDI
dairoldi@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6264

SENIOR EDITOR, LODGING & MEETINGS
ANGELIQUE PLATAS
aplatas@thebtngroup.com • 201.902.1985

ART DIRECTOR
JAMES JARNOT
jjarnot@thebtngroup.com • 646.380.6252

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The BTN Group also publishes:

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REPRINTS
ROBBIE RAY
Wright's Media
northstar@wrightsmedia.com • 877.652.5295

LIST RENTAL
DANIELLE ZABORSKI
MeritDirect
dzaborski@meritdirect.com • 914.368.1090

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BTN Group Vice President of Sales, Lindsay Straub at LStraub@TheBTNGroup.com.

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Dear BTN Readers,

At Avis Budget Group, we understand the significance of our role as one of the world’s leading transportation solutions providers.

We know it is important to act responsibly and do our part to support global efforts in the transition to a low-carbon economy. We

believe that leading the way in sustainable transportation solutions and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles is key to not only reaching our 2030 environmental targets but, more importantly, effecting substantial change.

We aim to provide sustainable transportation options by leveraging technology and investing in fuel-efficient, hybrid, and electric vehicles (EV). We know that our contribution is bigger than how we manage our fleet, which is why at our global locations, we implement leading sustainability practices to reduce energy and water consumption and increase waste diversion to minimize our overall environmental impact.

We also continue to innovate and invest in technology. As connected vehicles become increasingly more common, we are enhancing our core capabilities, including data intelligence and technology, to develop new lines of business.

Our long-term investments in connectivity, mobile digital user experience, and new technology partnerships, ensure that Avis Budget Group is in the best position for growth in an evolving transportation world.

Sincerely,

Beth Kinerk
Senior Vice President, Global Sales
Avis Budget Group



Dear BTN Travel Industry Family,

Welcome to the Business Travel News’ Sustainability issue. It’s inspiring to see our industry take actionable steps toward a more sustainable future.

At United, we recognize our contribution to climate change, and therefore our responsibility to change it. Our pledge to reduce 100% of our greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 is a formidable goal — one that requires collaboration, perseverance, and old-fashioned hard work. Collaborating with other industries will accelerate real solutions and lasting change, which is why we’re sharing more about our Eco-Skies Alliance program in this issue on page 15.

Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) is the fastest and most effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across our fleet — so we’re teaming up with our corporate customers to help invest in its production. Launched in 2021, the Eco-Skies Alliance has expanded to more than 40 corporate participants, which has allowed us to purchase over five billion gallons of SAF.

I am optimistic about the continued production of SAF; however, I’m even more inspired by the industry’s linking of arms on our path toward decarbonization.

Sincerely,

Doreen Burse
Senior Vice President, Worldwide Sales
United Airlines



FOREFRONT

Turning Words into Actions

BUYERS’ SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES ARE TAKING ANOTHER STEP TOWARD MATURITY.

BY CHRIS DAVIS

The evolution of corporations’ strategies to limit the carbon emissions generated by their business travel is continuing even as post-pandemic volume recovers, and buyers throughout the world are analyzing, developing and deploying multifaceted approaches to meet corporate goals. That’s the conclusion of a fresh survey of corporate travel buyers, managers and procurement executives conducted in May by BTN, which builds upon research conducted two years ago to illustrate what appears to be a continuing—accelerating, maybe—global drive to cut travel-related emissions. The following pages in this issue offer case studies that underscore the varied approaches companies are taking to achieve that goal. The discipline continues to mature. Hardly a one-size-fits-all process, companies have many options to analyze in determining the best path to achieve their sustainability goals. However those organizations choose to proceed, BTN’s survey shows that the majority of them are in fact proceeding, regardless of company size, industry or location.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Corporate efforts to reduce travel emissions typically are backed

by an overall effort to reduce emissions in other manners throughout the organization; it’s less usual to have the former as a standalone process without the latter. Of the respondents to

Has Co. Changed Overall Carbon Reduction Targets in the Past 12 Months?

	2021	2023
Increased	36%	32%
Decreased	2%	2%
Stayed the same	15%	31%
Never had reduction targets, but now considering	20%	16%
Never had reduction targets, not considering	15%	11%
Don't know	12%	7%

Sources: BTN February-March 2021 and May 2023 surveys of corporate travel managers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

European Regulations Target Sustainable Fuel Use

FRANCE BANS SHORT-HAUL TRAVEL ACROSS THREE ROUTES—A LARGELY SYMBOLIC MOVE, FOR NOW.

BY ROB GILL

Airlines in Europe have faced increasing regulatory pressure to reduce emissions, with the EU reaching an agreement on a mandate for sustainable aviation fuel use and France formally banning some short-haul domestic flights.

The European Parliament and the Council, which represents the 27 member states, agreed to a deal on the ReFuelEU Aviation mandate on April 25. The SAF policy, which will require airlines to increase their use of sustainable fuels for flights departing from EU airports, is now set to be implemented from 2025. It will start at a minimum 2 percent share of SAF and then rise to 6 percent in 2030, with the ultimate target of reaching 70 percent SAF by 2050. It is the final transport element of the EU’s Fit for 55 package,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

What’s Inside

At the Forefront

- 8 Sustainability Regulatory Timeline
- 9 Data Hub
- 12 Q&A with HRS’ Ragge

Sustainability Case Studies

- 14 Salesforce
- 18 EY
- 20 Aon
- 23 Siemens
- 25 Bank of America
- 27 Takeda Pharmaceuticals
- 29 University of California



HRS’ Tobias Ragge
Page 12

“As an industry we need to pro-actively address this and not wait for some-one else to try to do it for us.”



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Time Buyer Has Been Tasked with Assessing/Mitigating Corp. Travel Emissions

	2021	2023
More than 5 years	13%	9%
3 to 5 years	8%	19%
1 to 2 years	19%	20%
Less than a year	11%	9%
Co. hasn't tasked travel with addressing	48%	43%

Cos. That Have Changed Travel Approval Thresholds or Policies to Reduce Emissions

	2021	2023
Yes	20%	19%
No	73%	79%
I don't know	6%	2%

Are Travel Suppliers Selected Based on Sustainability?

	2021	2023
Sustainability is significant factor	12%	20%
If all else is equal, sustainability a factor	36%	42%
Pricing outweighs sustainability	19%	23%
Sustainability info requested but not seriously considered	3%	6%
Sustainability info not requested	31%	23%

Sources: BTN February-March 2021 and May 2023 surveys of corporate travel managers

METHODOLOGY

Business Travel News fielded the 2023 Sustainability Survey from May 18-30 on the SurveyMonkey platform. BTN via email solicited responses from subscribers to BTN, BTN Europe and BTN's newsletters. A total of 200 qualified respondents answered the survey, 73 percent from North America, 24 percent from Europe, and 2 percent from elsewhere. Not every respondent answered every survey question. Not all figures add up to 100 due to rounding. The 2021 survey, hosted on SurveyMonkey, was fielded Feb. 23-March 16, 2021, and returned 318 responses. The 2021 survey can be found in the Sustaining the Future issue on BTN's website.

Companies that increased their carbon emissions reduction commitments in the last 12 months

44%

BTN's 2023 survey, only 27 percent indicated that their organization never has had an overall corporate emissions-reduction target. That's down from 35 percent two years ago. (Another 7 percent this year didn't know if their companies had such a strategy, and that's down too, from 12 percent in 2021.)

Of those who said their companies had no such target, nearly 60 percent indicated they were considering setting one. Of all 2023 respondents, 32 percent indicated those targets have increased in the past 12 months and 31 percent noted they'd stayed the same, compared with 36 percent and 15 percent in 2021.

When asked whether the priority level their organizations had held for travel sustainability issues had changed in the prior 12 months, 44 percent of 2023 respondents indicated it had become a higher priority, while 6 percent suggested it was lower, compared with 50 percent and 8 percent, respectively in 2021.

TAKING ACTION

Even among those companies for which travel emissions reduction is high priority, the corporate travel department doesn't often act as an island in developing and deploying strategy, as many companies have developed cross-functional organizational task forces to address the issue, with some larger companies especially hiring sustainability executives to lead the process. Still, in many organizations, the travel manager remains a part of that process: About 57 percent of 2023 respondents indicated they had been formally tasked with assessing or mitigating travel emissions, up from 52 percent in 2021.

The list of specific actions those travel managers have taken to analyze or reduce emissions is varied and goes beyond simply

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Turning Words into Actions

taking steps to reduce travel (although 43 percent of 2023 respondents indicated they've been tasked with precisely that).

About 64 percent are collecting emissions data, while 45 percent are charged with modifying their travelers' booking behavior. About 22 percent are charged with exploring options like sustainable aviation fuel, carbon sequestration or other options, while about one in five each are tasked with exploring supplier partnerships around emissions and with carbon offset providers.

The question of cutting travel to meet carbon goals remains a sticky one. It's true that the most direct way of limiting emissions is to simply not travel, but with the homebound Covid era a bad memory for many and some executives embracing the return of face-to-face business, it can be a tough sell.

According to the 2023 survey, 19 percent of respondents indicated their organizations had changed travel policies or approval thresholds to meet corporate emissions goals, about the same as the 2021 figure. Similarly, 35 percent of 2023 respondents indicated their companies would reduce travel in the future for sustainability reasons, with another 26 percent projecting they would do so for other reasons.

SUPPLIER STRATEGIES

For some organizations, sustainability goals are pursued not only through internal processes but also through their organizations' partners in the supply chain. Including requests for specifics about sustainable practices has become commonplace in travel supplier requests for proposals, although the questions asked and information sought vary.

About 66 percent of 2023 respondents indicate that they ask for at least some sustainability information in travel supplier RFPs, compared with 55 percent who indicated they did so in 2021. (The latter figure has a much higher share of respondents who didn't know.)

What happens with that information remains in flux generally—most buyers have acknowledged sustainability doesn't outweigh cost or location when determining which suppliers will be selected to join a travel program. But 20 percent of 2023 respondents indicated information on sustainable practices "significantly factors" into supplier selection, while another 42 percent said it could break a tie between evenly matched vendors. ■

DATA HUB: BTN'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS TRAVEL SURVEY

EU & U.S. Sustainability Rules: An Implementation Timeline

Here's how corporate data requirements and regulations are rolling out in Europe and the United States:

2014

EU ADOPTED THE NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING DIRECTIVE

NFRD required certain companies to provide non-financial disclosure documents—understood as sustainability reports—with their annual reports.

March 2022

U.S. SECURITIES & EXCHANGE COMMISSION PROPOSED THE CLIMATE RISK DISCLOSURE RULE

The SEC originally expected to publish the rule in December 2023 but extended to April 2023.

Jan. 5 2023

EU CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING DIRECTIVE WENT INTO FORCE

Impacting EU Companies with €40M in turnover, €20M balance sheet and/or more than 500 employees, largely those already subject to the earlier Non-Financial Reporting Directive (CSRD is an expansion and evolution of NFRD over time).

April 2023

U.S. SEC DELAYED FINAL CLIMATE RISK DISCLOSURE RULE

The SEC closed the open comment period but the published rule will be delayed until at least fall 2023. That timeline pushes out the first data collection year, and delays standard disclosures in the U.S. to year-end 2024.

June 30 2023

EU CSRD MANDATORY EUROPEAN SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING STANDARDS TO BE FINALIZED

These go beyond environmental standards to include social responsibility, human rights, anti-corruption and board diversity.

2024

EU FIRSTYEAR CSRD DATA WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET ESRS FOR PUBLIC REPORTING IN 2025

Large EU companies to provide mandated data formulated to the European Sustainability Reporting Standard (ESRS).

2025

EU FIRST YEAR CSRD DATA WILL BE REQUIRED FROM EU SUBSIDIARIES OF U.S. COMPANIES OR U.S. COMPANIES LISTED ON A REGULATED MARKET IN THE EU FOR PUBLIC REPORTING IN 2026

(extensions to 2028 granted to certain U.S. companies).

2026

EU FIRST YEAR CSRD DATA WILL BE REQUIRED FROM SMALL AND MIDMARKET SUBSIDIARIES OF U.S. COMPANIES LISTED ON A REGULATED MARKET IN THE EU

ESRS STANDARDS WILL BE ADAPTED AND DEVELOPED TO APPLY TO THIS MARKET.

2028

EU FIRST YEAR CSRD DATA WILL BE REQUIRED FROM U.S. COMPANIES WITH MORE THAN €150M IN OPERATIONS IN WEU AND AT LEAST ONE LARGE BRANCH SUBJECT TO CSRD

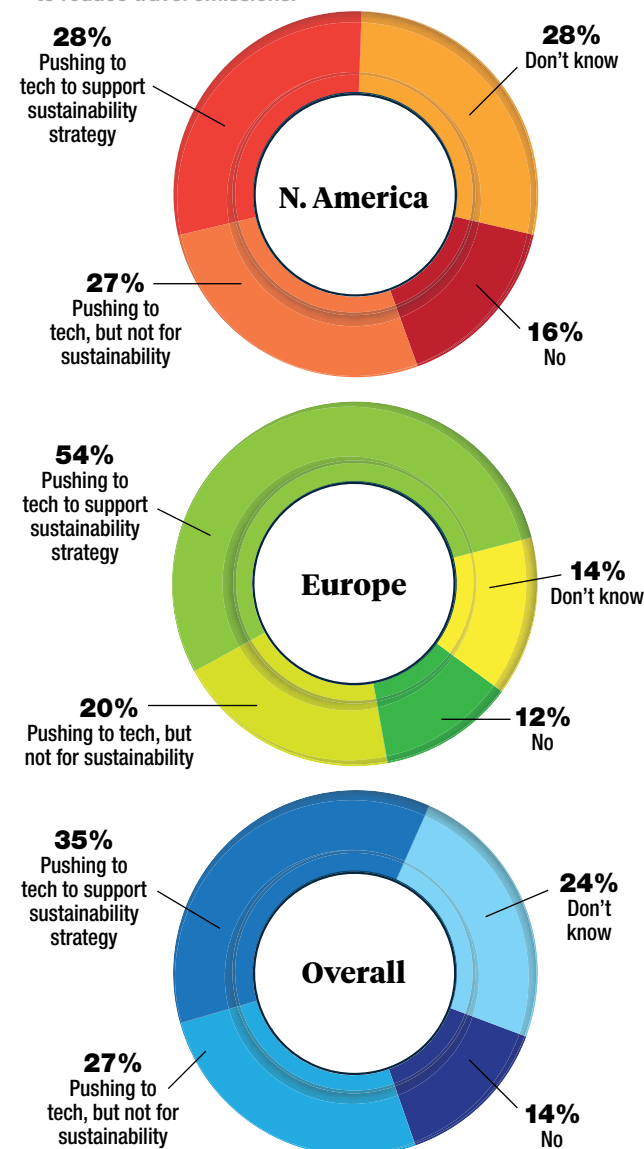
ESRS requirements or alternative standards to be developed; consolidated group data would also include non-EU activity.

Trends in Europe v. North America

BTN and BTN Europe surveyed 200 travel managers from May 18 to May 30 to understand how business travel sustainability fit into their companies' travel management priorities in 2023. The stats below compare and contrast three views of the data: North America-based travel managers, Europe-based travel managers and the total respondent base. The divergent results may largely be a product of the associated regulatory environment for each region in which corporations are (or are not yet, in the case of the U.S.) required to report in depth and to a specific standard about their carbon emissions—including Scope 3, which relates to business travel. The European Parlia-

Pushing Digital Alternatives

How intensively companies are using virtual meeting tech to reduce travel emissions.



ment expanded the existing Non-Financial Reporting Directive when it introduced the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, which went into force on Jan. 5, 2023. Faster moving regulations in the European Union have driven deeper awareness of sustainable business practices there as compared to the U.S. That said, the U.S. will not go unaffected by emissions reporting regulations. The Securities and Exchange Commission has rules pending, and they are expected to be finalized this fall. CSRD will also touch U.S. companies with operations in Europe; follow the disclosure timeline for both EU and US directives illustrated on page 8.

2023 Travel Management Priorities

Sustainability continues its struggle to break through other travel management priorities in North America. In Europe, it's a different story, where carbon emissions compete with pricing.

N. AMERICA

1. Reducing trip cost
2. Traveler risk management and well-being
3. Driving compliance
4. Managing travel data
5. Travel sustainability

EUROPE

1. Reducing trip cost
2. Business travel sustainability
3. Traveler risk management and well-being

OVERALL

1. Reducing trip cost
2. Traveler risk management and well-being
3. Driving program compliance
4. Sustainability

Getting Personal

Percent of travel managers personally concerned about their company's business travel emissions



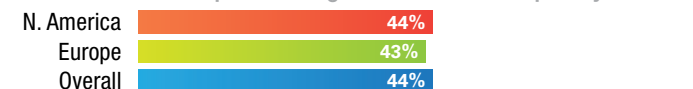
It's Official

Percent of travel managers officially tasked with reducing carbon emissions from their company's business travel



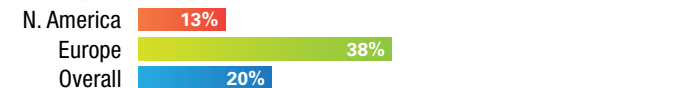
Sustainability Commitments Rising

Travel managers whose companies have increased travel sustainability priority in the previous 12 months; note in North America the increase still hasn't pushed it higher than fifth on the priority list



Choosing Suppliers on Sustainability Grounds

Percent of responding companies that prioritize sustainability over pricing in supplier choice.





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

European Regulations Target Sustainable Fuel Use

which is designed to turn climate goals into law, including the commitment to cut emissions by at least 55 percent by 2030. SAF can reduce carbon emissions by up to 80 percent compared with traditional kerosene jet fuel. The policy forms part of the European Green Deal initiative to make the continent carbon neutral by 2050.

“This political agreement is a turning point for European aviation, putting it on a solid pathway towards decarbonization,” according to EU commissioner for Transport Adina Valean. “Shifting to sustainable aviation fuels will improve our energy security, while reducing reliance on fossil fuel imports.”

As well as introducing the SAF mandate, airlines operating from EU airports will only be able to take on the fuel required for the next flight, rather than carrying excess fuel to avoid having to take on SAF-blended fuel. This over-fueling practice is known as “tinkering” and creates extra weight and carbon “leakage.” Airports will also be required to ensure that their fueling infrastructure is “fit for SAF distribution.”

Sustainability group Travel & Environment said the approval of the EU’s SAF mandate would “kickstart Europe’s green aviation fuel market” with T&E aviation manager Matteo Mirolo calling it “an unwavering endorsement of the world’s largest green fuel mandate for aviation.” He noted it “will require industrial support policies for synthetic kerosene but also stronger safeguards to ensure that no unsustainable biofuels creep into airplane tanks.”

AIRLINE INDUSTRY PUSHES BACK

The airline industry has pushed back on the requirement. At the International Air Transport Association’s annual meeting, held in Istanbul in early June, the group’s head, Willie Walsh, said it was an indication of “the EU as being anti-aviation, whereas other parts of the world are very positive, pro-aviation,” according to Reuters. Instead of mandates, IATA has called on governments to “act to ensure that SAF gets its fair production share,” which includes production incentives and diversifying methods and feedstocks available for SAF production, according to Walsh.

“With these two measures successfully in place, we can be confident that the expected 2028 production levels will be realistically aligned with our recently published roadmaps to net zero carbon emissions by 2050,” Walsh said in a statement. “That is important as we are counting on SAF to provide about 62 percent of the carbon mitigation needed in 2050.”

Lufthansa CEO Carsten Spohr, meanwhile, said that European airlines may be forced to increase fares and risk losing traffic to non-EU carriers because of the SAF mandate. He said that while the approach was right “in principle,” European airlines could lose

“Non-European airlines are not required to fill up with the sustainable—but expensive—fuel at their hubs. This will make tickets from European airlines more expensive because no airline can compensate for the additional cost.”

— LUFTHANSA’S
CARSTEN SPOHR

out because the EU’s regulations were not “competition neutral.”

“Currently, the mandatory blending quotas only apply within Europe, including feeder flights to our hubs,” Spohr said in a speech prepared for the carrier’s annual general meeting in May. “Non-European airlines are not required to fill up with the sustainable—but expensive—fuel at their hubs. This will make tickets from European airlines more expensive because no airline can compensate for the additional cost.”

Those higher prices could drive passengers to other carriers and to connections outside of Europe, which would counteract the mandate’s intent and “only lead to a shift in carbon emissions,” not a reduction, he said.

Short-haul flights on routes with comparable train service also has been in the sightlines of regulators, and France in May formally introduced the first ban on some routes with alternative train journeys of less than two and a half hours. The French government announced the ban as part of its Climate Law in 2021, and the European Commission approved it last December.

Initially, the domestic flight ban will only apply to three routes from Paris Orly airport to Nantes, Lyon and Bordeaux, but could be extended to other routes if equivalent train services are improved. The EU has stipulated that the measure must be reviewed after three years in place.

The enforcement of the ban is largely symbolic at this point, as the three affected routes are not currently served by any airlines. Air France stopped flying those routes in 2020 as a stipulation for receiving financial support from the French government during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Connecting flights are not affected by the ban, so it does not apply to any services to the country’s main hub at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport. ■



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AIR CANADA



Expert Q&A: BTN Group 2023 Sustainability Champion

The BTN Group in early May announced the recipients of its inaugural BTN Group Sustainability Awards. HRS CEO Tobias Ragge was voted by a panel of managed travel industry professionals and sustainability experts outside the travel industry as the 2023 Business Travel Sustainability Champion for his and HRS' work in putting forth the Green Stay Initiative, which creates standardized data points for the hotel community to convey their environmental conservation journey to business travel buyers and the procurement community. The program gained traction in a cash-starved, labor-starved hotel industry in the depths of a pandemic and has gained momentum across seven major hotel brands as well as independent hotels by offering hotels a clear "ramp up" journey to sustainability data transparency—all while keeping the program free of charge and the data open for hotels to use outside the GSI environment for other sustainability-oriented projects. Ragge sat down with BTN editorial director Elizabeth West to talk about the win and HRS' continued strategic plans around the Green Stay Initiative.

BTN: FIRST, CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER FOR BEING NAMED BTN GROUP 2023 SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR YOU, AND WHY IS AN AWARD LIKE THIS IMPORTANT TO OUR INDUSTRY?

Tobias Ragge: First and foremost, it shows the hard work that our team is putting into this is seen as valuable and addressing a very pressing topic in travel. It shows me we're doing the right things. The recognition itself is very important for the team because at the end of the day, let's face it, I'm the face to the outer world. Credit for the program needs to go to people like Martin Biermann, especially, who worked on so much of the intellectual property around the Green Stay Initiative and many others on the HRS team. You know, in terms of the work itself, I honestly never think of sustainability as having an endpoint, but just as a continuous journey. It's great HRS got this recognition from the BTN Group and it's a testimony to the importance of the work, but the work isn't over.



HRS CEO Tobias Ragge talks:

- BTN Group Sustainability Champion win
- Green Stay Initiative and its trajectory
- The responsibility—and power—corporates have to greenify the travel industry

THE GREEN STAY INITIATIVE IS THE BEDROCK UPON WHICH YOU WERE RECOGNIZED. WHAT HAS BEEN HRS' GOAL FOR THE HOTEL COMMUNITY AND FOR TRAVEL BUYERS IN INTRODUCING THAT PROGRAM?

Ragge: Prior to the pandemic, we saw momentum [toward] sustainable travel. So our supply partnership teams did the hard work to take hoteliers who might not always think about the importance of being on this journey, and convince them to give us at least 25 data sets of data. Sometimes they don't even know where to get it. Through [those data sets], you're creating transparency, which is always the first thing when you don't know what the result will be. On the other hand, it's scary for a lot of people because they are not seeing this as an opportunity, but much more as a risk. What if the data is showing their performance is not good?

Since then has been the publication of the latest on Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive in the EU [see page 8], so there's a lot of regulatory pressure for corporates to mitigate their carbon emissions, create transparency [in supply chains] and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by a certain period. 2040 is the climate pledge, but a lot of companies are now saying 2030.

In that environment, [hotels] have to deliver sustainability data to their corporate customers. If you are not providing transparency—whether that's through Green Stay or other initiatives—I think you will very soon no longer be part of large managed corporate programs.

SO THERE MUST BE DEMAND FROM THE BUYERS' SIDE FOR THIS. IS IT JUST THE ORGANIZATIONAL BUYER, OR IS THERE ALSO PRESSURE FROM EMPLOYEES WHO WANT TO BOOK SUSTAINABLE OPTIONS?

Ragge: It is right now the early stage of providing this, but I would say for the economic buyer it's a minimum criteria to take regulatory risk off the table for the corporation. For the employee, it's providing the capability to do the right thing [when booking their business travel] toward maintaining a greener planet.

SIEMENS LEVERAGES GREEN STAY AS AN INTEGRAL PIECE OF ITS LODGING PROGRAM. THEY'VE ALSO BEEN COLLABORATIVE AND LEANED IN WITH YOU. HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE A COLLABORATION PARTNER LIKE THAT?

Ragge: Those partnerships have been instrumental ... to create the success that this initiative has had. Because, quite frankly, when you go out and say, 'Hey, we want to do this, this is great. But you have to provide the data,' everybody is like, 'Why? We don't know where to get that data, it's a big effort,' etc.

ARE YOU ABLE TO SHOW HOTELS THAT PARTICIPATE IN GREEN STAY ACTUALLY CONVERT MORE BUSINESS, OR ONLY THAT THEY HAVE SUCCESS IN THE RFP PROCESS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY IN THE FINAL BOOKING WITH INDIVIDUALS?

Ragge: Because corporates like Siemens are making [supply chain sustainability reporting] more mandatory, the success ratio of hotels providing the Green Stay data is more than one-third higher in the conversation than the non-Green Stay associated ones. With companies making it more mandatory for their programs, the bookings will also come.

What's possibly more interesting, and we've talked about this before, is the convergence element [for travel and meetings], and we are seeing that more in corporate buying decisions which

"Lodging is the area in travel where individuals have the most choices. I usually have two or three routes operating and they operate more or less the same aircraft type. So I have really little choice. In lodging I have hundreds of choices, which are sometimes spread twenty-fold in terms of emissions."

are getting bigger and bigger [in terms of volume].

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON HOTELS WHEN AIR EMISSIONS MAKE UP SO MUCH OF THE TRAVEL EMISSIONS PICTURE?

Ragge: There's huge fragmentation of the [hotel] market to the corporation's business travelers. Taking all that data and the granularity on the one side but making it simple for the consumer to understand the points of difference on the other is challenging. But when you look at it, lodging is the area in travel where individuals have the most choices. When I go from A to B on a plane, I usually have two or three routes operating and they operate more or less the same aircraft type. So I have really little choice. In lodging I have hundreds of choices, which are sometimes spread twentyfold in terms of emissions. But I think we have to make that data picture more tangible to travelers—for example, 'This trade-off is equivalent emissions to heating four houses for an entire day.'

AS BTN GROUP'S SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION, WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CORPORATIONS AND CORPORATE TRAVEL AND GREENING THE ENTIRE TRAVEL INDUSTRY?

Ragge: Travel industry change will have to come from pressure from the corporate community because, let's face it, we're also in a world where recession is coming, maybe—inflation is high, people have less buying power, there's lot of uncertainty about capital markets, all of that. I see consumers are already starting to cut down on their expenditures and, let's be honest, a lot of people will say, 'Yes, we should save the planet, but I'm not starting this today, even if it's a tiny amount.' But it's going to get more expensive, so imagine how sensitive individuals will be. Regardless, corporations will need to account for that as part of business travel and new business practices going forward.

GREEN STAY IS FREE RIGHT NOW FOR BUYERS AND SUPPLIERS. WILL IT ALWAYS BE THAT WAY?

Ragge: We're not going to charge for any of these services. This is not changing in the future to say, 'Oh, now we have the data, you need to renew the data and pay us a fee or something.' At the end, that's also our commitment to creating that greener planet, even if that sounds like such a big audacious goal.

Travel is really visible, and I think our industry has to consider how we avoid the stigma that the tobacco industry has had with their product, given that about 10 percent of overall greenhouse gas emissions are produced by travel. As an industry we need to proactively address this and not wait for someone else to try to do it for us. ■



CASE STUDY: SALESFORCE

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM WINNER – N. AMERICA & EUROPE

MONETARY MOTIVATORS & MANAGEMENT BY METRICS

Salesforce has tied sustainability goals to executive compensation and is measuring progress by its carbon intensity—a ratio of emissions to revenue. Traveling for Salesforce is changing fast.

BY ANDY HOSKINS

Like many companies of its size, sustainability is a deeply embedded cornerstone of the corporate travel program at customer relationship management technology giant Salesforce. What sets the organization apart, however, is the alignment of emissions reduction targets with executive compensation packages. The closer the company gets to achieving its environmental goals, the greater the rewards for its top execs—a mechanism designed to ensure that sustainable practices are supported right from the top.

At the core of the company's travel-related sustainability efforts is the target of halving by 2030 its business travel emissions "intensity" compared with 2019, with intensity the amount of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of annual revenue. For 2022, Salesforce decided to make a portion of its top execs' bonus payments contingent on the company meeting interim targets towards that goal.

For the company's 2023 fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31, 2023, 10 percent of the annual performance-based bonus available to its executive officers was dependent on the company's ESG performance, with half of that based on equality targets and half on sustainability goals. The latter was further divided into two parts: achievement in reducing air travel emissions intensity (including charter jet usage) and increasing the percentage of spend with suppliers who commit to Salesforce's Sustainability Exhibit, a procurement contract designed to help the company and its suppliers reduce their collective carbon footprint and to set and meet science-based climate targets of their own.

GETTING THE DATA RIGHT

"The idea was developed by the sustainability team and they brought it to us in travel in 2021," explained Jenny Sabine, Salesforce manager of travel services and sustainability for Europe, the Middle East and Africa and Latin America. "We manage transaction data and we manage spend, but we'd never normalized or managed travel emissions alongside that spend, so the thought of being held accountable for produc-

ing emissions data that our executives were going to be compensated on was a little daunting."

The company has reported on its business travel and commuting emissions—and offset them—since 2019, but the travel data was fragmented across different sources and suppliers and assessed only annually, so significant changes were required. Salesforce started offsetting all Scope 1 and 2 emissions in 2017.

During the implementation of its travel management company four years prior, a feed from the agency's data lake into the company's platform had been established for spend reporting purposes. "We were able to build an emissions reporting process off that feed that was already coming in. As a tech company, we have the stack to do that," said Sabine.

"We've turned it [emissions reporting] from a very manual process into an automated one and accelerated what we used to do from annually to quarterly," she adds.

Sabine said the project was "very cross-functional," involving teams from sustainability, accounting, finance and operations, global travel and employee success, and consumed more than 600 hours of individuals' time. It also complies with internal and external auditing procedures.

"We tied the executive compensation program specifically to air travel because we need to be rigorous about the data reporting—it's the cleanest, most accurate data we have, and the vast majority [of travel] goes through our TMC and booking tool. Our hotel data is much more fragmented, for example," said Sabine.

In a proxy statement published in April, Salesforce reported it had exceeded both sustainability targets associated with its executive compensation scheme, and said the measures help "build accountability and accelerate our ESG initiatives".

"This is the first year [for the reduction and measurement], but we've exceeded the interim targets," said Sabine, who explained that an

United Airlines

United's Eco-Skies Alliance is helping customers help the environment

Through its Eco-Skies AllianceSM, United is building a win-win solution that's helping corporate customers help the environment. This first-of-its-kind program gives companies the opportunity to purchase sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and:

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- help their employees make more sustainable travel decisions
- help make sustainable aviation the norm

As the largest airline in the world, United knows how critical air travel is to the success of our corporate customers' businesses. But we also recognize that aircraft emissions are one of the biggest greenhouse gas contributors. That can be a stumbling block for customers who are as deeply committed to sustainability as United and are seeking ways to reduce their Scope 3 carbon emissions.

What's So Special About SAF?

At United, we believe sustainable aviation fuel is the fastest and most effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across our fleet. What's so special about SAF? It's a lower-carbon alternative to normal jet fuel that can be used to fuel existing aircraft without making significant modifications to the aircraft and their engines. It can be made from a variety of materials — even waste like banana peels and leftover cooking oil!

But as we began exploring ways to reduce our Scope 1 operational emissions, we were faced with a key reality of SAF: scalability. Current SAF supply is scarce and represents less than 0.1% of global jet fuel production, making SAF nearly three times more expensive than conventional jet fuel. Limited supply and this resulting "green premium" have hindered broader adoption by airlines.



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CORPORATE PROFILE



More SAF Requires Corporate Alliance

United realized a cross-industry effort would be necessary for any company to reduce their carbon footprint — it could not be done alone. The stage was set for United's Eco-Skies Alliance.

Launched in 2021, the Alliance leads global corporations to collectively contribute toward the purchase of SAF. The Eco-Skies Alliance — and our customers' participation — drives increased SAF demand and usage by funding the green premium. This creates a strong market demand signal for SAF while providing Scope 3 emissions reductions for customers who can officially claim the carbon reductions related to their SAF purchase.

This year, our Eco-Skies Alliance expanded to more than 40 corporate participants. With their help, United has invested in the future production of more than five billion gallons of SAF — the most of any airline in the world.*

Building A Better World for All

While many airlines have set sustainability goals for 2050, United offers a real and tangible way for our corporate customers to participate in and accelerate sustainability progress toward their company's goals and the airline industry as a whole — helping to create a better world for all of us.

About United for Business

United for Business works with companies of all sizes to provide customized travel solutions that are cost effective, can promote sustainable aviation, and meet their distinct needs. For more information on working with United for Business or joining the Eco-Skies Alliance, visit united.business.

*Based on publicly announced airline offtake agreements for future purchases of SAF



Learn more about United's Eco-Skies Alliance at united.com/ecoskiesalliance



CASE STUDY: SALESFORCE

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM WINNER – N. AMERICA & EUROPE

intensity target was chosen because “the company continues to grow and we need to be out there in front of customers. There might come a time when we have to look at our targets and increase them. A 50 percent reduction might not be enough.”

With financial incentives backing such a public reduction commitment, tracking Salesforce travel emissions against goals has become a priority.

“We now measure both cost and carbon savings on a quarterly basis and have a weekly check-in to track and trend,” said Sabineu, who believes the program—and the carbon intensity metric, in particular—is a blueprint for other organizations for how to tackle carbon emissions in the face of growth. “[It] has ripple effects beyond our own operations,” she said.

TRAVEL SUSTAINABILITY LEVERS

In the meantime, the company continues to pull available levers as it works to reduce emissions intensity and its overall footprint.

Internal travel is in the firing line, with all such trips now considered exceptions and requiring EVP level approval. The company also is discouraging one-day trips and has seen a rise in longer, multipurpose trips.

“We raise reminders when someone is searching flights for a particular origin and destination combination to either extend their trip to make it more purposeful or to consider making it virtual,” said Sabineu. She cited Sydney-Melbourne and several U.S. pairings as prime examples.

Salesforce has worked to shift travelers to rail over the last three years, identifying 10 high-volume routes, mainly in Europe and the Northeast U.S., where it has been able to negotiate preferred rates. “We’ve been serving pop-up messaging and guidance on those specific routes when someone searches for flights, guiding them towards rail instead,” said Sabineu.

The company continues to offset the emissions it cannot avoid using what it calls high-quality, vetted off-

sets. And as a founding member of the First Movers Coalition, it also invests in carbon removal technology and purchases sustainable aviation fuel which it includes within its offsets rather than claiming as an emissions reduction.

GETTING PERSONAL

Coming later this year is a sustainability dashboard that will give employees and their managers visibility into the emissions they personally generate in each category of travel—air, hotel, ground, rail and personal car mileage.

“This will help individuals see the impact of the choices they make,” said Sabineu. “It will also help us assess and review the data and see how we’ve been able to shift modes of transport. We think there might also be the opportunity for more restrictive policies by country or region, for example—we see that as a lever for the future.”

The dashboard will enable comparisons with 2019 data and will be updated daily. Notably, it will feature only emissions information, not spend data, which is visible to managers via a separate dashboard.

“We do not want to get into the business of comparing whether emissions savings translate into monetary savings, because that might not always be the case. In our minds, that defeats the whole purpose of training and educating the business to reduce emissions,” said Sabineu.

The new dashboard will be piloted with select teams and could be rolled out to all employees by the end of the year. “We think it will generate some healthy competition. We want to educate the business so that when you’re thinking about T&E cost savings, you should be thinking equally about your emissions savings—it’s not one or the other,” said Sabineu.

Could trip emissions play a part in the approvals process one day? “It’s definitely something we could look at in the future,” she added.

“We’re building the tools now so that we have a bit of a runway for the business and time for everyone to get used to these tools,” Sabineu said, “so that when we have more stringent goals and targets, we will be equipped to meet them.”

“We do not want to get into the business of comparing whether emissions savings translate into monetary savings, because that might not always be the case. ... That defeats the whole purpose of training and educating the business to reduce emissions.”

— SALESFORCE'S
JENNI SABINEU



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:
Salesforce

HEADQUARTERS:
San Francisco

NUMBER OF TRAVELERS:
35,000+

CHALLENGE:
Reduce business air travel emissions

KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:

- Tie bonus available to executive officers to achievement in meeting sustainability goals
- Enhance emissions reporting capability
- Require higher level of approval for internal business travel
- Discourage one-day business trips
- Shift travelers to rail on select high-volume European and North American routes



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CORPORATE PROFILE

Avis Budget Group

Avis Budget Group is a leading global provider of transportation solutions, operating three of the most recognized brands in the industry through Avis, Budget, and Zipcar, the world’s leading car-sharing network.

Together, our brands offer a range of options, from car and truck rental to on-demand car-sharing that bring vehicles closer to where and when customers need them.

We also have one of the largest fleets of connected vehicles in our industry, and are committed to moving the future of transportation forward.

Moving The Future Of Transportation Forward

At Avis Budget Group, we envision the future of transportation where vehicles will be connected, on-demand, and environmentally friendly.

There will be more green spaces than parking spots, everyone will have easy access to transportation, and municipal infrastructure will prioritize more modes of sustainable transportation. Our determination to see this future come to life has heavily influenced our partnerships, programs, vehicles, and our commitment to progressing our Environmental, Social & Governance strategy.

Our 2030 ESG Targets

- Reduce absolute Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) 30% by 2030 from 2018 base year
- Minimize Water Footprint 30% by 2030 from 2018 base year, prioritizing water-stressed locations
- Achieve zero Waste-to-Landfill for tires, windshields, motor oils, and car batteries



SOCIAL

- Invest \$10B in Diverse Suppliers
- Maintain 100% Gender Pay Equity
- Maintain 50% Employee Diversity

GOVERNANCE

- Train 100% of Rental Agents to help combat Human Trafficking

Offering a Green, Smart, Safe Fleet

We believe the passenger vehicle ecosystem is heading towards electric and hybrid vehicles. In anticipation of this shift, we have been working with our Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) partners to optimize a product line for EVs, while our charging infrastructure partners tackle logistical hurdles.

Our customers can choose from a wide variety of vehicles, including hybrids, electric, or fuel-efficient vehicles, at virtually all our rental locations. As the demand for EVs and availability of charging stations evolve, we will allocate these vehicles where they are most needed and have access to the necessary infrastructure.

Innovation & Partnerships

We continuously evaluate opportunities to leverage technology and build new business models. Our long-term investments in connectivity, mobile digital user experience, new technology partnerships, and self-service fleet management ensure we are in the best position for growth in a new transportation world.

Our Promise

As a leading global transportation provider, we promise to support the transition to a low-carbon economy and employ practices that promote a more fair, just, and equal workplace and community.

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CASE STUDY: EY

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM HIGHLY COMMENDED – EUROPE

AUTOMATION TO DRIVE GREENER CHOICES

EY changed its travel and meetings policies to combat carbon emissions. It built pre-travel approval automation—with relatable data details—to influence travelers to adopt.

BY LAUREN ARENA

When consulting giant EY made a public commitment in 2021 to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and reach net zero by 2025, the travel, meetings and events team knew they were in for a challenge.

“Business travel represents more than 70 percent of our overall carbon emissions, so we have a massive role to play,” said EY’s global head of travel, meetings and events, Karen Hutchings.

The company has pledged reduce absolute emissions by 40 percent across Scopes 1, 2 and 3 by 2025, against a 2019 baseline, and then plans to remove or offset more than the remaining amount of emissions every year.

When the ambitious target was announced, and subsequently approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), Hutchings and her team “had a seat at the table” when senior leaders gathered to discuss exactly how the business would achieve its goals.

“We were able to make recommendations to change our travel policy and drive behavior change [among our travelers] so that we can achieve our goals without having to offset,” Hutchings explained. “As it stands, we’re on track to deliver to that [2025] goal because we’ve put in place some simple directives to change behavior.”

This included three key policy changes. The first was eliminating day trips. The second was encouraging rail over air travel, and the third involved introducing a new meetings and events policy to encourage face-to-face meetings are held in venues that are easily accessible via public transport and where are least half of the meals served are vegetarian “as meat accounts for nearly 60 percent of all greenhouse gases” generated by food production, said Hutchings.

WALKING THE TALK

Policy change can be easy to make on paper, but implementation is the biggest hurdle. With some 150,000 travelers in its program, EY turned to automation to “nudge” travelers toward making more sustainable choices.

“Behind the scenes, we’ve assessed every air route that has a viable rail option and anyone who books an air ticket on one of these routes will be ‘pinged’ shortly afterwards [with a message that says] ‘you’ve booked a flight on this route, however, we recommend from a sustainability perspective that you take the train, so please go ahead

and cancel your air travel.’ We’ve set this up for hundreds of city pairs,” Hutchings explained.

Automated messages also alert travelers when out-of-policy bookings occur and encourage the use of virtual meeting tools as an alternative to travel.

All of the above features are wrapped up in the EY Sustainable Travel Approval Tool (STAT), which the travel, meetings and events team co-developed with IBM over an eight-month period and launched, first in the U.S., in 2022. With the aim of providing travelers greater visibility on their carbon footprint based on the travel choice they make, STAT has since been deployed in 41 countries.

“Where it really resonates is where there is a viable rail option to air [travel],” Hutchings said. “[STAT] gives really clear comparisons between the impact of emissions from air versus rail. It shows that in numbers, but it also tells travelers how long would it take a tree to grow to offset the decision they’ve made, or how many houses could be lit and for how many hours [with the same amount of emissions].”

The key to driving behavior change—and the success behind EY STAT, according to Hutchings—is the ability to make data relatable.

“It’s one thing to be told that you have to do something, but if there’s no real reason as to why that makes sense, then it’s hard for people to understand why they’re doing it,” she said.

“We’ve seen so many tools out there that quote a lot of numbers, but unless you’re an ESG expert, no one knows what these numbers actually mean. We want to make sure [our travelers] are fueled with the information they need to make the right decision. And as we see it, current online booking tools don’t have the ability to provide information that’s relatable... So, with STAT, we wanted to make [emissions data] understandable, tangible and relatable to our employees.”

Travelers must gain approval via STAT prior to accessing EY’s online booking tool, however Hutchings said she is talking to different companies

to see how the tools can be better integrated.

Line managers—or those responsible for approving travel requests—also receive automated updates via STAT and are notified as to the number of people they’ve approved to go on a particular trip against an engagement code or destination date, Hutchings explained.

“The tool takes the emphasis away from cost and puts it squarely on emissions. So, approval is based on emissions with an FYI of the cost, not the other way around,” she said. “Because if people don’t travel as much, we’re going save the organization money anyway. So, we don’t need to focus on cost savings because better decisions will drive that.”

And the proof is in the pudding. Since the release of EY STAT, same-day trips have dropped 15 percentage points, globally.

Rail bookings in countries where the tool has been deployed have increased to 25 percent of all bookings. For one participating firm where there is an extensive rail network, EY’s rail bookings increased from 20 percent to 63 percent following implementation of the approval tool.

Overall, rail bookings have increased to 22 percent of all travel bookings, compared with 10 percent in 2019.

GLOBAL GOALS, LOCAL REALITIES

As one of the Big Four accounting firms, EY has more than 700 offices in more than 150 countries and while the company’s member firms are guided by global ESG goals, these are often translated into local travel policies.

“There was a socialization that happened when the global [carbon emissions reduction] goal was set, and so everybody from the member firms would have bought into that concept,” Hutchings explained. “But the reality be can be quite different. ... There are some markets where sustainability is not high on the priority list from a cultural or governmental perspective, so we’re helping [travelers and stakeholders in] those

“The tool takes the emphasis away from cost and puts it squarely on emissions. So, approval is based on emissions with an FYI of the cost, not the other way around.”

— EY’S KAREN HUTCHINGS

countries instigate change.”

Hutchings said the travel, meetings and events team has “taken it upon ourselves” to oversee rollout of EY STAT, ensuring regional and local stakeholders were informed about travel policy changes and were presented with the business case behind STAT.

“Because so much of our carbon emissions come from business travel, it’s our job to ensure EY’s ESG goals are adhered to... this has given us something completely different to get involved with. It’s given us leadership,” Hutchings said.

On top of individual traveler dashboards that chart carbon emissions, a monthly emissions dashboard is shared with key regional stakeholders to chart how member firm countries and service lines are tracking against their carbon budgets.

While EY implemented carbon budgets last July, Hutchings said “we don’t insist on decisions made against it.” However, travel emissions dashboards are “certainly part of the teams’ business reviews with service lines” to ensure the company meets its goals, she said.

PUSHING TECHNOLOGY FURTHER

Air and ground transport are the current focus of EY’s carbon emissions measurement, however Hutchings and her team are now “doing a lot of work” with a select number of hotel providers in order to integrate emissions data linked to hotel usage as part of STAT.

“Measuring individual hotels is where we want to get to,” Hutchings said. “We want to be able to make recommendations to our employees that say, ‘If you select this hotel based on various criteria, it is recommended over another,’ but that’s still a work in progress and we’re using third parties to help build that.”

To meet the needs of its young employee base—the average age of EY employees is 27—the company also is looking to integrate gamification into STAT, along with the ability to earn an “eco badge” based on sustainable travel choices.

“We’ve gone out and gathered feedback so that we can develop the right tools to help drive change,” Hutchings said. “We love the challenge because it’s given us an opportunity to showcase the innovation that we have in the team.”



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:	KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:
EY	• Changed policy to eliminate same-day trips, push air travel to rail and plan meetings at venues with vegetarian meals
HEADQUARTERS:	• Built the EY Sustainable Travel Approval Tool with IBM; deployed in 41 countries
London	• Automated messaging to remind and recommend modality change from air to rail, across hundreds of routes
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT:	• Communicated data in relatable, rather than abstract terms
Achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2025; reduce absolute emissions by 40% across Scopes 1, 2 and 3 by 2025 compared to 2019	• Working to integrate hote data and gamificationl



CASE STUDY: AON

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

SUSTAINABILITY TAKES FOCUSED & FAR-REACHING EFFORTS

Aon's vision for a sustainable business has resulted in corporatewide participation in industry groups as well as focused initiatives that deliver internal reductions. It looks for similarly inclined partners who want to work together to tackle climate goals.

BY MARK FRARY

Global professional services and management consulting firm Aon says it is “in the business of better decisions.” Increasingly, those decisions take sustainability and the planet into account.

The \$12.5 billion revenue company is headquartered in London with North American operations based in Chicago. It operates in more than 120 countries and territories.

Abigail Neary, who leads the corporation's global sustainability efforts and chairs its net-zero steering committee, says the focus on sustainability is the culmination of a number of forces coming together over a number of years—part regulatory, part customer, partly from the C-suite and partly from the grassroots levels of the organization.

BIG-PICTURE COMMITMENTS

“We have the ESG commitment of our CEO and the C-Suite, we’ve got a lot of passion from colleagues and clients are asking for this. There’s a lot of regulation in EMEA and—in particular the U.K.—that we’ve been following,” she said.

Aon's drive for sustainability has three pillars:

- Its own decarbonization efforts and investments in sustainability
- Work to accelerate clients' climate resiliency and response
- Convening leaders and organizations to collaborate and scale its ambitions

At the heart of Aon's sustainability efforts is a commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, validated by the Science-Based Targets initiative.

The company's emissions footprint comes largely from the supply chain, real estate and travel and has focused its efforts in those areas. By 2022, the company had reduced emissions by 16 percent on 2019 levels.

“Aon has also signed on to support the Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and works with the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board Alliance

to participate in a multi-stakeholder forum with the goal of creating a common language, disclosures, and discourse around sustainability issues focused on finance,” Aon sustainability senior manager Amy Newkirk told BTN.

Aon is also a founding member of ClimateWise, part of the Centre for Sustainable Finance in the U.K.

“ClimateWise is uniquely positioned to bring together insurance industry organizations, academics and global sustainability leaders to respond to the risks and opportunities of climate change,” said Newkirk.

The company is also engaged at an international level with making investment and insurance sustainable. It is a signatory to the UN's Principles for Sustainable Insurance (PSI) and the UN Principles for Responsible Investing and is represented on the PSI board. This works to develop frameworks for the insurance industry addressing ESG risks and opportunities.

Sustainable sourcing is a key strategy, and eight of Aon's top 10 suppliers have set their own targets with SBTi.

“We work closely with suppliers to understand their existing carbon reduction commitments and strategies and encourage them to take steps toward those goals, in addition to considering future options to change suppliers,” said Newkirk. “Because many of our clients are also our suppliers, we see a significant opportunity for mutual collaboration.”

Neary added that supplier sustainability also includes a commitment for Aon to work with small, medium and diverse businesses and growing their capabilities in the community.

TRAVEL, MTGS. IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Business travel and meetings are an important source of carbon emissions for the company, which has some 50,000 frequent travelers.

Kelly Pereda, Aon's director of global travel and meetings operations, says this supplier focus is key. “In the travel space, we’re very cognizant of how we partner with our suppliers and because

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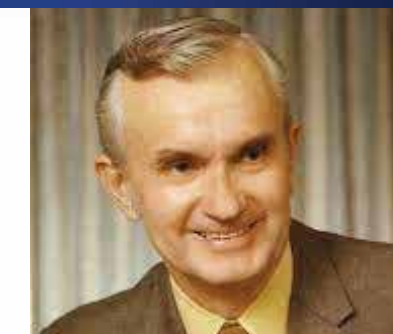
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CASE STUDY: AON

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

it's to our mutual benefit," she said.

"Through annual [request-for-propopsals] requirements, we ensured hotels were meeting sustainability standards and incorporated those into our global hotel program," said Newkirk. "Working with our fleet and car rental providers, we're moving toward electrifying fleet where possible. With airlines, it's important we work closely when data reporting is presented and help influence the next generation of services and common goals."

One of the flagship initiatives in the travel space relates to the use of sustainable aviation fuels.

Aon was the first client of American Express Global Business Travel to join the Avelia SAF pilot announced by the travel management company and Shell Aviation in 2022. Avelia is a book-and-claim solution for business travel which initially offers corporates access to around one million gallons of SAF, which Amex GBT says is enough to cover 15,000 business traveler flights.

"The SAF will be certified in line with the regulatory standards set within the country of delivery and purchase commitments by pioneering corporations are all supporting market development and driving investment to accelerate global supply," said Newkirk.

She added, "The business travel community is highly influential and concentrated, compared to leisure travel. While representing a relatively smaller portion of aviation, business travel can play a large role in leading the transition toward net-zero aviation. As the first corporate adopter of this program, Aon is investing to ensure a sustainable pipeline of SAF is available to reduce travel emissions now and in the future."

One of the steps in raising awareness with colleagues has been making carbon emissions data available in the online booking tool and mobile apps during the past 12 months. Emissions data also is included on invoices.

"Our mission is to simplify and standardize the business travel booking process, and to deliver services throughout the travel lifecycle that are

"The business travel community is highly influential and concentrated, compared to leisure travel. While representing a relatively smaller portion of aviation, business travel can play a large role in leading the transition toward net-zero aviation."

— AON'S AMY NEWKIRK



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY: Aon	KEY ACTIONS & PLANS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Founding member of Climate Wise in the U.K.• Supply side initiatives to partner with suppliers that have SBTi commitments in place<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Source hotels with sustainability initiatives◦ Working with car rental companies to stimulate demand for electric fleets◦ Accurately reporting air emissions data to influence next-generation goals• First company to sign onto Amex GBT's Avelia SAF partnership with Shell to purchase the equivalent of 15,000 flights.• Created a Sustainable Meetings & Events Guide to decarbonize Aon's event planning practices• Hybridized workplace strategy has reduced travel and serviced clients with the employees "best placed" to do so
HEAD-QUARTERS: Chicago	
NUMBER OF TRAVELERS: 50,000	
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT: Achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2030	

aligned with Aon's goals and policies, including making travel more sustainable and contributing our net-zero commitment," said Newkirk.

To raise awareness at Aon, the travel team has worked on a number of initiatives, including running a series of webinars.

"One of the major achievements of these quarterly webinars was the development of the Aon Sustainable Meetings and Events Guide. Driven by an interest in making events more sustainable, this guide was developed in collaboration with colleagues from across Aon, including the meetings and events, travel and sustainability teams. A cross-functional team was deployed to help develop materials to guide future events," said Newkirk.

The team has also posted content on Aon Avenue, the company's Yammer social media communities and through bi-weekly leadership messages.

Offsetting currently is not part of Aon's approach to sustainability. "Our plan is really 'reduce and replace.' We can reduce usage, reduce consumption, reduce emissions and replace high emitting things with lower emitting things," said Neary. "At the same time, we have made investments in offset partners. We have a collaboration with a with an organization called Revalue Nature and there are development carbon offset projects."

Does the commitment to sustainability go as far as reducing demand for business travel? As a consultancy, Aon is driven primarily by client requirements, and Pereda said that clients and colleagues still recognize the value of face-to-face meetings.

She said despite that, the company has limited its travel footprint through its Smart Working hybrid working strategy introduced due to the pandemic. The company said that Smart Working's aim is "to create a healthy, productive, inclusive, and sustainable way of working."

What does success look like for Aon?

"We are measuring our success by how we can achieve net zero by 2030 and help to really achieve those... agreements that are part of the Paris Agreement," said Neary, adding that true success would be "if the world starts to decarbonize on the 1.5 degree pathway" with all companies making smarter decisions. ■



CASE STUDY: SIEMENS

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

SETTING SUPPLIER REQUIREMENTS

Siemens pushes its travel supplier partners toward more sustainable operations, but collaborates with them along the way.

BY AMON COHEN

Siemens believes carbon emissions can be reduced not only by traveling less but also by traveling smarter. Its travel sustainability strategy stands out especially for the focus it places on supply-side innovation.

Most notably, the Germany-headquartered conglomerate is the first corporate adopter of the Green Stay Initiative created by hotel portal HRS, allowing travelers to identify more sustainable accommodation options at the point of booking. Siemens has also begun a pilot with Air France-KLM to use only sustainable aviation fuel on two routes where it is a major customer.

"We say to travelers, before you start planning your trip, ask 'Should I stay or should I go?'" said head of global airline procurement and payment solutions Susanne Steinmann. "This is of course the first step you have to take. The next step is to ask yourself how you travel and which suppliers you use. The clear advice from us to our travelers is, we have the right suppliers in the portfolio and in our booking tool, so you have the ability to choose the most sustainable way to travel."

Discriminating between suppliers based on environmental performance can make a meaningful difference, said Steinmann's colleague, head of global lodging procurement Eric Hofmeister. According to the methodology used by Siemens, the per-night equivalent carbon emissions for a hotel stay, depending on the choice of property, varies from six to 130 kilograms, a range that startled Hofmeister when he looked into the numbers. "You truly have a chance to travel smart," he said. "You cannot always avoid emissions by not traveling, but you can instead travel making the right choices."

Siemens' supply-side sustainable travel initiative is just one part of a strategy that works toward the company's overall sustainability goals. Siemens has committed to achieving net zero operations by 2030, following a plan approved through the Science Based Targets initiative. As of December 2022, the company had reduced Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 46 percent compared with 2019 and aims to achieve 90 percent reduction by 2030. Siemens also has targeted Scope 3 emissions with a goal to reduce by 20 percent by 2030, compared to 2020. Business travel is part of the Scope 3 target, and while no specific goals have been set for travel emissions, Siemens' many supply-chain efforts roll up to that Scope 3 initiative.

GSI'S NEXT STEP

Siemens has 200,000 travelers globally and is pursuing accommodation-related emissions reduction by requiring all hotels in its program to join the HRS GSI project. HRS assesses properties on environmental criteria and awards those which qualify with a green leaf logo on its booking tool.

To date, 50,000 hotels have elected to participate in GSI, with more coming on board. In the Siemens preferred hotel program for 2023, 72 percent participate in Green Stay.

A critical breakthrough made by GSI, according to Hofmeister, is that it steers travelers toward making greener choices at the point of booking. "It's very important we have transparency about the emissions we are making because only then can you make a conscious decision about, 'Do I really have to travel?'" he said. "If you have the comparison between different suppliers, if there is a hotel which is 50kg per night instead of 6kg, you can also make a very conscious decision."

Hofmeister hopes to make choices even clearer. At present, all hotels are recognized in the same way: either they are considered sufficiently sustainable to earn the green leaf symbol, or they have no green leaf at all.

Within the next couple of months, Hofmeister intends that each property will instead display a score. Hovering over the score with a mouse would reveal details including the hotel's performance on such criteria as carbon emissions, water and waste. "The score very much depends on the destination," said Hofmeister. "In some, for example, water is more critical than other criteria."

Siemens has played an integral part in refining the GSI process, especially the questionnaire that hotels have to complete, leading to a simplified version for smaller suppliers.

"HRS started with a version where you immediately had to answer 80 questions, but [we realized] that independent hotels do not have the resources to cover this topic, and that's why we introduced this staged approach,"



CASE STUDY: SIEMENS

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

Hofmeister said. “The threshold is not so high. That was my mission last year; come on board with this journey. I don’t want to harm you because in the early stage you took the initiative.”

For the forthcoming transition to scoring, hotels have to input supporting data. “It’s up to us at Siemens to put a weighting on it to come up with the score,” said Hofmeister. “HRS makes the methodology behind it, and we give the weighting. HRS is not the rule keeper. It’s us.”

Despite the work that has gone into the initiative, Siemens travelers are not obliged to book GSI-designated hotels. “I see myself as responsible for driving behavior in a different direction by making transparent which hotels are sustainable,” Hofmeister said.

SEEKING AIR SOLUTIONS

Achieving transparency for air bookings is proving much harder as Siemens strives along with the rest of the travel purchasing community to obtain reliable, granular emissions data. “Online booking engines always display averages, so it’s not really an accurate comparison,” said Steinmann. “This is one where we are struggling, to be honest. You can only work with plug-ins at the moment.”

Progress has been made with certain airlines to report to Siemens using Siemens’ preferred standard for measuring GHG emissions. It is one of several examples, along with the GSI project, of the Siemens travel team’s policy of collaborating at a deep level with suppliers and service providers over its sustainability goals.

Another example is the agreement with Air France-KLM that the two carriers will use only SAF on its routes from Nuremberg to Amsterdam and Paris. “In the air sector we are trying to buy SAF from airlines to lower our emissions,” said Steinmann. “We are hoping to add more routes and we are working with Air France-KLM to find a very smart solution to add the cost to the ticket price, not pay up front. We’re hoping to get other airlines into it too.”

“You truly have a chance to travel smart. You cannot always avoid emissions by not traveling, but you can instead travel making the right choices.”

— SIEMENS’ ERIC HOFMEISTER



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:
Siemens

NUMBER OF TRAVELERS:
200,000 globally

CARBON COMMITMENT:
Reduce Scope 3 (incl. business travel) emissions by 20% by 2030, compared to 2020

MORE COLLABORATION NEEDED TO REACH GOALS

Another supplier category in which Siemens wants to see faster progress is car rental. The company is pushing vendors to offer more electric cars but is frustrated by delays in vehicle deliveries to the rental market.

Meanwhile, Hofmeister wants to broaden the scope of GSI beyond purely environmental targets. “Right now it is called Green Stay. It is not called Sustainable Stay,” he said. “We do not have all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals included, but that’s the target: to look at all dimensions of sustainability.”

Non-environmental aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals include eliminating hunger, improving health standards and gender equality. Hofmeister recommends the goals as the starting point for travel managers aiming to build a sustainability strategy. “Take a look at how your company is implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the GHG Protocol and start taking action in your area of responsibility,” he said.

In Steinmann’s view, “You simply have to start. The perfect solution is not there for the time being. You may take the wrong approach, as we did two or three years ago when we thought offsetting was the solution for reaching targets, but then SAF came out, and this is our new solution to start reducing emissions. It’s learning by doing things, maybe taking the wrong path but then appreciating that’s also a learning in the end.”

There is no perfect solution to combating the climate emergency, but the Siemens travel team believe every attempt to reduce emissions helps. Asked whether the hotel initiative is worthwhile, given that, according to Advito, hotel emissions represent only 3 to 4 percent of total business travel emissions, Hofmeister said: “You could then also challenge whether it really makes sense when you compare with our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, but I think that’s the wrong approach. We have significant travel volume, and we do have a significant carbon footprint produced by lodgings.

“At Siemens it is always our mission to drive innovation and sustainability, so we need to take action and do something,” Hofmeister said. ■

KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:

- Strategic SAF investments with Air France-KLM
 - Plans future SAF agreements with other airlines
 - Looking for ways to add cost to ticket price and not pay up front
- Collaborating on and pushing hotel suppliers through HRS’ Green Stay Initiative
 - Soon will score each hotel in the program
 - Wants to add UN Sustainable Development Goals to the program and ratings
- Pushing car rental vendors to offer more electric fleet



CASE STUDY: BANK OF AMERICA

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

FUELING CHANGE FROM THE TOP DOWN

Bank of America is among the world’s largest corporate buyers of sustainable aviation fuel. The high-profile sustainability investment benefits a travel program looking at how to promote a greener travel culture.

BY CHRIS DAVIS

Sustainable aviation fuel in recent years has emerged as a key tentpole of the aviation industry’s efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of air travel. Major airlines around the world have committed millions of dollars to the purchase and production of the fuel, which can be made from a number of natural and synthetic sources including plants, other biomasses and waste oil and fats. The International Air Transport Association believes SAF use could contribute about 65 percent of the emissions reduction necessary for the airline industry to reach net zero by 2050, and the European Union is moving toward a new mandate that carriers increase their use of SAF for flights departing from EU airports (see story, page 5).

But the drive to increase SAF use has expanded past airlines and governments to some consumers, including some of the largest corporate buyers of air travel, who are looking to SAF to help reduce their own carbon footprints. Among them is Bank of America, which in 2022 announced it would support the production and use of one billion gallons of SAF by 2023, calling itself the “first global financial institution to set a SAF usage and capital deployment goal.”

The company committed to “the mobilization of \$2 billion in sustainable finance for the production of SAF and other low-carbon aviation solutions,” and said it would commit to utilizing SAF for at least 20 percent of its jet fuel use, including all its corporate jet fuel.

To help reach that goal for its commercial air travel, Bank of America has partnered with American Airlines to support the purchase of one million gallons of SAF from 2021 through 2023, a deal that the bank said is “the largest publicly announced SAF agreement by volume between an airline and a corporate customer for reducing emissions for employee travel.”

Bank of America also has signed a 10-year deal with SAF supplier SkyNRG to support the production of 1.2 million gallons of SAF per year beginning in 2025,

and also participates in United Airlines’ Eco-Skies Alliance program, launched in 2021, which allows corporate clients to collectively contribute to the purchase of SAF.

The SAF commitments are part of a broader sustainability initiative for Bank of America, which counts itself as a member of several international corporate sustainability purchasing and development initiatives.

TRAVEL’S DOWNSTREAM IMPACT

Bank of America’s embrace of SAF as its carbon-reduction weapon of choice is a result of a top-down decision to look for high-impact sustainability approaches, said head of global corporate and executive travel Beth Sullivan.

Sullivan said the push for SAF originated with Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan, whom she called “super involved and well-versed” in the issue.

“It really came from the top down,” Sullivan said. “The good news was that I didn’t have to build a business case. But it was the right thing to do because when you look at travel, if you’re going to make a dent in anything, the biggest chunk is going to be air. Air is always the biggest chunk of any travel budget, and SAF is going to make the most difference in terms of not producing the kind of CO2 that we have traditionally produced.”

For now, there haven’t been many downstream effects on Bank of America business travelers from the SAF deals. The company does not yet include the SAF purchased for American Airlines flights in its own emissions-reduction calculations, nor is the acquired SAF dedicated to a specific airport or flights on a particular city pair.

“We’re basically doing it so they can start injecting [SAF] into their system,” Sullivan said of American. “We’re helping them pay the premium for [what is] obviously more expensive fuel.”



CASE STUDY: BANK OF AMERICA

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

Bank of America is testing book-and-claim solutions that would ensure the emissions reductions generated by the company's acquired SAF would be claimed only once.

The company is exploring the possibility of assessing an internal fee on commercial air tickets to help pay for SAF acquisition, Sullivan said. While current Bank of America SAF is centrally purchased, such a premium on individual air tickets, if implemented, could help spread awareness of the environmental effects of business travel, she said.

INFLUENCE AND PERSUASION

With travel volume ramping up as Covid-19 shutdowns recede further in the rear-view mirror, Bank of America has not notably tightened its travel policy, nor has it particularly discouraged air travel, Sullivan said. Yes, the company would like travelers to consider virtual meetings as a replacement for in-person and it preferences rail over air when practical. That said, the company sees value in resuming business travel for in-person interaction.

"We are an in-office culture. We think people work best when they're together, and travel lends itself to that as well," Sullivan said. "Regarding business class, we've not changed our travel policy on that, because we are trying to also balance health and wellness, and if someone shows up for a meeting after a red-eye and can't function, that's not great either."

As such, mandates aren't going to be part of the company's quiver in leading travelers to more sustainable options, which means persuasion will lead the way. Sullivan said she plans to introduce more sustainability data to travelers to help make that case.

"We have not taken those drastic means [in tightening policy], and I know some companies have," Sullivan said. "But for us, I think it's going to be more about influencing." She said she'd like to establish

"If you're going to make a dent in anything, the biggest chunk is going to be air. Air is always the biggest chunk of any travel budget, and SAF is going to make the most difference in terms of not producing the kind of CO2 that we have traditionally produced."

— BANK OF AMERICA'S BETH SULLIVAN



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:
Bank of America

HEADQUARTERS:
Charlotte, North Carolina

NUMBER OF TRAVELERS:
60,000

CARBON COMMITMENT:
Reducing air travel emissions; stimulating demand for sustainable air travel

SUPPLIER STRATEGY

Beyond the incorporation of SAF, Bank of America is considering would-be suppliers' sustainability initiatives in considering whether to work with them, to a point, Sullivan said.

"Certainly, we look at suppliers from a partnership perspective," Sullivan said. "When you think about a hotel, what's the chain's commitment to sustainability? Some do it better than others. Some airlines do it better than others. There are different levels of commitment. We certainly want to partner with those who share our culture, so that every time I stay at a hotel, I know they have a commitment to sustainability. I know I'm not going to get a plastic water bottle because they've got water bottles in the room that I can fill up."

Still, formal evaluation of hotels in a request-for-proposals process still mostly focuses on location and proximity, but sustainability issues are taking a larger role in in-person meeting site selection, Sullivan said. "When we're going out to bid for events, we're interested in what they can do to help cut emissions on meetings, and it's becoming a qualifier for us," she said. "We're really focused on how to quantify our emissions from meetings."

Sullivan said she's seen a willingness on the part of her company's travel suppliers to share information on sustainability initiatives, and she's also seen Bank of America's business travelers open to exploring greener options.

"I think because we haven't forced anything, we haven't heard anything negative from them. They all know that we as a company have a huge commitment to all things sustainable, and it is just part of our culture," Sullivan said. "As we start rolling out other initiatives, it'll be a nice connection for them. We can show them all the things that we're doing that will really help accelerate the decarbonization of travel." ■

KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:

- Mobilization of \$2 billion in financing for sustainable aviation fuel
- Commitment to utilize SAF for at least 20 percent of its jet fuel use, including all its corporate jet fuel
- Testing book-and-claim solutions for SAF
- Formulating an internal fee for airline tickets to help pay for SAF investments
- Sourcing sustainable travel and meetings partners



CASE STUDY: TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICALS

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

GUIDING TRAVELERS TO SUSTAINABLE CHOICES

Takeda encourages its travelers to make green choices with POS sustainability information, carbon footprint tracking and sustainability-related communications. Traveling for Takeda is changing fast.

BY DONNA M. AIROLDI

Pharmaceutical company Takeda started on its sustainability journey in the 1970s. The travel department, however, began to look more seriously at ways to contribute to the larger company goals around three years ago, Takeda global head of meetings and travel center of excellence Michelle DeCosta told BTN.

"We saw Takeda's overall goals, so we started to build our strategies and our plans," DeCosta said. "We knew that there was an opportunity, [and] the areas we manage—travel, meetings and events, fleet—are very visible to the employees."

One strategy was to invest in sustainable aviation fuel in 2021, with both United Airlines and Delta Air Lines, two of the pharma company's preferred carriers. Initiated by the travel department, Takeda was the first pharmaceutical company to make a SAF investment.

The United purchase was part of the carrier's Eco-Skies Alliance, which allows corporate customers to help purchase SAF for the airline. Takeda has a similar arrangement with Delta. The pharma company, which globally has about 26,000 travelers, purchased SAF toward its travel on key routes.

DeCosta understood Takeda would be making key sustainability investments, but she also knew the travel team couldn't make it happen alone. She reached out to Takeda's environmental, health and safety group to present the idea and found synergies between the teams and their reporting structures, which worked well together. By aligning travel to contribute to existing environmental strategies, Takeda funded the SAF investments through money set aside for EHS innovation projects.

As a first mover in the space, the initiative attracted the attention of other industry executives; so much so, it stirred notice at the highest levels at Takeda.

"[Our CEO] was really supportive. We had a call with his team earlier this year to talk about what other investments we could make from a sustainable travel perspective," DeCosta said. "So the door is open to conversation with him, which is really incredible."

BRINGING SUSTAINABILITY TO INDIVIDUALS

Driving sustainable travel initiatives still poses challenges. One of the big ones, DeCosta said, was to "overcome the lack of awareness among our traveler base, especially those in the United States," that they can personally make a difference with their own travel choices. Even though Takeda employees believed the company had a "keen interest" in sustainability, and had seen that with moves like the SAF investments, they didn't feel as individuals they could have an effect with their travel or meeting choices.

DeCosta's travel center of excellence aimed to change that perception. In the past 15 months the department has worked again with EHS, as well as with procurement, legal and the data, digital and technology department to take a variety of actions that bring day-to-day sustainability awareness and action to individual employees.

REAL-WORLD EMISSIONS INSIGHTS

Takeda is using its travel technology platforms to drive home the concept of personal impact on emissions reduction and is putting the information in a tangible context for travelers. For a couple of years, Takeda has used the Emburse Go app, internally branded MyTravel. In addition to itinerary management and real-time alerts, the app gives travelers their carbon footprint metrics broken down by flights, hotels and car rentals.

Instead of a raw number, the app gives equivalents for the carbon consumption of each trip. It will show that a trip "could have powered seven houses for four days," DeCosta gave as an example.

In November 2022, Takeda implemented Tripkicks in Concur Travel to take that education a step further. Instead of reporting on what a traveler chose in the past, Tripkicks communicates emissions on trip selection in real time at the point of booking. For now, the tool focuses on air and rail travel, denoting the most eco-friendly flights based on the route



CASE STUDY: TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICALS

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

and the aircraft scheduled to fly. For certain routes, Tripkicks will throw up a recommendation to switch a flight search to a rail search to save on emissions. Takeda has both Amtrak in the U.S. and European rail providers embedded in the Concur tool.

"Definitely in Europe, the opportunity is there," DeCosta said, but also cited the New York-Boston route as a U.S. opportunity. Regardless of location or whether a traveler has a viable rail option, the Tripkicks overlay in Concur "helps you to make a more eco-friendly choice," DeCosta said.

Takeda wants to bring similar sustainability information into the decision-making process for hotel and car rental—and Tripkicks plans support that soon. Takeda is also looking for a tech partner to help plan more sustainable meetings. "Not just the big meetings, but also individual team meetings," said DeCosta.

GOING FOR A RIDE

At the end of 2021, DeCosta implemented a self-designed "green rebates" deal with Uber for Business, wherein Takeda's rebates earned through its Uber for Business partnership are used to offset the carbon emitted by Takeda rides, rather than bringing that money back to the company. "We are working on renewing it for next year," said DeCosta, who added that Takeda was also looking to optimize the type of offsets it funds.

The benefits of that program are getting multiplied by a new program the company introduced this year. Takeda replaced its inter-campus shuttles with free on-demand Uber rides. "It's a really new program done in partnership between travel and the U.S. facilities team," DeCosta said. Employees request rides through Uber, which are put on a central bill. "It makes it really easy for them," said DeCosta, and simultaneously contributes to the overall green rebates plan.

GUIDING DECISION-MAKING

As part of the effort to bring sustainability into more individual action

"[Our CEO] was really supportive. We had a call with his team earlier this year to talk about what other investments we could make from a sustainable travel perspective ... which is really incredible."

— TAKEDA'S
MICHELLE
DECOSTA



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:
Takeda Pharmaceuticals

NUMBER OF TRAVELERS:
26,000

CHALLENGE:
Enabling individual travelers to see and act on personal carbon emissions data

KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:

- First pharma company to invest in SAF
- Leveraging tech platforms to offer emissions transparency
- New ground transportation programs
- Communications and lead-by-example programs show travelers that individual sustainability choices can be meaningful and drive change

items, DeCosta's team launched TravelSmarter, a campaign that asks employees to consider three pillars before booking travel: employee well-being, planet impact and cost. It distills key elements of Takeda's travel policy and highlights sustainable choices, such as the lower carbon impact of taking fewer trips and understanding the emissions savings of selecting rail and tram options where available.

The campaign came about after a CFO of one Takeda business unit said travel was picking up and they could use help in controlling costs.

"We took it a step further," DeCosta said. "Saving money is nice, but let's talk about personal well-being and the planet impact, so we added sustainability and well-being. They loved it, so we published this to the CFOs of each business unit, and they sent it out. It was really well-received."

In addition, DeCosta created and shared with travelers her personal sustainable travel policy that focuses on the choices she makes to reduce her carbon footprint. The goal was to encourage Takeda travelers to do the same. It includes such actions as taking public transport, choosing eco-friendly hotels, bringing a reusable water bottle, conserving water and energy, eliminating one-day trips, and determining if a virtual meeting will achieve the same outcome as an in-person one.

The travel team does not keep metrics on its individual sustainability efforts, but Takeda publishes overall progress in an annual report. An internal dashboard is available for employees to track progress across key environmental targets, including GHG emissions performance and reductions. Takeda's EHS team produces the emissions calculations for travel, and any emissions not compensated by Takeda's SAF purchasing are offset through investments in carbon sequestration and removal projects.

In the day-to-day picture, however, the travel team has brought eco-awareness into the culture of travel at Takeda. "We put the information in front of [travelers] to help them make a better, more informed choice," DeCosta said. Traveler feedback has affirmed their initiatives.

"Travelers have been really happy to see they were offered the information at the point of sale. They especially like the part that gives them their carbon footprint," she said. It's up to each individual to take action. ◀



CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BTN GROUP'S 2023 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROGRAM FINALIST

EDUCATION IN TRAVEL SUSTAINABILITY

The University of California's decentralized travel program focuses on raising awareness, data-based education and hands-on experience events to build business traveler buy-in for making sustainable choices.

BY CHRIS DAVIS

One of the sharpest tools an organization can wield in the effort to reduce the environmental impact of its business travel is the ability to direct travelers' choices through a centralized, mandated travel program. A travel policy that mandates the selection of sustainable options could quickly show results in the use of lower-emission modes of travel and greener suppliers.

But few large organizations have full structural centralization and the hard policy mandates required to control traveler choice to that extent. As such, many travel managers who wish to guide their business travelers to more sustainable choices need to rely on other tools to make the case.

So it goes at the University of California. A massive system of public education made up of 10 separate campuses—in Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz—as well as its separate administrative offices and research laboratories, the university has an overall travel policy and preferred suppliers, but is largely decentralized, with each campus managing its travel independently. As of February, the university employed 240,000 people with 50,000 active business travelers among its staff and faculty members. There are no travel mandates imposed them.

To move the university's business travel in a greener direction, in concert with sustainability efforts in other aspects of the organization, the University of California's travel management team has relied on education, providing travelers and managers with data illustrating the actual environmental impact of their choices.

THE PROGRESS REPORT

Like many organizations, the university in recent years has prioritized sustainability in its operations. It has created several cross-functional working groups dedicated to the topic, including those focused on studying the effects of climate change as well as others exploring the environmental effects of the university's transportation as well as its Scope 3 carbon emissions, which includes business travel.

For University of California director of travel management services Debra Almason, the sustainability push offered the travel management team an opportunity not to mandate the selection of low-carbon modes of transport or the choice of particular suppliers, but a chance to educate travelers about the environmental impact of their actions.

To get there, though, "we knew we needed the data," she said. "The data was going to really provide the impact and tell the story."

The data that the travel team could offer was an analysis of actual travel patterns that the university's 50,000 business travelers had taken, particularly in terms of the carbon emissions it generated. Almason and her team, including travel management and information analyst Giesel Velez, set out to design a report that could incorporate emissions calculations based on the actual itineraries of the university's travelers.

"We began to sketch some items of how we wanted that report to look, and with our third-party reporting provider, identify what we wanted to capture, how we wanted to capture it, and where the sources would be coming from, including the data calculations," Almason said. "Based on basically a pencil sketch, we sent it to the third-party reporting firm, and they identified that there were a number of ways that we could approach designing this."

Almason said the university receives travel data from its travel management companies and directly from airlines, some hotels and car



CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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rental firms, and Amtrak. Using that data, the travel management team began to construct the foundation of the sustainable travel report.

“When we began establishing the data fields, it was more traditional as far as origins and destinations for top markets. We are breaking it down by airline, car rental, hotel and rail,” Almason said. “We also identified areas that were more customized. We wanted to break down the miles based on short-haul, medium-haul, and long-haul flights. There, we could match that up with not only the miles and emissions but also identify the type of [air] equipment used.”

The university uses the International Civil Aviation Organization’s airline carbon-emissions data, which can be used to assess emissions based on the type of aircraft used and the length of the trip. The report also incorporates rental car use, and whether electric cars were used. The travel management team is working to incorporate more data on hotel emissions into the report, as well as any environmental certifications received by properties used.

While the travel team for years has provided travel activity reports to campuses, the ability to provide emissions data in both pounds and metric tons is a recent wrinkle. “We hope we’re making things easier for them because we are also providing the calculations,” Almason said.

The travel team typically receives monthly reports on the university’s business travel, then distributes the sustainability report to stakeholders. “We manage and monitor the reporting. Reports are sent to leadership upon request,” Almason said. “The campuses, particularly in the travel and accounting departments or those that are members of our UC Travel Council, have administrative rights and can go into the reporting system anytime and run reports they choose.”

ELECTRIC DREAMS

The university’s travel team also tracks electric car use. California’s

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— UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA'S DEBRA ALMASON



CLIMATE ACTIONS

COMPANY:
University of California

NUMBER OF TRAVELERS:
50,000

CHALLENGE:
Reduce travel emissions, push greener travel choices

KEY ACTIONS & PLANS:

- Consolidate TMC, airline, hotel, car rental and rail data into customized sustainability reports for a decentralized travel management team
- Raise awareness among its 50,000 travelers, and educating them on how their travel choices impact the environment
- Works with car rental suppliers to increase electric fleets and holds hands-on experience events to promote use of electric vehicles to travelers
- Next steps include a university intranet resource to calculate itinerary emissions and provide travelers with strategies to reduce their trip missions

typical gas prices—highest in the nation by state, according to AAA in early June—make renting an EV sometimes more cost-effective than a standard gas vehicle, and Almason said the university is working with its car rental suppliers to expand EV fleets and encourage their use, including staging on-campus demonstrations.

“There’s still a lot of travelers that may not be familiar with electric vehicles, and there could be some intimidation,” she said. We are looking with our car suppliers to bring electric vehicles onto the campuses have demonstrations to take a little bit of unknown out of it, and people maybe will want to try an electric vehicle when they make that rental decision.”

The university also is assessing its travel suppliers’ sustainability efforts in its requests for proposals, Almason said. “I can say with full confidence that they are in alignment with us in terms of our mission to support both sustainability and small business,” she said.

THE NEXT STEPS

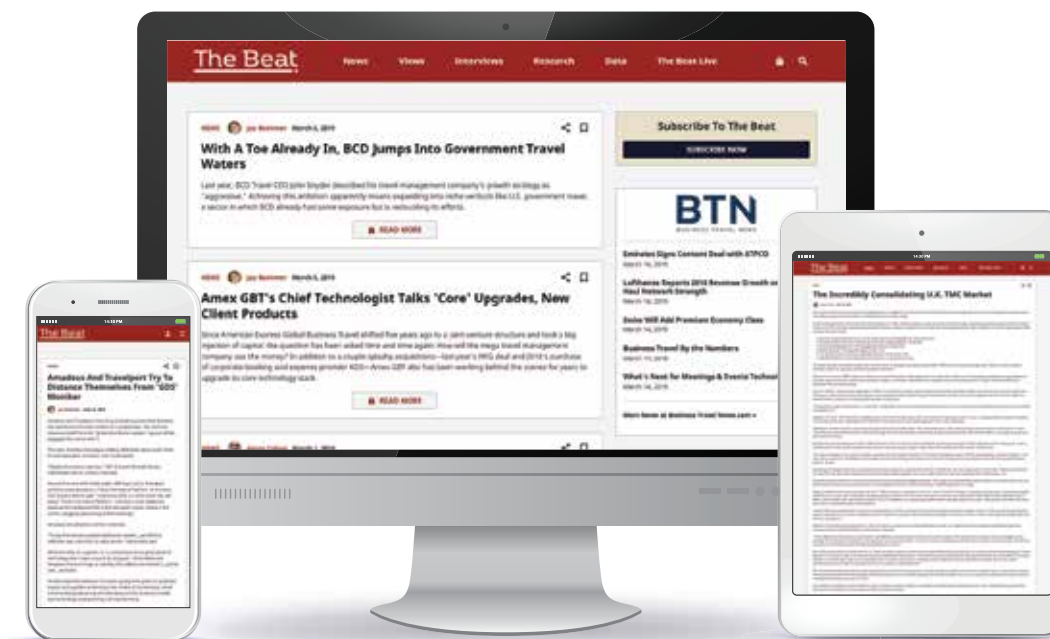
The university is in the process of developing a sustainable travel page for its internal travel portal, which all UC employees can access. “We’re very close to putting it in production,” Almason said. “Employees can go to this page to find travel tips and best practices to reduce the carbon footprint as far as travel goes.” The page will include calculators to assess the emissions impact for a given itinerary of an EV versus a fuel-powered car, and suggestions regarding air travel versus rail or car use. There will be tips for reducing emissions at home, too, she said.

The university has longer-term objectives, including the potential establishment of goals regarding cutting specific levels of carbon emissions related to business travel, but for now is focused on raising the level of awareness of the environmental effects of the decisions travelers and managers are making.

“I’ve been in this industry for almost 40 years, and I think that this particular chapter in my career is the most energizing, uplifting and fulfilling,” Almason said, “because it’s not all about whatever the lowest possible rate is for something. It’s about social responsibility.”

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