FOR CEOs AND COOs, **TRAVELER SAFETY, WELL-BEING AND SATISFACTION** ARE TOP OF MIND

While CEOs and COOs have a varied array of concerns as key stakeholders in their managed travel programs, they are first and foremost focused on taking care of their travelers.

In an online survey of 57 CEOs and COOs, a majority cited traveler safety and well-being as one of their top three concerns, followed by a strong minority who cited traveler satisfaction. Traveler concerns, for CEOs/COOs surveyed, topped cost considerations that finance, procurement and even human resources ranked as more important in this Executive Stakeholder View of Corporate Travel study of more than 200 company executives conducted by BTN Group Content Solutions and sponsored by SAP Concur.

The business and financial impact of the company's managed travel program are top concerns for just under a third of CEO/COO respondents, including the need to line up travel policy and management with company strategy and objectives, controlling travel costs to align with budgets, and receiving accurate and timely reporting on travel spend.

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP CONCERNS AS A KEY STAKEHOLDER IN YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MANAGED TRAVEL PROGRAM?

Figures show percentage of respondents who identified that element as one of their top 3 concerns.

SOURCE: BTN GROUP CONTENT SOLUTIONS ONLINE SURVEY, OCTOBER 2019

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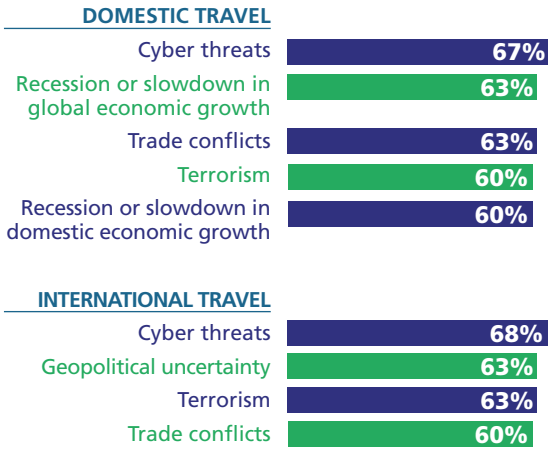
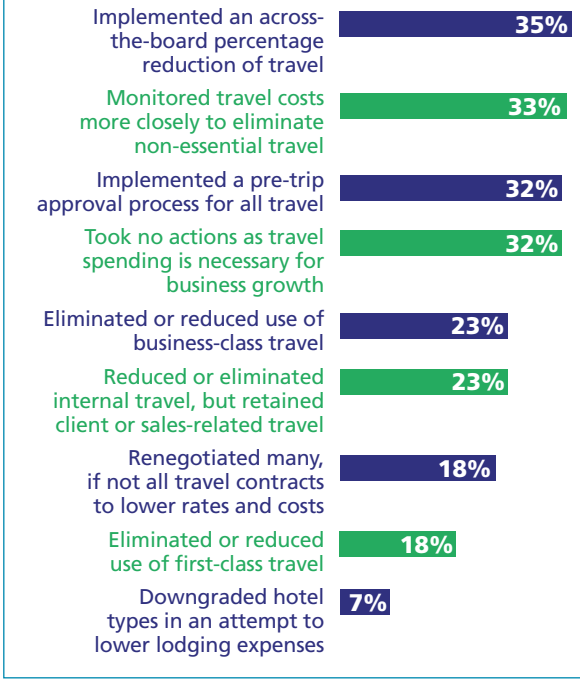
WHAT POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS THAT COULD IMPEDE DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TRAVEL IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS ARE OF MOST CONCERN?

Figures show percentage of respondents who are extremely or very concerned about the negative impact of the development.



SOURCE: BTN GROUP CONTENT SOLUTIONS ONLINE SURVEY, OCTOBER 2019

DURING THE LAST ECONOMIC DOWNTURN OR BUSINESS SLOWDOWN, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS DID YOUR COMPANY TAKE PERTAINING TO YOUR TRAVEL PROGRAM OR T&E SPENDING?



SOURCE: BTN GROUP CONTENT SOLUTIONS ONLINE SURVEY, OCTOBER 2019

›› KEEPING AN EYE ON LEADING INDICATORS

A majority of top executives are keeping an eye on a wide range of potential developments that are out of their immediate control but could hinder domestic and international business travel for their companies.

Their top concern: cyber threats impeding domestic and international travel. Just over 60% are also highly concerned about the potential impact of trade conflicts and terrorism on U.S. and global travel, and more than half are worried that climate change, protectionist movements and over-regulation of travel-related areas and suppliers will impede business travel at home or overseas.

›› READY FOR A DOWNTURN

In the event of a recession or significant slowdown in economic growth, a majority of CEO/COO respondents (61%) said their companies have a plan in place to modify their managed travel programs.

At the top of the list: Making cuts to travel and travel spending. The biggest percentage of respondents (42%) said they would immediately reduce their travel budgets and/or cut back on non-essential travel and entertainment spending in response to a serious economic downturn or recession. Just under two-fifths (37%) would first pow wow with key managed travel stakeholders to chart the most appropriate course of action around travel spending.

›› REDUCING AND CONTROLLING COSTS

A strong majority of CEO/COO respondents (84%) believe that implementing an effective cost avoidance strategy will enable them to significantly reduce their annual travel spend.

Education topped the list of elements identified by C-suite executives as a highly effective cost avoidance component: 79% cited proactively educating travelers on the importance of following corporate travel policies as an extremely or very effective element of an overall cost avoidance strategy.

The majority found an array of additional approaches to cost-avoidance highly effective, including:

- Reviewing regular reports and analysis of travel budget and program adherence **(77%)**
- Consolidating travel spending with fewer suppliers or across geographic regions **(72%)**
- Enforcing travel policy compliance **(72%)**
- Proactively educating travelers about booking preferred suppliers **(70%)**
- Incentivizing travelers to adhere to travel policies and programs **(70%)**
- Use of a pre-trip system to approve or deny travel **(70%)**
- Providing department managers with a specific travel budget that they manage and establishing new rules on when and why employees should be traveling **(63%)**
- Leveraging data to maximize negotiating power with travel suppliers **(58%)**

FOR CEOS AND COOS, **TRAVELER SAFETY, WELL-BEING AND SATISFACTION** ARE TOP OF MIND

A significant majority of CEOs and COOs (93%) said their companies need to track and report metrics around traveler experience and satisfaction in order to create strategic business value in their managed travel programs.

›› RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN BUSINESS TRAVEL

Nailing down the actual return on investment (ROI) of business travel can be a complex undertaking. Just under half (46%) of CEOs/COOs surveyed said their companies track ROI on some or all business trips, including 32% who track ROI on all business travel and 14% that track ROI on trips to drive sales growth. Nine percent are working on determining how to define and track ROI.

A significant minority of CEOs/COOs surveyed (28%) are unlikely to implement ROI tracking as they believe business trips have too many different objectives to effectively quantify an ROI metric, including some that are not directly measurable. Another 7% don't see any bottom-line benefit of tracking ROI on business travel.

CEOs and COOs said a variety of departments should be involved in defining what constitutes ROI on travel for their companies, with most citing their internal travel management team (46%) and their finance department (44%). Respondents also said key internal stakeholders in managed travel (30%), their travel management company (28%), and procurement (21%) should be involved in defining ROI.

›› REPORTS AND DATA SETS

A wide variety of reports and data sets are extremely or very important to CEOs and COOs in fulfilling their specific role as stakeholders in their managed travel programs.

The top two reports identified as highly important by the strongest majority of respondents are traveler safety (97%) and the positive impact of business travel on company performance (86%). Data sets that illustrate quantifiable ROI on travel spend are highly important for 81% of respondents, and 77% identified reports on the impact of travel on employee satisfaction, retention, and the ability to attract new employees as extremely or very important to their role as a managed travel stakeholder.

More than 70% identified reports on cost savings, policy and program compliance; travel spend compared to the prior period or YoY comparison; travel policy updates; and travel costs as a percentage of revenue as highly important. About 60% also said reports on preferred supplier metrics, trip volume compared to the prior period or YoY comparison, and sustainability/CO2 emissions are extremely or very important.

›› REPORT FREQUENCY

Most reports received by CEOs and COO respondents are quarterly, although about a fifth receive monthly reports on cost savings (25%), travel spend compared to the prior period or YoY comparison (23%), and travel policy updates (23%).

About a third of respondents receive quarterly reports on policy and program compliance, preferred supplier metrics, trip volume compared to the prior period or YoY comparison, quantifiable ROI on travel spend, the positive impact of business travel on company performance, and in-policy versus out-of-policy bookings.

The vast majority (93%) said they currently receive all of the reports and data sets they need to effectively implement their specific role in managed travel. On the wish list of several individual respondents who are not getting everything they need are reports that are closer to real time, from booking to actual travel, and reports that are broken down by traveler, department and project. One survey respondent would also like to see reports that show price comparisons, employee trip/travel reviews, quantifiable ROI, and the impact of company travel on emissions.

Overall, most CEOs and COOs surveyed (74%) are definitely satisfied with their involvement in and impact on shaping their company's managed travel policies and programs, while 24% indicated room for improvement the role they play.

›› KEY FINDINGS

CEOs and COOs are highly involved in their organizations' travel management programs, broadly focusing on travel as an integral business tool. They are also keeping a watchful eye on a wide array of domestic and international developments that could impede business travel this year.

- Traveler safety, well-being, and satisfaction, are chief executives' top concerns. Monitoring metrics around traveler experience and satisfaction in order to create strategic business value in their managed travel programs is a priority for most.
- CEOs and COOs are highly concerned about a number of developments that could impede domestic and/or international business travel including cyber threats, recession or economic slowdown, terrorism, trade conflicts, and geopolitical uncertainty.
- In the currently tight job market, they are also concerned about the impact of travel on employee satisfaction, retention, and the ability to attract new employees. ■

FOR CEOS AND COOS, **TRAVELER SAFETY, WELL-BEING AND SATISFACTION** ARE TOP OF MIND

›› ABOUT THIS SURVEY

BTN Group Content Solutions conducted an online survey in October 2019 of 208 company executives who identified as key stakeholders in their managed travel programs. Respondents included 57 Chief Executive Officers or Chief Operating Officers. For this Executive Stakeholder View of Corporate Travel study, sponsored by SAP Concur, the BTN Group Content Solutions also surveyed 50 Chief Financial Officers, 50 Chief Procurement Officers or other procurement executives and 51 Human Resources or Chief People Officers.

More than half of the CEO/COO survey respondents (54%) head up companies with fewer than 1,000 employees, including 28% who are at the helm of companies with fewer than 100 employees. One quarter head companies with 1,000 to 3,999 employees and the remaining 21% lead companies that employ between 4,000 and more than 100,000 workers.

About SAP/Concur **SAP Concur**

SAP® Concur® is the world's leading provider of integrated travel, expense, and invoice management solutions, driven by a relentless pursuit to simplify and automate these everyday processes. With SAP Concur, a top-rated app guides employees through every trip, charges are effortlessly populated into expense reports, and invoice approvals are automated. By integrating near real-time data and using AI to audit 100% of transactions, businesses can see exactly what they're spending without worrying about blind spots in the budget. SAP Concur eliminates yesterday's tedious tasks, makes today's work easier, and helps businesses run at their best every day.

Learn more at www.concur.com or the SAP Concur blog.