

TRAVEL TRENDS

But protocols have to be rolled out in collaboration across sector, backed with collective communication of these changes to travellers.

10 safety measures to restore traveller confidence: Travelport

By Travel Weekly Asia | Aug 25, 2020



Communication key to regaining confidence, while travellers express a greater likelihood to book through travel agents than before Covid-19 Photo Credit: Getty Images

The majority of travellers are now ready to consider booking domestic and international trips, but only if travel suppliers collectively implement 10 different safety measures throughout their journey, including fully flexible or refundable flight tickets.

This is the latest research findings from Travelport based on its survey of 5,000 travellers across the US, UK, India, Australia and New Zealand, as well as in-depth interviews with 29 leading travel suppliers, including airlines, airports, hotels and car rental companies to identify the safety measures they either have in place or are considering implementing.

The study found that at all parts of the travel journey, it is deemed critical to have social distancing rules, mandatory use of face masks, and ready access to sanitising gel or wipes, face masks and gloves. The study also revealed, however, that additional measures still need to be implemented by airlines, airports, hotels and car rental companies to fully restore consumer confidence.

		Airports	Airlines	Hotels	Car Rentals
1	Enhanced cleaning and/or disinfection		71%	73%	72%
2	Access to sanitizing gel/wipes, face masks and gloves	69%	61%	70%	66%
3	Social distancing	68%	66%	66%	64%
4	Temperature checks	66%	66%		
5	Mandatory wearing of face masks	64%	64%	64%	61%
6	Fully flexible or refundable tickets		64%		
7	Improved air filtration		62%		
8	Contactless services	58%		58%	55%
9	Plexi-glass at check-in	56%			
10	Managed boarding by row	56%			

The table on the left captures the 10 separate safety measures participants of the study said they need to know have been adopted by airports, airlines, hotels and car rental companies for those travellers to consider domestic and international travel. The percentage figures represent the number of travellers that said they will not travel unless the respective measure is in place.

	Total	US	GB	IN	AU	NZ
Airports						
Hand sanitizers at baggage collection	69%	66%	68%	76%	70%	64%
Social distancing throughout	68%	68%	67%	80%	69%	59%
Temperature checks at the entrance	66%	63%	64%	74%	69%	60%
Mandatory wearing of face masks	64%	70%	62%	80%	53%	52%
Contactless check-in	58%	55%	57%	65%	56%	55%
Plexi-glass at check-in desks	56%	59%	59%	62%	54%	48%
Managed boarding by row	56%	57%	57%	63%	55%	48%

Air

Overall, more than half of travellers said that to consider booking a flight, they need to know in advance that a wide array of specific measures have been implemented by both the airport and airline. At the airport, these include temperature checks on arrival (66%), plexi-glass at check-in desks (58%), and managed boarding by row (56%).

	Total	US	GB	IN	AU	NZ
Airlines						
Enhanced cleaning during and between flights	71%	72%	72%	72%	71%	70%
Aircraft disinfection before departure	70%	71%	67%	76%	72%	64%
Temperature checks before boarding	66%	65%	62%	75%	70%	60%
Socially distanced seating	66%	69%	65%	76%	66%	53%
Mandatory wearing of face masks	64%	70%	65%	79%	54%	50%
Fully flexible or refundable tickets	64%	65%	61%	61%	68%	65%
Improved air filtration	62%	65%	62%	62%	64%	58%
Readily available disinfectant wipes	61%	62%	59%	65%	64%	57%

When it comes to airlines, measures in high demand include enhanced cleaning (71%) and disinfection (70%), further temperature checks before boarding (66%), socially distanced seating (66%), and fully flexible or refundable tickets (64%).

	Total	US	GB	IN	AU	NZ
Enhanced cleaning throughout	73%	74%	72%	74%	72%	71%
Access to sanitizing gel, face masks and gloves	70%	69%	69%	77%	69%	64%
Social distancing throughout	66%	66%	64%	78%	66%	57%
Mandatory wearing of face masks by staff	64%	72%	61%	77%	54%	51%
Contactless check-in	58%	56%	58%	68%	55%	53%
Guest services accessible via mobile	51%	52%	46%	61%	50%	47%

Hotels

For travellers to have the confidence to book a hotel room, the study showed the majority want six specific safety measures in place including enhanced cleaning (73%) and guest services accessible via their mobile phone (51%).

	Total	US	GB	IN	AU	NZ
Enhanced cleaning between rental bookings	72%	74%	70%	73%	73%	73%
Access to sanitizing gel, face masks and gloves	66%	65%	65%	75%	65%	60%
Social distancing at rental locations	64%	65%	65%	77%	63%	52%
Mandatory wearing of face masks by staff	61%	69%	60%	74%	52%	48%
Contactless car collection and drop-off	55%	56%	54%	63%	50%	50%

Car

To book a car rental, according to the study, the majority of travellers want five key safety measures in place both at rental destinations and in vehicles including contactless car collection and drop-off (55%).

Greg Webb, CEO at Travelport said: "This study highlights the criticality these measures are now playing in restoring traveller confidence. However, for the majority of travellers to return to the skies, the industry now needs to work together to not only ensure a wide array of safety measures are in place throughout the travel journey, but to collectively communicate these changes to travellers using a range of channels and merchandising technologies."

On a country level, the study revealed demand for almost every safety measure is highest in India. Demand in New Zealand, while still high, tended to be the lowest across the five countries assessed. When it comes to age groups, demand for robust safety measures was again high across all categories, however, it was highest among baby boomers and lowest among millennials.

Derek Sadubin, managing director, CAPA – Centre for Aviation, added that while many suppliers including airlines have already implemented the safety measures travellers, the industry "still have a long way to go". He said: "Collaboration and communication are now key to restoring traveller confidence and securing a strong and responsible industry recovery."

These also reveal that travellers are more likely to book through a travel agent than before the Covid-19 crisis, with one third (33%) of all travellers anticipating an increase in their use of travel agent services. This trend was particularly evident among millennials (44%). Overall, the two thirds (65%) who claimed this, said it's because they feel travel agents are best placed to provide them with the latest travel safety information.

The full results of both the quantitative and qualitative components of the research can be viewed in Travelport's Guide to Travel Recovery report, available from the company's Covid-19 Resource Hub.

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