



Pack your bags! The end of COVID is near, and consumers around the world cooped up for the last year are itching to travel. Here's what advertisers can expect, from trends to new standards, and how to prepare their strategy.

Ad Spend Is Hot: Thanks to Travel

"Ad spending is red-hot right now. The economy is cranking up, travel and leisure are coming back, and consumers are emerging from their pandemic cocoons."

- Henry Blodget, a co-founder of Insider (formerly Business Insider).⁴

Analysts at CNBC say digital advertising's hot streak shows no signs of cooling down as travel starts to return and e-commerce spend persists. If the fourth quarter of 2020 was digital advertising's "perfect storm," then the first quarter of 2021, and perhaps the rest of the year, will be "hurricane season."⁶



Campaign Tip: Spend big on your campaigns and scale to reach as far and wide as possible.

Travel Post-Covid: It's Looking Bright

Consumers are optimistic about travel!

22% 22% of consumers have booked a vacation within the next three months.¹

51% 51% saying they're at least somewhat likely to book a vacation within the next three months.¹



Campaign Tip: Capitalize on this optimism with hopeful messaging and inspiring content.

Vaccine Matters

35% 35% of Americans are currently vaccinated against COVID as of May 10, 2021.⁷

45% 45% of respondents said they need to be fully vaccinated before they feel comfortable vacationing, while another 24% said they would prefer to be vaccinated.¹



Campaign Tip: eMarketer suggests focusing on demographics who are more likely to have received the vaccine, and geographic areas where vaccines have been rolled out effectively and at scale.

Leisure Travel Will Bounce Back Faster Than Business, Hygiene Will Stick Around

Expect a return to leisure travel before business travel. In previous crises, leisure trips or visits to friends and relatives tended to rebound first (this was the case in the UK following 9/11 and the global financial crisis)³

5X McKinsey predicts four to five times more remote work than before the pandemic, which could prompt a large change in the geography of work, as individuals and companies shift out of large cities into suburbs and small cities.⁵

20% About 20% of business travel may not return for sometime, and airline traffic likely won't return to 2019 levels this year.⁵



Digitalization will continue to transform the travel experience. Mobile apps will be used to store travelers' vaccine certificates and COVID-19 test results.³

Hygiene and safety standards will continue to be stringent, and consumers will expect these higher standards.



Campaign Tip: This illuminates where to focus advertiser energy. DO: emphasize hygiene and safety measures and ease of digital ticketing. DON'T cater to business travelers just yet - it's too soon.

Discounts and Deals



Credit cards are anticipating a travel boom! Credit card issuers are offering new card perks for the travel bounceback: American Express introduced welcome bonuses for Marriott Bonvoy members, Chase is partnering with United Airlines, and more. Rewards encourage traveling and offset the losses of 2020.²



Higher demand for travel may lead to sharp increases in travel-related expenses, including hotels and airline tickets, which may create opportunities for brands to offer deals.¹



The share of respondents who said they're likely to book a vacation climbed to 56% under the premise that they receive a discount from a hotel, and 59% said they're likely to book if they receive a free night's stay.¹



Campaign Tip: Offer deals, discounts, incentives, and reward programs. Most importantly, include those discounts in your creative assets! Bidtellect's [b]+studio consistently sees highest performance for headlines including a discount.

¹ eMarketer, New poll points to possible surges in both travel and related pricing this summer

² eMarketer, Credit card issuers anticipate travel bounceback with new card perks

³ McKinsey, Back to the future? Airline sector poised for change post-COVID-19

⁴ New York Times, In the Roaring Twenties, Ads Make a Comeback

⁵ McKinsey, The future of work after COVID

⁶ CNBC, Facebook, Google and Amazon are reaping the benefits from advertising's pandemic hot streak

⁷ CDC via Becker's Hospital Review, States ranked by percentage of population fully vaccinated: May 11