



2009 Summer Survey

Background

During July of 2009, Topaz International conducted a brief survey of Topaz Professionals to gauge their perspectives about corporate travel and current industry happenings. From what is happening with vendor negotiations to predictions about the future spending patterns, the questions were designed to provide value to each of you and your companies. We asked the opinions of over 2,000 corporate travel professionals from all over the world who work for various sized companies to weigh in on the issues.

Question #1

Q1: Do you believe that business travel spend for the balance of 2009 will:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increase more than 5%	3.8%	10
Increase between 1% and 5%	23.8%	62
Stay the same	35.4%	92
Decrease between 1% and 5%	16.2%	42
Decrease more than 5%	20.8%	54
<i>answered question</i>		260
<i>skipped question</i>		0

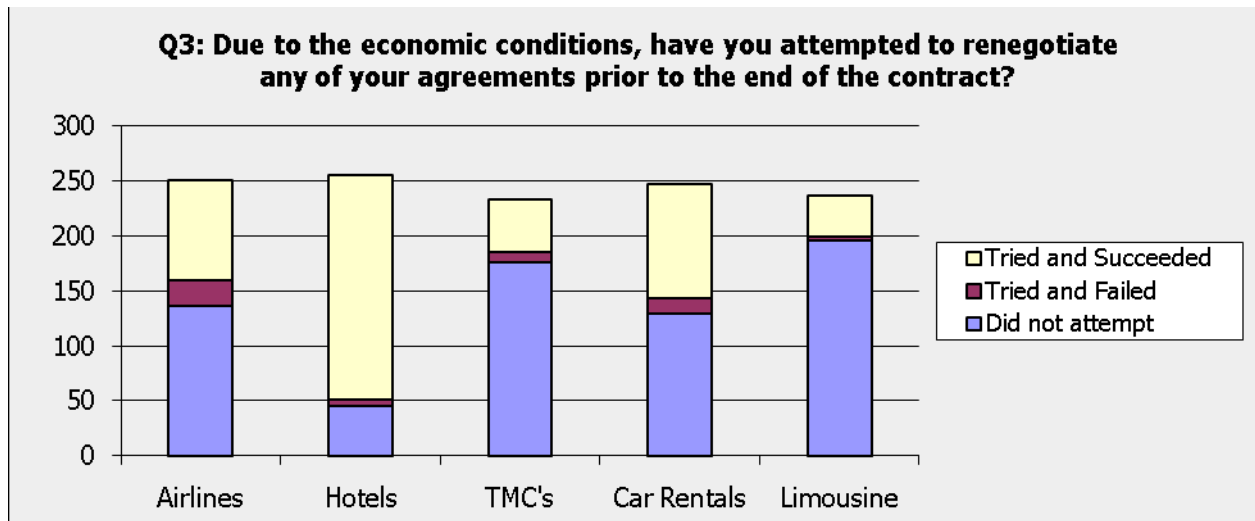
While the majority of respondents thought there would be no change between now and the end of the year, a greater percentage thought there would be further decreases. While many of us hope the worst is behind us, we are still looking at some challenging times for the rest of this year.

Question #2

Q2: Do you believe that business travel spend for 2010 will be:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Greater than 2009	49.0%	127
About the same as 2009	41.3%	107
Less than 2009	9.7%	25
<i>answered question</i>		259
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Thankfully most people think business travel will pick up in 2010. This is not just optimism for our industry, but for the global business industry as a whole. As goes the business world, so goes business travel.

Question #3



It is clear from these results that the opportunities travel professionals are looking for during these difficult times are being found in their hotel rates. Next, they have focused on airlines and car rentals, with poorer success rate, followed up by TMC and limousine success.

Question #4

The subject of business travel associations has been in the news lately. There are many associations all over the world, representing our industry. Of these associations, which organizational structure do you think is the most optimal and best serves our industry?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
The current structure and number of associations is just fine	31.2%	77
There should be one global association with local and country affiliated associations	40.5%	100
There should be regional associations representing North America, South America, Europe etc with local affiliated associations	28.3%	70
Do you have any other ideas?		25
answered question		247
skipped question		13

The last question was what should be done about the state of our trade associations? I thought the responses were very interesting because there is little consensus on what should be done. While the rhetoric in the media suggests a more unified approach to this subject, the results have indicated that is not necessarily the reality. This is even more interesting given the recent announcement from ACTE to attempt to open up merger discussions again. Where will it all end? It will ultimately be based on what the customer wants, needs and what they are willing to pay for.

I hope the travel community finds these surveys of value. We love to hear from you for suggestions, and will continue to do these surveys for the benefit of the industry as a whole. Complete results with more analysis and comments from the survey will be found on the blog of Brad Seitz at <http://bradseitz.typepad.com> on August 17th and we will have a summary document available at the NBTA conference for your use. Please stop by and visit us at the trade show, booth #826.

About Topaz International:

Topaz International provides strategic support to the corporate travel management professional. With 30 years of experience analyzing travel related expenditures, Topaz is a world leader in airfare & hotel auditing, providing benchmark information and consultancy services to improve the delivery of corporate travel services. Supporting travel managers, buyers and agencies, Topaz helps improve performance and facilitate cost savings.

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