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# Extending Business Travel into Leisure Time – Bleisure Study

North America-Based Business Travelers

June 2017

In partnership with:

**Hilton**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Study overview

This study, conducted in partnership with Hilton Hotels & Resorts, is based on a survey of 675 North American business travelers and their experiences taking “bleisure trips” in which they extend work travel for leisure. Key questions include:

- 1) How many business travelers have extended a work trip for leisure in the past year?
- 2) What traits make travelers more likely to take bleisure trips?
- 3) How long do bleisure trips typically last?
- 4) Which types of lodging accommodations do bleisure travelers use? Do they stay at the same place for their entire trip?

While answering these questions, the study considers the implications of these answers for managed corporate travel.

## Bleisure travel: definition and context

Last year, the GBTA Foundation released a report finding that 36% of U.S.-based business travelers had extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.<sup>1</sup> This practice, called “bleisure travel,” has remained a hot topic. This largely reflects the rise of the Millennial business traveler. In a study released last year, the CWT Institute found that the youngest business travelers—ages 20 to 25—take bleisure trips at more than twice the rate of the overall business traveler population.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, bleisure travel may increase as a result of changing corporate culture. Many companies have invested heavily in employee well-being. They have incorporated leisure into the workday – providing on-site gyms, lounge areas, and games, and in some cases even granting unlimited time off. In this context, employees may have greater flexibility to take bleisure trips.

Employees extended 7% of work trips for leisure in 2015, about the same rate as in 2011, according to the CWT Institute study.<sup>3</sup> Yet this figure could rise in the future, especially as Millennials travel for work more frequently.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **In the past year, one-third (37%) of North American business travelers extended a work trip for leisure.** Millennials (48%) did so at a higher rate than Gen-X travelers (33%) and Baby Boomers (23%).
- **In the past year, the most common reason why business travelers *did not* extend a work trip for leisure is that they *did not have time* (58%).** Less common reasons include company policy (18%), undesirable locations (17%), and cost (14%).

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<sup>1</sup> GBTA Foundation, *GBTA Business Travel Sentiment Index™*, in Partnership with American Express® (Alexandria, VA: GBTA Foundation, 2016), 31.

<sup>2</sup> CWT Institute, *A Quantitative Look at the Bleisure Phenomenon* (Carlson Wagonlit Travel, 2016), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 2.

- **Business travelers are more likely to extend a work trip for leisure in the future when they have done so in the recent past.** When rating the probability that they *would* take a bleisure trip on a 10-point scale, almost half (46%) who have taken one in the past year give a rating of eight or higher, indicating they are likely to take another one soon. Of those who did not take one in the past year, more than half (56%) give a rating of three or lower, indicating they are unlikely to take one.
- **When business travelers extend their work trips for leisure, they typically extend them for a short period.** While ninety percent extend them for more than one day, only one one-quarter (23%) extend them for more than three days. On average, travelers typically extend their trips for three days.
- **When taking bleisure trips, travelers overwhelmingly stay at hotels for both the business and leisure segments of their trip.** On their last bleisure trip, 91% of business travelers stayed at a traditional or extended stay hotel for the business portion, while 81% stayed at a hotel for the leisure portion.
- **Travelers rarely change lodging on bleisure trips.** On their last bleisure trip, 82% of business travelers stayed “at the same place for both the business and leisure portions of [their] trip.”

## METHODOLOGY

An online survey was conducted of 675 business travelers in the United States (460) and Canada (215). The survey was conducted by the GBTA Foundation using a business traveler panel. Fielding took place from February 26, 2017, to March 6, 2017.

Respondents qualified if they (1) were at least 22 years-old, (2) were employed or self-employed, on a full-time or part-time basis, and (3) had traveled for business at least once in the past year. After 207 completes were collected in the “soft launch,” respondents qualified if they met these three criteria *and* had extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.

Six hundred and seventy-five business travelers completed the survey. Quotas were set for age, gender, and country to obtain a sufficient number of respondents from each demographic and to mirror the business traveller population, thereby allowing comparison between groups.

After sampling, data was weighted further to approximate the business traveler population in North America. However, weighting was not applied in two scenarios: (1) when estimating the share of business travelers who had taken a bleisure trip in the past year, and (2) when reporting data on non-bleisure travelers. This is because data on non-bleisure travelers was only collected during the soft launch when weighting could not be applied.

The table on p. 21 shows the weighted age and gender distribution of respondents *who had taken at least one bleisure trip in the past year*.

Results were tested for significant differences between comparison groups at the 95% confidence level. When found, the significantly higher result is marked with the letter that corresponds to the significantly lower result. Comparison groups include:

- **Age:** 22 to 35, 36 to 54, 55 or older
- **Annual income:** Less than \$50,000, \$50,000 to less than \$100,000, \$100,000 or more

- **Children under 18 at home:** Yes, No
- **Number of “personal time off” (PTO) days annually:** 10 or less, 10 to 20, more than 20
- **Number of business trips in the past year:** 1 to 3, 4 to 11, 12 or more

## BLEISURE FREQUENCY

### How often do business travelers extend work trips for leisure?

In the past year, one-third (37%) of North American business travelers extended a work trip for leisure, similar to the share (36%) obtained in a 2015 survey of U.S.-based business travelers, the *Business Travel Sentiment Index™*, conducted by the GBTA Foundation in partnership with American Express.<sup>4</sup>

### Who extends work trips for leisure and who does not?

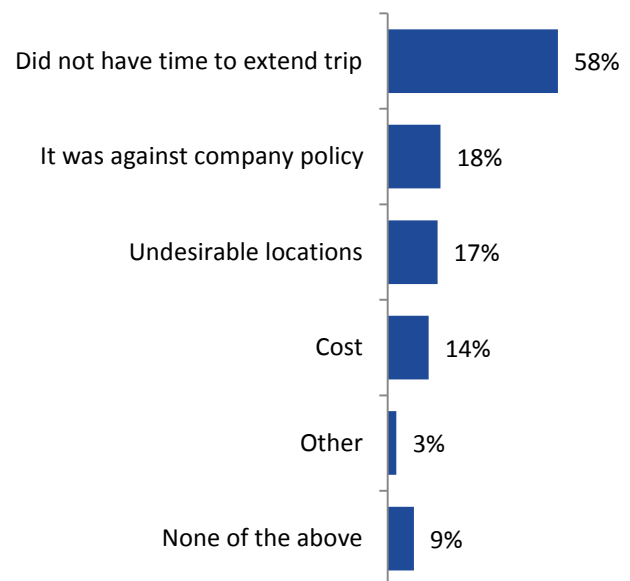
A key study objective was to discover *who* extends work trips for leisure. Is there a particular type of person—a “bleisure traveler”—who habitually extends trips? Or do a variety of business travelers—with different demographic traits and travel habits—extend work trips in different situations?

It is difficult to find consistent answers to these questions. On the one hand, when business travelers have *not* extended a work trip for leisure, it is rarely because they do not want to—or cannot afford to—explore the destination they are visiting. In the past year, the most common reason why business travelers *did not* extend a trip is because they *did not have time* (58%). Less common reasons include *company policy* (18%), *undesirable locations* (17%), and *cost* (14%).

On the other hand, business travelers are much more likely to take a bleisure trip in the future when they have taken one in the recent past. When rating the probability that they *would* take a bleisure trip on a 10-point scale, almost half (46%) who have taken one in the past year give a rating of eight or higher, indicating they are likely to take another one soon (see next page). Of those who did not take one in the past year, more than half (56%) give a rating of three or lower, indicating they are unlikely to take one.

### Why Did Business Travelers Not Extend a Work Trip for Leisure?

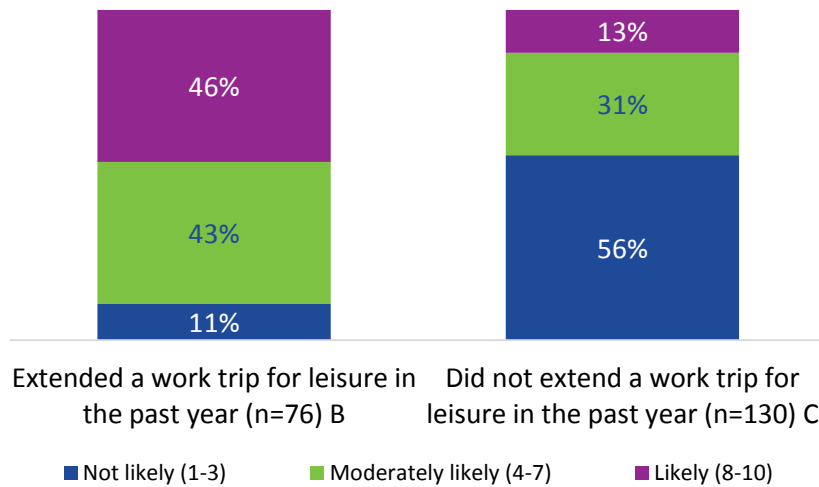
-among those who did not extend one in the past year (n=130)



Q. How likely are you to extend a business trip for leisure? **Note: Question only displayed to respondents who did not extend a business trip for leisure in the past year.**

<sup>4</sup> GBTA Foundation, *GBTA Business Travel Sentiment Index™*, in Partnership with American Express® (Alexandria, VA: GBTA Foundation, 2016).

## How Likely Are Business Travelers to Extend a Work Trip For Leisure? -rated on a 10-point scale



Q. How likely are you to extend a business trip for leisure?

The next page shows demographic traits of travelers who have taken at least one bleisure trip in the past year. It shows that bleisure travelers are a diverse group. They are spread across the U.S. and Canada, have different types of positions, work for companies of different sizes, and include frequent and infrequent travelers.

On average, these travelers took 7 work trips in the past year, earn \$79,000 annually, and work at companies with 950 employees. They occupy middle management positions (42%) at a slightly higher rate than entry-level (27%) and senior leadership/C-level positions (31%). In addition, almost three out of five (58%) bleisure travelers have children at home. These figures may be slightly different from the general business travel population.

## Characteristics of Business Travelers Who Extended at Least One Work Trip for Leisure in the Past Year

### U.S. Census Region



South

39%



Midwest

21%



Northeast

23%



West

17%

### Position

C-Level

16%

Senior leadership

15%

Middle management

42%

Entry Level

27%

### Canadian Province



Ontario

52%



Quebec

15%



British  
Columbia

17%

Other 18%

### Children at Home?



Yes

58%

### # of Business Trips in Past Year



1 to 3

31%



12+

13%



4 to  
11

56%

Estimated  
Average

7

### Employment Status

Employed full-time

77%

Employed part-time

10%

Self-employed full-time

9%

Self-employed part-time

4%

### Income



Less than  
\$50K

30%



\$100K+

23%



\$50,000 to  
< \$100,000

47%

Estimated  
Average

\$79K

### # of Employees at Organization



Less than 500

52%



3,000+

16%



500 to less than  
3,000

30%

Estimated  
Average

950

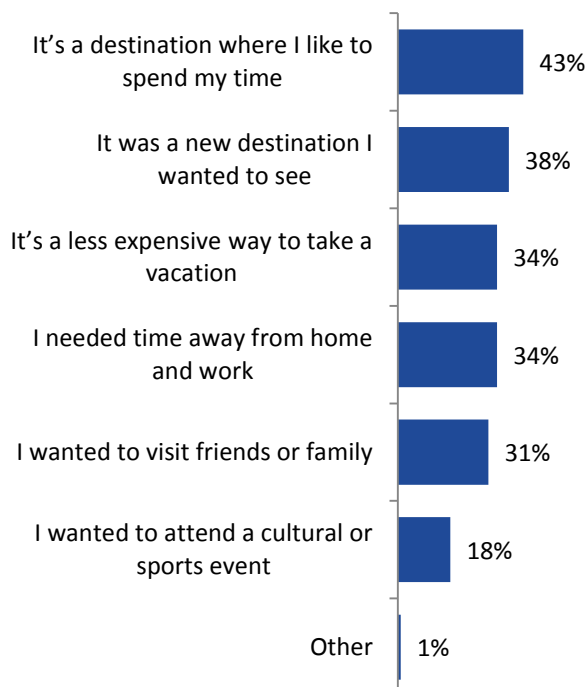
When it comes to group comparisons, Millennials are more likely to take bleisure trips, compared to older travelers. It is not clear whether this reflects unique preferences or transitory life events. Do Millennials take more bleisure trips than other generations did in their 20s and 30s? Or will Millennials take much fewer bleisure trips in later years? It seems possible that Millennials are actually different. One observation in particular reinforces this view: When business travelers have children, they are equally likely to take a bleisure trip, compared to those who do not have them, as shown in the graph at right. Thus, when Millennials have families in greater numbers, they may still take bleisure trips.

## BLEISURE PRACTICES

### Why do business travelers take bleisure trips?

In the past year, business travelers have taken bleisure trips for a variety of reasons. The most common are to visit *a destination where [they] like to spend [their] time* (43%) or *a new destination [they] wanted to see* (38%).

#### Reasons for Extending Business Trips for Leisure (n=545)

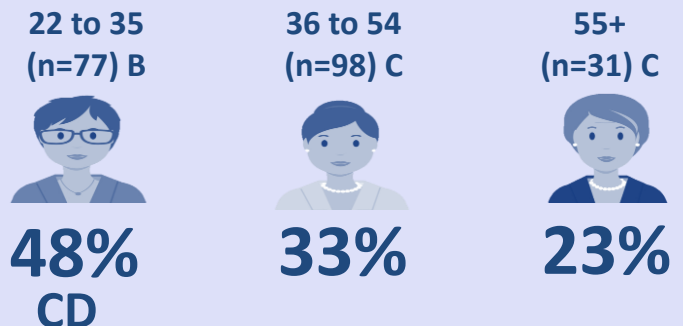


Q. Which of the following are reasons why you decided to extend your business trip to take personal time off? Please select all that apply.

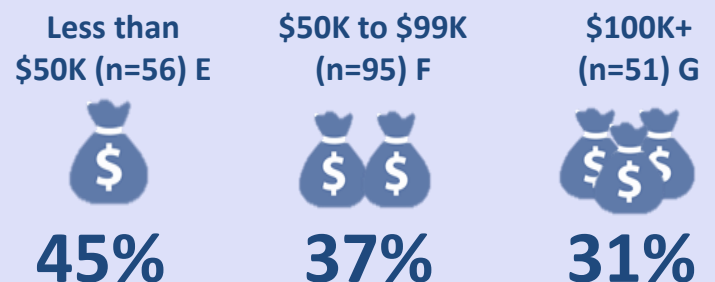
## Share who have extended a business trip for leisure in the past year

### Group Comparisons

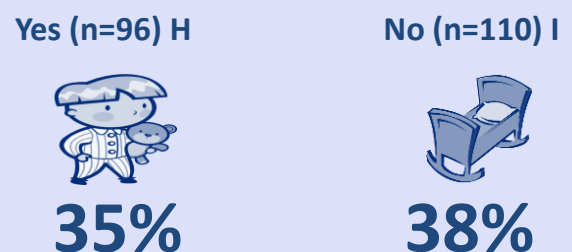
#### Age



#### Annual Income



#### Children Under 18?



#### Number of PTO Days Annually





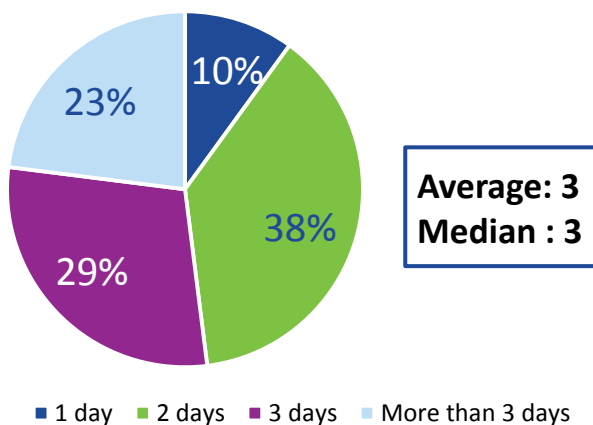
When business travelers extend their work trips for leisure, they typically extend them for a short period. While ninety percent extend them for more than one day, only one one-quarter (23%) extend them for more than three days (see graph below). On average, travelers typically extend their trips for three days.

There are several group differences when it comes to the length of bleisure trips. Baby Boomers are least likely to extend trips for three or more days. These travelers are more likely to have high-ranking positions, compared to younger travelers, and may have difficulty missing work for an extended period.

Travelers take longer bleisure trips when they have children at home. In all likelihood, a decent share of these travelers bring their children with them for the leisure portion of their trip. As shown on the next page, almost half of bleisure travelers brought someone else to accompany them on the last work trip that they extended for leisure.

In addition, higher income can mean longer trips. When travelers earn at least \$100,000 annually, they are more likely to extend work trips by at least three days for leisure, perhaps because they can afford these longer vacations.

**For How Many Days Do Business Travelers Typically Extend Work Trips (n=545)**



Q. How many days do you generally extend your trips? If you do not remember, your best estimate is fine. **Note: Question only displayed to business travelers who extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.**

## Percentage who generally extend business trips for 3 nights or longer Group Comparisons

### Age

22 to 35  
(n=305) B



53%  
C

36 to 54  
(n=200) C



54%  
C

55+  
(n=40) D



30%

### Annual Income

Less than  
\$50K (n=156) E



47%

\$50K to \$99K  
(n=252) F



50%

\$100K+  
(n=127) G



62%  
EF

### Children Under 18?

Yes (n=311) H



59%  
I

No (n=248) I



42%

### Number of PTO Days Annually

10 or less  
(n=173) J



42%

11 to 20  
(n=160) K



57%  
J

More than  
20 (n=137) L

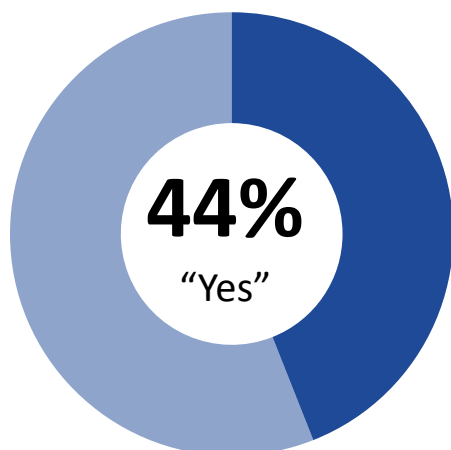


60%  
J

## Do business travelers have someone else accompany them on their bleisure trips?

On their last bleisure trip, 44% of business travelers traveled with someone else for the leisure portion. Travelers were more likely to bring someone else along when they had children or earned more than \$50,000 annually. Even though Millennials are least likely to have children and high income, they traveled with someone else at a similar rate as older travelers.

### Did Business Travelers Bring Someone to Accompany Them on Their Last Bleisure Trip? (n=545)



■ Yes ■ No

Thinking about the last business trip that you extended for leisure, did you travel with someone else who accompanied you on the leisure portion of your trip? **Note: Question only displayed to respondents who extended at least one business trip for leisure in the past year.**

Travelers were asked if they traveled with someone else on the *leisure portion* of their last bleisure trip; they were not asked if they traveled with someone else for the *business portion*. Yet it is possible that many of these travelers brought someone else along for the entire trip.

If this practice is widespread, it can pose challenges for corporate travel programs. One obvious challenge is cost control. For instance, they may spend more on meals or choose expensive flights or hotels to accommodate their travel companions. Companies might establish rules for reimbursing such expenses in their travel policy.

A more significant issue, however, is safety and security. While many companies have adequate protections in place for their travelers, they may not have any at all for family members. Companies can

### Share who had someone else accompany them on their last bleisure trip Group Comparisons

#### Age

22 to 35  
(n=305) B



43%

36 to 54  
(n=200) C



46%

55+  
(n=40) D



44%

#### Annual Income

Less than  
\$50K (n=156) E



38%

\$50K to \$99K  
(n=252) F



46%

\$100K+  
(n=127) G



50%

#### Children Under 18?

Yes (n=311) H



49%

No (n=248) I



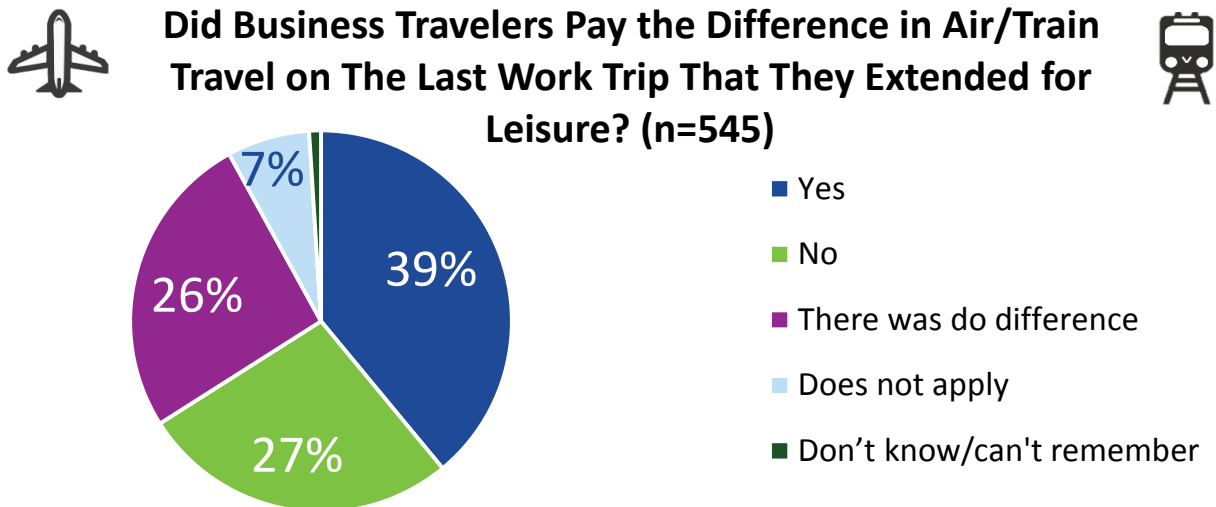
38%

make a greater effort in this area. For instance, they may advise employees to purchase additional travel insurance or assistance coverage for family members, or even extend duty of care services on the company dime.

### How do business travelers pay for transportation on bleisure trips?

When taking bleisure trips, travelers frequently incur additional transportation costs. In some cases, they add an additional destination to their trip, such as a vacation city close to their business destination. In many cases, when travelers extend a work trip for leisure, they travel during peak times—such as the weekend following their work engagement—when transportation is more expensive.

On their last bleisure trip, 39% of business travelers paid the difference in “air/train travel for extending [their] business trip into personal time off.” One-quarter (27%) did not pay the difference and another one-quarter (26%) indicated “there was no difference.”



Q. Thinking about the last time you extended a business trip for leisure, did you have to pay the difference in air/train travel for extending your business trip into personal time off?

These figures underscore a few challenges travel programs face as a result of bleisure travel. The first challenge is estimating additional costs stemming from bleisure trips. How much do airfares increase when travelers postpone a weekday flight to the weekend? Do companies have a reliable method in place for estimating these additional costs every time a bleisure trip occurs?

It can also be difficult to distinguish between business and leisure costs. For instance, if a work conference ends midday on Thursday—but travelers book a return flight for Friday—how should companies view expenses incurred following Thursday evening?

Yet the most significant challenge is addressing these issues in the company travel policy. While many companies expect travelers to cover leisure expenses, it can be difficult to establish reasonable guidelines for enforcing these expectations. For instance, if a leisure component adds only a small amount—say five percent—to an airfare, is it reasonable to expect travelers to pay?

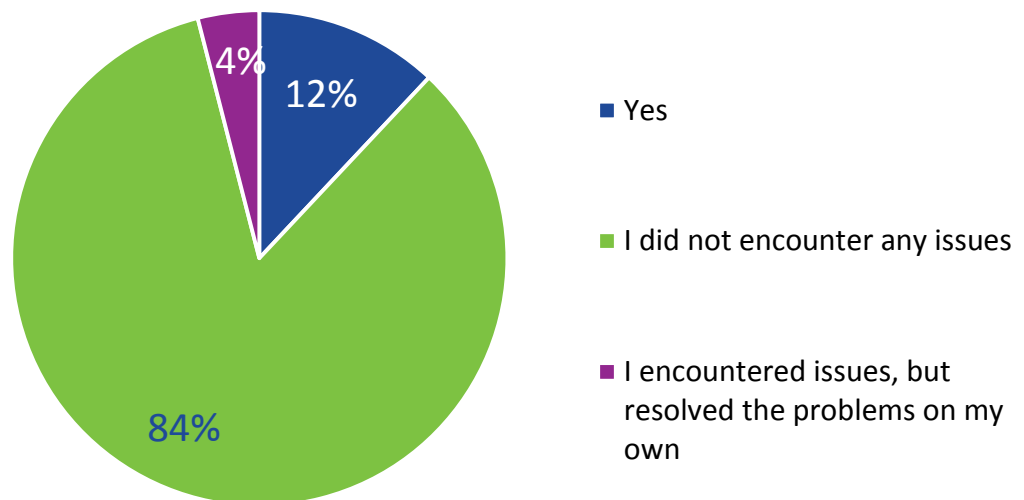
## How often do business travelers encounter problems on bleisure trips?

On their last bleisure trip, 12% of business travelers experienced an issue “where [they] needed assistance from [their] company or the person who arranged [their] travel.” It is not clear, however, what these issues were. They could range from routine rebookings and lost baggage to medical emergencies.

When serious emergencies occur, companies have an ethical—and in many cases legal—obligation to help their travelers. In some cases, bleisure travel can complicate these efforts. As mentioned previously, it can be difficult to distinguish between business and leisure travel. If a traveler extends a work trip for leisure, her company may have an obligation to help her only in an emergency that occurs during the *business* portion of the trip. Yet it can be hard to determine when the business portion starts or ends.

In addition, even though companies routinely provide safety-related services to their travelers—such as travel insurance, risk intelligence, concierge services, and a 24/7 helpline—they may not automatically provide these for the *leisure* portion of the trip. Travel Managers can make an effort to educate travelers about these gaps and how they can address them.

### On Their Last Bleisure Trip, Did Business Travelers Encounter Issues on Their Return Trip That Forced Them to Contact Their Company or Travel Arranger? (n=545)



Q. Thinking about the last business trip that you extended for leisure, did you encounter any issues on your return trip where you needed assistance from your company or the person who arranged your travel? **Note: Question only displayed to business travelers who extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year?**

## LODGING ON BLEISURE TRIPS

### Do bleisure travelers stay at the same place for both segments of their trip?

When taking bleisure trips, travelers overwhelmingly stay at hotels for both the business and leisure portions of their trip. On their last bleisure trip, 91% of business travelers stayed at a traditional or extended stay hotel for the business portion, while 81% stayed at a hotel for the leisure portion.

Bleisure travelers not only stay at the same *type* of accommodation for both portions of their trip, they also stay, in most cases, at the same specific accommodation. On their last bleisure trip, 82% of business travelers stayed “at the same place for both the business and leisure portions of [their] trip.”

Thus, bleisure travel may help companies achieve greater savings. If travelers book a bleisure trip—including the leisure component—through company channels, and stay at the same preferred hotel for the entire trip, they may help their company achieve more room nights with preferred properties. On the other hand, if these travelers book the leisure component separately through company channels, their company may face additional TMC fees.

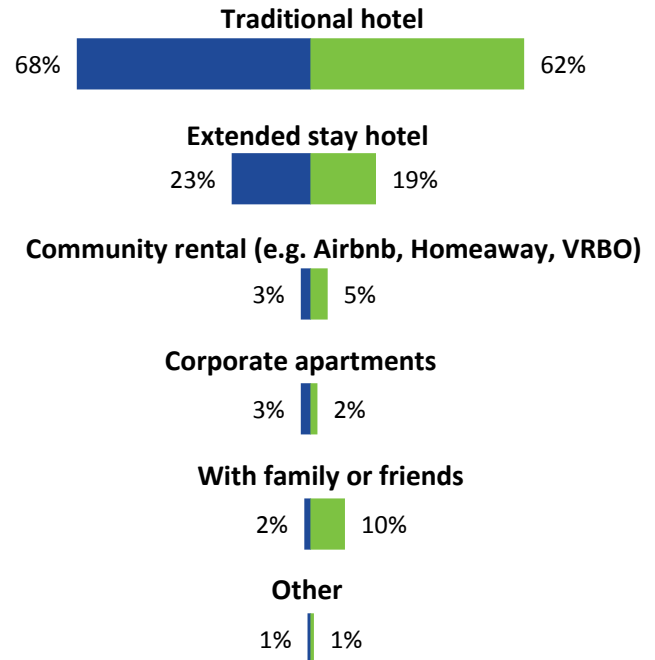
## On Their Last Bleisure Trip, Which Type of Lodging Accommodation Did Business Travelers Use for...?



**Business trip  
(n=545)**

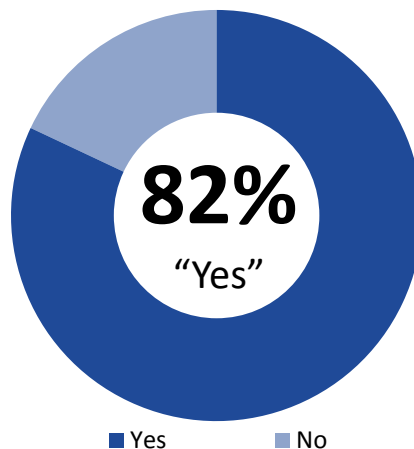


**Leisure trip  
(n=545)**



Q. Thinking only about the last business trip you extended into a leisure trip, which type of accommodation did you use on each portion of your trip? **Note:** Question only displayed to respondents who extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.

## On Your Last Bleisure Trip, Did You Stay at the Same Place for Both the Business and Leisure Portions? (n=545)



Q. During this last business trip that you extended for leisure, did you stay at the same place for both the business and leisure portions of your trip? **Note:** Question only displayed to respondents who extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.

Compared with Millennials, older travelers are more likely to stay at the same place for both portions of the trip. High frequency travelers are also more likely to stay at the same place.

The most common reason why business travelers stayed at the same place for both portions of their last bleisure trip was *convenience* (71%).

## Share Who Stayed at the Same Place on Both the Business and Leisure Portions of Last Bleisure Trip

### Group Comparisons

#### Age

22 to 35  
(n=305) B



78%

36 to 54  
(n=200) C



86%  
B

55+  
(n=40) D



88%

#### Annual Income

Less than  
\$50K (n=156) E



83%

\$50K to \$99K  
(n=252) F



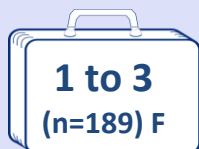
80%

\$100K+  
(n=127) G



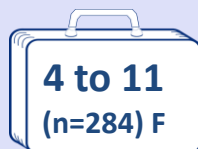
86%

#### # of Business Trips in Past Year



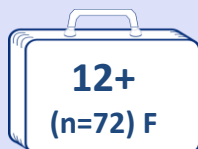
1 to 3  
(n=189) F

81%



4 to 11  
(n=284) F

81%

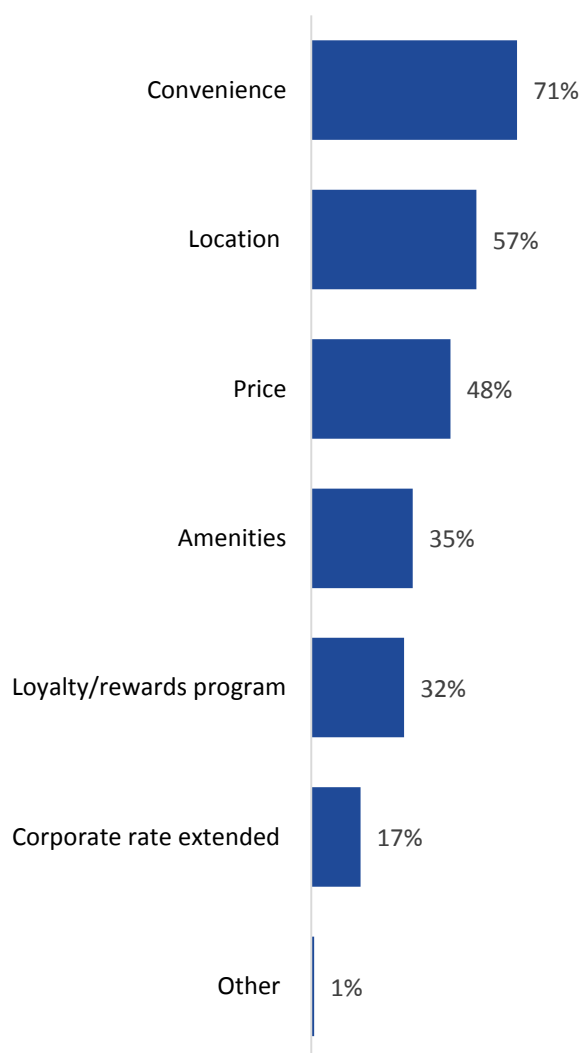


12+  
(n=72) F

91%

## Why Did Business Travelers Choose to Stay at the Same Place for the Leisure Part of Their Trip?

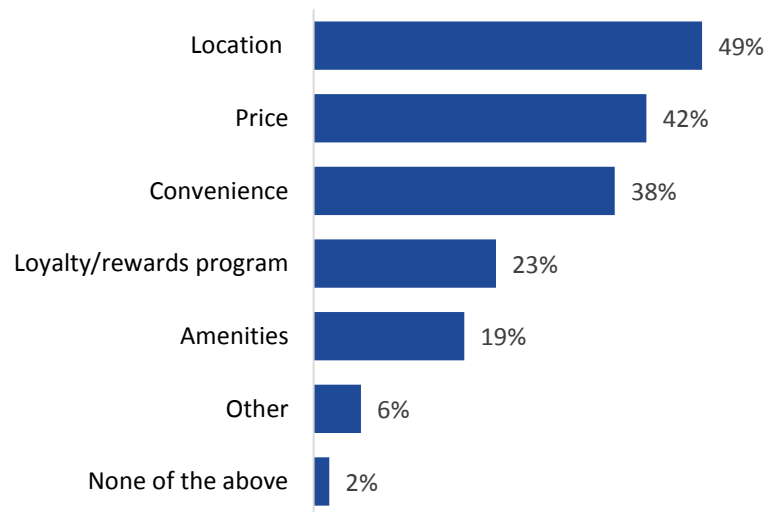
-among respondents who stayed at the same place for both the business and leisure portion (n=439)



Q. Why did you chose to stay at the same place for the leisure part of your trip? Please select all that apply.

As shown earlier, only 18% of travelers changed accommodations between the business and leisure portions of their last bleisure trip. The most common reasons why they did so were *location* (49%), *price* (42%), and *convenience* (38%). These reasons relate to circumstances of their *trip* and not characteristics of their *hotel*. When it comes to hotel characteristics, less than one-quarter of these travelers mention *loyalty/rewards program* (23%) or *amenities* (19%) as a reason why they changed accommodations.

**Why Did Business Travelers Choose to Stay at a Different Place  
for the Leisure Part of Their Trip?**  
**-among respondents who did not stay at the same place for both the  
business and leisure portion (n=104)**



Q. Why did you chose to stay at a different place for the leisure part of your trip? **Please select all that apply.**

### Lodging decision factors

One key study objective was to determine how travelers choose lodging on bleisure trips. Do they consider the same factors they use when choosing lodging for business-only trips? Do they search for hotels using the same channels?

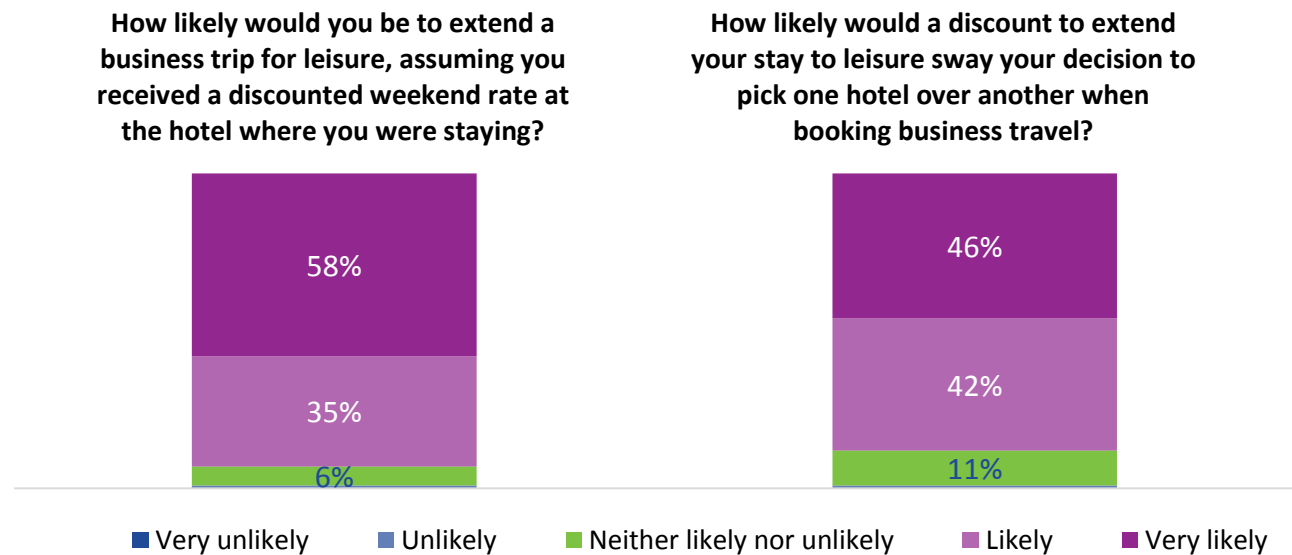
#### Decision factor #1 – Price

As shown earlier, an overwhelming majority of business travelers (82%) stayed at the same place for both the business and leisure portions of their last bleisure trip. Almost half (48%) of these travelers mention *price* (48%) as one of the reasons why (see p. 13). In addition, when business travelers changed accommodations, they commonly mention price (42%) as a reason why (see above).

Clearly, price has an impact on lodging decisions. Yet it not only impacts whether travelers *change* accommodations during their bleisure trip. It can also influence whether they extend a work trip for leisure at all, and if they do extend one, which hotels they choose in the first place—not only for the leisure portion of their trip but potentially for the business portion too.

Ninety-three percent of bleisure travelers say they are likely to “extend a business trip for leisure assuming [they] received a discounted weekend rate at the hotel where [they] were staying.” This includes more than half (58%) who are “very likely” to do so. In addition, 88% of these travelers say it is likely that a discount to extend their stay would “sway [their] decision to pick one hotel over another when booking business travel.”

## How Would a Discount Influence Choice of Lodging on a Bleisure Trip?



**Note:** Questions only displayed to respondents who extended at least one work trip for leisure in the past year.

These figures may have implications for travel programs. First, they suggest that bleisure travel could drive cost savings for companies. Because travelers commonly pay out of their own pocket for the leisure portion of their trip, they may prioritize affordability when booking a hotel. If they stay at the same hotel for their entire trip, some of these savings will accrue to their company. On the other hand, when booking a *business-only* trip, travelers may prioritize other factors such as location, convenience, and amenities.

At the same time, bleisure trips may incentivize travelers to book outside of their company’s travel program. Travelers may book with non-preferred properties, or through outside channels, for a variety of reasons—such as cheaper rates, the ability to earn or redeem loyalty points, or staying at a family-friendly property.

### Decision factor #2 – Loyalty/rewards programs

For bleisure travelers, loyalty programs are sometimes a consideration when selecting lodging. Of those who stayed at the same accommodation for both the leisure and business portions of their last trip, one-third (32%) indicate *that loyalty/rewards programs* are a reason why they did so (see p. 13). Of those who switched accommodations, almost one-fourth (23%) indicate that loyalty/rewards programs are a reason why (see p. 14).



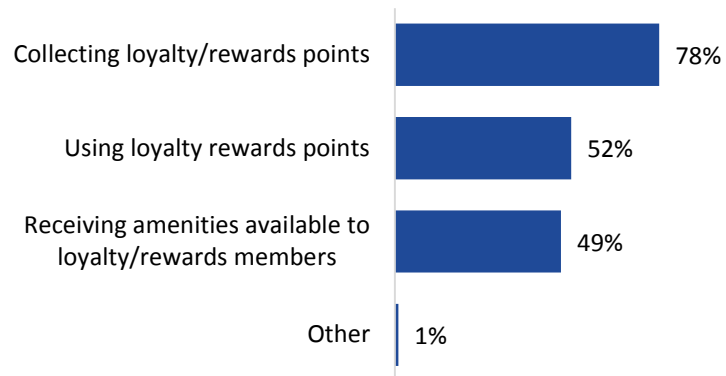
Loyalty/rewards programs influence travelers in a variety of ways. When travelers were influenced by such programs on their last bleisure trip, three-quarters (78%) wanted to *collect loyalty/rewards points*, one half (52%) wanted to *use loyalty/rewards points*, and one half (49%) wanted to *receive amenities available to loyalty/rewards members*.

On their last bleisure trip, 16% of business travelers who stayed at a hotel for the leisure portion paid for their stay using points. Of these travelers, 41% did so for *a place to stay*, 19% did so for *a luxury experience*, and 40% did so for *both*.

A past GBTA Foundation study, conducted in 2015 in partnership with Hilton, found that while travel programs almost universally allow their travelers to earn loyalty points

## What Considerations Motivated Business Travelers to Remain at or Switch Hotels at Least Partly Because of Loyalty/Rewards Points?

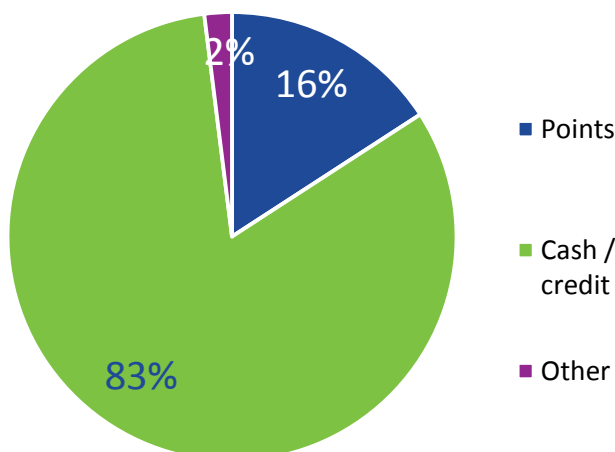
-among respondents who say "loyalty/rewards points" influenced their decision (n=159)



Q. You mentioned that you chose a hotel because of a loyalty/rewards program on the last business trip that you extended for leisure. Which of the following are specific reasons why? **Please select all that apply.** **Note:** Question only displayed to business travelers who indicated "loyalty/rewards points" as one of the reasons why they chose to remain at, or relocate to, a traditional hotel on their last bleisure trip.

## How Did Business Travelers Pay for Their Hotel on Their Last Bleisure Trip?

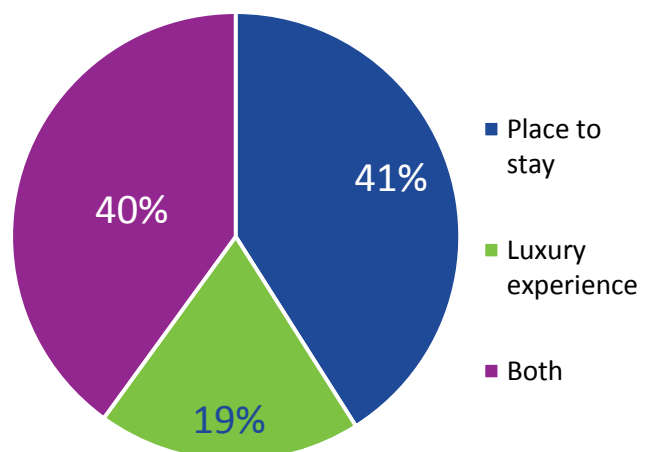
-among respondents who stayed at a hotel for the leisure portion of their last bleisure trip (n=437)



Q. Thinking about the last time you extended a business trip for leisure, did you pay for your hotel in points or cash? **Note:** Question only displayed to business travelers who indicated they stayed at a traditional or extended stay hotel for the leisure portion of the last work trip they extended for leisure.

## Why Did Business Travelers Pay for a Bleisure Stay Using Points?

-among respondents who stayed at a hotel and paid for their stay using points on their last bleisure trip (n=62)



Q. When you used loyalty points to extend a business trip for leisure, was it for a place to stay or a luxury experience? **Note:** Question only displayed to business travelers who indicated they stayed at a traditional or extended stay hotel for the leisure portion of the last work trip they extended for leisure.

on work trips, few actively promote these programs to their travelers.<sup>5</sup> If companies made a greater effort to do so, they might encourage travelers to stay with their preferred properties, especially on bleisure trips.

### Decision factor #3 – Amenities

In the past year, when business travelers extended a work trip for leisure—and stayed at the same accommodation for the leisure portion that they used for the business portion—one-third (35%) mention “amenities” as a reason why (see p. 13). This compares to 19% who switched accommodations and mention “amenities” as a reason why (see p. 14).

A variety of amenities influence traveler decisions. The amenities that most commonly have an influence are *room type* (72%), *food & beverage options* (71%), and *pool* (62%).

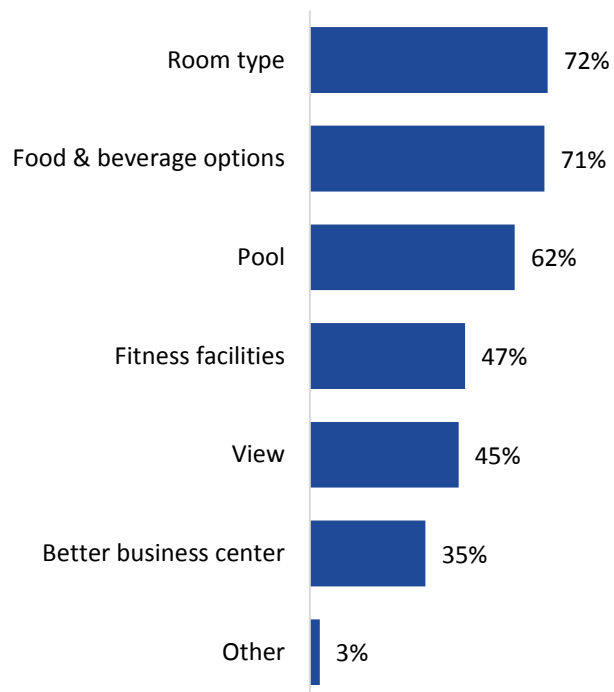
### Booking channels

When business travelers choose to extend a work trip for leisure, they generally search for accommodations through a third-party site or a hotel's website or mobile app (see next page). However, since survey respondents include all business travelers, this does not necessarily mean that bleisure travelers are frequently booking outside of their company's channels.

Yet it is possible that bleisure travel may incentivize travelers to book outside of their travel program. In doing so, they may find cheaper weekend rates, earn or redeem loyalty points with their favorite chain, or stay at a leisure-friendly property. To encourage travelers to stay within the program, companies might make a greater effort to help travelers receive the corporate discount for the leisure portion of their trip.

### Which Amenities Influence Bleisure Traveler Decisions?

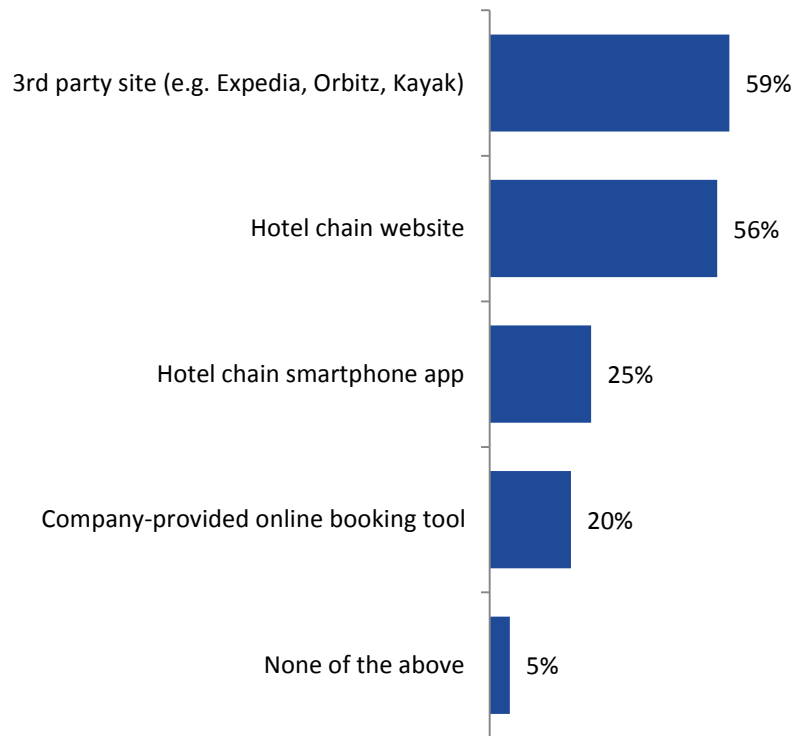
-among respondents who say “amenities” influenced their choice of hotel (n=158)



Q. You mentioned that you chose a hotel because of amenities on the last business trip that you extended for leisure. Which of the following are specific reasons why? Please select all that apply. Note: Question only displayed to business travelers who indicated “amenities” as one of the reasons why they chose to remain at, or relocate to, a traditional hotel on their last bleisure trip.

<sup>5</sup> GBTA Foundation, *Making Hotel Loyalty Programs Work for You and Your Travel Program*. (Alexandria, VA: GBTA Foundation, 2016).

### How Do Business Travelers Search for Bleisure Accommodations? (n=545)



Q. If choosing to extend a business trip for personal reasons, how do you search for your accommodation? Please select all that apply. *Please select all that apply.*

## CONCLUSION

In the past year, 37% of North American business travelers extended at least one of their work trips for leisure. This practice, called “bleisure travel,” can have an impact on managed corporate travel. This study has suggested a variety of ways in which companies can improve the bleisure travel experience for their employees and align bleisure travel with their own goals. These suggestions include:

- **Establish rules for reimbursing expenses incurred by non-employees.** A decent share (44%) of business travelers traveled with someone else on their last bleisure trip. These travelers may spend more on meals or choose expensive flights or hotels to accommodate their travel companions. Companies might address this issue in their travel policy.
- **Help insure the safety of employees’ family members.** While many companies have adequate security protections in place for their travelers, they may not have any at all for family members. Companies can make a greater effort in this area. For instance, they can advise employees to purchase additional travel insurance or assistance coverage for family members, or even decide to extend duty of care services on their own dime.
- **Help travelers understand the resources available to them on the leisure portion of their trip.** Even though companies routinely provide safety-related services to their travelers—such as travel insurance, risk intelligence, concierge services, and a 24/7 helpline—they may not automatically provide these for the *leisure* portion of the trip. Travel Managers can make an effort to educate travelers about these gaps and how they can address them.
- **Develop a policy regarding preferred suppliers and channels.** Travel programs can take steps to encourage employees to stay at company-preferred hotels during bleisure travel. These include helping travelers receive an extended corporate rate and encouraging employees to enroll in preferred chains’ loyalty programs. These steps can drive cost savings and policy compliance. On the other hand, when employees book leisure travel through a TMC, companies can face additional fees. Travel programs should weigh the costs and benefits of allowing or encouraging employees to book bleisure trips with specific vendors or through specific channels.

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Respondent Profile: Demographics

Country (n=545)



91%



9%

Gender (n=545)

Female



45%

Male



55%

Age (n=545)

22 to 35



51%

36 to 54



42%

55 or older



7%

Estimated Average: 37 years old

Income (n=535)

Less than \$50,000



30%

\$50,000 to < \$100,000



47%

\$100,00+

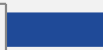


23%

Estimated Average: \$79,000

Position (n=545)

C-level



16%

Senior leadership



15%

Middle management



42%

Entry level Position/Management



27%

Children at home? (n=545)

Yes



58%

Organization Size (n=545)

Less than 500 employees



52%

500 to less than 3,000



30%

3,000 or more employees



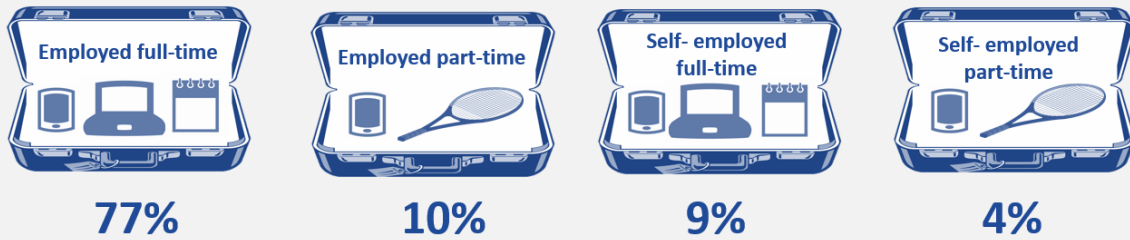
16%

Not sure  
2%

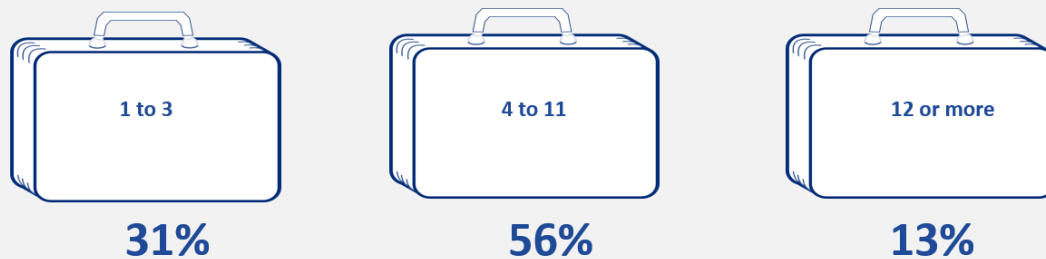
Estimated Median: 950 employees

## Respondent Profile: Business Travel Habits/Characteristics

### Employment Status (n=545)

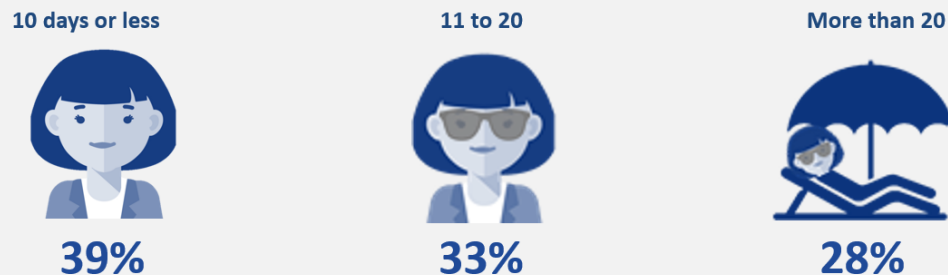


### Number of Business Trips in Past Year (n=545)

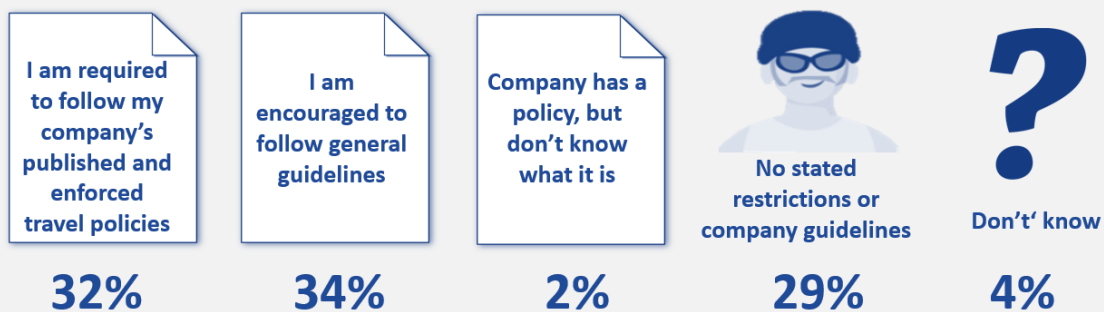


Estimated Average: 7 trips

### Number of PTO Days Annually (n=470)



### Travel Policy (n=545)



## WORKS CITED

CWT Institute, *A Quantitative Look at the Bleisure Phenomenon* (Carlson Wagonlit Travel, 2016).

GBTA Foundation, *GBTA Business Travel Sentiment Index™, in Partnership with American Express®* (Alexandria, VA: GBTA Foundation, 2016).

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## ABOUT THE GBTA FOUNDATION



The GBTA Foundation is the education and research arm of the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), the world's premier business travel and corporate meetings organization. Collectively, GBTA's 9,000-plus members manage over \$345 billion of global business travel and meetings expenditures annually. GBTA provides its network of 21,000 business and government travel and meetings managers, as well as travel service providers, with networking events, news, education & professional development, research, and advocacy. The foundation was established in 1997 to support GBTA's members and the industry as a whole. As the leading education and research foundation in the business travel industry, the GBTA Foundation seeks to fund initiatives to advance the business travel profession. The GBTA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For ore information, see [gbta.org](http://gbta.org) and [gbta.org/foundation](http://gbta.org/foundation).

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