



## Engaging Stakeholders In Managed Travel Programs

# DATA SHARING

As the quest for travel program compliance and savings remains the focus at many companies, travel executives reported that quarterly, if not monthly reporting to senior management, chief financial officers and business unit budget owners has become more important in the past year, according to results of a new survey conducted by The BTN Group and American Express Global Business Travel.

What do stakeholders want to know? How frequently? And, how can the sharing of travel data be used to gain program compliance and savings? Those were among several areas explored as we sought to better understand how travel managers are using data to influence booking behaviors, senior management support and program compliance. Specifically, we asked:

- What data sets are corporate travel managers most frequently sharing with various stakeholders?
- How often are corporate travel managers sharing data with each respective stakeholder group?
- How are companies communicating traveler behavioral messaging?
- What new metrics are of most interest to senior management and travel managers?

These questions and more are answered in the results that follow, along with potential recommendations.

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## DATA MORE IMPORTANT THAN YEAR AGO



Source: The BTN Group / American Express Global Business Travel survey of 161 corporate travel managers, buyers, procurement and other corporate executives conducted in April-May 2016

To chief financial officers, senior management and business unit budget owners, travel data distribution is more important than a year ago, according to more than 6 of 10 surveyed. (See chart above and accompanying infographic.)

Results point to both increased interest, and in some instances, frequencies, in various travel management reporting but also highlight areas for further improvements in data elements, speed, frequency, accuracy or stakeholder distribution to further influence behaviors and better align with corporate objectives.

### MAJORITY ARE INFORMING SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Seventy percent of those surveyed said they were sharing travel policy compliance with senior management. Slightly fewer said they were sharing the lost savings from buying decisions, travel policy compliance and as compared to peers with business units. Slightly more than half of respondents said they shared policy compliance data with

business units and the CEO/CFO.

But in terms of sharing similar reporting with travelers, only 4 of 10 said they provided travel policy compliance reports or the cost of each trip to travelers. Less than a quarter said they provided travel policy compliance compared to peers or other business units to travelers and even fewer—just 2 of 10—provided lost savings from buying decision reports to travelers. As for human resources, only 17 percent of respondents said they provided the stakeholder group with travel policy compliance reports while even fewer provided any other reporting to HR.

### SAVINGS MOST IMPORTANT METRIC TO SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Despite the increased importance of compliance reporting, nearly 80 percent of those surveyed said “savings” was the most important metric provided to senior management, followed by travel costs compared to the prior period and compliance as ranked by 43 percent. Respondents ranked travel spending as a percentage of company revenue and traveler satisfaction as the lowest-rated metrics for senior management, however, a handful of respondents specifically identified those elements among the new data points of interest to their senior management. More than 37 percent of respondents said they already track travel costs as a percentage of revenue and 9 percent more said they planned to start tracking that metric this year. About half said they track traveler satisfaction with the program.



## MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT REPORTING IS TYPICAL FREQUENCY

Monthly reporting to business unit budget owners, CFOs/finance and senior management were cited by more than one-third of those surveyed, while about a quarter said they provided the reporting quarterly. More than 2 of 10 said they provide reporting to their CEO, senior management and even business unit budget owners only as needed or requested.

As for real-time data deliveries, only 16 percent said they provided data to travelers that frequently with 9 percent linked to procurement real-time. But less than 5 percent of respondents said they provided real-time or daily data to any other stakeholder group. On a weekly basis, less than 7 percent of respondents said they provided travel data to business unit budget owners, procurement, CFOs or senior management.

## WHAT COMPANIES ARE COMMUNICATING TO TRAVELERS

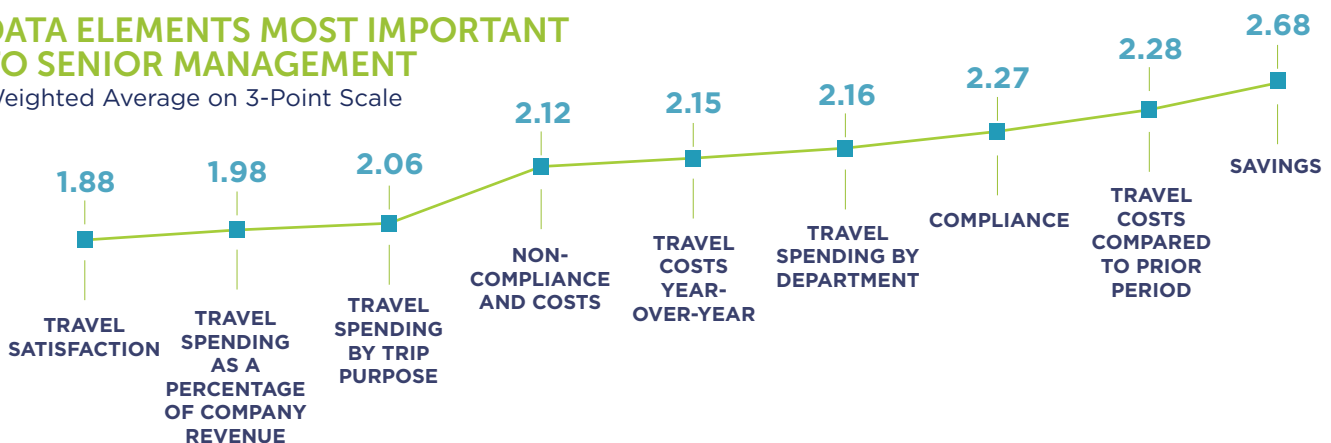
While the majority of those surveyed said they provide behavioral messaging to travelers about lowest-fare acceptance, policy violations and use of preferred suppliers, fewer than 4 of 10 said they also had messaging about booking within a suggested window to lower costs, missing hotel reservations or last-minute bookings.

As for reporting recaps, 4 of 10 respondents said they shared policy compliance reporting with travelers and fewer than one-quarter told travelers how their compliance compared to peers or other business units. Only 40 percent provided travelers with cost of trip detail and just one in five told travelers the lost savings from their buying decisions.

To cue travelers about non-compliant booking behaviors or decisions that cost the company more money, nearly 7 of 10 respondents said they relied on pop-ups or alerts in their booking portals for such communiques. Nearly 6 of 10 said they relied

### DATA ELEMENTS MOST IMPORTANT TO SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Weighted Average on 3-Point Scale



Source: The BTN Group / American Express Global Business Travel survey of 161 corporate travel managers, buyers, procurement and other corporate executives conducted in April-May 2016



on emails or calls from the travel department for such behavioral messaging. About 30 percent relied on communications from direct supervisors and 26 percent used regular reports via email.

For 17 percent, mobile app provide the solution and another 17 percent said they use dashboard notifications.

### ‘STAY WITHIN PROGRAM’ MOST IMPORTANT COMPLIANCE INSIGHT

What’s the most important insight that travel managers can provide to travelers to influence compliance and/or costs?

Stay within the program, echoed respondents in a variety of ways. “Big picture impact: It’s not about just you!” “Even if they think they can get something cheaper outside our tool, they may not, due to cancellation fees, non-included amenities, etc.” “We are watching and are concerned that we need to reduce costs.” “Senior management is watching travel costs.”

Several respondents noted that while they currently rely on online booking

tools or agency communications, they are working on a new traveler communications strategy. Others highlighted that “most travelers want to do the right thing; they just need to know how.”

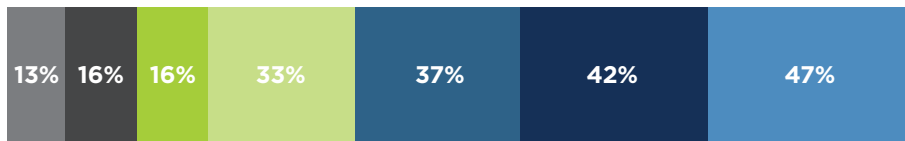
### MAJORITY RELY ON TRAVELER-GENERATED CONTENT

About two-thirds of those surveyed said they collect insights from travelers to enhance their programs. About one-third rely on travelers for tips on using or visiting company offices in various cities. Nearly 28 percent rely on travelers for internal ratings of air, hotel, car or other suppliers and 17 percent more use internal social media that allows travelers to communicate with each other. But 15 percent or fewer use internal social media to allow travelers to post travel tips or alerts, restaurant or venue recommendations or view co-workers in their destinations with which they could schedule meetings.

A few respondents said they soon plan to launch new intranet functionality for ratings and other traveler engagement.

## METRICS COMPANIES ARE TRACKING

### CURRENTLY



### PLAN TO THIS YEAR



### METRICS

- Success of each business trip
- Travel vs. use of video/remote conferencing
- Return on investment of business travel expenditures
- Traveler satisfaction with preferred suppliers
- Travel costs as a percentage of revenue
- CO2 Emissions
- Traveler satisfaction with travel program

Source: The BTN Group / American Express Global Business Travel survey of 161 corporate travel managers, buyers, procurement and other corporate executives conducted in April-May 2016



## TRAVEL MANAGERS PREPARE, SHARE REPORTS

When it comes to preparing and distributing reporting to various stakeholders, nearly half of all respondents said the task fell to the “travel manager” while 35 percent more indicated the “travel management team.” Just one in five said they had a data analyst within, or assigned to, the travel department to shoulder such responsibilities. One-quarter of all respondents said they relied on their travel management company.

For more than 40 percent of those surveyed, compilation was a combination of automated and manual processes. Just over one-quarter said they had an automated process to compile data from multiple sources, but relied on manual distribution methods while 12 percent relied on fully automated means to both compile and distribute travel data to all stakeholders within their organizations.

## ACCURATE, TIMELY FEEDS WOULD EASE DATA COMPILATION

More accurate, timely data feeds would make data compilation easier, faster or better, according to more than 6 of 10 surveyed. More than half said access to data feeds from additional sources such as suppliers, expense reporting or other systems would ease the burden. While forty percent said access to new tools would make the tasks easier, only 23 percent cited access to a data analyst as a solution.

## HALF ARE USING PRICE MONITORING TECH

While a variety of hotel and air price monitoring technologies have been introduced in the marketplace, more than half of those surveyed said they’re not using such functionality. The other half are using price monitoring, either to prove to travelers that they secured the lowest fare or rate or to prove the value of the travel program or TMC to management.

### KEY FINDINGS SUMMARY

### PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

<b>Savings are most important travel metric</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>Travel costs, compared to prior year, are most important</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Travel policy compliance is shared with senior management</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Travel policy compliance is shared with travelers</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Lost savings from buying decisions shared with senior management</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Lost savings from buying decisions shared with travelers</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to track traveler satisfaction with travel program</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to track traveler satisfaction w/ preferred suppliers</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to track travel costs as a percent of revenue</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to track ROI of business travel expenditures</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to track travel vs. use of remote conferencing</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Measurements in place to travel success of each business trip</b>	<b>13%</b>



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

While travel managers reported increased focus and management interest on savings and compliance, higher than expected percentages are providing reports to various stakeholder groups only as needed or requested, annually, twice a year or not at all.

Based on this, some shortcomings could be solved with the following recommended steps:

### REVIEW REPORTING FREQUENCY

**Travel managers might want to** review the frequency of reporting to all stakeholder groups, including travelers, to further reinforce program goals and saving opportunities. Monthly or quarterly reviews should provide needed insights, but the frequency will depend on the group and objectives.

### ASK STAKEHOLDERS WHAT METRICS THEY WANT

A handful of respondents specifically identified two newer metrics of interest to their senior management: travel spending as

a percentage of company revenue and traveler satisfaction. However, when asked to identify the three most important metrics to their senior management, respondents rated the two factors least important of nine factors.

**Travel managers might want to** ask their own stakeholders what they want to see and how frequently they want to see it.

### REVIEW CUSTOMER SATISFACTION METRICS

Elsewhere, managers identified metrics they're already tracking and those that were planned for this year. Less than half said they're tracking traveler satisfaction with the travel program while less than one-third are tracking satisfaction with preferred suppliers.

**Travel managers might want to** review customer satisfaction, as well as other metrics, to ensure alignment with company objectives.

### EXPLORE NEW WAYS TO MINE DATA, ENHANCE PROGRAM

Several travel manager respondents highlighted the abundance of data available today as well as the missing data elements,

## FREQUENCY OF DATA REPORTING TO STAKEHOLDERS

	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	AS NEEDED	NOT SHARING
<b>BUSINESS UNIT BUDGET OWNERS</b>	43%	13%	23%	9%
<b>CFO/FINANCE</b>	40%	28%	12%	5%
<b>SENIOR MANAGEMENT</b>	36%	25%	22%	2%
<b>CEO</b>	21%	20%	23%	23%
<b>PROCUREMENT</b>	29%	9%	22%	19%
<b>TRAVELERS</b>	12%	5%	31%	27%
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	12%	4%	38%	37%
<b>SUPPLIERS</b>	10%	26%	29%	23%

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such as ancillary fees, out of compliance spend and meeting and event spending. Others noted analytical insights, such as whether connections are worthwhile, the cost of ticket penalties, costs per city and opportunities to improve their programs and savings. Armed with more data than ever

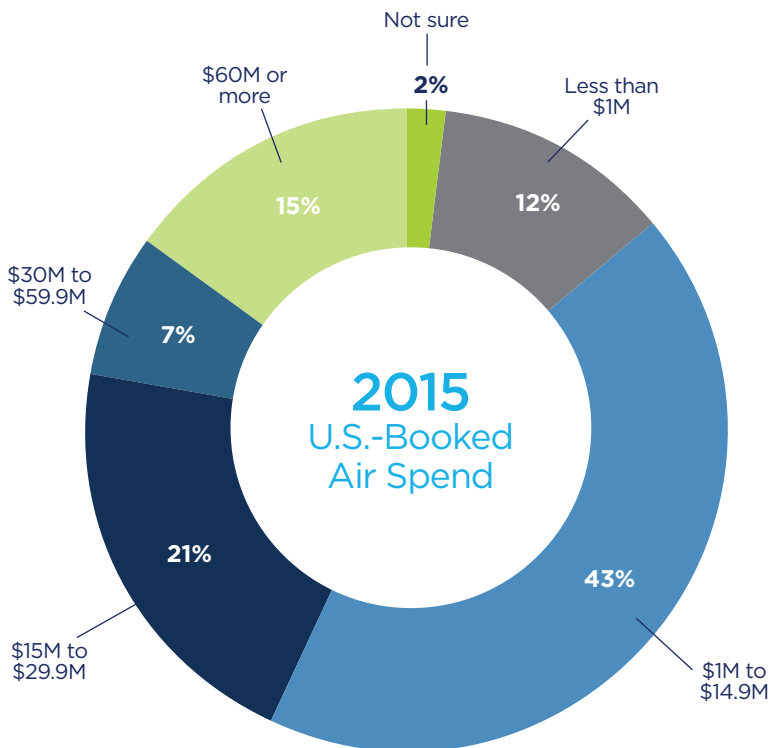
before, it's clear that interest in finding new ways to mine and distribute the insights will remain a focus.

**Travel managers might want to** scour current reporting with a new lens, looking for opportunities or metrics to track on emerging business or industry trends.

## ABOUT PARTICIPANTS/METHODOLOGY

The BTN Group invited subscribers to participate in an online survey from April 22-May 18, 2016, about data sharing trends for a custom research project for American Express Global Business Travel.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE



Source: The BTN Group / American Express Global Business Travel survey of 161 corporate travel, procurement or other managers / decision makers conducted in April-May 2016

## ABOUT THE SPONSOR



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American Express Global Business Travel enables corporations and empowers business travelers with insights, connections and exceptional customer service on a global scale. Through technology and information, American Express Global Business Travel provides leading travel solutions, integrated consulting services, proprietary research, and end-to-end meetings and events capabilities. These innovative offerings enable clients to optimize the return on their travel and meetings investments.

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