



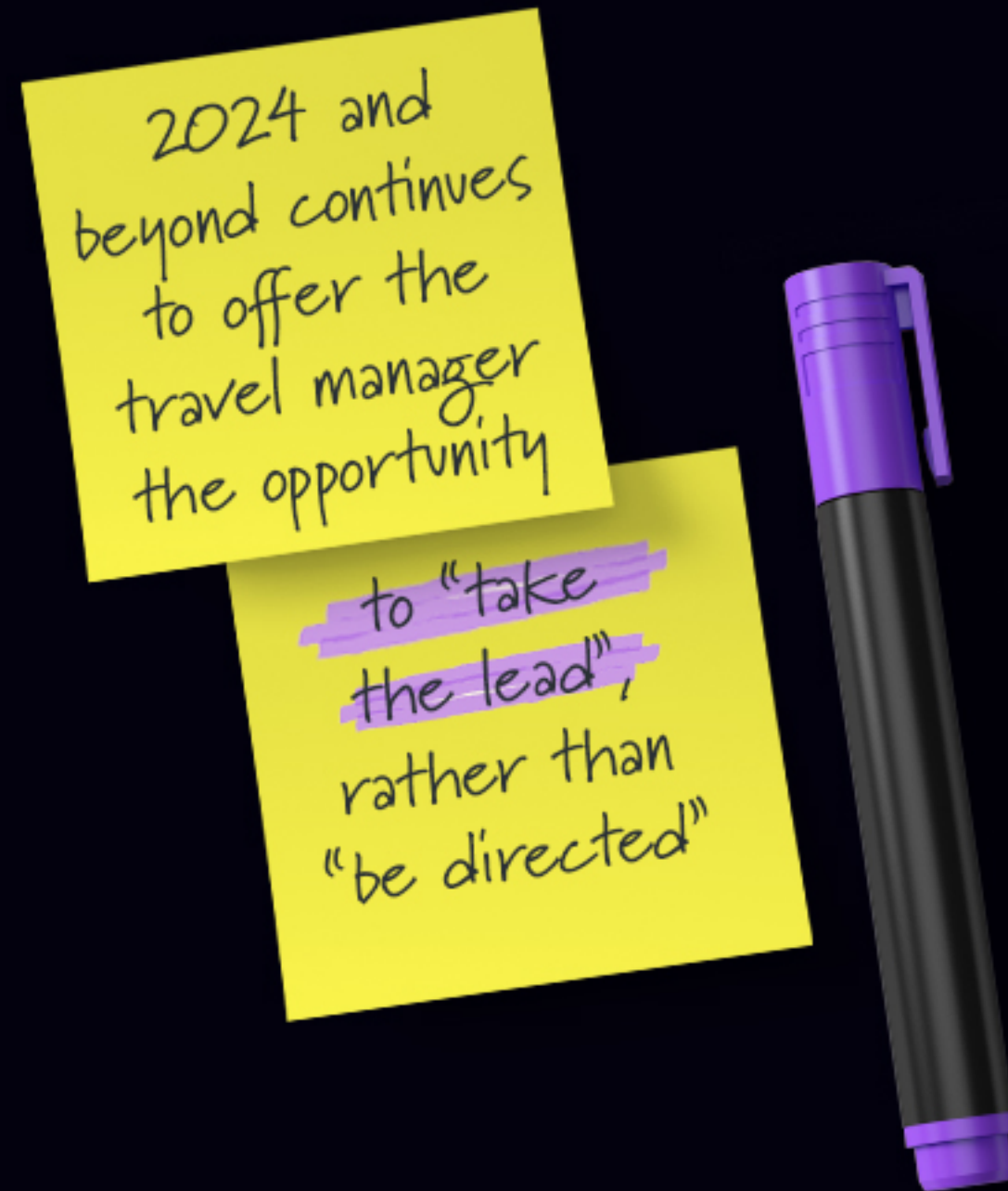
FESTIVE
ROAD 

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT VERSION 2.0

The Macro Changes Affecting
Travel & Meetings Management
in The Decade Ahead



"Travel managers need to become more strategic, asking if each endeavour brings them closer to their company's purpose. Their perceived value will be determined by the relationships they build and the strategic choices they make."



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Introduction by the FESTIVE ROAD Managing Partners

Welcome to The MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0

We produced our first edition of The MACROSCOPE REPORT at the beginning of 2022, where we detailed the eight trends we saw shaping corporate travel and meetings management in the decade ahead.

After publishing the trends we were asked to present them to numerous teams and conference audiences. We also hosted some buyer "Dine & Discuss" sessions in different parts of the world, to understand which trends are most likely to affect travel and meetings, processes, travellers/attendees and supplier relationships. And we provided an **assessment tool** for buyers and wider buying teams to assess their readiness for the changes these trends would bring.

In this second edition of the MACROSCOPE REPORT we've added much of the additional insights we gained through this activity, to help our sector understand the impact of the trends and where key challenges and opportunities may lie.

But, as a result of our listening over the last year we also believe that there's a 9th, distinguishable

trend we should detail. Since the launch of the report, the pace of change seems to be still accelerating and there are key areas of disruption increasing. Meaning that disruption itself is a trend which will shape the future of travel and meetings management and the way corporate travel programmes, and the suppliers who serve them, will evolve.

We present these insights, as we always do, with the intention to create better travel and meetings management. That's our mission and we believe that our independent insights further that mission through the stimulation of dialogue and debate.

We hope you enjoy version 2.0 and as always we'll be listening throughout the year to ensure our thinking stays up to date.

Paul Tilstone & Caroline Strachan

Managing Partners of FESTIVE ROAD

#CREATEBETTER
#SEEWATWESEE



PAUL
TILSTONE,
UK



CAROLINE
STRACHAN,
UK

Methodology & Feedback

We are fortunate that FESTIVE ROAD gets to work with some of the brightest minds in the industry, both in a client and voluntary capacity. This and our constant, persistent drive to understand and analyse sector changes and broader macro changes provides us with a wholly independent and holistic view of the future of

The insights are based on what we hear throughout the year, through deep client engagements and the considerable amount of time we take to talk with the sector.

business travel and meetings sector.

The ever-developing requirements from our travel and meetings manager clients

across strategy, sourcing, delivery and audit tell us part of the story of our futures. But the insights of our Roaders, the work we do pro-bono across permissible and purposeful travel and our engagement with the media, associations and other voluntary groups tells us the rest.

So, the insights are based on what we hear throughout the year, through deep client engagements and the considerable amount of time we take to engage with the sector.

In 2022 we created the initial list of trends after intense debate amongst the FESTIVE ROAD team of experts.

When we launched the report to the sector we initially undertook a buyer "Dine & Discuss" format to hear what they had to say about the trends and their impact to different aspects of travel management. We held one in the UK and one in the USA. The input from these sessions, plus additional input from our clients and teams in APAC, helped us to better understand which trends will be most impactful and where. They also helped us see other aspects shaping travel and meetings management that fell outside of the trends.

We still see these insights as a company in our day-to-day engagements with the sector.

You may disagree and see something more pressing, and we are ok with that. Dialogue and debate only enrich our understanding of the sector. And going back to our mission, to create better travel and meetings management, we know that such a mission is dramatically enhanced when we continue to listen to the insights of our community. So, if you see something we don't or have any feedback on these insights at all please drop us a line at hello@festive-road.com.

MACRO #1 FUTURE OF WORK: DISPERSED BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

by Louise Kilgannon, UK &
Barbara Arena, USA



For some, the “Home Office” should be called the “Hybrid Home Office” as some CEOs lure employees back to company bases. The push to retain talent, collaborate, and create in an office setting is becoming more common in the post-pandemic world.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #1



LOUISE
KILGANNON,
UK



BARBARA
ARENA
USA

For some, the “Home Office” should be called the “Hybrid Home Office” as some CEOs lure employees back to company bases. The push to retain talent, collaborate, and create in an office setting is becoming more common in the post-pandemic world. And while many believe the office is the best place for employees to come together, with the benefit of chance meetings,

As employees settle into a new set of company demands, suppliers have reconfigured hotel rooms and dormant sections of lobbies, transforming them into quiet workstations and collaboration pods, bringing people together in unconventional ways.

coffee chats and whiteboards, the hybrid model provides work-life balance and is highly valued by employees. But is there a mismatch between CEO demand and employee needs which continues

to cause friction? What is apparent is that we are still witnessing one of the biggest shifts in worker patterns since the Industrial Revolution, calling for KPIs favouring output vs. ‘busyness’.

In the hybrid realm, a new need for ownership of remote work policies and the management of internal space has emerged. “Home Offices now need to be fully functional, permanent workstations that maximise personal productivity. On-site offices and conference rooms need to

be remote-capable collaboration stations so remote participants are fully included in team interactions” according to recent research by Gallup. As employees settle into a new set of company demands, suppliers have reconfigured hotel rooms and dormant sections of lobbies, transforming them into quiet workstations and collaboration pods, bringing people together in unconventional ways. This presents opportunities for employees in the same city to ‘co-locate’ however the question of who manages employee productivity and company sustainability goals is still unanswered in many organisations.

Today we are in a temperamental junction where business travel meets mobility, meets commute, meets in-person collaboration. Meetings and Events continue to push forward with a hybrid component, in line with sustainability commitments, and chunks of transient travel continue to be lost to the computer screen. As companies embed hybrid working into their culture, we need to find new ways to monitor output. Productivity paranoia at the top levels of organisations will fuel trends such as ‘quiet quitting’ and lead to people searching for organisations that understand employee needs in the post-covid world.



MACRO #2 ESG AT THE PURPOSEFUL CORE

by Sally Higgs, UK &
Ami Taylor, UK

The travel industry has demonstrated remarkable adaptability in just a few short years. Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) has catapulted towards the top priority list for buyers and suppliers.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0
MACRO #2

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it" - Robert Swan, Explorer

The travel industry has demonstrated remarkable adaptability in just a few short years. Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) has catapulted towards the top priority list for buyers and suppliers. Organisations are responding to the increasing pressure to meet regulatory obligations set by governments. ESG commitments now have a board-level focus in most organisations. Chief Sustainability Officers often lead these efforts, illustrating that ESG has risen to the same importance as technology, finance, and sales within organisations.

While business travel often grabs the headlines due to aviation's environmental impact, it's crucial to acknowledge that this industry, though challenging, presents an opportunity for transformation. Although practical alternatives to Long-Haul flights with reputable carbon abatement, like sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), can be costly and elusive, we see innovative approaches to emissions management taking shape within the sector; the industry is seeing advancements in influencing behaviour, through pre-trip traveller engagement, carbon budgets/ pricing and point of sales solutions. The ongoing controversies surrounding carbon offsetting and the lack of global standards for measuring genuine carbon reductions give us

a chance to be pioneers and establish credible approaches. In this dynamic landscape, travel managers shoulder added responsibilities as they navigate the complexities of "greenwashing" and "greenhushing" in their supply chain.

ESG encompasses a broad spectrum of standards that demand attention and dedication, and it is essential not to lose focus of the "S" and "G" in ESG when re-evaluating the travel programme. Ensuring the safety of LGBTQ+ employees whilst travelling, recognising the DE&I credentials of travel suppliers, and embracing ethical sourcing are all noteworthy and emerging trends in business travel. This pivotal decade represents a unique moment when organisations can take a proactive stance and harmonise people and the planet alongside profit. At the core of any successful ESG endeavour lives a purpose-driven travel and meetings programme, deeply rooted in our understanding of employee travel needs, connected to clear business objectives that focus on achieving a return on investment (ROI) in spending and carbon.

Our journey toward achieving that net zero travel may be complex, but within our industry, we find a shared purpose and collective desire to drive meaningful change. Together, as determined individuals, we have the power to accomplish amazing things.



SALLY
HIGGS,
UK



AMI TAYLOR,
UK



MACRO #3 IT WAS ALWAYS ABOUT THE MEETING

by Meredith Smith, USA &
Ian Jones, UK

The full integration of travel and meetings has been a high ideal for years. And yet few companies have achieved a truly coordinated approach to the two sister categories.



THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #3

The full integration of travel and meetings has been a high ideal for years. And yet few companies have achieved a truly coordinated approach to the two sister categories. Who provides what in the meetings sector has been historically and bizarrely shaped by the travel supply chain's technological inability for decades to manage a booking of more than nine people.

It seems crazy, but the pandemic brought the reality home. We travel to meet. Not always, sometimes travel is to fix or deliver or see, but the vast majority of trips are to facilitate meetings of two, ten or thousands. Travel and meetings are intricately intertwined.

And because necessity is the mother of invention, the pandemic triggered "the meeting" to be achieved in a different way whilst the traditional options were paused. The category owners for meetings and travel have had time to reconsider the need. There was no going back.



MEREDITH
SMITH,
USA

It seems crazy, but the pandemic brought the reality home. We travel to meet.



IAN JONES,
UK

Virtual, hybrid, multi-hub have all entered the meetings management mainstream vernacular. However now the pandemic feels to be firmly in the past the meetings landscape has blown up once again.

A dispersed workforce brings new needs, with in person team meetings a vital connection between colleagues. What was once considered a commute is now part of the journey to meet in person with colleagues who for some time were just a two dimensional image on a screen.

This has allowed some supply areas to flourish, the simple meetings tool, much talked about for many years is now a reality. Large organisations partnering with new tech companies to offer seamless solutions to look and book simple meeting space, which dovetail into the main travel and expense programme.

Coworking spaces with plush meeting facilities compete and in many cases, win, over the traditional hotel conference space when it comes to hosting. With many delegates and organisers choosing quirky coworking spaces with on tap refreshments, floor to ceiling daylight, central locations and foosball tables over a hotel meeting room.

With such a seismic shift in the way we work (see macro trend #1) heightening the need for a structured meetings policy within the organisation then it really is the time to herald the mantra that it is, and always was, all about the meeting.



MACRO #4 THE WHOLE TRIP EXPERIENCE (AT LAST)

Katie Virtue, USA &
Alex Kingston, UK

When travel managers reinvent their travel programme with the traveller at the very core, extraordinary things can happen. Duty of care is met, travellers adhere to policy and the right on-trip tools and information are provided to maximise trip value.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #4

When travel managers reinvent their travel programme with the traveller at the very core, extraordinary things can happen. Duty of care is met, travellers adhere to policy and the right on-trip tools and information are provided to maximise trip value. However, despite "traveller centric" programmes being on the rise, we've only seen nominal headway on supporting the traveller throughout the whole trip. Until now. Traveller satisfaction was never just about the booking, so how did we let it become just that!?

The whole trip experience has moved into sharp focus. All stages of the journey are now viewed together, in order to meet increasing traveller expectations. Combined with a traditional lens on cost (or value) and a new lens on carbon, the focus is now on travellers becoming more productive and less stressed to achieve their trip purpose.



KATIE
VIRTUE,
USA



ALEX
KINGTON,
UK

Travelers are setting new rules of engagement and the experience needs to measure up.

Traveller expectations have changed. Tools and processes must be digital and user friendly and seamlessly connected to make researching, preparing, travelling & expensing easy and pain free. Pre-travel considerations extend beyond the business reason for the trip; we now need to consider when in-person is needed, options

that are sustainable, impacts to mental health and wellbeing and what objectives the trip will help achieve. Supplier products have changed too. New microservices target specific parts of the trip while other solutions look to create a seamless, connected journey.

Working habits and expectations have evolved, with people seeking autonomy and choice across a multitude of work aspects, including when, where, how and why to travel. Travelers are setting new rules of engagement and the experience needs to measure up.

It's truly time to connect all the critical elements that make up a business trip and put servicing the traveller as a programme priority.



MACRO #5 DYNAMIC CONTENT, THE TRUE KING

Ginger Rippley, USA &
Amy Williams, USA



Dynamic content is king, yet the crown is still being adjusted for proper fit. There is tremendous potential for suppliers to revolutionise business travel by offering deeply personalised content and user experiences to the travellers.



THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #5



GINGER
RIPPLEY,
USA



AMY
WILLIAMS,
USA

Dynamic content is king, yet the crown is still being adjusted for proper fit. There is tremendous potential for suppliers to revolutionise business travel by offering deeply personalised content and user experiences to the travellers. But has dynamic content truly arrived in corporate travel? We're on the brink of a revolution but are we all ready for it?

Airlines sit on the throne of innovation and are taking steps - some bold, others cautious - toward providing dynamic content to travellers. In return for greater visibility into purchaser behaviour, airlines gain greater control over bundles and fares offered and different economics in their distribution methods. Travel managers demand the content to be available in their existing travel programmes while maintaining negotiated rates, company policy, and consistent user experience. Reducing programme leakage is still the name of the

With travellers shifting to smarter, more purposeful trips, dynamic content supported by AI will align both traveller and company objectives. And the true king will reign.

game for many. Meanwhile, travellers expect personalised offers tailored to their loyalty status, preferences, travel patterns as well as relevant messaging via the right channels at the right time.

Hotel content and room bundles remain largely dictated by corporate contracts rather than traveller personalization. The change in the ground transport space has been noted too, with centralised distribution technology developed to offer a full comparison suite of products, from the scooter to the S-Class. Perhaps it's also time for rail content to evolve to more aggressively compete with air?

And the rising power behind the king, well it has to be machine learning! Who can have missed the huge acceleration in Artificial Intelligence and its potential as the driver of personalization on travel platforms. It enables contextual content, where "content" has expanded to include bespoke travel itineraries, real time support, and guidance throughout a traveller's journey. AI will change the industry and the delivery of dynamic content quicker than any previous innovation.

With travellers shifting to smarter, more purposeful trips, dynamic content supported by AI will align both traveller and company objectives. And the true king will reign.



MACRO #6 API EXPLOSION BRINGS BUYER EMPOWERMENT

Lora Ellis, USA &
Abi Cummings, UK

In the year since our first
Macroscopic Trends report, we've
seen the API explosion start to
come to life in travel & meetings
programmes of all shapes and
sizes.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0
MACRO #6

In the year since our first Macroscopic Trends report, we've seen the API explosion start to come to life in travel & meetings programmes of all shapes and sizes. Post-pandemic programmes are shifting focus to four key areas: Purpose, People, Planet & Profit. And the API is increasingly becoming a way to achieve these programme shifts. And that's an exciting development for us all.

*For corporations, APIs
bring the potential for
deeper data science
and allow buyers to
make better decisions
and drive different
behaviours...*

On the traveller side of the equation, there is a demand for a better and more tailored digital experience. The FESTIVE ROAD mantra, "Know me, be where I am, tell

me only what I need to know" rings truer than ever before and APIs are playing a key role here. In addition, travellers expect consumer grade content within the corporate programme, and APIs can bring this while ensuring company policy is overlaid.



LORA ELLIS,
USA



ABI
CUMMINGS,
UK

For corporations, APIs bring the potential for deeper data science and allow buyers to make better decisions and drive different behaviours, for example, more sustainability focus at the point of sale or understanding traveller sentiment and reasons for going off-programme. They also

provide, for the first time in the history of travel management, the opportunity to deconstruct the travel & meetings programme and rebuild it in a way which will create more agility and use service delivery expertise in key areas, such as; sustainability tools, data providers, duty of care tools, direct content or alternative aggregators, re-shopping and independent profile management tools to name a few.

"Plug and play" may not be as easy as it sounds, but the potential to "Build Your Own" servicing ecosystem is beginning to take shape. Travel buyers with the "skill, will and bill" have even more choices and opportunity to take control. Providers built with APIs at the core are providing the IT infrastructure to support the complexities of this evolving programme model. And for those who want a more streamlined & simpler model, the TMC landscape is evolving to support micro-services via in-house development or partnerships.

The API force is strong!

MACRO #7 HAIL TO THE STORYTELLERS

by James Windsor, UK &
Nicole DiSarno, USA



In business travel, data is everywhere. Every click of the traveller's mouse, keyboard tap, or swipe generates data that can and should shape travel programme decisions.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #7

In business travel, data is everywhere. Every click of the traveller's mouse, keyboard tap, or swipe generates data that can and should shape travel programme decisions. But our challenge to date has been to consolidate the huge amount available. Multi-source has become everything. Internal and external sources such as TMC, card, expense, profile, HR, CRM have started to come together. But now our travel management brains are thinking bigger... we're considering the "what if"...health data, traveller sentiment, friction and more. Each data source contains rich insights, the more we have the better the stories can be told.

Of course, it's one thing having it, however unlocking the value in the data is something else. It's all about the right skills, technology and tools, appropriate privacy, and of course cybersecurity.

But where there's opportunity, there are solutions. More companies are recognising the potential for taking stagnant historic data and turning it into an insightful, predictive and secure solution. The

demand for insights, stories and actions is what's powering the rush.

If travel programme goals include risk management, sustainability,

quantifying travel ROI or measuring its benefits, you need data-driven insights. From identifying new travel patterns to opportunities to leverage tailored products, to redefining the KPIs of travel management. Data underpins it all.

To shine you don't just need to know where you're going and when to change course, you need to show how to get there too. Every good story has an ending that leaves audiences wanting more..."what are we going to achieve now?". But, whilst the story doesn't have to end there, turning insights into action requires commitment. Regularly reviewing data and adjusting travel programme levers is crucial to ensuring that the programme continues to meet the needs of the organisation, and to ultimately drive better decisions.

We've entered the era of the analyst as the lock picker, the storyteller through the numbers. The data cruncher is cool, the storyteller is in ascendance.



JAMES
WINDSOR, UK



NICOLE
DISARNO,
USA

To shine you don't just need to know where you're going and when to change course, you need to show how to get there too.



MACRO #8 TAKE THE LEAD OR BE DIRECTED

by Nicola Lomas, UK &
Frasier Johnson, USA



The year 2022 was one of introspection for travel buyers. Despite significant challenges caused by the pandemic, these professionals had risen to the occasion, adapting their roles to support their companies.

THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #8



NICOLA
LOMAS, UK



FRASIER
JOHNSON,
USA

The year 2022 was one of introspection for travel buyers. Despite significant challenges caused by the pandemic, these professionals had risen to the occasion, adapting their roles to support their companies. One crucial realisation was that travel functions could not operate in isolation. Successful travel programmes need to align with broader business goals, they require senior level sponsorship and cross-functional collaboration.

But the aftermath of the pandemic has continued to significantly impact travel buyers, requiring them to focus on highly transactional tasks, necessitating a more granular examination of the business traveller's journey from booking to expense. It started with health and risk management but has continued as a result of dramatically rising prices and more recently the impact of disappearing content.

At the same time, service providers and suppliers are struggling to meet contractual service levels, leaving travel buyers unable to hold them accountable, unable to move to those strategic tasks.

This constant requirement to focus on granularity

Travel buyers need to adopt a more selective approach, focusing on strategic tasks and outsourcing, automating, or adopting scalable, self-sustaining solutions for others.

shows no sign of disappearing and has detracted from their ability to concentrate on higher impact tasks. So, it's clear that travel buyers need to adopt a more selective approach if they are to take the lead, focusing on strategic tasks and outsourcing, automating, or adopting scalable, self-sustaining solutions for others.

Continued changes in the way we work (see trend #1) and a revised focus on meetings (see trend #3) means that there's a new opportunity for the travel manager. Travel buyers have the opportunity to contribute to the new workplace and meetings strategy by supporting better hybrid, remote, and face-to-face interactions to support the organisation in achieving its strategic objectives. They have the opportunity to extend their influence into the employee experience, beyond the office walls.

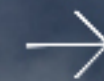
It's time for travel managers to better understand their business and the role of travel in its success. Being an "operational doer" is no longer enough. Instead, travel managers need to become more strategic, asking if each endeavour brings them closer to their company's purpose. Their perceived value will be determined by the relationships they build and the strategic choices they make. 2023 and beyond continue to offer the travel manager the opportunity to "take the lead", rather than "be directed".



MACRO #9 DISRUPTION AT THE CORE

Mike Orchard, AUS &
Carol Peters, UK

In today's travel industry, disruption has become an ever-present challenge that requires travel managers to be constantly prepared for change and uncertainty.



THE MACROSCOPE REPORT 2.0 MACRO #9

As Charles Darwin famously said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most adaptable to change."

In today's travel industry, disruption has become an ever-present challenge that requires travel managers to be constantly prepared for change and uncertainty. As an industry, we've experienced disruptions all too regularly, such as the impact of 9/11, Eyjafjallajökull (the ash cloud), SARS and, of course, the COVID-19 pandemic. But now, disruption is taking so many forms that disruption management must become a core travel management discipline.

Travel programmes, and their suppliers, must be built on adaptable and flexible foundations.

The frequency of disruptions in the industry is increasing from threats such as supply chain and service issues, cybercrime, the

impacts of climate change and geopolitical unrest.

And as technology continues to advance, the way travel content is distributed is evolving, causing another wave of disruptions throughout the travel industry. Traditional distribution channels are being challenged by new platforms and content change, and confusion prevails in the short term.

This exacerbates the challenge for the industry to manage disrupted travel patterns.

Travel programmes, and their suppliers, must be built on adaptable and flexible foundations. By leveraging technology such as predictive analytics, API connectivity, and real-time solutions, travel managers can now develop dynamic technology operations that can quickly adapt to different situations as the need arises. The need for rapid changes to travel policy, adding new travel approval pathways or providing additional communication to travellers should all be considered.

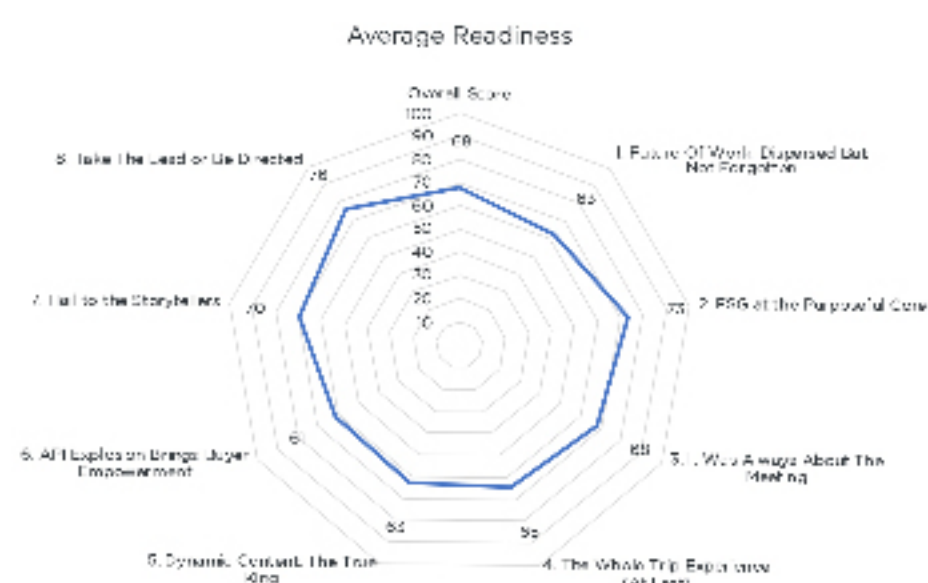
By adopting a proactive and positive approach to disruption management, travel managers can position themselves to succeed in the years ahead as agile agents of change. Ultimately, the key to thriving in the face of disruption is to view it as an opportunity for agility, expertise and innovation rather than a threat to our future.



How Prepared Are Travel and Meetings Buyers?

Along with the first publication of **The MACROSCOPE REPORT**, we also launched our illuminator assessment tool, asking travel and meetings buyers to assess their readiness against the initial 8 trends (now 9 of course), benchmarking their results against their peers.

Over 50 travel buyers undertook the illuminator providing us with an excellent data sample to illustrate where travel managers feel they are most and least prepared for the trends ahead. Clearly, travel buyers are a resilient bunch and it was no surprise when looking at the eight trends that they felt most equipped to take the lead, rather than be directed (trend #8).



ESG comes a close second, with the focus of programmes rapidly turning to how the travel buyer can support the wider corporation to attain net zero.

However, The API Explosion (trend #6) does not yet appear to have brought widespread buyer empowerment. Many buyers still feel ill-equipped to deal with the wide-scale changes around distribution and direct connectivity.

The next few years represent a significant opportunity for travel managers to tackle this trend, potentially unlocking greater content potential for their travellers and the beginning of a new pathway for the sector to create better experiences and better corporate travel programmes.

Overall, travel buyers scored a 64% preparedness score for the eight trends we see, with two thirds of the topics scoring between 60- 70% and the remainder above 70%.

The good news is that there are, on the whole, no critical areas.

The bad news is that change and disruption is coming from all sides: Hollywood's 2022 Academy Award winning Best Picture probably encapsulates it best, "Everything, Everywhere, All At Once..."

TREND REFLECTIONS - GLOBAL CONSISTENCIES & VARIANCES

Since the launch of the original (Version 1) MACROSCOPE report, the team at FESTIVE ROAD held round-table discussions, travel buyer team talks and on-stage discussions about the trends across the globe.

Our quest was simple - to listen to reflections on the eight trends we outlined, understand the implications of these trends, and see where there were consistencies and variances globally. The following is a snapshot of those insights.

The Overriding Trend

Wherever we were in the world, buyers unanimously agreed that the trend with the most influence on the travel management eco-system is "The Whole Trip Experience (At Last)". A clear travel management focus for many is on improving the overall experience of business travel right from the initial booking stage through the journey to post-trip activities. This is top of mind for many travel managers, ensuring the business trip enables the traveller to be as successful as possible for their organisations. The idea of the "Chief Journey Officer" was discussed during one roundtable, and the

potential for the TMC to support better and influence the whole trip was featured in many discussions.

Expectations of suppliers are high, but so is the opportunity, an opportunity for a deeper relationship between buyer and supplier, based on more than price.

The Consistencies

Alongside "The Whole Trip Experience" as a consistently heightened theme, we heard other consistent narratives.

+ The Forthcoming Impact of Sustainability -

In all regions, the challenge and opportunities that ESG will bring to travel programmes, travel suppliers and to travellers was consistent. In Europe, it was unequivocally the top spot for most roundtable attendees and was consistently discussed. In the rest of the world, whilst the topic was definitely front of mind, it competes with many other topics as one of the top areas of focus. Whether this will change as ESG continues to rise up the corporate agenda remains to be seen, but feels likely from the dialogue we heard.

- + **The Role of The Intermediary** – The provision of services by the TMC, the challenges they face and the opportunity in hand for them to evolve to solve for future needs was a consistent theme that crossed many of the trends featured in the report.
- + **A Call To Action** - All sets of buyers were very vocal about the need for action by the travel & meetings management community to drive, more significant and faster change if the sector is to truly prosper and take advantage of the opportunity at hand it seems “collaboration and co-operation” are watch-words for success.

The Variance

- + **Owning The Tech Roadmap** – Whilst not all buyers in the US voiced this desire, there was considerably more discussion about unbundling the travel and meetings management service need and taking control of technology to provide for the future. Essentially, buyers were intrigued by what it meant to enter a micro-services world on the back of the evolving API landscape. This doesn't mean it isn't a focus for buyers elsewhere, but the US travel managers were far more vocal about the opportunity technology presents for them to take more control.

Naturally, we're a curious bunch, so we'll continue to listen to travel buyers' reflections and measure the aggregated Illuminator responses on how prepared they feel to deal with these trends. As the pace of industry change continues to accelerate, we know the hot topics for travel buyers and the impact of these trends on their programmes, travelers and supplier relationships will evolve.

Summary & Action

Never have the foundations of travel and meetings management been shifting as they have today.

Sure, the speed of change has been increasing for years as technology has driven new offerings, efficiencies, challenges and opportunities. But the acceleration of socioeconomic trends as we emerge into the new world from the biggest global event in decades is overlaying considerable complexity. As one pundit put it, “We've gone through ten years of change in just eighteen months”. Our new ninth trend certainly highlights there is no sign of this speed of change abating.

The trends we have detailed are significant enough in their own right without other important factors like high inflation, talent shortages due to changing employee priorities and the dynamic changes in the fuel market. But if there's one thing we've learnt in the last few decades, the pace of change in world events is ever increasing. So, the nine trends within this book are the ones we think will continue to impact travel and meetings management thinking regardless of what else happens in the meantime.

Never has there been a better time to take a step back, consider the “Why” of the travel and

meetings programme itself and the value travel & meeting managers deliver to their businesses. It's an essential basic step to make sure that the travel and meetings programme in place is both aligned with the needs of the business and travellers and also well placed to manage for the trends ahead.

A blank piece of paper and a fresh perspective are probably two of the most important tools for successful travel management in the 2020's. That and a little bit of perspective, a little bit of vision. And one eye through the MACROSCOPE.

From the FESTIVE ROAD Team

THE CONSULTANCY ON A MISSION TO CREATE BETTER TRAVEL AND MEETINGS MANAGEMENT

**IF YOU'RE A TRAVEL
MANAGER AND YOU
ENJOYED THESE
INSIGHTS WHAT'S
YOUR NEXT STEP?**

Option 1 - complete our "MACROSCOPE Illuminator"

Test how robust and agile your travel management strategy, programme and role are against the nine macro trends. You'll receive an instant assessment and then a follow up with benchmarks across your peers.

[Complete your MACROSCOPE Illuminator](#)

Option 2 - A Team Presentation

There's no better way to kick-start a programme rethink than walking your whole travel management team through these macro trends in detail. But you don't need to do it, just ask us if we can. We may just say yes!

[Send us a mail](#)



The MACROSCOPE REPORT was produced by FESTIVE ROAD, the consultancy on a mission to create better travel & meetings management.

If you'd like to speak to us about any of these trends or how to review your travel and meetings management strategy contact your favourite Roder or drop us a line at hello@festive-road.com

www.festive-road.com

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