

## INSIGHTS COLLECTIVE

Pandemic Economics Think Tank



## VIRUS

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**Air Canada is volunteering to participate in a study on the effectiveness of quarantine policies.** The effort comes as the country has placed limits on inbound travel, including a mandated 14 days of quarantine upon arrival. The study will ask inbound passengers to volunteer samples for COVID-19 testing when they land, seven days later, and at the end of the 14-day period. The goal is to see if quarantine periods can be shortened or eliminated. Source: [BTN](#)

**And why is that important [Insights Collective] ...** Quarantine coupled with testing procedures, and the best practices that follow now **need to take on primary importance in resort and destination operational playbooks.** There is no due date for a vaccine, despite political pressure to deliver a vaccine by election day. As a result, changes in social behavior coupled with testing and quarantine are the best procedures to follow.

## REOPENING

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**A new type of memento is being sold at this year's drive-through Colorado State Fair.** The range of purchasable products is much narrower than in years past, but it now includes custom masks that reflect a "Walk on the Wild Side" theme. The fair launched a friendly competition among its staff to design official

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masks once it became clear that any in-person event would require them. Source: [La Junta Tribune-Democrat](#)

**And why is that important [Insights Collective] ...** As we've alluded to in prior issues, reopening is more than going back to the way things were. Reopening means being aware of guests' preferences and society needs – in this case wearing a mask to attend an in-person event. **Our research continues to show that visitors are more likely to make (and keep) travel plans when their safety is a top consideration by the resort and destination.**

## ECONOMY

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**An index measuring employing trends rose in August for the fourth consecutive month.** Despite the improvement, the labor market is still far from making up all lost ground in March and April. A wave of infections this fall would limit the expansion of the labor market, but a decline in infections would lead to job growth for industries impacted early in the pandemic such as hotels and restaurants. Source: [Conference Board](#)

**And why is that important [Insights Collective] ...** There are silver linings in the economic data – employment trends being one of them. For many, **the virus and its spread have become just another thing to manage, and as a result their attention has turned to other aspects of life: school, work, and play.** That shift means companies will need “staff-up” in order to serve the growing demand. Again, much of this depends on the ability to curtail another spike in infections – but the right protocols and procedures can go a long way to ensuring the economy has more bright spots in the future.

## LODGING

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**Airbnb announced that 1.2 million of its 5+ million listings now follow an enhanced cleaning protocol.** The program began in June to increase guest confidence and is now available in 220 countries and regions. The company claims that listings using the protocol are receiving three times more bookings than other properties. Source: [PhocusWire](#)

**And why is that important [Insights Collective] ...** Transparency between travelers and homeowners about expectations and protocols is more important than ever. With vacation rentals being in high demand, vacation rental managers have reported that they're busier than ever during the pandemic, partially due to travelers believing they are safer alternatives to hotels. **Enhanced cleaning protocol, and the marketing of those protocols, will help reinforce that perception.** We believe that as travelers continue to favor domestic destinations for their next getaway, and with the COVID-19 pandemic still raging, they will likely book even more vacation rentals.

*\*This is a new section to our Briefing Sheet, and its inclusion is a valuable proxy for anticipated guests returning to the market.*

## NEW REALITIES

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**Spirit Airlines has started testing biometric check-in.** The trial program will be based at Chicago's O'Hare Airport and is designed to streamline the process and reduce face-to-face interactions between employees and passengers. One customer service agent is still involved at the beginning in order to check ID before allowing access to the new kiosks at the check-in/bag-drop area. Source: [TechCrunch](#)

**And why is that important [Insights Collective] ...** The arrival of biometric check-in for Sprint passengers in Chicago is another **example of the pandemic allowing for experiments that otherwise would have happened much further in the future.** We see this technology being quickly adapted at the destination and

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facility level – and encourage the industry to be on the leading edge of its implementation.

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The COVID-19 Briefing Sheet is a weekly distribution of Insights Collective, an industry Think Tank focused on leading resorts and destinations through the New Realities of management, marketing, and positioning. It is made possible by contribution from other civic minded organizations including Red Sky Travel Insurance.

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