



VIRUS

Coronavirus positivity rates rose sharply throughout Illinois. In Chicago the positivity rate rose to 5.4 percent, the highest level in the past six weeks. The state's highest coronavirus positivity rate is in the Rockford area, where two weeks of increased mitigations have failed to stem the increase in positivity rates – now at 10.6 percent. Source / Full State-wide data: [here](#)

And why is that important [Insights Collective] ... Under Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan, if one of the state's 11 regions experiences three or more consecutive days of **a coronavirus positivity rate of 8 percent or more, authorities activate additional restrictions on gatherings and businesses.** This is precisely what transpired at The University of Arizona. They announced it will cancel Spring Break in 2021 to limit the spread of COVID-19. Some students think their peers will still travel because many classes are online only. The school is joined by other universities in Pac-12 and the American Association of Universities in eliminating Spring Break 2021.

REOPENING

Tennessee has launched a new ad campaign aimed at protecting the health of visitors and residents. The effort, 'For the Love of Tennessee, Travel Safe' reminds residents to play--but play it safe--while following key safety guidelines like mask-wearing and social distancing. The campaign will run through December with TV, print, digital, radio and billboard ads. Microsite: [here](#)

And why is that important [Insights Collective] ... By and large destination marketing has resumed –and the tone is one of safety and responsibility. This approach assumes travelers have internalized the inspirational aspect and don't need it to be front in center of any advertising push. Campaigns that promote

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health and safety likely **activate a repeat customer base more than first time visitors.**

ECONOMY

Unemployment rates were lower in 30 states, higher in 8 states, and stable in 12 states and the District of Columbia. All 50 states and the District had jobless rate increases from a year earlier. The national unemployment rate declined by 0.5 percentage point over the month to 7.9 percent but was 4.4 points higher than in September 2019. Source: [BLS](#)

And why is that important [Insights Collective] ... **Hawaii and Nevada are being impacted by the lack of tourism.** Hawaii had the highest unemployment rate in September, 15.1 percent, followed by Nevada, 12.6 percent. Nebraska had the lowest rate, 3.5 percent, followed by South Dakota, 4.1 percent, and Vermont, 4.2 percent. Looking at source market unemployment is important, it tells us where travel restrictions are most impactful (Hawaii and Nevada) and reminds us that **those not working, or worried about losing their jobs, are not candidates for travel.**

LODGING

A 10-year, nearly \$800,000 tax break for a new Kessler hotel has been approved by the Hudson Industrial Development Agency in New York. The property will open in 2022. About \$156,000 in tax breaks would be from the state and \$597,146 would be from the region. Within the region, \$253,574 in tax breaks would come from the county, \$168,950 from the city and \$174,622 from the Hudson school district. Source: [Register Star](#)

And why is that important [Insights Collective] ... Only reputable and influential developers receive tax breaks, and besides, **tax breaks are generally only given to developers when the area is going to greatly benefit.** Only time will tell if the tax breaks are the right decision. The ROI report suggests for every \$1 of incentive the project receives, the county receives \$7.54, the city receives \$11.99 and the school

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district receives \$2.62. This averages to \$7.36 in benefits to the region and state for every \$1 given to the project in incentives.

NEW REALITIES

Nebraska tourism industry professionals gathered virtually for the 2020 Nebraska Tourism Conference. Attendees heard from a variety of speakers on topics such as editorial impacts and inspiration, benefits of diversity and inclusion and the future of tourism. **All sessions were free.** Source: [KRVN](#) / Full Agenda: [here](#)

And why is that important [Insights Collective] ... We highlight the effort of Nebraska tourism officials for making their event complimentary to attend. Is this the future of events? Yes. As more organizations shift to complimentary distribution of content it will be hard to justify full, or even discounted registration fees for virtual events. Music and movies went through a similar digital pricing evolution, conferences and events will need to as well. **For destinations anticipating a return to conference business, be mindful that professionals in the conference industry are looking at new digital models which remove the destination experience from the top of the consideration set.**

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