

INSIGHTS COLLECTIVE

Pandemic Economics Think Tank



VIRUS

News continues to break on a possible vaccine. Current trials from the University of Oxford/AstraZeneca, CanSino Biologics and Pfizer/BioNTech find that their version of a vaccine can produce immune responses that would be expected to protect people against infection – but stressed that more study is needed. There are 23 Covid-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials globally, according to the World Health Organization. Source: [CNN](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] Our data continues to show that a vaccine solution is the enabling factor which most travelers would need to feel safe to travel again – in mass. Sure, a vaccine is the desired outcome – though **efforts to encourage mask wearing and pre-arrival testing should continue** until one is widely available.

It's dangerous to project when a vaccine would be widely available and we won't make one here, but we do point out that while the industry celebrates efforts to reopen safely, some residents, and non-tourism professionals remain confused by our desire to do so. Those opinions are formed mainly on the science that requiring a negative COVID-19 test prior to arrival ignores the pathology of COVID-19 – that travelers could test negative 72-hours prior to arrival and an infection contracted on the plane would not trigger a positive test result.

REOPENING

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Philadelphia tourism officials have convened a health advisory board to help restart conventions. The city has lost nearly 400 gatherings as a result of COVID-19 that would have brought 420,000 visitors. Officials are expecting it to take three to five years before convention business returns to normal levels, and the health advisory group will answer questions from interested businesses. Source: [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] The effort in Philadelphia follows a similar development in Orlando – whose version includes offering a medical concierge program for convention events. Any group holding an event at the convention center can access protective equipment, on-site medical experts, and 24/7 virtual health services. **These developments continue to expand the role of DMOs from sales and marketing to something best described as *destination facilitator*.** We see this as a positive development and one that destination organizations should have taken a long time ago. While not currently scalable to the leisure market, offering a medical concierge program for convention events visibly adds to the quality of life for residents; and creates a conversation about 'what destinations organizations actually do' that can't be done with the resources of another agency.

ECONOMY

The American Automobile Association (AAA) forecasts a 15-percent decline in summer road trips this year. By sector, air travel is going to be down 74 percent, and all other modes of transportation - bus, trains, cruise ships - will see an 86 percent decrease from last year. However, this doesn't mean that people aren't going anywhere. Methodical and spur-of-the moment travel will prevail, as will smaller towns and cities. Long extended stays at popular locations such as Orlando, Florida will wane. Source / Data Table: [AAA](#)

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And why is that important... [Insights Collective] While road trips are trending down, second home use is trending up – especially among wealthy Bay Area residents that can hide out somewhere nice. Private jet traffic in places like Freidman Memorial (Sun Valley) is so numerous that lodging options for crew are becoming a concern. There just aren't enough rooms. **We believe that private jet traffic will increase – especially as work from home policies allows for digital nomads to thrive.** So, yes, summer travel seems to be cooling, but a new type of getaway – the Covid-cation – is bubbling up.

NEW REALITIES

The CVB in Chaffee County, Colorado has launched a campaign to encourage wearing masks. The Mask Up campaign is a collaboration with several chambers of commerce and other business groups, and it includes a \$10,000 matching grant for donations toward the purchase of branded bandanas to give to visitors as face coverings. More than 9,000 bandanas have been distributed so far. Source: [Chaffee County Visitors Bureau](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] This little destination of just 20,000 is out in front of the pandemic messaging. Even if bandanas are on the lower end of protection when comparing different face coverings ([CNN](#)), **the matching grant removes the financial burden of stakeholder organizations participating, and the logo inclusion (branded bandanas) foster a sense of well-being and community.** We don't scoff at the choice of bandanas – compared to protection. Their approach contrasts visibly with that of our northern neighbor, Canada. They are opting for an outright ban on (US) travelers rather than believing we are capable of a behavioral change ([Reuters](#)). If we remain unable to contain COVID-19, we will have to get used to being unwelcome as hosts or visitors by large parts of the world, including such historically friendly places as Canada.

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Until we match the appreciation for public health shown in other places, America can expect these restrictions to continue, even at significant economic cost to everyone involved. Despite the hardship caused by blocking visitors from the much larger U.S. population, more than 80 percent of Canadians still want their southern border to remain closed.

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Insights Collective – Pandemic Economic Think Tank



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The COVID-19 Briefing Sheet is a weekly distribution of Insights Collective, an industry Think Tank focused on leading destinations through the New Realities of destination/resort management, marketing and positioning.

The COVID-19 Briefing Sheet, combined with other resources from Insights Collective, allow destination and resort executives to have top-line information on demand and supply developments, along with Insights Collective knowledge on where to focus resources next.

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