

TRAVEL





InView
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Overview

- ▶ AAA estimated roughly 88 million Americans plan to take at least one family vacation this year. Among those taking family vacations, 35% said they plan to go to an international destination, up from 26% in the same survey fielded in 2016. More than one-fourth of families surveyed said they plan to take three or more trips in the next 12 months, and almost three-fourths said they intend to go someplace they've never visited before. *(Source: Hotel News Resource, 3/15/18)*
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- ▶ A survey of U.S. frequent flyer/hotel loyalty program members found almost half (47%) don't know how many hotel loyalty program points they currently have and 35% don't know how many frequent flyer miles they have. Almost one-fourth of the program members said they don't even know how to redeem their points/miles. *(Source: NextAdvisor.com, 4/13/18)*
 - ▶ A survey of luxury travelers found the most popular special requests on trips were: getting an exclusive/VIP tour (66%), having a private car & driver (51%); being treated to custom culinary experiences (46%); renting a private villa or home (39%); and having a private beach or island of their own (25%). *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/19/18)*
 - ▶ New research found U.S. workers took an average of 17.2 vacation days last year, up from 16.0 days in 2014. Still, most American workers (52%) did not use all their paid vacation leave in 2017, and almost one-fourth said they haven't taken a vacation in over a year and less than half only used 8 of the 17.2 vacation days to travel someplace. *(Source: Travel Industry Wire, 5/8/18)*
 - ▶ The eruption of Kilauea volcano in Hawaii has wreaked havoc on some travelers' plans. Several airlines including American, United, and Hawaiian Airlines announced that passengers booked on flights into or out of Hilo International and Kona International airports through May 13, 2018 could have any change fees waived on their flights due to the eruption's impact. Royal Caribbean's Radiance of the Seas had to cancel its planned stop at the port of Hilo as well. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 5/8/18)*
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- ▶ A survey of American workers found more than half (56%) said they would check in with their office at some point during their summer vacation this year. Among Millennial employees, the number is even higher, with 70% saying they will be in contact with their employer during their vacation. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/21/18)*

Air Travel Industry

▶ United Airlines saw its brand suffer after a dog died during a flight where its owner was forced to stow the dog's carrier in an overhead bin. A review of social media "chatter" about United Airlines before and after the dog's death showed a 140% increase in negative sentiment, with as many as 8,000 negative "conversations" the day after the dog's death compared to 230 positive mentions the day before. United was also the most talked about airline on social media during the period from March 12th through March 14th, as it was the focus of 89% of social media posts that were about U.S. airlines. (Source: MarketingDive.com, 3/15/18)

▶ American Airlines reached an agreement with the City of Chicago regarding a planned expansion of O'Hare International Airport. The city agreed to speed up construction of three new gates for American in the L Concourse where it currently operates. American had argued the city reached a secret agreement with United Airlines which gave it five new gates in the future expansion of O'Hare. The expansion project could not start without American Airline's approval. (Source: Chicago Tribune, 3/15/18)



▶ Airlines for America, the trade association representing U.S. airlines in Washington DC, submitted a list of more than thirty current or pending regulations that it would like the Department of Transportation to either roll back or alter somehow. The list was a response to a request from the Department of Transportation late last year as the Trump Administration looked for ways to reduce the amount of regulation on U.S. businesses. Among the rules the airlines want changed: the "tarmac delay rule" that penalizes airlines for keeping passengers sitting on planes for hours at a time due to weather or other issues; the rule that requires airlines to let customers know how they can file a complaint with the Department of Transportation; and the new rule which would require airlines to publish all fees & taxes associated with a given air fare. (Source: Orlando Sentinel, 3/22/18)

▶ Southwest Airlines was the #1 U.S. airline in terms of number of passengers carried in 2017, with 157.6 million passengers transported last year. Delta Airlines came in at #2 with 145.6 million passengers, while American was #3 with 144.8 million passengers. Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport was again the busiest airport in the United States, with more than 50 million passengers processed at that airport in 2017. (Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle, 3/23/18)

▶ Alaska Airlines updated its First-Class experience with new "West Coast" inspired menu items and special seating amenities. The new menu will have healthy seasonal salads and snacks including a fruit & cheese plate or edamame hummus with veggies and whole wheat pita pieces, local sweets such as Sweet Lady Jane brownies from California and Seattle Chocolate truffles, and wines & beers from West Coast wineries and microbreweries. Travelers will be able to snuggle in with a quilted throw while they watch in-flight entertainment options on large tablets. (Source: PR Newswire, 3/16/18)



- ▶ Southwest Airlines received a temporary permit to operate at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu, Hawaii, but it has not begun flying to that state yet. According Southwest's CEO, the airline hopes to be flying to Hawaii by the end of 2018.

(Source: Dallas Business Journal, 3/19/18)



- ▶ An annual customer experience ratings report stated Southwest Airlines ranked highest among U.S. airlines in customer experience for the seventh time in eight years. *(Source: Houston Business Journal, 4/2/18)*
- ▶ United Airlines announced new service between Chicago and Auckland, New Zealand as part of an expansion of its joint venture with Air New Zealand. United also said it will expand its seasonal service between San Francisco and Auckland to be available year-round starting in April 2019. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/27/18)*
- ▶ The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded several U.S. airlines additional flights to Havana, Cuba: American Airlines and Delta Air Lines each got a daily flight out of Miami; Southwest Airlines got a daily flight out of Ft. Lauderdale; Jet Blue received six flights out of Ft. Lauderdale on Sundays through Fridays and one flight from Boston on Saturdays; and United Airlines added daily flights out of Houston, Texas. *(Source: Miami Herald, 4/2/18)*
- ▶ American Airlines teamed up with Marvel Studios and the Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) organization to run public service announcements about SU2C's efforts to raise money for cancer research. The PSAs featured characters from the new "Marvel Studios' Avengers: Infinity War" movie along with SU2C researchers and several American Airlines employees who are cancer survivors. The PSA campaign let American Airlines AAdvantage members know they could receive ten AAdvantage Miles with a \$25 donation to SU2C. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/9/18)*
- ▶ Alaska Airlines announced a reduction in the size of carry-on bags for its flights. Starting June 4th, travelers on Alaska Airlines, Horizon, and SkyWest flights will need to make sure their carry-on bag measures no more than 22"x14"x9", down from 24"x17"x10". Several other U.S. airlines including American, Delta, and United already have the smaller size limits in place for carry-on bags on their planes. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 4/9/18)*

- ▶ Delta Air Lines now has biometric check-in at all its Delta Sky Club lounges in the United States. Travelers will just have to place two fingers on the scanner to gain entrance to the lounge rather than show their boarding pass or Delta Sky Club membership card. In order to use the biometric check-in, Delta Sky Club members must be enrolled in the CLEAR airport security program. *(Source: Transportation Monitor Worldwide, 3/29/18)*



- ▶ Delta Air Lines reported its computer system suffered a data breach in the fall of 2017 and any payment information that customers provided when making reservations on its website for a short period between September 26th and October 12, 2017 may have been compromised. Reservations and other purchases made through Delta's mobile app were not affected by the breach. *(Source: Wall Street Journal, 4/5/18)*

▶ Spirit Airlines added seven new seasonal flights and six new year-round flights to its schedule for passengers wanting to fly into/from Detroit, Orlando, Seattle, and Tampa. To celebrate the new routes, Spirit ran an online sweepstakes to give away six pairs of round-trip vouchers for flights anywhere Spirit serves. (Source: *GlobeNewswire*, 4/11/18)

▶ Air Canada unveiled new Air Canada Signature Service on transcontinental flights between New York and Vancouver, and between Toronto and Los Angeles or San Francisco. The premium cabin service includes lie-flat "suites" with special bedding plus new lunch & dinner menus with the option of espresso or cappuccino to be served along with dessert or a cheese plate. Air Canada also announced that starting later this year it will offer valet service for customers flying out of Toronto-Pearson airport to international destinations. The Air Canada Valet Service will operate a fleet of BMWs to transport travelers across the tarmac to the various terminals. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 4/17/18)



▶ Southwest Airlines suffered its first ever fatal passenger accident when one jet engine on Flight 1380 exploded and sent a blade crashing into a window on the plane, which caused a passenger to be partially sucked out of the plane. The passenger was pulled back into the plane and once the plane made a successful emergency landing she was taken to the hospital but died of her injuries. Several passengers posted photos and videos online of the depressurized cabin and drew attention to the fact that very few of them knew how to properly wear the oxygen masks, with most people only putting the mask over their mouth and not their mouth AND nose. A representative of the International Air Transport Association said members attending a safety conference at the same time as the accident were "surprised" to see the passengers didn't know how to wear the masks properly and expects airlines will push harder to get passengers to pay attention during the preflight safety briefings. (Source: *Wall Street Journal*, 4/19/18)

▶ Southwest Airlines offered every passenger on board Flight 1380 a check for \$5,000 plus a travel voucher good for \$1,000. In a letter to the passengers, Southwest' CEO said, "we value you as a customer and hope you will allow us another opportunity to restore your confidence in Southwest." (Source: *Dallas Business Journal*, 4/20/18)

▶ Allegiant Air issued a statement claiming a story on CBS' "60 Minutes" told a "false narrative" about the airline and it was "ready to fight back" after the news program reported the airline had experienced more than one hundred "serious" mechanical incidents on planes flying between January 2016 and October 2017. CBS got the data from the FAA through a Freedom of Information Act request. In the news report, CBS also aired comments from the local Teamsters union president saying Allegiant discourages pilots from reporting mechanical problems they have with any of the planes. According to CBS, Allegiant's MD-80 planes are an average of 28 years old and suffer more breakdowns due to their age. Allegiant has said it plans to retire all its MD-80s by the end of 2018. (Source: *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 4/17/18)



- ▶ Southwest Airlines cancelled forty flights and delayed another 488 on April 22nd as it continued to inspect engine fan-blades mandated by the FAA after its deadly accident. The cancelled flights only represented about 1% of Southwest's flights on April 22nd. (Source: Dallas Business Journal, 4/22/18)

- ▶ Alaska Airlines announced it would retire the Virgin America brand as of April 25th. Planes will take longer to be repainted, but all signage, lobbies, ticket counters, gates, and baggage areas would be changed from Virgin America to Alaska Airlines starting the night of April 24th. Customers will also need to use the Alaska Airlines app, website or call center going forward. (Source: TravelPulse.com, 4/20/18)



- ▶ Iceland-based WOW air introduced a new WOW premium ticket bundle which includes a WOW air BigSeat with a foot rest and 37" of legroom, priority boarding, in-flight meal and drinks, two checked bags, one carry-on, one personal item, and no change fees if the passenger needs to reschedule. WOW air Premium flights from Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York to Europe start at \$599. (Source: PR Newswire, 4/20/18)

- ▶ Alaska Airlines' Chief Commercial Officer announced the airline would begin offering a basic economy fare later in 2018. The new basic economy fare will restrict passengers to seats in the back of the airplane and they will be the last group to board the plane, but they will receive an assigned seat when making their reservation and will be allowed a carry-on bag. (Source: Business Travel News, 4/23/18)

- ▶ JetBlue partnered with JetSuiteX on a new code-sharing agreement, the first of its kind between a major national carrier and semi-private airline. Corporate customers may also book JetSuiteX flights at JetBlue's website. (Source: Business Wire, 4/23/18)

- ▶ Silver Airways announced the acquisition of Seaborne Airlines. The Seaborne brand will continue to exist on its flights around the Caribbean, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico, while the Silver Airways brand will be seen on flights in Florida and the Bahamas. (Source: Business Wire, 4/23/18)

- ▶ WOW air launched a special fare sale offering flights from 13 cities in the United States to Iceland for just \$69 one-way. The special sale is good on travel between May 1st and June 20, 2018 or September 1st through October 27, 2018. (Source: PR Newswire, 4/24/18)

- ▶ As part of its partnership with Marvel Studios and the Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) organization, American Airlines unveiled an A312T plane wrapped in a special design featuring the superheroes from "Marvel Studios' Avengers: Infinity War" as well as SU2C researchers and members of the American Airlines team who are cancer survivors. The special plane is in service on the Los Angeles to New York route. (Source: PR Newswire, 4/24/18)



- ▶ JetBlue announced updates to its “West Coast Strategy” which included: new service in Bozeman, Montana, Ontario, California, and Steamboat Springs, Colorado; expanded seasonal service to Palm Springs, plus the addition of its Mint service for Palm Springs holiday travel; additional flights in the Burbank, California market; and changes in service in the Long Beach market. *(Source: Business Wire, 4/25/18)*

- ▶ JetBlue ran a special marketing campaign to promote its 11 daily flights between New York and Los Angeles by delivering pizzas from Patsy’s Pizzeria in New York to select locations in Los Angeles. From May 9th through May 11th, the airline “delivered” 350 cheese and pepperoni pizzas to Los Angeles International Airport each day, where a delivery service would pick them up and take them to the customers who ordered them. The pizzas cost \$12 for cheese or \$15 for pepperoni – tip, taxes, and gratuity included. *(Source: Fast Company, 5/8/18)*



- ▶ JetBlue added Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to its roster with an inaugural flight from Boston arriving on May 3rd. Minneapolis had been the largest city in the United States to not have JetBlue service. *(Source: Business Wire, 5/3/18)*
- ▶ United Airlines added several new items to its Choice menu for the spring/summer season such as chicken chorizo & egg breakfast tacos, a barbeque chicken sandwich, several new beers including Stella Artois (the first time it has been offered on an airline), and Ghirardelli ice cream toppings (only available on the Premium Transcontinental Menu). *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/26/18)*
- ▶ The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill which would require the FAA to: establish a minimum width of airplane seats and the minimum amount of leg room between seat rows; prohibit voice calls by passengers during flights either by phone or by services such as Skype; ban the removal of passengers who have already boarded planes that are overbooked; require airlines to post information about compensation available to passengers when a flight must be diverted; create a smartphone app and set up a 1-800 number for passengers to use when reporting complaints about an airline; and require all new airplanes to have a secondary set of barriers that block access to the cockpit during a flight. *(Source: Tallahassee Democrat, 4/30/18)*

- ▶ United Airlines resumed its PetSafe transportation program which flies pets in the cargo hold section of planes. The program had been put on hold earlier in the year, and data from the U.S. Department of Transportation showed of the 24 animals that died on U.S. airplanes in 2017, 18 of them were on United flights. United said it has started working with the American Humane Society to improve the experiences of all pets traveling on its flights. As part of its program review, United announced it will not allow certain dog & cat breeds to be transported on its planes, specifically those that are short/snub-nosed such as bulldogs, pugs and Persian cats. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 5/2/18)*



▶ The FAA ordered a second “airworthiness directive” requiring airlines to run an initial inspection of all CFM56-7B engines – the one that failed on the Southwest Airlines flight in April – plus schedule follow-up inspections of these engines’ fan blades after 3,000 “cycles” to check for metal fatigue. (Source: Dallas Business Journal, 5/1/18)

▶ As part of its promotional agreement with Disney-Pixar, Alaska Airlines unveiled a special “Incredibles 2” themed-plane with images of the movie’s characters on the fuselage and inside the plane. The “Incredibles 2” plane will be flying on various transcontinental routes as well as out to Hawaii. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/5/18)



▶ JetBlue announced it will begin the first direct non-stop service from New England to Cuba with the launch of its new Saturday flights from Boston to Havana starting November 10th. The airline also plans to add as many as three daily flights between Fort Lauderdale and Havana and two new daily non-stop flights from Boston & New York City to Mexico City, Mexico, subject to approval by the FAA. (Source: Business Wire, 5/8/18)

▶ Southwest Airlines won the “Program of the Year” award for the third year in a row and “Best Customer Service” title for the sixth year in a row at the InsideFlyer Magazine’s Freddie Awards. Southwest also won awards for Best Airline Redemption Ability, Best Elite Program, Best Loyalty Credit Card, and Best Promotion. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/11/18)

▶ United Airlines said it will end flights between Los Angeles and Mexico City as of October 4th, as well as flights from the United States to Huatulco, Mazatlan, and Villahermosa, citing weak demand. There has also been increased competition in the U.S.-Mexico markets after Delta Air Lines formed an alliance with Grupo Aeromexico in 2017. (Source: Chico Enterprise-Record, 5/11/18)

▶ American Airlines announced it will limit the type of animals it allows to be brought on board its planes as service/support animals and no longer let passengers claim their ferret, goat, reptile, waterfowl, amphibian, spider or insect is a support animal which needs to ride with them on their flight. Owners wanting to bring other service/support animals on board will need to provide documentation supporting their claim at least 48 hours before departure. (Source: Houston Chronicle, 5/15/18)

▶ Southwest Airlines kicked off the summer with a special promotion with some fares starting as low as \$49 one-way. A 21-day advance purchase was required for travel on the sale fares and domestic flights were only available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. (Source: Southwest Airlines press release, 5/15/18)

▶ Southwest Airlines teamed up with Jersey Mike’s and Villa Italian Kitchen to distribute “a sub and a slice” (turkey & provolone sandwich and a slice of Neapolitan pizza) to passengers onboard a flight from Orlando to Denver. The surprise meal was part of Southwest’ “WOW Wednesday” promotion. (Source: QSRWeb.com, 5/8/18)



- ▶ Surf Air has launched in California. The private air travel company offers a “all you can fly” membership program starting at \$1950 a month, with flights through secondary airports in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, and Las Vegas as well as smaller airports in Napa Valley, Lake Tahoe, Monterey, Palm Springs, and Santa Barbara. Travelers can arrive at the airport just 15 minutes before the flight leaves, and Surf Air will arrange for a rental car, ride-share or cab to transport the traveler to the final destination after the airport. If a traveler isn’t sure they will use the service frequently enough to justify the monthly cost, they can also pay a \$2500 annual fee plus \$545 per flight. (Source: Forbes.com, 5/14/18)



- ▶ Delta expanded its test of letting Delta One class passengers pre-select their in-flight meals after getting favorable results from a test limited to flights from Atlanta & New York City to Europe. Now Delta One class passengers with a valid SkyMiles account connected to their reservation can pre-select their meals on flight from nine U.S. cities to Europe, Asia, and Australia. Delta says by letting travelers pick their meals ahead of time, it gives the flight attendants more time to take care of the passengers. (Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle, 5/15/18)

- ▶ WOW air launched a new flight service from the United States to India – via Iceland. Travelers will be able to fly from nine U.S. airports to Iceland, where they will connect to flights going to New Delhi. The Delhi route will be served by WOW air Airbus A330neo planes which have premium seats offering 37” of legroom. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/15/18)

- ▶ Alaska Airlines announced an extended partnership with online travel site Rocketmiles which has created the Alaska Mileage Plan Hotels group. Members of the Alaska Mileage Plan frequent flyer program can now redeem miles for reservations at more than 400,000 hotels around the world. Members with the Alaska Airlines Visa Signature Card also get discounted pricing on their hotel stays. Mileage Plan members can choose to pay for their hotel stays through miles only or a combination of miles and cash. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/29/18)

- ▶ United Airlines will donate grants totaling \$8 million to local community groups in each of its hub markets to help “lift up communities in crisis.” The airline will work with city leaders to identify areas of critical need in their cities. The first announced grant is going to Year Up in Chicago, a non-profit organization helping to train young adults in Chicago in technical and professional skill sets. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/30/18)



- ▶ An annual customer satisfaction survey found that overall, North American airlines have seen seven straight years of improvement in their customer satisfaction scores, with 2018 scores reaching their highest level ever: 762 out of 1,000 points. Alaska Airlines ranked the highest among traditional airlines with a score of 775, while Southwest was highest among low-cost airlines with a score of 818. (Source: PR Newswire, 5/30/18)

- ▶ In a presentation to shareholders, Southwest's CEO said the airline is considering expanding its service to Canada, South America and Europe in the future, with Baltimore Washington International Airport being a "logical consideration" for European flights. (Source: *TravelPulse.com*, 5/22/18)

- ▶ American Airlines appears to be ignoring the complaints and concerns of its flight attendants regarding the new bathrooms it is installing on new Boeing 737-MAX planes. The new lavatories are only 24" wide and are reportedly so narrow that travelers cannot turn around inside them and must decide before entering if they need to back into the bathroom. The tiny bathrooms are freeing up enough space so American can add another 12 seats on the plane. (Source: *Forbes.com*, 5/30/18)



- ▶ American Airlines rolled out a new ad campaign touting its premium "flagship" experience for first and business-class travelers both in the plane and at the airport. The ads show off the lie-flat seats on the plane as well as details about the new flagship lounges at four U.S. airports. (Source: *Dallas Business Journal*, 4/25/18)
- ▶ United Airlines and JPMorgan Chase introduced a new United Explorer credit card. This new card offers 2 miles per \$1 spent on hotel stays and restaurant purchases as well as 2 miles per \$1 spent on United Airlines' flights and 1 mile per \$1 spent on everything else. Cardholders also get 25% back on Wi-Fi, food & beverages purchases made with the card in-flight, one free checked bag when the airfare is purchased with the card, and priority boarding. (Source: *Business Wire*, 6/1/18)
- ▶ JetBlue unveiled its refreshed jetblue.com site. The new site is optimized to fit the screen of whatever device is being used to view it (smartphone, tablet, or computer) and has improved self-service tools. JetBlue plans to roll out additional features during the summer months such as adding Apple Pay as a payment option, webchat for customer service, and more ways for TrueBlue members to earn and use their rewards points. (Source: *Business Wire*, 6/1/18)

- ▶ Delta Air Lines and American Express announced the "Perksicle Tour" offering ice pops to travelers in nine major U.S. cities. People can present their Delta SkyMiles Credit Card from American Express to the ice pop truck vendor and receive one free ice pop for themselves plus one for a friend. Anyone can purchase an ice pop from the truck for \$3, and Delta & American Express will jointly make a matching donation to the American Red Cross for every ice pop sold. (Source: *Business Wire*, 5/31/18)



- ▶ Southwest Airlines issued guidance that its second quarter revenue would be down after the fatal accident in April resulted in fewer bookings. Southwest said the drop was expected because it has stopped all marketing in the days after the accident, and since its flights can't be found at online travel aggregator sites, there was a temporary drop in the number of passengers seeing Southwest's flights as a travel option. (Source: *Dallas Business Journal*, 6/4/18)

Hotel Industry

- ▶ InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) announced it will pay \$39 million to acquire a 51% share of Regent Hotels & Resorts, with the option to purchase the remaining 49% of the company by 2026. The Regent Hotels & Resorts will join IHG's Luxury portfolio and IHG plans to expand the brand from six to more than forty hotels in the future. The InterContinental Hong Kong will also be rebranded as a Regent hotel in 2021. *(Source: Hotel News Resource, 3/14/18)*
- ▶ Super 8 Hotels displayed a concept vehicle at the New York International Auto Show in a novel way of showing off its new room redesign. The Road M8 is a 2017 Jeep Wrangler with Super 8 bedding designs on the upholstery, a built-in coffee machine, a mini-fridge in the center console, and a nightstand incorporated into the dashboard. The exterior of the vehicle is yellow & red, like the Super 8 signs. The Road M8 will be on display at the brand's annual franchisee conference in Las Vegas, then it will hit the road on a tour so hotel owners and guests can see it for themselves. *(Source: Marketing Daily, 3/30/18)*
- ▶ Choice Hotels International launched a new promotion for its Choice Privileges loyalty program. The "Book. Stay. Repeat" promotion will let members earn enough points for one free night at more than 1,000 Choice properties after making just two separate hotel stays between April 2nd and May 25, 2018. Choice Privileges members must register for the promotion before checking out on the first qualifying visit. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/2/18)*
- ▶ The Radisson Hotel Group revealed a brand refresh plan at its annual Americas Business Conference. The plan includes: a new brand logo and tagline, new color palette, new design aesthetic, and an improved guest experience. The company believes 10-15% of its hotels in the Americas will not be able to comply with the refresh plan and will be removed from the Radisson brand portfolio. The new tagline is "Simply Delightful" and the design aesthetic is Scandinavian with "tasteful simplicity." *(Source: Hotel News Resource, 4/4/18)*
- ▶ W Hotels Worldwide introduced a new "experience" offering called FUEL Weekends. The three-day weekends allow guests to combine workouts led by fitness experts with healthy cuisine options, pool parties and DJ events. Guests can also sign up for off-site excursions such as spa treatments, ziplining, and surf lessons, depending on the hotel location. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/4/18)*
- ▶ Wyndham Hotel Group's CEO told attendees at the company's annual meeting that all 19 of the company's hotel brands will now have "by Wyndham" added to their names. The company will pay for new signage on hotels if they reach certain quality benchmarks, but all hotels must have new signage within five years. The updated brand names started appearing on websites, mobile sites, and third-party travel aggregator sites on April 16th. *(Source: Hotels Magazine, 4/10/18)*



- ▶ IHG and Chase Card Services added two new cards to the IHG credit card portfolio. The IHG Rewards Club Premier Card offers 10 points per \$1 spent at IHG hotels, 2 points per \$1 spent on gasoline, groceries, and restaurants, and 1 point per \$1 spent on all other purchases. The Premier Card also confers immediate Platinum Elite IHG Rewards Club status, an anniversary free night, no foreign transaction fees, and trip cancellation insurance. The IHG Rewards Club Traveler Card has 5 points per \$1 spent at IHG hotels, 2 points per \$1 spent on gasoline, groceries, and restaurants, and 1 point per \$1 spent on all other purchases, with the ability to earn Gold Elite status if the cardholder spends \$10,000 or more with the card in a calendar year. (Source: Business Wire, 4/5/18)



- ▶ Marriott Rewards and Starwood Preferred Guest launched two new promotions for members to earn bonus points. The Marriott Rewards MegaBonus lets members earn 750 bonus points each night of every stay between April 16th and July 20, 2018, starting with their third night. Marriott Rewards members can earn up to 36,000 bonus points during the promotion. The SPG More Nights, More Stars Promotion is similar, but members earn 250 bonus Starpoints per night (which equals 750 Marriott Rewards points) and can earn a maximum of 12,000 Starpoints. (Source: PR Newswire, 4/5/18)

- ▶ Marriott International returned to the Coachella music festival but this year instead of offering luxury tents that looked like rooms in Moxy Hotels or Aloft Hotels they had yurts, circular tents designed to look like W Hotels & Resorts locations in Bali, Barcelona, and Hollywood. The yurts had Wi-Fi, private restroom with shower, a fully stocked mini-fridge, and 24-hour security. Members of the Marriott Rewards and Starwood Preferred Guest programs could bid on staying in one of the yurts using their loyalty points through the SPG Moments platform – one yurt went for 822,500 points. Yurts resembling the soon-to-open W Hotel in Dubai were available for the media to tour, but not for guests to stay in. (Source: Adweek.com, 4/12/18)

- ▶ Marriott International announced at five of its hotel brands – Courtyard, Fairfield, Residence Inn, Springhill Suites, and TownePlace Suites – the complimentary small bottles of shampoo, conditioner and body wash will be replaced with large, refillable shower dispensers. According to Marriott’s VP of Sustainability & Supplier Diversity, the move will save each hotel as much as \$2000 per year and prevent more than 23,000 tiny plastic bottles from being thrown away each year. The shower dispensers are already in use at Element and Aloft branded hotels. (Source: Hotel News Resource, 4/12/18)



- ▶ Marriott International revealed its three loyalty programs – Marriott Rewards, Starwood Preferred Guest, and Ritz-Carlton Rewards – will be replaced by a single loyalty program in August 2018. Members with accounts in the existing separate loyalty programs will be able to combine them into a single account beginning in August. The three programs will continue to operate under their respective brand names until a new unified program name is rolled out in 2019. Until then, members in all three programs will now earn points under a new common benefit program with standardized elite tiers and 10 points per dollar spent at most brands (stays at Element, Residence Inn, and TownePlace Suites will earn 5 points per dollar.) (Source: PR Newswire, 4/16/18)

- ▶ Chase Card Services and Marriott International introduced a new Marriott Rewards Premier Plus Credit Card. The newest card for members of the Marriott Rewards loyalty program offers: a limited-time offer of 100,000 points for new cardmembers; two points earned per \$1 spend on non-Marriott purchases, six points per dollar spent at Marriott International hotels; a free membership anniversary night at selected hotels; trip delay reimbursement; no foreign transaction fees; free in-room premium Wi-Fi; and access to Premier Experience Events. *(Source: Business Wire, 4/16/18)*



- ▶ IHG revealed a new hotel brand which it will begin building in the United States. The Avid hotel brand is midscale and will offer “the basics done exceptionally well” for the everyday traveler. The first Avid hotel is set to open in Oklahoma City in August 2018. *(Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle, 4/13/18)*

- ▶ American Express and Marriott International announced one new card and two updated cards for the Starwood Preferred Guest loyalty program. The Starwood Preferred Guest American Express Luxury Card offers complimentary Gold Elite Status in the SPG program as well as: six points earned per \$1 spent on eligible purchases at SPG and Marriott hotels; three points earned per \$1 spent at restaurants in the United States and on airline travel booked directly with airlines; and two points per \$1 spent on all other purchases; an Annual Night Award each year after the first year of card membership; \$300 in statement credits per card on the account each year for purchases made at SPG and Marriott hotels; and other perks. The Starwood Preferred Guest Consumer and Business Cards offer: an Annual Night Award; automatic Silver Elite status; and various levels of points earned per dollar spent on SPG & Marriott Hotels, business purchases, and other eligible purchases. *(Source: Business Wire, 4/16/18)*

- ▶ Hilton is in the process of updating its hotel rooms so guests can use the Hilton mobile app on their smartphones to control the television, lighting, and temperature in their room. If a guest doesn't want to use the app to control the room's technology, there will still be a simplified TV remote available. *(Source: USA Today, 4/27/18)*

- ▶ Days Inn is looking for a summer intern or “Sun-tern” to travel across the country taking photographs of the sun. The “Sun-tern” will spend one month this summer traveling to specific sunny cities in the United States with the directive of capturing as many sunny, outdoors photos as possible that will be posted on Days Inn social media channels, the Days Inn website, and even printed & displayed at certain Days Inn properties in the U.S. The Sun-tern will receive a \$10,000 stipend on top of having their travel expenses paid, plus they will have Wyndham Rewards Diamond Status for the month, and receive a letter of recommendation from the Wyndham Hotel Group's Chief Marketing Officer at the end of the assignment. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/30/18)*



- ▶ Choice Hotels International revealed a new brand logo for its Comfort brand at its annual franchisee convention. The new logo is part of the brand's “Move to Modern” update which includes updated interiors, new lobbies, and upgraded guest rooms. *(Source: Hotels Magazine, 5/2/18)*

▶ Marriott International will reposition its Courtyard by Marriott brand to be targeted to young professionals and “ambitious & enterprising” guests. The brand update will include a new logo, color palette, exterior design and bar experience. An ad campaign supporting the brand refresh will feature a young female business traveler “living and pursuing her passion in this new world of business.” (Source: *Hotels Magazine*, 4/24/18)

▶ Best Western kicked off the celebration for the 30th Anniversary of its Best Western Rewards Loyalty Program. As part of the celebration, Best Western will gift lifetime Diamond Select Status on the approximately 3,000 members who have been in the rewards program since it launched in 1988. This status receives 50% bonus points with every stay, a free thank you gift (or points) upon check-in, and guaranteed free night availability. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 5/11/18)



▶ Marriott International teamed up with Salesforce to create a new “customer recognition platform” which lets Marriott associates track and view information on guests who have opted into the program. The platform pulls together loyalty program profile data, past stays, any interactions the guest has had in the past with Marriott’s customer engagement center and more. Marriott is also testing a new Apple Business Chat program which lets loyalty program members chat with Marriott associates weeks prior to their check-in date to make special requests such as vegan snacks. (Source: *Business Travel News*, 5/2/18)

▶ The 2nd Annual Hotel Loyalty Program Study commissioned by Best Western found almost three-fourths of travelers said a hotel brand’s loyalty program is the ‘significant factor’ in where they decide to stay. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of hotel loyalty program members surveyed said they had used points to book hotel stays. When asked what the most negative thing was about hotel loyalty programs, one-third said point expiration dates were “most frustrating” especially as more than half of the respondent said they save points to use on “dream vacations.” (Source: *PR Newswire*, 5/14/18)

▶ Marriott International signed a partnership agreement with Simon, the shopping mall ownership company, to build at least five new hotels at Simon properties across the country. There are already more than 15 Marriott-branded hotels at Simon malls, which attract both business travelers and locals who have a special shopping trip planned, such as looking for wedding clothing. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 5/17/18)

▶ Wyndham Worldwide announced its acquisition of La Quinta Holdings was complete. The La Quinta Returns reward program will be merged into the Wyndham Rewards soon. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 5/31/18)

▶ A review of hotel construction data found 43% of all hotels currently being built in the United States fall in the “upper midscale” category which includes Holiday Inn Express, Hilton Home 2 Suites, and Hampton Inn & Suites. (Source: *Hotel News Resource*, 5/30/18)



- ▶ Red Roof kicked off a special summer promotion: the “Stay 3, Get 7,000 Points” offer. RediCard members can earn 7,000 RediCard points if they stay three separate times at any Red Roof property between June 1st and August 31st. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/22/18)*
- ▶ Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Inc. was officially spun-off from Wyndham Worldwide Corporation, which has now been renamed Wyndham Destinations and manages the company’s timeshare and vacation rental properties. *(Source: PR Newswire, 6/1/18)*
- ▶ Westin Hotels & Resorts announced a new collaboration with Charity Miles, a group that enables people to raise money for their preferred charity by working out. From June through August, Westin will contribute \$1 per mile earned for any charity included in the Charity Miles – up to \$25,000 – for people who work out through the new Westin portal in the Charity Miles app. On Global Running Day, Westin’s own Run Concierges will host special run events to spread awareness of the Charity Miles program. *(Source: PR Newswire, 6/5/18)*
- ▶ Wyndham Hotel Group sold the Knights Inn brand to RLH Corp. for \$27 million in cash. The Knights Inn economy brand had the lowest RevPAR of any Wyndham brand at \$24. *(Source: Hotels Magazine, 4/4/18)*
- ▶ Hyatt Place announced several new updates to the brand to keep it “relevant and fresh” for guests. The updates include changes to the guestrooms (premium mattresses, blackout shades, and warm-color lights for better sleep quality), bathrooms (new walk-in showers with footrests and a larger shower amenity tray; multidirectional lighting at the vanity to reduce shadows, larger vanity counter space), and food options (“elevated culinary offerings” for breakfast, redesigned coffee bars, an evening lounge with cocktail & dinner menu items). World of Hyatt members will be able to use their mobile devices for check-in and check-out, plus they will receive free breakfasts. The Hyatt Place hotel properties will also upgrade their fitness facilities and introduce partnerships with fitness and well-being apps, including a bike sharing program. *(Source: Business Wire, 6/4/18)*



Car Rental/Ride Sharing Industry

- ▶ National Car Rental announced it has expanded its sponsorship of Busch Stadium in St. Louis through 2022. As part of the expanded sponsorship, the former Bank of America Club will be renamed the National Car Rental Club. National has been the Official Car Rental Partner of the St. Louis Cardinals Major League Baseball Team since 2015. *(Source: St. Louis Post Dispatch, 3/29/18)*
- ▶ Avis was rated “Best Car Rental Company” for the nineteenth year in a row in an annual customer loyalty engagement study. Avis ranked highest across all four engagement categories: customer service; digital experience, understandable pricing/discounts/options, and range of vehicles/features available. *(Source: Auto Rental News, 3/21/18)*



- ▶ Enterprise Truck Rental started offering tow-capable pickup trucks for personal consumer use. The company has offered these trucks to businesses in the past, but not consumers. These trucks have a hitch attached that can tow boats, campers, trailers, ATVs, or snow mobiles. *(Source: Auto Rental News, 3/23/18)*
- ▶ Silvercar announced it will now offer child booster and convertible car seats from Peg Perego for parents renting any of the company's Audi A4 or Q5 cars, at no extra charge. Peg Perego is an Italian company known for its premium children's products. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/11/18)*
- ▶ Hertz Gold Plus Rewards won "Best Rewards Program" for the Drive category in all geographic regions of the 2018 FlyerTalk Awards. This is the seventh year in a row Hertz has swept the awards with their loyalty program. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/10/18)*
- ▶ National Car Rental has signed an agreement to be the Official Car Rental Partner of the Washington Nationals Major League Baseball team, the 10th MLB team National Car Rental is sponsoring. The agreement lasts through 2020 and includes signage in the Nationals Park home field. Subscribers to Nationals.com – the team's official online community – will receive a dedicated email about the sponsorship. Members of the National's organization will receive discounted rental rates and membership in the Emerald Club. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/10/18)*
- ▶ Waymo, the self-driving car company, has partnered with Avis to provide cleaning and maintenance services to its autonomous fleet, as well as handle the paperwork such as car registration and license plates. Avis and other rental car companies are well suited to offering these services to the growing autonomous car industry as they have relationships with the Department of Motor Vehicles in each state and their own maintenance facilities. *(Source: FastCoDesign.com, 5/21/18)*
- ▶ EZ Rent-A-Car has added cryptocurrencies as a reward option for members of its EZ Money rewards program. Program members can exchange their rewards points for bitcoin, Ethereum, or Litecoin. *(Source: Auto Rental News, 6/4/18)*
- ▶ Silvercar added convertibles to its fleet of Audis for the first time. The Audi A5 Cabriolet will be available in select cities starting in late June 2018, with rental starting at \$95 per day. *(Source: PR Newswire, 6/5/18)*



Cruise

- ▶ A survey of Americans found most (55.5%) don't believe cruise ships are properly equipped to handle serious medical issues, up from 44% in the same survey fielded in 2017. The same survey found almost 40% of respondents believe having travel insurance is more important for cruises than any other form of travel. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/15/18)*



- ▶ Princess Cruises has teamed up with Bon Appétit magazine to create a new culinary-themed shore excursion program with 30 different tours. A few of the highlighted tours include a “Taste of the North” featuring Norwegian specialties and a tour of Kristiansand, Norway; an afternoon of hands-on scone making in the Irish countryside; a walking tour of Juneau, Alaska’s top restaurants; a class on paella in Valencia; and more. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/15/18)*

- ▶ Royal Caribbean took delivery of its new Oasis Class ship, the Symphony of the Seas. This new ship can carry more than 5,500 passengers, has seven “neighborhoods,” the tallest water slide at sea, and an Ultimate Family Suite, a two-story 1,346-square foot suite with its own private movie theatre, a floor-to-ceiling LEGO wall, a full-size whirlpool, and a Royal Genie (concierge). The Symphony of the Seas will make its debut with a 5-night preview sailing in the Mediterranean before moving to its home port of Miami in November 2018. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/23/18)*



- ▶ Royal Caribbean announced a multi-billion-dollar investment in upgrading its ships, destinations, and guest experiences. The company will create a new “Perfect Day Island Collection” of private island destinations around the world, starting with a \$200 million renovation of its existing CocoCay private island in the Bahamas. Other “Perfect Day” islands will be located in the Caribbean, Asia, and Australia. A modernization program called “Royal Amplified” will see \$900 million spent on bringing all its ships up-to-date. Royal Caribbean is also launching a new line of short 3-4-night Caribbean cruises out of its ports in Florida. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/15/18)*

- ▶ Norwegian Cruise Line has raised its automatic gratuity rates slightly, up 41 cents – \$1 per person, per day depending on the type of cabin. The increased rates took effect on April 1, 2018, but customers who had made bookings prior to that date could prepay the gratuities at the old rate level. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 3/21/18)*

- ▶ Travelers on Princess Cruises to the Caribbean will be able to savor island life with the “Rhythm of the Caribbean” cultural experience. This new program includes an onboard Caribbean Festival, authentic cuisine such as Jamaican jerk chicken and Puerto Rican mofongo, special Caribbean cocktails, parrots & macaws in the ships’ Atrium, presentations by shipwreck hunters, and pirate-themed activities for kids. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/23/18)*

- ▶ Silversea introduced a new policy offering free unlimited standard Wi-Fi access for guests in standard suites, and free unlimited premium Internet access for guests in larger suites (only two devices per suite can be using it at the same time.) *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 3/28/18)*

- ▶ Holland America ran its popular “Ready Set Sail” promotion on any cruises booked before June 14, 2018. The promotion offers pre-paid gratuities, 50% reduced deposits, and low fares. Travelers who book a suite as part of the promotion will receive up to \$300 per stateroom in onboard spending credits. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/3/18)*



- ▶ Representatives from Carnival Cruise line surprised a family in Virginia by showing up at their home to acquire the @CarnivalCruise Snapchat handle their 15-year old son had created on a cruise back in 2012 when he was nine years old. The company offered the family a free trip to Barcelona, Spain to sail on the 2-week transatlantic maiden voyage of the new Carnival Horizon ship. The young man accepted the offer and turned over the @CarnivalCruise account to the company. (Source: *The Breeze – James Madison University, 3/28/18*)

- ▶ Viking Cruises announced a new series of Ocean & River combination cruises for the 2019 season. Travelers will get to cruise on one of the company's famous Viking Longships on the Rhine and Danube rivers before transferring to an ocean liner for the second part of the cruise through the fjords of Norway. (Source: *PR Newswire, 4/3/18*)



- ▶ Carnival Cruise Line will add twenty new cruises to Cuba from Tampa, Florida in 2019 aboard the Carnival Paradise ship. These new cruises are in addition to 17 cruises to Cuba that were also added to the 2019 schedule for the Carnival Sensation ship sailing from Miami. A spokesperson for the company said their cruises to Cuba "have been met with phenomenal guest response" as all of Carnival's shore excursions in Cuba meet the regulations put into place by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Foreign Assets Control. (Source: *PR Newswire, 4/6/18*)

- ▶ Princess Cruises announced its "Encounters with Discovery at SEA" program series for 2018. Speakers this year include: Shirley Jones, actress best known for her movie musicals in the 1960s and her role as the mom on "The Partridge Family," Pete Best, the original drummer for The Beatles, Charles Fox, an Oscar & Emmy-nominated American composer, John Mauceri, conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra, and Linda Gray (Sue Ellen Ewing from "Dallas"). (Source: *PR Newswire, 4/13/18*)

- ▶ Crystal Cruises' CEO told an annual meeting of travel agents the company's focus was on "stabilization" after several major changes over the past few years including adding river cruises, branching out into private luxury air service, and installing a new reservations system. He said doing all of that at once "put a tremendous strain on all departments, internally and externally" and the company was going to "focus back" on ocean cruises "because they truly are the heart and core of everything we do." (Source: *TravelPulse.com, 4/24/18*)

- ▶ Industry insiders got a sneak peek at the new Carnival Horizon. This new ship has a Dr. Seuss-themed waterpark, Wi-Fi fast enough to support live-streaming on Facebook, and special "destination-based" elevators that don't have buttons. Passengers use a touch screen in the elevator lobby to select the destination where they want to go. The screen then displays which elevator car they should use, with each car having an assigned letter. Once in the elevator, the passengers are taken straight to their destination, with no other stops. (Source: *TravelPulse.com, 4/18/18*)



▶ Princess Cruises announced a special 2020 World Cruise on its Pacific Princess ship. This 111-day cruise will take travelers to 42 destinations on five continents, with excursions to 20 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/23/18)*

▶ Cunard announced special viewing parties would be held on board its Queen Mary 2, Queen Victoria, and Queen Elizabeth ships in honor of Prince Harry's wedding to Meghan Markle. Passengers would be able to watch the wedding, attend a Royal Wedding Afternoon Tea, have special themed cocktails such as The Princess Bride and a commemorative dinner with keepsake menu, enjoy a special cake with the same lemon & elderflower flavor as the Royal Wedding Cake, and have a glass of Champagne with dinner. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/1/18)*



▶ Princess Cruises announced a special promotional offer on cruises to its 2019 destinations in Europe, Alaska, Japan and the Caribbean. During the "Landmark Sale," travelers can get up to \$1,000 in onboard spending money per stateroom plus a 10% refundable deposit. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/7/18)*

▶ Seabourn introduced a new dining option called "Earth & Ocean At The Patio" which offers an a la carte menu and candlelight dining next to pool onboard the new Seabourn Ovation. *(Source: PR Newswire, 4/9/18)*

▶ Princess Cruises and the original cast of the television show "The Love Boat" received an honorary star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame as a "Friend" of the world-famous walk. All the original cast members of the show were present, as well as Princess Cruises' president. "The Love Boat" was originally filmed on the Pacific Princess and the Island Princess, and the company is still known as "The Love Boat" cruise line. Princess Cruises joined ABSOLUT Vodka and L'Oreal Paris as the only brands with "Friend of the Walk of Fame" stars. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/10/18)*

▶ Royal Caribbean made an industry "first" when it named Carlos & Alex PenaVegas and their 17-month old son Ocean as the "Godfamily" for its new Symphony of the Seas ship. The acting couple was onboard the Harmony of the Seas filming a movie for the Hallmark Channel when Royal Caribbean "popped the question." The two have a long history with Royal Caribbean as Carlos went on his first cruise when he was 4, they got engaged on the Oasis of the Seas and spent their "babymoon" on the Allure of the Seas. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/10/18)*

▶ Windstar Cruises added 44 new Concierge Collection excursions to its 2018 cruises. These special excursions are small, with most having less than 10 guests, and incorporate culinary as well as environmental aspects, such as fishing in the Tongass National Forest in Alaska and then working with a local chef to prepare their catch for dinner. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/14/18)*



▶ Carnival Cruises launched its second new ship of 2018: the Seabourn Ovation. This ultra-luxury ship has 300 all-oceanfront suites with private verandas and will go on longer 14-day cruises around Norway and the British Isles. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/15/18)*

- ▶ Azamara Club Cruises revealed its 2020 cruise itineraries, including destinations in French Polynesia, Hawaii, and for the first time, Africa. The 2020 cruises will have more time in port so travelers can better immerse themselves in the local culture. In Africa, pre- and post-cruise safaris will be available through Micato Safaris. Almost half of the 2020 cruises will be “country-intensive” in that the cruise will focus on a particular country such as Scotland, Denmark, or South Africa. Also in 2020, guests can experience the Triple Tour, a 42-night cruise from Athens to Copenhagen during which travelers will switch between the Azamara Journey, Azamara Quest and Azamara Pursuit, allowing them to travel on all three ships in one trip. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/15/18)*



- ▶ Carnival Cruise Line announced it will have three “Carnival Journeys” cruises which are longer than normal, ranging from 13 to 24 days. The 24-day Transpacific Crossing is the longest cruise Carnival has ever offered and will take guests from Long Beach to Singapore, with the first visits to Guam, Vietnam and Malaysia on a Carnival ship out of a U.S. port. *(Source: PR Newswire, 5/15/18)*

- ▶ The trade group Cruise Lines International Association predicts 28 million people worldwide will go on cruises in 2018. This comes after significant growth in 2017 when 26.7 million people went on cruises, far more than the 25.8 million that CLIA forecast for the year. The North American market represented 49% of all cruise-goers in 2017 with 13 million passengers, up 5% from 2016. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 5/26/18)*

- ▶ Princess Cruises revealed a newly renovated Sapphire Princess ship which now has Club Class Mini-Suites, a new stateroom category with perks such as priority boarding, a reserved dining area, and expanded menu options. *(Source: PR Newswire, 3/28/18)*

- ▶ Carnival Cruise Line rolled out an update to its Carnival Players Club casino program. New membership levels range from Getaway (for travelers on 3-5-day cruises); Premier (for avid players on cruises lasting 6 or more days); Ultra (by-invitation only); and Elite (for the best players). The Getaway level includes gifts in the stateroom, priority check-in and luggage delivery, free in-casino drinks for qualified players, and a chance to win \$10,000 in free play, cash and prizes. The other levels build on the Getaway level perks and include Welcome Aboard/Sailaway parties, free shore excursions, free Wi-Fi, complimentary parking at port or pick-up/drop-off at airport, early access to the traveler’s cabin, and more. *(Source: TravelPulse.com, 5/31/18)*



- ▶ Princess Cruises will celebrate the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia by broadcasting all 64 games in the tournament on board nine of its cruise ships. The soccer games will be shown on the outdoor screens used for the cruise line’s Movies Under the Stars events. Themed entertainment will also be available. *(Source: PR Newswire, 6/6/18)*

Business Travel Industry

- ▶ A global “bleisure” survey found overall 20% of business travelers refuse to do any leisure activities while on a business trip because of concern over how their employer would feel about it. By region, Asian business travelers are more likely to skip any leisure activities (32%) compared to North American business travelers (20%) or European travelers (15%). (Source: *Business Travel News*, 3/26/18)

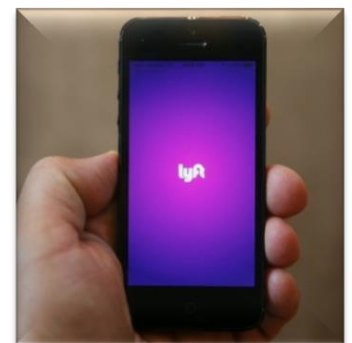


- ▶ Many business travelers are open to paying extra fees for add-on products at hotels, much like on airplanes. Over 80% of business travelers surveyed said they would be willing to purchase the option to check in early or check out late, or have fees added into their nightly rate. Almost 40% said they would be willing to pre-pay for breakfast at the hotel at the time of making their booking. (Source: *Hotel News Resource*, 4/3/18)

- ▶ A business traveler survey commissioned by the Hyatt Place and Hyatt House brands found that more than three-fourths of U.S. business travelers think their business travel experiences have helped them learn to communicate more successfully with various types of people. Two-thirds of the respondents also said their business travel has made them more empathetic, and three-fourths said going on business trips has taught them skills that can be transferred to their personal lives. (Source: *Business Wire*, 4/20/18)

- ▶ A survey of American female travelers found that while two-thirds are “very” or “somewhat” likely to travel alone in 2018, the same number said that they always or frequently think about their personal safety while traveling. However, 84% said their employers either did not offer any travel safety tips/resources or, if there were any, their employers did not publicize them. (Source: *Travel Industry Wire*, 5/16/18)

- ▶ A quarterly review of expense reports processed by Certify found employees are using Lyft more often now, with the ride-sharing service representing 19% of all ride-sharing receipts in Q1 2018, up from 10% in Q1 2017. That nine-percentage point increase came directly from Uber, who saw its share of the ride-sharing receipts drop from 90% to 81%. Combined, Lyft & Uber represented 70.5% of all ground transportation receipts in Q1 2018, a huge increase in just four years as they made up just 8% of that category’s receipts in Q1 2014. The report also found Delta was the most common airline expensed in Q1 and the most popular hotel was Hampton Inn. (Source: *GlobeNewswire*, 4/30/18)



- ▶ Hyatt Hotels Corp. unveiled a new discount program specifically for small & medium businesses. Hyatt Leverage is open to SMEs that are legal business entities with valid tax ID numbers and expect to have fifty or more hotel stays per year. Members can get discounts of 5-15% off a standard hotel room rate, and 5% off the standard rate for stays at Hyatt Oasis home rentals. (Source: *Business Travel News*, 5/22/18)

Online/Mobile Travel Sites

- ▶ Orbitz reported it suffered a data breach in which the personal information for almost 900,000 payment cards was hacked. The hackers reportedly gained access on January 1, 2016 and continued to access the Orbitz system on and off until December 22, 2017. Personal information such as names, email addresses, billing addresses, and phone numbers were likely accessed; however, Orbitz said "we do not have direct evidence this personal information was actually taken from the platform." (Source: *Hospitality Technology*, 3/21/18)
- ▶ Orbitz launched a new marketing campaign aimed at Millennials. The four 15-second ads show the "Orbitz Duo" of travelers enjoying the various rewards they can earn as members of the Orbitz Rewards loyalty program. (Source: *Marketing Daily*, 3/27/18)
- ▶ Expedia.com ran its first ever Expedia Semi-Annual Sale offering low-price flight packages from Delta Air Lines as well as discounted prices on hotel rooms, cruises, car rentals, and vacation activities. The sale ran from April 20th through April 24th, with special coupons and other offers released each day on Expedia.com and the Expedia mobile app. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 4/5/18)
- ▶ Booking.com announced it now has five million listings in its database which represent "alternative accommodations" such as homes, apartments, villas, and ryokans (Japanese guest houses). Research by Booking.com found 30% of travelers worldwide want to stay in an alternative to a hotel, and 21% said they would even consider putting their own home on a travel site in the next year. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 4/10/18)
- ▶ A review of data at more than 325 travel transaction websites in 12 major markets around the world found 70% of travelers visited TripAdvisor.com prior to making their travel purchases, more than any other travel website: Booking.com 45%, Trivago 28%, Hotels.com 23%, Expedia, 22%. (Source: *PR Newswire*, 4/12/18)
- ▶ Priceline.com launched a new ad campaign to celebrate its "Tweniversary" and offer 20 days of special discounts. Longtime spokesperson William Shatner came back for the campaign. (Source: *AdAge.com*, 4/30/18)
- ▶ Hotwire announced a big summer sale which focuses on the fact that this year the 4th of July falls on a Wednesday, making travel plans difficult. The "Hotwire Effect XL Sale" offers a \$49 nightly rate at participating four- and five-star hotels the weekend before the 4th of July, the weekend after, and during the holiday week itself. The low rate applies to just the first two nights of a hotel stay between June 28th and July 8, 2018. (Source: *TheDrum.com*, 6/4/18)





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