TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX

JUNE 2019

# JUNE TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX

The Travel Trends Index measures the direction and pace of travel volume to and within the U.S. on a monthly basis. The index includes a Current Travel Index (CTI) and a Leading Travel Index (LTI). Both the CTI and the LTI include subcomponents (domestic, international, leisure and business).





CTI reading of **51.2** in **June 2019** indicates that travel to or within the U.S. grew **2.4%** in **June 2019** compared to June 2018.

LTI predicts travel will moderate through December 2019, a result of softer growth in domestic travel and stagnant international inbound travel.

Overall travel volume (person trips to or within the United States involving a hotel stay or air travel) grew at a slower year-over-year rate in June 2019 compared to May 2019. Domestic travel experienced uneven growth supported entirely by the leisure segment; domestic business and international inbound travel stalled.

# HIGHLIGHTS:

\* For CTI and LTI definitions, please see below.

- The Current Travel Index (CTI) has registered at or above the 50 mark for 114 straight months, as the industry sustains its tenth consecutive year of expansion.
- The CTI was positive in June, registering 51.2 (indicating 2.4% y/y growth). This is slower than the 6-month moving average (3.0%).
- International inbound travel contracted 0.8% in June, bringing its six-month trend below zero for the first time since September 2015. The Leading Travel Index (LTI) projects that inbound travel growth will hover just below zero over the next six months, registering around -0.2%.
- Domestic leisure travel extended its growth trend in June (3.8%), on par with its six-month trend. The business segment faltered, declining 0.2% following the appearance of strong growth in May (3.4%).
- The six-month LTI reading of 50.9 indicates that total U.S. travel volume is expected to grow at a rate of around 1.8% through December 2019. Over the same period, domestic travel is projected to grow by 2.0%, while international inbound travel will remain flat.

The Oxford/U.S. Travel Current Travel Index (CTI) measures the direction and pace of travel volume to and within the U.S. on a monthly basis compared to the same month in the prior year. The index is comprised of a weighting of hotel room demand and air passenger enplanements that represents the overall volume of travelers each month. A score above 50 indicates expansion. A score below 50 indicates decline.

The Oxford/U.S. Travel Leading Travel Index (LTI) is an indicator of the future direction and pace of travel volume to and within the U.S. over the coming three and six months compared to the same period in the prior year. The LTIs represent average readings over the next three and six months. The LTI econometric model is based on data sets that have demonstrated to predict near-term future travel: online travel searches and bookings for future travel, consumer travel intentions data, and economic fundamentals. A score above 50 indicates expansion. A score below 50 indicates decline.



# JUNE TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX (CONT.)

	СТІ	3-MONTH LTI*	6-MONTH LTI**		
MAY INDEX	51.8	51.0	50.9		
JUNE INDEX	51.2	50.9	50.9		
DIRECTION AND SPEED	Travel demand increased; at a slower rate than the previous month	Travel is expected to grow over the coming 3 months; at a slower rate	Travel is expected to grow over the coming 6 months; at a slower rate		

<sup>\*</sup> Average outlook reading for Jul 2019 to Sep 2019
\*\* Average outlook reading for Jul 2019 to Dec 2019



In June, travel posted its poorest performance in nine months due to flat domestic business travel growth and a decline in international inbound travel. While some factors cannot be controlled, the continued promotion of the U.S. in the competitive global travel market is more critical than ever. Congress and the administration must secure Brand USA's long-term reauthorization immediately.

#### **DAVID HUETHER**

Senior Vice President, Research

# **DETAILED RESULTS:**

Domestic travel demand increased 2.6% in June, solely supported by leisure segment growth. Business travel demand fell modestly (-0.2%) as it did in April, drawing the 6-month moving average down to 2.2%. Looking ahead, leisure travel is anticipated to continue growing, albeit at approximately half its current pace. Vacation intentions are gradually slowing, while forward-looking bookings and searches point to resilient, yet softer growth.

International inbound travel decreased in June (-0.8%), marking the third month of contraction in the first six months of 2019. The pace of international inbound travel is expected to remain constrained and may dip into negative territory over the coming months.

	CURRENT TRAVEL INDEX (CTI)				LEADING TRAVEL INDEX (LTI)		6-MO LTI VS. CTI 6-MO AVG.	
	6-MONTH AVG	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	3-MONTH*	6-MONTH**	DIRECTION	SPEED
TOTAL MARKET	51.5	51.3	51.8	51.2	50.9	50.9	Increasing	Slower
INTERNATIONAL	49.9	52.2	50.3	49.6	49.8	49.9	Decreasing	-
DOMESTIC	51.6	51.2	51.9	51.3	51.1	51.0	Increasing	Slower
BUSINESS	51.1	49.9	51.7	49.9	50.8	50.8	Increasing	Slower
LEISURE	51.9	51.7	52.0	51.9	51.2	51.0	Increasing	Slower

<sup>\*</sup> Average outlook reading for Jul 2019 to Sep 2019

## JUNE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL INDEX

Index (>50 = expansion, <50 = decline)



## JUNE DOMESTIC BUSINESS AND LEISURE TRAVEL INDEX

Index (>50 = expansion, <50 = decline)



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The Oxford/U.S. Travel Leading Travel Index (LTI) is an indicator of the future direction and pace of travel volume to and within the U.S. over the coming three and six months compared to the same period in the prior year. The LTIs represent average readings over the next three and six months. The LTI econometric model is based on data sets that have demonstrated to predict near-term future travel: online travel searches and bookings for future travel, consumer travel intentions data, and economic fundamentals. A score above 50 indicates expansion. A score below 50 indicates decline.



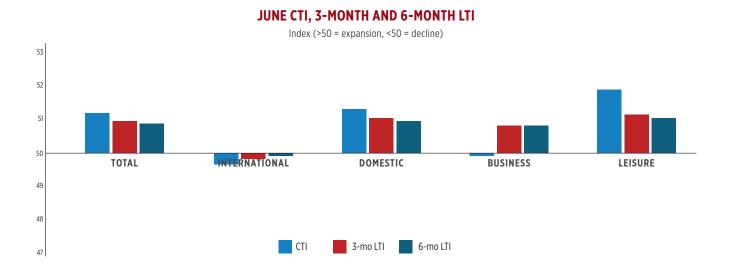
# JUNE TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX (CONT.)

The LTI indicates that domestic travel is anticipated to rise approximately 2.0% year-over-year through December 2019, with leisure travel contributing slightly more to the expansion than business travel. Consumer confidence dipped to its lowest point since June 2018 and expectations followed. Consumer spending and business investment are projected to continue cooling through the end of 2019, weighing upon both the leisure and business segments. New, enduring or escalating trade conflicts pose additional downside risks, and contribute to tepid prospects for business investment growth in 2019.

International inbound travel demand has now contracted in three of six months in 2019. Sustained weakness is expected, and intermittent declines over the next six months are possible. Soft global economic activity, the continued strength of the U.S. dollar, prolonged and expanding trade tensions and uncertainty surrounding the Trump administration remain major risks to international traveler sentiment.

Adam Sacks, President of Oxford's Tourism Economics group says, "Enduring fundamental strength of U.S. business and consumer activity, as well as signals that the Fed intends to adopt more accommodative monetary policy, continue to support the view that the US economy will land softly through the end of the year. In turn, we expect an ongoing moderation in travel demand."

**Please note:** The Travel Trends Index is based on public and private sector source data which are subjected to revision by the source agency.



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# **METHODOLOGY**

The **Current Travel Index (CTI)** measures monthly travel volumes in the U.S., including both domestic and international inbound travel. A score over 50 indicates an expansion in travel relative to the same month the prior year.

The index measures person trips that involved a hotel stay and/or a flight.

The following methods and sources are used to estimate (1) total travel; (2) international visitations; and (3) domestic travel (which is the residual of total travel minus international visitations):

1. Total travel (domestic and international): Total travel is calculated based on hotel stays of domestic and international travelers as well as air travel of domestic travelers. While most international visitors are assumed to stay in hotels, domestic travelers often do not. As such, the domestic travel estimate is further informed by domestic air enplanements to help capture the entire domestic market. STR provides monthly data on hotel room demand, and domestic air passenger enplanements are calculated based on monthly investor relations reports for all major domestic airlines. The research firm TNS provides representative data on U.S. travelers to determine the average length of stay, persons per traveler party, and the proportion of hotel guests who also fly. The CTI encompasses three traveler types on these bases that are shown below with their basic calculation.

#### **HOTEL GUESTS & FLYERS HOTEL GUESTS & NON-FLYERS NON-HOTEL GUESTS & FLYERS** enplanements enplanements occupied rooms x people per room % of hotel quests % of flyers that Χ Χ Χ stay in hotel that did not fly that stay in hotel) enplanements per trip length of stay enplanements per trip

- 2. International visits: The international component of the CTI is based on the Department of Homeland Security's Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS), which tracks international travel to the U.S., and distinguishes between foreign nationals and U.S. citizens. Visits from Canada are tracked by Statistics Canada and visits from Mexico are tracked by Banco de Mexico. Further analysis of international markets is informed by origin-destination air travel data from OAG, Sabre Market Intelligence aviation passenger data, and IATA Billing Settlement Plan data. Each of these datasets tracks non-resident air travel to the U.S. by country of origin based on unique sources. Official estimated of international visitation to the U.S. (I-94) are released by the U.S. Department of Commerce on approximately a four-month lag. As this data becomes available, historic CTI estimates will be revised.
- 3. **Domestic travel:** The domestic component of the CTI is measured as the residual of total travel minus international. The domestic leisure travel component is based on STR room demand data that is segmented by type of property and day of the week. A domestic leisure travel proxy has been developed based on the location, type of property, and day of the week of travel. Domestic business travel is measured as the residual of total domestic travel minus domestic leisure travel.

The **Leading Travel Index (LTI)** measures the likely average pace and direction of U.S. travel volumes over the coming three and six-month periods. A reading over 50 indicates an expansion in travel relative to the same period last year.

The LTI econometric model includes three categories of information that have shown a strong predictive capability of short-term travel trends. High frequency macroeconomic data capture underlying movements in the labor market, exchange rates and company performance. Consumer sentiment data from the Conference Board provide a long-term trend of consumer attitudes that can be tracked with future travel patterns; online search and bookings data provide a window into traveler planning based on data from ADARA and nSight, and data from ARC measures bookings.

TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX DATA CATEGORY	MEASUREMENT	TRAVEL SEGMENTS	DETAILS			
MACROECONOMIC TRENDS	Unemployment rate	Total, international, domestic (leisure)	Share of labor force			
	Exchange rates	Total, international	\$US market rates, weighted average of inbound markets			
	GDP by visitor origin	Total, international, domestic (business & leisure)	Gross output, U.S. and weighted average of inbound markets			
	Corporate profits	Total, international, domestic (business)	Corporate earnings, U.S. and weighted average of inbound markets			
	Personal disposable income	Total, international	Personal income, weighted average of inbound markets			
CONSUMER AND	Consumer travel intentions	Total, domestic (leisure)	Visitor intentions & air visitor intentions			
BUSINESS SENTIMENT	S&P stock market index	Total, domestic (business)	Stock market index, period average			
TRAVEL SEARCH AND BOOKING	ADARA online searches and bookings for future travel	Total, international, domestic (business & leisure)	Domestic/international & business/leisure			
	ARC bookings for future travel	Total, domestic	Air travel with 6-month booking windows			
	nSight online searches and bookings for future hotel stays	Total, domestic, international	Domestic/international forward bookings			

#### **ABOUT THE U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION**

The U.S. Travel Association is the national non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry, which generates \$2.5 trillion in total economic output and supports 15.7 million American jobs. U.S. Travel's mission is to increase travel to and within the United States.

### **ABOUT OXFORD ECONOMICS**

Oxford Economics is one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts and analytical tools on 200 countries, 100 industrial sectors and over 3,000 cities. Its best-of-class global economic and industry models and analytical tools give it an unparalleled ability to forecast external market trends and assess their economic, social and business impact.

### **DATA CONTRIBUTORS**

The U.S. Travel Index project is dependent upon unique datasets to track and predict travel trends. The U.S. Travel Association and Oxford Economics wish to thank the following organizations for their significant contributions:

**ADARA** serves leading travel brands by delivering critical intelligence that drives personalization and relevance throughout the customer's journey, resulting in more meaningful and profitable relationships. Fueling these insights is ADARA's data co-op which connects over 200 leading travel brands to create the most comprehensive view of the world's travelers and their behaviors across brands, channels, and devices. ADARA transforms how their B2C clients leverage consumer insight at every stage—learn, act, measure and modify—to unleash the revenue potential of each individual.

**Airlines Reporting Corporation (ARC)** is a leading technology solutions company providing the U.S.-based travel industry with world-class business products, travel agency accreditation services, process and financial management tools, and powerful data analytics.

**nSight** combines the world's largest view of consumer shopping data with predictive marketing and revenue management solutions to deliver more guests to your hotel and visitors to your destination.

STR is the leading global provider of competitive benchmarking, information services and research to the hotel industry.

TRAVEL TRENDS INDEX	55	54	53	52	51	50	49	48	47	46	45
12-MONTH % CHANGE IN TRIPS	+10.0%	+8.0%	+6.0%	+4.0%	+2.0%	+0.0%	-2.0%	-4.0%	-6.0%	-8.0%	-10.0%