

# Global Meetings Industry Day 2022: *Key Messages*

The following messages convey the undeniable value that meetings, trade shows, incentive travel, exhibitions, conferences and conventions bring to people, businesses and communities. Help to voice these messages, stronger and more united than ever, to demonstrate the unwavering value of our industry with leaders in business, government and the media. Showcasing the value of business travel, meetings and events has never been more important.

These messages are reiterated throughout our GMID 2022 toolkit, which includes a social media guide, ideas for ways to engage, fact sheets, videos and graphics and more. We encourage you to visit [U.S. Travel's GMID 2022 webpage](#) for all downloadable resources.

## Main Messages

- Showcasing the meeting and event industry's value has never been more important—and GMID is a critical opportunity to use the industry's united voice to elevate the importance of resuming in-person meetings and events
- GMID 2022 will spotlight for business leaders, lawmakers and the media the benefits of meeting face-to-face – and how it can be done safely across the world
- A range of well-documented benefits result from face-to-face meetings and business travel, from building a competitive edge to bottom-line revenue gains
- Business trade events can and are being safely held today with a layered approach to health and safety
- Business travelers are eager to get back to meetings and events
- The travel industry—particularly the meetings and events sector—was disproportionately impacted by the severe economic disruption of the pandemic and recovery lags years behind other sectors of the economy.
- Professional planners operate meetings, events and conferences abiding by safety restrictions imposed by the state and/or venue, ensuring the utmost health considerations are taken to keep attendees safe
- According to scientific modeling by the Exhibitions and Conferences Alliance and Epistemix, in-person meetings, conferences and events pose a 0.1% risk of COVID-19 transmission to attendees—even for large events
- High levels of vaccination among business travelers also contribute to a safer environment for all attendees. As of January, 87% of business travelers have been vaccinated, compared to 80% of American travelers overall (Destination Analysts)

## Key Economic Messages

- The COVID-19 pandemic has decimated business travel, meetings and events. Not only do large events drive human value—but they also drive significant economic value
- Business travel is critically important to restoring the travel economy—and for a rebound of the U.S. economy overall
- Business travel has a disproportionate impact to our businesses. Despite making up 20% of pre-pandemic trip volume, business travelers account for 40-60% of lodging and air revenue in the U.S. (New York Times)
- The U.S. saw a decline of \$211 billion in business travel spending in the U.S.—\$97 billion of which was due to the decline in meetings, conventions and trade shows (Tourism Economics)
- Domestic leisure travel is nearly recovered to 2019 levels, but business travel remained at less than half of 2019 levels in 2021
- A return to a thriving travel industry—and American economy—is dependent on the return of business travel, meetings, events and conventions

- The steep decline in business travel led to the loss of more than 1.4 million direct travel jobs and wiped out \$29 billion in travel-generated taxes in the U.S. (Tourism Economics)
- On average, COVID-19 restrictions cost U.S. states \$5.3 billion in 2020 (Tourism Economics)
- The economic case for a safe and immediate return to in-person meetings and events is clear. Bottom line: To get business back, we must get back to business.

## Key Business Messages

- In-person meetings and events are safe to resume and good for business
- Virtual meetings and events cannot provide the same type of interactive and relational opportunities that come from in-person meetings and events
- More than two-thirds (69%) have felt the effects of “Zoom fatigue” and 63% are tired of web conferencing and are eager to get back to in-person meetings (Destination Analysts)
- We cannot rebuild the economy on Zoom
- In-person meetings provide significant benefits to attendees—including deeper connections to business contacts, education and training opportunities, access to key information through informal conversations, and improved company morale and job fulfillment
- According to business travelers, in-person meetings are twice as likely to convert prospects to customers than virtual meetings (Tourism Economics)
- More than half of business travelers miss traveling and hope to travel more often in the future and just one in 10 are unwilling to travel (GBTA)
- More than four in five decision makers believe business travel leads to increased profit and revenue (American Express)