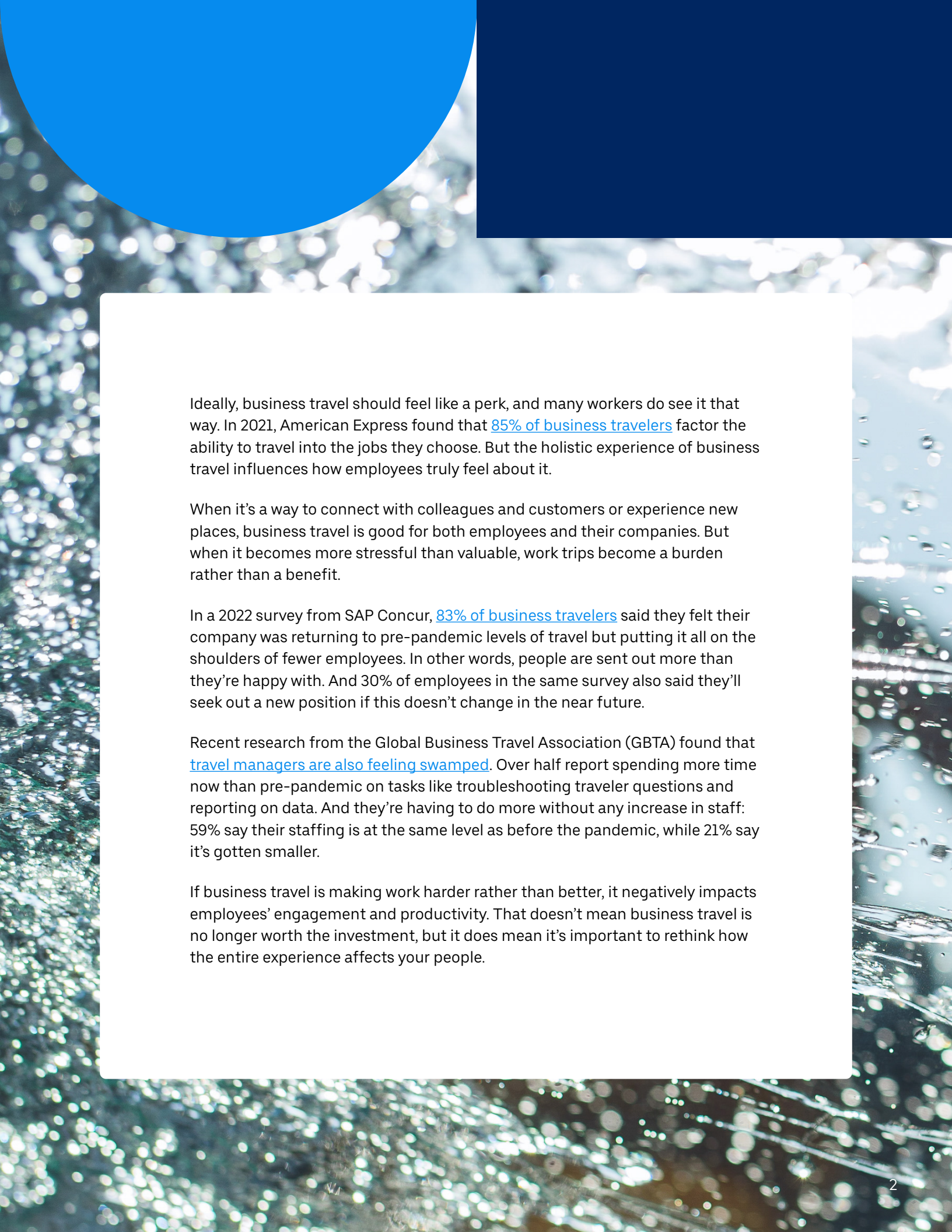


Uber for Business

Navigating the challenges of the travel industry





Ideally, business travel should feel like a perk, and many workers do see it that way. In 2021, American Express found that [85% of business travelers](#) factor the ability to travel into the jobs they choose. But the holistic experience of business travel influences how employees truly feel about it.

When it's a way to connect with colleagues and customers or experience new places, business travel is good for both employees and their companies. But when it becomes more stressful than valuable, work trips become a burden rather than a benefit.

In a 2022 survey from SAP Concur, [83% of business travelers](#) said they felt their company was returning to pre-pandemic levels of travel but putting it all on the shoulders of fewer employees. In other words, people are sent out more than they're happy with. And 30% of employees in the same survey also said they'll seek out a new position if this doesn't change in the near future.

Recent research from the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) found that [travel managers are also feeling swamped](#). Over half report spending more time now than pre-pandemic on tasks like troubleshooting traveler questions and reporting on data. And they're having to do more without any increase in staff: 59% say their staffing is at the same level as before the pandemic, while 21% say it's gotten smaller.

If business travel is making work harder rather than better, it negatively impacts employees' engagement and productivity. That doesn't mean business travel is no longer worth the investment, but it does mean it's important to rethink how the entire experience affects your people.

What makes business travel challenging

Several factors make business travel uniquely challenging for businesses, travelers, and managers.



The struggle with staffing

Airline [staffing issues and outdated technological systems](#) are leading to fewer scheduled flights and higher cancellation rates. On top of that, the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\) is understaffed](#), which means longer lines for travelers when they do fly.

Hotels are experiencing similar issues. The American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) reported in 2022 that [97% of hotels](#) are facing staffing shortages. [J.D. Power](#) also noted a 2022 decline in guest satisfaction. With fewer staff members available to serve them, travelers aren't getting the same standard of service they're accustomed to.

While the travel and hospitality industries were among those hardest hit by pandemic labor shortages, other industries are also facing personnel constraints. The [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) has reported on shortages in industries ranging from manufacturing to financial services. At many companies, that means a small number of employees are trying to manage a large quantity of work.

For understaffed companies, the work involved in business travel—from travel booking to expense tracking—are tasks busy staffers are balancing with many other responsibilities.



While travel costs rise, budgets shrink

Due to recession fears, a 2023 CFO survey found that [99% of business leaders](#) anticipate budget cuts. At the same time, travel costs are rising. [A 2023 NerdWallet analysis](#) found that since the pandemic started:

Airfare prices are up

6.4%



Lodging prices are up

17%



Car rental costs are up

36%



Restaurant prices are up

19.3%



Businesses will have to figure out how to shoulder these higher costs while finding ways to reduce overhead in general.

Managing vehicles is expensive

Companies with employees on the go might hope to save money by investing in their own fleet of vehicles. But all the associated costs of owning and using cars are going up, too. Kiplinger reports an [increase in gas prices](#), estimating that the national average will reach \$4 a gallon by spring 2023. [JP Morgan reported](#) that 2022 saw a 6.3% increase in the cost of new cars and a 42.5% increase in the cost of used cars. On top of all that, managing a fleet of cars is work someone in the company has to do, and those labor hours have a cost as well.

Travel adds to emissions

Sustainability has quickly become a priority for both companies and employees. In [Fortune's 2022 survey of CEOs](#), 58% said they have a plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 or before—up from only 36% the year before.

Employees also care about their environmental impact. [SAP Concur](#) found that 48% want sustainability information on each travel option when booking business travel, and 24% will decline a trip if it requires them to use non-sustainable options.

4 ways to improve business travel

Business-travel challenges shouldn't mean your company has to sacrifice its values. Here are several ways to make business travel better.

1

Prioritize the travel experience for your teams

When budgets are tight, making travel selections based on cost may seem like a good way to save money. But if travelers have miserable experiences in transit, it will impact how they perform once they arrive—and may affect their overall job satisfaction as well.

The best way to avoid employee discontent with business travel—at least to the degree you can control—is to think about their experiences in the planning stage. This means considering factors such as:

- Flight length and number of layovers required
- The reputation and quality of the hotels travelers can book
- The distance between the traveler's hotel and the locations important to their trip
- Options available for getting around their destination city

[Uber for Business](#) lets travelers schedule rides in advance or request them as needed. And with ride options like Uber Comfort, they can request vehicles with more space when they need it for a premium experience.

- How to help them access the area's best food options

By ordering delivery with [Uber Eats](#), tired travelers can easily sample the city's delicacies without having to leave their hotel.

“

There's a lot of stress on employees when it comes to travel. Uber takes that all away in terms of anxiety. The moment an employee lands, he or she can actually coordinate a ride to their required destination.

[Ed Evans](#)

Global HR Director



2

Set clear travel guidelines for employees

In addition to creating great travel experiences for employees, you also need to ensure that they fit within your company's goals and budget. Providing travelers with clear guidelines can help you stick to your business goals while giving your traveling employees options. So before your employees make travel plans, you may want to:

- Explain how travel permissions work
- Set and communicate spending limits for each aspect of travel
- Provide instructions on how to pay for travel expenses and request reimbursements
- Outline guidance for record keeping and expense tracking
- Highlight company-preferred brands
- Provide relevant safety information, such as emergency phone numbers

Leverage relationships with travel businesses

Many travel and hospitality businesses offer loyalty programs or other perks to companies and their employees. Companies can often negotiate volume discounts and other benefits in exchange for giving specific brands priority in their booking decisions. When perks extend to employees, the business-travel experience can be that much more rewarding, especially if those rewards extend to personal use.



When travelers use Uber for Business, eligible rides and food orders can earn them rewards with [American Express](#) and [Marriott Bonvoy](#).

Developing relationships with travel brands provides benefits beyond deals and discounts. It can also simplify the administrative work associated with booking and expensing. If employees use the same hotel, airline, and/or car brands for the majority of their trips, travel managers spend less time researching options when booking. Having a short list of preferred providers also creates a more organized system for tracking expenses than if you have to manage a myriad of accounts.

3

Equip travel managers with tools that make the job easier

Making travel plans was a lot of work in the best of times. Add in budget constraints and pandemic disruptions, and it has become even more difficult than it used to be. Employees could easily spend hours comparing flights and researching hotel options before making a decision—hours they're not spending on all their other responsibilities.

On top of that, tracking expenses is a hassle. Even though the days of hanging onto stacks of paper receipts are behind us, trying to save proof of every dollar spent while traveling is a pain for travelers and a headache for admins.

Businesses can invest in resources to make this easier. For example, corporate cards streamline booking and expense processes. Travel management software tools can also enable automation and offer organization features to help travel managers work more efficiently while giving employees access to everything they need to book accommodations, flights, and ground transportation.

Let Uber for Business work for you and your travelers



For employees, it provides:

- The convenience of booking rides and ordering food in an app they likely already know and use
- Automatic receipts and expense tracking to avoid a hassle and reduce errors



For admins, it provides:

- Real-time, automated reports on the activity and spending of each traveler
- Seamless integration with top expense platforms

For both, Uber for Business can save time and increase efficiency, giving everyone more hours to spend on other important work.

The platform can also help you control costs by setting spending limits on traveling employees' rides and/or meal deliveries. This not only reduces confusion and enforces compliance, it gives unprecedented visibility into real-time usage and expenses.



If you're traveling a lot, [Uber] splits your personal and business. Then when I do my reporting...I can go on the site and see all my business expenses, download a PDF that has all the information I need, and my company accepts it.

[Gonzalo "Gonzo" Rincon](#)
Infosys BPM





4

Include sustainability goals in your travel planning

For companies committed to reducing their carbon footprint, travel is one of the biggest areas of concern. There are a number of steps you can take to reduce environmental impact:



Lessen the number of employee flights by offering alternative transportation options that produce fewer emissions, such as trains and buses



Give preference to airlines, hotels, car rental companies, and rideshare companies that offer green options



Prioritize partnerships with travel companies who have made commitments to reducing emissions



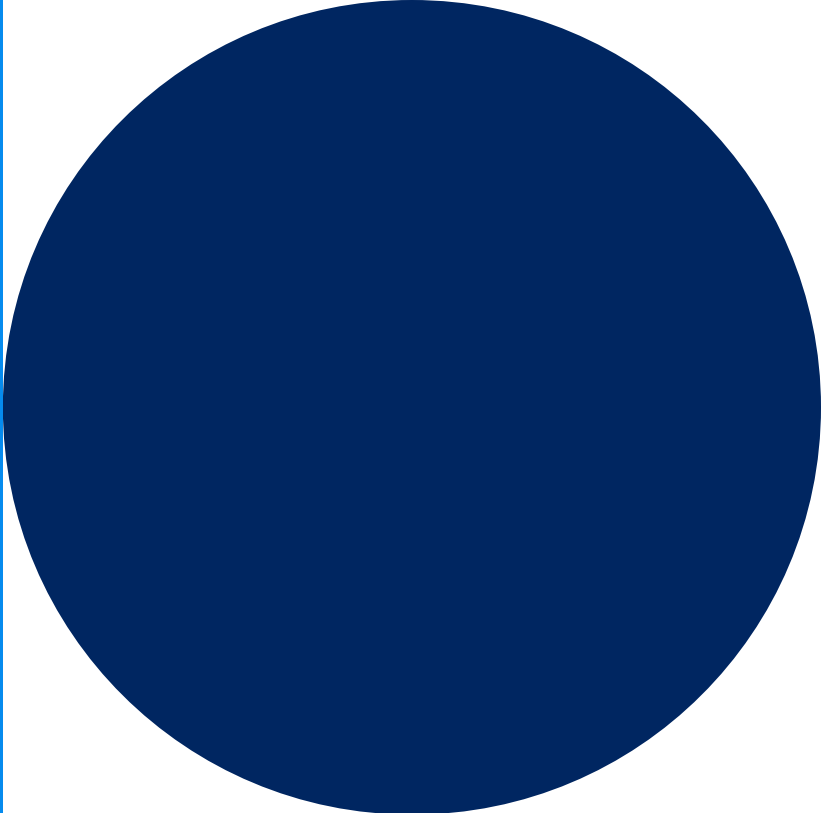
Have your employees choose green options such as electric vehicles (EVs) as often as possible when driving is required

Uber is committed to becoming a [zero-emission rides platform](#) by 2040. In addition to helping drivers transition to EVs, the platform offers [Uber Green](#), which lets riders request rides in electric or hybrid vehicles in 100 major urban markets across 3 continents. Uber Green trips produce 25% fewer emissions than the average trip. And for those who want to ride in premium zero-emission vehicles, there's Uber Comfort Electric.



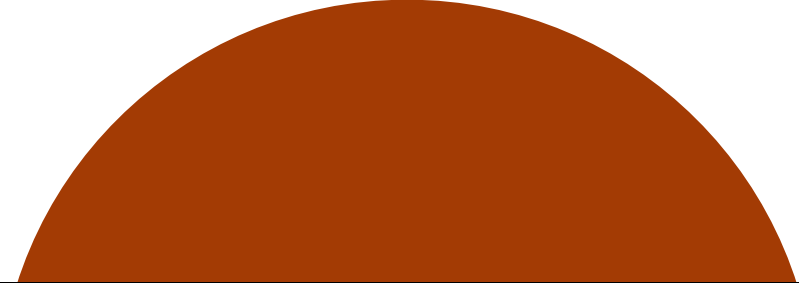
[Track relevant metrics](#) for each business trip to better measure your progress on sustainability goals. For businesses committed to improving sustainability efforts, considering the climate impact of your business travel in the planning stage enables you to make smarter choices.

Within the Uber for Business dashboard, customers can track their climate impact with sustainability metrics. This includes overall emissions from ground transportation, total low-emission trips, and average CO₂ per mile. When you know exactly how your employees' movement translates into emissions, you can make more informed decisions and stay on track to meet your sustainability goals.



Improve business travel with Uber for Business

Corporate travel can be hard, but it still has value. Uber for Business can streamline the business traveler's journey with easy transportation and meal options while keeping administrative work to a minimum. That way business travel stays a company benefit and asset rather than a hassle for travel managers and employees.



Learn more about adding Uber for Business to your business-travel toolkit →