## **CPA**

## Practice **Advisor**

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jobs are expected to be filled this year, overall, the decommodations sector faces ...

Jan. 22, 2021



The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) today released "AHLA's State of the Hotel Industry 2021" outlining the forecasted state of the hotel industry in 2021 and into the immediate future. The report examines the high-level economics of the hotel industry's recovery, the specific impact on and eventual return of business travel, and consumer travel sentiments.

The pandemic has been devastating to the hospitality industry workforce, which is

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year and 20% more than a year from now. Business travel is not expected to return to 2019 levels until at least 2023 or 2024.

Leisure travel is expected to return first, with consumers optimistic about national distribution of a vaccine and with that an ability to travel again in 2021. The report found that heading into 2021, consumers are optimistic about travel, with 56% of Americans saying they are likely to travel for leisure or vacation in 2021. While 34% of adults are already comfortable staying in a hotel, 48% say their comfort is tied to vaccination in some way.

The top findings from this report include:

- 1. Hotels will add 200,000 direct hotel operations jobs in 2021 but will remain nearly 500,000 jobs below the industry's pre-pandemic employment level of 2.3 million employees.
- 2. Half of U.S. hotel rooms are projected to remain empty.
- 3. Business travel is forecasted to be down 85% compared to 2019 through April 2021, and then only begin ticking up slightly.
- 4. 56% of consumers say they expect to travel for leisure, roughly the same amount as in an average year.
- 5. Nearly half of consumers see vaccine distribution as key to travel.
- 6. When selecting a hotel, enhanced cleaning and hygiene practices rank as guests' number two priority, behind price.

"COVID-19 has wiped out 10 years of hotel job growth. Yet the hallmark of hospitality is endless optimism, and I am confident in the future of our industry," said Chip

Rogers, president and CEO of AHLA.

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The resurgence of COVID-19, the emergence of new strains, and a slow vaccine rollout have added to the challenges the hotel industry faces this year. With travel demand continuing to lag normal levels, national and state projections for 2021 show a slow rebound for the industry and then accelerating in 2022.

The hotel industry experienced the most devastating year on record in 2020, resulting in historically low occupancy, massive job loss, and hotel closures across the country. Hotels were one of the first industries affected by the pandemic after travel was forced to a virtual halt in early 2020, and it will be one of the last to recover. The impact of COVID-19 on the travel industry so far has been nine times that of 9/11.

Download the full report here.

**Small Business** 

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