Consumer Confidence & Perceptions around the Impact of COVID-19

North West Research & Strategy are bringing you regular updates on the key points coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic through our weekly review of research and intelligence from the visitor economy sector. This week we have used the COVID-19 – Attitude Tracker from BVA BDRC & Alligator Digital which looks at UK consumer and business confidence, as well as VisitBritain's COVID-19 Consumer Sentiment Tracker. We hope these consumer and business insights help assist with your current business resilience and planning for recovery post-COVID-19. Don't forget, you can also get further information on Government support and sector specific advice on the Growth Platform website.

Some highlights from the COVID-19 – Attitude Tracker report include:

- The proportion of respondents who fear that 'the worst is still to come' has increased to 35%, compared to 31% two weeks ago. Just 27% believe that 'the worst has passed' (compared to 30% last week).
- The proportion of those who plan to go to a visitor attraction by the end of August has dropped to 28%, after jumping up to 32% in the previous week.
- Despite indoor attractions being able to open from 4th July, the proportion who intend to visit an indoor play centre, museum/gallery or an aquarium has only increased marginally, and average lead time for these activities are each over 4 months.
- While intention to visit a theme park in the next 3 months has increased by 2% to 14%, intention to visit a country park/scenic area in the next 3 months has dropped (61%, compared with 65% last week).

- Intention to take a UK holiday is now increasing, with over half likely to do so by the end of the year (54%) – the highest proportion recorded since the start of tracking.
- Intention to visit a restaurant by the end of August is now at its highest point (39%, compared to 33% last week) – perhaps unsurprising given that they are able to open from 4th July. The proportion who intend to visit a cinema in the next three months has also increased (15%, compared to 11% in the previous two weeks).
- While overall intention to use rail services remains low, the proportion who intend to travel by train within the next 3 months has recovered slightly this week (22%, compared with 19% last week).

Main points from VisitBritain's Consumer Sentiment tracker include:

- Just 18% of UK residents believe that life will return to 'something close to normal' by September (compared to 23% last week), the second consecutive week where expectations have dropped significantly.
- This week's 'appetite for risk' score stands at 2.35 out of 4, which is only marginally higher than last week (2.33). Going for a walk in a country park/local trail is the only activity to see a decrease since last week, whilst travelling by public transport has increased for the first time since research began (1.9 compared to 1.8 in previous weeks).
- The majority of respondents are confident that they will be able to take a UK trip between October and December this year (54%), and almost three-quarters (72%) are confident in doing this from January 2021 onwards.
- 'Fewer opportunities to eat/drink out' is the leading reason respondents give for not being confident about travelling between June and September. From October onwards, the top reason changes to 'I have concerns about catching COVID-19'.

- In terms of where respondents plan on staying in the UK for an overnight trip between June and September, the North West ranks 5th out of 10 options for the second week in a row, compared to being 3rd last week. This rises to 4th out of 10 from October onwards.
- 23% of respondents indicated that a 'city or large town' would be their main type of destination for a trip in June-September, ranking it 3rd out of 5 options (compared to 25% last week). From October onwards, this figure rises to 30%, ranking it 2nd. For both time periods, 'countryside or village' is the most popular option.

Help us help you by completing our Business Recovery Survey

In response to the outbreak of COVID-19, Growth Platform are currently undertaking a short survey aimed at Visitor Economy businesses in the Liverpool City Region to help identify specific initiatives that will be needed for recovery, and ensure your views are represented. You can access this survey here. The deadline to submit your response is 8th July 2020.

Growth Platform

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