

 Ohio Travel <small>ASSOCIATION</small>	Longwoods International Fielded August 24, 2021	Destination Analysts Fielded the Week of August 23, 2021	Colleen Dilenschneider Published August 18, 2021
Influences	<p>Almost two-thirds (59%) of American travelers now indicate they are changing travel plans due to the pandemic, which is up 16 points in just two months and back to levels not seen since the beginning of March 2021.</p>	<p>Even with high vaccination rates among travelers, the Delta variant situation is casting a heavy shadow. Despite 72.2% of American travelers reporting they have received a COVID vaccine, 63.2% have a high degree of concern about personally contracting the coronavirus right now. The proportion who are unconcerned about personally contracting COVID has decreased by half since May, dropping from 40.0% to 21.4%.</p>	<p>At the last published masking data update (July 2), IMPACTS Experience found that 43% of high-propensity visitors to cultural entities in the United States believed that organizations should require all visitors to wear a mask. That was down from 53% on June 18, 62% on June 4, and 67% on May 2. People were feeling more comfortable going maskless.</p>
Perception of Safety	<p>Visitors are less inclined to take guidance from their state government that it is safe to travel than they are from federal leadership and agency sources.</p>	<p>Given what’s happening with the pandemic, the majority of American travelers support both indoor masking requirements right now, as well as vaccine mandates for certain indoor activities. This week, 73.6% of American travelers support the reinstatement of indoor masking policies, growing nearly 9 percentage points since August 9.</p>	<p>People with kids under 13 in the household, as a group, were never okay with discarding the masks. In fact, they remained reliably uncomfortable about the shedding of indoor mask requirements over the last few months. Remember, children still aren’t able to be vaccinated in the US.</p>
2021 Travel Plans	<p>While the Delta variant has directly caused more than one-third of American travelers to postpone travel (35%), it has not completely deterred Americans from planning travel, as 88% still report having travel plans in the next six months. This is a consistent level that has been recorded this summer.</p>	<p>A small gain in optimism about where the pandemic is headed in the next months hints at slight rebounds in travel sentiment. With an increase in the number of unvaccinated travelers who say they will get vaccinated this year (32.1% up from 24.7% August 9) and a record 58.8% of traveling parents of school-age children saying they will have their kids inoculated from COVID-19, the proportion of American travelers who feel the pandemic situation will improve in the next month has gained 6 percentage points in the last two weeks to 26.3%.</p>	
Marketing Considerations	<p>Businesses and destinations should adjust marketing strategies to the fluctuations in traveler sentiment to support a safe and profitable fall travel season.</p>	<p>80% of American travelers still have trip plans. In your marketing, consider sharing what safety protocols are available at your destination or place of business, as it is increasingly important to travelers.</p>	<p>Continue to gauge what’s important to your customers. If they expect mask requirements and safety protocols (whether for themselves or their children), make sure these expectations are present not only in your marketing, but at your sites.</p>

The Ohio Travel Association is a non-profit organization supporting the Ohio travel economy.
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