

Holiday Planning and Booking Process – UK – 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the domestic and overseas holiday markets.
- Trends in booking intentions and bookings.
- Holiday booking channel and research sources.
- Purchase drivers when choosing a travel company.
- Attitudes towards entry requirements.
- Consumers' perceptions of seven key players in the holiday market.

Although the share of online bookings for holidays was already high prior to the pandemic, it is expected to increase further due to increased interest among over-55s to book online. 77% of over-55s had booked or were planning to book their main holiday in the 12 months following March 2021 online, up from 70% who booked online prior to the pandemic. Increased online activities during the pandemic are likely to have made this demographic more confident in making online transactions.

The domestic holiday market has benefited from the cautious approach of the UK government to restart international travel. The share of Brits planning to take their main holiday in the UK now exceeds pre-COVID-19 levels, while the initial enthusiasm about travelling overseas has subsided. Encouraging bookings for the late-summer and winter season will become increasingly important as many will be reluctant to travel abroad in the short term.

The speed of recovery will depend heavily on the easing of restrictions by both the UK government and the destination itself, while a vaccine-resistant mutation of COVID-19 will be disastrous for international travel. Amid the maze of rules, travellers will be looking for reassurance and simplicity when making their holiday arrangements.

There is also a group of consumers keen to splash out on travel to make up for a prolonged period with limited options to travel. Brands have the opportunity



“The low volume of bookings in the past year has given companies the chance to redesign the customer experience with improved flexibility, efficiency and relevancy in order to better appeal to customers’ individual needs and wants.”
– Marloes de Vries, Associate Director – Travel, 25 June 2021

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to enrich the holiday planning and booking process with options to upgrade to more premium options, longer stays or add-on experiences.



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