

Business Travel to Soar by 2015, Announces Barclaycard

Changes in the global economy will have the biggest impact on business travellers in the next decade according to new research out today from Barclaycard Business.

(PRWEB) February 25, 2006 -- The research reveals that long haul air and rail services will see the most growth with business travel to global destinations expected to increase. Distance travelled per week will increase to approximately 700 miles per person, compared to 609 miles currently. In addition business people will on average spend an extra night away from home each month, up from 4.1 nights in 2005/6 to 5.2 nights in 2015.

The tenth anniversary results of the annual Barclaycard Business Travel Survey reveals that whilst distances travelled for business travel are predicted to increase, growth will be seen at a slower rate than the 32% increase seen between 1996/7 and 2005/6.

Meanwhile, individual days away for business per week will decrease to 2.0 in 2015, from 2.4 in 2005/6. This can largely be out down to the increasing role of technology. The use of video conferencing, for example, is expected to be used by 50% of workers by 2015, compared to 26% currently.

Tim Carlier of Barclaycard Business comments, "These trends have significant implications for the business travel industry. Long distance travel providers will need to respond to the increasingly demanding business traveller who is travelling further distances for longer periods of time. Furthermore, the decline in shorter journeys may provide a challenge for the industry to consider other ways in which to grow business."

Air travel

With long haul travel increasing, the number of flights taken per business traveller will increase by 12% from 7.6 flights per year in 2005/6 to 8.5 flights in 2015. Low cost air travel is predicted to be near saturation point and will therefore level off, with 74% of business travellers expected to use these services in 2015, no change from 2005/6.

Rail travel

Conversely, the number of business travellers regularly using trains is predicted to decrease from 34% in 2005/6 to 25% in 2015. However, there may well be growth opportunities for long distance rail travel providers.

Improved services

As journeys become longer, the desire for improved services and better working conditions will rise. It is predicted there will be an increase in:

Preference for electronic check in procedures	2005 - 23%	2015 - 90%
Preference for online booking	2005 - 37%	2015 - 70%
Business class air travel	2005 - 25%	2015 - 33%
Premium class rail travel	2005 - 22%	2015 - 25%

Snapshot of business travel in 2005/6

Nearly half (45%) of business travellers say they are travelling for business more in 2005/6 than they were in 2004/5. In contrast, actual miles travelled per month have decreased from 642 in 2004/5 to 608.5 in 2005/6.

The main reason given for the increase in business travel is business expansion, both overseas (33%) and in the UK (18%). Of those who say they are travelling less, 25% put this down to technology reducing the need.

Trade in the UK is already becoming more global, affected not only by new countries such as Poland joining the EU but also by the opening up of economies such as China. The top three business destinations over the last twelve months were:

- UK and Ireland (75%)
- Western Europe (56%)
- US and Canada (23%)

However, Asia Pacific (10%), Eastern Europe (10%), China (7%) and Africa (4%) were also cited.

The 2005/6 business traveller

The typical male business traveller is aged between 41 and 65 and is married with children. He has a managerial position in a company with a turnover in excess of £5m but less than £20m. He will travel for business 2.5 days per week, is away on business for 4.3 nights a month and will cover 662 miles each week.

The typical female business traveller is married, younger in age (31 - 40 years) and is less likely to have children than her male counterpart. She travels for business 2.2 days per week, is away on business for 3.8 nights a month and will cover 335 miles each week.

Notes to editors:

The tenth annual Barclaycard Business Travel Survey, conducted in October 2005, amongst a nationwide sample of Barclaycard Business' 565,000 commercial card holders, questioned 2,500 respondents (CEOs, company directors, managers and executives), about all aspects of business travel from airlines and hotels to online bookings.

Business travel forecasting to 2015 has been carried out by the Future Foundation, using their own in-house data and Barclaycard Business travel survey data, dating back to when the survey began.

Barclaycard Business is the UK's leading issuer of Visa commercial cards with over 152,000 corporate customers and over 565,000 cardholders. Barclaycard Business services businesses of all sizes from multi-national companies and Government departments to small and medium enterprises.

Barclaycard Business commercial cards allow simple, cost-effective management of business travel expenditure and frees staff from the paperwork often associated with expenses. They enable businesses to pay for travel expenses such as airline tickets, car hire, hotels, restaurants and petrol, and provide a range of added-value services.

A member of Visa, Barclaycard Business cards are welcome at more than 800,000 places in the UK and 24 million worldwide.

Barclaycard Business is also one of Europe's largest acquirers and processors of plastic card transactions. In 2005, 1.8 billion purchases were made with credit and debit cards through 192,000 Barclaycard Business' customer outlets in the UK.

About Barclaycard

Barclaycard (<http://www.barclaycard.co.uk>) is a multi-brand credit card and consumer lending business. It is one of Europe's leading credit card businesses and has an increasing international presence.

In the UK, Barclaycard includes all Barclaycard branded credit cards and loans, Barclays loans, the FirstPlus secured lending business, Monument cards and loans and the retail finance business Clydesdale Financial Services.

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