



BLEISURE – A FANCY NAME FOR SOMETHING OLD IN BUSINESS AVIATION

News / Business aviation



Work travel is emerging as a lifestyle rather than necessity for some people. According to Global Business Travel Association, the number of U.S.-originated business trips alone will increase to 499.2 million in 2015. Meanwhile, despite the apparently rising workloads, a new survey by Pullman Hotels states 43% of international travellers always take their professional mobile devices with them even on holiday or weekend trips. However, the new business traveller isn't all work and no play.

The BridgeStreet report on international travel habits states 83% of business travellers use time on business trips to explore the cities they are visiting. Moreover, a survey conducted by Jurys Inn, showed 35% of respondents see an overnight business trip as a break from the office routine – which implies taking time out to vacation-like experience. In addition, more than 50% of business travellers bring a family member or significant other with them. It's called bleisure, and currently it's pretty hot.

The trend, first spotted in 2007 is clearly gaining its momentum. 60% of the BridgeStreet survey said they have been taking bleisure trips, usually adding two vacation days to work-related travel.

Nearly half of them did so on most occasions, and 6 out of 10 said they were more likely to take bleisure trips today than they were five years ago. This is about more than rest and relaxation, though. What it really means is that even the travel time between destinations and even in the air is no longer viewed as lost business hours, but as an opportunity.

"Most modern business people tend to blend work into their lives, checking emails and taking work calls 24/7. It is clear, that the behaviours of modern business people have shifted towards a culture that combines productivity, opportunity, and new experiences. Therefore, it was just a matter of time, before this mixture would extend into the travel industry, generating a new demand," says Vitalij Kapitonov, the CEO of KlasJet.

According to Skift, over 50% of travellers enjoy arriving at the airport up to an hour early before their flights to use airport lounges for their Wi-Fi and quiet workspaces. This is not to mention extras like complimentary salon services to help them look their best on the way to a big meeting or cocktail bars to celebrate achievements on return. Even on-board bars are gaining popularity as meeting places and social areas.

In addition, almost all business travellers that took part in the BridgeStreet survey feel bleisure actually benefits business. For instance, it helps gain cultural experience and knowledge of the cities they were doing business in. Nearly 4 out of 5 respondents agreed leisure days on business trips added value to their work assignments.

"Travel is now a part of work and vice versa. So anything that you can do to make yourself more relaxed, focused and more present is what people are looking for when planning their business trips. For some businesses, interested in having a bite of the new market, this essentially means niche marketing, as they have to try to appeal to different sectors of the public. For business operators though, it's pretty much routine," says Vitalij Kapitonov, the CEO of KlasJet.

According to KlasJet, increasing productivity of a passenger has long become one of the distinctive features of business aviation. No security lines at the airport, Wi-Fi connectivity and less distractions on-board actually offer an environment that allows to get things done while travelling, winning over the majority of business passengers that give it a try. In fact, a recent study conducted by the National Business Aviation Association has revealed that more than 20% of all business aviation users felt more productive while on-board a private jet compared to working in their offices, generated 245% higher return for their shareholders than those travelling by other means of transportation. "Why spend precious time on getting a good night sleep before the meeting, when you can actually arrive feeling refreshed, and use the additional day to explore the new destination? The rule is simple: if you're doing something, do it right," jokes the CEO of KlasJet.

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