# Business travel set for a transformative recovery by 2025



By the end of 2024, business travel expenditure is projected to either reach or surpass levels observed in 2019, signalling a robust recovery following the pandemic. The corporate travel landscape is poised for significant transformation, propelled by emerging technologies, shifting generational preferences, and enhanced integrations such as the New Distribution Capability (NDC). By 2025, the primary focuses within the sector will include efficiency, personalisation, and safety—factors that will redefine the travel experience for business travellers.

An ongoing wave of industry consolidation is expected to accelerate, as both customers and suppliers adapt to evolving market demands. This consolidation enables travel management companies (TMCs) and associated businesses to modernise services, streamlining operations to create a more seamless travel experience. As described in Travolution, "For TMCs, this means greater efficiencies through scale, improved supplier relationships, and the ability to leverage technology to deliver a unified experience." By integrating advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and predictive analytics, these mergers are designed to enhance the travel ecosystem, ensuring an efficient and coherent integration from booking through to expense reporting.

Additionally, the adoption of NDC, introduced by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), is anticipated to become a widely accepted feature in business travel by 2025. Though initially met with some hesitance, the potential of NDC to improve the corporate travel experience is becoming increasingly acknowledged. This standardisation aims to enable better connections between airlines and travel agencies, facilitating a more streamlined customer journey.

AI's impact will be profound as its integration into corporate travel management continues to expand. As the Travolution article points out, "AI-based agents or 'co-pilots' will offer business travellers personalised recommendations, customised itineraries, and proactive support." This personalised assistance will increasingly resemble the consumer travel experience, with AI capable of anticipating disruptions—such as flight delays or adverse weather conditions—while also optimising travel costs. For businesses, investment in AI solutions presents opportunities to not only boost operational efficiency but also enhance the overall experience for travellers.

Gen Z, projected to constitute 27% of the global workforce by 2025, is expected to significantly influence business travel preferences. According to a recent survey by Direct Travel, while most employees currently favour a mix of self-service and agent assistance, Gen Z shows a stronger inclination towards fully self-service travel management. This demographic's comfort with technology and desire for autonomy will encourage a movement towards self-service solutions, particularly those powered by AI. As the report highlights, "Gen Z travellers will want more control over their itineraries," emphasising the need for mobile tools that allow adjustments and real-time management.

Furthermore, the concept of 'Duty of Care 2.0' is set to evolve, with AI and real-time technologies facilitating enhanced safety and security measures during travel. Businesses will increasingly utilise AI for risk management, enabling real-time tracking, automated alerts, and comprehensive health protocols. These advancements will allow organisations to monitor potential risks—ranging from geopolitical tensions to health crises—empowering them to swiftly respond to unforeseen disruptions.

As we move closer to 2025, the anticipated shifts in business travel management will emphasise increased efficiency, tailored experiences, and heightened safety. Companies that proactively champion these changes stand to gain significant advantages in enriching the traveller experience, navigating an increasingly dynamic and complex landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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