

News & Notes

TRAVEL • MANUFACTURER • RETAIL

TRAVEL

U.S. Travel Outlook



According to the U.S. Travel Association (USTA), positive growth in the travel sector is due to a consistently strong leisure travel market, which offsets the continuing decline in business travel. Travel demand is growing at a diminished rate, but comes on top of 74 continuous months of growth. International travel to the U.S. is up just 1%, held back by a strong U.S. dollar – but domestic leisure travel is expected to lift summer travel expenditures enough for positive overall travel growth over the next six months. Airlines carried more than 895 million passengers through U.S. airports in 2015, an all-time high and the biggest year-over-year increase (approximately 5%) since 2009, with July being the busiest month. Summer fuel prices are forecast to average \$2.04/gallon nationwide, significantly lower than last summer's \$2.63/gallon, which may bode well for summer road trips.

SOURCE: USTA

How to Be a Good Airline Passenger

According to Sharon Schweitzer, international etiquette expert and founder of Protocol & Etiquette Worldwide, proper airport and flying etiquette is essential to minimize travel issues and delays. She offers tips to make flying as painless as possible. First, she says, understand that the safety of fellow passengers and crew comes first. “Your behavior is under heightened scrutiny,” Schweitzer says. “Don’t give security reason to respond to your temper tantrum when they are protecting you from terrorism.” Schweitzer also suggests travelers remember that the airline personnel who are often the brunt of travel criticisms and complaints largely have no control over the

circumstances causing delays and cancellations, and that simple respect will lead to a better experience for all parties involved. Stay calm, have patience and expect delays. Things happen, she says. Getting angry won’t help. Also remember that it’s not about you. At any given time there are more than 5,000 planes flying in the United States. “With millions of travelers taking off and landing each day,” Schweitzer says, “the delay you may be experiencing is not occurring to make your day as horrible as possible. It’s just a side effect of travel and it is affecting much more than you.” To learn more about travel etiquette, visit www.protocolww.com.

SOURCE: PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE WORLDWIDE

Book Airport Taxes When You Book Your Flight

Travelers will soon be able to book airport taxes when they book their trips through travel agents or online thanks to a new partnership between Dutch company Taxi Tender and the travel technology firm Amadeus. Not only will pre-booking benefit travelers, but discount rates for airport taxes are sure to help too. Taxi Tender, which also operates under the names Cheap Taxes and Your Airport Transfer (YAT) offers worldwide airport taxi service, covering North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The company’s proprietary system for price comparison calculates the average taxi fare per route and then auctions the fare to local cab companies. The goal? To guarantee the traveler a better-than-average price, before they’ve even left home.

SOURCE: AMADEUS

Airport Napping Made Easier



Joining airports in Dubai, London and Toronto, New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport now sports a set of four sleeping pods in its Terminal 5. Thanks to a partnership between JetBlue Airways and pod builder MetroNaps, the four EnergyPods will provide free 20-minute naps to travelers in need of a respite. According to MetroNaps, the pods offer “an ergonomically perfect, gravity-neutral position that optimizes circulation and encourages a reinvigorating, restful siesta.” Other features include visors for privacy, soothing rhythms via built-in speakers, headphone jacks and storage bins. When the 20-minute nap is complete, the chair automatically comes out of a reclining position as nappers are awakened with a combination of lights, music and vibration.

SOURCE: USA TODAY

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Travel Goods SHOWCASE Summer 2016

What's Trending in Cruise Travel?

CruiseCompete, an online cruising marketplace, compiles a monthly list of insights into what is trending with ocean and river cruise travelers. The April CruiseTrends™ report listed the most popular cruise lines as Carnival, Oceania and Viking River, with the most popular ships being the Oasis of the Seas, the Queen Mary 2, and Emerald Waterways Ships. The most popular regions for cruising are the Caribbean in the Premium/Contemporary category and Europe for luxury and river cruises. The most popular American port is Miami (which overtook Fort Lauderdale, the previous month's leader) and Amsterdam is the most popular European port for river cruises. The most popular destinations include Mexico, Germany and Italy, with Dubrovnik, Croatia, overtaking Bora Bora, French Polynesia, as the preferred destination for luxury travelers. Balcony cabins and week-long trips are the most popular, and most travelers tend to look at options only a month in advance, except river cruisers who prefer to schedule two to three months out.

SOURCE: CRUISECOMPETE

National Park Service Celebrates Centennial

2016 marks the hundredth anniversary of the National Park Service. There are more than 59 officially designated national parks in the United States, and more than 400 official "units" that the park service oversees. These units include national monuments, preserves, historic sites, battlefields, rivers, parkways and trails. Each year, it is estimated that more than 300 million people visit the national parks. But which places are most popular? According to the National Park Service's annual ranking for recreation visitors, the 10 most popular parks, from least visited to most, are: Glacier National Park (Montana), Acadia National Park (Maine), Grand Teton National Park (Wyoming), Olympic National Park (Washington), Zion National Park (Utah), Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming, Montana, Idaho), Yosemite National Park (California), Rocky Mountain National Park (Colorado), Grand Canyon National Park (Arizona) and Great Smoky Mountains National Park (North Carolina, Tennessee). Interestingly, the number one destination on the list, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, received nearly 11 million visitors in 2015, practically double the visitors to the Grand Canyon.

SOURCE: USA TODAY

Samsonite Buys Tumi

Samsonite International SA has agreed to purchase New Jersey-based Tumi Holdings, Inc. in a \$1.8 billion all-cash transaction that was unanimously approved by both companies' boards of directors in early March, and expected to close in the second half of 2016, pending approvals by each company's shareholders and regulatory agencies. In a prepared statement, Samsonite CEO Ramesh Tainwala said, "Tumi is a perfect strategic fit for our business. The brand is beloved by millions of loyal customers for its high quality and durable premium business and luggage products." Samsonite's press release states, "Tumi's leading market position in the premium business and luggage segment is a perfect complement to Samsonite's strong and diverse portfolio of brands and products, with limited overlap in market positioning, price point and distribution." Growth opportunities for its new acquisition include "expansion of Tumi in Asia and Europe, strengthening its platform in North America, and leveraging Samsonite's clear strength in hardside innovation to expand Tumi's hardside luggage offering."

SOURCE: SAMSONITE

CCL Security Has a New Website

CCL Security, makers of fine padlocks for the travel industry and beyond, has launched its newly redesigned website. The updated site offers ease of use, quick navigation, interactive features and downloadable product spec sheets, along with lots of product photos. CCL Security's new web site can be found at www.cclsecurity.com.

SOURCE: CCL SECURITY

HONTUS Milano News

HONTUS Milano has opened a 4,000-square-foot gallery at the brand's U.S. headquarters in Miami. To meet increasing demand, HONTUS Milano has also expanded operations with a new distribution center in California featuring an additional design gallery. The company cites a hardworking and devoted worldwide staff for the growth of its Mia Toro brand, which has necessitated the expansion. HONTUS Milano is also collaborating with artist Jozza, known for his vibrant, pop art painting style. Later this year, the brand will be releasing two new lines featuring original artwork by Jozza. HONTUS Milano is the only brand in the world to feature Jozza's work on its luggage.

Design Director Joseph Pagan says that the company is "thrilled with the new partnership and looking forward to creating amazing and innovative styles with his art."

SOURCE: HONTUS MILANO



Above: The new 4,000-square-foot gallery at HONTUS Milano headquarters in Miami, featuring a display of artwork by painter Jozza.

Left: HONTUS Milano Product Architect and CEO Harry Shelkh (left) with pop artist Jozza in the company's new 4,000-square-foot Miami gallery.

MiWorld Partners with Isaac Mizrahi

Thanks to a new licensing agreement, MiWorld Accessories LLC will manufacture and distribute a line of travel accessories under the Isaac Mizrahi New York label. The collection of exclusive travel pillows, eye masks, travel blankets, luggage scales, passport holders, luggage tags, travel adapters and travel kits and cases will augment the existing line of Isaac Mizrahi-branded luggage manufactured and distributed by Signal Brands LLC and available in department stores and specialty retailers throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. "I love the glamour and excitement that comes with travel," said Mizrahi. "My collection of luggage and travel accessories is perfect for the stylish woman who's always on the go."

SOURCE: MIWORLD ACCESSORIES LLC

Royce at Selfridges

Leather goods maker Royce has launched its newest collection at Selfridges, a high-end English department store with a 106-year history. The line of leather bags includes a backpack, two holdalls and a briefcase, as well as a bit of technological innovation via the Royce Leather Item Tracker. The Bluetooth device can be inserted into any Royce bag or wallet to provide instant tracking information via Android- and iPhone-compatible apps. "We are extremely grateful to announce Royce has launched our newest designer collection at Selfridges," said Royce CEO Andrew Royce Bauer, "one of the greatest department stores in the world."

SOURCE: ROYCE

UrbanGear's Digital Expansion

Seeking to build a community around its brand, toolmaker UrbanGear has expanded digitally with a new website and social media accounts, as well as a new catalog. Positioned as clever, everyday tools to keep convenience close at hand, UrbanGear products include multi-tools, knives, carabiners, lights and utility ties with features such as non-slip carbon grips and push-button lights. Through its social engagement and interactive website, UrbanGear hopes to receive feedback from customers about what kinds of everyday problems can be solved by new product solutions. Suggestions can be emailed to info@urbangeartools.com. The brand's new website is www.urbangeartools.com.

SOURCE: LCI BRANDS

Travelers Club Luggage Has a Stylish New Line

Travelers Club Luggage Inc. has signed a licensing deal with kensie, a Bluestar Alliance portfolio brand, to produce fashion luggage for style-conscious customers. "Travelers Club Luggage is an excellent partner that can execute the DNA of the brand," said Ralph Gindi, COO of Bluestar Alliance, "incorporating key characteristics and superior quality our customer expects." The runway-inspired pieces are described by the company as being "pretty with an edge, perfect for day or play" with a mix of patterns, textures and colors for an effortless, chic look. The new collection debuted at luggage retailers and department stores with its Spring 2016 line.

SOURCE: TRAVELERS CLUB LUGGAGE INC.

24-7 International Honors Retailers

Luggage maker 24-7 International honored a pair of retailers with its Retailer of the Year Awards during the 2016 International Travel Goods Show in Las Vegas. HSN was named 24-7 International's Retailer of the Year, while Bon-Ton was named Department Store Retailer of the Year. "Retail has gone through enormous change over the last few years with digital, ecommerce and technology at the heart of transforming the retail landscape," said Scott Kosmin, president and COO of 24-7 International. "These retailers have evolved to stay ahead of the curve with expansion of digital and mobile technologies to reflect the fundamental shift in the way consumers shop."

SOURCE: 24-7 INTERNATIONAL



24-7 International named HSN as its Retailer of the Year. From left: Chris DePonte, executive vice president of 24-7 International; Jane Dyer of HSN; Scott Kosmin, president and COO of 24-7 International and Susan LeMaitre of HSN.



24-7 International named Bon-Ton as its Department Store Retailer of the Year. From left: Scott Kosmin, president and COO of 24-7 International; Amanda Manke of Bon-Ton; Jordan Ketel of Bon-Ton and Dennis Zhang, CEO of 24-7 International.

Cabrelli Name Change

Cabrelli, a handbag supplier with a 75-year history, has updated its name and logo to more accurately reflect its current corporate identity. On January 1, 2016, Cabrelli Inc. began operating under the new name of Cabrelli Group Inc. "By adding 'Group' to our name," wrote company President Mark Goldman and Vice President Howard Kalichman in a letter to suppliers, "we are reinforcing the fact that over time we have evolved into a diversified company, developing and supplying new and exciting products to the travel, gift and accessories markets throughout North America. We do this through both our brick and mortar customers, as well as a vibrant online presence."

SOURCE: CABRELLI GROUP INC.



The new logo of Cabrelli Group Inc.

Sprayco Expands Travel Lines

Sprayco, a leader in travel plastics, beauty accessory and spray bottle categories, has acquired Miamica, a trendy travel accessory brand. Along with the recent acquisition of Allure Style Accessories, a complete line of hair accessories, Sprayco's footprint in the travel and beauty markets increases significantly. "We welcome Miamica to the Sprayco family of brands," says Eric Seidel, senior vice president at Sprayco. "We believe the addition of the Miamica products will greatly compliment the current Sprayco travel line. We welcome Devra (Miller, founder of Miamica), her team and their tremendous creativity to our family."



The Miamica line of trendy travel accessories, now a part of Sprayco Consumer Products.

SOURCE: SPRAYCO CONSUMER PRODUCTS

ExOfficio Wins Major Award

ExOfficio's Give-N-Go® performance travel underwear has won *USA Today's* 10 Best Readers' Choice Award. A panel of *USA Today* travel experts also named the underwear one of the best adventure gifts for travelers, highlighting the product's breathability, low weight and long-wearing ability. ExOfficio's Give-N-Go® underwear is light, breathable, odor-resistant, moisture-wicking and quick drying. Travelers appreciate the ability to hand wash the underwear knowing it will be dry in just a few hours – ideal for extended trips and for those who particularly appreciate the benefits of traveling light.



ExOfficio's Give-N-Go® Underwear has won USA Today's 10 Best Readers' Choice Award.

SOURCE: EXOFFICIO

Genius Pack & Red Dot

Genius Pack's innovative approach to luggage and packing isn't just attention-getting at The International Travel Goods Show, but in the global design community as well. Genius Pack's 21" Hardside Spinner Carry-On managed to distinguish itself from a field of 5,214 products, culled from 57 countries, in this year's Red Dot Award: Design Concept competition. The design category encompasses everything from household items and sporting goods to transportation, with innovation, ergonomics, durability and functionality on the long list of criteria to be considered. The 41-member Red Dot jury, consisting of designers, design professors and journalists, granted Genius Pack's hardside spinner an honorable mention "for a particularly well-executed aspect of design work."

SOURCE: GENIUS PACK

The Genius Pack 21" Hardside Spinner Carry-On just received the prestigious 2016 Red Dot Award for product design.



The QR Code's Second Act

The QR code, that little square barcode that looks like a random bunch of pixels, was once the darling of the mobile tech world. Point a smartphone camera at a QR code and immediately connect to information about practically anything. QR codes can trigger videos, launch email apps and do just about anything on a computer or smartphone. After a strong beginning back in the early 2000s, when marketers largely used QR codes as simple shortcuts to basic consumer connectivity, QR codes started to fall out of favor. But now, as the technology has matured, new uses for QR codes are appearing. The Grocery Manufacturers Association's SmartLabel initiative incorporates QR codes to expand the amount of information delivered by a label. More than 30 manufacturers are participating in the initiative. For instance, Hershey used SmartLabels on holiday packaging to provide detailed product information including ingredients, allergens and nutritional information. QR codes are also being used for messaging. China's WeChat uses QR codes to help users opt in to discounts and rewards, while Snapchat and Shazam use QR codes to enhance users' access to their services. As retailers and marketers find new uses for QR codes, this old technology may find a new life.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

Retailer Integrates Artificial Intelligence into Online Shopping Experience

Rather than relying on keywords and other less intuitive search techniques, The North Face has harnessed the power of IBM's Watson technology to make its e-commerce experience more like a traditional brick and mortar shopping trip. Integrated into Fluid's Expert Personal Shopper platform is artificial intelligence designed to create natural conversations with online customers. Similarly, digital assistants such as Apple's Siri and Windows' Cortana have enabled a third of consumers with smartphones or tablets to use a digital assistant monthly, with projections that by the end of 2016 more than \$2 billion in online shopping will be performed exclusively by this style of mobile digital assistant. Artificial intelligence, it seems, is the future of personalized e-commerce experiences, and customers say they are ready. According to The North Face's beta tests, 50,000 customers tried the personal shopper platform in two months, and each stayed an average of two minutes longer than other visitors to the site. Post-test surveys revealed that three quarters of those who tried the platform would use it again. The highest ratings were from customers who had previously experienced problems on the site.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

Smartphones Are Making Handbags and Wallets Smaller

As mobile payment services increase in popularity, consumers have less need to carry multiple credit cards and cash. Smartphones also replace many membership cards and loyalty rewards cards. As a result, wallets – and the handbags that contain them – are getting noticeably smaller. Women are also increasingly likely to choose styles such as crossbody bags, small satchels, zip-around pouches and thin billfold wallets. At fashion brand Michael Kors, much smaller wallets are selling faster than larger ones. “As more things end up on your phone,” said Michael Kors CEO John Idol, “you need less things in your wallet. So that’s just a fact.”

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

What Won't Consumers Cut?

American consumers report that there are a few things they aren't willing to give up when reining in spending. Fully 80% of consumers consider their Internet service a nonstarter when looking for budget items to trim, and nearly 60% say the same about their smartphone. Beyond that, though, very few purchases are seen as untouchable. To a generation of millennials who came of age during the great recession, frugal spending is a way of life. They'll skip a new pair of jeans, high-end cosmetics or fancy dinners if the budget dictates. They also cut the purchase of new objects before eliminating unique experiences. But according to National Retail Federation research, they'll cut it all before sacrificing their mobile connectivity and media consumption. Consumer attitudes toward spending are improving, NRF reports, employment data looks solid and there doesn't appear to be any significant recession risks on the horizon.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION



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