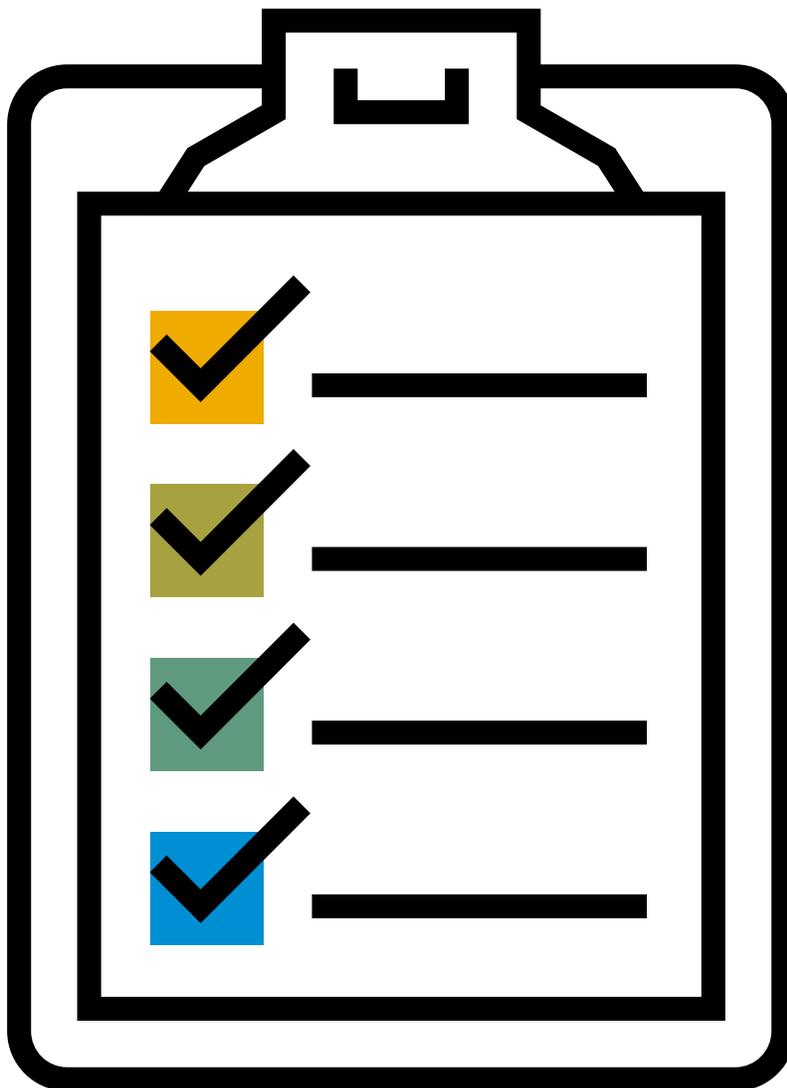


# Visibility Matters Most During Uncertain Times

5 Things You Should Think About Now to Stabilize Your Travel and Expense Programs



Managing a business means managing change – responding to both unforeseen and unexpected challenges. Now is a good time to think holistically about the spend across your company, review policies, and evaluate your travel and expense landscape. Use this checklist to support a strong financial statement and support your company’s ability to redirect budgets to where the business needs them most.



## 1. PARADIGM SHIFT

When business resumes, how should you adjust your travel and expense program in support of the changing business environment? For instance, do you need to review your expense policy for more at-home workers? You may need to tighten criteria for travel or encourage travel for certain groups of employees in a phased approach.

### How to take action:

- Connect with your sales, services, operations, and other business development teams to understand their new go-forward strategies and forthcoming travel needs.
- Consider developing short, medium, and long-term policies that align with business strategies: this may include an automated pre-approval process and greater mobile adoption.
- Use downtime to assess your current system. Identify gaps and investigate solutions to fill those gaps.
- Be flexible; fluid situations call for flexibility, and plans may need to change to respond to new priorities



## 2. TRANSPARENCY IS OPTIMAL

Is your reporting as comprehensive as you’d like it to be? Right now, there are fewer people traveling but direct booking happens; when travel resumes, make sure you are prepared to capture that data. Make sure you can see all your travel spend across the entire ecosystem of travel suppliers. Create actionable suggestions on how the company can improve value.

### How to take action:

- Take a hard look at your current travel and expense operational reports. What works? What doesn’t? What is essential in a post-crisis world? Can you see data from all sources? Adjust as necessary for end to end data transparency.

- Focus on understanding what your senior leadership wants you to focus on. Then align with the budget stakeholders as to what they want to see in reports. Give budget stakeholders what they want in a simple format and not an “eye chart” full of details.
- Your responsibility is not to tell stakeholders how to spend their budgets, but to help them maximize their value for every travel and expense dollar spent.

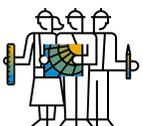


### **3. BUILD BRIDGES, BREAK DOWN SILOS**

Think about how aligned your travel and expense programs and supporting technology solutions are within your business community. Are they helping or hindering your business travel community? For many organizations, this is an area of opportunity to optimize.

#### **How to take action:**

- Review your travel and expense policies, and make sure they align with stakeholder needs for better visibility, compliance, process simplification, and improved employee experiences.
- Check to see if your travel and expense policies align with potentially new local and international regulations and requirements.
- Check travel and expense policy rule sets in your booking and expense systems. Make sure they are as automated as possible. A little work now can save untold hours down the road as they help increase employee productivity, support compliance, and reduce employee friction.



### **4. GET AHEAD OF THE NEXT DISRUPTION**

It's not just a question of if the next crisis will take place, but when, where, and to what magnitude. Your company needs to stay vigilant on preparedness and develop improved 'duty of care' as a part of your travel program. You'll need a way to locate all your employees, communicate with them during emergencies, and be prepared to respond to international regulatory inquiries.

#### **How to take action:**

- Review how well Travel, Security, HR, Finance, and PR teams are working together on business continuity and ensure that your travel management solutions allow you to identify and communicate, preferably two-way, with all your employees in case of an emergency.

- Make sure employee's profiles are up to date, and you have mobile phone numbers, emergency contacts, and other vital data not just for travelers but for all employees.
- Align and integrate your travel program with a global risk management service provider.
- Evaluate your travel program's and finance team's readiness for an audit of domestic and international travel from tax authorities as there is a potential for greater scrutiny moving forward.



## 5. PARTNERS FOR THE FUTURE

Now is an excellent time to reach out to your travel suppliers and TMCs. Everyone's facing uncertainty, and yet more than ever, we also need to think about business relationships moving forward. Both buyers and suppliers are reevaluating. How has your TMC weathered recent events? Opening up channels of communication is the best way to find common ground and strengthen relationships.

### How to take action:

- Start thinking about building sustainability into your travel and expense policies. For instance, as sustainability is becoming increasingly important, revisiting policies that encourage direct flights that reduce your travel carbon footprint, instead of focusing on cost alone might make sense. .
- Talk to your TMC about the status of their capacity and staffing. Will there be a ramp-up period for the TMC's to handle booking or processing loads once business returns? Where are they on tracking your potential refunds, fee waivers, and credit balances for canceled trips?
- Envision the next phase of your travel supplier relationships with an eye to a win-win outcome for everyone.
- Partner with like-minded suppliers who embrace leading-edge technology advancements in line with your business strategy.

## WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

These are truly extraordinary times. We are sure to emerge from it changed by the experience. We hope that this checklist helps you frame up a few next steps with purpose, a degree of control, and a path to drive value for your organization in a way that outlasts today's challenges. With that, we are forgoing our usual call to action and simply want to say, from everyone at SAP Concur, we are here for you.

**For more detail on making these checklist items a reality:**

[Download the Executive Overview](#)

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