amaDEUS

Rebuild Travel
Digital Health Survey
United Arab Emirates

2021

Introduction

As the COVID-19 crisis has evolved, Amadeus, a global leader in travel technology, has been committed to better understanding what the traveler wants during and after this unique time. To gather more insights into how the travel industry can rebuild, this latest traveler research focuses on learning more about their top concerns around digital health data, their comfort levels with sharing and storing their data, and the solutions that may help to alleviate their concerns for future travel.

Censuswide surveyed respondents between 18-26 February, 2021, across nine markets, including UK, Spain, Germany, Russia, UAE, France, India, Singapore and the US, who've traveled abroad in the last 18 months, with 1,000 respondents per market. The survey aims to understand consumer sentiment to safe travel in light of COVID-19 and traveler receptiveness to providing digital health information to enable the opening up of travel. The survey also revisits the traveler sentiment issue, which was part of our first survey, in September 2020, to see if there are notable changes. Below are some of the key insights for the UAE market.

Similar reports focused on the other eight countries plus a global report can be found here.

Digital health passports will help make UAE travelers more likely to travel

- **Over 8 in 10 (82%) would be willing* to store their travel health data electronically if it enabled them to pass through the airport faster with fewer face-to-face interactions while 78% would be willing* if it meant it enabled them to travel sooner and to more destinations (78%).**

- **53% would be happy for a digital health passport to be used at all times when traveling,** while 4% would not be comfortable using a digital health passport for future travel under any circumstances.

- Over half of respondents in Abu Dhabi and Dubai surveyed were happy to use a digital health passport at all times when travelling (both 53%). However, there were generational differences: Gen X were more receptive to this than Gen Z (57% and 46%, respectively).

- UAE travelers are more confident in providing health data for travel purposes (66%) or booking and checking in at a hotel (52%) than for working in an office (41%) or visiting a restaurant or bar (26%).

Security and privacy concerns remain the central challenge to digital health passport acceptance

- **The main concerns UAE travelers have in relation to data storage are the security risks with personal information being hacked (39%), privacy concerns around what health information needs to be shared (38%) and a lack of transparency and control over where the data is shared (30%).**

- Overall, only 20% of UAE travelers are concerned about loss of information while travelling or before a journey and 26% are concerned about price increases from travel insurance companies based on health data.

- **Skepticism around digital health passports is highest amongst Gen Z** (8% of Gen Z said they would not be comfortable using a digital health passport under any circumstances, which decreases to 4% amongst Gen X). This trend is reversed when it comes to security concerns, with almost a quarter (24%) of Gen Z concerned about the lack of transparency and control over where the data is shared, which increases to 37% amongst Gen X.

- There is little variation in the different kinds of travelers, with both business travelers (36%) and leisure travelers (38%) demonstrating similar levels of concern about what health information needs to be shared.

The checks and balances that need to be put in place to ease privacy concerns and build traveler confidence in digital health passports

- **Almost 3 in 5 (58%) of UAE travelers would be comfortable using a digital passport if it was accepted by most countries and was regulated by international standards,** while 47% would be comfortable if only COVID-19-specific data was included in any health passport.

- Business travelers would be more comfortable using a digital passport if it was accepted by most countries and was regulated by international standards (52%), but this inreases to 59% for leisure travelers.

- **Under 8 in 10 (78%) would be more likely** to store health data on an app where a travel company has partnered with a trusted healthcare company.**

- 80% of respondents agreed*** that they would be more likely to feel comfortable sharing health data if the airline they frequently travel with offered a way to store travel health data in an app, while 68% agreed*** that they would be open to downloading a new third-party app to store health data, irrespective of which airline or travel company they use.

- Having a travel app that could be used across the whole journey would reduce stress around travel (55%), greatly improve the overall travel experience (52%) and reassure travelers that all information is in one place (51%).

Concerns remain around traveling in light of COVID-19

- **The biggest concern for UAE travelers is the safety and cleanliness of public transport (62%),** followed by fears about mixing with crowds in airports or at transport hubs (55%). Only 4% of travelers don't have any concerns about traveling in light of COVID-19.

- **Business travelers are less concerned than leisure travelers –** 38% are concerned about wearing a mask for long periods compared to 46% in those traveling for leisure, and only 39% indicating anxiety over other traveler's not wearing masks compared to nearly half (49%) of leisure travelers.

- Fears about mixing with crowds in airports or at transport hubs were more acute in Gen X and Millennials (both 60%), while Gen Z were most concerned about the safety and cleanliness of public transport (50%).

The technologies that would increase confidence in travel among UAE respondents in the next 12 months

- **Mobile boarding (52%), contactless payments (49%) and mobile apps to provide on-trip notifications and alerts (49%) are popular technologies that respondents noted would increase their confidence to travel in the next 12 months.**

- Respondents who are leisure travelers were more likely to prefer contactless payments (51% vs 36% for respondents who are business travelers) and mobile apps to provide on-trip notifications and alerts (45% vs 42% for respondents who are business travelers).

- UAE travelers would be more comfortable using biometric facial recognition technology at boarding gates (63%) and hotel check-ins (52%) than at airport duty free shops (41%) and conferences and events (33%).

- 31% of Gen Z would have their confidence to travel in the next 12 months increased by self-service check-in, but that rises to 44% for Gen X. **Only 5% of Gen Z agreed that no technology would increase their confidence to travel in the next 12 months compared to 3% of Gen X.**

Conclusion

Amadeus is committed to supporting the industry to restart and rebuild travel. It recognizes that digital health verification will be increasingly important to both increase traveler confidence and assist in opening up international borders.

While the appetite for digital health verification among travelers, governments and the industry is high, it also presents challenges to the industry that need to be addressed by multiple stakeholders. This is why Amadeus has developed the Safe Travel Ecosystem, a global program designed to help the industry overcome these challenges and accelerate recovery.

Digital health passports or certificates – whether to demonstrate health checks or vaccination status – need to be fully integrated into airline or airport systems to avoid creating customer pain points, or friction, along the journey. In addition, travelers need to know that their personal information is safe and secure, and that they are in control of how it is used.

This is why Amadeus has added new capabilities to Traveler ID, a secure platform for its travel provider customers, that connects, digitizes and automates traveler identification and document validation across the traveler journey, while meeting regulatory requirements. This platform connects the health certification touchpoints end-to-end, integrating multiple stakeholders involved in the process, providing a secure and frictionless way for passengers to show that they have the necessary health documentation. Privacy and security are central to the design of Traveler ID, ensuring that passengers choose when and where they want to provide digital evidence of their health status.

Importantly, for airlines and airports, this solution can be integrated directly into their own digital channels, removing operational complexity and facilitating a smooth traveler experience. Amadeus is also able to connect existing identity and health validation initiatives, such as CommonPass and ICC AOKpass, to accelerate global adoption, which is critical to unlock international travel in the coming months.

Beyond digital health data, the survey shows that there is an appetite for technology able to address the concerns of today's travelers, whether it is better access to information, ensuring social distancing or reducing physical contact.

One year on from the start of travel restrictions, technology deployment has accelerated across all parts of the sector, designed to foster increased confidence among travelers and help the industry to adapt. Amadeus continues to work in partnership with customers and partners to innovate and deploy technology that improves both the traveler experience and operational efficiency.

Notes to editor
*Statistic was obtained by combining 'Very willing' and 'Somewhat willing' responses
** Statistic was obtained by combining 'Much more likely' and 'Somewhat more likely' responses
*** Statistic was obtained by combining 'Strongly agree' and 'Somewhat agree' responses

For reference: Generation Z = 16–24 year olds; Millennials = 25–39 year olds; Generation X = 40–54 year olds; Baby Boomers = 55–74 year olds; 75+ Silent Generation