



**GREATER BOSTON
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

May 29, 2020

COVID-19 INDUSTRY UPDATE

Good Morning,

We hosted our second webinar yesterday and were pleased to welcome Fred Dixon and Elliott Ferguson, my counterparts from NYC & Company and Destination DC, to offer their perspectives. GBCVB Board Member Cindy Brown, CEO of Boston Duck Tours, moderated the panel and generated a robust and engaging conversation. You can find a recording of the [webinar here](#).

Much of the industry news from our three cities remains sobering, but our sincere hope is that our members saw the spirit of solidarity that defines this industry and the people and relationships that underpin it. Yes we have a healthy competition with New York and DC for visitor market share, but in a larger sense the East Coast camaraderie that you saw in the webinar is what matters most, and those collaborative conversations will drive recovery. Our next webinar will occur on Thursday, June 4 at 10am and focus on the future of virtual and hybrid meetings.

I've now participated in several calls with Governor Baker's reopening advisory committee and [Mayor Walsh's advisory panel](#) will hold its second call today. We are very pleased to be on both committees as it allows the Bureau to join in conversations at the state and city level and represent our members' interests in these conversations. As these meetings proceed and key developments emerge we will keep all partners updated.

Our friends at U.S. Travel are tracking several legislative proposals that would provide relief for our industry. All of their [legislative priorities](#) are important, but the most crucial for us at this juncture may be the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act and the Payment Protection Flexibility Act. Of particular interest for the Bureau, and our efforts on behalf of our member organizations, is a proposal to make DMOs and CVBs eligible for PPP funds. We are closely monitoring these negotiations happening at the federal level.

We continue to see [new trends in traveler sentiment](#) from surveys conducted by Destination Analysts. This week's presentation deck included an [interesting graphic](#) illustrating travelers' comfort levels around various trip components – which they feel okay and which make them feel relatively uneasy. We encourage our partners [to register](#) for Destination Analysts webinars. The next will occur on June 2 and include panelists from the attractions industry. We also want to [share the link](#) to a new webcast series from IC Summits which will launch next week and recur every Wednesday at 2pm. The first webcast is called “Staging a Marketing Comeback.”

Today we received April hotel data from Pinnacle Advisory Group and it's as devastating as you might expect. In April of 2019, Occupancy was nearly 88% and this translated to a RevPAR over \$250. In April of 2020, Occupancy for all properties (including those offline) was 5%. RevPar came in at \$6.44.

Of course, these YOY numbers reflect different realities. We had no meetings or conventions this April. We didn't see those pre and post stays from cruise passengers, or those overnights generated by playoff games at the Garden or early season baseball. April weddings were a wash. We didn't see that initial uptick in leisure visitation that occurs around Patriots' Day. We didn't host the Boston Marathon. And for the first time in its history, the Boston Marathon will not be run at all this year.

But we persist. Working with the teams assembled by Mayor Walsh and Governor Baker we will continue our work on your behalf and on behalf of this vital industry. Please join us for our next [virtual Open House](#) on June 3 where we will share a video that we've been working on for all those who want Boston to feel like home again. We'll get there and along the way we are here for you.

Martha

Martha J. Sheridan
President and CEO
Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau
Two Copley Place, Suite 105
Boston, MA 02116
msheridan@BostonUSA.com
Direct Line: (617) 867-8278
BostonUSA.com