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All right, Nancy good to go.

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Good morning everyone. I just like to welcome you to our webinar we're so happy to be with you today this is this is more meaningful than ever for us to be gathering.

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We'd like to welcome you to our newest NYC talk series international market updates, as we all know, this pandemic has stopped our industry for over a year with, with the momentum we have with our cases and hospitalizations decreasing and vaccination,

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increasing.

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We thought this was the perfect time to start up our engagement with you for these webinars, and we look forward to continuing them as we roll out our, our engagement in our various international markets are you know you are members.

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You are reopening the city is reopening our restrictions are easing.

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We know there's growing interest in New York City and growing activity from both domestic and international markets so we're really looking forward to resuming our international representation in the, in the near future.

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So this series of international market updates are really intended to provide you with the latest insights and tools you need updates and changes in the markets which are happening so quickly.

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So these will be meant to inform and make sure that you stay engaged and up to speed on what's happening directly from the market itself. We think this is the right time to start the series and having a UK and Ireland be our first market feels very appropriate

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and more markets will will come from here so thank you so much for joining us. We hope you find this useful. From here I'm going to pass it on to Reginald Charlot, my colleague who will take you through the run of show.

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Good morning. Thank you very much, Nancy. Good morning everyone.

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We as Nancy just said we are really really pleased to be able to share with you this new series.

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The idea for this series was actually born from our virtual sales mission, which is the UK, and sales mission, which is going to take place next week.

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But, of course, prior to our missions we normally have organized pre cons, and the pre cons for the members that are on the mission and basically outline the run of show and provide a market update prior to the start of the mission.

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But as we as we've seen much more activities and movements when the markets, and of course with the recent announcement between President Biden and Prime Minister boards Johnston regards to looking to ease the restrictions between travel between the US

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and UK.

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This is a perfect time to start up this international market update series, and it's an opportunity for you all to hear directly from the markets to support you in restarting your international market efforts, and as well as of course we all want to bring

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visitors back to New York City.

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Before we get started though I would like to just, just let you know the zoom platform is accessible by screen reader and captioning.

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So if you would like to turn. Your turn your closed captioning off, you can do so at the bottom of your screen. Now, next to the q amp a button you'll see live transcript.

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Once you click on that you'll be able to show or hide the captioning. Just wanted to know that. But of course, keep in mind that we will be providing a full transcript with this webinar, along with the recording in our follow up email, where you'll receive

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what you'll be receiving the next few days. Now, let's keep in mind also that the webinar will be live on the member section of the website. So if you're not, if you want to share this with colleagues in the future.

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But today I'm really really happy to be able to welcome the team from mgy hills Balfour based in London and Dublin, to provide the market updates for the UK and Ireland.

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First we have Amanda Hills Balfour president of MMGY Hills Balfour will start us off with the impact of covert and the current situation in the UK and Ireland, followed by updates from to Tryphavana Cross account director for Ireland presenting the Irish landscape.

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Rhys Powell Vice President and Vice associate presenting the UK travelled trade and mice landscapes.

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Caroline Moultrie Managing Director presenting the UK media landscape. Nick Evans, social and digital director, presenting the UK social media landscape.

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And finally, Amanda will have a one on one conversation with a wonderful Caroline Smith commercial manager at British Airways holidays.

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Now after Amanda and Caroline's one on one conversations, ends. I will ask for all of our presenters to come back on the screen for a 10 minute q amp a session.

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Please know during the webinar, feel free to use the q amp a function at the bottom of your screen to ask questions. If you have specific questions for one of our presenters, please indicate this when you write in your question.

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Now, without further delay, without further ado, I would like to welcome, Amanda hills Balfour

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lovely thank you so much Reginald what an absolute pleasure it is to be here.

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It's, it's just couldn't be a more special occasion.

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While we have been welcoming Mr Biden over here to our shores, and we know that price Johnson is is in discussion about that UK, US, Canada, that would be waiting with waiting with some time.

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So without further ado, I'd like to just really start talking about the market.

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So, just to really put everything into context I think what's important is, as we talk through today about the opportunity from the UK and Irish market.

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What we really want to say is our consumers going to have spend to spend on the holidays when when those borders open when those flights start taking place.

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So the answer is yes. Actually we've got 40 billion consumer cash reserves that is expected to be spent of the pandemic.

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One of the things that the government's have been incredibly good about in UK and Ireland is ensuring that we have a very strong furlough scheme in place, which has meant that people's jobs have been somewhat protected over a very difficult period.

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So obviously we're expecting some kind of hesitancy in some quarters in terms of concerns about employment. We're actually expecting really because the unemployment levels are going to be considerably lower than what we're first anticipated.

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We expect there's gonna be a real said, in terms of spending some of that cash reserves everyone's been reserving during lockdown.

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So, also I think what's very significant is on the next slide was seeing the 851,000 holidaymakers are also holding refund credit notes, which means that they were booked on those holidays.

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They weren't necessarily given a cash refund by the tour operator the airline, that they were given a credit note, and they need to spend that money spend that somewhere.

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really familiar with. And as we all know, nobody is more familiar than the British consumer traveling to New York City, so this is a massive moment for us. So just on to the next slide, I'm looking at consumer desires so we know that we've got the wherewithal

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we know we've got cash. But really, we've got the desire Well yeah, travel to the UK and I've been stronger we've actually had a particularly revolting spring weather is, you know, whether it does suggest that we really need to go to other places, 63%

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of UK travelers hope to travel overseas for summer holiday this year. And then also when we're looking at consumer buying behavior that's changing 52% of your travelers want to increase the length of the holiday plan for 2021 and beyond.

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And we've got lots of, lots of stats but essentially what it's saying is, the consumer market is really strong the pent up demand is is you know it is extraordinary for us to take international visits the vaccination program I think is really underpins,

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a lot of our travel plans. And that's the UK has been particularly good in terms of the vaccination program we're sure you've been you're aware of that we're now on 75% of all US adults in the UK are vaccinated, with the first vaccination and nearly 50%

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second, and that is, is really gaining momentum and an Ireland, as well as Japan is going to come and talk a little bit about, they're really doing well as well so you cannot and is really poised ready to travel to the US into New York in particular.

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and this is really just to say not to be sort of not not to not to dwell too much on this, but I know that there's been a lot of mentioned recently about the about the Delta, and the Indian

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issue of concern. And this is, and whether this is having an impact on on hotel admissions, they're not consistently following the vaccine is working.

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That's the message. So just going on to what the plan looks like and what the rollout looks like we're coming forward. When we look at the UK economic forecast of GDP growth is anticipated to be 6.8% in 2021, which was really significantly up.

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we were expecting to have a smaller growth, we're looking at, you know, it's all looking well the positive q2 2021 so UK economy, returning to its q4 20,019 levels, which is really three months earlier than previously forecast so we're looking for solid

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recovery, economically, and also we back soon as the rollout continues.

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The robot to recovery. I think one thing that the British government has been has been very insistent on is a really intense lockdown. And what we've seen is that what they have been stating is is really now coming into play.

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Though the happened delays on the travel, which I know we'll we'll discuss with with Carolina a little bit, but what we have seen is on the monsters of the schools which are open right the way through that being interested in the messaging, we're anticipating

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One thing that I think a lot of people have been asking about is a traffic light system, what does this mean for travel. So, we have a green and a red system relatively simple.

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The red system is is suggest a mandatory 14 day hotel quarantine. Returning to the UK so red tends to be a very, very sticky one for people coming in, and that certainly isn't everywhere, people are taking vacation.

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The Amber, which is currently where New York City, and USA sits means that if you actually do go on holiday which is not recommended by the government but people still do that when you return, you've got a five to 10 day quarantine.

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The five day quarantine means that you can actually do something called PCR test, and the test and release so it means that you can leave earlier, or you have to do a 10 day quarantine.

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But that is at home, and otherwise the green system the green is the light that we want to be to be flashing.

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Because that's no quarantine on return and again when we think this quarter is going to open up between the US imminently, that is where we anticipate New York will be sitting and that is the moment when bookings will start.

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I think was really significant to say is on the roadmap, as soon as we have a very good and positive announcement. we've seen the searches just soaring off the page as you'd imagine, and this is just an indication of where those searches go into the size

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of the searches, so we know when the announcement is going to happen, that we will start to see applicants increase.

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Thank you. So I'm going to pass over now to Germania who's going to talk a little bit about the Irish landscape.

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Thank you, Amanda and good morning everybody adulation to be here today, and presented to you with the Irish market and thank you for having us here today.

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And the Irish economy is expected to rebound in the second half of this year, as locked and restrictions ease and the vaccination rate takes effect with consumer spending expected to increase sharply.

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According to the US nation's economic forecast.

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Overall Arlen's economy is projected to grow by 4.6% in 2021 and 5% in 2022.

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According to the European Commission spring forecast.

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Ireland was the only country to register positive growth.

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And in 2020, this was largely due to a good performance by the multinationals and pharmaceutical industries,

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personal savings have also increased greatly in early during the pandemic to almost 16 billion.

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The positive effect of the savings is evidenced by feedback from the travel trade, which indicates that those who are booking trips to the US are purchasing a higher standard of accommodation and optional add ons than in the previous years, these positive

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indications, and are significant in that space should facilitate your recovery of traveling restrictions are lifted.

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Ireland is now in phase three of the roadmap for reopening society and business from the 19th of July subjects the prevailing public health situation are known to operate in the EU digital Kogut certificate, the GCC for travel origination within the EU

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and eta.

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The approach to travel outside the EU and eta applies to travel to and from the United States and Great question.

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I'll pass your connection race for the UK, be

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like a true Vanya.

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I'm going to now, talk to you very briefly about the travel trade landscape for the UK. Now, the Kovats crisis has affected the travel industry, as you all know, and you've all experienced about the role of the travel professional has never been more

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important in the postcode world.

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in the postcode world. So, before the coven crisis hits.

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The people were unsure people were thinking they were going to go and book direct a lot more. Now it seems, there was a lot more confidence and the need to book with a trusted travel professional.

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So as you can see from the stats here 20% people are more likely to use travel professional than ever before. And people are always looking for that better value package holiday.

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That is also secure, so they want to know that they can be protected should anything happen in the future.

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A quick look at some key points here. One of them is the how tour operators have adapted during the crisis.

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There's been a lot of changes within the key players and the key setters, the New York City. So there's been a lot of staff who've been placed on furloughs we've lost some great people.

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Sadly due to the redundancies that have been taken place. And there's the companies have taken it upon themselves to actually shift themselves to survive and grow from this process.

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So we're working closely with the tour operators and we're making sure that we're supporting them in every way possible. One thing we're finding is the 8020 rule.

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That's where we find that 20% of the staff are now doing the job of 80% that were there previously. So this is apparent when we're trying to get new product put in place, train some staff and basically work closely with the top writers, they don't have

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have as much time as they did before, to try to get things done so the more we can do to help them, the better that is so that's when you're working with the tour operators and you probably thinking you're not getting the reply in time, then please be

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mindful of this. It's because they are very very busy, so the more you can do to help them, the better. We have seen an increase in vote homeworkers during this time.

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So that has meant that we've had to adapt the way we work. So rather than the big Consortium's having call centers all the time, we find that people are now working from home, and they like to build their own database of the consumers that they that trust

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them. So like a concierge service. So we need to be. We need to be more adaptable, when we're trying to communicate with them, and we're looking at new ways to do that which I'll go into in a second.

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We also seen a big rebooking and cancellations because of the changing announcements that people be made which takes a lot of the time for these tour operators.

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Now one thing you can do to make it easier for them is to honor any rates that you have for the next year wherever possible, because it's easier for them to to move one of their customers over to a new date, if it's exactly the same like for like, otherwise

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you risk them taking a refund or go into a competitor instead.

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And also, just to finish on this there's the coiled spring effects for the travel industry as well. Now we know that there's a demand for the consumers wanted to come back and have fun and the same thing is for the travel professionals, they want to get

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back to going out and meeting with you all and having a drink and having a good time, and also getting the deals done. So there is pent up demand, and everybody wants to come out the other side, much stronger.

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Now one new areas, trade social communities. So how we've adapted on communicating with the travel trade is by using platforms such as tableau, which is my tableau.com.

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This is a brand new system that's a take the best parts of LinkedIn and Facebook and it creates a community where you can connect with travel professionals, all around the world.

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So, New York City at MIT and company have a page here and this is where we're going to be running some of our events next week during the sales mission, but we highly recommend that you will check out this platform, and then sign and register, it's free

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for you to do so. And it's great for you to be able to connect with the travel industry professionals, I'll share the link afterwards as well with you.

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Now I'm also going to touch briefly on the UK mice landscape here.

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Now there's, there's a survey by North Star pulse which showed that there is a confidence which is slowly returning for live and hybrid events, because virtual is still very prevalent at the moment, but we people are missing that live experience that

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connection that they make from having live events. So, the staff of the pandemic. People are unsure, where life will be it there's definitely a place to live and hybrid in the future.

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And that's shown by some of these stats here, 76%, expect are going to organize an event, a live event in 2021. And though. That's a really positive step and then we've also seen new bookings for live events going up by 26% which is up from the 11% in

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February.

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In February, and we're not trying to teach you how to do things which you already know we understand you know how to communicate with the most trade but we know about the safety protocols and value and pricing, but something that we noticed a lot more

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is the need to look at the environmental and sustainable messages, because everybody's been more conscientious because since the pandemic began, they want to make sure they're more environmentally sound.

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so if you can get to those messages in to communications as well, it really would help.

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Now I'm just going to move on to Caroline who's going to talk about the media landscape.

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Thanks very much Reese Good morning everybody and yes the media landscapes really dramatically changed since the pandemic and. And really we just wanted to pull out some of the key changes that are most relevant to New York.

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So first the first slide really declining print circulations and digital growth. So print considerably suffered in the past year and whilst none of the travel sections pause, so much pagination was reduced across the board to one or two pages and they

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were incorporated into the main pages of those publications and magazine speculation also fell by about 6.6% year on year in 2020 and certainly glossy consumer publications including the Sunday Times travel magazine and Lonely Planet they all folded sadly.

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And so it's it's a bit too early to call the death of print but certainly as we find our new normal. The great news is that some standalone application.

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So back in and and pagination is increasing in those slowly but surely, however it's a different story for digital, and according to panko which is the publishers audience measurement company and the industry is really continuing to see a rise in the

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digital news readership of about 3.7 million year on year to do to cope with 19 which is exceptional performance and additionally the telegraph digital subscriber number is rapidly growing the rise from about 140,000, to 562,000, subscribers in the year

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and in December 2020 which is 33% increase in fact, we were talking to the team the other day, and they had a goal of delivering 10 million registered users and 1 million subscribers by 2023 but by March in 2021 they'd already hit that 600,000 subscribers

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milestone already.

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So, it's also been interesting for publishing houses like Conde Nast actually who seems to be adopting a sort of digital first approach and consolidating teams and publications so their contents now grounding into this sort of shared shared approach to

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content across all the titles so something they've not previously done as each brand was individual but they're now looking at that sharing that content across all of those titles guiltily times or something we're going to see even more often there's

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Shortly times or something we're going to see even more often there's a real greater need for flexibility and agility. So as editors respond to the evolving government guidelines and green lists and profit light systems editorial deadlines to change the

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stories, often evolve or change completely right at last moment so it's really important for us to think that through and be really flexible. When it comes to story angles and providing information whether that's a quote or details on hotels or museums,

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but, providing that really swiftly imagery is going to be incredible so editors are really demanding strong imagery that makes absolutely the case for whatever we're trying to talk about so striking visuals are important, and almost as more important

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than the copy themselves so really let's think that through and we're, we're talking to the editors travel essays, this is something that we're likely to see more of in terms of personal travel features in sa form this trend started around about mid last

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year by ft weekend and Vanity Fair and coven 19 really made us reconsider why we travel and have seen loads of an attitudinal changes towards travel to features that really get under the skin of a destination aiming to reconnect the reader with the local

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and look at how the journey changed the writer is going to be reading more important costs were on the rise pre Kogut 19 but there's been a boon during it, this, this year according to Forbes, and estimated hundred million people listen to a podcast every

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month in 2020 so was we were going out on our walks around our parks, people were listening to podcasts in their cars working at home, but also you know just being together as you're walking into learning and evolving and that sense of connectedness and

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So there's a number of key media trains on a real macro level but we just picked out a few that are really sort of focused on on New York so so I'm just going to focus on three because in the interest of time but but the first one being a community lead

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tourism and, and the reason really NYC is so special is because of New Yorkers. the creative curious, interesting interested, inspiring and most of all, resilient, and we've been reminded of these qualities in the past year.

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So this trend is really perfect for the cities that really leads into the all in NYC campaign and a great opportunity to showcase the diversity and breadth of experience across all five boroughs, putting the spotlight on New Yorkers.

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That makes in my city, NYC that the greatest city in the world.

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The second one I just want to touch on is is culture vultures so we all know that Arts and Culture The soul of any city, and here's where NYC shines being the home of some of the best museums and galleries and culture performances that the world has to

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to offer. So after a year of Netflix and Amazon Prime diets travelers are eager to return to Broadway. And while a while away afternoons in museums and galleries and we're so desperate for that cultural stimulation again and final one for me is is on

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hold happy memories and people want to feel reassured comforted and and really familiar with the experience. And there's such a certain comfort and familiarity with New York.

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And as we all have certain memories of New York when we be in or even if we haven't been thinking about the view from the Empire State Building to walking along Brooklyn Bridge and running in Central Park and a young keys game.

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But, but even if we've never really been to the city we've always had positive images of New York embedded in the in our minds through films and our childhood. So returning to much loves destinations that travelers can only reminisce with but also create new moments with family and friends

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new moments with family and friends is going to be ever more important. So, yeah, the final one really is the roaring 20s which is which is a fascinating one for us here in the UK and Ireland it's it first surface last year, but it's Mars gathering pace

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and and the British media have have sort of label the summer of 2020 is a summer fun, and after a year of almost collective global lockdown people are so desperate to have fun.

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Feel carefree and enjoy life again. And so cities are the perfect playground for this so many distractions from restaurants and bars and galleries and museums, you name a better playground in the New York City.

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Anyway, so in the interest of time, I hope that gives you a flavor of what's going on in the media landscape from the UK and Ireland, and I'm going to hand over to Nick to take you through the social landscape,

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everyone. Such a pleasure to be with you all today thank you so much for having us.

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I think it's safe to say like a lot of the world, and time spent in lockdown is only sort of catalyzed an accelerated Digital Trends and mass digitization that was, that was already very much on the way but there's been a huge acceleration in terms of

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social audiences. And here in the UK and across all into we are huge social adopters, we have a social penetration rates of about 80% so 80% of our population, our regular social media users.

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And if we compare that to the global average which is around 50%. As you can see we do love to consume content on platforms across mobile devices and everything too.

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And I think what's really important when thinking about lockdown is that has essentially as you can imagine, made more people spend more time online, more people spending time on devices.

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We've seen a 45% increase in the amount of time, people are spending on social 23% of people say they're spending significantly more time on their devices.

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And I think what's interesting too is with people not being able to have this sort of in person social escape. We've actually seen some of the older generations over 65 market, originally quite hard to target on social platforms, join in the social revolution

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as a word to make sure they can communicate with everyone, which has been fantastic and I think when we look at the amount of time certainly here in the UK that we've been in lockdown in that situation.

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That's enough time for habits to form which means even coming out into this wonderful new normal that we're in.

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We will still see people spending significantly more time on line, and obviously lots of time in line. Lots of people on social we have a very cluttered.

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Social ecosystem if I'm completely honest, I'm a huge visual man So this slide here, honestly. It depicts, how many feet of content, the average consumer is going through scroll through about 300 feet of content every single day on social platforms and

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so just in the spirit of hyper local content and speaking to you guys in New York for us here in London that's roughly the size of Big Ben. And then for you guys the size of the Statue of Liberty.

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So absolutely fundamental and important for us to be focusing on storytelling cut through etc. to make sure we get our message heard, and ever gone to the next slide.

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Another piece of information I think is hugely important in the UK is, we are a market with huge mobile coverage. And so I know that doesn't tend to sound too important terms of social but we have a 98% coverage of 3g here in the UK and across Ireland

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to, which means we are a fantastic market to basically adopt new technologies, we can download rich media pretty much wherever we are in the country. So the way we communicate in our media Cody is a very rich media college at the moment.

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So with the inventive AR filters and the light new platforms, very easy for us to adopt not just at home but even as we get out of our homes across the board as well.

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And so, if you know for example the likes of Tick Tock etc made huge impact here. And all of those devices that are allowed within that, so be that everything can sort of pop household Do as I say filters on ticked off, she engages here because we have

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potential to do that and no matter where we are in country. And obviously, if we move on to the next slide one of the biggest question the industry here is asking is, we've seen huge development in terms of the way we can communicate on social platforms.

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One of the biggest issues we have is obviously whether the way we measure success has evolved a similar rates and so one of the bigger debates is happening here.

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One of the biggest changes will predict and sort of looking over the course of the next year is a slight refresh on how we measure ROI on the next slide, and pretty much in summary, ultimately, there is a real recognition, no doubt across, you know your

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marketing teams as well there.

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And so often we we sort of see engagement and follower numbers as the the core result, the best measure of social but ultimately, we need to refocus now on looking at return on investment as a way to measure social impact with engagement being a tool

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to do that, as opposed to the goal itself. And a final sort of picture in here I think that's probably something that sits across the US to on the next slide, we'll see.

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Obviously campaigns have been hugely empathetic social has been on the forefront of constantly changing messaging and its ability to allow us to have peer to peer conversations has been fundamental over the course of the last year with, you know, constantly

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updating news etc. and the desire to sort of have one on one conversations with the consumer. And I think one of the biggest trends will see over the course of the next year is bringing in more empathy to campaigns, when we've got so much content out

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there when we're scrolling through so much content. It is absolutely vital that empathy and understanding the needs to have a consumer sits alongside of understanding of the product marketing, as well as the technology platforms with marketing on as well.

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well. So that's just a really quick update on the social landscape here in UK and Ireland, and I'm passing on to a one on one with Caroline Smith.

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Hi.

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Thanks very much. We got Caroline, I yeah I'm here.

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Oh lovely.

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Sorry about that so that this is going to be a one on one with Caroline and myself actually not as Caroline, just not not to say that the camera is going to be by myself.

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There we go. I'm Caroline thank you so much for joining us today. Honestly we couldn't be more delighted. We really appreciate that. It's such a busy time with all the news the imminent us coming.

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So we so appreciate you taking time out VA has been such an amazing partner of the airline and the holidays of New York City for so long.

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So, thank you for joining us and really looking forward to asking you a few questions and getting some insight. So, just to kick off really could Could we talk a little bit about how the lockdown has affected the operations at ba and perhaps we can just

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look at both ba, ba holidays. And what that's done in terms of consumer demand consumer resilience and, and how do they feel about ba I know you've handled things in an incredibly brilliant way and we just love you to share that with the group today.

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Thanks Amanda and festival everybody and thank you so much for having me today it's it's wonderful to be here with you all and talk about moving forward in this market so so thank you for having me.

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And, yeah, I mean, let's talk about how to fix your operations as an airline, and as you can imagine it's been significantly tested, and we've had to get really used to reacting at short notice.

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As you know, constantly changing travel restrictions. So, our flight schedules been under constant review.

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In order to support our customers and optimum optimize opportunities to fly so I think the you know the positive that I take from that is, you know, British Airways has been known in the past to be quite slow moving.

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Whereas I think it's fair to say we've become a lot more agile with our flight schedule which which is wonderful.

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I guess the other key operational changes in the implementation of all the new safety measures to protect customers and colleagues, and you know increase sanitization changes to catering, but we're really pleased at British Airways that our high standards

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have been recognized by Skytrax who've awarded be a four stars for COPD safety. So some of the things that we've worked hard on it it's great to see them recognized and.

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In a similar vein from a holiday standpoint, we really focused this last year on the customer.

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And we responded really quickly, and putting measures in place last year to make sure and following through sadly into this year as well, but to make sure we refunding our customers as quickly as possible.

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And we've also launched our customer promise, we got that out in the market very quickly to outline a range of a flexible booking options as well as our safety initiatives.

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And again, we're really pleased that these efforts have been recognized both with the media, our customers have responded positively.

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We've been identified by external surveys of, you know, how fantastically we've handled it, and also being cited as having strong flexible working policies for future travel so, yeah, we're confident that, you know, it was the right thing to do to really

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focus on our customers but, but we also think it's really helped build consideration and loyalty in our brand as well. Yeah, yeah sure it's been extraordinary that brand loyalty that you that you commanded which is going to be very important for everybody

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for all our members in New York. And can you just remind us what was your capacity to New York, pre Kobe, and what do you think that's going to look like coming out code when do you think it's going to sort of start to ramp up.

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Yeah, I mean, so, prior to David we were operating 12 daily flights to New York, from three London airport. I think we're currently at one a day at the moment so we've got a long way to go.

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I mean it's impossible at the moment to say when we can return to those levels again I think you know the key messages that we are very keen to return to those levels.

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New York is obviously one of our most important routes on the network.

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We know there's huge demand for connectivity between our cities so it will happen, but but when is still on no yeah.

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Yeah.

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So, can we just touch us for a few minutes on the back seat and the health foods, because we've been reading about the way which there was a pioneer and leading the way in terms of trials of health pulses.

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And can you tell us a little bit about that. The the training that you're going to do, of the IR to travel costs, and also perhaps you could touch on the way that you have been looking at how you can make the make the testing a little bit more affordable

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for consumers, which is obviously going to have a full impact on holiday prices. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, we are absolutely committed to finding ways to try and make that customer journey as frictionless as possible for customers.

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We know that digital travel passes are part of that solution so yeah we're trialing. We've got a couple of passes that were trialing the IR to travel pass.

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So it's a mobile app that helps travelers store and manage their certifications and in the future, and their vaccination status as well so we're trying that on a couple of European roots, the moment.

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And we're also trialing. The digital travel up there a fly on certain routes as well. So, you know, we really believe that we needed it. Agreed. International framework and infrastructure to reassure customers and provide that seamless travel experience

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so we're working really hard, you know, developing apps, working with governments and countries around the world to try and reduce that friction for customers and, and as you said Amanda we really are continuing to champion affordable testing negotiating

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prizes from testing providers and, you know, we have all this information on ba.com so we're really trying to, as I say, make it as straightforward as possible for our customers despite the complexity that I think it is a parent at the moment.

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Yeah, definitely. I'm really, you know, congratulations to you for doing so well in that regard I know we've seen some great coverage for be a prominent.

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What do you think of this some of the challenges that we're going to be facing you know we confusion over testing the passports and how can we as an industry, help facilitate that you think there's anything we can be doing can we be sharing information

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on websites and and talking to travel agents etc about it.

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Yeah, I think, you know, we're working on some different solutions at the moment because as you say, I think, you know, it is a very confusing area for the consumer and it's even hard for us to do it because, you know, as soon as we think, you know, we

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understand what we need to communicate it changes again.

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But absolutely, you know, we're at the forefront of that and we want to work you know as you know we're on the travel task force that is created by the government and we're really wanting to engage in that as much as possible, so that we can clearly communicate

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to customers as much as we can, what needs to be done. Ya know it's been fantastic we saw the press release this week where you know your CEO came out and, you know, with that statement to let's get back corner working so we've already we're already ready

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for that.

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This is the first time I'm sorry, it was the you know for the first time we saw CEOs from, you know, the largest airlines across the US and the UK come together and you know to call for the reopening of that coverage or so.

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Yeah, I think we believe that we really have an opportunity to lead the way with that you know are. We both got such successful vaccination programs and I think you know we want to benefit from the success and should leave the world further in setting

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up that safe transatlantic corridor. Yeah, no, no, absolutely. Um, can we just talk a little bit about bookings, and, you know, with our research suggesting that there is a massive surge in bookings and flight searches.

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Are you seeing this and and what does that look like, and what does that look like in terms of trends, is it going to be this year is it going to be, you know, next year when do we think, when do you see the bookings happening.

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Yeah, I mean what we are seeing the same I mean we've seen throughout the last year if I'm honest we've seen huge surge in bookings every time a border opens or government restrictions lifted we see a normal spikes in demand and bookings and I think,

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you know, we've been fortunate in a way that we are you know a global airline, so that when one country becomes accessible, you know, we can put capacity on there and and really optimize that opportunity.

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But yeah, as you say that the demand spikes have been huge. And I think that that gives us. I mean, it gives us real confidence that in the speedy Return of the UK leisure customer.

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We know there's huge pent up demand and, you know, as we said earlier, I think we're really well placed to, to help customers get that holiday that they so desperately want but in terms of when people are booking.

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I think since the last government announcement.

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Two weeks ago nearly, our lakes business for the summer has taken a bit of a hit. But our bookings for further into 2021 so quarter for and into 20 to remain really strong.

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And we've actually seen bookings for longer lead times hold up throughout the last year. And so, you know, our forward business actually looks quite positive.

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And we know that when restrictions lifted we see those surgeries in late so we remain hopeful for the summer.

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But yes, it's certainly a challenge at the moment. Yeah.

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Um, can we touch a little bit about on product and compared to pre Kobe, and you seen any particular interest in the UK consumer in any regions and, you know, are we are we going to see interested cities, is that being reflected in your bookings and what

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you feel the consumer go along.

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Yeah, we've seen our beach program hold up better than our cities program across the board, actually. New York's actually maybe a slight exception to that obviously in our cities program or Europe cities programs been been hit hard, and our bookings to

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Our bookings to the Caribbean the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. I would say have been really strong. And we've seen some real positive, you know, real positive trends in those destinations, or Europe each program really does hinge on on this summer,

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to be honest. So yeah, six cities have been a struggle.

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I would say the other thing that we're seeing less off or we have seen less of this this last year is more complex touring multicenter holidays. I mean we're thinking it's down to the complexity and people not wanting to cancel multiple elements and rebook

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them, but we've definitely seen seen a slow down there for the US, and it's the big hitters the big destinations that continue to do well for us so Florida is really strong continues to be strong and then New York in Vegas are also strong for us so I

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think that the city's program will recover slower, on the whole, but equally i i do think New York stands on its own a little bit there. And it you know it's very new, unique and the Brits have such an affinity for it that and looking at what we can see

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on the books I feel a lot more positive about our new york business. That's lovely to hear, and we agree with that completely within that we all love New York as well.

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What in terms of space and just having a look a little bit, and perhaps the challenge for the role of the travel trade and how important that is for you, what what do you what do you think that clients are going to be looking for in terms of what their

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concerns are, what the focus is on from safety perspective. And how do you think you the travel trade can help facilitate that. And what can I do to support you on that.

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Yeah, so we we quickly introduced a new safety measures, and both on board and with our partners so we have updated our requirements to include the implementation of procedures in response to covert 19 which is in line with the World Health Organization

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guidelines, so we we are clearly communicating this to customers are all possible opportunities on our website to really make sure that customers are clear on the links that ourselves and our partners have gone to, you know, to look after them safety.

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I think, I think, you know, the New York being, you know, the US and Europe particularly doing so well with their vaccination program, and also with the leading healthcare provision that you guys have as well i think that that will give customers that

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the confidence to travel to New York I think we do have a bit of a challenge in terms of.

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In the early days of the pandemic that there was some negative press.

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You know, particularly in relation to that the streets of New York and you know I think we've got a bit of work to do actually to work closely with you guys.

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You know to get that message back out there to the UK consumers that New York is back and it's safe and it's the place to go again. Yeah, they're lovely that's that's that's really helpful.

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And then just just on the flight corridor I know this is just such hot news and because the tassels have been created and I know you're playing such a big role.

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The London to New York City is in amazing valuable bilateral card or your bow. And we're hearing strong signals even this morning, the pressure from the education sector and the time you might find in the UK, you know, energy seven summit is, is, you

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know, in, is there anything you can share with us. Any, any kind of news that you'd like. Honestly, I really wish you know I really wish I knew no sadly I you know I did offer earlier on this morning to drive down to Cornwall and sit in the sunshine with

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them.

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But no, we don't have any news we are, we are really hopeful. Yeah, brilliant That's great to hear it's great it's great to hear that you're hopeful from your end because I know that you're, you're going to be pushing, New York, so much.

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We really want to thank you and Carolyn Can I just say this is a very personal question. I know you love New York personally I know that that we've had.

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We've had many a wonderful time together in New York. And so what do you what do you miss the most, where are you looking forward to going back to that old you know it's funny and only when I was listening to Caroline talk about you know nostalgia, you

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sort of powering a lot of these trips I so agree with that you know as you know I love New York and I miss it. I miss just posturing around the streets if I'm honest you know there's such a buzz and a by but if when I was working just, you know, walking

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around the streets I I miss it so much so I can't wait to get back. Yeah. Lovely. That's great. That's great. Well thank you so much and thank you for your continued support honestly, It's amazing.

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And I know that everybody on speaker will have everybody here. Thank you. Thank you for everything you're doing is British Airways holidays and British Airways, we so appreciate it.

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We appreciate it. And thank you to the joining us on the call at such a busy time looking very soon.

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So, thank you, thank.

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Well thank you very much, Amanda and Carolyn that was really really informative and absolutely useful for our members to hear this so what's happening in the UK what ba is doing particularly in regards to their initiatives, launching their initiatives

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and looking at the, the UK, US corridor and how that will impact business and I think it's just all positive and very good news. But of course, thank you for that but of course I would like to ask all of our presenters, if you could come back on.

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Because we're going to go into the q amp a right now and get questions from our members.

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Right, so everybody is there great great great, so I know, I know that.

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I know New Yorkers aren't shy so I'm expecting more questions then seeing So, before we go into that I just wanted to ask a quick question in regards to the UK market.

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Are we seeing any particular trends any new trends we're seeing in the UK and Ireland in regards to travel, whether it be family or whatever have you are those trends do the things are what's happening.

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Um, I'll just pick this one up yes we're seeing the trends, looking towards family travel and reconnecting with loved ones. There's been a few surveys that have come back in, showing that during the lockdown period where families were spending time together.

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Not all of it. Great, trying to do homeschooling and trying to battle all your work as well as trying to get your family commitments done, but what it has shown is people do need that break together to reconnect as a family.

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And they, there was an emphasis and then increase a percentage of the people that are saying that they want to have more multigenerational holidays because they have missed that connection with the ones they love.

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So you always miss what you can't have them too so it's. So we have seen an increase in that so the family travel sector is going to become more important we're seeing, so that we can get that family message out in New York City and what has to offer

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that would be quite a fantastic. I think also read another one of the other trends and then you know perhaps Caroline you could give us a little bit of insight, you know, as well.

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Um, one of the things we're seeing is that people are looking forward to slow travel, so they may be traveling a little bit less sustainability is huge and very important area for the British Irish consumer and also from European consumer as an owner

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the for everyone but I think we're anticipating more people will go for longer. And I think as New York that's a massive opportunity for us. We are the gateway city we want to make sure that people are coming and staying longer and looking at all the five boroughs also using us as

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using us as the launch pad into the US and coming to the US if they haven't been necessarily thinking about before. So we're looking forward to that we think slow travel is going to be it's going to be a great one.

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And also, perhaps, you know, relevant for the members we are looking, because people because there's pent up demand, people are going to be traveling and also even able to work from home a little bit more work remotely, the anticipated that we're going

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to see a longer season so that flattening and seasonality that we've seen before, which is so critical to how we, you know, occupied hotels in New York because international visitors.

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We think that's going to be flattening out so there'll be opportunities as well for us to really focus on those areas. So I don't want to, Caroline Caroline that so you got anything to add to that.

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Okay, first is the first Caroline yeah No, I was just I was just, I just add to that, and really around is slow travel, and this sort of feeling of of purposeful travel actually and really getting to know the destination and not only just spending two

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three days there but actually you know almost, you know, starting in one place and then ending up in another and spending longer periods of time and there's this real trend that we're definitely seeing about people really thinking through you know the

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different dynamics and putting a lot of time because they have time on their side to into that itinerary so as much as they can do and as much as they can in experience within that destination, as well and and this sort of feeling that bucket lists and

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hour out and living list so now in. So, how do you take what you've learned over the lockdown and how do you bring that into a holiday and continue with sort of the wellness feeling or the outdoor feeling that you had in the lockdown and kind of start

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living it you know with with your, your holidays and your brakes at the same time is kind of experiencing What's there to be to be had.

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And not just to continue on that one to make further the is that authentic experience that's that's inclusive. So if the diversity, equity and inclusion, which is not just being shown by the consumers but also in the my sector so the buyers are looking

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for more D and I.

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And when they are looking at their inquiries for their RFP, so it's always important to make sure we're putting that front and center, so people understand.

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Yeah, and also just carry on if that's okay i think you know in our data we are seeing people staying longer. Absolutely. You know, for 2021 2222 holidays.

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You know we're booking a lot more six seven iterations to New York than we've ever seen which is wonderful. We know you know the Brits tend to stay longer.

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Anyway, have a higher average length of stay but yeah we're actually seeing people upgrade their holiday at all levels, whether that's you know in the air on the ground in terms of their room selection their hotel choice i think you know people are still

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looking for value, but you know that they're absolutely looking at you know as you guys have said for that real experience on the holiday. Now, but that's probably that's actually kind of ties into, which is, which is great responses and that kind of

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ties into a few questions that we had just received from some of our members.

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The majority of questions were regards to sentiment about traveling to the US, And you know with negative news coverage.

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Will that you know with increased crime etc etc political, social issues is that impacting will that impact British travelers from coming to New York.

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You know, what's the sentiment on that in regards to on the UK market and then I guess I'm just for ba.

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Okay, so should we kick off with, do you want to kick off with the first john.

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Come on.

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In terms of the sentiment. Yeah, I mean, yes I think the question is do you see a concern or change in sentiment about traveling to the US on the coverage unrelated to code infections.

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I mean I think what's wonderful about about the British generally, is that we have very short memories with these things.

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So, genuinely you know people we know we're so resilient. And I think everybody knows that about about the British traveler, that we do have short memories, it for me it was just something that came to mind as something that we need to talk about in the

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market, you know and and really, really instill that confidence in people love Yeah, I would just, I would just build on that and say you know certainly we're talking now and as Caroline says you know we've got we've got short, short memories so so but

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but the you know the general trend in the UK publications and Irish publications is very little sort of inspirational coverage on the US generally. So I think, you know, the moment that there was, you know, a change in tempo with with leadership, and

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also, you know, the thought that actually the US can can start to open up again for us, we're back here and you know so they are hungry they're really hungry for stories they're hungry for positive connections with communities and in fact, you know what's

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great about it is they really want to hear about you know the different sort of districts the different kinds of people behind the businesses in New York so so that that's what we're seeing any way certainly this sort of, you know, almost a bit of a low

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to this huge injection of excitement and now you know everybody is is positively looking to travel whenever they can, that's that's that's fantastic yeah i think i think there is that that element of positivity.

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You know, you know things things things happen things have been happening to us, you know, we can't control that but obviously you know we want to be able to control what we see in here in New York City and I think York City is inspirational.

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Still, is special for a lot of people for a lot of visitors. And I think that is really what people are going to be excited more about is about coming back to New York City, seeing what the web is new in New York City and all the new things that they

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can do and see when they come to visit again.

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There's another question in regards to Kogut so they're asking the question, are there any covert procedures, regarding vaccine tests masks, etc. that visitors will be looking for when selecting activities.

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Well, and I think it's all on the VA website isn't it.

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Alright, maybe a demon in terms of selecting activities when they're in New York. Yes. Yeah, I'd like to attractions or museums or, you know, yeah I think people have become to expect that as the norm, to be honest and it's it's become part of, you know,

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our everyday life, you know whether whether we're here or whether we're in the US.

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the moment, aren't they well they certainly they are in this country so yeah I don't think anybody would, you know some people may have their own preferences and it's quite a personal thing I would say.

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There was a study.

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Last month, by Expedia who did a study, and the one of the questions was do would you expect and how high the portal is there's cleanliness and the safety.

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Now, figure, where is that number used to be around 80%, but now it's 97% on average for for the UK, and also for a lot of European countries. So, it is important to everybody but it's not the thing they dwell on, they just want to know what procedures

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are there so they can apply to them.

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I think to your point Reese if I'm able to build on that, I think, you know, we shouldn't underestimate that whilst you know people expect it, actually, it's become, you know mandatory that people understand it.

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So I think, you know, almost doubling down on being really clear about you know safety procedures cleanliness procedures and hotels and it is really important in their, in their decision making process.

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So I think in terms of messaging and communication of clearer we can be with with that and those procedures and those high standards, the better it will be for consumers to feel competent to book.

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But that is that is very I think that's really important is that is the messaging, so that people do feel comfortable and feel more comfortable when they do poker chips New York, New York City.

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There was a there was another question on regards to.

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Interesting question they're asking the question of how does the US move from amber to green for travel quarantine tests requirements upon return.

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So that will be something which the government's will turn. And that is something that we're really hoping is going to be a decision. Any day now and it's really about the government's between the two of them analyzing and working out the data.

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So what they said what our government said all along is, it's about data, not dates, so they can't specify when that data is going to be but we think it's imminent.

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And to be honest, it's really down to its the scientists will determine it Phil, Phil, Phil determine whether or not they think it's right to be on green or Amber.

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We're hoping that once it's on green, it will not then change to Amber, because obviously that shot that causes a lot of uncertainty in the market.

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And, yeah, so it's it's sort of really out of our control it's it's it's for government.

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Amanda if I could add Sorry, no kidding but, um, yeah i was reading an article the other day and it said that there was three. There were three real variants in terms of red and green and it's all based on three things I've just written down was the number

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of cases in in the destination so the number of cases in New York, would be the first thing. The second thing is how, how, how good or how effective has been the vaccination program so what is your percentage in terms of that herd immunity let's say and

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the vaccination program take up. And then the third one is variants because obviously we've got this additional confusion of variants so if all like Amanda says if all three of those are working well then that will take you from amber into green it according

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to the research.

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That's great. Well actually I don't want to rush anybody ever we have time for one more question but we have to go. It's basically asking I think this is more for ba holidays.

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They're saying that they're you're seeing a lot of trouble coming back in the fourth quarter, but they were asking the question if you were seeing a lot of holiday bookings, as opposed to fall bookings.

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Yeah, I mean absolutely we've got a huge number of holiday bookings on the books, we still have a huge number of holiday bookings on the books for this summer that we're hopeful.

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And those those holidaymakers will be able to take their trips but yeah I mean looking ahead into quarter four and into 2022 as well as businesses, positive versus 2019, and at the same time last year so so yeah we are really we are really positive.

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That's fantastic big thank you thank you very much for that Caroline. And I love that positive ending, which is perfect because I just need to we need to wrap this up because I know you need to get back to things out of the holidays and I know that you

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know all of our New Yorkers we need to get back to work. So on behalf of my colleagues, I'd like to thank you all for joining us today. I hope that you found the webinar very useful.

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I would also like to thank our presenters, Amanda to find your Reese Caroline Nick, and the rest of the mgy but hills about 14 and a special thank you to Caroline Smith from ba holidays.

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And of course I would like to thank my father I would like to thank the NYC company team for helping to put this first webinar of a series together, especially I like to thank Nancy Susan Prescott and Michelle.