3 in 4 UK SMEs now extending business trips for leisure time, new research reveals

Saturday 25 October, 2025

Related Sectors:

Business & Finance ::

Scan Me:

‘Bleisure’ boom: 3 in 4 UK SMEs now extending business trips for leisure time, new research reveals

UK SMEs are embracing the rise of ‘bleisure’ travel, with more employees than ever extending business trips for leisure time, signalling a shift in how companies are approaching travel and employee wellbeing.

New research from Travel Counsellors for Business, based on a survey of 1,000 UK SMEs, shows that 76% of respondents now typically extend overseas business trips for leisure or personal time - a sharp increase from 48% in 2024. Of those who do, 57% extend by 1–2 days and 32% by 3–4 days, underscoring a growing appetite for balance and wellbeing alongside business productivity.

The trend also extends to family travel: 58% of SME travellers now say they would bring a partner or family member on an overseas business trip, compared to 42% last year, reflecting a shift towards a more holistic view of business travel that prioritises personal time.

96% of SME travellers report that they enjoy travelling overseas for business, with only 4% saying they never enjoy it, suggesting that business travel is increasingly seen as a valued and rewarding experience rather than a professional burden.

Notably, one in five SMEs (20%) now actively encourage employees to extend business trips for leisure purposes. Other wellbeing measures include reducing indirect flights (20%) and minimising travel outside working hours (18%). Together, these initiatives point to a broader shift toward more sustainable and people-focused business travel policies.

Melanie Quinn, Director, Travel Counsellors for Business, said: *“The move to actively build leisure time into business trips reflects a fundamental shift in how SMEs value corporate travel. Travelling for work is no longer just about productivity and profit, it’s also about people. Whether it’s taking time to relax and recharge after meetings, exploring new cultures, or spending extra days abroad with family, businesses are increasingly recognising that supporting employee wellbeing delivers long-term benefits for engagement, retention and performance, far beyond the bottom line.”*

“At Travel Counsellors for Business, our ‘high-tech, high-touch’ approach means we can tailor travel experiences that truly recognise that travellers are people with individual and personal preferences. From flexible itineraries to online support platforms that enable our clients to show care for their travellers wherever they are in the world, and a human travel expert always on hand to support their trip, we empower people to make corporate travel both effective and enjoyable.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

The research was conducted by Censuswide, among a sample of 1,000 UK SMEs who book business travel trips abroad (nat rep 18+), excluding the UK. The data was collected between 28.08.2025 – 03.09.2025. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society and follows the MRS code of conduct and ESOMAR principles. Censuswide is also a member of the British Polling Council.

Media Enquiries

Hudson Sandler

travelcounsellors@hudsonsandler.com

About Travel Counsellors

Vitruvian Partners-backed Travel Counsellors is the UK’s largest and fast-growing technology platform for travel entrepreneurs that connects over 2,100 independent business owners, ultimately enabling them to deliver exceptional levels of customer service. In the six months ended 30th April 2025, sales on the

platform reached £566m, up by 10% against the same period the previous year.

Travel Counsellors operates across six countries (UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, South Africa, and the UAE) and employs 300 people in its UK headquarters and overseas offices. The Company provides a high touch, digitally enabled platform, that enables and empowers travel counsellors, who are travel entrepreneurs and small business owners, to harness innovative and constantly evolving tools and technology to build their businesses in a way that suits them, with limitless potential and scale. This is underpinned by the knowledge and power of a global community and strong people-first culture.

The company operates its own ATOL supported financial trust which safeguards customers from any failure of a travel supplier involved in their booking.

Travel Counsellors is multi-award-winning and has a five star, ‘Excellent’ rating on Trustpilot. It was founded in 1994.

In 2025, Travel Counsellors was recognised as in The Sunday Times Best Places to Work 2025 for the third year running.

For further information about Travel Counsellors, please visit:
https://www.travelcounsellors.co.uk/our-story/

...

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk