

WHY BLEISURE TRAVEL?

*Catrinel Raluca Dridea**

Abstract

As the tourism industry has faced numerous challenges over the recent years, many changes have occurred in terms of tourists demands and travel habits. New trends have emerged, and little by little, tourism representatives have tried to identify and provide new and interesting offers in order to cater for the exigent and sophisticated tourists. As part of the undergone changes in the tourism industry, the concept of bleisure has become to arise and to be more and more attractive for the consumers. Therefore, the time for work and leisure, the interconnection of these, the difficulty in providing a clear definition in the context of blending the two concepts, represent important issues for all tourism organization to consider for an optimal approach of tourism services. So, why bleisure travel? This paper tries to analyze the role and importance of bleisure travel and its part of the major trends shaping the future of the tourism industry.

Keywords: work, leisure, bleisure, travel, tourism, trends.

JEL Classification: Z32, Z31, Z30.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the recent years tourism has gone through a series of transformations, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, economic crises, political instability and others. The pandemic has led to a remote working scenario, that had risen in popularity ever since. Even though this concept wasn't new, the large-scale application has generated many benefits for both the employers and the employees, such as increase productivity, costs reduction, optimization of transport and others.

Based on these arguments many companies have integrated more and more the concept of remote working, with different ranges, from 1-2 days per week, to the entire week for specific roles. This has translated into new working perspectives, offering the opportunity to do all related activities away from office.

More than that, the increasing need for travel has stimulated the development of bleisure travel. By combining the concept of work and leisure, the digital nomads are redefining business and leisure.³⁴

Based on similar definitions, terms as digital nomad or bleisure traveller are usually not the same, the digital nomad represents a change in lifestyle,

* Dridea Catrinel Raluca is Lecturer at the Romanian-American University, Bucharest, e-mail: catrinel.raluca.dridea@rau.ro

³⁴ <https://nomad365.beehiiv.com/p/the-rise-of-bleisure-travel-how-digital-nomads-are-redefining-business-and-leisure>

working remotely for a longer period of time, for weeks or months, or indefinite³⁵.

Whether the term used is *workation*, *digital nomad* or *bleisure traveller*, with their particularities, the main idea represents the intertwining of work and leisure time, aspects that presents large benefits for all parties included. Future trends in tourism are underlining the importance of these, as organizers are taking into account the availability of working and leisure facilities. Adapting to cater for this segment of tourists has generated tailor made services and specialized offers.

2. BLEISURE TRAVEL – BLENDING BUSINESS AND LEISURE

Tourism industry has gained a significant increase over the past few years, being projected to grow annually with a rate of 3.9% from 2025 to 2029, reaching a value of 1.114 billion USD, in terms of revenues.³⁶ International tourist arrivals are expected to register 2 billion over the next decade, as currently being 1.5 billion per year³⁷.

The rapid growth of travel comes with a series of transformations that are shifting towards niche vacations, a preference for personalized and meaningful experiences such as³⁸:

- Family travel, focusing on multigenerational trips and activities,
- Romantic getaways and unique experiences based on sustainable practices and digital detox,
- Destinations for sports tourists, combining fitness and travel
- Travelling for music and festivals
- *Bleisure travellers*
- Solo travellers

Other perspectives are conveying over future tourism trends as³⁹: AI-tinerary (increase demand for AI generated travel planning), authenti-cities (choosing unique / remote travel places, rather than the well-known destinations) or, earth-friendly escapes (sustainable travel), *bleisure travel*, solo travel, food focused travel etc.

It can be acknowledged that, over the last few years, the focus of tourists has been on authentic and meaningful experiences, offering a similar perspective over the tourism industry's trends. One can see clearly, the

³⁵ <https://www.sevencorners.com/blog/travel-tips/bleisure-travel-getting-paid-while-you-work-from-anywhere>

³⁶ <https://www.statista.com/outlook/mmo/travel-tourism/worldwide>

³⁷ <https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/global-travel-industry-poises-for-historic-milestone-as-international-tourist-arrivals-projected-to-surpass-2-billion-by-2030/>

³⁸ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/trends-leisure-travel-2025-alessia-negro--fnckf>

³⁹ <https://all.accor.com/a/en/limitless/thematics/lifestyle-trends/travel-trends-2025.html>

importance of bleisure travel, as it has maintained a constant position within all trends. The need for properly blending the business and leisure travel is on a rise.

What is bleisure travel? It can be defined as an extension of work-related trips for leisure activities.

The work-travel evolution can be explained by the following steps⁴⁰:

1. **Bleisure** - the main reason for travel is represented by business activities, with a few days for leisure before or after work;

2. **Workation** – the business remains the primary reason, but the setting is chosen in regard with travel preferences;

3. **Remote work** - a more permanent arrangement for working outside the office;

4. **Digital nomad** – an independent work by balancing aspects as location, freedom and work-travel flexibility.

Redefining the patterns of work and leisure has changed the image of travel. From the tourism perspective, there are new opportunities for travel, all year round, and also in other destinations than the overcrowded ones. From a company's perspective, bleisure travel is one of the perks employees are looking for, with benefits on both sides. As a result, finding an optimal way to integrate bleisure travel should be one of the priorities of every company.

The table below accentuates the differences between bleisure and workation, both of them with a positive outcome for the entire tourism industry.

Table 1 Bleisure vs Workation

	Bleisure	Workation
Dates and location	Dependent on business venue and date	Flexible
Duration of stay	A few days	Up to a month
Accommodation	Selected by the company	Usually a rental home/apartment
Priorities	Nearby attractions, tours	Equipped workplace
Payment	The company pay for flights and accommodation and the employee for the extra days	Paid by the employee

Source: <https://www.altexsoft.com/blog/bleisure-travel-how-to-capitalize-on-business-travelers-that-linger-for-leisure/>

⁴⁰ <https://oneplanetjourney.com/understanding-bleisure-travel-complete-guide/>

The increased interest for bleisure travel is determined by its benefits, among which there can be presented: improving the work-life balance, generate a greater job satisfaction and therefore employee retention, increase productivity, personal development, cost reduction or savings and so on.

Nowadays finding the proper work-life balance can be a challenge. The time associated with work and other activities of a mandatory nature can take its toll on people's well-being, generating the need for leisure practices. With extra time on business travels for leisure activities, the bleisure concept provides the opportunity for stress reduction and avoiding or diminishing the burn out syndrome.

The increase of job satisfaction represents another important aspect to consider in promoting bleisure travel, as an extra incentive, enhancing motivation and productivity⁴¹.

This type of travel can significantly help the professional and personal development, adding value to the entire experience of traveling, enriching the business component with local cultural immersions, gaining skills and knowledge.

In terms of cost reductions, certain expenses are covert in part by the sending company, such as airline tickets and accommodation as well as the opportunity to travel extra season, among others.

Table 2. Factors Influencing Bleisure Tourism

Factors of influence	Potential Reason For Bleisure
Economic and social	- A part of the trip is paid by the company; - Desire for shorter but more frequent vacations;
Generational	- More authentic experience while travelling, especially for the younger generation;
Health, wellness and lifestyle	- Increase balance between work and healthy life; - Spend more time relaxing;
Personal	- Spend more time with family and friends; - Learn more about the places;
Safety and security	- Insured while travelling on business;
Technological	- Possibility of working remotely; - Increase knowledge of leisure activities due to social networks.

Source: Narendra Kumar, Swati Sharma, Vasco Ribeiro Santos, *Smart Travel and Sustainable Innovations in Bleisure Tourism*, IGI Global, 2024; https://www.google.ro/books/edition/Smart_Travel_and_Sustainable_Innovations/OiQqEQAAQBAJ?hl=ro&gbpv=1

⁴¹ <https://www.fcmtravel.com/en-nz/insights/benefits-and-challenges-with-bleisure>

3. BLEISURE TRAVEL AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Bleisure travel has grown over the years, due to the various benefits for both the employer and the employee, as it can be observed in statistics registrations of the international tourism indicators. Even though the concept of bleisure has appeared years ago, it has developed with a higher growth rate than initially predicted. The numbers highlight the positive evolution of this type of tourism, as seen in the figure below, expecting an annual growth rate of almost 20%.

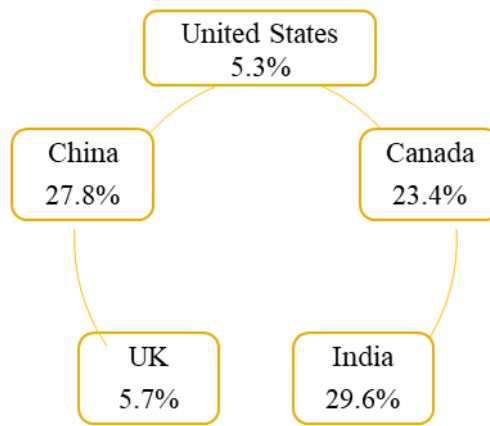
Fig.1 Global Bleisure Tourism Industry Analysis



Source: <https://www.futuremarketinsights.com/reports/bleisure-tourism-market>;

Regarding the regional statistics, the economies of Europe, North America and Asia, the percentages below are underlining the importance of bleisure tourism and its prediction the annual growth rate for 2024-2034.

Fig2. Bleisure tourism market regional analysis – CAGR 2024 to 2034



Source: <https://www.futuremarketinsights.com/reports/bleisure-tourism-market>

The numbers presented in the previous figure show that USA and UK predictions are the lowest compared to the other. USA is expected to lead North America's bleisure tourism market influenced by the number of outbound tourists and also due to the increase of low-cost airlines; nevertheless the growth may be limited considering they have one of the lowest average paid vacation days in the world and inflexible work environments; Regarding Europe, the popularity of United Kingdom as a bleisure destination still remains, attracting foreign visitors and Americans, being expected to reach a moderate market growth of 5.7% CAGR⁴². Canada, China and India are strong examples of growth in the years to come, with important contributions for the next decade of 23.4%, 27.8% and 29.6%.

The interest for bleisure travel, as statistics has showcased is definitely increasing, for instance⁴³: the most of respondents in India are planning bleisure travel (92%), followed by China (84%), Germany (79%), and the US and the UK (both at 72%).

This growing trend is embraced by 78% of millennials, with the technology sector leading at 24% of such travellers, 13% from manufacturing sector and other 12% from finance and so on; more that 65% are solo travellers, though 35% bring companions, and 57% are influenced by family considerations in selecting destinations; bleisure travellers are taking an average of 6.4 trips annually, with Indian travellers leading at 7.4 trips per year, followed by German and Chinese; four in five business travellers believe that leisure time should be integrated into work trips⁴⁴.

Recent studies have illustrated that business travellers are requesting more and more the addition of leisure time to their trips⁴⁵:

- 89% want to add leisure time to the next business trip;
- 76% have already combined business and leisure travel;
- 55% intend to plan more bleisure trips to improve the work-life balance;
- 73% consider that adding leisure to their business trips will enhances their professional well-being etc.

Such surveys are illustrating the importance of bleisure for employees, being an imperative from their point of view in selection a business trip and therefore, a requirement for companies to consider integrating it as part of employees' incentives and benefits. As statistics shows, employees are taking into account more and more the opportunity for extra leisure travel associated with business trips.

⁴² <https://www.futuremarketinsights.com/reports/bleisure-tourism-market>

⁴³ <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20241231-travel-in-2025-longer-trips-to-fewer-places>

⁴⁴ <https://hoteltechreport.com/news/bleisure-statistics>

⁴⁵ <https://navan.com/blog/insights-trends/bleisure-travel-statistics>

4. CONCLUSIONS

So why bleisure travel? Because it provides several benefits for tourists, organizations and destinations. The business tourists are given the opportunity to detach from work, stress or even burn out, to learn about people and culture, to immerse into the local tradition, to enhance their personal development and many more. They have the chance to explore new destinations, in off peak season, to save costs for travelling and spend time with families and friends.

Companies are encouraging bleisure travel, as it increases employees' productivity and well-being and consider this to be one of the most appealing perks of their job.

Destinations are benefiting from all the extra days for leisure, which will translate in higher tourists' arrivals and receipts and also the increased international notoriety.

Therefore, bleisure travel remains an important trend of the tourism industry, alongside other related concepts that are properly combining work and leisure activities.

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