

What I've Learned from Travel Advisors During the COVID-19 Pandemic

by [Daniel McCarthy](#) / May 06, 2020

Everyone in the industry has felt that pain, but as the frontline of the industry, it's hard to overstate what advisors have had to endure over the past few months. Despite the fallout, the past few months—just like any other period of travel chaos—have continued to prove just how valuable advisors are.

'Drinking from a fire hose' Advisors told me that they haven't seen anything like this during their time in business. There have been big events that sent their business up or down dramatically—9/11, the 2008 recession, major hurricanes in Caribbean,—but none of them have impacted them this drastically. But that didn't mean that advisors stopped working, in fact, **their work accelerated**. Advisors who I have spoken with during the last month told me they spent those first couple of weeks “drinking from a fire hose,” trying to handle getting clients back home while also dealing with an onslaught of cancellations, all while suppliers were changing their policies, the workload picked up for seemingly everyone, just as profits and revenue slowed down.

On TMR, we heard how one advisor used her supplier contacts to [get clients home from Thailand](#) as the impact of coronavirus was growing, another pushed to work through the night [to save the day for clients halfway around the world](#), and another advisor utilized her connections to arrange a private flight [for her clients to get home before travel restrictions kicked in](#).

One thing that this slowdown has taught me is that being a travel advisor is one of the most selfless professions in the world. Most won't earn on saving a trip or fighting to get a refund back for their clients from an airline. They won't earn on passing their contacts off to a colleague, or on leading a training course for new entrants to the industry. But they do it anyway.

The future Things are going to rapidly change over the next few months for both travelers and advisors. Masks are going to be required for some flights, air travel to some countries and some states might not be allowed, cruises will be dealing with rapidly changing schedules, new protocols will be put in places for tours and river cruises, and more.

The new rules are going to be fast and furious and I cannot imagine being a frequent traveler and trying to sort through the clutter myself. People are going to want to know when they can travel, where they can travel, and what kind of value they can get on travel. They're going to want to know where they can go to get information on health and safety. They're going to want to go to an expert who will be able to guide them to make well-informed decisions.

The nature of the job seems to have changed over the last decade or so, but the reliance of the travel trade remains the same and now it's more important than ever. Advisors should be proud of the work they've done in face of some massive obstacles. They've mostly remained calm as things went wrong and were a stable force during a time that their clients needed them most.

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- [*A letter to Travel Agents from INTREPID TRAVEL Company...excerpt...*](#)

To our Partners and Friends,

*Since the start of the global pandemic earlier this year, the travel industry has been turned upside down. And although we don't know when we will get past this, **we know that we can't do it without you.***

Today we'd like to share the first letter that we've written: a genuine thank you to you, our agent partners.

- *Today is a day we celebrate travel agents all over the world, so we wanted to take the opportunity to express our gratitude for all the work that you do. We know that creating the best travel experiences for your clients is not always an easy job, although you make it seem so effortless.*
- *So, thank you. Thank you for inspiring your clients to travel with a company that puts sustainability front of mind. Thank you for the adventurous souls you have introduced to our style of travel. Thank you for your dedication. For the early mornings, for the late nights, for the long calls, for the longer email chains... for the passions stirred, for the dreams created.*
- *Thank you for working with us to change the way people see the world.*

We know this is a challenging time for the entire travel industry, but please accept our sincere appreciation for your continued support, kindness, and understanding. It is difficult now, but we know that together we will get through this - stronger than ever.

We can't wait to continue making travel dreams a reality, together. In the meantime, we are never more than a call, email, or live chat away! From your friends at Intrepid Travel, we're here for you.

Thank you and take care.