

2021 Travel and Expense Management Trends

Throughout a year like no other, organizations of all sizes scrambled to maintain continuity as lockdowns fell around the globe. While travel and expense management is complex even under normal circumstances, digitizing processes to adapt became an immediate need. Results from the 2021 Travel and Expense Management Trends Report reflect the shift to working from home and the push to improve experiences for employees.

Review this year's infographic or [download a full copy of the report](#).

Dedicated Solutions Grow in Popularity

More organizations are employing dedicated expense solutions than ever before. This year, we chart the further decline of manual processes as finance becomes increasingly digitized.

Manual vs. dedicated expense management 2017-2021



Expense management systems 2021



Expense management system by company size



TRENDS FACT #1

46% of companies achieved positive ROI in less than one year after switching to a cloud-based expense system

Average cost to process an expense report



Average expense report processing time



TRENDS FACT #2

42% expect duty of care costs to increase in 2021

Top 5 pain points for T&E management in 2021

Employees losing paper receipts/submitting without receipts

Employee's failure to submit reports on time

Errors on the report (incorrect codes, payment amounts, etc.)

Reconciling the data

Time spent reviewing and approving reports

Top 5 leading organizational pressures to improve T&E management in 2021

Need to reduce expense report processing costs

Disconnected systems

Lack of control over T&E spending

Inconsistencies and lengthy reimbursement cycles

Poor visibility into T&E data

TRENDS FACT #3

Only 5% of organizations use expense data for vendor negotiations

Travel and Expense Policy

78% of respondents reported the presence of a formal T&E policy. Proof that having a policy is only part of the solution, 58% reported their travelers' understanding of it as "decent—but in need of improvement."

Percentage of submitted expenses within policy



TRENDS FACT #4

68% use a manual method to enforce T&E policy

T&E policy enforcement methods

Our T&E policy is not enforced

Responsibility of employees

Manually check each expense

Manually, only reviewing expenses with a high value

Our T&E system automatically flags out-of-policy expenses

We use a third-party service

I don't know

Top reasons for moving to a dedicated expense management solution

Simplifying the expense reporting process for employees and managers

Reimbursing employees faster

Providing an expense system accessible from anywhere (global, mobile capabilities, online)

Improving employee compliance rates to corporate travel policies

Improving reporting and analytics around T&E spend

TRENDS FACT #5

36% of respondents use consumer websites to manage travel bookings

Managing Non-Employee Spend

Companies pressed to maintain positive cash flow may have turned to a flexible workforce to fill gaps without adding too much weight to extended salary commitments.

Non-employee expense management systems

TRENDS FACT #7

52% of organizations use a manual process to manage non-employee expenses

Volume of expense reports processed annually for non-employees

Fewer than 10

10-50

51-100

101-500

I don't know

Average length from submission to reimbursement for non-employees

1-3 days

4-7 days

8-14 days

15-30 days

Over a month

I don't know

Percentage of non-employee expenses within policy

0%-24%

25%-49%

50%-74%

75%-100%

I don't know

TRENDS FACT #8

Accounting is most often responsible for approving non-employee expenses

Missing receipts

Failure to submit reports on time

Lack of control over T&E spending

Payments (checks, ACH, wire, gift cards)

Errors on the report (coding, amounts, etc.)

Survey Demographics

Company sizes

Job title

This material has been prepared for general informational and educational purposes only, and it is not intended to provide, and it not be relied upon for, tax, legal, or accounting advice. You should always consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors before engaging in any transaction. The use or reliance on any information herein is at your own risk.

Data Provided By: Over 500 CFOs and financial professionals in North America responded to a survey for the 2021 Travel and Expense Management Trends Report by Emburse.

Learn more at www.emburse.com

For media inquiries, contact media@emburse.com or (888) 781-0088 x468

Disclaimer: This material has been prepared for general informational and educational purposes only, and it is not intended to provide, and it not be relied upon for, tax, legal, or accounting advice. You should always consult your own tax, legal, and accounting advisors before engaging in any transaction. The use or reliance on any information herein is at your own risk.