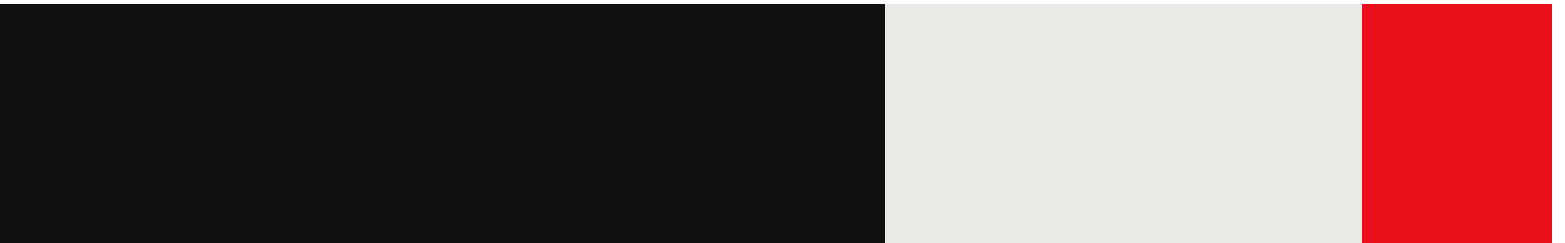


# Despite an extended spending surge, travel remains a small industry for advertising

Article

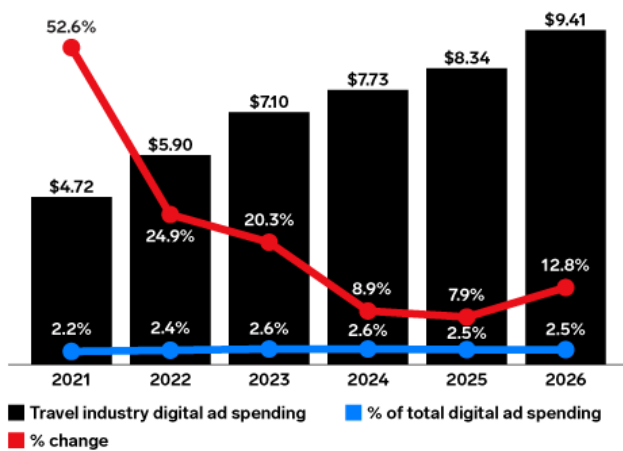


The travel industry's total media ad spending declined by almost 60% in 2020, but as of this year, it will have fully regained the lost ground. Travel-related companies will spend \$9.86

billion on [total media advertising](#) in 2024, just a hair above the \$9.85 billion they posted in 2019. Several years of towering growth rates drove this recovery, but we now expect a substantial moderation going forward.

**Over 78% of travel's ad dollars will go to digital advertising this year, or \$773 billion.** That equates to an 8.9% YoY spending increase—a decent if unspectacular outcome. The national growth rate for digital ad spending in 2024 will be 12.6%, which means [travel will underperform compared with most other industries](#). This represents a significant change from the past three years, when travel led all industries in growth every time.

**US Travel Industry Digital Ad Spending, 2021-2026**  
billions, % change, and % of total digital ad spending



Note: includes advertising that appears on desktop and laptop computers as well as mobile phones, tablets, and other internet-connected devices, and includes all the various formats of advertising on those platforms  
Source: EMARKETER Forecast, Aug 2024

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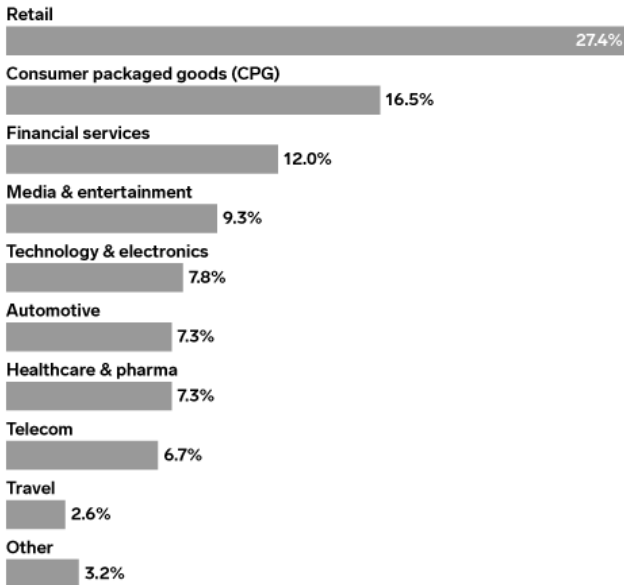
**We have substantially downgraded our growth estimate for 2024 compared with our previous forecast.** We originally anticipated a gentler deceleration, but it's been a tough year for many travel industry players. A shaky economy and persistent inflation have weighed on consumer budgets, and the "revenge travel" phenomenon of the post-pandemic era has petered out. High-income travelers continue to prioritize travel spending, but much of the middle class has pulled back. Travel marketers have responded with increased caution in their spending decisions.

**Travel remains the smallest ad spender among the nine industry verticals we break out.** Across both total media and digital media, [travel ranks last in spending](#), trailing even our

miscellaneous “other” category. Although it has clawed back some share compared with 2020, travel will still account for just 2.6% of digital spending this year. It will trail the next largest industry, telecom, by \$12.54 billion.

### US Digital Ad Spending Share, by Industry, 2024

% of total digital ad spending



Note: includes advertising that appears on desktop and laptop computers as well as mobile phones, tablets, and other internet-connected devices, and includes all the various formats of advertising on those platforms; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding  
Source: EMARKETER Forecast, Aug 2024

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**Travel will spend more than \$2 billion on traditional media this year, but that figure is set to decline.** At 21.6% of its total outlay, travel companies’ share of spending on TV, radio, out-of-home, and print ads almost mirrors the 22.3% national average. Although [travel has not abandoned traditional media as much as some other industries](#), it is still a very small factor for traditional ad publishers, and its spending will fall going forward.

**Travel’s affinity for large-screen advertising will keep its ads on traditional media to at least some degree.** Travel industry products and services can look more tempting on TV screens (and billboards) than on small-format digital devices. Traditional media is also still useful for top-of-funnel national branding exercises, which fit well with broad-based tourism campaigns. Nonetheless, travel is slowly retreating from traditional media like [almost every other industry](#).

Read the full report, [US Travel Industry Ad Spending 2024](#).

Report by Ethan Cramer-Flood Oct 23, 2024

# US Travel Industry Ad Spending 2024

