

**BLACK TRAVEL ALLIANCE**

alliance. amplification. accountability.

Black Travel Alliance    

# **#PullUpForTravel Campaign Report**

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# Executive Summary

In the wake of social unrest from George Floyd’s publicized murder and pronouncements of “Black Lives Matter” support by destination management organizations and travel brands, a group of Black Travel Content Creators from across the globe formed the Black Travel Alliance (BTA) and launched the #PullUpForTravel campaign in June 2020. The main objective of the campaign was to hold travel brands accountable and advocate for meaningful representation of Black voices across the travel industry. Specifically, the campaign evaluated destination management organizations and travel brands in five major areas:

- **Employment:** Current number and percentage of Black people in management and on staff
- **Conferences & Tradeshows:** Black representation (number and percentage) on speaker panels, workshops, sessions, etc. in 2019
- **Paid Advertising/Marketing Campaigns:** Black representation (number and percentage) in TV, radio, print and digital channels including social media in 2019
- **Press:** Black representation (number and percentage) on media/press trips in 2019
- **Philanthropy:** Charitable contributions and support (i.e. mentorship and intern programs, etc.) to Black charities and community groups

In order to achieve the campaign objective, BTA asked destination management organizations and travel brands to publicly share their KPIs in the five areas using the #PullUpForTravel hashtag on social media. The key outcomes of the campaign are summarized below:

- Of the 121 travel organizations that BTA identified as posting about #BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday, 67 (55%) responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign.
- All the destination management organizations (DMOs) that responded were based in the United States, except for the Bermuda Tourism Authority.

- Travel Related Retail Brands and Travel Related Financial Services Brands had the lowest response rate for the #PullUpForTravel campaign.
- A few organizations (one under Travel Communities and two under Travel Services) not initially identified also responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign.

Overall, key takeaways from the #PullUpForTravel campaign include:

- Black travel content creators are under-represented in the travel industry and there is a great need to address the imbalance.
- There is, for the most part, lip service paid to diversity and inclusion and it is time for allies in the travel industry to join forces with organizations like the BTA and push for the positive change the travel industry – and the world at large - needs.
- The importance of formalizing subsequent campaigns with a structured survey, as well as expanding KPIs to include vendor selection for future editions of the **Black Travel Alliance Industry Scorecard**.

# Section 1: Background and Rationale

## 1.1 Introduction to the #PullUpForTravel Campaign

In the wake of social unrest from George Floyd's horrific murder, which was highly publicized and pronouncements of "Black Lives Matter" support by destination management organizations and travel brands, a group of Black Travel Content Creators from across the globe joined together and launched the Black Travel Alliance.

In the press release announcing the new organization on Tuesday, June 16th, 2020, the Black Travel Alliance called on destination management organizations and travel brands to take #BlackLivesMatter and #BlackOutTuesday support beyond social media and work towards meaningful representation of Black voices in the travel industry.

As a starting point, the Black Travel Alliance asked destination management organizations and travel brands to publicly share their KPIs in these five areas using the #PullUpForTravel hashtag on social media:

- **Employment** – Current number and percentage of Black people in management and on staff
- **Conferences & Tradeshows** – Black representation (number and percentage) on speaker panels, workshops, sessions, etc. in 2019
- **Paid Advertising/Marketing Campaigns** – Black representation (number and percentage) in TV, radio, print and digital channels including social media in 2019
- **Press** – Black representation (number and percentage) on media/press trips in 2019
- **Philanthropy** – Charitable contributions and support (i.e., mentorship and intern programs, etc.) to Black charities and community groups

The target date set for destination management organizations and travel brands to communicate their metrics publicly via social media with the #PullUpForTravel hashtag was Friday, June 19th. More than a mere black

square on social media, the Black Travel Alliance believed that this data would demonstrate true allyship, and that these areas are vital towards ending the systemic lack of diversity in the travel industry.

It should be noted that the hashtag #PullUpForTravel is a variant of #PullUpOrShutUp launched by Sharon Chuter in response to #BlackOutTuesday. That campaign called on beauty companies to provide insight into the number of Black executives and staff at their companies. The #PullUpForTravel campaign sought to uncover Black employment figures for destination management organizations and travel brands, along with data for the other four areas outlined.

Friday, June 19th was symbolically chosen, given that it was Juneteenth, a day which celebrates the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19th that Union soldiers landed in Galveston, Texas, with news that the American Civil War and slavery had come to an end.

## **1.2 Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and Travel Brands Targeted**

Across the United States and the rest of the globe, there are thousands of destination management organizations and travel brands. Thus, the focus of the Black Travel Alliance #PullUpForTravel campaign was the 121 destination management organization and travel brands identified as having made statements on social media, mostly on Instagram.

To secure a response from these destination management organizations and travel brands, the Black Travel Alliance researched and put together an email list of media and senior-level contacts. An initial email, along with a follow-up email, was sent out to these executives. Beyond this, communication was also made via social media, either through direct messaging where possible and/or tagging. Finally, the BTA also asked supporters to tag the destination management organizations and travel brands.

# Section 2: Presentation and Discussion of Results

## 2.1 Results of KPIs

Of the 121 travel organizations that BTA identified as posting about #BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday, 67 (55%) responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign.

- All the DMOs that responded were based in the United States, except for the Bermuda Tourism Authority.
- Travel Related Retail Brands and Travel Related Financial Services Brands had the lowest response rate for the #PullUpForTravel campaign.
- A few organizations (one under Travel Communities and two under Travel Services) not initially identified also responded to our #PullUpForTravel campaign.

The ensuing sections discuss the results of the requested KPIs in more detail.

### 2.1.1 Employment

67 companies responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign. Of these, 29 gave a percentage range of 0% to 90%. However, most of the responses were for the category of POC employees and not for Black employees specifically.

The remainder of the companies provided statements regarding employment, but no data figures were provided for Black employees, even for the companies' previous 3 to 5 fiscal years.

### 2.1.2 Conference and Trade Shows

Of the 67 respondents, 6 companies (of which 4 were DMOs) provided figures that they ensured Black representation on speaker panels,

workshops and sessions at conferences and trade shows. This highlights that even with companies that responded, there was still less than 10% of Black representation at conferences and trade shows.

### 2.1.3 Paid Advertising/Marketing Campaigns

12 companies (18%) out of the 67 respondents provided data figures demonstrating that they included Black representation in the areas of TV, radio, print and digital channels including social media in 2019.

### 2.1.4 Press

In the area of press 6 DMOs, which is 9% of all respondents, provided data indicating that they ensured Black representation on media/press trips in 2019.

The remaining 61 travel companies that responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign provided no data or statement regarding diversity in their media and press trip campaigns for 2019 or previous years.

### 2.1.5 Philanthropy

In total, 5 companies (7.5%) provided figures for charitable contributions/support to black charities and community groups. The remaining 62 companies provided no data or statement.

## 2.2: Campaign respondents by organization type (Figure 1)

Organization Type	#BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday	#PullUpForTravel
DMOs	31	16
Travel Brands	46	22
Travel Communities	8	9
Travel Media	6	6

Travel Services	8	10
Travel Related Retail Brands	18	4
Travel Related Financial Services	4	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>67</b>

82% of the destinations and travel brands who responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign were based in the United States.

### 2.3 Organization Types Explained:

- **Destination Management Organizations (DMOs):** includes city, state, regional and national level
- **Travel Brands:** includes accommodation/hotels, airlines, cruise lines, online travel agencies, travel guide/book publishers, study abroad operators, tour operators, trip planner apps, etc.
- **Travel Communities:** includes conferences and networks
- **Travel Services:** includes influencer marketing agencies, marketing, and public relations agencies, etc.
- **Travel Media:** includes online and print publications
- **Travel Related Retail Brands:** includes clothing, luggage, electronics, etc.
- **Travel Related Financial Services:** includes banking and credit card services

### 2.4 Campaign respondents by country (Figure 2)

Organization Headquarters	#BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday	#PullUpForTravel
Australia	3	2
Austria	1	1

Bermuda	1	1
Canada	5	3
Germany	1	0
Guadeloupe	1	0
Japan	2	0
Netherlands	1	0
New Zealand	1	1
United Kingdom	5	4
United States	100	55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>67</b>

Beyond the destination management organizations and travel brands who responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign, it should be noted that dozens of Black content creators and allies also posted messages of support.

Currently, there are over 900 posts on Instagram, using the #PullUpForTravel campaign.

<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/pullupfortravel/>

## 2.5 DMOs + Travel Brands Who Responded to #PullUpForTravel Campaign

The information received from most destination management organizations and travel brands was incomplete.

- Of the 67 travel organizations that responded to the #PullUpForTravelCampaign, 29 provided data on the percentage of Black employees in their organization but no actual figures.
- 34 gave statements on the actions they were taking to increase the diversity and inclusion of Black people in their organizations through employment.

- The responses for how these travel organizations were ensuring that there was diversity at conferences/tradeshows, paid advertising, media trips and philanthropy fell even further, with less than 10 of the 67 travel organizations being able to provide data on:
  - o Black people being speakers at conferences/tradeshows
  - o being including in paid advertising and campaigns
  - o Media trips
  - o Philanthropy

## 2.6 Breakdown by the 5 major KPIs requested (Figure 3)

Organizations	% of Employment	Conference & Tradeshows	Paid Advertising/ Marketing Campaigns	Media Trips	Philanthropy
DMOs	11 DMOs provided the % of Black people employment at their organization. Percentages ranged from 7.69% - 90%. 3 DMOs provided statements, but no data was provided.	4 DMOs provided figures ranging from 20% - 55%	5 DMOs provided figures ranging from 23% - 72%	6 DMOs provided figures ranging from 9% - 48.75%	2 DMOs donated between \$134,710 to \$1.64 million
Travel Brands	8 Travel Brands provided figures ranging from 0% - 35%. A further 11 provided statements but no data.	Not provided /No data?	3 Travel Brands provided % data ranging from 8% - 65%	Not provided /No data	2 Brands have donated between \$770 and \$500,000

Travel Communities	6 provided figures ranging from 0%-25%. 3 communities gave a statement but provided no data to back this up.	2 community 31%	1 community 8%	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data
Travel Media	1 Travel Media provides data of 8%. A further 4 provided statements but did not provide any data.	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data	1 travel media organizations donated \$200,000
Travel Services	1 service provider responds with figures ranging from 0% - 3%. 8 companies gave statements but provided no data.	Not provided /No data	3 Service providers gave data ranging from 5% - 46%.	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data
Travel Retail Brands	2 brands provided data ranging (29% - 35%). A further 3 gave statements, but no data.	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data	Not provided /No data

## 2.7 Review of US State Level DMOs

As most of the destination management organization who responded to the #PullUpForTravel campaign were at the city level, BTA undertook a review of

all 50 state-level destination management organizations in the United States to see if they posted on social media, especially Instagram, about #BlackLivesMatter, #BlackOutTuesday or #Juneteenth.

## Summary of Results

- Of the 50 state-level destination management organizations in the United States, only five acknowledged #BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday on their social media channels.
  - Explore Minnesota
  - Travel Oregon
  - Visit Pennsylvania
  - Virginia Is For Lovers
  - Experience Washington
  
- Of the 50 state-level destination management organizations in the United States, only two acknowledged #PullUpForTravel on their social media channels.
  - Explore Minnesota
  - Virginia Is For Lovers
  
- Of the 50 state-level destination management organizations in the United States, only five acknowledged Juneteenth on their social media channels.
  - Visit California
  - Visit Maryland
  - I Love New York
  - Visit Pennsylvania
  - Virginia Is For Lovers

The destination management organization from the state of Virginia (Virginia Is For Lovers) was the only one that acknowledged all three hashtags - #BlackLivesMatter #BlackoutTuesday & #Juneteenth - on their social media channels.

## 2.8 Top 25 Travel Brands

Similarly, the Black Travel Alliance undertook a review of the top 25 travel brands globally, as listed on the 2019 Travel Weekly Power List (<https://www.travelweekly.com/Power-List-2019>). The geographic location for these travel brands is as follows:

- o United States - 23
- o Canada - 1
- o Australia - 1

### Summary of Results

- 10 of these top 25 travel brands posted a message in support or about #BlackLivesMatter or #BlackOutTuesday on their social channels. This includes:
  - o Expedia Group
  - o Booking Holdings
  - o Flight Centre
  - o American Express Travel
  - o Direct Travel
  - o Travel and Transport
  - o World Travel
  - o International Cruise & Excursions
  - o Adelman Travel
  - o Cruise Planners, an American Express Travel Representative
- None of these top 25 travel brands acknowledged #PullUpForTravel on their social media channels.
- Only two of these top 25 travel brands posted about #Juneteenth on their social channels. This includes:
  - o Expedia Group
  - o Booking Holdings

# Section 3: Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

## 3.1 Conclusions

The #PullUpForTravel campaign highlighted the lack of diversity and representation in the five key areas that were targeted. However, Black representation in the areas of conference/trade shows, press and philanthropy are amongst the worst, coming in at less than 10% for the companies who responded. This data is also reflected in the 50 state-level DMOs targeted and the 25 top travel brands reviewed for this #PullUpForTravel campaign.

While much of the information received from most destination management organizations and travel brands was incomplete, BTA views the campaign as a success. As a new organization, the Black Travel Alliance should be given credit for prompting 67 destination management organizations and travel brands to go on the record about Black representation within their companies. This now becomes a benchmark for greater transparency and accountability in the months and years to come.

## 3.2 Directions for Future Research

With the above said, it is acknowledged that further research into Black representation in the travel industry is necessary. The #PullUpForTravel campaign confirms the need for standardized surveys in order to acquire the relevant data according to organization types. Future research will also seek to expand the metrics to include vendor selection under the **Black Travel Alliance Industry Scorecard**. This is planned to be conducted before the one year anniversary of the #PullUpForTravel campaign.

In conclusion, the key performance indicators to be measured moving forward would include these six KPIs:

- **Employment** – Current number and percentage of Black people in management and on staff
- **Vendors** – Current number and percentage of Black companies in the supply chain

- **Conferences & Tradeshows** – Black representation (number and percentage) on speaker panels, workshops, sessions, etc.
- **Paid Advertising/Marketing Campaigns** – Black representation (number and percentage) in TV, radio, print and digital channels including social media
- **Press** – Black representation (number and percentage) on media/press trips
- **Philanthropy** – Charitable contributions and support (i.e., mentorship and intern programs, etc.) to Black charities and community groups

## Section 4: Appendices

### 4.1 Black Travel Alliance Research Committee

This #PullUpForTravel campaign summary was prepared by members of the Black Travel Alliance Research Committee including:

**Chair:** Ursula Petula Barzey, Founder & Digital Content Creator at CaribbeanAndCo.com

**Vice-Chair:** Gabby Beckford, Gen Z Travel Expert at Packslight.com

**Additional Research Committee Members:**

- Donna-Kay Delahaye, Travel Blogger, Photographer, Digital Content Creator at HuesOfDelahaye.com
- Patricia King, Blogger at SavvyTraveling.com
- Martinique Lewis, Diversity in Travel Consultant at MartySandiego.com
- Kerwin McKenzie, Author, Content Creator, Speaker at Cruisinaltitude.com

To get in touch with the **Black Travel Alliance Research Committee**, email: [research@blacktravelalliance.com](mailto:research@blacktravelalliance.com).

## 4.2 About Black Travel Alliance

### About

The Black Travel Alliance is a new group of Black Travel Content Creators from across the globe. Our three pillars of the community are alliance, amplification, and accountability. As travel authors, bloggers, broadcasters, journalists, photographers, podcasters, social media influencers, and vloggers, we unify to amplify. We also aim to provide training and business support to our members, as well as hold destinations and travel brands accountable on the issue of diversity in travel marketing and storytelling.

### The Black Travel Alliance leadership team includes:

**President:** Martinique Lewis, Diversity in Travel Consultant at MartySandiego.com

**Secretary:** Martina Johnson, Content Creator at ThatCoupleWhoTravels.com

**Treasurer:** Xavier Owona, Travel Entrepreneur & Content Creator at BlackVoyageurs.com

### Board Members:

- Ursula Petula Barzey, Founder & Digital Content Creator at CaribbeanAndCo.com
- Gabby Beckford, Gen Z Travel Expert at PacksLight.com
- Donna-Kay Delahaye, Travel Blogger, Photographer, Digital Content Creator at Huesofdelahaye.com
- Rashida Dowe, Career Break Coach, Content Creator at Shidasontheloose.com
- Lauren Gay, Travel Blogger, Podcaster, Photographer, Misadventures of an Outdoorsy Diva Blog & Outdoorsy Diva Podcast
- Monet Hambrick, Family Travel Expert, Author at TheTravelingChild.co
- Tomiko Harvey, Digital Marketer at Passportsandgrub.com
- Colby Holiday, Travel Blogger, Content Creator at World of a Wanderer
- Jeff Jenkins, Content Creator, Social Media Specialist at ChubbyDiaries.com
- Patricia King, Blogger at SavvyTraveling.com
- Travis Levius, Travel Writer/Editor, Content Creator, Consultant at Misterlevius.com

- Leslie Johnson, Content Creator at ThatCoupleWhoTravels.com
- Kerwin McKenzie, Author, Content Creator, Speaker at Passrider.com
- Dr. Nadeen White, Travel Blogger, Content Creator, Author, Speaker, TheSophisticatedLife.com
- Davida Wulff-Vanderpuije, Travel Writer, Content Creator and Podcaster at WondersOfWanders.com

