

## PRESS RELEASE

### Move over pig, 2019 will be the year of the business traveler

**UTRECHT, The Netherlands, December 11, 2018** – In the Chinese zodiac, 2019 is the Year of the Pig, a time of abundance and good fortune. According to global corporate travel agency BCD Travel, next year will favor the business traveler—as the rise of supportive robots, cashless trip transactions, personalized experiences and smart cities all add to the traveler experience.

BCD identifies [six trends](#) that business travelers should look for in 2019—as well as a quick look back at three “firsts” that emerged in 2018. Here’s a glimpse of some of the six things that favor business travelers next year:

#### **Interacting with robots**

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in business travel continues to rise—from the friendly chat bot used to provide airline web support to the voice-command assistant that allows us to order snacks at hotels at any hour. With more and more suppliers experimenting with robot technology, interacting with a physical robot will eventually become standard practice. In 2019, business travelers are likely to meet a robot at the airport, helping them to park their car or find gates and restaurants. AI and Internet of Things (IoT) applications will also play an important role in the way traffic is managed, with responsive traffic lights adjusting to real-time volume. The result? Less traffic congestion, less pollution, less frustration for business travelers.

#### **Traveling without cash**

We are moving relentlessly towards a paperless and cashless society. Companies like Uber are leading the way for a whole new payment experience, and with more and more organizations adopting the same model, it gets smoother every day. According to the *Evening Standard* newspaper, half of all London Tube journeys are now made using contactless payments. The system behind it has been so successful that cities like New York and Boston decided to adopt it too.

#### **Personalized experiences**

In 2019, traveler identity will play a much larger role in traveler service and satisfaction. According to Forrester’s *Age of the Consumer* research, 72% of consumers expect companies to understand their unique expectations. Business travelers expect the same personalized, simple and seamless experience they get from consumer brands—and are willing to share information for the sake of convenience and service. Suppliers will increasingly gather relevant data about traveler brand preferences, booking behavior and travel patterns, and merge that information with corporate travel policy in order to influence in-trip spending decisions and improve service.

[Recent BCD research](#) reveals that business travelers think their companies are falling short on meeting their on-trip needs. “Creating personalized experiences for travelers may not seem important at first. However, if you don’t create happy, well and joyful business travelers, they are

going to go to your competitor,” says Miriam Moscovici, senior director, Research and Innovation at BCD Travel. “Savvy companies will work with their travel agencies to develop happiness quotients to measure the satisfaction of their travelers so they can keep traveler satisfaction high. That might be as simple as giving them seat upgrades on long-haul flights.”

To read about all six business 2019 travel trends in more detail, visit [BCD Travel’s website](#).

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### **About BCD Travel**

BCD Travel helps companies make the most of what they spend on travel. For travelers, this means keeping them safe and productive, and equipping them to make good choices on the road. For travel and procurement managers, it means advising them on how to grow the value of their travel program. In short, we help our clients travel smart and achieve more. We make this happen in 109 countries with almost 13,500 creative, committed and experienced people. And it’s how we maintain the industry’s most consistent client retention rate (95% over the past 10 years), with 2017 sales of US\$25.7 billion. For more information, visit [www.bcdtravel.com](http://www.bcdtravel.com).

### **About BCD Group**

BCD Group is a market leader in the travel industry. The privately-owned company was founded in 1975 by John Fentener van Vlissingen and consists of BCD Travel (global corporate travel management), Travix (online travel: CheapTickets, Vliegwinkel, BudgetAir, Flugladen and Vayama), Park ‘N Fly (off-airport parking) and Airtrade (consolidation and fulfillment). BCD Group employs over 14,500 people and operates in 109 countries with total sales of US\$27.9 billion, including US\$10.4 billion partner sales. For more information, visit [www.bcdgroup.com](http://www.bcdgroup.com).