

Tips decline as fees in travel industry increase

By Julie Weed, New York Times

Tipping for hotel concierges, bellhops and housekeepers moves up and down with the economy, but lately it has also been affected by changes in corporate, airline and hotel policies.

The airlines' checked bag fees offer a prime example. Since luggage got wheels, more travelers have been eschewing porters and taking their own bags up to their hotel rooms. But the airline fees have made things worse, said Adam Weissenberg, a vice chairman at Deloitte & Touche who leads the firm's American travel, hospitality and leisure division.

"People are packing lighter so they can bring just a carry-on and avoid the fees," he said. "The other day, I was sitting in a lobby for 20 minutes, and not one business traveler used a bellman."

The bag fees have also affected skycap tips, said Calvin Miller, who has worked as a skycap for five years at George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston. He said that he was paid \$2.13 an hour plus tips, and that those tips had decreased by 30 percent since the airlines started charging the fees.

"The more people have to pay for baggage fees, the less money they are going to give to skycaps," he said. "It would be nice if the money could trickle down to the workers who are giving the service."

Read the whole story