



HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION DES HÔTELS DU CANADA

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

### **2010 Canadian Travel Intentions Survey Indicates Business Travel Will Pick Up and Leisure Travel Will Decline Slightly**

**February 8, 2010 - Ottawa** -- The Hotel Association of Canada (HAC) today released data from its 2010 Canadian Travel Intentions survey indicating that expected business travel is up three per cent from last year but leisure travel is down four per cent.

Seventy-eight per cent of leisure travellers intend to travel the same or more in Canada in 2010 and 76 per cent of business travellers intend to travel the same or more in Canada in 2010.

“We’ve got almost half of those surveyed stating they are ‘vacation-deprived’, which tells me that while people are worried about their jobs and are afraid to spend their money on extended travel, they still plan to travel in 2010,” said Tony Pollard, President of the Hotel Association of Canada.

#### ***Canadian Travellers and the United States***

Twenty-two per cent of travellers say they expect to take more trips to the United States in 2010 than 2009, and 12 per cent say they would take less, similar to results from 2009 and 2008 HAC surveys.

A potentially new and disturbing trend has emerged with almost 20 per cent of Canadian travellers stating they went by car to a United States airport in 2009 to take a trip using less expensive airline tickets purchased for U.S. or foreign travel.

“Deals in the United States that are not matched by Canadian air carriers are having an impact on 18 per cent of the air travel business in Canada,” says Pollard. “We’ll be following this trend to see if it gets better or worse over the coming years. Lower fares from U.S. destinations hurt all of our businesses in Canada.”

#### ***Web Presence is Key for Hoteliers***

More and more, Canadian travellers are looking to the web for information about where they choose to stay. Thirteen per cent more business and five per cent more leisure travellers than the HAC 2009 survey said ratings on internet booking services and other sites have a great deal of influence on where they choose to stay. Eighty-five per cent business and 79 per cent leisure travellers consult accommodation ratings before booking stays.

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Data released for 2009 by comScore Video Metrix, a firm that measures digital world data, indicated 21 million Canadians viewed more than 3.1 billion videos online during the month of February 2009. The HAC 2010 survey supports those results, with 79 per cent of leisure and 67 per cent of business travellers viewing videos or taking a virtual tour of the place they are going to stay.

Canadians are also wired when it comes to internet comparison-shopping, with 86 per cent leisure and 81 per cent business travellers looking for “specials”. Almost 60 per cent of leisure (57%) and slightly less than half of business (49%) travellers think they will get a better hotel rate directly from a hotel rather than a third party booking service.

While technology is important to travellers, not everyone has GPS. A majority of travellers say they consult the web to get directions and maps (82% leisure; 85% business).

“What this tells me is a hotel’s web site is critical to a property’s success. With 88 per cent of business and 69 per cent of leisure travellers getting their information on accommodations from the internet, a web presence is key,” said Tony Pollard. “As a hotelier, if you’re not dealing with your on-line presence, you will lose business to those who are paying attention to the internet.”

#### ***“Deals” and “Service” Are Important to Travellers***

Price and location are more important to travellers than the brand name of the hotel. When asked to choose, 56 per cent ranked price as their first choice, 37 per cent ranked location second and only eight per cent ranked brand/name of the hotel as being important when selecting a hotel.

Travellers are also looking for properties with well-trained staff. Eighty-eight per cent agreed that employees who have been properly trained for their occupation provide a higher level of service. Travellers defined “high quality service” as friendly, a desire to provide service and honest and ethical behaviour.

“Well-trained employees mean that guests get the service they deserve,” says Pollard. “Our survey shows, while there’s always room for improvement, of those that responded a majority of travellers have not seen a drop in service over the past five years.”

Friendly service is still the most important attribute for business (80%) and leisure (84%) when choosing between accommodations offering the same rates. This attribute is more important than room service, a restaurant, high-speed internet and a spa.

Loyalty programs are still important, particularly for business travellers (44%). Additionally, it seems the way to travellers’ hearts is definitely through their stomachs. Seventy-four per cent of leisure and 67 per cent of business travellers say a hotel with a complimentary breakfast is important.

#### ***Environment Still Important***

Despite the current economic challenges, environmental initiatives are important to more than 40 per cent of both leisure (44%) and business (42%) travellers, up more than six per cent over 2009 figures. Leisure travellers concern about spending too much for a vacation does not trump their worry about protecting the environment. Forty-one per cent, similar to 2009 HAC survey results, of leisure travellers say they are willing to pay between \$1 and \$5 per night to participate in a carbon off-set program. The beginning of an economic recovery is also reflected in the seven per cent increase over 2009 survey data of business those who are willing to pay between \$1 and \$5 per night to participate in a carbon off-set program.

Most firms do not have a “green travel policy” yet, but travellers said more than twice as many business had a green travel policy in 2009 (11%) as did in 2008 (4%)

The survey of Canadian travellers is the sixth annual Canadian Travel Intention study undertaken by the Hotel Association of Canada. This survey was fielded by TSN Canadian Facts and defines a traveller as someone who will stay at least one night in a hotel, motel or resort. The online survey was conducted in December 2009 among 1524 “likely travellers” with a margin of error of +/- 2.5%.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **Hotel Association of Canada**

The Hotel Association of Canada (HAC) is a professional industry association representing the lodging industry in Canada. Its membership encompasses the provincial and territorial hotel associations, the corporate hotel chains, independent hotels, motels and resorts and the many suppliers to the hotel industry. HAC’s objective is to assist both its national and international members as they endeavour to enhance their competitiveness and achieve their bottom line. The HAC accomplishes this through the collection and dissemination of information, research, advocacy, education, and operational support services designed to assist its members. The Hotel Association of Canada represents more than 8,400 hotels, motels and resorts across Canada  
[www.hotelassociation.ca](http://www.hotelassociation.ca).