

More Asian Tourists turn to the Web for bookings

HotelClub Releases Results from Global Consumer Survey

HONG KONG - 19 JULY 2007 - More consumers are using the internet to book their holidays according to leading online accommodation provider HotelClub.com which has recorded an increase of 40% in online bookings in the past 12 months.

Releasing the findings today of its global consumer survey, HotelClub found that which 49.5% of those surveyed indicated that they book travel online either through hotel or airline websites (30.6%) or online travel agent (18.9%).

The online survey by HotelClub.com was undertaken from October to December 2006 and received more than 80,000 hotel nominations.

The survey is the third consumer-driven free text survey undertaken to find Asia's Best Hotels and Resorts. HotelClub.com will recognise those properties voted the Best Hotels and Resorts from this survey in a gala awards ceremony to be held at Café Deco on 26 July 2007 in Hong Kong.

As part of the survey, consumers were asked questions on their travel habits - in addition to voting for their favourite hotels. These included questions relating to travel frequency, influences in selecting a hotel, preferred booking method, influences for travel purchase decision and online purchases.

Key results from the survey[#] include:

- The internet is the most influential channel used to make travel purchase decisions with 51.1% of respondents indicating they use the internet for research on their travel purchase, followed by word of mouth (26.2%), and magazines (7.1%)
- The two most popular travel related products to be purchased online (over a 12 month period) were flights (50.3%) and accommodation (35.1%).
- 81% of respondents prefer 4 and 5 star hotels, with almost half (48.5%) of respondents electing to stay in 4 star hotels.
- Leading factors influencing the respondents' hotel selections were location (45.7%), price (21.3%) and facilities (15.6%).
- 78% of respondents travel (within a twelve month period) once per year (40.6%) and 37.4% travelled 2-4 times per year

"These survey results are truly outstanding. We are seeing a major shift in the way consumers across Asia booked their holidays. Consumers are embracing the Internet to make an informed travel purchase decision. The survey indicates that consumers are price conscious when making a booking online – but they also realise the value savings that the internet provides, making hotel and accommodation choices affordable for more consumers," said Ms Chloe Lim, Managing Director for HotelClub.com.

"We have been seeing growth from this region for the past couple of years. These results show that Asian consumers are savvy and well-travelled, and understand the convenience and affordability of online accommodation (and travel) bookings," Ms Lim said.

These survey results reflect the trends that HotelClub.com has seen from its Asian consumer bookings. During the past twelve months HotelClub.com has seen an increase of more than 40% in bookings. Additionally unique visits to HotelClub.com from its Asian customer base have increased by 70% (2006 compared with 2005). Early indications for 2007 show that visits to HotelClub.com have increased by 45.7% and bookings have also grown by 36.3%.

As well, more HotelClub.com customers are making bookings that are of three days in length with an average booking value of US\$280. This reflects the trend that consumers are taking more frequent but shorter breaks such as long weekend trips (up to four long weekend trips of up to three days) rather than long holidays that they may only take once a year.*

The total estimated size of the Asian online travel market is \$US20.9 billion[@]. As internet usage increases across Asia, HotelClub expects to see an impact on the online shopping habits of Asian consumers. Currently, 11.3% of the 3.7 billion people in Asia have access to Internet services[∞].

HotelClub offers over 30,000 hotel accommodation choices in 4,500 cities and 120 countries worldwide. HotelClub has over 3.5 million consumer ratings and reviews that provide independent advice on each hotel.

HotelClub.com will recognise the Best Hotels & Resorts in Asia, as voted by consumers, in a gala Awards ceremony to be held at Café Deco in Hong Kong on July 26 2007.

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^ Source: www.HotelClub.com Booking Statistics – 2006 vs 2005

@ Source: PhoCus Wright Asia Pacific Online Travel Marketplace

∞ Source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm>
accessed on 11.7.07

Source: HotelClub.com Best Hotels and Resorts Survey conducted October – December 2006.

* Source: PhoCus Wright Consumer Travel Trends, 9th Edition 2007

About HotelClub

HotelClub (www.HotelClub.com) is a global accommodation specialist website offering hotel bookings for up to 12 months in advance. It offers users the choice of over 30,000 hotels – at savings of up to 60% – in 120 countries. HotelClub is available in twelve languages – Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish and Thai. HotelClub is a truly global website offering its customers access through country specific sites in 10 countries including HotelClub.com, HotelClub.com.au, HotelClub.de, HotelClub.fr, HotelClub.it, HotelClub.es and HotelClub.co.uk. HotelClub is operated by Flairview Travel, a Travelport brand. Travelport is one of the largest and most geographically diverse travel companies, dedicated to creating the exceptional travel experiences the world demands.

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