

# Business Travel in Asia and Pacific: Singapore and Hong Kong Most Popular

The Accor Asia Pacific Business Travel Research 2011 report indicated some key trends for the region, to which Accor is planning to respond with its hotel offerings, according to the survey manager.



“There were many insights that have been unearthed during the study and many of which will be used to further enhance our brands and ensure their continued relevance to this key market that represents more than 60% of our segmentation,” said Evan Lewis, VP of communications, Asia/Pacific for Accor and coordinator of the survey, which was conducted in partnership with Cimigo Limited between 28 June and 7 July.

There were 10,347 Asia/Pacific-based business travelers surveyed about their travel habits during the first half of 2011 and their planned business travel for the rest of the year.

From Accor’s perspective, the information provided insights into traveler behavior, Lewis said. “We learnt a lot about the manner with which business travelers from different markets travel and the way in which the hotels are consumed by travelers from different regions,” he said via email. “This information is being shared amongst all functional and operational departments as it has relevance to all.”

## **Fitness & Workout**

Among the findings, work hours and fitness habits were clearly different based on country of origin. Travelers from Hong Kong are most likely to burn the midnight oil, with 14% working between

midnight and 6 a.m., compared to 7% on average. The most likely times for business travelers to work in the hotel are naturally after office hours, with 35% working from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and 52% working from 9 p.m. to midnight. Survey participants from Australia and New Zealand were most likely to work early—35% and 38% working from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m., respectively. The most likely place to take a bre



ak is the hotel fitness center, according to 53% of respondents. Indian business travelers are the “power users,” with 64% indicating they use the facility. Of all respondents who said they use the fitness center, 93% use cardiovascular equipment.

“Insights such as this will help us define our products, better enable our hotels to develop products and services to best accommodate the needs of this segment and for the brand in the region (to) evolve to ensure its continued relevance,” Lewis said. “A road show of the findings is being undertaken with our hotel general managers to enable them to immediately be able to respond to the learning’s at an operational level.”

### **Travel Intentions**

The survey indicated Singapore and Hong Kong are the most popular destinations for business travel in the region, with each receiving 38% of answers from destinations traveled to for business in the first half of 2011.

“Singapore and Hong Kong are well established as business hubs in this region, and hence the findings only serve to reinforce this,” Lewis said. “In fact, Singapore and Hong Kong appeared as two of the top three business destinations across seven of the eight markets researched. What was a little surprising was that Bangkok was equal third with China as a destination likely to be travelled to for business in the second half of 2011.”

Intent to travel in the second half of 2011 remained relatively flat compared to the first half of the year. Respondents took an average of 6.3 business trips in the first six months and plan to take an average of 6.2 trips in the last six months of 2011.

“We view flat volumes forecasted for the second half, as a positive indication of sentiment from business travelers,” Lewis said. “Improvement in the business travel segment was seen in the last

half of 2010 and has continued into the first half of 2011, with continued strength anticipated through this year.”

The most active business travelers based on average number of trips taken in the first half of 2011 reside in China (8.7 trips), India (7.3 trips) and Singapore (7.1 trips). Planned trips for the second half still position Chinese residents as the most active (9.2 trips). In a broader sense, male respondents (6.9 trips) are planning to take more trips than female respondents (4.4 trips).



### **Booking Behavior**

Survey respondents are most likely to book hotels directly online (57%), followed by hotels booked by a secretary (46%), online agents (26%), and contacting a travel agent (16%).

Business travelers across key markets in the survey expect the hotel branded website would offer the most competitive rates. Travelers from Indonesia and China, however, have more confidence in their travel agents' websites compared to the total respondent base. Travelers from Australia and New Zealand are more likely to believe that independent travel websites (online travel agencies) will be most competitive.

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