

RESEARCH: INCREASING NUMBER OF BUSINESS TRIPS IN ASIA-PACIFIC



Accor recently conducted a study that will help in understanding the habits of business travelers in Asia-Pacific region. The research organized in 2012 shows that average executive in the region took about 10 trips in the first half of 2012 compared to just 6 trips in the same period last year.

The highest increase in volume was in Mainland China where executives took 17 business trips in the first half of this year compared to just nine trips in first half of 2011. The next highest increase was in India where executives took 13 business trips compared to just 7 trips last year. Singapore was the only country in the Asia-Pacific region that did not show any increase in 2012. The number of business trips taken by executives in Singapore was seven in the first half of 2012 and 2011. However, Singapore emerged as the most popular business destination in 2012 followed by Hong Kong and Thailand.

Other popular business destinations in Asia-Pacific region include Mainland China, Malaysia, India and Indonesia. Even though the popular business destinations are unlikely to change in the second half of 2012, it is likely that Japan could become a popular destination for Thai and Chinese business travelers.

The survey also showed that allocated hotel budgets increased from \$121 to \$125 this year. Business travelers from Singapore registered the maximum increase of 16.4 percent followed by Australia and India. However, business travelers from Indonesia registered the biggest decrease of 12 percent in accommodation budget. Indonesian business travelers also had lowest accommodation budget of just \$81 per night.

The survey interviewed about 2600 executives from nine countries in the Asia-Pacific region that took about 26,000 business trips in the first half of 2012.

The research also tried to find out the reasons for increase in business travel. Some of the main reasons were change in job-title, increase in business activity and increased marketing and sales effort. Travelers from India and Thailand were most bullish about economic recovery and upswing in business was the main reason why they increased their business travel.

The survey found that most business travelers where technology-savvy as they preferred to make their bookings online. Most executives in the Asia-Pacific region preferred to book their rooms using the hotel's website. More than 68 percent business travelers in India preferred using the hotel's website while in China it was only 31 percent. Some of the reasons why people preferred online booking include convenience, access to special deals and discounts, easy to manage and instant confirmation. Some travelers preferred online booking because they could see what the hotel rooms looked like before making a booking.

About 74 percent business travelers are in managerial or lower roles. However, most business travelers from India are directors, CEO's or the owners of the company. This shows that in India seniority plays a major role on the ability to travel. Also, more than 75 percent of business travelers

from Asia-Pacific are men. In India, only 6 percent business travelers are women while in Thailand there are more than 40 percent female business travelers.

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