

Press Release

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Asia-Pacific business travel volumes up more than 60% in first half of 2012, Accor survey reveals

Accor Asia-Pacific Business Traveller Research 2012 shows the average executive took 10 trips in first half of 2012 vs. 6 trips last year; Singapore beats Hong Kong as region's top business destination; hotel budgets up slightly year-on-year

Accor, the largest international hotel operator in Asia-Pacific, has revealed the findings of its third annual **Accor Asia-Pacific Business Traveller Research**, which seeks to better understand the travel and behavioural preferences of business travellers based in the region. The survey interviewed over 2,500 respondents from nine countries in Asia-Pacific, who made business trips in the first half of the year.

According to the survey, **the average number of trips taken by Asia-Pacific executives increased by 67% in the first half of the year**, with ten trips reported in the first half of 2012 versus six trips over the same period last year. Mainland Chinese executives posted the highest increase in volume, with the average Chinese business traveller going on 17 trips in the first half versus nine trips over the same period last year. The next highest increase was among Indian travellers, who took 13 trips compared to seven last year. Singapore was the only country surveyed where business travel remained flat year on year, with the average traveller taking seven trips in the first half of both 2011 and 2012.

The survey found **Singapore emerging as the region's most popular business destination in the first half of 2012** – the city-state appeared in the "Top 3" destination lists of nine key markets surveyed. Last year, Singapore and Hong Kong vied for top honours. Thailand emerged as another key business destination in the first half, appearing the "Top 3" lists of travellers from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, India, Mainland China and Indonesia.

The planned destinations for the remaining half of 2012 are very similar to those countries travelled to in the first six months of the year, with the exception that **Japan moves into the "Top 3" for Chinese and Thai business travellers for the first time** since Accor began the annual survey in 2010.

According to **Evan Lewis, Vice President, Communications, Accor Asia-Pacific**, "In this year's survey, business travellers have told us that Singapore is their top destination in Asia-Pacific and that they expect to continue travelling to the city-state in the second half of the year. The findings underscore Singapore's importance as business gateway to Southeast Asia."

Allocated hotel budgets increased slightly on the whole, with average nightly room budgets creeping up by 3.3% to US\$125 from US\$121 last year. Singapore-based business travellers increased their average nightly hotel spend more than any other country, budgeting 16.4% more per night than last year, followed by

Australian (9.5%) and Indian (3.9%) business travellers. Indonesian travellers had the sharpest budget decrease – 12% -- and the lowest accommodation budgets overall, spending US\$81 per night on average. Another key finding from the survey is the reasons Asia-Pacific executives reported for increasing their travel this year. A change in job-title requiring more travel (38%) coupled with an increase in business activity (35%) and increased sales and marketing efforts (28%) were the most frequently-cited reasons why business travel increased year-on-year. **Indian and Thai business travellers were the most bullish, with 47% of Indians and 45% of Thais citing an upswing in business** as a main reason for increasing their travel plans.

When it comes to making reservations, **business travellers in Asia-Pacific prefer booking online (82%) to offline channels.** The majority of executives in the region (57%) book directly via the hotel's website, with a quarter booking through online travel agencies. India-based business travellers are the most likely to go directly to a hotel's online portal (69%), with only 31% of Mainland Chinese travellers doing the same. The main reasons for booking online include convenience (73%), access to special offers (61%), ease of management (50%) and instant confirmations (48%). For business travellers from Indonesia and Thailand, being able to see what the rooms look like is also an important driver for choosing the online booking route.

Across Asia-Pacific, 74% of business travellers are in managerial or lower roles, with the exception of India, where the bulk (65%) of business travel is done by executives at the director level or higher. Notably, **India also has the highest proportion of business owners travelling**, suggesting that seniority is a strong influencer on the ability to travel for that country.

When looking at who is doing the bulk of business travel in Asia-Pacific, one interesting statistic is those who aren't: women. **Business travel in Asia-Pacific remains dominated by men, with roughly one in four executives surveyed being women.** Thailand had the highest female-to-male ratio (40%) amongst Asia-Pacific business travellers in the first six months of the year, moving ahead from second place over the same period last year. Australian and New Zealand business women took second and third place, with 33% and 30%, respectively. India rounded out the bottom of the list with only six percent of business travellers being women.

The Accor Asia-Pacific Business Traveller Survey aims to provide a deeper understanding of business travel habits in the region. Accor commissioned ORC International to conduct the Accor Asia-Pacific Business Traveller Survey 2012, using an online methodology, targeting members of its loyalty rewards program, Le Club Accorhotels. Over 2,500 Asia Pacific-based business travelers were surveyed online about their travel habits in the first half of 2012, and their planned business travel for the remainder of the year. This survey focused on business travellers currently residing in the following countries: Australia, China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Thailand.



Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 92 countries with more than 4,400 hotels and 530,000 rooms. Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands - Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, ibis, all seasons/ibis Styles, Etap Hotel/Formule 1/ibis budget, hotelF1 and Motel 6 - provide an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With more than 180,000 employees* in Accor brand hotels worldwide, the Group offers to its clients and partners nearly 45 years of know-how and expertise.

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