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Part Two

Research Sheds Light on International Shopping Travelers

By Carolyn J. Feimster SCMD, President, CJF Marketing International, North Brunswick, NJ

LAST MONTH, WE INTRODUCED THE STUDY ON THE INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING TRAVELER, produced by Taubman Centers and Shop America Alliance in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries. This month's article will expand on the findings and how shopping centers are using the data.

According to the study, the most frequently purchased item was apparel.

The study listed the top 25 brands shopped for by the international traveler (see table). Centers have shared this information in their merchant newsletter, including listing the top brands that appeal to the international shopper. This can be taken a step further by partnering with retailers to develop additional pre-arrival awareness programs. Karen MacDonald, director of communications for Taubman Centers, said, "Since Woodfield Mall (Schaumburg, IL) has 11 of the top 25 retail brands, we are sharing the information with our merchants who carry those brands specifically to get them to participate in our new proposed loyalty program."

Another finding from the study showed that the vast majority of international travelers use web sites to plan and book their travel.

"We use online sites such as Guidebook America to get our message out," said Kathy Anderson, tourism manager of America's Premier Shopping Places, the tourism brand for General Growth Properties, Inc. "All of our centers are listed with their destinations on the

site, along with a link to our printable Premier Passport voucher, which travelers exchange at our centers for special offers. We also have banner placement on their weekly newsletter that goes out to over 20,000 consumer subscribers with a link to our dedicated tourism website www.AmericasShoppingPlaces.com."

The study listed the top 25 cities visited by the international shopping traveler. The top five are New York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Orlando and San Francisco.

To capitalize on this, The Seaport recently partnered with the Downtown Alliance to participate in Pow Wow, a trade show produced by the U.S. Travel Association that targets the international tour operator and receptive tour operator. Partnering with a DMO gives strength to a shopping venue within a destination.

For Las Vegas to be in the number-three position, speaks volumes about the success of Art Jimenez, senior director of leisure sales for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, and the work he has done for the past eight years with their award-winning Shop Las Vegas program. We have covered many of his programs

in these articles over the past few years.

For the past year, the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. (Orlando CVB) has partnered with its local shopping venues to create a Shop Orlando program, which features shopping packages sold through Shop America Tours. "Having been ranked as the number-four shopping destination in the recent international study really validates how Orlando has emerged as a major player on the global shopping scene," says Nancy Hahn Bono, senior director of global development for the Orlando CVB. "Shop

Brand Savvy

Brand preferences vary by inbound market. The top 25 brands shopped for overall are:*

- 1. Nike
- 2. Levis
- 3. Gap
- 4. Polo Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger
- 5. Abercrombie & Fitch
- 6. Calvin Klein and Coach
- 7. Adidas, Gucci and Chanel
- 8. Sony, Armani, Banana Republic and Louis Vuitton
- 9. Apple, Prada and Victoria's Secret
- 10. Old Navy, Dolce & Gabbana, Diesel, American Eagle, DKNY, Hugo Boss and Hollister

*Duplicate names on the same line indicate that the same percentage of international shopping travelers surveyed, selected those brands.

Orlando has proven to be a great complement to our overall destination marketing efforts.”

Another interesting finding from the study showed that the number-one motivator for shopping was to purchase for themselves.

Why? Depending on the country, it could be a favorable exchange rate or it could be that the goods are less expensive in the US. Studies have shown that a plane ticket, overnight stay and shopping for popular brands in the US cost less for the UK traveler than that same brand at home, even with today’s exchange rates.

It’s not just about shopping. Cultural and heritage attractions are important too.

Forty-eight percent of shopping travelers also visited historic sites. This becomes an important marketing tool for venues such as historic Faneuil Hall Marketplace and The Seaport. Along with promoting shopping and dining, we market the venues as historical

attractions. In the case of The Seaport, we have a strong partnership with the South Street Seaport Museum. In fact, the Museum acts as our fulfillment center for visitors picking up their VIP welcome packets. These packets include a welcome letter, coupon book, directory, logo gift item and brochures from attractions in and around The Seaport. We promote these welcome packets in all of our tour operator programs.

No surprise, 42% reported seeking out unique dining experiences while visiting the US. This is excellent information for the leasing departments so they will target interesting new restaurant concepts.

Although the study findings were not issued until May of this year, participants at this year’s Shop America’s Global Shop Summit in January received a preview of the study and what it would include. Organizer of the Summit and Shop America’s President

Rosemary McCormick said, “Destinations, brands, retailers, outlets and shopping centers need to promote shopping as an essential part of the travel experience. Through shopping tourism marketing, we can increase travel spending and overall economic benefits throughout our country.” For more information on The International Shopping Traveler, visit ShopAmericaTours.com or email ShopAmericaTours@aol.com and mention JONESREPORT Plus for your free executive summary.

We are continuing this series of articles on tourism every other month and would like to focus on some of the more innovative tourism programs. Please submit your programs to me, either via e-mail at Carolyn@CJFMarketingInternational.com, by fax 732/545-3138 or mail. If possible, include samples of your graphics. Full credit will be given to the person or team responsible for the program. Visit our new website: www.cjfmarketinginternational.com. ■

Top Cities

The top 25 cities* visited by international shopping travelers overall are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. New York, NY | 13. Atlanta, GA |
| 2. Los Angeles, CA | 14. Phoenix, AZ |
| 3. Las Vegas, NV | 15. Dallas-Fort Worth, TX and Seattle, WA |
| 4. Orlando, FL | 16. Tampa, FL |
| 5. San Francisco, CA | 17. Philadelphia, PA |
| 6. Honolulu, HI | 18. Detroit, MI |
| 7. Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL | 19. Fort Myers-Naples, FL |
| 8. Chicago, IL | 20. West Palm Beach, FL |
| 9. San Diego, CA and Washington, DC | 21. Denver, CO |
| 10. Houston, TX | 22. Portland, OR |
| 11. Boston, MA and | 23. Baltimore, MD |
| 12. Buffalo, NY | |

*Duplicate destinations on the same line indicate that the same percentage of international shopping travelers surveyed selected those cities.

CJF Marketing International offers a range of services for creating and implementing strategic tourism, economic development and marketing programs for shopping centers, urban entertainment projects, downtown retail districts, communities and commercial properties globally. The firm also offers educational programs and seminars for corporate meeting planners, shopping center developers, communities and re-development agencies. Feimster can be reached at 732/249-6080.
