

**ACTP promotes better usage of research**

In this issue, we have highlighted the US Travel Trade Research. To read others, please visit our [research page](#) or watch for the next issue of [‘What’s New at ACTP’!](#)

**Atlantic Canada’s position in the US travel trade market**

The U S Travel Trade study was undertaken to identify current trends and Atlantic Canada’s position in the US Travel Trade Market. The key findings of the report are:

- Because of the recession, prices (cost) were seen as the driving factor in the US travel industry in 2009.
- Two thirds of tour companies (67 percent) reporting customers shopping for deals or bargains was the single most important trend now taking place in the industry.
- The US itself was reported as the destination showing the greatest increase in travel in 2009.
- None of the companies reported an increase in travel to Atlantic Canada in 2009 and none were expecting an increase in 2010.
- Tour companies did not see prices in Atlantic Canada as too high but they did point out that competitive destinations were reducing rates and it was having an impact.
- In terms of trends in mode of travel; tour companies saw cruise as the leading growth segment in the short term because of its willingness to slash prices. Group travel is expected to remain strong with a division noted between new seniors and traditional seniors. FIT is expected to be the fastest growing segment among younger travelers.
- Tour operators saw the leading product trends of the future being driven by a desire for more trip flexibility and especially the opportunity for involvement. The trip components experiential, culinary and cultural rated very high.
- Atlantic Canada was seen as having low awareness in the US marketplace
- Priority changes recommended to improve Atlantic Canada’s image included more opportunities for involvement and more experiential experiences.
- The leading trend in package sales was more web sales and less being sold by travel agents.
- The overall trend in consumer advertising was more web marketing and especially more integration between web and other media (usually direct mail).
- Social media was recognized as very important by 95 percent of Companies.
- Tour companies were very supportive of ACTP’s co operative advertising program. It was recommended as a first priority activity by 80 percent.

Implications to industry

- It is important to recognize that the current decline in US trade visitation to Atlantic Canada is being influenced to a significant extent by the impact of the recession (cost & closer to home vacations). While certainly not guaranteed, future recovery is possible as economic conditions improve.
- Trade customers will be looking for more flexibility in their trips and the opportunity to experience “local life” at the destinations they visit. Industry should be prepared to accommodate this expectation.
- Culinary experiences are now very hot products in the trade industry. This may present an opportunity (change simply dinning to an experience).
- Experiential products are now so in demand with the trade that they are almost essential.

Industry should be prepared to respond to this expectation.

- Social media is expected to become very important in trade marketing. This should be followed as it may present very cost effective marketing opportunities.

To learn more, please check out the [US Travel Trade summary report](#) or [full report](#) on the ACTP website.

### **The Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership – Who We Are**

The Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership is a nine-member pan-Atlantic partnership consisting of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the four tourism industry associations in Atlantic Canada and the four provincial departments responsible for tourism in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. ACTP has been in place since 1991 and is dedicated to promoting Atlantic Canada as a tourism destination of choice in key American and international markets. For more information, visit [www.actp-ptca.ca](http://www.actp-ptca.ca)