

ASTA Releases Annual Supplier-Travel Agent Marketing Report

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The survey producing the results found in this 18-page report was conducted in March of 2008 and includes survey data on preferred supplier relationships, booking channels used, incentives and the usefulness of supplier education programs.

"It is important for travel professionals to have the opportunity to step back and review industry trends on a regular basis," said Cheryl Hudak, CTC, ASTA president and CEO. "ASTA is committed to consistently producing high-quality reports, such as the Supplier-Travel Agent Marketing Report, so members are aware of emerging trends and so they can monitor their overall progress on a regular basis and make adjustments when necessary to ensure continued success."

ASTA conducted its annual Supplier - Travel Agent Relationship Marketing survey to assist travel agencies and suppliers in understanding and benchmarking typical agency-supplier business arrangements.

The report concluded that a strong relationship between suppliers and travel agents is imperative if both sides want to increase the amount of business they generate. This report also found that agents 95.9 percent of agents who engage in a preferred supplier relationship do so based on the supplier's reputation and quality of their product.

Among other findings:

- The majority of agencies, 66.1 percent, do not provide incentives to front-line agents for booking with preferred suppliers.
- The majority of airline travel 65.9 percent is still booked through the GDS system followed by the airline's Web site.
- Personal sales calls and local trade shows are the most effective ways agents learn about new suppliers.
- When asked for their preferred method of receiving education, respondents chose in-person conferences and seminars and online Web training as their top preferences. The majority of agents participate in FAM trips to learn about new products and destinations.

Premium Members will receive this full report for free and travel agent members will receive a free two-page summary, but can also purchase the entire report for \$250. The cost for ASTA member suppliers is \$350 and \$550 for non-members. For additional information, please contact mteates@asta.org or visit the research page on ASTA.org.

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