



Stockton's Levenson Institute Research Showing Positive Signs for Atlantic City

Evolution to Destination Resort Appears to be Underway

For Immediate Release

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Contact: Tim Kelly
Office of Public Relations
Galloway Township, NJ 08240
Tim.Kelly@stockton.edu
(609) 652-4950

Atlantic City, NJ- Casino Gaming is still a top draw, but research findings of the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism of Richard Stockton College of New Jersey indicate the possibility of a changing tourism landscape.

An annual survey of 3,000 randomly selected adults in 16 major markets within 400 miles shows changing perceptions, wider ranging reasons for visiting and favorable visitor satisfaction compared to nearby competing states.

"It's really not your grandfather's Atlantic City anymore," said Israel Posner, Levenson Institute Executive Director, who worked on the survey along with the lead investigator, Dr. Brian J. Tyrrell, a Stockton College professor in the department of Hospitality and Tourism Management. "Gaming is still the top draw, however more and more visitors are coming to Atlantic City for concerts, the beach, special events and shopping at the Walk. Atlantic City has worked very hard in recent years at diversifying and adding to its attractions and now the efforts look as if they are beginning to pay off."

According to the survey, more than half of the respondents overall (53 percent) had visited Atlantic City at least once. A bit more than half of that group had visited since

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2003, when major projects such as Borgata Casino & Spa, the Quarter at Tropicana and the Walk came on line.

Posner said the latter number, when projected to the population base of the tested area totaled nearly 15 million people. "When you have that many people coming into a resort with this many changes in facilities and attractions, you are going to see a shift in public perceptions," he said. Margin of error in the survey is 1.8 percent.

"The largest percentage rise in visitors since '03 is in visitors whose primary purpose included shows, special events, concerts, shopping and the like," Tyrrell said. "This is precisely the type of visitor Atlantic City is hoping to attract." For visitors who had not been to Atlantic City since 2003, only 4 percent said their primary trip purpose was to attend a concert, show or special event. That number has more than doubled, with 9 percent of visitors who have come since 2003 for such purposes.

Perhaps most heartening for Atlantic City booster is that approximately 10 percent of this region have been to Atlantic City at least once in the past 12 months, or approximately five million unique visitors. The survey found that many of these individuals made multiple trips, translating to 28 million total trips or an average of six trips per year -- indicating strong customer satisfaction. Another 24 percent of the respondents, representing 12 million individuals, had visited AC prior to 2003.

Dr. Tyrrell said Atlantic County leads the state of New Jersey in tourism dollars spent, with almost \$11 billion. That is about twice the amount of tourism expenditures in the next closest New Jersey county of Cape May. Further, New Jersey bested the neighboring gaming states of Delaware, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and New York in customer satisfaction ratings. Over half (53.8 percent) of Atlantic City gamblers left satisfied, significantly higher than all the northeast casino destinations, particularly its closest rival of Pennsylvania where only 39.5 percent of visitors were leaving satisfied. "Undoubtedly it is the multitude of destination elements in Atlantic City that account for this satisfaction. The shops, the entertainment, the world class restaurants and, of course the beach and boardwalk."

To read the entire 2012 Tourism Promotion Survey, click on the following link:

[Click here to go to the 2012 Tourism Promotion Survey](#)