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Does The Travel Industry Strive To Serve Its Female Customers? A Closer Look At The Changing Nature Of Female Business Travelers

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DOES THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY STRIVE TO SERVE ITS FEMALE CUSTOMERS? A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CHANGING NATURE OF FEMALE BUSINESS TRAVELERS

BY

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Author's Note

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INTRODUCTION

It's 12 a.m. central standard time and a female executive has just arrived at her downtown Chicago hotel after being almost 3hours delayed at the O'Hare airport. After she checks in, she begins to walk the long dimly light corridor to her room that just happens to be located on the other side of the hotel. Once in her room, she realizes there is no peephole or safety lock on the door and that the closets only have clothes hangers meant for slacks not skirts. It's too late and too dark to go out for a bite to eat and yet the hotel doesn't offer room service. This scenario could be classified as a typical example of what female business travelers experience during any given business trip.

Ah, the life of the traveling executive; exploring exotic locales, sampling bountiful breakfast buffets, and accumulating a lifetime supply of hotel shampoos and body lotions. No one knows the ins and outs of smart business travel better than the road warriors (McDaniel, 1999). Business travelers can face numerous headaches in a given day. Some of these include overcrowded airports, flights that run late or are canceled, pre-arranged rental cars that have been sold out, and hotels that are completely booked. Thanks to a strong economy and bargain travel prices, many travel experts expect these situations to multiply due to the increased number of personal and business travelers.

After decades of trying to conform to a man's world in the workplace, women business travelers are asserting their differences and want to be catered to, whether that's having skirt hangers in hotel rooms or holding meetings while having spa treatments. Until recently, the travel industry has targeted males as the ultimate decision-maker.

Today, the ratio of men to women travelers has shifted. According to Working Woman (Woods, 2000) magazine, women currently make up 40 % of all business travelers, numbering approximately 17.2 million strong.

Women have a huge stake in the current and future job market. Between 1998 and 2008, women's participation in the labor force is expected to increase by 15%, while men will only see an increase of about 10% (Silvestri, 1995). As a result, women will increase their share of the labor force from 46 to 48%.

Given the number of women in the job market and its impact on business, the author is disconcerted by the findings of a Sewell (2000) study, which implies that the business travel industry should focus its efforts on men rather than women. In the past, the travel industry has focused its efforts on males since they made up the majority of business travelers. The travel industry, however, believes that there are so few differences between the sexes when it comes to travel that they wonder whether women should be treated differently. Moreover, such decisions as which airline carrier or hotel to select are now being determined by women. Due to the increasing number of female travelers, the role of female business travelers as decision-makers should become of considerable importance to the travel industry.

Several major hotel chains and learning institutions have conducted research on female business travelers and have found that savvy sophisticated women who travel for business today believe that responsive service is the most important criteria to use when selecting a hotel for business. Among the many revelations about female business travelers is that their preferences are often similar to men's. For example, surveys have

shown that women favor separate makeup mirrors in hotel bathrooms. When hotels installed them, they found that many men prefer them to other mirrors for shaving. And they found that many male diners like to sit at those large round tables that are set up in hotel restaurants mainly for single women, so they won't have to eat alone.

In the mid 1990s, the US hotel industry 'discovered' the female business traveler was a viable and desirable market segment. Interest in this emerging segment is apparent in the development of specific products and services by major and niche hotel companies designed to develop brand awareness and loyalty among women who travel on business (Bond, 1997 p.88).

It is imperative that the travel industry realizes that women account for 40 % of business travelers and begin to react to this growing population. According to a study of female business travelers (Crown Plaza Hotel Travel Index Survey, 1998), a woman's top concern on business trips is having responsive service. Travel corporations that are responsible for marketing its products and services need to acknowledge this paradigm shift and begin to target their products and services toward this growing market segment, females.

The intent of this study is to explore the wants, needs and attitudes of female business travelers, a large and growing market segment particularly as it relates to the lodging industry. Additionally, this study will contribute objective data that will provide a richer, fuller picture that expands the awareness of the attitudes and behavior about female business travelers. Second, the study will attempt to uncover whether or not the travel industry fully understands how to market to this growing market segment.

As a vice president of a public relations firm, as well as a frequent business traveler, the author seeks to prepare herself, her female colleagues, and the industry with several answers to this paradigm shift. Additionally, the author will bring first hand experience and relate these experiences as a female as well as a frequent business traveler.

Statement of the Problem

Research shows that the business travel industry is geared more toward men then women, despite the increase in the number of female business travelers. This study explores that issue to determine if the travel industry strives to serve its female customers.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to focus on whether or not the travel industry has directed its marketing efforts toward its female customers.

While there is a significant amount of literature describing the travel industry in terms of airlines, hotels for both personal and corporate use, and cultural impact, most studies do not specifically discuss issues and interests relative to women. The absence of comprehensive studies that go beyond superficial information to focus on the attitudinal and behavior characteristic of the female business traveler is scarce at best.

The author intends to focus specifically on women for two reasons: First, as a female and frequent business traveler, the author is interested in whether or not the travel

industry is cognizant of the large percentage of female business travelers and their impact on the industry. The existing secondary research concentrates on men; up until now they have comprised the majority of business travelers. Although some data are available, detailed analysis of women's travel habits is not adequate considering the profound impact they have had on the travel industry. This impact is documented in this study.

Objectives

This study sufficiently looks at the travel industry and the effects it has on its female business travelers. The first objective of this study is to add to the existing body of information relative to the relationship between women and the travel industry. The results of this study have implications for personal and business travel use. Secondly, this study will attempt to determine whether or not the travel industry uses its products and services to successfully impact female travel decisions.

Armed with the knowledge of why women select certain airlines and hotels, travel industry marketers could tailor advertising and marketing campaigns to reach this growing segment of the population. Additionally, the results of this study have implications for women. Knowing how and why other female business travelers could inspire the industry to pursue this venue in new and exciting ways.

The author plans to share this information with her current employer's corporate travel department, female travel publications, as well as with her female colleagues who also travel frequently.

Definition of Terms

1. Award: Free airline ticket, hotel stay, and car rental, merchandise item, traveler's check, or gift certificate. Depending on the program, awards may be actual tickets or certificates that must be redeemed at airline ticket counters, hotel front desks, car rental desks, or specific merchandise outlets.

2. Class of service: Refers generally to airline travel; indicates the level of travel, cabin position, size of seat and surrounding area, and the amenities offered. Most frequently listed as First Class, Business Class and Coach.

3. Code sharing: When one airline provides connecting service under another carrier's name. Both airlines' codes appear in reservation systems and on tickets. Code-share flights can occasionally increase mileage.

4. Connection: Changing to a different airplane en-route to final destination. Connection bonuses and segment promotion credits are earned only if the connecting flight number is different from the origination flight number.

5. E-Ticket: While a formal trademark of one airline, it generally refers to the concept of not issuing an advance ticket or boarding pass for travel. Similar in concept to hotel and car rental reservations, passengers receive necessary documentation when checking in. This system is becoming more and more prevalent in airline frequent flyer programs as a means of award redemption.

6. Elite level: Additional services for members attaining certain levels of accrued miles or points. Elite-level membership usually allows travelers to accrue miles or points

faster, provides special check-in services, and grants special airline seating or hotel floors.

7. <u>Off-peak travel</u>: Travel at a particular time of year when airlines predict a lower demand for seats. This usually excludes the time surrounding major holidays. Airlines designate specific "peak" and "off-peak" dates, and many do not allow award travel during peak times.

8. <u>Personal knowledge:</u> Personal knowledge is information (data, facts, and opinions) that pertains directly to a woman's personal (non-professional) activities or interests.

9. <u>Professional knowledge:</u> Professional knowledge is information (data, facts, and opinions) that relates directly to a woman's occupation or career.

10. <u>Purchased upgrades</u>: An upgrade to a higher class of service that can be obtained by actually purchasing the upgrade.

11. <u>Retroactive credit</u>: Miles or points awarded to new member who may have flown or stayed previous to enrollment in a program. Requires proof of flight (boarding pass) or proof of stay (hotel receipt).

12. <u>Standby upgrade</u>: Available at check-in if space is available in a higher class of service. Usually passengers check in no more than two hours in advance for standby upgrades.

13. <u>Web sites:</u> Web sites are stored in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) format. They include text, typically some type of multimedia features such as graphics, digitized sound files and video, and blue colored hypertext links to other documents.

Additional terms are included in Appendix A.

Limitations

The author is, herself, a woman and business traveler and therefore, acknowledges that there is a bias toward the subject matter. It is important to note that during the course of this study, the author uncovered that many articles concerning business travel focused on the effects of business travelers as a whole. Additionally, it appears as though the industry as a whole believes that men and women are treated equally and that there are few differences when it pertains to business travel. This issue is briefly discussed in this study. However, the author does not feel this problem adversely impacts the final results of this study because its purpose is to find out if the industry is providing female business travelers with what they really want.

In addition, although a good sampling of female business travelers is part of this study, their thoughts and opinions do not, of course, represent all women who travel. A more representative and scientific sample would need to be done to gather such opinions.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Century of Women

Women made substantial progress during the 20th century, closing the employment, occupational and earnings gaps significantly. It has been suggested that the 21st century holds even more promise, leading some to refer to it at the "Century of the Woman" (Sewell, 2000, p. 1).

Changes in the lives of women in the 20th century laid the groundwork for the prominence of women in the work force in the 21st century. Some of these changes are political, many are social, some are demographic, and others are economic.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (US Dept. of Labor, 1999) projects that women will increase to 47.5% of the labor force by 2008. More than 70 million jobs were added between 1964 and 1999. Of the more than 70 million jobs, 43 million were for women, 28 million were for men. Thirty of 100 jobs were in manufacturing in 1964, 14 of 100 jobs in 1999. Two-thirds of jobs were in service-producing industries in 1964, four-fifths, in 1999. For every two jobs added for men in government, five were added for women. For every two jobs added for men in services and retail sales, three were added for women. Jobs in services jumped by 30 million for women and men. Women's jobs doubled in every industry except manufacturing, men's jobs doubled only in services, retail trade, and finance 1964-1999.

Occupations, which did not exist for women at the beginning of the 20th century, have become increasingly important in the information technology revolution according to Sewell (2000). For many of these positions, it should be noted that business travel is considered mandatory.

The importance of the passage of the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States in 1920, granting women the right to vote, cannot be overemphasized. It provided the precedent for other legislation aimed at improving work conditions for women. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), though not designed specifically for women, sets the minimum wage, overtime pay, record keeping and child labor standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private and public sectors. Legislation in the early 1960's, which outlawed employment-based discrimination against women and minorities, began to open up job opportunities for them.

In 1996, there were 7.7 million women employed in executive, administrative and managerial occupations (US Dept. of Labor, 1999). Women in management, or the executive, administrative and managerial occupation category, are an extremely broad group. It includes fast food restaurant managers, CEOs of large corporations, accountants, underwriters, administrators and officials, financial managers, medicine and health managers, and other occupations. Workers in this group establish policies, make plans, determine staffing requirements, and direct the activities of business, government agencies, and other organizations.

Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations are projected to have faster than average employment growth. The number of executive, administrative and

managerial workers is expected to increase by 2.2 million from 1994 to 2005, or 17%, well above the 14% for all occupations (Brame, 1996).

Women comprised 44% of the total number employed in executive, administrative and managerial occupations in 1996, up from 39% in 1988 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1997). Women's job growth in this field has surpassed that of men in recent years. The number of women in this field grew by 39% between 1988 and 1996, while the number of men grew by only 16% (Sewell, 2000).

The supply of women qualified for management jobs has continued to increase as more women accumulate work experience and complete management professional education programs. Although women have made great progress attaining management jobs, their median weekly earnings continue to be well below those of male managers.

The Glass Ceiling Commission was established in 1991 to study and make recommendations about the barriers that prevent women and minorities from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder. According to their fact finding report (Shellenbarger, 2000), the U.S. Labor force is gender and race segregated- - white men fill most of the top management positions in corporations. Although women are 43% of the executive, administrative and managerial occupations, they account for less than 3% to 5% of top executive positions (Shelenbarger, 2000).

Over the last decade, surveys of Fortune 500 companies conducted by Korn/Ferry International and Catalyst (1999), an employment consultant firm, found that 95 to 97% of senior managers - - vice presidents and above- - were men. According to Korn/Ferry

(1998), 60% of the Fortune 100 companies had women on their board of directors in 1992. This figure was up from 36% in 1979 and 11% in 1973.

According to Sewell (2000), women are still most likely to be managers in the same fields in which there are also proportionately more of them employed below the managerial level. Women held 75% of all managerial positions in medicine and health. They held over half of the managerial jobs in finance, personnel and labor relations, accounting and auditing, and buying. In addition, they held over 60% of the managerial jobs as personnel, training and labor relations specialists, as well as underwriters. In contrast, Sewell (2000) believes that women still are substantially underrepresented among inspectors, funeral directors, and administrators in protective services.

Heidrick and Struggles (1993) suggest that beliefs and attitudes individual organization members hold toward the appropriate roles and job assignments for women are frequently described as primary barriers to women's careers in management. Other studies suggest that contextual aspects of organizations, such as their existing social structures, personnel and compensation practices, and industry type are also associated with gender stratification across firms.

President Clinton has called on employers, government officials, community educators and workers to recognize and reward the full value of the skills and contributions of women and people of color. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman has directed the Women's Bureau to develop an Equal Pay Checklist as a guide to issues that affect pay. Working women are entitled to equal employment opportunity on the job, including the right to equal pay for equal work and to earn a paycheck that is free from

unlawful bias. Yet working women continue to tell the U.S. Department of Labor that pay is one of their biggest workplace concerns (US Dept. of Labor, 1999).

Women have a huge stake in the current and future job market. Between 1998 and 2008, women's participation in the labor force is expected to increase by 15 percent, while men will only see an increase of about 10%. As a result, women will increase their share of the labor force from 46 to 48% (Sewell, 2000, p.12).

Of the 108 million women age 16 and over in the United States in 1999, 65 million were in the labor force-working or looking for work. Six out of every ten women age 16 and over were labor force participants in 1999 (US Dept. of Labor, 1999). Women age 35-44 had the highest labor participation rate in 1999. Women's share of the labor force reached 46 percent in 1994 and has remained at this level. By 2008, women are projected to comprise 48 percent of the labor force (US Dept. of Labor, 1999). According to the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, (2000), there were 62 million working women in 1999; 75 percent (46 million) were employed full time, while 25 percent (16 million) worked part time.

There are still challenges to be met by women. It is important to emphasize to employers that women are nearly half of the work force. Employers must adjust to meet women's needs, as well as men's, to ensure the success of their business venture. It is in their own best interest to be fair to all workers.

The Changing Role of the Business Travel Industry

"The demands of the business traveler today are a lot larger than they used to be," says Ruth Stanat, (cited in Faltermayer, 1998, p. 32) author of the book Global Gold: Planning for Profits in Foreign Markets. "The fall of the iron curtain is the crucial factor in the expanded scope of business travel. When the walls came down, a lot of companies started taking a look at Eastern and Central Europe and China," Stanat says (p. 31). As a result of that, the travel situation is explosive. And as a result of that, employees of expanding companies have had to change their life-styles" (Stanat, 1998, as cited in Faltermayer, 1998, p. 2). Stanat is the founder and president of SIS International Research, which provides market feedback for companies such as Motorola and Wendy's that want to do more business abroad. Stanat's definition of a business traveler is one who has traveled to more than 100 countries to help clients develop business intelligence and world trade.

Businessmen and women can communicate practically anywhere around the globe in seconds. Still, business travel continues to rise. An electronic handshake won't replace the human touch anytime soon. Even with net conferencing and video conferencing, you've got time changes and lots of circumstances when technology doesn't work, points out Robert Strauss (as cited in Simmons, 2000), professor of economics and public policy at Carnegie Mellon' Heinz School of Public Policy. "The initial courtship of business often benefits from face to face contact, especially when people are talking about a lot of money. People want to know who's on the other end of the split screen" (p. 1).

The travel industry has two types of clientele: personal travelers and business travelers. Both of these groups represent a different classification when it pertains to frequency of travel, budgets and time spent away from home. Although historically, males have made up the larger percentage of the business traveler industry, the research conducted for purposes of this study concentrated solely on the female business traveler.

According to Reed Travel Group (1997) in 1996 the travel industry believed that the frequency of business travel was at an all time high. In fact, numerous surveys like the 1996 Survey of Business Travel sponsored by the Reed Travel Group (1997) and the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) (Taylor, 2000), stated that there are more business travelers "on the road" than ever before. The TIA National Survey reported that 193 million-business trips were taken in 1996. Additionally, they found that a record number of U.S. adults were taking at least one business trip per year. This number has steadily increased over the last several years. The current number of 42.9 million business travelers reflects a 12% increase since the 1996 Survey of Business Travelers, and a 21% increase in the number of business travelers since 1991 (Stanat, 1999, p. 8).

According to Business Travel News, a New York based magazine for corporate travelers, the 100 companies that spend the most on business travel, led by IBM, spent more than $10 billion just on air travel in 1999. Overall, corporations spent $175 billion on business travel, including transportation, food, lodging, and entertainment during the same period. Furthermore, more than 1 in 5 adults traveled for business at least once last year, a 5% increase since 1994, says the Travel Industry Association of America (TIAA) (Simmons, 2000, p. 2)

In 1996, the average business traveler was described as a well-educated professional male, 40 years of age, married with an employed spouse. The average household income of business travelers was $68.9 million. Almost half (49%) of business travelers referred to their occupations as professional or managerial. It is important to emphasize that the "average" business traveler in 1996 was male. If we compare the literature of 1996 to today, one would find a very different "average" business traveler (Reed Travel Group, 1997).

Why is business travel up? Between 1998 and 2008, U.S. employment will rise 160.8 million from 140.5 million. This represents an increase of 14%, or 20.3 million jobs. Many of these new job opportunities will benefit persons seeking employment in computer and health related occupations, social services, legal, natural science, teaching and financial sales areas (Taylor, 2000).

In most instances, increased travel is due to a combination of factors. These include a booming domestic economy and globalization as well as people having more job responsibilities, more out of town business is conducted, people attend more industry events, more occupations require travel, organizations are demanding more face-to-face interaction with clients and clients are demanding more face-to-face interaction with their organizations.

Technology encourages travel. In addition, communication breeds more communication. It's the self-perpetuating nature of communication. The more you talk and exchange emails, the more you stir up business, eventually requiring more meeting and more trips (Simmons, 2000, p. 68).

The author, however, believes that by combining technology with the hassles of travel, the result is more stressful business trips. Whereas people watching in airports used to be a favorite pastime of business travelers before the digital age, many now spend time waiting for the often delayed flights hunched over laptops or making cell phone calls.

Technology, rather than face-to-face meetings, is often used for internal company communication, as well as with external firms, once deals have been sealed. In an ironic twist, the Internet, email, and teleconference have freed up firms to do more travel. "If anything, technology has helped travel grow. While it saves time and money on internal meetings, it gives you resources to spend on external meeting and sending staff to conferences " (Shellenbarger, 2000).

Bond (1997) reports that over the past 5 years the number of women travelers has grown dramatically. The majority of women travelers originate from North America, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, South and Southeast Asia, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong and Singapore. All projections indicate that the number of female travelers will continue to increase. The power of women and their economic impact is being felt in all sectors of the travel industry. This market segment represents new profits for the next century (Bond, 1997).

Women who have earned positions of leadership and control are like their male counterparts, among the most savvy of business travelers. They have clearly defined expectations as to what makes a positive business exchange. Evaluating how the industry

caterers to the real needs of women business travelers today should become a primary concern.

The literature does mention that as a proportion of total business travelers, women have edged up slightly since 1996, increasing from 38% to 40%. This equated to a ratio of 60% of business travelers being male, while 40% were female. In actual numbers, this represented 17.2 million female business travelers and 25.7 million male business travelers (Reed, 1997). According to research conducted by NBC-TV for a special segment on the Today Show (Bernard, 1998) about "Women Travel," 238 million women traveled without men in 1998. NBC predicted that within the next 4 years, women would represent over 50% of the market share for business travel.

Today, there are numerous social, cultural and economic factors that, over a period of time, have evolved, altered and coalesced to create what can best be described as the changing nature of women who travel on business. According to the U.S. Travel Data Center (Bond, 1997), in 1996, female business travelers accounted for 40% of business travel with 17.2 million women making 67 million business trips during the year. This growth is expected to continue, with women constituting 50% of the business travel market by the midpoint of the next decade (Sewell, 2000, p. 27).

Research has shown that the larger percentage of business travel clients in the convention or conference domain will be women. Women make 70% of all travel decisions. A woman hears or reads about a particular destination, trip or airline and then she begins more extensive research.

If 70% of all travel decisions are made by women and over 50% of travel clients are already women, the time has surely come to identify the "female travelers" needs and purchase motivators. Products should be modified to accommodate these changing markets. Sales, marketing and advertising campaigns should increasingly target the female business traveler if they want to stay competitive.

Has the industry followed this logic of thinking? Which hotel chains have aimed their efforts to cater to women business travelers? Certainly, women business travelers require the same amenities as their male counterparts: fax capability, modem jacks, and a comfortable night's sleep. But even in an increasingly egalitarian world, a woman's security needs cannot be ignored. Extra anxiety generated from a fear of feeling unsafe is not acceptable for any business traveler. Safety is often cited in the literature as the number one concern of female business travelers. This issue has gained almost mythical status in the industry and whenever the needs and wants of the female business traveler are discussed, safety dominates the exchange. As a consequence, hotels tend to put a tremendous amount of emphasis on security in the belief that this provides the most tangible demonstration of their sensitivity to the needs of this market. For that matter, neither is a room with a trouser press and no skirt hangers.

So how are some hotels meeting the needs of women business travelers? As the number and proportion of women traveling on business has mushroomed in recent years, some large hotel chains claimed that they have focused their attention to these concerns. Much of this attention is on the World Wide Web, on such sites shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Female Travel Web Sites

Female Oriented Travel Site	Summary
Journeywoman www.journeywoman.com	This is an electronic magazine for traveling women, which packages the input of others in a quarterly newsletter conveying pertinent information and tips.
HERmail.net www.hermail.net	A sister site of journeywoman, allows women to share travel information and experiences.
Executive Woman's Travel Network www.delta-air.com/womenexecs	Joint project between Delta Air Lines and American Express covers key travel topics relevant to females.
Wyndham's Women on Their Way www.womenbusinesstravelers.com	Provides females business travelers with a source to go for pertinent travel and business related information.
IVillage.com's Travel Channel www.ivillage.com/travel	Bills itself as the women's network for travel information. Offers articles of particular interest to business travelers.
Business Travel Section of Women's Wire www.womenswire.com/biztravel	Provides travel tips and suggestions for female business travelers.
Women.com www.women.com/travel	Provides travel tips and suggestions for female business travelers.

Note. This data was gathered from numerous travel magazines and journals.

Personal safety is a factor in this new, wide-open world. A growing number of

companies are taking extra steps to ensure their employees' safety as they log those

mega-miles. Don Hubbard, national director of security for Coopers & Lybrand, saw the

need to bolster the company's international travel-security policy after an executive was

trapped in Mexico City restaurant by three gunmen, robbed and released (Faltermayer,

1998).

Many who think that business globetrotting will taper off as communications

technology replaces the need for personal contract. The way people do business might

change, however, there is no replacement for face-to-face trust. To be competitive in the world today, companies need to deliver world-class service to clients. Additionally, they need to link their expertise and specialties. This requires companies to be more multinational to their clients. Personal meetings are often required.

Profile of the Female Business Traveler

The statistics speak for themselves: Women purchase 81% of products and services in this country. On average, women live 6 years longer than men. One of every nine female baby boomers will live to the age of 90 or older. It is estimated that up to 90% of all women will have the sole responsibility for their finances at some point in their lives. Female-headed households have increased by 125% since 1960. Some 73% of women will celebrate their 85 birthday. Nearly 72% of all women are in the U.S workforce with total earnings of more than $1 trillion (Feb 2000, Working Woman).

Moreover, in undeniable, quantifiable terms, greater numbers of women are actively involved in creating, conducting and managing business. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (1998), as of March 1998, women represent 46% of the total American workforce. The rise in the number of women business owners from 1987 to 1997 is well documented in the literature and is echoed in this study, as owner/partner is the second largest category of female business travelers. According to the Bureau of the Census (as cited in Chun, 1996, p. 22), the number of women business owners has increase 29% from 2.8 million in 1987 to 3.6 million in 1997.

It wasn't that long ago that "women business travelers" were considered paradoxes which make the meteoric rise of businesswomen, who now collectively earn $2.3 trillion and own more than one third of U.S. businesses (Chun, 1996, p. 26). The power women yield today has come from their ability to reverse the tide, to turn their disadvantageous beginnings into a source of strength.

A mere 25 years ago, the floodgates were sealed shut.

"Many women had to survive in environments that might be considered hostile. Today, they've developed into hearty business people who can survive any adversity thrown their way. Most women were tolerated and included in the workplace...if they knew their place. After a brief burst of victory upon being dutifully accepted into the ranks of the Fortune 500, women were soon sporting braises from bumping against the class ceiling. Yet this whole phenomenon isn't about the world changing for women - it's about women changing the world" (Brudney, 1985 p.8).

Women have played a crucial role in forging a brave new business world.

In 1987, 35 million people traveled around the country on business, representing a total of 158 million trips and spending a total of 820 million nights from home (Brudney, 1995). In an increasingly global economy, it is only realistic to expect people will continue to travel more, not less, in pursuit of their livelihood.

According to SRI, International (Sorensom, 1991), a California travel industry-consulting firm, one out of every three-business travelers is a woman and female's traveler's account for one out of every five-business trips. Additionally, more than half

of "baby boomers" are women (baby boomers represent 70 million Americans, about 30% of the population.) Furthermore, the U.S Census Bureau (1990, as cited in Brudney, 1995) reports that women now hold 30.5% of all U.S. managerial positions.

Women have become more discerning, and many decided they didn't want to sit back and watch the world go by but instead wanted to become a vital link to decision making. As stated earlier, recent reports have shown that more than 40% of business travelers are women. By the year 2000, women will likely account for 50% of business travelers. The trend is reflected everywhere, even in travel ads. Some hotels have surveyed female customers to better understand their needs. They believe that they have concerned themselves with the added pressures and stress that can be placed on business travelers and have assessed ways to improve the life of their most valued customer, the business traveler, in particular the "female business traveler". But, have they incorporated these needs into their business practices?

The demographic, attitudinal and behavioral profile of the female business traveler may cause tempered astonishment. If one or more of any of the following general findings is surprising, this research has fulfilled its goals (Reed, 1998). Table 2 provides and an overall perspective of the typical female business traveler, as noted by Reed (1998).

Table 2

Typical Female Business Traveler

Typical Female Business Traveler
Is married
Works full-time and holds the position of manager
Has earned a bachelor's degree
Have no children in the household
Is over the age of 40
Is the secondary wage earner
Has a personal income under $50k
Finds her job challenging and gratifying
Views business travel as an important component of her job and an aspect that makes her job more interesting
Is an occasional business traveler taking between 2-4 trips per year
Does not travel with children
Typically spends under $75 per night for a hotel room
Is currently not booking online or either hotel room or airline ticket purchase
Eats at a restaurant away from hotel when traveling with colleagues and when traveling alone eats in hotel restaurant
Feels the positive benefit of business travel far outweigh the negative aspects
Tries to incorporate some leisure time into the trip and during the leisure time will shop, visit historical sites and landmarks and participate in outdoor activity
Values responsive service, hotel located near business and affordable rates
Is looking for convenience (express check in and out, late check out)
Does not feel guilty about being away on a business trip

Note. This data was gleaned from a survey conducted by New York University, NY, NY, in 1998.

Recent Travel Industry Surveys

To discern what specific features are important to females, many hotels have surveyed their female guest asking them to rate the importance of dozens of amenities and services. The needs of women business travelers have changed and will continue to evolve. Several hotel industry leaders are interest in finding out what they should change in order to gain the business of female traveler. Numerous travel studies have been

conducted pointing to preferences of female business travelers. Most studies indicate that female travelers differ from male travelers as far what's important to them relative to hotels.

A study by the Opinion Research Corporation in Princeton, New Jersey (Silvestri, 1995) revealed women business travelers are younger, more often single and have lower individual incomes than their male counterparts. This study determined that (a) Women place more emphasis on amenities and personal safety while men are more concerned with price (when asked to describe the reasons for hotel and motel preferences.) and (b) Women are less likely to make their travel reservation and report more corporate travel restrictions (Brudney, 1995).

Mostly all the studies conducted on "female business travelers" report the same findings: the prime concern for women travelers is personal safety and comfort. Additionally, female executives stressed, according to the survey (Silvestri, 1995), the importance of lighter meals, including salads, soups, fresh fruits and cheeses, along with typical business amenities such as reading materials in the room. Women polled listed these room amenities as skirt hangers, iron and ironing board, shampoo and conditioners, hair dryers and moisturizing soaps as "most important" (Brudney, 1995).

A recent study published in Hotel and Motel Management (1998) by sociologist Harriet Presser, director of the University of Maryland's Center on Population, Gender and Social Inequity makes several interesting points. The study examined gender difference in travel. The study found the employed men are twice as likely as employed women to take an overnight trip that is work related, but a new study finds that a

woman's marital status or motherhood status is not the reason for the disparity. Additionally, Presser stated that "Our findings challenge the notion that women are not traveling to the extent of men because they are married, have children, or both." In fact, Presser and Hermsen found that marital status and children made no significant difference among men or women in the likelihood of making overnight trips, once differences among individuals in their job and background characteristics, such as age, education and race, were controlled.

While this study suggest that gender discrimination may account for women traveling less, it did not find race or ethnicity to be a significant factor in employers selecting women for business travel. It did, however, find that race plays a role in travel by men. However, Presser and Hermsen did find that work-related overnight travel may be regarded as a scarce and valued resource because of the status it brings and because it may facilitate access to other resources, such as greater earnings and job mobility. Additionally, they considered women's work-related overnight travel as a significant but neglected gender equity issue that reflect the extent of women's penetration into the world of paid work as a central rather than peripheral member.

Brudney (1995) also states that the number one concern for a female traveler is safety. The concept of safety from a female perspective is defined in two ways: 1. Physical Safety. Does the hotel room have double locks, a peephole in the door, a phone in the room that works? Where can she store her valuables? Is there a safe in the room? 2. Psychological Safety. A woman's sense of psychological safety depends upon her feeling "at ease" or comfortableness with a group of people, or in nature.

Holiday Inn, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, Marriott, Novotel and Crown Plaza have also conducted surveys on women business travelers. In October 1999, Holiday Inn (as cited in Brudney, 1985) surveyed 1,000 executives to get the real scoop about business travel. They examined such things as the secret to packing wrinkle-free suits to the surprisingly sentimental side of the male executive. The majority of people polled for this surveys respondents (61%) were men (Brudney, 1995).

Wyndham Hotels groundbreaking survey was conducted in conjunction with New York University. They found that savvy, sophisticated women who travel for business today believe responsive service is the most important criteria to use when selecting a hotel for business. Dr. Lalia Rach (as cited in Bond, 1997), associate dean and director, The Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Travel Administration at New York University stated "The release of this study marks the first time such an in-depth profile of the women business traveler has been available to the hospitality industry" (p. 46). The Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Travel Administration at New York University is an educational and research center located in Manhattan.

Table 3

Wyndam Hotels Travel Survey Findings

More than 40 % of women business travelers who belong to Generation X are occasional travelers: 33 % are constant travelers and 25 % are periodic travelers
Almost half of women business travelers surveyed vary their eating patterns. Among these 34 % admit to eating foods that are less healthy than what they eat at home 21 % eat more often and 24 % are guilty of snacking on high-calorie foods.
Among a list of motivations for ordering room service "safety" was next to last "indulgence" was number one and "not wanting to eat alone in restaurants" was last.
Shopping is the number one leisure activity for business travelers regardless of their age income or gender.
Women felt that flight attendants and front desk staff treat men better while men think that bell staff treats women better.

Note. This data was gleaned from as survey done by Wyndam Resorts in 1998.

Wyndam not only surveyed the female business traveler market to find out what they want, but they also have a program in place "Wyndham's Women on Their Way." This program is a distinctive, award-winning initiative designed to serve women business travelers by constantly staying in touch with them and evolving to meet their changing needs. The program is composed of an advisory board and strategic partnerships with associations such as the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), the LPGA Golf Clinics for Women National Program/Series and Business and Professional Women/USA (BPW/USA). Additionally, the program makes relevant travel information available in an effort to improve the entire business travel experience for women and ultimately for all guests (Bond, 1997).

To better understand today's business traveler, Crown Plaza Hotels and Resorts conducted a national survey of "road warriors' those executives who take at least two business trips per year, and as many as 21 or more. However, the goal of the Crown Plaza Hotel Travel Index was not only to find out the frequency with which business traveler hit the road, but to gain insight into who these 'warriors of the road' are, their habits, where they stay most often and why.

This survey looked at males and female business travelers. Thomas Arasi (as cited in Bond, 1997), president, Crown Plaza Hotels and Resorts stated, "Recently, there seems to be a return to a more personal way of doing business. This is driving executives out of town more than ever before, and leading them to turn the hotel room into the

'office away from the office' while making full use of today's technologies to enhance, rather than replace, traditional forms of communication" (p 12).

According to the Crown Plaza Hotels Travel Index, the average business traveler takes 11 trips per year, stays an average of 4 nights per trip, spending a total of 44 nights a year away from home.

When asked what prompts one to choose a particular hotel, women clearly favored intimate hotels over large, impersonal properties that cater to convention groups. Safety also ranked high among women's concerns and they found that they expect hotels to do whatever is possible to provide it. Hotel staff should advise women on which areas of a city are unsafe after dark and provide maps so they know which areas to avoid. Standard hotel features should include peepholes in guest room doors, 24-hour security on site, well-lit common areas, safe parking and room keys that do not indicate the room number. Also appreciated are front desk personnel that do not announce the quest's room number or name out loud (Cahill, 1999).

These surveys are just one way in which hotels continually fine-tune its approach to women travelers, who comprise over 30% of overall guests at hotels. With women expected to account for nearly half of all business travelers by 2002, according to USA Today (as cited in Cahill, 1999), leading hotel chains need to be well aware of the importance of serving this discerning market and plan to meet their expectations and demands with the services, amenities and facilities required.

Summary

The author's review of pertinent literature related to female business traveling provides insight to several questions raised in Chapter I of this study. Specifically, the author examined characteristics of female travelers as well as how they affect the industry. Past studies also led the author to explore the relationship between female business travelers and the industry as a whole. While several reputable hotel firms have conducted market research to test this theory, the results remain inconclusive.

Chapter III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Population and Sample

Through this study, the author plans to analyze how business travel among females affects the industry. Data were collected via 40 personal interviews and a survey that was emailed to 250 females who were frequent business travelers (see Appendix B).

The female business travelers were randomly selected by the author at airports as well as from a pool of business travelers provided by Valerie Wilson Travel Inc. The following International Airports were used as selected test sites: O'Hare International, Illinois; Newark International, New Jersey; Minneapolis/St. Paul International, Minnesota; Los Angeles International, California; Dallas/Fort Worth International, Texas; Houston, Texas; New Orleans International, Louisiana; and Seattle/Tacoma International, Washington.

Survey

The author conducted 40 face-to-face interviews between January 30, 2000 to February 30, 2000. The survey and executive summary of this thesis project (see Appendix D) were emailed on January 30, 2000. Responses were requested by mail, fax or returned email by February 15, 2000. As of that date, 130 responses were received. As a follow-up, the author contacted the remaining targeted participants on March 5, 2000 via an email (see Appendix F) and requested their support and participation. An

additional 60 surveys were completed and returned. A profile of the participants appears

in Table 4.

This email contained a cover letter that explained the rationale and direction for

completing the survey. The letter also assured participants that their identity would be

confidential.

Table 4

Overall Profile of Respondents

Is married
Works full-time and holds the position of manager and above
Has earned a bachelor's degree
Have no children in the household
Is under the age of 40
Is the secondary wage earner
Has a personal income under $60k
Travels at least 30% of the time
Finds her job challenging and gratifying
Views business travel as an important component of her job and an aspect that makes her job more interesting
Is an occasional business traveler taking between 2-4 trips per year
Does not travel with children
Typically spends under $150 per night for a hotel room
Is currently not booking online or either hotel room or airline ticket purchase
Eats most meals in hotel room
Feels the positive benefit of business travel far outweigh the negative aspects
Values responsive service, hotel located near business
Is looking for convenience (express check in and out, late check out)
Is enrolled in numerous Frequent Guest programs
Has been traveling for 1-3 years
Frequently flies Continental Airlines
Frequently stays at Marriott Hotels
Does not feel guilty about being away on a business trip

Note. This data was gleaned from the author's survey.

Data Collection

In collecting these data for this study, it was critical that the survey be designed in such a way that key areas of research be clearly addressed by the author and the respondents. Among the data gathered were the traditional statistical characteristics that form the basis of understanding of any market. In this regard, the survey was broken down into seven sections: <u>About You</u>, <u>About Your Job</u>, <u>About Your Travel</u>, <u>Safety and Security</u>, <u>Working on the Road</u> and the <u>Overall Travel Experience</u>. Questions were constructed in a multiple-choice format. The author's objective was to assist the respondents' in identifying the primary foci of the research and, to simply make the survey more "reader friendly."

Questions pertaining to <u>About You</u> focused on the demographics each the respondents. The questions established a basic profile of the female business traveler (i.e. age, martial status, salary range, and education). These data were important as it helped the author to identify trends in the travel industry relative to female business travelers.

Questions pertaining to <u>About Your Job</u> focused on the employment status of the respondents. If the respondent was unemployed, the survey was complete. Information obtained from this section identified such questions as professional titles, salary range and household income.

Questions pertaining to <u>About Your Travel</u> focused on the respondent's frequency of business travel. The information gathered from this section would help the author to better understand if the cost of travel as well as who was incurring the expenses had any correlation to the types of lodging that was selected. Additionally, the answers solicited

from this section would help to build a framework to better understand how decisions were made.

Questions within the Safety and Security section provided the author with a good understanding as to whether or not travel safety was a concern to female business travelers, contrary to the research that was uncovered.

Working on the road focused on questions that allowed the author to gain a better understanding of what business travel needs are in order to be successful on the road.

Finally, the Overall Business Travel Experience section focused on how females perceive the business travel industry as well as if their experiences have been positive.

Data collection began on March 1, 2000 and was completed in six business days. A total of 190 surveys were completed. Initially, individuals were screened to determine that they were (a) employed and (b) traveled at least for business purposes at least twice during a calendar year. Upon completion of data collection, questionnaires were hand-edited.

The survey population was made of entirely of females as the objective of the survey was designed to expand the understanding of the characteristics and behaviors of the emerging female business traveler.

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

Based on the literature and professional experience, the author had some

expectations as to what these data would reveal. Among these was the assumption that

the primary motivation for the travel industry was not to target women but to lump both

genders together. This assumption stemmed from what the industry believes is the larger

market segment, that being men.

The author states that she doesn't find business travel exhilarating at all, but if

there is one redeeming factor that it offers, it is that it eliminates monotony within the

workplace. Carole Willins, a partner at a Chicago law firm, that travels an average of 30

times a year for her firm, and noted on the survey, "Your family life becomes

fragmented."

Among the major sources of stress for business travelers, besides being away

from home, is lack of control over schedules, physical exertion, and dissatisfaction with

airline service, hotels, and car rental companies. Yet, despite the stress of separation

from family and friends at home, the percentage of the frequent travelers polled said they

got a sense of accomplishment from business travel.

Data Review

<u>About You</u>

The greatest number of respondents were those between the ages of 31 to 36. The

domination of this generation in all areas of American life is well documented as it

represents 32.7% of the general population. Clearly, there were significantly less older

and younger respondents than those between the ages of 31 and 36 as illustrated by

Figure 1. An accepted explanation for the large number of respondents in this age

category may lie in the fact that individuals in their early to mid-thirties are more likely to

be in positions of responsibility, which often requires business travel.

A little less than three out of four female respondents are married (63%), while

21.0% are single, 15 % are divorced, widowed or separated see (Figure 2). "Having a

family and being on the road can be a recipe for disaster," says Maureen McGrath, a

Marketing Manager for a pharmaceutical company. Trying to keep up with what's going

on at home as well as how to manage numerous travel agenda's can be very trying on

both my job and my family." Fifteen percent of the respondents were either divorced,

widowed, or separated. It would be interesting to see if business travel played a part in

the reason for their marriage breakups. That question was not raised during the interview.

For purposes of the study, the country was broken into four areas: West, Central,

Southwest, and Northeast. After an analysis of the data, the largest majority lived in the

Central region (130) of the U.S. accounting for 68%. This region consisted of Illinois to

Texas. The second largest group came from the Northeast region (40) of the U.S.

accounting for 21%. This region consisted of Maine to Washington DC. The Southwest

(5) and West (15) made up 10 percent of the remaining population (see Figure 3). A few of these states consisted of Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, California, Washington and Colorado.

Examination of frequency of travel by geographical region reveals that nearly two-fifths (10%) of Central region women are infrequent travelers, one-third (15%) are periodic and 32% are regular travelers. The infrequent business traveler dominates the other three regions with all reporting exactly or nearly half in this category.

An analysis by highest degree obtained was conducted to determine the correlation between education and frequency of travel. Across the seven degree categories, women with an associate degree were the largest percentage of those business travelers classified as infrequent, while women with advanced degrees were more likely to be regular travelers (40%). Those with high school degrees were the largest percentage of periodic travelers (12%).

As illustrated in Figure 4, the bachelor's degree was the highest level of educational attainment for the majority of respondents (45%). The second largest cohort (34%) earned the master's degree, followed closely by those with an associate's degree (20%). On either end of the continuum, a little more than 1 out of 10 (5%) had earned a high school diploma and nearly an equal amount (10.2%) have achieved a professional masters (M.B.A., etc) or doctoral degree. Overall, 64 % of the respondents have earned at least the bachelor's degree.

There are numerous reports that document the impact higher education has on overall success in one's professional life. For both men and women, age and education

increase the likelihood of travel, as does an executive or professional position in a core

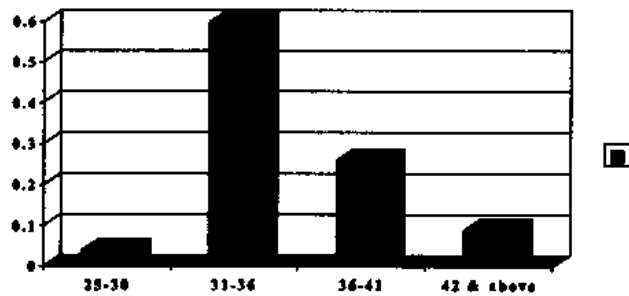service industry (Hotel and Motel Management, 1996).

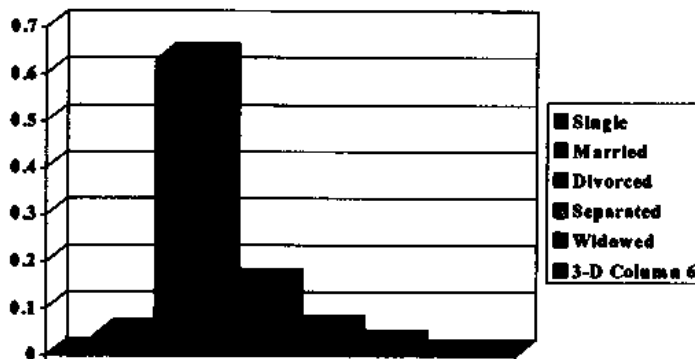Figure 1. Total Female Respondents by Age Group

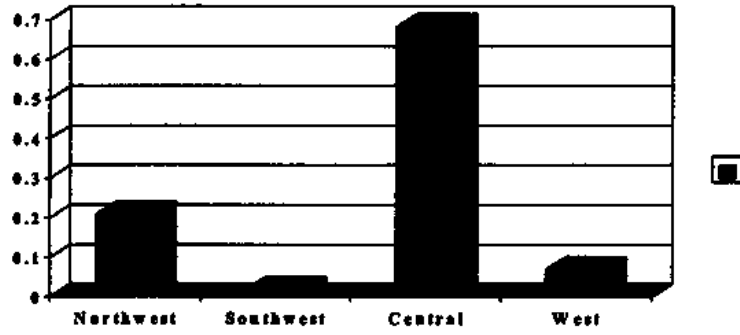Figure 2. Total Respondents by Marital Status
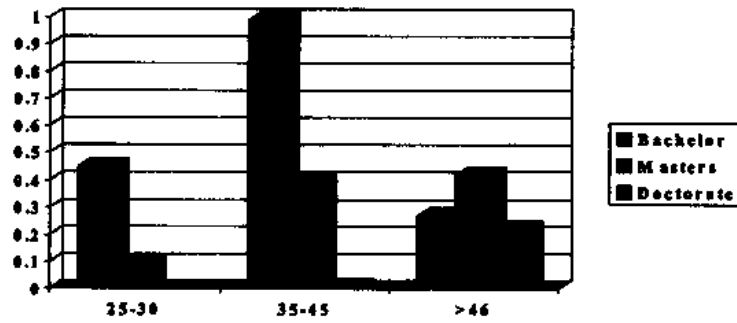
Figure 3. Total Respondents by Region.

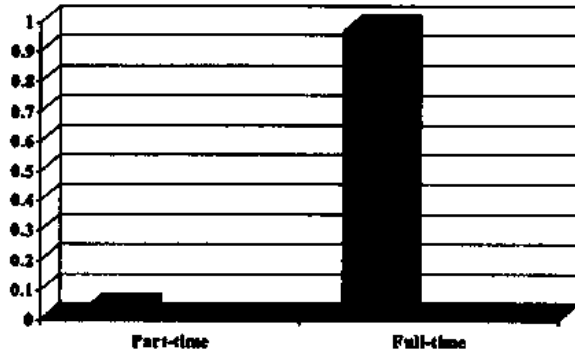

Figure 4. Total Female Respondents by Educational Levels.

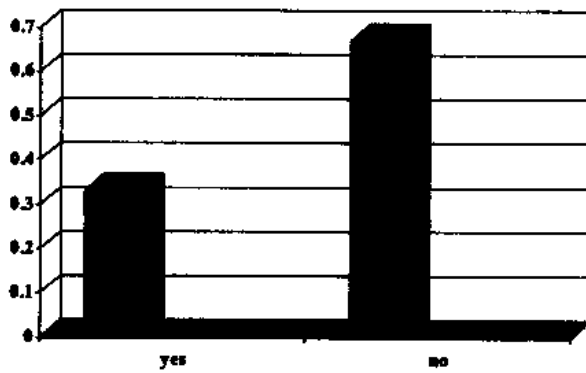Figure 5. Respondents Who Find Their Job Challenging.

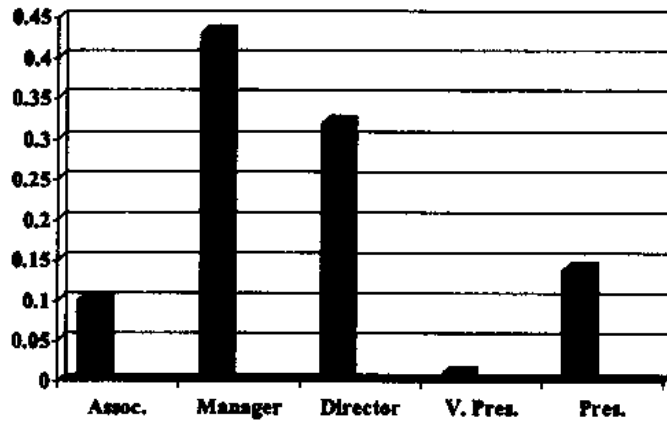Figure 6. Respondents Who Work Full Time vs. Part Time.

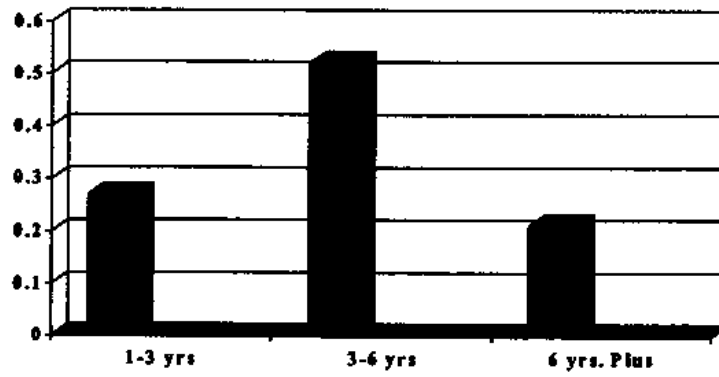Figure 7. Total Years Employed at Current Firm

Figure 8. Total Female Respondents Professional Titles

The numbers are somewhat more complex in what they tell about educational levels within the age groups, especially the largest age group of women business travelers.

About Your Job

The responses were spread equally (see Figure 5) when asked whether or not the female travelers found their jobs challenging. For some of the respondents, this was a new position and they had not had an opportunity to fully complete training. For the more seasoned professional, they felt that they had been doing the same thing for over five years and were getting tired of the monotony and would welcome a new challenge.

Nearly 9 of 10 respondents reported that they work full-time (see Figure 6). As evidenced by our study's statistics, the late 1990s have provided a clear indication that the business world is forever changed by the increasing numbers of women in the workforce.

The respondents were asked how long they were employed by their current firm (see Figure 7). Fifty two percent (77) of the respondents have been employed at the same company for 3 to 6 years. This number could also account for the reason nearly half of the respondents did not find their jobs challenging. Those employed at their firms for less than 1 (42) to 3 years (40) accounted for 27% while those employed over 6 years (31) accounted for only 21%. Some of the major occupations that were mentioned were Marketing, Finance, Consulting, Technical and Pharmaceuticals. For the 190 respondents the title and position of manager (42%) is the most common for women who travel on

business, followed by the title and position of Director (31%). Rounding out the top three is the title and position of Vice President (14%). The proliferation of titles in business is acknowledged by the sizable response to the category (see Figure 8).

A comparison of the top two titles (Manager and Director) by age group (25-30, 31-36, 36-41, 42 and above) illustrates some expected and perhaps some surprising differences between the groups. Respondents over the age of 42 are much less likely than their younger counterparts to be managers, yet, they are more than two and half times as likely to be an Director. There are many plausible explanations for this phenomenon. First, women in their forties represent the first sizable cohort of females who started their careers following college and have moved through the ranks to senior executive positions.

Second, the gender-neutral trend toward second careers enables older women to more readily assume power positions. This is supported by the growing numbers of women who entered the workforce for the first time after raising a family and/or the women who had interrupted careers due to both childcare and more recently, eldercare obligations.

By comparison, the under 30 and the 36-41 age groups have similar numbers of Managers and Director with the Manager position far exceeding the numbers reporting the position of Vice President and President.

During one interview, respondent Jennifer Peelze, a Vice President with a reputable CPA firm, stated that she could feel the heat coming. "I'm so tired I can hardly see straight," says Peelze, 48, coming off a trip that took her from her home base in Los

Angeles to New York City, to Zurich, back to New York City, to Washington, to

Cleveland and finally back to Los Angeles. All in 2 weeks. As the accounting and
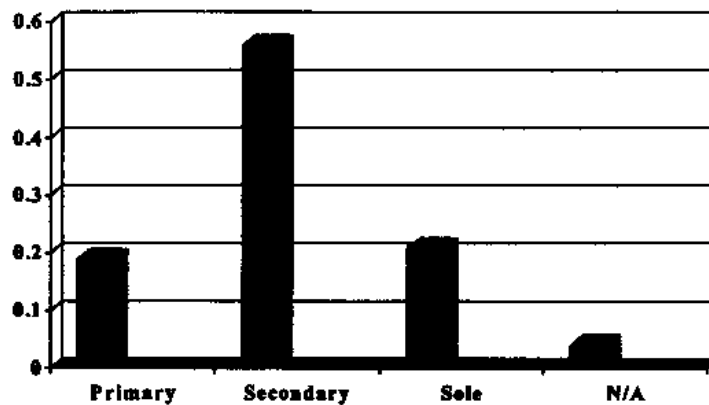

Figure 9. Total Female Respondents by Wage Category

consulting firm's chief knowledge officer, she is building a global information network

that will have access to the firm's database. How often does Peelze travel? "I don't know

she replies. "Would it be easier to ask how often I'm not traveling?"

    The mean age of the participants was 35 years, one-fifth of respondents are sole

wage earners, while almost three-quarters of those interviewed contribute to the

household income either as the primary (just under 20%) or secondary (over half of all respondents) contributor (see Figure 9). Awareness of the size of the sole wage earner market is important because of their uninhibited spending power and responsibility for making leisure travel decisions.
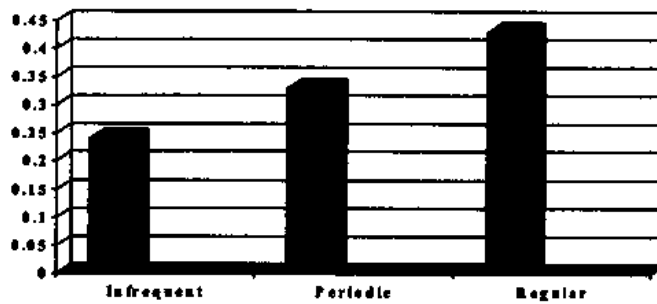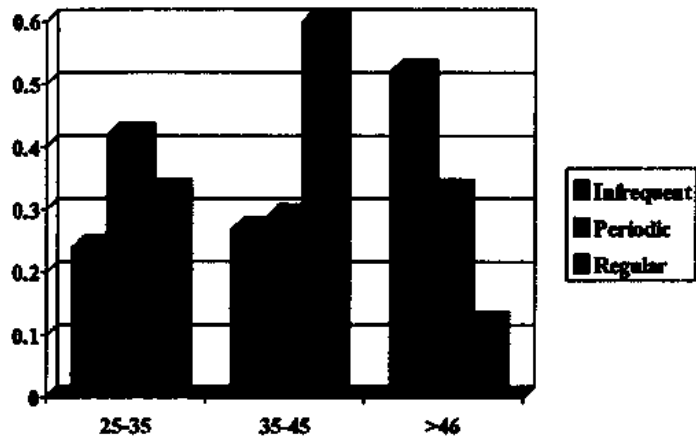

Figure 10. Frequency of Travel.

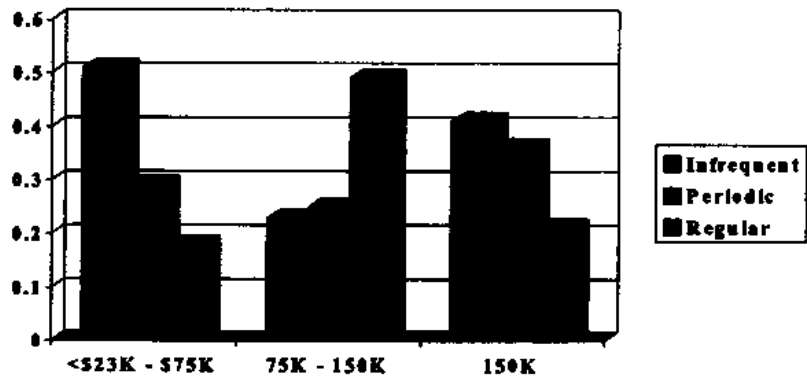Figure 11. Frequency of Travel by Age Group.

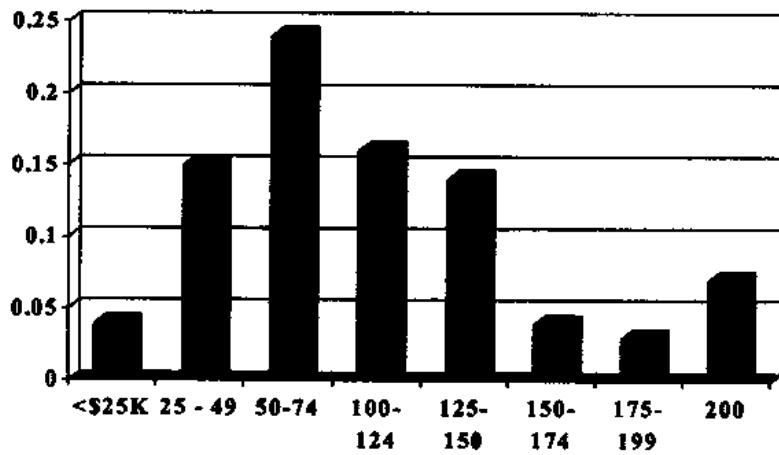Figure 12. Frequency of Travel by Income.

Figure 13. Household Income

About Your Travel

Three classifications (infrequent, periodic, regular) were used to describe the categories of female business travelers for this study. An infrequent business traveler makes 2 to 4 trips per year; a periodic business traveler completes 5 to 10 trips per year, while a regular business traveler takes 11 or more trips per year.

An analysis by age group was conducted to determine the correlation of age and frequency of travel. Using the generational age groups (30 to 35, 40 to 45), frequency of travel by classification (infrequent, periodic, regular) was determined. As depicted in Figure 10, 43% of the female business travelers are infrequent travelers but one-third 33% are periodic travelers. The fact that the Gen X age group had the largest number of regular travelers (24%) may be an indication of the future of the female business travel.

For this study, 23% (45) of the women surveyed are classified as infrequent; 21% (40) are designated as periodic business travelers and just fewer than 48% (63) are considered regular business travelers. It is the predominance of infrequent business travelers (21%) that perhaps prevents the industry from fully recognizing the value of the female business traveler segment. As a result, the industry has overlooked the fact that just less than half (45%) of women business travelers complete at least 11 plus business trips per year. Figure 11 depicts the age ranges of each travel classification.

Forty nine percent of the respondents who traveled infrequently reported household income between $75,000 and $150,000 (see Figure 12). While the majority of women who travel on business are members of the middle class relative to household income levels, nearly one-third (21%) of those respondents who traveled regularly report

household income of $150,000 and above. Categorized as members of the affluent and wealthy class, these respondents represent substantial discretionary spending power.

There is a direct correlation between earnings and frequency of travel among women professionals (see Figure 13). Nearly two-thirds of infrequent business travelers are secondary wage earners while periodic and regular business travelers are nearly as likely to be primary and sole earners as they are to be secondary earners.

An analysis by highest degree obtained was conducted to determine the correlation between education and frequency of travel. Across the seven degree categories, women with associate's degrees were the largest percentage of those business travelers classified as infrequent, while women with advanced degrees were more likely to be regular travelers (40%). Those with a high school degree were the largest percentage of periodic travelers (40%).

Full-time employment is a primary characteristic of women who travel on business. Nine out of 10 respondents are employed full-time. Comparing employment status to frequency of travel demonstrates that part-time employees are more likely to be infrequent travelers (67% part-time to 46 % full-time). Full-time employment increases the likelihood of business travel as 30% are periodic travelers and 25% are regular travelers.

Of the respondents surveyed, 97% were traveling on business as opposed to only less than 2% where traveling for personal (see Figure 14). It is possible that the responses are skewed more towards business travel as the face-to-face interviews were

conducted in airports during the workweek. This is typically a time when most people, men or women, are traveling on business. Overall, most of the frequent travelers stated
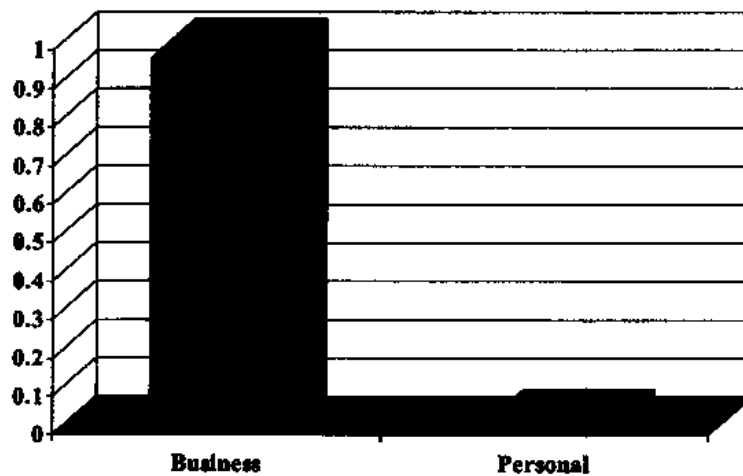

Figure 14. Reasons for Traveling Personal vs. Business

that due to the amount of travel they do during the week, vacations are usually spent at home. Of those traveling on business, 52% (100) have been traveling for 3-6 years, while 12% have been traveling for less than 1 year to 3 years (see Figure 15). Additionally, the respondents were asked how many domestic trips versus international trips were taken during this travel period. The classification period for domestic and international was

None or 0 trips, Infrequent or 2-4 trips, Periodic or 5-10, and Regular or 11 plus trips. Figure 19 highlights the response.

Frequency of travel is the key issue in business travel as the more times per year an individual travels, the more often the traveler requires products and services offered by travel business. Frequency is the element that determines the degree to which airlines, hotels, car rental agencies and other travel businesses demonstrate the value of the customer relationship. The companies are seeking to secure the loyalty of the frequent business traveler and are willing to provide additional services and benefits to maintain the relationship. The first step in this process is to develop taxonomy for the frequency of travel. Seventy percent of the respondents stated that they made they were in control of making their own travel arrangements while only 40% had an assistant coordinate all the details (see Figure 17). Those individuals that fell into the 40% category said that they reviewed the information and made the final approval.

When asked how much do you think each business trip costs, 23% of the respondents had no idea. Almost 91% (174) stated that their company picks up the cost of all travel as Figure 18 shows. Many (179) of the female business travelers interviewed and surveyed had no idea if their company even had corporate travel policy and if so, if it was enforced (see Figure 19).

The respondents were asked if they favored one airline and/or hotel over another. Fifty percent of the responses favored both Continental Airlines (see Figure 20) and Marriott Hotels (see Figure 21). Of the travelers who value frequent guest programs, the survey found a correlation between frequency of travel and loyalty program participation.

The data indicates see (see Figure 22) that respondents that travel frequently are more likely to enroll in a program (80%) and 48% of periodic and regular business
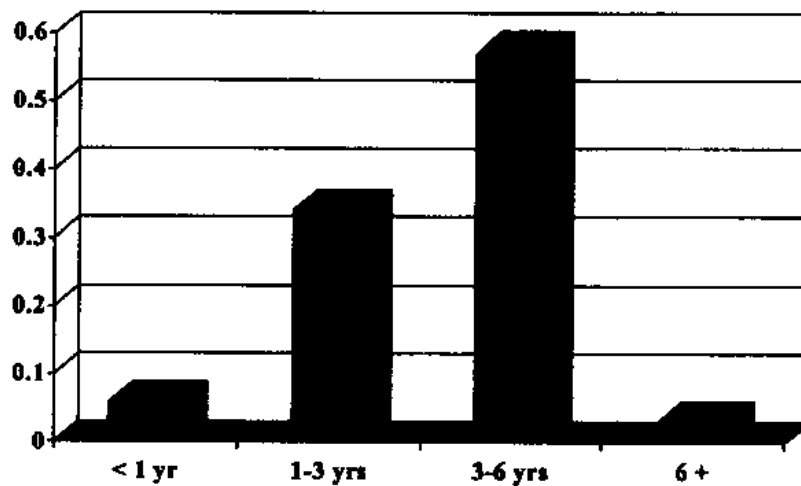

Figure 15. Number of Years Traveling.

travelers while (52%) of female business travelers are not taking advantage of these programs. It can be assumed that the more frequent the traveler, the more tangible and immediate the benefits.

Despite the lure of frequent-flier benefits, business travel is not always the perk it once was. Age, family status, and career status effect employees' views of travel. Alternatively, the benefits of the program are not valuable enough to those who travel

irregularly, as the possibility of accumulating the points needed to claim the rewards are so low, maintaining memberships are a low priority.

The mean for booking hotel reservations online is extremely low, at 1.01 times in the past year (see Figure 23). The vast majority of respondents (82%) did not book online, and those who did (17%) indicated they booked online anywhere between 1 and more than 10 times in the past year.

Of the small number of female business travelers who book online, they are more than twice as likely to book a flight than a hotel room. Regardless of the category, this phenomenon is clearly in its infancy and is expected to change rapidly over the next few years. Even as this study is being finalized the numbers and habits of business travelers relative to online booking is increasing.

International Travel
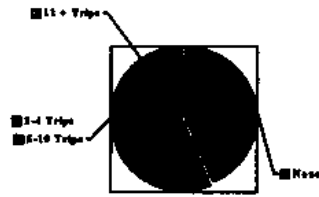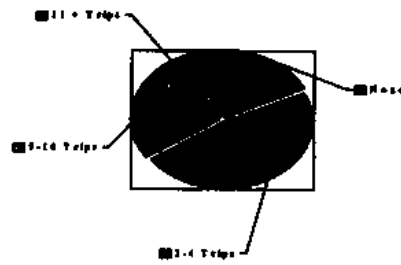

Domestic Travel

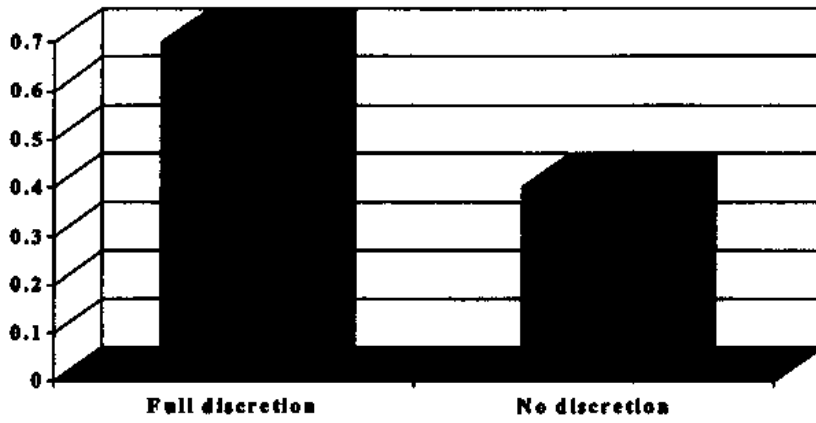Figure 16. Domestic vs. International Travel.

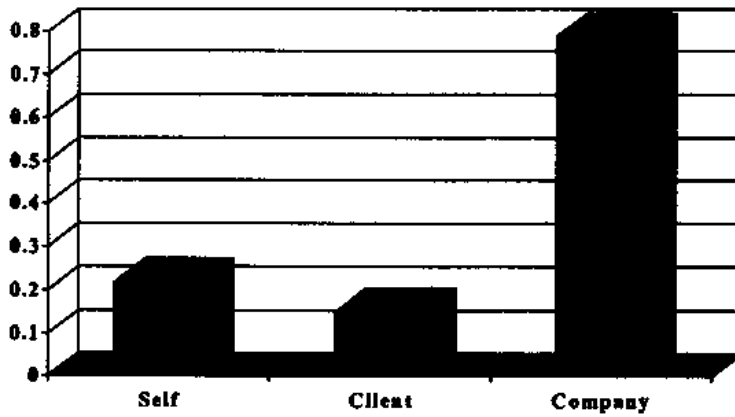Figure 17. Who Makes Travel Arrangements?

Figure 18. Who Pays the Bill?

Figure 19. Companies with Corporate Travel Policies.
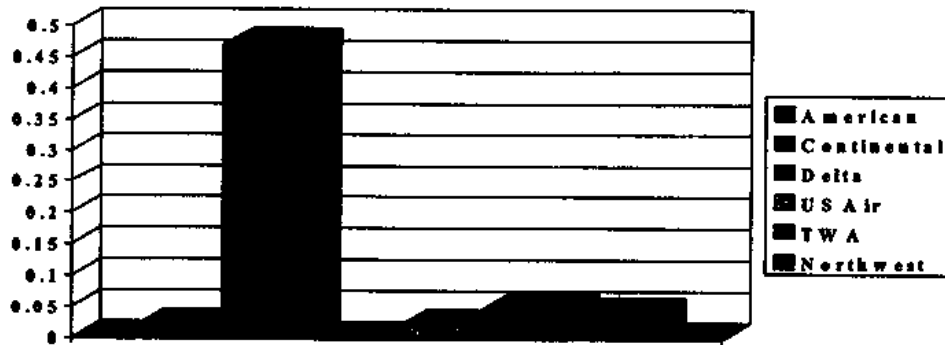

Figure 20. Frequently Flown Airlines.
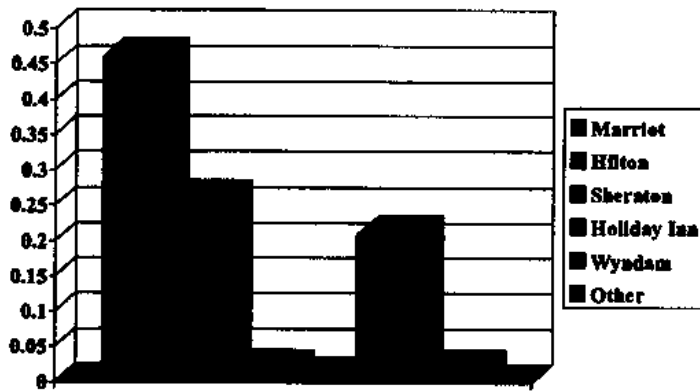
Figure 21. Frequently Booked Hotels.

Figure 22. Frequent Guest Program Membership.
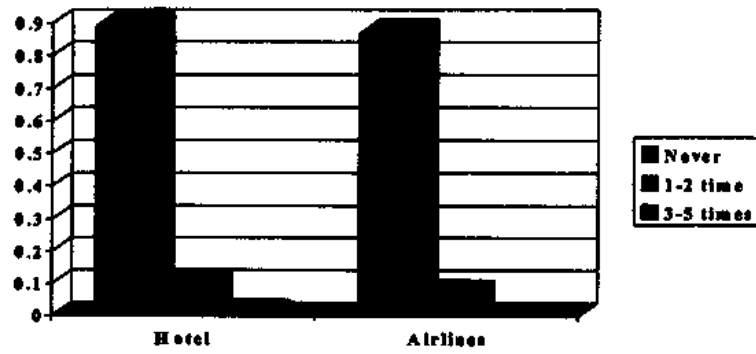
Figure 23. Online Travel Booking.
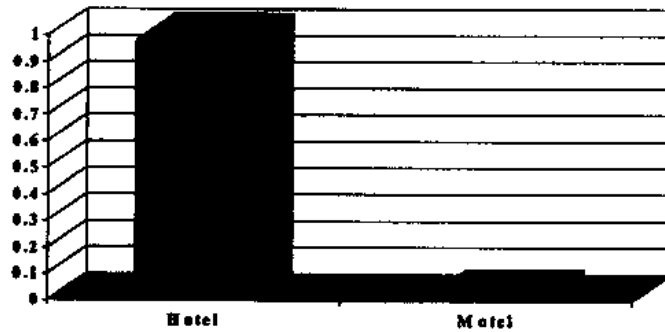
Figure 24. Hotels vs. Motels.

Safety and Security

Is Safety and Security a concern to female business travelers? The respondents where asked if they felt there was a difference between hotels and motels relative to safety. Ninety eight percent responded that hotels were much safer than motels (2%) especially when traveling alone (see Figure 24).

Respondents were also asked how they felt about their safety relative to air travel. Seventy three percent of the female's business travelers felt that they were occasionally worried about it (see Figure 25). This was contradictory to data depicted in Figure 26,
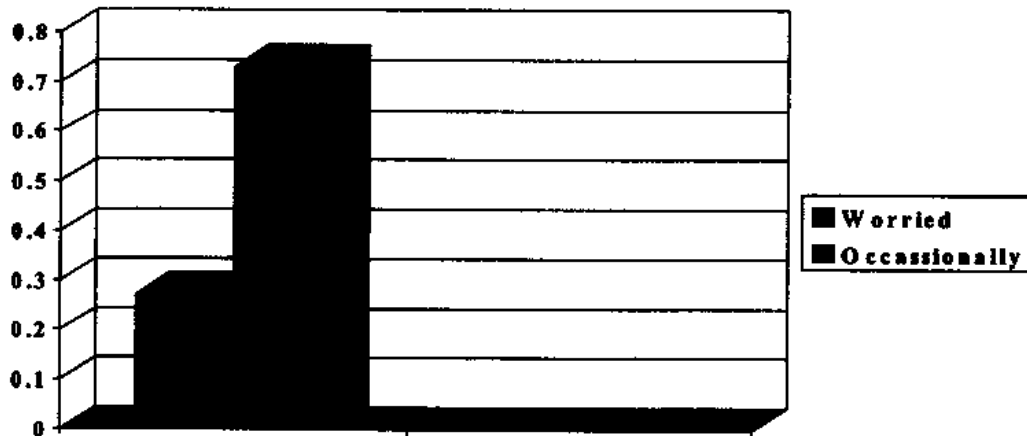
Figure 25. Air travel safety.

which asked if they had ever experienced an unsafe experience. Remarkably, 93% had experienced at least one incident. Of the 93%, only 80% had reported this incident to either the airline or hotel authorities (see Figure 27).

To take this issue one step further, the author asked if the female travelers would use the airline or hotel again after the incident. Only 10% said they would (see Figure 28)
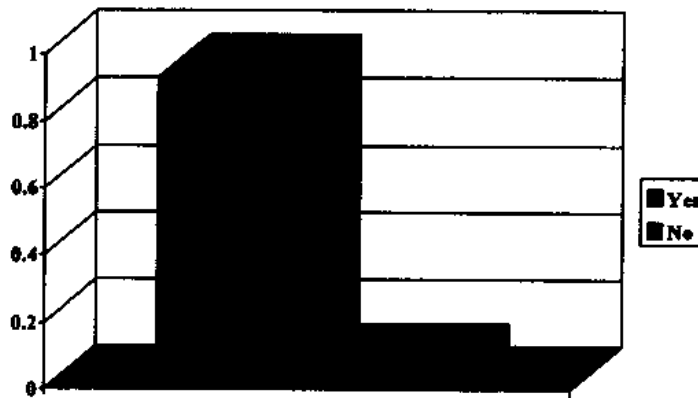
Figure 26. Unsafe Experiences.
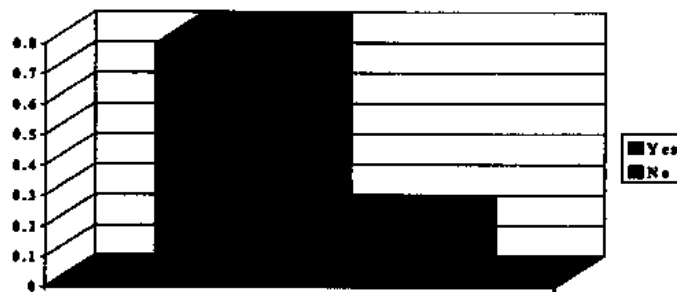
Figure 27. Alerting Someone of the Unsafe Experience.
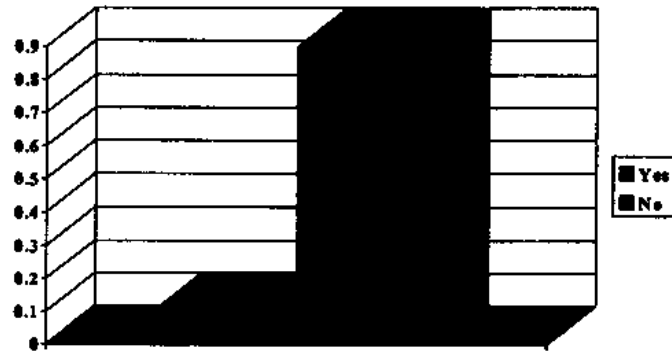
Figure 28. Booking After An Experience.

Figure 29. Eating Habits.
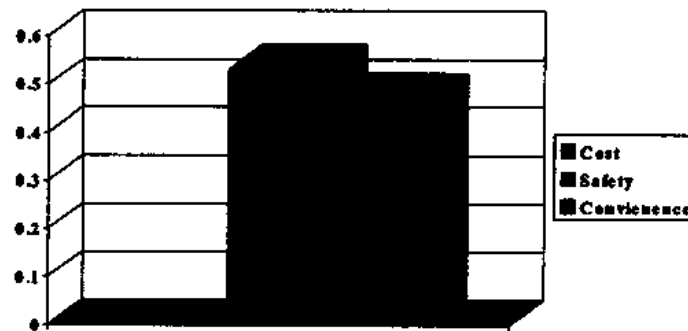
Figure 30. Room Service Motivators.

Working on the Road

Whether traveling alone or with colleagues, women indicated that eating in the guest room was the least likely choice of the three locations provided, eating in the hotel room, eating in the hotel restaurant or eating at a restaurant offsite. Forty-nine percent of women traveling alone responded they were very or somewhat likely to eat in their room. Food intake is often a good indicator of an individual's state of mind. As indicated in Figure 29, roughly half of female business travelers do not change their eating patterns while away from home. The other 49% vary their eating patterns depending on whether they are being asked about their snacking habits, the number of times they eat or the overall healthfulness of the food they eat. Thirteen percent tend to eat meals that are

healthier when traveling and one-third (34%) agreed that their meals on the road are less healthy than those they eat at home.

On balance it appears that those who do alter their food habits tend to change for the worse on the road, eating less healthily (34%), eating more often (21%) and snacking on high calorie foods (24%).

Room service is often the most contradictory of experience for travelers. On one occasion, it is loved and in the next instance, it is greatly disliked. To better understand the reason for using room service, respondents were asked to indicate a level of agreement to a series of attitudinal statements (see Figure 30).

The first choice for women when traveling alone is to eat in their hotel room. The last choice is to eat at a restaurant outside the hotel grounds. Such information provides insight into the increased sophistication of the female business traveler and changing comfort level women feel when away from home. The focus of concern has shifted from the singular to a multitude of attributes (location, convenience, quality, service) used to measure the attractiveness of activities and products. Nearly three-quarters of women traveling, whether alone or with colleagues, indicated they are likely or somewhat likely to eat in the hotel restaurant.

Whether traveling alone or with colleagues, women indicated that eating off site was the least likely choice of the three locations (see Figure 31). Forty-nine percent of women traveling alone responded they were very or somewhat likely to eat in their room. When traveling with colleagues, less than one-quarter were very or somewhat likely to eat in their room. There are any numbers of reasons that come to mind other than safety

that explains this reality: historically poor quality of room service food, the lack of proper furniture to enjoy the meal, and the desire to be sociable.

The major difference between location of the meal when alone or with others is the likelihood of eating somewhere outside the hotel. Less than 1 out of 10 women are likely or somewhat likely to dine off property when alone while the number rises to more than 9 out of 10 when traveling with a colleague. The rationale for this could relate more to logistics (sharing cab or car expenses, knowledge of the geography of the destination, familiarity with restaurants in the city) than to the level of comfort at leaving the environment of the hotel.

When considering the data based on frequency of travel, women who travel infrequently (45%) are less likely to eat in their room than women who travel regularly (51%). A reasonable explanation for this is exploration versus familiarity and convenience. Rather than eating in ones room, dining in the hotel or a restaurant offsite provides an opportunity for new experiences, meeting people and networking. For those women who travel more often eating in the room may be a way to carve out time for ones self. For these women, the treat aspect may have worn away and rather than seeing travel as an adventure the rigors of the experience may dominate.

The study also sought to identify what the important variables were in selecting a hotel for business travel. Using a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 is "not at all important" and 7 are "very important" twelve aspects were presented to determine the most important aspects (see Table 5). Not surprisingly, membership in hotel frequency guest programs varies significantly between full and part time employed respondents. Of the 150 female

business travelers surveyed, 22% were enrolled in a frequent guest program; 8 out of 10 are full time employees.

In order to determine whether room amenities or services were more important in ensuring customer loyalty, this survey asked respondents to indicate their level of interest in a range of services (see Table 6). The top three services directly relate to convenience and reflect the stress of travel and the desire by women business professionals for speed when checking in or out of the hotel and for late check out to be a standard practice when on business. More than 70 % of women indicated they would be very or somewhat interested in three items that reflect the changing nature of life: the rise of women in

Figure 31. Eating Locations.

business, the emphasis on healthy eating, and the influence of technology in every aspect of life.

Table 5

Choosing a Hotel

Choosing a Hotel

Hotel Offering	% Agreeing Important
Responsive Service	94%
Affordable Rates	72%
Upscale reputation	88%
Location to business	91%
Attractive décor	89%
Guest rooms equipped for business	92%
Location convenient to airport	88%
An efficient hotel business center	89%
Frequent Flyer Miles	98%
Membership to frequent hotel program	95%
Exercise facilities	78%
Restaurant	66%

The variable that most influences the choice of hotel is responsive service. More than 9 out 10 women agreed this aspect was important to very important in their selecting of a business hotel. The concept of responsive service reflects the importance that women place on the quality and character of the service they receive from hotel employees. Hotels should consider whether the defining elements of responsive service

-- a sincere sense of welcome, receptivity, and demonstrated understanding of the

individual and her needs - -are integrated components of their establishment's culture.

Table 6

Interest in Hotel Amenities and Services

Interest in Hotel Amenities and Services

Amenity/Service	Very or somewhat interested
Express Check-in	94%
Express Check-out	92%
Late Check-in	98%
Free Local Calls	59%
Courtesy call before room service delivery	98%
Healthy snacks in mini bar	66%
In room access to internet	90%
24 Hour room service	82%
Fresh flowers in room	75%
In room fax machine	72%
Special Safety Locks on Doors	98%
Safe Deposit Boxes	99%

Overall Travel Experience

The two main focus' of this survey was to determine two things: Is business travel an important component to one's job and whether or not female business travelers feel that they are treated appropriately by the industry. Figure 32 represents that 79% of the women survey agreed that travel was an important and sometimes mandatory component of their job. Figure 32 represents that only 52% of these respondents felt that the industry met their needs occasionally.

In closing, the author asked the respondents what components of business travel need to be in place in order for the trip to run smoothly. "Technology makes it easier for business travelers to be out of the office and remain productive," says Elizabeth Jenkins, Senior Manager at an Advertising Agency. "You can take your office on the road with you, with laptops, Palm Pilots, and cell phones, and simply turn them off when you need a little downtime."

"Travel gives me the opportunity to get out, see what's going on within my industry and meet new people," says Cheryl Candleua, from Head Up, a media relations firm in Washington DC. "It provides me the opportunity to think about things. In my busy day-to-day situation, I don't have a chance to sit back and think about what issues are really important and how I should be focusing my time. Whenever I come back from a business trip of more than one day, I have some new idea that I can apply to my business."

Yet, while travel is an important part of the job, it becomes more of a nuisance and disruptive from a personal point of view as one's personal income increases. Overall, 35% of women find business travel to be a hassle, but the level of agreement with this statement increase in relationship to the increase in personal income.
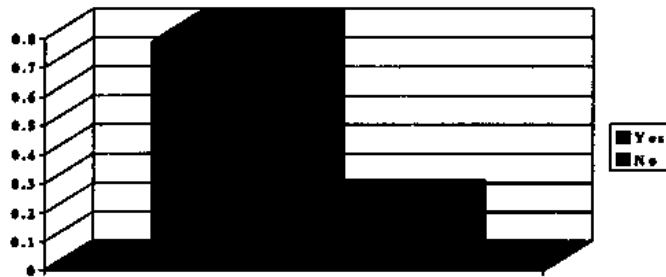
Figure 32. Is Business Travel an Important Component to ones Job?
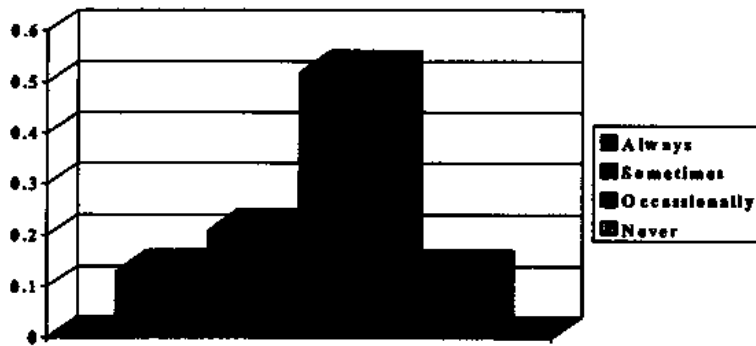
Figure 33. Does the Travel Industry Meet My Business Travel Needs?

Chapter V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the onset of her research, the author sought to explore the wants and attitudes of female business travelers to learn whether or not the industry was striving to meet this ever-growing market segment. Through comprehensive review of limited relevant literature related to female business travelers, the author found that some reputable hotel chains claim that there is not a strong correlation between what the industry says its doing to meet the needs of female travelers versus. what female travelers say they experience.

Both the literature and the data reveal that female business travelers are on the rise. Specifically, the author found that there are more female travelers crowding the airports and hotels than there are men. They are also traveling more confidently. Perhaps the strongest findings that provide insight to the author's primary research question is that no respondents felt as though they had ever received special treatment.

If 70 % of all travel decisions are made by women and 50 % of clients are already women, the time has come to identify the women travelers needs and purchase motivators. Products should be modified to accommodate these changing markets. The author believes sales, marketing, and advertising campaigns will increasingly target the female traveler.

Hotels should offer female guests a range of value added extras and personalized attention to make their stay more comfortable. The women business traveler segment is an important aspect of any business, which companies should continually look to grow and enhance, by making special services and amenities available.

Use of a complementary fitness center, Spa and body treatments, 24-hour room service to include low calorie and vegetarian meals, served by a waitress who calls up to the room before delivering, should all be incorporated. Additionally, security, one of the main concerns for female business travelers, is taken care of by providing card key locks, electronic safes, and increased security checks.

Lodging owners and operators need to acknowledge that the business market is segmented and that the female business traveler market is significant and here to stay. The travel industry need to see how they look through the eyes of a woman is business. Asking questions of female travelers, whether through personal interviews or questionnaires, to learn their preferences is extremely critical if the industry wants to remain afloat.

There is a direct correlation between earnings and frequency of travel relative to degrees. Analysis by highest degree obtained was conducted to determine the correlation between education and frequency of travel and it is no surprise that females with MBA's had the highest earnings as well as highest frequency of travel.

With more women traveling on business, hotels need to expand their standard service offerings to reflect their awareness of how women define responsive service. A courtesy call from room service prior to delivery insures the guest will be ready to receive the waiter and subtly reflects a feeling of security. Have special needs or requests in the room upon check-in reinforce the concept of responsive service for many women business travelers. Healthy snacks in the mini bar demonstrate an awareness of the changing needs and wants of travelers and assist those who wish to maintain their normal

eating habits while traveling. Finally, in-room access to the Internet is a tangible demonstration of understanding the demands that are placed on women when they travel on business.

Frequency of travel is the key issue in business travel as the more times per year an individual travels, the more often the traveler requires products and services offered by travel businesses. Frequency is the element that determines the degree to which airlines.

Hotel chains are leveraging, among other things, strategic alliances with other travel industry partners to offer value-added incentives to draw new customers to its hotels and retain the loyalty of existing guests. Yet membership in loyalty programs among female business travelers remains relatively low with more than six of 10 women currently not members of any program. The industry needs to reevaluate the programs and determine why they hold so little attraction for the majority of women business travelers.

People start out traveling with a lot of excitement. They want to see new places and new faces, and get out of the routine. About two years into it, they start to reevaluate. Even as an enthusiastic business traveler, the author feels that personal and professional crunch. " I pay a price when I leave," she says. "I get plagued with mail. I'm gone a couple of days and it seems like I was gone a couple of months. Likewise at home, there's always something that needs doing. I'll put things off, and then on the weekend, I don't want to do anything." In closing, the author believes that her literature review and research with those who make up this important audience, can contribute to the growing body of information related to female business travelers.

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Appendix A

Additional Definitions of Terms

1. BETWEEN (Vs. TO/FROM): In determining routing for accrual travel or award travel, "between" indicates that travel may originate on either end of a route. For example, a roundtrip award that allows travel between Mexico and the United States means that travel can originate in either Mexico or the United States. Conversely, roundtrip travel to Mexico from the United States means that travel is restricted and must originate and terminate in the United States.

2. Capacity Controls: The process airlines, hotels, and car rental agencies use to allocate awards depending on actual vs. anticipated demand.

3. (In) Conjunction (With): The condition by which hotels and car rental agencies award bonus miles.

4. Elite-Level Upgrade: Upgrade to higher class of service available with membership in elite-level programs.

5. Expedited Awards: A service that is offered by many programs for an additional cost, expedited awards allow members to expedite processing and delivery of award tickets or certificates. Often the requested award is delivered to members within 24 hours.

6. Fare Basis: Determines how miles or points are awarded based on the fare paid. For example, to accumulate mileage on some airlines, you must pay a published full-fare rate. Some hotels require that you pay corporate rates or higher to accrue points.

7. Minimum Mileage: Minimum number of miles earned by program member regardless of the length of the flight.

8. One Class: Usually associated with airline and car rental upgrades, allowing one level of service upgrade; such as a one-class airline upgrade from Coach to Business Class.

Contrast this with a First Class upgrade jumping more than one class of service from Coach to First Class.

9. Open Jaw: A round-trip ticket with an open segment. For example, a routing from Chicago to New York, returning to Chicago from Boston. Open jaws are often allowed when flying on an award ticket and are often counted as a stopover.

10. Segment: One or more legs of continuous travel.

11. Service Center: Place where members of frequent travel programs can call for award travel, redemption, accrual and current special promotion information.

12. Threshold Bonus: A mileage bonus incentive offered to members to fly or stay a predetermined number of miles or nights, and award bonus miles or points to members who reach threshold levels.

Appendix B

Travel Tips and Resources

TRAVEL TIPS AND RESOURCES

Travel Resources

1. Smart Business Supersite. The How-To Resource for Business
    (wwwl.smartbiz.com): The most comprehensive site for women entrepreneurs. SBS
    has a lengthy list of article, reports, book profiles, business products and statistics. It
    also lists related Internet resources, such as other Web sites.

2. Women's Wire (women.com/): This interactive publication for professional women
    contains links to women's resources and business on the Web. "Ask Biz Shrink" to
    get advice from a California marketing firm specializing in women-owned small
    businesses.

3. VOWworld - Voices of Women Online (www.voiceofwomen.com/): This site exudes
    a faint new age fragrance but is nevertheless worth a peek for its business
    opportunities and business services listings.

4. WebSearch, The Business of Women of Women (www.web-
    search.com/women.html): An enormous database of women-owned business-each
    with a link to its own Web site.

5. Women's Business Resource Site (www.athenet.net/~ccain/indechtml): Get
    information to help your business and network to share experiences about business
    ventures. You can also link to other business sites; free articles, products and
    services; and other business resources.

6. The Executive Woman's Travel Network (www.delta-air/com/womenexecs):
    Sponsored by Delta Air Lines and American Express Travel Related Services, it's

included an interactive travel forum; tips on safety, packing fitness and nutrition; and

statistics about female business travelers.

TRAVEL TIPS

1. "Do Not Disturb" Signs- Place a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door to discourage anyone from entering your room while you are away.

2. Accompaniment to Parking Lot- When arriving at night, rental car agencies and hotels can arrange for someone to accompany you to and from parking lots.

3. Airplane Discretion- When traveling on plane, do not indicate final destination (i.e. hotel you are staying at) with person sitting next to you. This might be heard by another person and pose a risk.

4. Alone? Order for Two. - Order room service for two, take two keys upon check-in and do not allow room number to be announced.

5. Check Window/Door Lock- When staying in hotels, always check the window/door locks.

6. Check with Desk Before Opening Door- Violence is everywhere. Lock all bolts in hotel room and do not open for anyone without checking with the front desk.

7. Checking Closets/Shower- Use your baggage to hold hotel room door open and check closets and shower before closing the door

Appendix C

Travel Survey

Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

- Age Bracket

    25-30 ☐   36-41 ☐
    31-36 ☐   42 and above ☐

- Marital Status

    Single ☐   Married ☐   Divorced ☐   Separated ☐   Widowed ☐

- What region of the country do you live in?

    Northeast ☐ Southwest ☐
    Central   ☐ West   ☐

- What is your educational level?

    High School Diploma ☐
    Some College   ☐
    Bachelors Degree   ☐
    Advanced Degree   ☐

- Do find your job challenging?

  Yes ☐   No ☐

- Do you work full time or part time?

- How long have you been employed at your current company?

  Less than one year ☐

  1-3 years ☐

  3-6 years ☐

  6 plus ☐

- Occupation

- Professional Title

  Associate   ☐
  Manager   ☐
  Director   ☐
  Vice President   ☐
  President   ☐

- Salary Range

  $25-35 ☐ $55-65 ☐ $85-95 ☐ $35-45 ☐ $65-75 ☐
  $95-100 ☐ $45-55 ☐ $75-85 ☐ $100 and above ☐

- Are you the sole provider/wage earner in your household?

    Yes ☐ No☐

- What is your total household income?

25-35 ☐	$55-65 ☐		
$85-95 ☐	$35-45 ☐		
$65-75 ☐	$95-100 ☐		
$45-55 ☐	$75-85 ☐	$100 and above ☐	

- Reason for traveling?

    Personal ☐ Business ☐

    If you are traveling for personal, please jump to question

- How long have you been traveling for business?

    Less than one year   ☐

    1-3 years   ☐

    3-6 years   ☐

    6 plus   ☐

- How many business trips did you take in the past 12 months?

    <u>Domestic</u>
    2-4   ☐
    5-10   ☐
    11+   ☐

<u>International</u>
None ☐
2-4 ☐
5-10 ☐
11+ ☐

- Who makes your travel arrangements?

  Administrative Support ☐

  I do ☐

- Who pays for your travel expense?

  The company that employs me ☐

  The company I own ☐

  The client ☐

  I do ☐

- Does your company have a corporate travel policy that sets limits on the amount spent on air, hotel and car rental expense?

  Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

  If yes, does your company enforce this policy?

  Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

- Please check off the airline(s) you most frequently fly for business? Are you part of their frequent flyer program?

  American ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  America West ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  Continental ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  Delta ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  US Air ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  TWA ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  Northwest ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

  Other ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐

Reason for selecting this airline

- Are you a member of any airline club?

    Yes ☐   No ☐   If yes, which ones?

- Please check all of the following you have done in the past 12 months to reduce the cost of business travel:

    Stayed over a Saturday night to get a lower fare   ☐

    Took fewer last minute trips or unscheduled trips to get a better airfare   ☐

    Started using low fare air carriers where available   ☐

    Took fewer trips requiring air travel ☐

    Used back to back ticketing ☐

    Switched to a less expensive type of hotel   ☐

    Drove rather than flew whenever possible   ☐

    Took more day trips   ☐

    Used frequent flyer awards for business travel   ☐

    Didn't do anything   ☐

- Does your company reimburse you for this membership?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please check off the hotel (s) you most frequently stay at? Are you part of their frequent stay programs?

    | Marriott ☐ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
    | Hilton ☐ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
    | Sheraton ☐ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
    | Holiday Inn ☐ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
    | Wyndam ☐ | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |
    | Other | Yes ☐ | No ☐ |

Reason for selecting this hotel

- As a female traveling on business, do you feel like the following travel industry groups treat you equally well or less well than they treat male business traveler?

	Equally well ☐	Less well ☐
Front Desk	☐	☐
Bell Staff	☐	☐
Concierge	☐	☐
Travel Agents	☐	☐
Flight Attendant	☐	☐
Gate Agents	☐	☐

- Do you book your business travel online?

    Yes ☐ No ☐

- On a scale of 1-4, how concerned are you about air safety?

    5 Always worry about it ☐
    4 ☐
    3 ☐
    2 ☐
    1 Never even think about it ☐

- Have you ever experienced a situation where you did not feel safe while traveling?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

- If yes, did you alert anyone of this situation?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    Where further actions taken?

Yes ☐   No ☐

- Where did this situation occur?

  Airline   ☐
  Hotel   ☐

- Would you consider using this hotel/airline again based on this situation?

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- When traveling, do you feel safer staying at a hotel or motel?

  Hotel   ☐
  Motel   ☐
  Doesn't matter ☐

- Where do you eat most of your meals when traveling?

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Hotel Restaurant	☐	☐	☐
Room Service	☐	☐	☐
Outside Restaurant	☐	☐	☐

- Do you find that you eat well-balanced meals when traveling?

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- What motivates you to order room service? Check all that apply

  Convenience ☐
  Safety ☐
  Cost ☐
  Taste ☐
  Other

- What hotel amenities are most important to you?

  Double locks ☐
  Robes/slippers ☐
  In-room movies ☐
  Min-refrigerators ☐
  Irons ☐
  Make-up mirrors ☐
  Computer modem connections ☐
  Other

- Is business travel an important component to your job?

  Yes ☐ No ☐

- Overall, how satisfied have you been with the products and services that the travel industry has offered you?

  Very satisfied ☐
  Satisfied ☐
  Unsatisfied ☐
  Additional comments?

- As a female business traveler, do you feel that the travel industry has you're your needs?
  Yes ☐ No ☐

- If you could design the perfect business trip, what would it include?

Thank you for completing this travel survey.

Please send your completed survey to: Laura Clark 102 Crown Point Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 or email Lclark@principalpr.com. Should you have any questions, I can also be reached at 973-394-1177

Appendix D

Executive Summary

Master's Thesis Project
Does the travel industry strive to serve its female customers? A closer look at the
changing nature of female business travelers.

By Laura A. Clark

Problem Statement:

Research shows that the business travel industry is geared more toward men then women,

despite the increase in the number of female business travelers. This study explores that

issue to determine if the travel industry strives to serve its female customers.

Purpose of the Study

- The primary purpose of this study is to focus on whether or not the travel industry has

  directed it's marketing efforts toward its female customers.

- The absence of comprehensive studies that go beyond superficial information to focus

  on the attitudinal and behavior characteristic of the female business traveler is scarce

  at best.

- The author intends to focus specifically on women for two reasons: First, as a female

  and frequent business traveler, the author is interested in whether or not the travel

  industry is cognizant of the large percentage of female business travelers and their

  impact on the industry. The existing secondary research concentrates on men; up

  until now they have comprised the majority of business travelers. Although some

  data are available, detailed analysis of women's travel habits is not adequate

considering the profound impact they have had on the travel industry. This impact is documented in this study.

Objectives

This study sufficiently looks at the travel industry and the effects it has on its female business travelers. The first objective of this study is to add to the existing body of information relative to the relationship between women and the travel industry. The results of this study have implications for personal and business travel use. Secondly, this study will attempt to determine whether or not the travel industry uses its products and services to successfully impact female travel decisions.

Armed with the knowledge of why women select certain airlines and hotels, travel industry marketers could tailor advertising and marketing campaigns to reach this growing segment of the population. Additionally, the results of this study have implications on women. Knowing how and why other female business travelers could inspire the industry to pursue this venue in new and exciting ways.

The author plans to share this information with her current employer's corporate travel department, female travel publications, as well as with her female colleagues who also travel frequently.

Reason for Study

To add to the limited data that currently exists on and for female business travelers.

Lessons Learned

By the year 2002, female business travelers will comprise more than 50% of the business travel industry. Although the industry believes it has made strives to meet this growing market segment, female business travelers who travel frequently are not reaping these benefits.

Appendix E

Survey Cover Letter

Laura A. Clark
102 Crown Point Road, New Jersey 07054
973.394.1177

Subject: Female Business Traveling Survey

Dear Colleague

I am a candidate for a master's degree at Seton Hall University. One of the requirements is to complete a Masters Thesis. Your participation is greatly needed. Please take a few minutes to complete the attached survey.

By completing this survey, you will be contributing to the limited data that currently exists today on female business travelers. Additionally, your insight is very important as female business traveler as to whether or not the travel industry is striving to meet the needs of the female business traveler.

To complete the survey, please mark only one answer per question unless asked otherwise. Once complete, please forward the completed survey in the pre-stamped envelope to *Laura Clark at 102 Crown Point Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054.*

Thank you for your participation.

Laura A. Clark

Appendix F

Survey Follow-up Letter

Laura A. Clark
102 Crown Point Road, New Jersey 07054
973.394.1177

Dear Colleague:

Recently I mailed you a survey asking for your thoughts and opinion on your "Female Business Travel" experiences. If you have already returned this questionnaire, please consider this card a "Thank You" for your valuable help.

If you have not had a chance to do so yet, may I ask you to return the completed form today? As part of my Seton Hall University Masters Thesis, your opinions are a very important part of my thesis. Your input is greatly appreciated.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your opinions and experience with me.

Sincerely,

Laura A. Clark

PS: For your convenience, I've enclosed a postage paid envelope for the return of the survey.

Thanks!

Appendix G

Survey Thank You Letter

Laura A. Clark
102 Crown Point Road
Parsippany, NJ 07054

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for completing and returning the questionnaire I recently
sent you. I appreciated the time you invested to provide me with
your valuable impute about female business travel.

All the best,

Laura A. Clark