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2009 ttra International Conference

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ABSTRACT

The spa goer market has been the subject of several studies in the last seven years, largely because it is seen as a rapidly expanding and very profitable niche. Each of these studies defined the spa market somewhat differently, and while each study contributes to the overall knowledge of this market, they do not provide the industry with a comprehensive understanding. This study postulates that the spa goers who visit day spas while travelling are significantly different from those who visit a health and wellness spa and/or stayed at a spa resort. The data is drawn from the Travel Activitys and Motivation Survey (TAMS) and clearly shows original spa report, published by Lang Research Inc. (2007) is misleading in its profile of this market.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 10 to 15 years, any number of articles and studies in various parts of the world have addressed the spa-goer market, and found that generally speaking, it is made up of fairly well-educated, higher income, and active individuals that take more trips than the average traveler (Cochrane, 2008; EIU Trend & Tourism Analyst, 1996; Joppe & Choi, 2008; Lang Research Inc., 2001; MedSci Communications & Consulting Co., 2006; Mueller & Kaufmann, 2001; Nahrstedt, 2004; Tabacci, 2001; The Hartman Group, 2004 & 2006; Yesawich, Pepperdine & Brown, 2000).

One of the first comprehensive assessments of travel behaviour and motivators of both U.S. and Canadian travelers, including interest in vacations at health spas, was the Travel Activities & Motivation Survey (TAMS), completed in 2000 (Lang Research Inc., 2001). This study defined the types of vacation experiences sought, destination images held of the United States and Canada, and determined the overall market potential. In 2005, The Hartman Group conducted an extensive survey in the U.S. and Canada of active spa-goers. This was the first study that broke spa-goers into three distinct segments "depending on their level of participation in the larger World of Spas. At the heart of this world is a core contingent or segment of spa-goers who feel that learning about and going to spas is important to their lifestyle and at the other extreme is a periphery segment of spa-goers who enjoy going to spas but otherwise show little interest in them. Between these two segments is a mid-level spa-goer segment that is interested in learning about spas but lacks the commitment and passion of the core spa-goers." (The Hartman Group, 2006: X). However, it only looked at those spa-goers that visit spas while traveling ("spa traveler") and those who do not ("other spa goers"). It found that spa travelers are much more likely to be "veteran" spa goers and will try many different types of treatment, are most likely to stay at a hotel/resort spa, and shopping as well as culinary experiences ranked highest among activities participated in during spa travel. Joppe & Choi (2008), using the 2006 TAMS, determined significant differences between two types of spa travelers: the "recreational" and the "serious", based on whether they had only visited or stayed at a health spa as one of several activities, or had made it their main purpose of the trip.

However, it was hypothesized that a more meaningful distinction could be made among spa travelers based on whether they visited a day spa while travelling, stayed at a health resort or did both.

METHODS

In this study, the Canadian Travel Activity and Motivation Survey (TAMS) data were used to better understand Canadian spa travelers. The samples were restricted to all persons aged 18 years of age and older in the ten Canadian provinces and full-time residents of institutions were excluded. The TAMS study, undertaken by Statistics Canada, used random digit dialing to obtain samples stratified by census metropolitan area (CMA). The process began with the generation of a random list of 132,065 telephone numbers. Non-travelers and travelers who took an out-of-town trip of one or more nights in the past two years were identified via a screening telephone interview. The mail survey was conducted with those (46,143) who were identified as travelers. A total of 24,692 (53.5%) travelers completed the mail-back survey questionnaires. Only respondents who had taken an overnight trip in the last two years were considered (84% of respondents). Two activity variables were used: "Day visit to a health spa and wellness spa while on a trip of one or more nights" and "staying at a health spa". For each variable, it was possible to choose either "On out-of-town trips of one or more nights in past 2 years" or "Main reason for taking any of these trips".

Among 24,692 Canadian overnight travellers, 1,564 visited a day spa, 452 a health spa, and 974 did both. When weighted to the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2006), it was determined that 11.0% or over 2.23 million of Canadian overnight travelers visited a health and wellness spa and/or stayed at a spa resort while on an out-of-town, overnight trip of one or more nights. The weighted study data were analyzed using frequency, chi-square and Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) techniques. All results, except where indicated, were significant at the 0.001 level or better due to the large sample size.

FINDINGS

Socio-demographic characteristics

The majority of the respondents were female (60.6%), and the median age group of the respondents was in the 35-44 segment. The median family income range was $80,000-$99,999. Compared to the general population in Canada (80.2% - Canadians and 19.8% immigrants – [Statistics Canada, 2007]), participating in spa activities was not largely influenced by country of origin (81.3% - Canadians and 18.7% immigrants). The five major cities in Canada account for 50.7% of the spa travellers: these include Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, and Ottawa.

Day spas are by far the most frequented type of spa, especially in Ontario which makes up 39.9% of the clientele. Day spa goers are predominantly female, younger, highly educated, and of the medium income bracket while resort spa goers are more evenly split along gender lines, older, less educated, more predominantly Canadian and dominated by Quebec (50.0% with Montreal accounting for 30.8%). Active spa goers are also predominantly female, Gen-Xers and younger baby-boomers, and highly educated with high income levels. Quebecois are the largest cohort among active spa goers, accounting for 40% with Ontarians a distance second at 29.4%.

Media habits

Spa travellers are heavy newspaper readers (88.5% -Weekdays, 89.1% - Weekend), including travel sections (64.3% - Weekdays & 68.6% -Weekend). The top magazine categories are general interest (37.1%), fashion & beauty (34.9%), food & cooking (34.9%), and health & living (32.5%); spa goers are also heavy watchers of movies (72.2%), news/current affairs (66.9%), dramas (61.3%), and comedy programs(51.8%) on TV. Their most preferred radio programs are multi-cultural (44.3%) and modern rock ones (40.8%) (Table 1).

Day spa goers are more likely to watch dramas (63.1%), news/current affairs (65.0%), and movies and read health & living (34.4%), and the modern rock program (43.3%) is the number one radio program for this cohort. What truly differentiates the media habits of resort spa goers from those of either the day spa goers or the overall samples is their television program preferences: they tend to watch science & nature (47.6%), history (46.2%), travel shows (41.5%), and sports (41.2%) more often. Also, they are more likely to read business/finances/investment magazines (31.4%) than either of the other two segments. Active spa goers are more likely to read the following magazine categories: general interest, fashion & beauty, and food & cooking; as well as watch movies, news/current affair, and comedies. The number one radio program category for both resort spa goers and the active spa goers is multicultural.

Table 1. Newspaper & Magazine Readership and Preferred TV & Radio Programs

Characteristics	Day Spa Goers (%)	Resort Spa Goers (%)	Active Spa Goers (%)	Overall (%)
Newspaper Readership (daily)**	87.4	88.5	90.1	88.5
Newspaper Readership (weekend)**	88.1	89.0	90.6	89.1
Weekday Ed. Newspaper Readership (Travel section)**	(*N*=1,017,615)	(*N*=333,653)	(*N*=706,447)	(*N*=2,057,715)
Frequently	26.3	29.8	28.0	27.5
Occasionally	38.0	32.5	37.2	36.8
Rarely	23.9	28.6	24.1	24.7
Never	11.8	9.1	10.8	11.0
Weekend Ed. Newspaper Readership (Travel section)	(*N*=1,025,384)	(*N*=336,647)	(*N*=710,000)	(*N*=2,072,031)
Frequently	33.8	33.5	38.1	35.2
Occasionally	33.2	30.8	34.8	33.4
Rarely	22.0	26.9	18.8	21.7

Never	11.0	8.8	8.2	9.7
Magazine Readership**				
General interest	36.0	29.6	42.2	37.1
Fashion & beauty	35.1	26.2	38.7	34.9
Food & Cooking	35.0	29.6	37.3	34.9
Health & living	34.4	24.7	33.5	32.5
Home & garden	31.1	29.0	34.6	31.9
Business/Finance/Investment	20.8	31.4	25.2	24.0
Travel	16.9	19.8	20.8	18.7
TV Programs**				
Movies	71.3	67.9	75.7	72.2
News/Current affair	65.0	64.1	71.1	66.9
Dramas	63.1	55.0	61.5	61.3
Comedies	49.3	45.8	58.4	51.8
Biography	48.2	40.7	45.4	46.0
Science & nature	40.8	47.6	44.9	43.3
History	41.5	46.2	43.1	42.8
Reality	44.9	39.8	39.4	42.2
Travel shows	38.3	41.5	39.6	39.3
Sports	37.8	41.2	37.3	38.2
Cooking	36.4	34.0	37.0	36.2
Radio Programs**				
Multicultural	42.0	45.3	47.2	44.3
Modern rock	43.3	34.8	39.9	40.8
Oldies	33.6	34.4	38.5	35.4
Soft music	33.1	26.8	33.2	32.1
Top 40s/current hit	30.9	23.0	30.8	29.6

Note: ** statistically significant at the 0.001 level

Online behaviour and organization membership

All spa travellers considered the Internet (89.8%) as an important source of information. The popular Web sites for the segments are related to travel (68.0%), weather (62.1%), entertainment (54.9%), and health (53.4%). They tend to hold both auto club (43.8%) and flyer program (40.6%) memberships. Almost without exception, the active spa goers are the highest users, followed by the day spa goers. The resort spa goers tend to visit most web sites considerably less than either of the other segments (Table 2).

Table 2. Internet Web Visit and Organization Membership

Characteristics	Day Spa Goers (%)	Resort Spa Goers (%)	Active Spa Goers (%)	Overall (%)
Internet as a Source of Info**	90.5	86.5	90.5	89.8
Web site visiting behaviour**				
Travel	68.2	59.2	71.8	68.0
Weather	60.4	60.6	65.5	62.1
Entertainment	55.0	50.7	56.5	54.9
Health	50.7	55.7	56.3	53.4

Network news sites	36.7	33.3	42.2	38.1
House & home	35.4	31.9	38.2	35.8
Organization Membership**				
Auto club	43.8	39.4	45.8	43.8
Flyer program	42.1	32.8	42.0	40.6
Sports club	37.5	34.2	40.0	37.8

Note: ** statistically significant at the 0.001 level

Benefits sought

With regard to benefits sought, relaxation was by far the highest ranked for all three segments, ranging from 2.74 for “relax and relieve stress” to a low of 2.43 “have a life with no fixed schedule. This was followed by learning/experience, family/social bonding, and self-esteem. Similarities in benefits sought were found between day spa goers and active spa goers. Resort spa goers are less benefit seekers than the other two segments (Table 3).

When planning a trip, both day spa goers and active spa goers were more likely to be motivated by Relaxation (to relax and relieve stress; to get a break from your day to day environment; and to seek solitude and isolation) though some minor differences were found between the two groups while resort goers were slightly less likely to be motivated by any of the benefits sought.

Table 3. Benefits sought

Benefits Sought	**Day Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)**	**Resort Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)**	**Active Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)**	**Overall (mean/std.dev)**
Learning/experience**				
To see or do something new & different	2.53(.56)[a]	2.49(.58)[b]	2.49(.56)[b]	2.51(.56)
To gain knowledge of history, other cultures or other places	2.24(.65)[a]	2.09(.57)[b]	2.24(.64)[a]	2.22(.61)
To enrich your perspective on life	2.25(.67)[b]	2.11(.64)[c]	2.26(.67)[a]	2.23(.67)
To stimulate your mind/be intellectually challenged ...	2.01(.67)[b]	1.94(.68)[c]	2.02(.68)[a]	2.00(.68)
Relaxation**				
To relax and relieve stress	2.74(.48)[b]	2.67(.53)[c]	2.76(.45)[a]	2.74(.48)
To get a break from your day-to-day environment	2.74(.50)[a]	2.68(.53)[b]	2.68(.51)[b]	2.71(.51)
To have a life with no fixed schedule	2.43(.65)[a]	2.43(.68)[a]	2.41(.66)[b]	2.43(.65)
To seek solitude and isolation	2.53(.56)[a]	2.49(.58)[b]	2.49(.56)[b]	2.51(.56)
Self Esteem**				
To have stories to share back at home or something interesting to talk about	1.70(.69)[c]	1.76(.68)[a]	1.72(.71)[b]	1.72(.69)
To be challenged physically/ to feel physically energized	1.91(.71)[b]	1.79(.70)[c]	2.00(.74)[a]	1.92(.72)
To create lasting memories	2.56(.60)[a]	2.39(.65)[c]	2.54(.59)[b]	2.54(.61)
To be pampered	1.89(.68)[c]	1.99(.76)[b]	2.01(.70)[a]	1.95(.70)
Family/Social Bonding**				
To keep family ties alive	2.24(.71)[b]	2.20(.72)[c]	2.28(.69)[a]	2.25(.71)
To renew personal connections with people	1.96(.69)[a]	1.94(.71)[b]	1.88(.69)[c]	1.93(.69)
To enrich your relationship with your spouse/partner/children	2.50(.66)[c]	2.47(.69)[c]	2.53(.68)[a]	2.50(.67)

Note: Benefit sought items were anchored by 1 is Of no importance and 3 is Highly important.

** statistically significant at the 0.001 level

Destination selection factors and general attitudes

Apart from any cost consideration, all three segments were more likely to consider Safety when planning a trip (X=2.65; X=2.55; X=2.57, respectively). In addition, the segments were also concerned about accessibility to a destination, with direct air access being particularly important to active spa goers, availability of mid-range accommodations, and availability of adult activities (Table 4).

Day spa goers are more likely to be less price sensitive (X=2.39), prefer to visit undiscovered places (X=2.89) than the other two groups while both day spa goers and resort spa goers are more likely to make a decision quickly and easily. In addition, active spa goers tend to be confident that they have much more energy than most people in the same age (X=3.33).

Table 4. Destination Selection Factors & General Attitudes

Factor	Day Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)	Resort Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)	Active Spa Goers (mean/std.dev)	Overall (mean/std.dev)
Safety and Security**				
No health concern at the destination	2.43(.63)[a]	2.40(.68)[c]	2.42(.63)[b]	2.42(.63)
Safety	2.65(.54)[a]	2.55(.59)[c]	2.57(.58)[b]	2.61(.56)
Familiarity**				
Familiar with culture and language	1.72(58)[b]	1.75(.63)[a]	1.71(.62)[c]	1.72(.61)
Being at a place that is very different culturally	1.75(.61)[c]	1.83(.64)[a]	1.76(.65)[b]	1.77(.63)
Destination having friends or relatives	1.41(.61)[a]	1.39(.62)[b]	1.30(.55)[c]	1.37(.59)
Destination Attributes**				
Lots of things to see & do -children	1.51(.74)[c]	1.68(.79)[a]	1.56(.77)[b]	1.55(.76)
Lots of things to see & do - Adults	2.36(.57)[a]	2.35(.62)[b]	2.35(.57)[b]	2.35(.58)
Availability of information on the Internet	2.08(.70)[b]	1.90(.75)[c]	2.09(.72)[a]	2.05(.72)
Shopping opportunities	1.75(.69)[a]	1.62(.67)[b]	1.60(.67)[c]	1.68(.73)
Accommodation **				
Luxury accommodation	1.60(.68)[c]	1.73(.66)[a]	1.65(.70)[b]	1.64(.69)
Mid-range accommodation	2.25(.61)[a]	2.24(.65)[b]	2.24(.63)[b]	2.25(.62)
Budget accommodation	1.88(.69)[a]	1.80(.71)[b]	1.80(.71)[b]	1.84(.70)
Availability of low package deal**	1.98(.67)[a]	1.94(.65)[b]	1.93(.72)[c]	1.96(.68)
Accessbility**				
Direct access by air**	2.24(.66)[c]	2.29(.68)[b]	2.32(.62)[a]	2.27(.65)
Direct access by car**	2.20(.69)[a]	2.11(.70)[c]	2.19(.70)[b]	2.18(.70)
General Attitudes**				
Prefer to visit undiscovered places	2.89(1.40)[a]	2.63(1.48)[c]	2.82(1.37)[b]	2.83(1.40)
Actively involved in a regular fitness programs	2.75(1.40)[b]	2.64(1.41)[c]	2.95(1.46)[a]	2.80(1.43)
Much more energy than most people in the same age	3.23(1.08)[b]	3.03(1.20)[c]	3.33(1.10)[a]	3.19(1.14)
Often buy products before they come down in price	2.39(1.19)[a]	2.28(1.12)[c]	2.32(1.23)[b]	2.35(1.19)
Make decisions quickly and easily	3.28(1.12)[a]	3.28(1.07)[a]	3.24(1.10)[b]	3.27(1.11)

Destination selection items were anchored by 1 is Of no importance and 3 is Highly important.
General attitude items were measured using a 5 point Likert type scale: 1 – Applies very little and 5 Applies very much

** significant at the 0.001 level

Information search behaviour

Information searches are an important part of decision making for most travel planning because of the necessity for determining accommodations, transportation, and activity participation. The most widely used information sources identified in this study were: the Internet (78.5%), word-of-mouth (60.5%), past experience (57.5%), and travel agencies (50.9%). These were followed by official guides (36.8%) and maps (36.0%). Accommodation Web sites (67.1%) were the most popular websites for spa goers, followed by airline websites (57.1%), e-travel agencies (56.4%) and destination websites (54.1%).

Day spa goers and active spa goers seek out information using various sources, while resort spa goers tended to be less active information seekers. Specifically, day spa goers and active spa goers tended to use most information sources more than did resort spa goers except for travel agencies (51.1%; 50.0%; 52.5%, respectively). As shown in Table 5, more than two thirds of respondents (68.0%) indicated that they purchased travel arrangements via the Internet. Not surprisingly, day spa goers and active spa goers (71.8%; 65.0%, respectively) were more likely to purchase travel online than were resort spa goers (62.1%). Interestingly, resort spa goers (76.9%) preferred to purchase accommodation over the Internet more so than did day spa goers (72.5%) though active spa goers tend to be the top ranked accommodation booking group over the Internet (85.1%).

Table 5. Information Search Behaviour

Information source	Day Spa Goers (%)	Resort Spa Goers (%)	Active Spa Goers (%)	Overall (%)
An Internet Website**	79.3	68.3	82.2	78.5
Word of mouth**	61.2	47.3	65.5	60.5
Past experience/been there before**	58.0	49.7	60.4	57.5
A travel agent**	51.1	52.5	50.0	50.9
Official travel guides or brochures**	34.0	35.5	41.7	36.8
Maps**	36.8	32.9	36.1	36.0
Articles**	30.3	28.1	35.8	31.8
Visitor info. Centres**	26.6	27.6	40.8	31.5
Travel guide books**	20.6	18.8	26.3	22.2
An auto club**	22.8	18.9	21.4	21.7
Advertisements**	20.0	16.9	23.9	20.8
Travel Web site use				
Travel planning/booking**	59.3	48.4	55.2	56.4
Airline Web site**	59.9	47.4	57.0	57.1
DMO Web site**	57.9	54.4	48.1	54.1
Accommodation Web site**	65.7	72.7	67.0	67.1
Booking over the Internet (overall)**	71.8	62.1	65.0	68.0
Booking over the Internet (accommodation)**	72.5	76.9	85.1	77.3
Booking over the Internet (airline ticket)**	79.8	67.1	76.3	76.9

** statistically significant at the 0.001 level

Activity participation

TAMS lists 192 activity items and survey respondents were asked to check their participation in each. In this study, only the top ranked activities engaged in by respondents were included. The most preferred activities for the total study sample were: dining on local cuisine (75.8%), shopping for clothing, shoes, jewelry, etc. (74.3%), outdoor cafes (65.1%), shopping for books or music products (59.5%), sightseeing (58.6%), and sunbathing (57.5%) (Table 6).

Active spa goers expressed a strong preference for participating in most activities examined; general recreational activities (golfing, jogging, and fitness centre) and shows, events & fairs (live theatre, farmer's market, outdoor concerts, and comedy shows) were of less interest. Day spa goers were also more likely to participate in most activities; however, they are slightly less active than Active spa goers. Resort spa goers had some interest in shopping (e.g., clothing, shoes and jewelry), staying in a lakeside/riverside resort, outdoor cafés, and fine dining while showing low participation in most activities compared to the other groups.

Table 6. Activity Participation by Rank

Item	Day Spa Goers (%)	Resort Spa Goers (%)	Active Spa Goers (%)	Overall (%)
*Nature Based Activities***				
Sunbathing/sitting on beach	61.1	40.7	60.4	57.5
Swimming in lakes	49.2	37.0	49.1	47.2
Swimming in oceans	47.2	34.5	50.9	46.4
Motor boating	26.8	18.4	25.8	25.1
Downhill skiing	23.6	18.1	23.4	22.7
Snorkelling	24.3	9.7	23.4	21.6
Fishing (fresh water)	20.2	21.7	21.9	21.0
*General Recreation Activities***				
Golfing - played occasionally	26.1	22.3	25.7	25.3
Jogging/exercising outdoors	26.7	14.7	25.0	24.2
Fitness centre - working out	23.8	18.0	26.4	23.8
*Park Activities***				
Nature park	43.4	22.7	44.3	40.3
Hiking - same day excursion	35.9	23.4	39.6	35.1
Attended free outdoor concerts in park	29.2	21.7	38.0	30.9
Wildlife land based animals	21.2	14.3	27.2	22.1
*Shows, Events & Fair***				
Attended live theatre	30.9	21.0	38.6	31.9
Attended farmers' markets country fairs	31.3	20.3	35.4	30.9
Attended fireworks displays	27.8	25.6	28.8	27.8
Attended stand up comedy shows	18.6	16.9	27.9	21.5
*Dining***				
Restaurants - local ingredients/recipes	76.5	60.8	82.0	75.8
Went to local outdoor cafes	63.5	54.1	72.7	65.1
Dining in other high-end restaurants	45.4	42.3	56.0	48.5
Dining restaurant international rep.	36.9	30.7	37.9	36.2
Went to wineries for day visits tasting	29.4	30.4	34.2	31.2
*Attractions***				
Strolled city observe bldgs architecture	62.7	37.3	62.8	58.6
Visited known historic sites/ buildings	47.0	23.8	51.3	44.7
Went to casino(s)	39.6	29.2	40.7	38.3
Visited well known natural 'wonders'	39.7	22.3	42.0	37.6
Other hist.sites/monuments/bldgs	36.9	19.9	41.5	35.7
Museum- general history/heritage	34.3	18.0	42.4	34.4
Visited art galleries	31.6	21.1	44.9	34.4
Visited amusement parks	29.4	25.0	30.5	29.0
Visited botanical gardens	24.8	17.6	25.1	23.7
Visited aquarium	20.6	16.4	24.6	21.2
*Resort***				
Stayed in lakeside/riverside resort	36.1	49.4	58.4	45.8

Stayed at seaside resort	35.8	30.9	49.2	39.5
Stayed at ski resort or mountain resort	29.2	23.8	31.0	28.9
*Shopping or Browse***				
Shop/browse clothing, shoes, jewellery	77.0	51.4	81.3	74.3
Shop/browse bookstores or music stores	60.1	47.4	64.3	59.5
Shop local arts-crafts studio/exhibition	56.3	39.1	64.4	56.2
Shop or browse antiques	34.7	27.3	44.0	36.7
Shop/browse gourmet foods retail stores	31.0	24.9	39.3	32.8

Note: ** statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

Application of results

As hypothesized there is indeed a significant difference in the profile and motivations of day spa goers and resort spa goers, while active spa goers more closely ressemble the day spa goer. Hence, the marketing strategies to reach these different segments must be adjusted according to their differing media habits and destination search patterns. For instance, the accommodation website is of great importance to the resort spa goer, who will also not hesitate to book via this medium. On the other hand, an Internet website, word-of-mouth and past experience are all of much greater importance to day spa and active spa goers. Hence packaging becomes critically important for day spas, with a call to action that drives the customer to a booking website, as they are quite prepared to book via the internet, particularly through an accommodation or airline website. These packages should also stress the restaurant scene, highlighting those that use regional product and specialities, as well as the shopping opportunities, both activities of great interest to these two segments.

Since all three segments are heavy readers of daily and weekend newspapers, this may be another advertising medium to be explored. However, the travel section of these newspapers is only read regularly by a good third of them, while travel websites are visited by a majority (68%), with a high of 71.8% for Active spa goers. Relaxation and stress relief is the overriding benefit sought by all three segments, and the messaging must reassure the potential guests that the package or stay will indeed accomplish this. As previous research has shown (Joppe & Choi, 2008) that particularly the serious spa goers, many of whom ressemble the resort spa goer, is also interested in different types of treatments, information on exactly what benefits each treatment procures would be an important aspect of the spa-specific website.

Conclusions

There are many ways to segment the spa goer market, and indeed many definitions of what the segments are. With a rich database such as TAMS, it is important to clearly understand the differences in motivation and behaviour before attempting to profile a segment. The simplistic approach adopted by Lang Research Inc. (2007), at the direction of the Canadian Tourism Commission's Research Committee, that only considered one variable in the survey ("Day visit to a health spa and wellness spa while on a trip of one or more nights") completely ignores the fact that those who chose to visit a health and wellness spa and/or stayed at a spa resort are quite different. Even the title of the report is misleading since it refers to *"Visiting Spas While On Trips of One Or More Nights"*. Since the TAMS Spa Report would most likely be accessed mainly by hotels and resort with spas or associated with a spa, this is truly a disservice to the industry.

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