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Choi, Dr. HS Chris; Cho, Dr Jueun; and Joppe, Dr. Marion, "Benefit Segmentation of US Pleasure Travellers to Hawaii" (2016). *Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally*. 7.

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## **Benefit Segmentation of US Pleasure Travellers to Hawaii**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study delineates the benefits sought by US pleasure travellers to Hawaii by using a factor-cluster market segmentation technique. Based on four benefit factors (knowledge/learning; relaxation; family/social bonding; and pleasure experience), cluster analysis was used to identify similar respondents based on the benefits that they sought. This study identified three distinct segments: active travellers, relaxation seekers, and traditional tourists. The following variables were shown to be statistically significant among the three segments: age; gender; education; occupation; marital status; ethnicity; household size; information sources; Web site visit behaviour; destination selection factors; appealing states; travel frequency to Hawaii; and activities enjoyed. The study discusses the distinctive and common characteristics of the three identified segments.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since Smith (1956) introduced market segmentation, it has received much attention in research circles and has become a valuable marketing tool for practitioners and a popular topic for academic researchers (Wyner, 2002). The major objective of market segmentation is to subdivide consumer markets into specific and distinctive sub-segments and help marketers to understand consumers' needs and wants. Thus marketers can develop marketing actions that meet the needs and desires of targeted market segments (Lewis & Chamber, 2000).

Due to the practical importance of market segmentation in marketing, it has received greater attention from tourism researchers and practitioners (Anderson & Langmeyer, 1982; Hsieh, O'Leary & Morrison, 1992; Jang, Morrison & O'Leary, 2002; Shoemaker, 1994; Woodside & Jacobs, 1985). Numerous segmentation bases have been used to segment markets in the tourism and marketing literature: demographics (Reid & Reid, 1997); psychographics (Silverberg, Backman, & Backman, 1996; Ziff, 1971); benefits (Haley, 1968, Jang, Morrison & O'Leary, 2002); usage (Bonn, Furr, & Susskind, 1999; Twedt, 1964); lifestyle (Plummer, 1974); loyalty

(Grover & Srinivasan, 1989; Petrick & Sirakaya, 2004); image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Sirgy, 1982); and activities (Hsieh, O'Leary, & Morrison, 1992). Despite the varying popularity of these bases, many authors (Haley, 1968; Jang, Morrison & O'Leary, 2002; Silverberg, Backman & Backman, 1996; Ziff, 1971) found that the benefit sought represents a frequently used psychographic variable and a viable means of determining travel market segments. This study selected benefits sought as a psychological trait in order to segment the US traveller market to Hawaii. Thus, the purpose of this study is to segment US travellers to Hawaii using a factor-cluster market segmentation procedure and to profile the identified segments by testing statistical differences with the socio-demographic variables; travel behaviour patterns; and attitudes.

### **STUDY METHOD**

This study utilized the Travel Activity and Motivation Survey (TAMS) data collected in the United States between January and June 2006. The study was commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism with the cooperation and support of eight provincial and territorial ministries and agencies responsible for tourism as well as the Canadian Tourism Commission, Parks Canada, Canadian Heritage and the Atlantic Tourism Partnership.

This survey data was collected by mail with an established U.S. postal panel. Of the surveys sent, 60,649 were returned (71.3% overall response rates). A data subset of 2,069 travellers who visited Hawaii was extracted and used for this study. K-mean cluster analysis, factor analysis and discriminant analysis were employed to segment the data set. Chi-square and ANOVA tests were used to identify the distinctive and common characteristics of the three segments.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

A varimax rotated principal component analysis was used on 15 Likert-type benefit scale items to extract general domains of destination choice. A cut-off point of 0.4 was used to include items in interpretation of a factor and three benefit items did not load on any factor, overall reflecting the homogeneity of items. Accordingly, four factors explained 56.4% of the variance in the original data set. Factors were named based on common characteristics of the items they included. Table 1 displays the domain descriptions, items, factor loadings and Eigenvalues.

The K-means cluster analysis algorithm was used to segment groups of respondents. With examination of the dendrogram from a hierarchical cluster analysis, a three-cluster solution was found to be more meaningful. The results of the means difference to determine the importance of each of the factors for US travellers to Hawaii indicated that the four factors were statistically significantly different from each other. Identified clusters were labelled as *Active Travellers*, *Relaxation Seekers*, and *Traditional Tourists*.

Table 1. Results of Factor Analysis for Benefits Sought

Factor	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Grand Mean (Std. Dev.)
<b>Knowledge/Learning</b>				
To gain knowledge of history, other cultures or other places	.767	3.030	23.31	2.12(0.44)
To stimulate your mind/be intellectually challenged	.752			
To enrich your respective on life	.751			
To see or do something new and different	.610			
To be challenged physically/to feel physically energized	.491			
<b>Relaxation</b>				
To relax and relieve stress	.781	1.940	14.92	2.40(0.39)
To get a break from your day-to-day environment	.717			
To have a life with no fixed schedule	.655			
To seek solitude and isolation	.498			
<b>Family/Social Bonding</b>				
To keep family ties alive	.798	1.313	10.10	2.01(0.59)
To renew personal connections with friends	.795			
<b>Pleasure Experience</b>				
To create lasting memories	.679	1.042	8.02	2.16(0.51)
To have stories to share back at home	.558			

1) The items were measured using a 3-point Likert type scale (1 = of no importance, 2=somewhat important & 3 = highly important).

2) Principal component analysis was employed with varimax rotation using 15 benefit sought scale items.

3) Total variance explained: 56.35%

4) KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy: 0.764

5) Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Chi-Square = 5474.41,  $p < 0.0001$

Table 2. Characteristics of the Cluster and Results of ANOVAs

Cluster	Variable	Knowledge/ Learning	Relaxation	Family/ Social	Pleasure	
Cluster 1: <b>Active travellers</b> ( $n = 885$ )		2.35	2.69	2.22	2.18	
Cluster 2: <b>Relaxation Seekers</b> ( $n = 990$ )		1.90	2.43	1.84	2.28	
Cluster 3: <b>Traditional Tourists</b> ( $n = 565$ )		2.13	1.88	1.97	1.95	
Total ( $n = 2440$ )						
ANOVA Statistics						
F value		302.11	1974.01	105.48	<.0001	82.01
$p > F$		<.0001	<.0001			<.0001

The study used discriminant analysis to check groupings and the three group discriminant analysis indicated the presence of two significant functions (Eigen-values 1.993 and 1.404, respectively), which recovered 99.2% of the classification accurately.

Table 3. Summary of Discriminant Analysis

Discriminant Function <sup>a</sup>	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' $\lambda$	$\chi^2$	df	p-value
1	1.993	58.7	0.816	.139	4806.84	8	.0001
2	1.404	41.3	0.764	.416	2136.64	3	.0001

Note: <sup>a</sup> First 2 canonical discriminant functions were used in the analysis.

In order to profile the three clusters and gain a greater understanding of each cluster's characteristics, chi-square analyses for categorical variables (such as education, income, gender, age, occupation, marital status, ethnicity, cruise experience, information sources, activity participation, and so on), and ANOVA for continuous variables (household size, general attitudes, destination choice factors, appealing items) were used to test the differences among the three clusters.

### FINDINGS

Three clusters of US visitors to Hawaii were determined in the study. Although all three groups have higher incomes and are better educated than typical US travellers, the following are their distinctive socio-demographic characteristics (Table 4):

*Cluster 1: Active Travellers (36.3%):* "Active Travellers" are likely to be married, employed and university educated. They predominantly consist of baby boomers and females, earn the highest income of the three segments while maintaining a mid-level household size; at 14.4%, this group has the largest representation of non-Caucasians.

*Cluster 2: Relaxation Seekers (40.6%):* The "Relaxation Seekers" consist of employed Caucasians that are predominantly married and relatively less affluent than the other two. These travellers are relatively less educated, the youngest group, and have larger households.

*Cluster 3: Traditional Tourists (23.2%):* The "Traditional Tourists" consist of retired men, Caucasians and highly educated people with somewhat lower incomes. They are also the oldest group and have the largest proportion of divorced/widowed/separated.

Overall, all three groups use the Internet as a major source of information, followed by previous experience, word of mouth, travel agents, and maps. They are very active and experienced cruise tourists. For instance, more than 90% of US travellers to Hawaii had taken an Alaska cruise. When making a decision, they are likely to select a destination easily and quickly. The most popular travel Web sites visited by these groups are airline and hotel Web sites.

Active travellers are likely to book a trip on the Internet, and more frequently visited airline Web sites. When planning a trip, they are likely to search for package deals (Table 5). Destination choice is important, particularly regarding health, safety, mid range accommodation, entertainment, and accessibility by air. Active Travellers are the most proactive information searchers. They are keenest on visiting undiscovered places, will buy products before they come down in price and make decisions quickly and easily, more than either of the other two segments.

Table 4. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Variable		Active Travellers (%)	Relaxion Seekers (%)	Traditional Tourists (%)	Overall (%)	$\chi^2$ Statistics
Education	High school or less	7.6	11.6	10.2	9.8	$\chi^2 = 37.15$ $p < 0.001$
	Bachelor's degree	62.4	67.2	56.7	63.0	
	Some graduate/ grad. degrees	30.0	21.2	33.2	27.1	
Income	Under \$40,000	14.6	17.6	17.2	16.4	$\chi^2 = 5.248$ $p = 0.512$
	\$40,000 - \$79,999	33.3	33.6	34.8	33.8	
	\$80,000 - \$124,999	30.7	30.0	28.9	30.0	
	Over \$125,000	21.4	18.7	19.2	19.8	
Gender	Male	46.6	44.4	54.9	47.5	$\chi^2 = 17.09$ $p < 0.001$
	Female	53.4	55.9	45.1	52.5	
Age	Gen Y	7.1	9.9	5.3	7.8	$\chi^2 = 155.94$ $p < 0.000$
	Gen X	36.2	39.2	22.1	34.1	
	Baby Boomers	43.2	37.4	37.5	39.5	
	Traditional Tourists	13.6	13.5	35.0	18.5	
Occupation	Full time	59.9	57.3	44.4	55.2	$\chi^2 = 139.56$ $p < 0.001$
	Part time	5.2	8.0	6.5	6.7	
	Self employed	11.9	9.2	9.3	10.2	
	Retired	11.3	10.1	30.0	15.1	
	Others	11.9	15.4	9.8	12.8	
Marital status	Married	67.5	70.7	65.4	68.3	$\chi^2 = 16.56$ $p = 0.002$
	Never Married	18.3	17.7	15.6	17.4	
	Divorced, widowed, separated	14.2	11.6	19.0	14.3	
Ethnicity	Caucasians	85.6	88.6	90.7	88.0	$\chi^2 = 8.564$ $p = 0.014$
	Others	14.4	11.4	9.3	12.0	
Household size	Mean (Std. Dev.)	2.43(1.19) <sup>b</sup>	2.58(1.22) <sup>a</sup>	2.23(1.11) <sup>c</sup>	2.45(1.20)	$F = 15.74$ $p < 0.001$

Relaxation Seekers also book trips via the Internet and rely on the Internet for information. However, they are passive users of other information sources. When planning a trip, they are similar to Active Travellers. It is interesting to note that they visited hotel Web sites more often than did members of the other two groups when searching for information and are less sensitive to price. Traditional Tourists use all types of travel information when planning a trip, but rely more heavily on travel agents than either of the other segments. They visit DMO websites more frequently than the other two segments.

Members of these three groups selected Hawaii as the most appealing destination state in the US ( $X=9.28$ ), followed by California ( $X = 7.93$ ), and Florida ( $X = 7.23$ ). More than 40% of US travellers to Hawaii were from the West Coast [California (25.7%), Washington State (7.6%), Colorado (4.1%), and Arizona (5.3%)]. All three segments are keenly interested in destinations that have lots to see and do for adults, which may partly explain their loyalty to Hawaii.

Table 5. Travel Experiences, Information Sources, and General Attitudes

Variable	Active Travellers (%)	Relaxation Seekers (%)	Traditional Tourists (%)	Overall (%)	$\chi^2$ Statistics/ F statistics	
Cruise Experience	Alaska	93.2	94.8	90.3	93.2	$\chi^2 = 11.92$ $p = 0.003$
	Caribbean	85.4	83.4	81.6	83.7	$\chi^2 = 3.821$ $p = 0.148$
	Other cruise	85.2	83.9	76.8	82.7	$\chi^2 = 18.64$ $p < 0.001$
	Great Lake cruise	98.4	99.5	99.5	99.1	$\chi^2 = 7.20$ $p = 0.027$
	Submarine	97.7	98.4	98.4	98.2	$\chi^2 = 1.326$ $p = 0.515$
Information Source	The Internet	91.3	88.3	85.1	88.7	$\chi^2 = 12.84$ $p = 0.02$
	Past experience	62.4	58.9	61.5	60.8	$\chi^2 = 2.38$ $p = 0.305$
	Word of mouth	56.5	51.9	53.6	54.0	$\chi^2 = 3.710$ $p = 0.156$
	Travel agent	36.9	42.4	44.8	40.9	$\chi^2 = 9.67$ $p = 0.008$
	Map	42.4	31.5	44.3	38.4	$\chi^2 = 31.79$ $p < 0.001$
	Auto club	34.9	30.0	36.2	33.2	$\chi^2 = 7.35$ $p = 0.03$
	Newspapers/Magazines	34.0	26.8	41.0	32.7	$\chi^2 = 31.61$ $p < 0.001$
	Official travel guides	33.9	26.5	34.7	31.1	$\chi^2 = 15.35$ $p < 0.001$
	Travel guide books	34.3	25.5	35.2	30.9	$\chi^2 = 21.56$ $p < 0.001$
	Visitor info. centre	26.4	20.7	27.8	24.4	$\chi^2 = 11.99$ $p = 0.02$
Travel info. by mail	25.4	20.1	27.2	23.6	$\chi^2 = 11.64$ $p = 0.03$	
Website Visit	Airline's Website	72.5	68.3	68.7	70.0	$\chi^2 = 3.77$ $p = 0.152$
	Official DMO Website	46.3	38.9	47.5	43.6	$\chi^2 = 12.51$ $p = 0.002$
	Hotel's Website	64.2	66.8	64.6	65.4	$\chi^2 = 1.33$ $p = 0.514$
	Cruise line's Website	22.2	20.9	26.8	22.7	$\chi^2 = 5.87$ $p = 0.053$
	Attraction's Website	36.4	32.7	35.4	34.7	$\chi^2 = 2.584$ $p = 0.275$
General Attitudes	Prefer to visit undiscovered places	3.27(1.29) <sup>a</sup>	2.56(1.21) <sup>c</sup>	2.92(1.23) <sup>b</sup>	2.90(1.28)	$F = 73.86^{**}$
	Often buy products before they come down in price	2.56(1.21) <sup>a</sup>	2.43(1.16) <sup>ab</sup>	2.24(1.11) <sup>b</sup>	2.46(1.17)	$F = 6.95^*$
	Make decision quickly & easily	3.27(1.04) <sup>a</sup>	3.10(1.06) <sup>b</sup>	3.24(1.02) <sup>a</sup>	3.20(1.04)	$F = 6.56^{**}$

\* Significant at the 0.01 level; \*\* Significant at the 0.001 level

Active Travellers visited Hawaii more often than did Relaxation Seekers. In addition, they are more likely to be attracted by other major states in US than another other groups. They are most concerned that there be no health risks at the destinations, even though they attach some importance to being at a place that is very different culturally. Relaxation Seekers travelled to

Hawaii less often than did the other two clusters; however, Hawaii is the most appealing state among the top US states, including California, New York and Florida. Safety at the destination is even more of a concern to this segment than it is for the Active Travellers. Traditional Tourists travel to Hawaii even more frequently than Relaxation Seekers and Active Travellers. When selecting a destination, they are less interested in safety/security than are members of the other two groups.

Table 6. Destination Selection Factors & Appealing States

Factor	Active Travellers (mean/std.dev)	Relaxation Seekers (mean/std.dev)	Traditional Tourists (mean/std.dev)	Overall (mean/std.dev)
Safety and Health				
No health concern at the destination***	2.39(.67) <sup>a</sup>	2.32(.70) <sup>a</sup>	2.13(.69) <sup>b</sup>	2.30(.69)
Safety***	2.75(.47) <sup>a</sup>	2.77(.46) <sup>a</sup>	2.52(.57) <sup>b</sup>	2.70(.50)
Familiarity				
Familiar with culture and language***	1.96(.60) <sup>a</sup>	1.96(.59) <sup>a</sup>	1.79(.58) <sup>b</sup>	1.92(.60)
Being at a place that is very different culturally***	1.83(.64) <sup>a</sup>	1.58(.59) <sup>b</sup>	1.78(.65) <sup>a</sup>	1.72(.63)
Destination having friends or relatives***	1.43(.63) <sup>a</sup>	1.31(.57) <sup>b</sup>	1.44(.66) <sup>a</sup>	1.38(.62)
Destination Attributes				
Lots of things to see & do –children***	1.47(.72) <sup>a</sup>	1.50(.73) <sup>a</sup>	1.30(.57) <sup>b</sup>	1.44(.69)
Lots of things to see & do – Adults***	2.49(.56) <sup>a</sup>	2.50(.56) <sup>a</sup>	2.34(.59) <sup>b</sup>	2.46(.60)
Availability of information on the Internet***	2.21(.68) <sup>a</sup>	2.19(.70) <sup>a</sup>	1.93(.66) <sup>b</sup>	2.14(.69)
Shopping opportunities***	1.80(.70) <sup>a</sup>	1.86(.68) <sup>a</sup>	1.64(.61) <sup>b</sup>	1.79(.68)
Accommodation				
Luxury accommodation***	1.81(.74) <sup>a</sup>	1.68(.70) <sup>b</sup>	1.51(.63) <sup>c</sup>	1.69(.71)
Mid-range accommodation***	2.40(.59) <sup>a</sup>	2.37(.58) <sup>a</sup>	2.19(.55) <sup>b</sup>	2.34(.59)
Budget accommodation*	1.96(.71) <sup>a</sup>	1.92(.71) <sup>ab</sup>	1.87(.67) <sup>b</sup>	1.92(.70)
Availability of low package deal***	2.04(.67) <sup>a</sup>	2.10(.66) <sup>a</sup>	1.94(.67) <sup>b</sup>	2.04(.67)
Accessibility				
Direct access by air***	2.38(.60) <sup>a</sup>	2.36(.61) <sup>a</sup>	2.25(.60) <sup>b</sup>	2.34(.61)
Appealing state by rank				
Hawaii***	9.34(1.44) <sup>a</sup>	9.38(1.37) <sup>a</sup>	9.00(1.71) <sup>b</sup>	9.28(1.49)
California	7.96(2.27)	7.98(2.19)	7.77(2.21)	7.93(2.22)
Florida***	7.23(2.52) <sup>a</sup>	7.47(2.36) <sup>a</sup>	6.78(2.48) <sup>b</sup>	7.23(2.46)
Colorado***	7.49(2.21) <sup>a</sup>	6.96(2.23) <sup>b</sup>	7.11(2.10) <sup>b</sup>	7.19(2.21)
Arizona**	7.23(2.32) <sup>a</sup>	6.92(2.40) <sup>b</sup>	6.91(2.33) <sup>b</sup>	7.03(2.36)
New York**	7.07(2.49) <sup>a</sup>	6.82(2.50) <sup>ab</sup>	6.68(2.52) <sup>b</sup>	6.88(2.51)
Travel frequency to Hawaii for the last 2 yrs				
1	79.4	81.9	77.4	80.0
2	13.9	12.5	13.6	13.2
3+	6.8	5.6	9.0	6.8

Destination selection items were anchored by 1 is Of no importance and 3 is Highly important.

\* Significant at the 0.1 level; \*\* Significant at the 0.05 level ; \*\*\* Significant at the 0.001 level

All three segments have a keen interest in dining in restaurants that feature local ingredients, and while they are interested in water-based activities, they also have an interest in sightseeing and visiting known historic sites and buildings.



Active Travellers participate in most travel activities and are more likely to attend shows, events, fairs, restaurants and shop than either of the other two segments (Table 7). Relaxation Seekers are the least active group, except for sunbathing, swimming in the ocean, snorkelling, and shopping for clothing and jewellery, and going to shows. Finally, Traditional Tourists are very unique in activity participation and are likely to prefer land-based activities such as visiting nature parks, hiking, wildlife viewing, event activities, shopping in bookstores and antique shops, and traditional attractions.

Table 7. Activity Participation by Rank

Item	Active Travellers (%)	Relaxation Seekers (%)	Traditional Tourists (%)	Overall (%)
<i>Water Based Activities</i>				
Sunbathing/sitting on beach****	63.8	65.1	53.0	61.8
Swimming in oceans****	60.7	62.6	50.6	59.2
Snorkelling **	47.9	49.2	42.6	47.2
Marine life watching	27.1	23.8	26.1	25.5
<i>Land Based Activities**</i>				
Nature park*	44.3	38.9	42.2	41.6
Hiking - same day excursion****	39.9	26.5	34.0	33.1
Wildlife land based animals****	22.4	15.5	23.4	19.8
Jogging/exercising outdoors****	23.8	14.1	17.4	18.4
Wildflowers/flora viewing***	21.4	14.6	17.7	17.8
Golfing - played occasionally	19.5	16.1	18.2	17.8
<i>Shows, Events, Fairs &amp; Festivals</i>				
Live theatre****	25.0	18.5	31.7	23.9
Firework displays***	26.2	19.7	24.5	23.1
Free outdoor performances****	25.5	15.4	26.5	21.6
Stand-up comedies	18.6	17.9	17.5	18.1
Food/drink festivals***	19.9	14.3	17.7	17.1
<i>Shopping/Browsing</i>				
Clothing, shoes, jewellery****	67.5	67.4	56.5	64.9
Bookstores or music stores****	50.2	38.5	46.7	44.6
Antiques**	29.8	25.2	31.5	28.3
Gourmet foods retail stores****	31.3	22.0	26.7	26.4
<i>Dining</i>				
Restaurant with local ingredients****	77.1	73.3	76.0	75.3
Local outdoor cafes****	55.2	44.5	53.1	50.3
High-end restaurants**	46.4	40.3	44.9	43.6
High-end restaurant international rep.****	38.1	29.5	32.7	33.3
<i>Attractions</i>				
Sightseeing****	52.7	43.8	54.9	49.6
Known historic sites/ buildings****	47.8	41.5	55.5	47.0
Well known natural 'wonders'****	45.3	38.4	48.5	43.2
Other hist.sites/monuments/bldgs****	39.0	36.4	47.4	39.9
Aquariums	33.6	34.0	32.0	33.4
Heritage museum****	32.5	24.7	38.5	30.7
Art galleries****	30.9	21.1	37.0	28.3
Botanical gardens****	30.1	21.4	29.7	26.5

Note: \* Significant at the 0.1 level; \*\* Significant at the 0.05 level; \*\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level; \*\*\*\* Significant at the 0.001 level

## Implications

Understanding the benefits sought by some of the most loyal segments of visitors to

Hawaii is critically important when trying to position experiences and capturing their attention. While relation as a benefit is ranked highest by the Active Travellers, they also attach the greatest importance to knowledge and learning. Therefore, experiences need to be positioned as “no hassle” and pleasurable learning opportunities. Relaxation Seekers, on the other hand, obviously value relaxation but also pleasure, and hence the focus needs to be much more on dining opportunities, strolling through shops and attractions, and the safety and familiarity of the destination. Finally, the Traditional Tourists prize knowledge and learning, and so the experiences need to highlight the Hawaiian culture and all the opportunities to learn more about it and the islands’ history.

This study extends the existing research by using the benefit sought trait to segment US travellers to Hawaii and enabling marketers to develop marketing strategies. Very few studies have segmented a regional market such as Hawaii. This study identified some distinctive differences among the three lucrative segments. The study findings may provide destination management organizations in Hawaii a useful platform from which to adjust or improve current marketing strategies.

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