

Report: Focus on women travelers is growing

August 16 2011, By Elizabeth Simpson

When businesswomen travel, well-lit hallways, comfortable beds and rooms with big windows are not enough to make them want to return to a hotel. They need to feel valued.

In the Cornell Hospitality Reports article "Creating Value for Women Business Travelers: Focusing on Emotional Outcomes," Judi Brownell, professor of organizational communication and dean of students at the School of [Hotel Administration](#), finds that women have "stronger emotional, personal responses" to their hotel experience than men.

In 2010 women comprised nearly half of all business travelers. Brownell identifies distinct emotional differences between male and female travelers and the role this plays in marketing hotels to women.

The report finds clusters of factors vital to women's satisfaction, such as safety, comfort, empowerment and value. "Managers should focus on how best to generate key emotional responses through a holistic approach rather than seek to identify any one specific service, amenity or facility that all women [business travelers](#) prefer," Brownell writes.

Hotels can feel and be safer by installing covered parking and deadbolts on doors. Because women are generally more concerned than men with getting good night's sleep and spending time relaxing, Westin Hotels' Heavenly Bed offers a spa-like ambiance.

Travel itself makes women feel empowered. "Women seek business travel to broaden their horizons, contribute to their professional

advancement and provide them with freedom from daily routines," Brownell writes. Hoteliers can enhance this experience through exceptional room service, spas and on-site fitness centers.

One of traveling women's biggest complaints is that they don't feel valued by the hospitality industry. Amenities that pamper -- brand-name bath products, fresh flowers, flavored coffee and tea, and stylish furnishings -- create [positive feelings](#) in women. Some hotels even provide the option of women-only floors.

Women tend to use hotels differently than men; they book rooms further in advance and stay longer to conduct meetings and attend conferences and conventions. More men tend to stay for single nights on sales or consulting trips.

About 20 percent of businesswomen use vacation days to extend their hotel visit and trip for enjoyment. In a survey of hotel managers' perceptions of what women want from their hotel experience, Brownell found that [women](#) communicate their emotional needs well and hotels are working to serve this developing market.

Provided by Cornell University

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