



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**When Making Hotel Reservations for Personal Travel, Gays and Lesbians More Likely than Heterosexuals to Book Their Accommodations Online**

*New national survey by Harris Interactive and Witeck-Combs Communications examines travel behaviors among gays and lesbians*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – April 10, 2006** – A new survey reveals that gays and lesbians (79%) are more likely than heterosexuals (54%) to say they most often go online to book hotel accommodations for personal travel. Gays and lesbians (16%) are also more likely than non-gays (4%) to cite a hotel's fair treatment of guests like them as one of their three most important considerations when deciding at which hotel to stay for business purposes. Similarly, by nearly a three-to-one margin, 22 percent of gays and lesbians say "fair treatment of guests like me" is one of their top three considerations when traveling and staying in a hotel for pleasure, compared to only eight percent of heterosexuals.

These are several highlights of a nationwide online survey of 2,581 U.S. adults (ages 18 and over) conducted online between March 7 and 13, 2006, by Harris Interactive®, a worldwide market research and consulting firm, in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc., a strategic public relations and marketing communications firm with special expertise in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender market (GLBT).

"These results may further provide evidence of the love affair between gay travelers and the Internet," says John Butler, Senior Communications and Marketing Strategist of Witeck-Combs Communications. "When booking accommodations, online services are truly the default option for substantial numbers of GLBT travelers. The survey results also show us that many factors, not just price and location, go into hotel choices, and that's no surprise for any consumer."

Butler adds, "Yet, what also stands out again is the reputation that a hotel property signals by treating all customers, including gays and lesbians, with fairness. For most, that simply may mean welcoming with equal respect, which experience shows us actually differentiates one hotel brand from another in terms of true hospitality."

**TABLE 1  
METHOD USED TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS FOR PERSONAL TRAVEL**

“When making your hotel reservations for personal travel, what method to book your accommodations do you most often use?”

Base: All adults

	Total	Gay/Lesbian*	Heterosexual
	%	%	%
Online	54	79	54
Phone or in person	29	12	30
Do it myself	1	1	2
Do not stay in hotels	13	7	13

Note: Total includes all heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adults and does not include gay/lesbian “over-sample”.

\* Gay/lesbian sample of 192 includes an over-sample of gays/lesbians.

**TABLE 2  
MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DECIDING AT WHICH HOTEL TO STAY FOR BUSINESS**

“When you travel for business and stay in a hotel, what are the three most important considerations when deciding at which hotel to stay?”

Base: All adults

	Total	Gay/Lesbian*	Heterosexual
	%	%	%
Pricing	24	37	23
Location	24	39	23
Cleanliness	22	30	22
Amenities	12	15	12
Sense of security	12	7	12
Guest rewards program	6	11	6
Standard large chain	5	4	5
Fair treatment of guests like me	4	16	4
Recommendation from friend/family	2	2	2
Physical accessibility	1	2	1
Historic building	*	1	0
Other	2	4	2

Note: Total includes all heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adults and does not include gay/lesbian “over-sample.”

\* Gay/lesbian sample of 192 includes an over-sample of gays/lesbians.

**TABLE 3**  
**MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DECIDING AT WHICH HOTEL TO STAY FOR PLEASURE**

“When you travel for pleasure and stay in a hotel, what are the three most important considerations when deciding at which hotel to stay?”

Base: All adults

	Total	Gay/Lesbian*	Heterosexual
	%	%	%
Pricing	64	71	64
Cleanliness	50	44	50
Location	42	63	42
Amenities	21	16	21
Sense of security	20	11	22
Fair treatment of guests like me	8	22	8
Guest rewards program	7	10	7
Standard large chain	5	5	6
Recommendation from friend/family	5	7	5
Physical accessibility	3	5	2
Historic building	1	1	1
Boutique hotel	1	2	1
Other	2	3	2

Note: Total includes all heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender adults and does not include gay/lesbian “over-sample”.

\* Gay/lesbian sample of 192 includes an over-sample of gays/lesbians.

### Methodology

Harris Interactive® conducted the study online within the United States between March 7 and 13, 2006, among 2,581 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 2,241 indicated they are heterosexual and 192 self-identified as gay or lesbian\*. Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. In addition, the results for the gay and lesbian sample were weighted separately based on profiles of the gay and lesbian population that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

All surveys are subject to several sources of error. These include: sampling error (because only a sample of a population is interviewed); measurement error due to question wording and/or question order, deliberately or unintentionally inaccurate responses, nonresponse (including refusals), interviewer effects (when live interviewers are used) and weighting.

With one exception (sampling error) the magnitude of the errors that result cannot be estimated. There is, therefore, no way to calculate a finite “margin of error” for any survey and the use of these words should be avoided.

With pure probability samples, with 100 percent response rates, it is possible to calculate the probability that the sampling error (but not other sources of error) is not greater than some number. With a pure probability sample of 2,581 adults one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 2 percentage points. Sampling error for the sub-sample of heterosexuals would be +/- 2 percentage points, and for the sub-sample of gays and lesbians +/-7 percentage points. However that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

\* Includes an over-sample of GLBT adults.

***These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.***

Additional Note: Previous research conducted by Harris Interactive in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. queried gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) self-identified respondents. Although we remain interested in the consumer attitudes and characteristics of all of these individuals, this survey is focused specifically on gay/lesbian responses.

**About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.**

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. ([www.witeckcombs.com](http://www.witeckcombs.com)) is the nation's premier strategic marketing communications firm, specializing in reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over nine years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications has developed respected relationships throughout the community and serves as a bridge between corporate America and gay and lesbian consumers. In April 2003, American Demographics magazine identified Bob Witeck and Wes Combs as two of 25 experts over the last 25 years who have made significant contributions to the fields of demographics, market research, media and trendspotting for their pathbreaking work on the gay and lesbian market.

**About Harris Interactive®**

Harris Interactive Inc. ([www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com)), based in Rochester, New York, is the 13th largest and the fastest-growing market research firm in the world, most widely known for *The Harris Poll*® and for its pioneering leadership in the online market research industry. Long recognized by its clients for delivering insights that enable confident business decisions, the Company blends the science of innovative research with the art of strategic consulting to deliver knowledge that leads to measurable and enduring value.

Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its United States, Europe ([www.harrisinteractive.com/europe](http://www.harrisinteractive.com/europe)) and Asia offices, its wholly-owned subsidiary Novatris in Paris, France ([www.novatris.com](http://www.novatris.com)), and through an independent global network of affiliate market research companies. EOE M/F/D/V

To become a member of the Harris Poll Online<sup>SM</sup> and be invited to participate in future online surveys, go to [www.harrispollonline.com](http://www.harrispollonline.com).

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