Hotel Online
News for the Hospitality Executive

New Survey Claims the Added Value Provided by Hotel Brand Loyalty Programs
Remains a More Critical Factor in Hotel Selection than Price of the Room

SINGAPORE, 6 July 2009 – New research conducted by Hilton HHonors - the loyalty programme for the Hilton Family of Hotels - has found that 62% of travellers across Asia Pacific are currently feeling 'as loyal' or 'even more loyal' to brands in response to the economic downturn, largely influenced by the presence of effective loyalty programmes.

These compelling findings were the result of an Asia Pacific survey conducted by Hilton HHonors with 5,000 respondents across Australia, China, India, Japan and South Korea.[1]

When broken down by market, the survey found that 79% of Australians felt more or equally loyal as did 73% of those in China, 69% in India and 59% in Japan. Conversely South Koreans felt less optimistic with only 27% in the as loyal or more loyal group.

Survey participants were also asked if they would choose a specific hotel even if they knew it was more expensive but would accrue them personal loyalty points. Almost half (47%) of all travellers surveyed agreed that they would. This behaviour was even more common in China and India where the figure rose to (67%) and India (52%) respectively but less strong in Australia and Japan (36% and 37%).

Deborah Merrens, Hilton Hotels Director of Strategic Partnerships explained the findings in more detail stating, "What this new research shows is that it is the added value provided through loyalty programmes, more than price, which remains the critical factor in a customer decision making. This means that loyalty continues to be a key to any brand aiming to retain and attract customers. As HHonors research shows, when the going gets tough, the customer gets loyal."

Interestingly HHonors members were found to be more loyal to brands than the Asian Pacific or market average with a massive total of 88% of HHonors members stating that they felt at least as loyal, or more loyal, in these depressed economic times. This showing the power and success of the award winning Hilton loyalty programme.

Across all hotel loyalty programmes, 50% said that being a member made them more likely to stay with that hotel brand than any other. When taking into account only the HHonors members, the average was

higher once more – the figure rising to 56%.

Ms Merrens continued "At HHonors we see loyalty as being about building long-term relationships through constant and consistent attention to customers in return for their support of our brands. This helps to build the bond and familiarity between our brand and our customers and ultimately results in the kind of loyalty that as this research has shown, can help a brand through challenging economic times."

About Hilton HHonors
Hilton HHonors® is an esteemed guest reward program that gives frequent travelers a fast way to earn the rewards they want most. It is the only guest reward program to offer Points & Miles® and No Blackout Dates with no capacity controls at more than 3,300 hotels. Enrolled members can Double Dip® to earn HHonors points and airline miles for the same stay, at nearly any rate, at participating Hilton®, Conrad® Hotels & Resorts, Doubletree®, Embassy Suites Hotels®, Hampton®, Hilton Garden Inn®, Hilton Grand Vacations™, Homewood Suites by Hilton® and The Waldorf Astoria Collection™ hotels around the world. In addition to redeeming HHonors points for complimentary nights, Hilton HHonors members can also redeem points for merchandise, vacation packages, unique experience rewards and more.

Membership in HHonors is free. Travelers may enroll online by visiting HiltonHHonors.com. Consumers in the U.S. and Canada can enroll instantly in the program by calling 1-800-HHONORS. Outside the U.S. and Canada, travelers may call the Hilton Reservations and Customer Care office in their area. Travelers also may enroll at any Hilton Family Hotel. For further information, visit HiltonHHonors.com.

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