

U.S. Travel Trends and Outlook

SPEAKER: *Suzanne D. Cook, Ph.D.*, President, Suzanne Cook Consulting, LLC

The “Great Recession” crippled the global and U.S. travel and tourism industry as leisure, and especially business and meetings-related, travel declined significantly in volume and spending. Consumers re-thought and scaled back their discretionary spending, including for travel. And businesses, affected profoundly by the economic downturn as well as what has become known as the “AIG Effect”, reduced dramatically their corporate business travel and even more so their meetings activities. But 2011 has posted better economic and performance indicators and there is a new sense of optimism among industry operators and leaders. Combining her industry knowledge and experience with critical new data and forecasts, Suzanne will share her outlook on what to expect for the months and year ahead and her insights on shifting consumer trends that could affect your business.



For more than three decades, Suzanne served as the Senior Vice President of Research for the U.S. Travel Association, providing economic and marketing research and analysis to benefit its members and support industry efforts involving advocacy and promotion. The comprehensive program she developed and directed includes the Travel Economic Impact Model, the only national model which provides consistent and comparable estimates of both domestic and international travel's economic impact at the national, state, and local levels. She was also instrumental in the creation of several consumer research programs designed to monitor the size, characteristics and growth of existing and emerging

travel markets on an ongoing basis, such as *TravelHorizons™*, a quarterly, forward-looking survey conducted in conjunction with the Ypartnership. She was also the principle architect of *travelgreen.org*, the primary source for information on sustainability efforts within the travel community, and some of our industry's best efforts, developed in partnership with American Express.

Suzanne has now established her own company, Suzanne Cook Consulting, LLC, specializing in research, strategic planning and presentations for destinations and travel corporations. She has also been appointed Senior Executive Associate with the Consumer Insights and Brand Strategy Group of the Ypartnership, a leading marketing service company serving the travel industry.

In addition, Suzanne continues to serve as Senior Advisor to the U.S. Travel Association. In this capacity, she is the author of the monthly e-newsletter *U.S. Travel Outlook*, which monitors ongoing travel industry performance; synthesizes relevant economic, social and consumer trends that can affect travel; and provides regular forecasts and qualitative analysis about the future of U.S. travel. She also serves as General Manager of U.S. Travel's *Marketing Outlook Forum*, the industry's leading strategic forecasting conference.

Earlier in her career, Suzanne held the position of Senior Project Director for the Arbitron Company, a major broadcasting research firm. She is an adjunct faculty member at The George Washington University, where she received her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Social Psychology, and has taught graduate level courses in research methods and statistics in Washington, D.C., abroad, and online. She also served as President and Chairman of the Board of the International Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA).

Travel Agent Magazine named Suzanne as one of the most powerful women in the travel industry. She is the recipient of TTRA's highest and most prestigious award, The Lifetime Achievement Award, as well as the Access to Freedom Award given by the Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality.