



First ever BDRC Russian Hotel Guest Survey results published

Developing market offers many opportunities to international hotel brands

London 13th January 2009: The hotel market in Russia is widely regarded as offering many opportunities for the hospitality industry. However, little research has been available on this developing market. Now specialist market research company BDRC (www.bdrc.co.uk) has just released the Russian edition of their respected Hotel Business Guest Surveys investigating the Russian business travel market. The report highlights some of the areas in which the market offers great potential for hotel brands including:

- The small number of strong local branded players and low levels of awareness for most hotel brands (as compared to our other studies) leaves space for international hotel brands looking to enter and expand in Russia
- Usage of the internet for hotel booking and fact-finding is even more popular than in Europe, the online channel offers a powerful route for brands to reach business guests
- High levels of loyalty programme membership, among those aware of the programmes, offer opportunities for international brands to develop loyalty through these means.

Radisson and Hilton: top performers in Russia

Radisson and Hilton share the title of Number One Hotel Brand in the first edition of the Russian Hotel Guest Survey based on key performance indicators. Despite having only one property in Russia, Hilton manages to score highest levels of awareness amongst business travellers but Radisson is the most preferred brand.

Despite the strong global positioning of Hilton, Radisson is likely to become market leader here, partly because it was one of the first global hotel brands to enter Russia and also due to its more extensive development plans. On the key measures of awareness,

usage and leading choice Nevsky and Heliopark appear as the two strongest local players - but only the former joins the top 10 league.

Importance of hotel chain websites for information and reservations

The internet is used by the majority of Russian business travellers as a source of information, to review hotel availability and to book a room. Possibly as a result and more striking than in other European countries, the usage of hotel chain websites to book hotel rooms is higher, and preferred to the direct contact that travellers favour in other markets.

Radisson's website leads in terms of both visits and bookings, with almost one in three business travellers claiming they had visited the website in the last year. However in Russia as in most business traveller markets, travel websites are more commonly visited than hotel websites but the latter are preferred for bookings. Travel.com, Yahoo! Travel and hotels.com are used the most.

A need to increase awareness of hotel loyalty programmes

At only 28%, awareness of any hotel loyalty programme in Russia is much lower than in Western Europe. Hilton HHonors claims the highest awareness and membership levels amongst all business travellers but not amongst its own guests. Here Marriott Rewards heads the way. However the high conversion rates from awareness to membership indicate that once they know about these programmes, business travellers find the benefits they offer appealing. A great opportunity then lies for hotel brands to increase sign up in this market if they can raise recognition levels.

Esther Reynal de Saint Michel, Project Manager says "This is the first year we have carried out research in this exciting market. Compared to most of Western Europe the research suggests a potentially lucrative market for hotels chains willing to invest. However, we also need to take into account the growing economic downturn and its effect on the Russian market. We look forward to repeating our study in July to measure any impact as a result of the global crisis."

Ends

For press enquiries please contact:

Geraldine Gitel, PR Consultant Greenfields Communications
ggitel@greenfieldscommunications.com Tel: +44 7917 885380

For details on the entire survey please contact:

Guy Gilben, BDRC Senior Client Services Manager
Guy.gilben@bdrc.co.uk Tel: +44 (0) 20 7400 0388

Note to editors:

The Russian Hotel Business Guest Survey, researched for the first time in 2008 was recently published by [BDRC](#). This in-depth study focuses on the hotel staying market, providing information on brand awareness, usage and preference, as well as on business traveller's profile and behaviour.

For the first year of the survey, over 300 Russian business stayers were interviewed. The BDRC Hotel Guest Surveys were first launched in 1982 in Britain and are now conducted annually amongst more than 12,000 hotel business guests in the bespoke regions. The surveys focus on hotel brand awareness, usage, preference, and image perception. They also examine the hotel selection and reservation process, hotel & travel internet websites and other marketing issues. The BDRC Hotel Guest Surveys are conducted in almost 40 markets: Britain, Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Lebanon, Qatar, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, China, India, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Australia, United States, Canada, Russia, Poland and Turkey.

About BDRC

Founded in 1991, Business Development Research Consultants is a leading full service market research agency. Working primarily for service organisations, the company specialises in hotels, finance, travel and tourism and mobile telephony. The acquisition of Continental Research at the beginning of 2008 added media and advertising, public sector and technology research expertise to the portfolio of market sectors covered. Headquartered in London BDRC works internationally and has representation in South Africa and Asia. For more information, visit www.bdrc.co.uk.