

# Assessment of Tourism/Hospitality Journals' Role in Knowledge Transfer: An Exploratory Study

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*This study is a preliminary assessment of the transfer of knowledge from 13 popular tourism, hospitality, and related academic journals to managers, researchers, and other practitioners in the U.S. tourism and hospitality industries. It is based on a sample survey of members of two organizations that cover these populations: the Travel and Tourism Research Association and the Travel Industry Association of America. This study finds, among other results, that the two populations differ in their proportions that read any journals and specific journals, that there are preferences for journals that vary by occupation and tourism industry sector, and that relatively little transmission of knowledge is taking place from leading journals to industry practitioners. Recommendations are presented for further research and action.*

*Keywords: knowledge management; survey research; tourism and hospitality journals*

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Knowledge management is now a popular topic among organization managers, as indicated by measures of formal attention in books (e.g., Davenport and Prusak 1998; Tiwana (2002); Sanchez 2001a; Stapleton 2003), magazines and journals (e.g., *Knowledge Management Magazine* and the *Journal of Knowledge Management*), and organizations (e.g., Association of Knowledge and Knowledge Management Consortium International). Formally, knowledge management has been defined as "the process by which information and research outcomes are transformed into capabilities for effective action" (Ruhanen and Cooper 2003, p. 10).

Knowledge management today appears to be shaped by two convictions (Sanchez 2001b, p. 3), one relatively old and one comparatively new. The old conviction is that managing knowledge is the essential skill of the manager (Drucker 1954, p. 346; Sanchez 2001). The new one is that managing knowledge successfully is essential to achieving growth and competitive success. (Sanchez 2001)

Ruhanen and Cooper (2003, p. 11) have proposed a "knowledge value chain" for the tourism sector that identifies four key stages of knowledge management, from knowledge generation to commercialization and diffusion:

1. Determine the strategic need for knowledge.
2. Determine the knowledge gap between the knowledge needed and that available.

3. Narrow the knowledge gap by developing new knowledge.
4. Diffuse and apply available knowledge to stakeholders through commercialization processes.

This is a good beginning, but from the organization managers' point of view, it truncates the knowledge value chain. There should be at least two more steps if knowledge management for the tourism sector is to be helpful to managers and other stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality industries:

5. Stakeholder application of knowledge to achieve objectives
6. Feedback on success in achieving objectives, that is, "summative evaluation" (Stevens, Lawrenz, and Sharpe 1997), to managers and knowledge generators

Academic authors and others who publish in the professional journals in tourism, hospitality, and related subject areas can play effective roles in all six stages above. Traditionally, their most active sphere of activity relates to Stage 4: knowledge diffusion (Merali 2001, pp. 44-45) or knowledge transfer (Davenport and Prusak 1998, p. 89).

Knowledge transfer involves two actions: transmission (sending or presenting knowledge to a potential recipient) and absorption by that person or group. If knowledge has not been absorbed, it has not been transferred. (Davenport and Prusak, p. 103)

According to his Web site (<http://omni.cc.purdue.edu/~alltson/alastair.html>), in April 2003, Alastair Morrison of

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*Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 43, November 2004, 1-8  
DOI: 10.1177/0047287504268230  
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Purdue University had identified 26 hospitality journals, 39 tourism journals, and 15 leisure and recreation journals published in the English language alone. As discussed below, there has been some published research on the popularity and value of these journals to the academic community. However, there appears to be no published research on knowledge transfer between researchers/authors publishing in these journals and one salient stakeholder group in the knowledge management system: managers of tourism-related organizations in the private, nonprofit, and government sectors.

This study attempts to initialize such a process regarding the first action of the Davenport and Prusak (1998) knowledge transfer process: "sending or presenting knowledge to a potential recipient." It assumes that a key role of such journals is to transfer knowledge from researchers to practitioners. This assumption is supported by statements of purpose published in the mastheads and notes to authors of recent issues of the following journals:

- *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*: "Includes sections for . . . applied articles that exhibit high standards of scholarship, relevance and thought."
- *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*: "Encourages . . . new ideas and approaches in relation to the theory and practice linking tourism and sustainability."
- *Journal of Tourism Studies*: "The intended readership is expected to cover a wide range of personnel involved in the tourism industry."
- *Tourism Analysis*: "Aim . . . is to promote a forum for practitioners and academicians in the fields of Leisure, Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality."
- *Tourism Management*: "Invite the submission of articles on the research, policy and practice of tourism which are of interest to both academics and practitioners."
- *Journal of Travel Research*: "Specific goals are to be international in scope . . . and to be germane to the travel industry."

## PRIOR STUDIES

Published research leading to rankings of tourism and hospitality journals has focused on the needs of educators and academic researchers. Sheldon (1990) surveyed "356 research-oriented faculty in either tourism or hospitality" drawn from the membership directories of the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA), the American Hotel and Motel Association, and the Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (p. 43). Respondents were asked to rank 15 tourism and hospitality journals on quality ("rigor of review process, impact of articles on the field, and the institution's consideration of the journal in tenure and promotion decisions"), frequency of referencing, and frequency of publishing in the journals (p. 44). Sheldon received 158 usable responses (44% response rate), but only 103 of these were from faculty who publish. She found that respondents ranked the *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly*, and *Journal of Travel Research* were ranked in the top three on each of these dimensions.

Schmidgall and Woods (1993, p. 90) sent questionnaires to 570 members of the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) in 4-year programs. Thirty-

seven percent responded (212 respondents), reporting their ratings of the importance (5-point scale from *little importance* to *most important*) of the 12 publishing channels listed below in order from highest to lowest such group mean ratings (Schmidgall and Woods 1993, p. 93):

1. Hospitality education journals – refereed
2. Professional education journals – refereed
3. Books – one author
4. Books – co-authors
5. Paper presentation published
6. Hospitality trade publication – national scope
7. Chapters in books
8. Hospitality education journals – nonrefereed
9. Hospitality trade journals – regional, state or local scope
10. Monographs
11. Professional journals – nonrefereed
12. Book reviews

The authors concluded,

Hospitality faculty members clearly rate educational publications at the most important channels for publishing research. In addition, the highest ratings were for refereed journals, with refereed hospitality journals scoring number 1, followed by refereed educational journals that did not cover the hospitality profession. (P. 100)

Ferreira, DeFranco, and Rappole (1994) sent questionnaires to "120 directors (chairpersons, deans and department heads) of four-year hospitality programs who were members of CHRIE" (p. 210). Respondents "were asked to rate the quality of the journals when evaluating a faculty member's published research" on a 5-point Likert-type scale from *very low quality* to *very high quality* (p. 210). Forty-three percent of the sample (52 respondents) replied by returning completed questionnaires covering 46 hospitality refereed and nonrefereed "trade journals." The proportion of respondents returning ratings of these journals ranged from a high of 90% for one journal to a low of 29% for one journal. (pp. 213, 215)

The authors concluded,

Most of the refereed journals were considered more important than nonrefereed or trade journals for faculty to publish. The top five rated journals by directors from both graduate and undergraduate programs were *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *Hospitality Research Journal*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, and *School Food Service Research Review*. (P. 217)

Schmidgall, Woods, and Rutherford (1996) sent questionnaires to 1,000 members of CHRIE, asking them to rate 17 periodicals using a 5-point Likert-type scale (*least useful* to *most useful* to hospitality educators) on five potential uses:

1. outlet for own articles
2. research information source
3. lecture information source
4. student assigned readings
5. professional or personal development

The periodical list included seven refereed tourism/hospitality journals (*Annals of Tourism Research*, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, *FIU Hospitality Review*, *Hospitality and Tourism Educator*, *Hospitality Research Journal*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, and *Journal of Travel Research*), seven hospitality trade publications, one daily newspaper, and one business journal. Thirty percent of the questionnaires were returned (303 responses). The authors concluded that the top refereed journals in terms of usefulness to faculty were the *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, the *Hospitality and Tourism Educator*, and the *Hospitality Research Journal*. They added, "To us the biggest surprise is the strong showing of nonrefereed journals" (p. 55).

Pechlaner, Zehrer, and Abfalter (2002) sent e-mail requests to 918 "members of the scientific community" (evidently TTRA members and International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism members outside of German-speaking countries), asking them to visit a Web site and complete an online form rating 22 tourism and hospitality journals on a 7-point Likert-type scale on the following dimensions of "journal quality" (p. 396):

1. readership frequency
2. scientific relevance
3. practical relevance
4. overall reputation
5. importance for an academic career

A response rate of 13% was obtained after two reminders (122 responses). The authors reported means and standard deviations on these dimensions for 10 of the publications and concluded, "The results clearly show the leading role of *Annals of Tourism Research*, the *Journal of Travel Research*, and *Tourism Management*" (p. 399).

In summary, published articles on the ranking of professional journals in tourism and hospitality have focused on surveys of educators and academic researchers and have investigated preferences for journals as outlets for faculty publications, as relevant to academic needs, and on their reputations within the academic community. Overall response rates have ranged from 13% to 44%, indicating that nonsampling error or bias may affect the findings relative to the academic and scientific populations they represented. Nonresponse, particularly more than 30%, contributes to bias of survey results, and the greater the bias, the lower the validity of the survey. (Alreck and Settle 1995, p. 79; Woodside and Ronkainen 1994, pp. 549-550; Hunt and Dalton 1983)

## PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the readership and usefulness of professional/academic journals in the fields of tourism and hospitality among three U.S. tourism/hospitality groups: educators, marketers, and managers. Three objectives serve this purpose: (1) to identify specific journals with specific target readers, (2) to indicate the state of knowledge transfer from the academic community to managers and marketers, and (3) to suggest future directions for knowledge transfer in the tourism/hospitality area.

Specifically, the following propositions relating to tourism/hospitality educators and practitioners and tourism/hospitality journals are explored:

1. Readership of individual journals is constant across the two populations sampled in this study (i.e., there is no significant difference in proportions reading the selected journals between the TTRA sample and the Travel Industry Association of America [TIA] sample)
2. Readership is relatively constant across the 13 journals studied (i.e., the proportions of consumers reading different journals show no significant difference)
3. Journal readership is widespread in the populations studied (i.e., more than one-half of respondent groups indicated they read individual journals)
4. Educators, researchers, marketers, and managers are similar in their consumption of journal content (i.e., the proportions of persons reading journals are similar across reader categories)

## METHODOLOGY

### Pilot Survey

In the spring of 2000, 200 names were systematically selected from two strata of the membership directory of the TTRA and three strata of the membership directory of the TIA, as shown in Table 1. These sampling frames were chosen as representative of all tourism and hospitality management educators, managers, marketers, and researchers in the United States. Although it is recognized that unknown biases may exist in these sampling frames, there appear to be no better sampling frames of the populations of interest.

A questionnaire was mailed to each, asking for indications of awareness, commitment, readership, and evaluation of each of the 21 tourism and hospitality journals listed in Figure 1. The list resulted from searching various print and Internet sources of tourism and hospitality journals and selecting those English-language journals with the words *tourism*, *travel*, *hospitality*, or *vacation* in their titles. All were refereed journals, using a blind review process.

The initial survey mailing consisted of a questionnaire on both sides of a single 8.5- by 11-inch page, a stamped return-address envelope, and a cover letter indicating the survey purpose, assuring anonymity, and offering to enter any respondent who returned a completed questionnaire in a drawing for a \$20 check. One week after the initial mailing, a reminder card was sent to the sample. Six weeks after the initial mailing, the survey was closed, with 53 usable questionnaires returned for an overall response rate of 27% (see Table 1).

This response rate was too low to validly infer anything from the target populations, so this was treated as a pilot survey and evaluated for revisions in the process and questionnaire for another survey. The primary lessons drawn were the following:

1. The questionnaire was clear to respondents, but too many journals were included, leading to low response rates on the ratings.

**TABLE 1**  
**SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF**  
**INITIAL SAMPLE FOR THE PILOT SURVEY OF**  
**TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNAL READERSHIP, 2000**

Source	Names Selected	Response Rate (%)
TTRA educators <sup>a</sup>	50	40
TTRA other members	50	32
TIA federal/state tourism agencies	33	21
TIA regional and local tourism agencies	33	24
TIA other (excluding educational institutions)	34	6
Overall	200	27

Note: TTRA = Travel and Tourism Research Association; TIA = Travel Industry Association of America.

a. Defined as affiliated with educational institutions.

- The incentives offered (receive the results, chance to win \$20) were not strong enough to generate an acceptable response rate. A stronger response enhancement procedure was required.

### Subsequent Survey

Based on the results of the pilot survey, another survey of tourism and hospitality journal readership and usefulness among U.S. tourism/hospitality educators, researchers, and marketers was conducted during the spring of 2003. To reduce the number of journals listed and encourage response, only those titles were included that garnered positive responses from 20% or more of the respondents to the statement "I have read or seen this journal" in the 2000 survey. Eleven journals out of the initial 21 satisfied this criterion. Inadvertently, two additional journals (*Current Issues in Tourism* and *Journal of Tourism Studies*) were included in the final survey questionnaires, even though they did not meet this test. This yielded 13 journals for the final survey, as listed in Figure 2.

There are no definitive sample frames for the three populations of interest, but there are two major associations with sizable memberships drawn from these populations. The TTRA is the international association of travel and tourism researchers and marketers, with 487 individual U.S. members. The TIA is the association representing "the whole of the U.S. travel industry to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States" (Travel Industry Association of America 2003), with 1,839 U.S.-based organization members.

Figure 3 contains the characteristics of the subsequent survey design and results.

## RESULTS

Table 2 shows the initial sample sizes and response rates achieved. Federal and state tourism promotion agencies showed the lowest response rate, whereas TTRA members other than educators showed the highest, at 58%. Note that "TTRA Educators" were identified as individuals affiliated with educational institutions in the TTRA member list. Later

**FIGURE 1**  
**JOURNALS INCLUDED IN PILOT TOURISM JOURNAL**  
**READERSHIP SURVEY, 2000**

- Annals of Tourism Research*
- Current Issues of Tourism*
- International Journal of Tourism Research*
- Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*
- Journal of International Hospitality, Leisure & Tourism Management*
- Journal of Sustainable Tourism*
- Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*
- Journal of Travel Research*
- Journal of Tourism Studies*
- Journal of Vacation Marketing*
- Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Management*
- Tourism Analysis*
- Tourism and Hospitality Review*
- Tourism, Culture & Communication*
- Tourism Economics*
- Tourism Geographies*
- Tourism Management*
- Pacific Tourism Review*
- Journal of Sports Tourism*

**FIGURE 2**  
**JOURNALS INCLUDED IN THE**  
**TOURISM JOURNAL READERSHIP SURVEY, 2003**

- Annals of Tourism Research*
- Current Issues of Tourism*
- Festival Management and Event Tourism*
- International Journal of Tourism Research*
- Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*
- Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*
- Journal of Sustainable Tourism*
- Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*
- Journal of Travel Research*
- Journal of Tourism Studies*
- Tourism Analysis*
- Tourism Economics*
- Tourism Management*

analysis found that a few of the respondents from this category were librarians and others who did not consider themselves engaged in education or training.

Relative to the response rate, three envelopes were returned as undeliverable. The response enhancement produced a curious reaction. Six respondents returned the \$1 bill with their completed questionnaires, indicating that they were government employees and not permitted to accept such remuneration.

Table 3 presents the characteristics of respondents indicated on the returned questionnaires. As a group, TTRA educators showed the longest tenures in the tourism/hospitality field, whereas federal/state tourism agency employees showed the shortest time in the field. Whereas the overall group was balanced in gender, women dominated the TIA respondents in number, and men dominated the TTRA respondents. The ages of respondents from each group ranged from 45 to 54 years, except for the TIA area and regional promotion agency respondents, who clustered in the 55- to 64-year-old group.

**FIGURE 3  
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DESIGN AND RESULTS OF  
THE SURVEY OF TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNAL READERSHIP, 2003**

- A. Target population definition: (1) U.S. members of the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA); (2) U.S. members of the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) (except educators)
- B. Sample frames: (1) 2002 TTRA list of U.S. members stratified by educators and noneducators; (2) 2003 list of TIA U.S. members stratified by (a) federal and state government agencies, (b) area and regional tourism promotion agencies, (c) all others except educational institutions
- C. Sample selection method: systematic sampling with intervals for each list equal to the stratum size divided by 50
- D. Sample sizes. TTRA = 100 (50 from each stratum); TIA = 150 (50 from each stratum)
- E. Survey period: March 4 through April 23, 2003
- F. Response enhancement procedures: package mailed first class, cover letter, stamped return-address envelopes, new \$1 bill, reminder postcards sent to entire sample on March 17
- G. Response rate: 131 usable questionnaires divided by 250 mailed = 52%
- H. Pilot survey conducted: yes
- I. Interview mode: self-administered questionnaire by mail
- J. Survey instrument: submitted with this article
- K. Data entry: entered by students into MSExcel spreadsheet with all entries verified

**TABLE 2  
RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS FOR THE SAMPLES FOR  
THE SURVEY OF TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNAL READERSHIP, 2003**

Source	Names Selected	Valid Responses	Response Rate (%)
TTRA educators	50	29	58
TTRA other members	50	32	64
TIA federal/state tourism agencies	50	19	38
TIA area and regional and promotion agencies	50	24	48
TIA other (excluding educators)	50	27	54
Overall	250	131	52

Source: Tourism/Hospitality Readership Survey 2003.  
 Note: TTRA = Travel and Tourism Research Association; TIA = Travel Industry Association of America.

**TABLE 3  
RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS FOR THE SAMPLES FOR THE SURVEY OF TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNAL  
READERSHIP, 2003**

Source	Mean Years Professional Interest in the Tourism Industry	Percentage Female	Mode of Age Category (Percentage)
TTRA educators	21	31	45 to 54 years (50%)
TTRA other members	18	47	45 to 54 years (50%)
TIA federal/state tourism agencies	12	67	45 to 54 years (44%)
TIA area and regional and promotion agencies	16	52	55 to 64 years (30%)
TIA other (excluding educators)	14	67	45 to 54 years (42%)
Overall	17	51	45 to 54 years (41%)

Source: Tourism/Hospitality Readership Survey 2003.  
 Note: TTRA = Travel and Tourism Research Association; TIA = Travel Industry Association of America.

Table 4 shows the distribution of the TTRA and TIA respondents for 12 “parts of the tourism industry” in which they worked. Educators made up nearly one-half of the TTRA sample reporting, whereas federal/state/local government, destination promotion, and attractions each accounted for about one-fifth of the TIA respondents.

Table 5 presents the distribution of area of functional responsibility or specialty of respondents by their sources. The plurality of all respondents was in marketing jobs, whereas one-third of TTRA respondents were in the education/training or research categories. Nearly half of the TIA

sample indicated marketing positions, whereas about one-quarter were in management/operations.

**Journal Readership  
by the Two Populations**

Table 6 presents the proportions of respondents from each of the two populations sampled who replied that they “usually read all, most, or some of this journal.” Note that any differences between percentages shown of 17 points or more are statistically significant at the .05 level of significance.

**TABLE 4**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF TOURISM INDUSTRY SECTORS BY SOURCES OF RESPONDENTS (IN PERCENTAGES)**

Sector <sup>a</sup>	TTRA Respondents	TIA Respondents	All Respondents
Educational	48	0	22
Federal/state/local government	16	24	21
Destination promotion	15	20	18
Attractions	2	19	10
Research/consulting	10	1	6
Accommodations	2	6	5
Advertising/public relations	0	7	4
Transportation	0	9	4
Travel agency/tour operator	0	6	3
Associations/trade organizations	7	0	3
Communications/publications	0	3	2
Other	2	6	0
Total	100	100	100

Source: Tourism/Hospitality Readership Survey 2003.

Note: details may not add to 100% due to rounding.

a. Answers to Question 6: "Part of the tourism industry you work in."

**TABLE 5**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY/SPECIALTY BY SOURCES OF RESPONDENTS (IN PERCENTAGES)**

Area of Responsibility/Specialty (Question 7)	TTRA Respondents	TIA Respondents	All Respondents
Marketing	13	42	29
Management/operations	13	26	20
Educational/training	33	1	16
Research	31	1	16
Sales	1	16	9
Tours/travel	0	9	5
Other	7	1	4
Consulting	2	3	2
Total	100	100	100

Source: Tourism/Hospitality Readership Survey 2003.

Note: TTRA = Travel and Tourism Research Association; TIA = Travel Industry Association of America. Details may not add to 100% due to rounding.

**TABLE 6**  
**REPORTED READERSHIP OF TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNALS BY SOURCE OF RESPONDENT (IN PERCENTAGES)**

Journal Usually Read	All TTRA Respondents	All TIA Respondents	All Respondents
A. <i>Journal of Travel Research</i>	74*	14	47
B. <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	51*	9	31
C. <i>Journal of Travel &amp; Tourism Marketing</i>	44*	14	31
D. <i>Journal of Hospitality &amp; Tourism Research</i>	36*	13	24
E. <i>Tourism Management</i>	41*	6	22
F. <i>International Journal of Tourism Research</i>	23	11	18
G. <i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	34*	6	17
H. <i>Tourism Analysis</i>	28*	4	16
I. <i>Festival Management &amp; Event Tourism</i>	26*	6	16
J. <i>Tourism Economics</i>	20	6	15
K. <i>Journal of Hospitality &amp; Tourism Education</i>	23*	3	13
L. <i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	11	11	8
M. <i>Journal of Tourism Studies</i>	18*	1	8
Median	28%	6%	17%
Number of cases	61	70	131

Note: TTRA = Travel and Tourism Research Association; TIA = Travel Industry Association of America.

\*Significantly higher than the TIA sample at the .05 level of significance.

**TABLE 7**  
**REPORTED READERSHIP OF TOURISM/HOSPITALITY JOURNALS**  
**BY AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY/SPECIALTY OF RESPONDENT (IN PERCENTAGES)**

Journal Usually Read	Education/ Training	Research and Consulting	Marketing and Sales	Management/ Operations	Overall <sup>a</sup>
A. <i>Journal of Travel Research</i>	95	87	20	31	47
B. <i>Journal of Travel &amp; Tourism Marketing</i>	76	39	14	23	31
C. <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	86	48	10	12	31
D. <i>Journal of Hospitality &amp; Tourism Research</i>	57	30	10	23	24
E. <i>Tourism Management</i>	81	22	4	12	22
F. <i>International Journal of Tourism Research</i>	38	13	12	27	18
G. <i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	43	26	2	15	17
H. <i>Festival Management &amp; Event Tourism</i>	43	13	6	15	16
I. <i>Tourism Analysis</i>	48	22	4	12	16
J. <i>Tourism Economics</i>	43	17	8	4	15
K. <i>Journal of Hospitality &amp; Tourism Education</i>	48	13	2	4	13
L. <i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	14	4	8	8	8
M. <i>Journal of Tourism Studies</i>	24	13	2	4	8
Median	48%	22%	8%	12%	17%
Number of responses	21	23	49	26	130

Source: Tourism/Hospitality Readership Survey 2003.

Note: Differences of 25 percentage points or more are statistically significant for all comparisons.

a. Includes respondents not included in any of the four areas of responsibility categories shown

For 10 of the 13 journals studied, TTRA members reported significantly higher levels of readership than did the TIA sample. The TTRA member median proportion of readership was significantly higher than for TIA members as well. So, we can conclude that the data reject our first proposition, and instead find that readership of most of the individual journals studied is significantly higher for TTRA members than for TIA members.

The *Journal of Travel Research* stands out among the 13 journals with three-quarters of TTRA members reading some, most, or all of it. However, about one-half of TTRA members receive this journal quarterly as a TTRA member benefit (Patty Morgan [info@ttra.com], e-mail to author, March 30, 2004), so this high proportion may be a design effect of this study. Disregarding this journal, among TTRA members, the proportion reading the different journals varies significantly, from 11% (*Current Issues in Tourism*) to 51% (*Annals of Tourism Research*).

The variation is considerably less among TIA members because the readership proportions are so much smaller. Still, the *Journal of Travel Research* (tied with the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*) garnered the highest proportion of TIA member readers (only 14%). It seems fair to conclude that our second proposition is contradicted by the data and that, instead, there may well be distinctly different hierarchies of tourism and hospitality journals in terms of readership by these two populations.

Moreover, neither group of respondents indicates extensive readership of tourism/hospitality journals. Table 6 indicates that only two journals (*Journal of Travel Research* and *Annals of Tourism Research*) garner one-half or more of either population in terms of readership. Indeed, no more than 14% of the TIA sample indicates reading any journal studied. Thus, we can conclude that our third proposition is not confirmed by these data, and instead it appears that a

relatively few TTRA and TIA members read any of the tourism/hospitality journals studied.

### Journal Readership by Responsibility

Table 7 helps sort out the readership patterns by major areas of responsibility or specialty. It presents the proportion of each respondent category that reported usually reading at least some of each journal. More than one-half of respondents with education/training positions read 5 of the 13 journals. Those in education/training and research and consulting positions were the active readers of the *Journal of Travel Research* or *Annals of Tourism Research*. None of the journals garnered more than 31% readership in the marketing and sales group or the management/operations category of respondent. The medians clearly show that the education/training category is the dominant source of active readers of these journals.

These findings cause us to reject our fourth research proposition and provisionally conclude that the tourism/hospitality journals selected for study here are read predominantly by educators and trainers, and to a significantly lesser extent, by research and consulting workers. Relatively small proportions of marketing/sales personnel and managers read any tourism/hospitality journal studied.

## CONCLUSION

This exploratory study of the journal readership patterns of U.S. tourism and hospitality educators, researchers, marketers, and managers utilized sampling frames of the TTRA and the TIA members. A survey of these populations' readership of 11 tourism/hospitality journals, indicated as the most

popular among 21 studied in an earlier survey (plus two other journals), found the following:

1. TTRA members are much more likely to read the journals studied than are TIA members.
2. The populations studied indicate there is a distinct hierarchy of preference for the 13 journals among education/training personnel, led by the *Journal of Travel Research*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, and *Tourism Management*. Researchers and consultants showed preferences for the *Journal of Travel Research* and *Annals of Tourism Research*.
3. Among practitioners (all other areas of responsibility), the *Journal of Travel Research* led (25% of respondents), followed by the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* (18%).
4. Whereas educators/trainers are relatively active readers of most of the 13 tourism/hospitality journals studied, only 1 journal studied garnered more than one-fifth of the group of practitioner respondents studied (joint marketing and sales and management/operations group); the median percentage reading these journals was only 9%.

The results herein strongly suggest that relatively little knowledge transfer, in the Davenport and Prusak (1998) sense of sending/presenting to potential recipients, is taking place between the knowledge generators in the academic community on one side, and managers and operators in the private and public sectors responsible for tourism and hospitality development on the other. Davenport and Prusak's finding seems relevant here:

Too many knowledge projects focus only on "stocking the shelves" with knowledge, with little regard for why or how users might be motivated to draw on a piece of knowledge in their work routines. (P. xiii)

On a more positive note, should authors want to reach educators and trainers, this study indicates that the *Journal of Travel Research*, the *Annals of Tourism Research*, and *Tourism Management*, followed by the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* are the best outlets. If they want to transfer knowledge to practitioners, the *Journal of Travel Research* and the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* are the best media, as limited in readership among this group as they are.

## Recommendations for Research and Action

Additional, better funded research should be applied to confirm whether or not these findings accurately describe the current state of knowledge transfer between academic generators and tourism/hospitality practitioners and knowledge users in the United States and elsewhere. Should this essential element of knowledge management be truly lacking, then educators, researchers, managers, and operators, along with journal publishers, should jointly discuss how to redress this

disturbing deficiency. Otherwise, one would question how the continued boom in the quantity of academic articles published on tourism and hospitality issues is benefiting anyone outside the limited sphere of academic researchers.

One promising initiative in this regard is active national government sponsorship of a Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism in Australia (Ruhanen and Cooper 2003, pp. 13-14). Ruhanen and Cooper (2003, p. 14) note that one of the primary objectives "is to further develop and market the collective intellectual assets of the centre for the benefit of industry." Carrying forward a debate over the merits of such an initiative at all levels of government in other countries appears to be one promising way to improve in the knowledge management in academia, government, and the private sector.

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