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Swine Flu Epidemic Leads To Sharp Decrease in Cancun Convention Business

A Knowland Group survey finds Cancun hotels experiencing a 36% average drop in business due to the epidemic.

Salisbury, MD – April 30, 2009 - The Knowland Group, the world's leader in hotel group intelligence, found Cancun area hotels slammed with cancellations due to growing concerns about the swine flu epidemic. In a survey of approximately 100 hotels in the popular Mexican resort, Knowland discovered a 36% average drop off in monthly business directly attributed to the potential pandemic.

The Knowland Group found Cancun hotel personnel insisting that their area is not in the path of the epidemic. Some blame the media for their steep decline in business. Maribel Arroyo of The Golden Parnassus Resort & Spa believes the news coverage is being unfair, because "the situation is in Mexico City and not in Cancun!" Nevertheless, she is handing out face masks to the kitchen crew and taking extra precautions in the kitchen area. Ms. Arroyo has had 2 groups and some individual guests cancel because of worries over swine flu.

Flor Castro, Director of Sales for the Maison Lafitte Hotel in Cancun, told Knowland Group researchers that the hotel had 31 cancellations this month. She added that they are already getting cancellations for June and August as well. At the Iberostar Cozumel Hotel, Luis Velez, the Reservations Manager, noted that the hotel usually has around 45 tours booked through the month. Now they are averaging just 35 groups with cancellations continuing. The Iberostar is offering options allowing guests to either move their travel date to later this year or switch to Jamaican or Caribbean travel packages.

At the Iberostar Paraiso Hotel, Reservations Manager Martaa Bae stated that 48-52% of her reservations have been canceled this week alone. While Charlie Ross, of the Cancun Hotel 2000, told the Knowland Group that he has seen his average bookings, usually thirty to forty per day, drop to zero bookings in the past 2 days. "Nothing but cancellations," Mr. Ross lamented.

About Knowland:

Headquartered in Salisbury, MD, The Knowland Group is a premier provider of sales and marketing products and services to the hospitality industry worldwide. Knowland serves over 90 markets within the United States, Canada, and beyond. Single-minded in its goal to add client value, Knowland is a proven innovator, consistently striving to develop market-changing products and services. For more information, visit www.KnowlandGroup.com or call 410-860-2270.

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