

For Immediate Release

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Gulf Oil Spill Looms Over Hotel Sales One Year Later

More than 60 percent of Gulf Coast hotels Knowland surveyed are still recuperating

Washington, DC 4/20/11 – For the one year anniversary of the Gulf Oil Spill, [The Knowland Group](#), the world's largest data firm in the global meetings and conventions industry, conducted a survey of 100 Gulf Coast hotels. In its research, Knowland found that group sales at nearly half of the hotels surveyed were affected by the spill and only 37 percent have fully recovered from the negative financial effects. The survey was conducted at hotels spanning the Gulf Coast region – Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

Nearly one-third of the hotels surveyed lost a lot of business during the 87-day spill and the following months during the massive clean-up operation. A great deal of hoteliers surveyed, 41 percent, experienced some lost business while 29 percent were not forced to deal with cancellations and/or sluggish group sales.

Of the hotels that were affected, 31 percent have not recovered from the revenue lost from the oil spill and 32 percent have seen their profits rebound somewhat. When it comes to the number of bookings, 43 percent report they are back to the same level of group bookings they would typically see while 29 percent have not seen their group bookings bounce back.

During May and June 2010, Knowland surveyed hoteliers in the Gulf Coast region four separate times to gauge the effect the spill had on their hotel group sales. Cancellations steadily increased throughout May and June with 60 percent of the hotels having to make do despite group booking cancellations.

The end of June 2010 brought about an upswing in the amount of room bookings because of the clean-up crews. But that didn't last according to Carol O'Brien, the General Manager/Director of Sales at the Days Inn & Suites Bayou Land in Thibodaux, LA. She said as soon as the recovery teams left, so did the business.

In case of a future disaster, Knowland asked the hoteliers if their hotel has a contingency plan in place but nearly half do not. One hotelier surveyed in Lake Charles, LA, believes there isn't much that can be done to prepare for a situation like the Gulf Oil Spill.

"We lost 20 percent of our business during the spill and we have already cut our prices as low as we can to compensate," she said. "If there is another disaster I will need to close down the hotel."

This Knowland survey was conducted over a five-day period from April 4 through April 8, 2011. The full survey results can be found below.

1. Were your hotel group sales affected by the Gulf oil spill?
 - A) No **29%**
 - B) Yes **47%**
 - C) Somewhat **24%**

2. How much business was lost due to the Gulf oil spill?
 - A) None **29%**
 - B) Some **41%**
 - C) A Lot **31%**

3. Have you recovered financially from the effects?
 - A) No **31%**
 - B) Yes **37%**
 - C) Somewhat **32%**

4. Are you back to the same levels of group bookings that you would typically have?
 - A) No **29%**
 - B) Yes **43%**
 - C) Somewhat **29%**

5. In the wake of the Gulf Oil Spill, have you created a plan in the event of a future disaster?
 - A) No **47%**
 - B) Yes **20%**
 - C) In progress **21%**
 - D) We plan to in the future **12%**

About The Knowland Group

The Knowland Group is a proven innovator, developing intuitive marketing products and services that streamline and support event and group sales in the hospitality industry. The company, headquartered in Washington, DC, serves more than 3,000 hotel clients and nearly 20,000 users globally. Knowland was ranked as the fifth fastest growing software company (public or private) in North America by Deloitte and the second fastest growing private company in the travel industry for both 2009 and 2010 by Inc. Magazine. For more information, visit www.KnowlandGroup.com, call 410-860-2270, or follow us on Twitter [@knowlandgroup](https://twitter.com/knowlandgroup).