

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Hotels Coping with Gulf Oil Spill Despite Looming Concerns Over Long-Term Impact**

***Knowland finds 35 percent of hotels surveyed have had cancellations due to spill***

McLean, VA, 05/06/10 – [The Knowland Group](#), a leading provider of business development solutions for the global hospitality industry, surveyed Gulf Coast hotels this week to gauge the effects of the leaking oil well on the local hospitality industry. The pungent smell has already reached many properties in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama, and the oil itself is not far behind. 35 percent of hotel surveyed said the spill has caused some cancellations, while 42 percent said it has affected their ability to book future events.

Hoteliers are rushing to deal with a large volume of calls from groups worried about how the spill will affect their upcoming conference or event, as well as assuage concerns from potential clients over booking future meetings. But staff at many hotels are making the most of the situation by reaching out to BP officials and other cleanup volunteers.

“We have actually had increased business due to the workers coming in for the cleanup,” said one hotelier in Harvey, Louisiana.

“We are being proactive,” said another in Gulf Shores, Alabama. “We have attended several meetings held by the community and are calling small businesses to see if they need rooms in order to keep business.”

There is positive note for groups who have booked events at Gulf Coast hotels: 62 percent of hotels surveyed who have had event cancellations are not holding groups to the attrition clause in their contracts. This means no cancellation fees, or in some instances a credit towards future bookings. Knowland Group CEO [Michael K. McKean](#) advises hoteliers to work smarter, not harder by cultivating professional business development.

“Hotels have to be proactive in the face of natural disasters and other challenging situations,” said McKean. “At Knowland we provide powerful business development tools including micro-targeted lead generation, sales force automation, meetings management, and experienced telesales support to help hotels grow their group business in any climate.”

Uncertainty reigns across the entire coastline. No one knows just how large the oil spill will get, or how far and fast it will spread. For now, hotels are doing their best to cope with the situation and reduce any lasting economic impact.

“We’re in the wait and see mode,” said one hotel owner in Navarre, Florida. “Nothing like this has happened before, so we’re all just waiting for some direction.”

### **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 Salisbury, MD, serves over 2,000 hotel clients and 17,000 users globally. Recently featured on the *Inc.* [Fast 500 List](#), The Knowland Group is the second fastest growing company in the travel industry. For more information, visit [www.KnowlandGroup.com](http://www.KnowlandGroup.com), call 410-860-2270 or follow us on Twitter [@knowlandgroup](#).