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Savvy Hoteliers Successfully Implement Proactive Measures in Face of Swine Flu Hysteria

*Knowland Survey finds insignificant decrease in business among San Antonio hoteliers,
despite intense media coverage of swine flu.*

Salisbury, MD – May 5, 2009 - The Knowland Group, the world's leader in hotel group intelligence, found hotels in the busy San Antonio meeting and conference market have experienced only a slight decline in business this month, even in the face of heavy media coverage over possible swine flu cases in Texas. Knowland Group research found that San Antonio hotels have successfully reassured guests that the flu is being managed properly, avoiding any significant business drop off stemming from customer fear of the illness.

In a survey of approximately 150 hotels, Knowland discovered an average business drop off of just 15% among respondents, which may or may not be due to consumer fears of swine flu. Frank Vasquez, manager of Homegate San Antonio Fiesta Park, states that his facility was full last Saturday evening. His cancellations overall have been minimal. He also notes that the shaky national economy is as likely a reason for any cancellations as fear of the swine flu.

Survey questions, put to hotel staff by Knowland Group researchers, show that strong safety measures were implemented almost immediately in area hotels. This has, according to respondents to Knowland's survey, successfully contained the panic and kept business declines slight. For example, Joseph Pedraza, of the Residence Inn San Antonio North Shore Oak, says that his employees are wearing masks and gloves, while working in rooms. They are also regularly using hand sanitizer. His business has remained stable since the flu outbreak, he adds.

Hotel staff members questioned by the Knowland Group, state that they have been keeping their guests well-informed about exactly what their hotels have been doing to battle the spread of the flu. This has helped counter the media hype about the flu and helped keep bookings steady, they report.

The Knowland Group findings show that other proactive measures taken by the hotels have included screening staff for signs of the illness, carefully tracking visitors from Mexico, adding additional facility cleanings to the hotel's regular schedule and encouraging guests (both verbally and in writing) to frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitizer.

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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