



The International Association of
Visitor Information Providers

Hospitality Visitor Information Survey February 2019 to March 2019

Summary Report Key Findings

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Methodology

Bentley University, Center for Marketing Technology, created a survey in collaboration with Visitor International to understand the usage and effectiveness of hospitality visitor information during February 2019 to March 2019. The new findings examined 891 responses from hospitality professionals at locations in North America - United States, Canada and Mexico; in Europe – Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Scotland, Spain; and in Africa - South Africa.

Important Respondent Characteristics

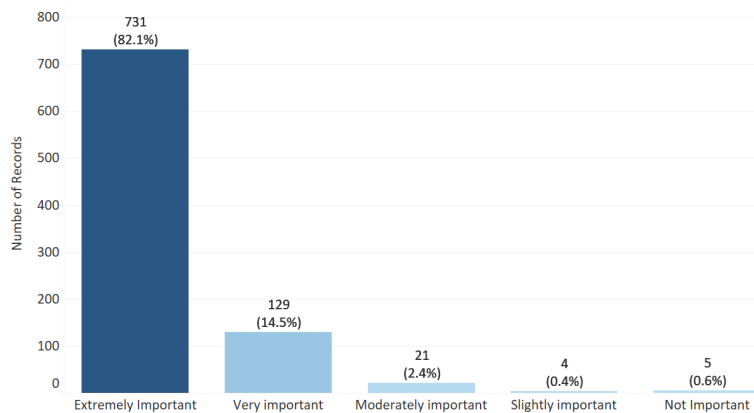
The value of this data comes from the survey answers provided by the front office staff within the hospitality industry. These are the opinions of the professionals at the check-in and concierge desk that have the greatest potential to impact guest satisfaction with their accommodation.

Print Media Is The Preferred Hospitality Visitor Information Resource

The survey shows hospitality professionals overwhelmingly favor the use of printed media to assist guests in their properties and suggest that their guests frequently use printed brochures in their hotels 88% of the time. Hotels continue to believe in the value of providing visitor information for their guest by way of a brochure display and 97% of the surveyed properties consider visitor information as very or extremely important for their guests. See Figure 1.

Figure 1

96.6% of hotel staff consider visitor information as extremely important



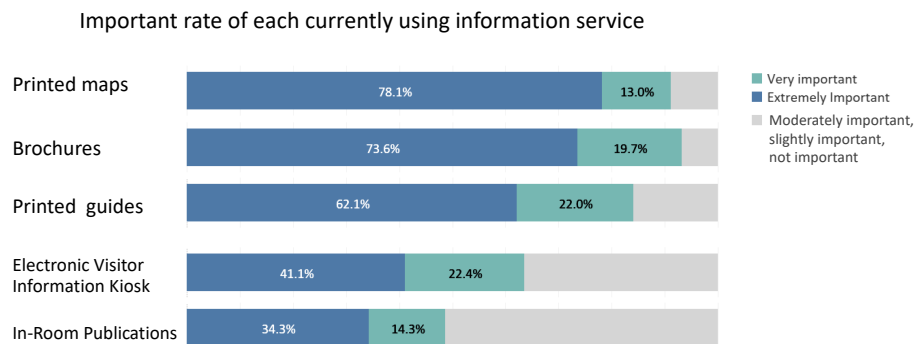
Q How important is providing your guests with visitor information, e.g. local attractions, shopping, etc.?
Combining 'very important' and 'extremely important': 14.5%+82.1%=96.6%

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Print media is far more highly valued by guests than electronic and kiosk information. Printed brochures, maps and guides placed in the lobby are much more likely to be used by guests during their stay. Printed maps are rated #1 by ranking of extreme importance (78%) followed by brochures (74%) and printed guides (62%). If we collapse the ratings of extremely and very important then both printed maps and brochures are virtually equal in ranking at #1 (91%). Electronic visitor information kiosks are growing in importance with a 63% importance rating, but clearly the tactile, physical properties of printed information is favored. In room publications lag behind other media (47%), perhaps suggesting they perform an entertainment function but lack the utility of a map or brochure. See Figure 2.

Figure 2

Overall, hotels highly value printed maps and brochures



The stacked bar chart includes all hotels having a brochure display.
 Q4. What visitor information services are you currently using to assist guests? Please rate each selection.

The Value of printed Visitor Information

Hotel managers and front desk staff value print displays and the brochures, guides and maps contained within them for a number of reasons. The most significant reason is that printed visitor information helps to provide a better customer experience for their hotel guests. The reasons given range from the surprising insight that in the digital age brochures and maps provide faster information than looking up the same information on a mobile device. Additionally, a printed brochure facilitates human interaction with a concierge or front desk staff. We live in an

increasingly physically isolated world, connected digitally but essentially alone. Printed information aids communication between people and provide a wealth of knowledge, opinion and data from a trusted source – the concierge. This can lead to a chance piece of information that might lead to a more enjoyable tourist experience rather than disappearing into the rabbit hole of an internet search. Print is easily sharable – it helps to create a community of shared decisions and experiences.

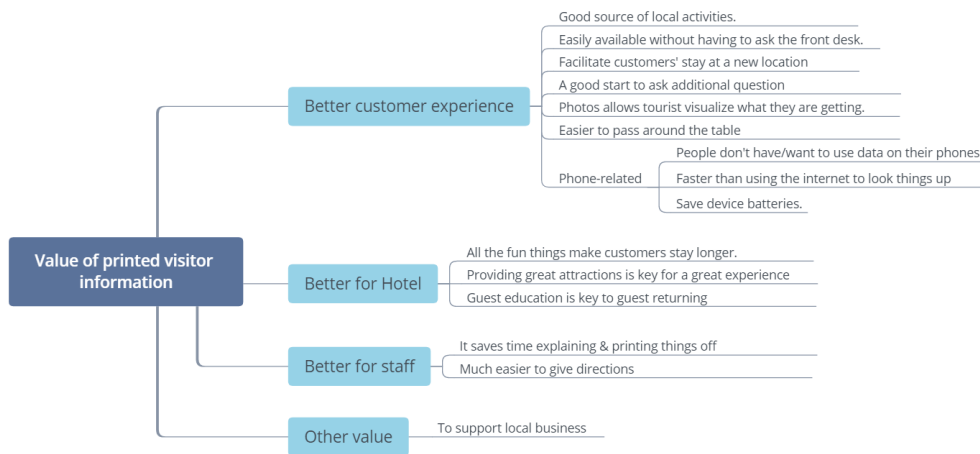
A second major factor in favor of printed materials is that an easily accessible source of good quality information enhances the reputation of the hotel and its staff. Guest education is key to that guest returning. The reputation is enhanced with the experience when a map is presented by a guest to a concierge who traces a line on a map and calls out key stops and sights along the route.

Hotel front desk staff cite the convenience of readily available printed maps and brochures. They are easier and quicker to provide directions, easy to explain and more efficient than printing digital information for a guest on the hotel computer and printer. This saves time and money as well as improving the customer experience.

Last but not least a hotel can be a nucleus for a local business community providing information for guests to visit local attractions, restaurants and shops. The hotel and its important brochure racks offer support and revenue opportunities for local businesses. See Figure 3.

Figure 3

Hotels receptionists see value in printed visitor information

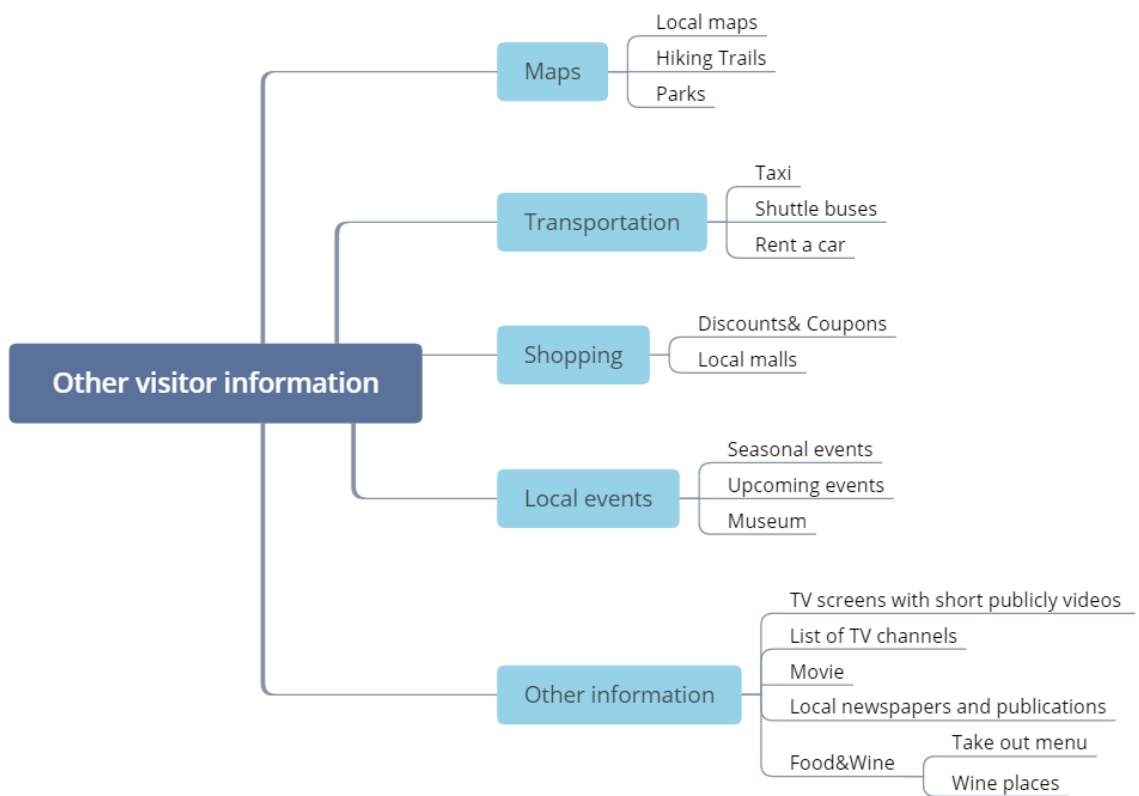


Q: Do you see value in having printed visitor information available for your guests?

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Hotel guests value printed visitor information to help them find where they need or want to go, for leisure or business, with different transportation options. It can provide maps for trails as well as a street map of the city. Many visitors want to know where the best shopping can be found, and guides can provide an easy to read checklist of stores and malls and districts with the additional shopping incentives of discounts and coupons printed in the material or weblinks to current offers. Cities and tourism offices provide seasonal information, local events and future programs to entice visitors to come back. Just as theaters can display the times of movies and plays on a website a printed brochure is excellent to promote the play, the movie theater and direct the guest to a website to purchase tickets online, read reviews and enhance their experience. Guests value a menu for takeaway or room service in printed form that can be easily shared by the family in a single glance of the paper menu. See Figure 4.

Figure 4



Conclusion

The data shows that hotel front desk staff in locations across North America, Europe and Africa overwhelmingly favor brochure displays in their properties today. Hotel front desk staff much prefers to assist their guests with printed media. Electronic kiosks are a useful supplement to printed material within the hotel.

In the digital age, printed media is the most preferred and maps guides and brochures are a highly valuable support tool to supplement the local knowledge of the front desk and concierge team. The use of print for maps and directions perhaps shows the value of shared knowledge gathering and the shared experience that highlights the hotels staffs' knowledge with the desire of the guest to find a new experience. The map facilitates the collaboration of knowledge, the physical environment and the highly tactile and sensory experience of using a map, with added information from the concierge.

This survey data suggests that hotels should continue to provide value to their guests with printed maps, brochures and guides. There is no reason to suggest that guests cannot enhance their visitor experiences with the data they collect on their mobile device with the tactile, in-the-moment information, provided in print by the front desk. Data from the 2018 Visitor International study on Visitor Information Usage and Effectiveness and the data in this survey of hotel staff suggests printed material continues to play a vital and valuable role in the visitor and guest experience.