



The Americas: Canada

WHAT ARE SOME CHANGES YOU HAVE NOTICED IN YOUR CUSTOMERS THIS PAST YEAR? ARE YOU SEEING ANY NEW REQUESTS FROM CONSUMERS?

We understand from our clients that spending was sluggish throughout most of the year, although the latter part of 2010 did see a slight economic improvement with the strong Canadian dollar, which kept spending going, especially on feel-good products and services that help people feel relaxed, balanced and in tune with their health. Loyalty programs and promotional discounts were also on the top of list, almost a requirement for spas to gain new customers.

In 2010 there was a high concentration of new requests for enhanced database security (PCI/PA DSS), loyalty programs, in-room booking, web booking and mobile devices for internal and external use (staff and guest functionality). The ability for a paperless environment was also a popular request, supporting green initiatives and well as the latest technology.

WHAT SECTORS DO YOU SEE ATTRACTING THE MOST INVESTMENT CAPITAL THESE DAYS? WHAT ABOUT WHEN IT COMES TO THE SPA AND WELLNESS ARENA?

According to The Conference Board of Canada (CBoC), the wholesale and retail trade sector was the best performing sector within the Economic Performance Index, finishing slightly ahead of the financial sector. Meanwhile, the tourism sector ranked sixth in terms of economic performance. We found that there was substantial investment in Canada by corporate hotel/resort chains in the likes of new construction properties with spas, or new construction spas in an existing property. Spa and retail branding was also a major focus for investment, as was web presence and social media.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE LOOKING LIKE FOR SPA AND WELLNESS IN YOUR COUNTRY?

Although Canada's population is only one tenth the size of the U.S, we anticipate steady investment to continue in corporate hotel/resort development, as well as corporate taking back management of their existing spas that were previously managed by a third party operator. In addition, Canada is expected to become a world leading Wellness Travel destination. Wellness Travel focuses on health and a sense of well-being. Activities include spa treatments, healthy food, and indoor and outdoor fitness activities.

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