



DATE: April 18, 2006  
CONTACT: Cathy Keefe  
202-408-2183  
ckeefe@tia.org, www.tia.org

## **ONLINE TRAVEL BOOKINGS INCREASE AT THE EXPENSE OF TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS**

**WASHINGTON, DC** — Preliminary data from the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd. show that last year, for the first time, more trips were booked online than by any other method.

In 2005, 19 percent of all U.S. resident travelers traveled by common carrier (includes plane, train, bus, ship). Transportation reservations for more than one-third of these travelers were made online (35%), an increase of 25 percent from the year before. The next most common method was calling transportation carrier 800 telephone numbers, but such usage was down 16 percent from 2004. Travel agents assisted 4 percent of all travelers who made transportation reservations in 2005, similar to 2004 (5%).

Accommodation bookings followed a similar pattern. One-quarter of travelers who booked accommodation reservations did so online in 2005 (24%), up 9 percent from the year before. Hotel chain websites were used most often to make internet reservations, followed by other online booking services (such as online travel agencies). Nearly as many travelers booking lodging reservations used chain 800 telephone numbers, but this was down 5 percent from 2004. The largest share of travelers making reservations made them directly with the property, but this also declined in frequency compared to the prior year. Four percent of travelers used a travel agent to book accommodations in 2005, similar to 2004 (5%).

Suzanne D. Cook, Senior Vice President of Research at the Travel Industry Association of America, believes this information is an important bellwether for all facets of the industry. She says, "TIA is pleased to join our partner, DK Shifflet & Associates, in providing such detailed information on the

way travelers actually book their trips. Increasing use of the Internet to make travel reservations fits with other trends we've been monitoring, and helps alert the industry to some of the changes that are yet to come."

Douglas Shifflet, President and CEO of D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., noted that "The acceleration in Internet booking further demonstrates Americans' comfort with technology that allows them to more directly understand and control their travel choices." He further states, "The TIA/DKS&A partnership is a great step forward in utilizing the large monthly **DIRECTIONS**<sup>®</sup> surveys to identify travel trends that dramatically impact the travel business and convey that information to our industry with one clear voice."

Trips booked online involve significantly higher spending on average (\$754, excluding the cost of transportation) than trips booked offline (\$406) or with no advance booking (\$219). Internet-booked trips also entail more activities (2.3 on average) than do trips booked offline (1.7 activities) or with no advance bookings (1.5).

The average age of travelers who book trips online is 44 – similar to the age of travelers who booked offline (45) or did not book at all (43), but younger than those who booked through a travel agent (49).

A full report on travelers' booking behavior will be available in the Fall of 2006.

The above information was obtained through TIA's **TravelScope/DIRECTIONS**<sup>®</sup> survey as well as the **DIRECTIONS**<sup>®</sup> survey by DKS&A. These surveys provide detailed trip and traveler characteristics through their mail and Internet sample of more than 150,000+ trips reported by a representative sample of traveling U.S. households annually, and are available on a brand and state/city destination level. Trips are considered any journey of 50 miles or more, one-way, away from home or a journey that involved an overnight stay.

###

*TIA is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$645 billion travel industry. TIA's mission is to represent the whole of the U.S. travel industry to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. More information on TIA is available at [www.tia.org](http://www.tia.org).*

*For almost 25 years, D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., a leading travel research firm, has provided the most complete consumer-based travel data on U.S. citizens and their travel worldwide. DKS&A's **DIRECTIONS**<sup>®</sup> Travel Intelligence System<sup>SM</sup> collects detailed monthly travel data on more than 150,000 trips annually collected from a representative sample of US households.*