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Resort Recreation Amenity Report

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Introduction

During difficult economic times, vacationers are more discriminating when choosing a resort destination. Amenities often define a resort (Mill, 2001; Schwanke, 1997). When making a vacation decision, tourism experts will cite resort offerings and amenities as one of the key deciding factors (Brey, 2010). Amenities are ‘any extra product or service found in the hotel (Vallen & Vallen, 2005). Although amenities can include hotel items such as shampoo, a coffee machine, and Wi-Fi, this study focuses exclusively on resort recreation amenities. The purpose of the Report is to provide a comprehensive look at the most recent data on resort recreation amenity facility and service offerings and serve as a source for recreation amenity comparison and benchmarking data for industry professionals.

According to Brey (2011), a resort is a full-service lodging facility that provides access to or offers a range of amenities and recreation facilities to emphasize a leisure experience. Resorts work for as a primary provider of the guests’ experience, often provide services for business or meetings, and are characteristically located in vacation-oriented settings. Brey cites that the minimum qualifications of a resort, related to recreation amenities, include: (1) Provide one signature amenity or anchor attribute, (2) provide five secondary recreation/leisure/entertainment experiences and (3) emphasize a leisure or retreat-environment experience.

Resort recreation offerings have grown over the years. Early resorts could focus on one amenity and be prosperous. Ski resorts didn’t seem to need more than an alpine ski area and beach resorts could rely on the beach alone for visitors. But as the resort industry grew, multiple amenity offerings became the norm and consumers became conditioned to expect certain amenities as part of the resort experience (Stringham, 2008; Anon., 1989). Recreation participation changes, vacationer demand, and industry influence have swayed resort development over the years, so much so, that for each decade, a new seemingly “essential” recreation amenity appeared to emerge. A swimming pool was one of the earliest expected resort facilities, followed by tennis in the 70s, fitness in the 80s, golf in the 90s, and spa in the 2000s.

Amenity facilities and related services can make or break the success of a recreation amenity department and is a way for resorts to stay competitive in the market (Kandampully et. al., 2001). According to a 2010 research study, 40% of hospitality managers indicated they were ready to make 'recreation area' structural improvements, with twenty percent (20%) also specifying spa improvements (Bohrod, 2010). Because today’s travelers expect much from their recreation

dollar and are offered more ways to spend that dollar, resorts must anticipate changing consumer preferences and cater to those needs (McElyea and Cory, 1998). This article will provide resort operators and developers a snapshot of existing resort recreation amenities and provide a means of gauging their operations.

A few research projects have taken a broad look at the resort industry and revealed whether or not resorts have recreation facilities (American Hotel and Lodging Association/Smith Travel Research, 2010 & 2012; Stringham, 2008), others have looked at specific types of resort offerings and taken a more detailed look at the number and size of the facilities (International Spa Association/Smith Travel Research, 2011; National Golf Federation, 2011; National Ski Areas Association, 2011; Sangree, 2011). The purpose of this report is (1) to consolidate industry research findings to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of resort recreation facilities in the United States and (2) expand industry findings using data collected in the summer of 2012. All data is presented to provide a detailed report of the state of U.S. Resort Recreation Amenities. The results of this study will assist resort recreation professionals in comparing their amenity offerings to other resorts, provide resort operators and developers a closer look at amenities of existing resorts, and assist suppliers in providing amenities to and/or attending to existing resort amenities.

Methods

The Resort Recreation Amenity Report is a descriptive research project designed to provide data on the state of resort recreation amenities. Two methods were employed to address the study objectives. First, a review of the literature was completed to identify the latest resort recreation data and second, a survey of resorts was implemented to supplement and enhance the industry data.

Industry Data

Industry research was published in one of two formats: (1) studies that examined the resort/hotel industry and identified common recreation offerings and (2) those that focused on a specific recreation offering and also provided data on that type offering in resorts. In the case of some resort recreation offerings, no industry data was available.

The American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) conducts research on a regular basis, periodically touching on recreation amenities in hotels. The AHLA 2010 Lodging Study contained data on golf, water parks, skiing and gaming; where the AHLA 2012 Lodging Study included data on pools, spas, fitness, and children's offerings. The AHLA data is segmented by 'location type' which

includes the categories urban, suburban, airport, small town, interstate, and resort. For the purposes of comparison, only “resort” data is shared in this report. In addition, a study completed in 2008 by Stringam, generated data on many of the same resort recreation amenities featured in the AHLA study.

Industry data featuring a specific recreation offering at resorts typically was produced by allied professional associations. For example, the International Spa Association (ISPA) publishes research each year on the U.S. spa industry. This research includes resort spa data (International Spa Association/Smith Travel Research, 2011). The National Ski Areas Association completes a regular member survey (2011) of ski resort offerings. Compared to other resort recreation research, the ISPA and NSAA are the most comprehensive and thorough. Similar research was found also for water parks (Sangree, 2011) and the golf industry (National Golf Federation, 2011).

2012 Resort Survey

General and recreation managers at resorts were surveyed using a self-designed online instrument. In order to generate comparable content, the survey instrument was developed emulating the content and formatting of AHLA (2010) and Stringam (2008). Resort facility and service survey items were expanded to make the discoveries more comprehensive.

Additional survey items were revealed in earlier published research (Masterson &Verhoven, 1995; Chong & Singh, 1995; Secory, 1989), industry research reports, and by utilizing university student employees to search online for unidentified resort offerings.

A convenience sample of 1,199 U.S. resort managers were surveyed. Two email databases were combined for use in the study. The first was a member email list from the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association and the second, a general manager database of U.S. resorts developed by a partnering university. Starting in September 2012, each subject was sent an email, linked to the online instrument, describing the purpose of the research and asking for participation. During the course of the study, subjects were contacted every two weeks, up to three times, to encourage involvement. One hundred and forty-nine (149) surveys were returned. After eliminating duplicate, incomplete and non-resort surveys, 126 surveys remained and were used in the research, generating a 10% response rate. Data was analyzed and conveyed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percent, range, mode, and mean.

In addition to inquiries about the resort’s recreation amenities, several descriptive questions were also included. Resorts represented in the survey were located in 15

different states. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the resorts were independent resorts; the remaining 18% branded. Number of rooms/units ranged from 6 to 2100, with a mean of 289. Fifty percent of the resorts had more than 130 rooms/units. The number of full time employees in the resorts studied ranged from 0 to 3000, with a mean of 203. Of the resorts responding, 11% indicated offering no sports, recreation or social activities/facilities beyond retail and restaurants.

Several different methods are used in the industry to classify resorts. One common technique is to identify with the resort's signature amenity (Chon and Singh, 1995). According to Brey (2011), amenity identifiers most closely associated with the resort product include golf, ski, beach and spa. In this study, when subjects were asked the question 'based on its primary amenity, select your resorts designation,' beach-style resort was selected most often (41%), followed by golf resort (8%) and spa resort (7%). Twenty-four percent of the study sample indicated their resort had no or an uncommon amenity designation (Table 1). This data helps to provide a profile of the types of resorts included in this research.

Table 1: Self-Identified Resort Designation

Beach/Ocean/Lakeside Resort	41%
No Amenity Designation/Other*	24%
Golf Resort	8%
Spa/Health/Wellness Resort/Destination Spa	7%
Historic Resort	5%
Ski/Mountain Resort	5%
Waterpark/Aquatic Resort	4%
Casino Resort	3%

*Other includes Tennis, Fishing/Hunting, Marina, Theme Park, etc.

Results

Findings from both methods utilized in this report are presented together, separated into sections based on each type of recreation. The primary recreation sections are followed by a brief segment on "other recreation amenities." The sections are presented in descending order, starting with aquatics, the most frequently offered type of resort recreation. Each section begins with industry data followed by a summary table and presentation of 2012 Resort Survey research findings. In each case, the following resort recreation data is presented: (1) Facilities, including type and size (2) related services and staffing and (3) whether or not the offering is available to the public (non-resort guests). Tables display data on the types of facilities and services in two different forms (1) the left

column, titled 'All Resorts,' includes the percent of all resorts reporting this type of facility/service and (2) the central column, titled 'resorts with (type of recreation),' the percent of resorts that have a facility/service in the recreation category (i.e. aquatics) that have this type of facility/service. Additional descriptive data is offered in select sections.

Aquatics

Aquatics are generally defined as any activity taking place in or on the water. The AHLA 2012 Lodging Survey reported on resorts with indoor pools, outdoor pools or Jacuzzi/hot tubs and Stringam (2008) reported on resort hotels with indoor and outdoor pools. A summary of data is found in Table 2.

Table 2: Industry Data – Resort Aquatics

	AHLA 2012	Stringam 2008
Outdoor Pool	86%	87%
Indoor Pool	22%	21%
Jacuzzi/Hot Tub	71%	

The AHLA 2010 Lodging Survey reported 5% of resorts having waterparks on property. Additional data on U.S. waterparks by Sangree (2011) indicated that there are a total of 136 waterpark resorts in United States. Forty percent (40%) of all indoor waterpark resorts are franchised and have an average room count of 292. The average size of the indoor water park facilities was 32,428 square feet. Twenty-five percent (25%) of all outdoor water parks are franchised and have an average room count of 659.

The 2012 Resort Survey showed 84% of resorts having aquatic facilities and/or services. Of those, forty-nine percent (49%) open their aquatic facilities to the public. Table 3 and 4 detail specific aquatic facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Sixty-six percent of resorts had both indoor and outdoor facilities. Recreation pools were most common ranging from 1 to 20 pools, and averaging 2.3 pools. Aquatic staff was most often employees of the resort (76%) and a wide variety of aquatic services were offered, most popular being boat rentals, followed by pool and poolside games/activities.

Table 3: Aquatic Facilities

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Aquatics (N=97)	Type of Aquatic Facility
62%	73%	Recreation Pool(s)
53%	62%	Beach
34%	61%	Hot Tub(s)

35%	41%	Children’s Pool(s)
21%	25%	Lap Swimming Pool(s)
18%	22%	Whirlpool(s)
18%	22%	Waterpark Facilities (Slides, Lazy River, etc.)
Facility Location:	66%	Both Outdoor and Indoor Facilities
	26%	Outdoor Facilities Only
	8%	Indoor Facilities Only
Facility Size:	Range 1 to 20 Pools on Property, Mean 2.3	

Table 4: Aquatic Services and Staffing

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Aquatics (N=97)	Type of Aquatic Services/Staffing
37%	44%	Motor or Non-Motor Boat Rentals
32%	38%	Pool Games/Activities
32%	38%	Poolside/Beach Games/Activities
25%	30%	Chair/Cabana Rentals
24%	29%	Aquatic Group Fitness Classes
20%	24%	Aquatic Rentals (non-boat/chair rentals)
14%	16%	Swimming Instruction
Staffing:	76%	Employees Only
	22%	Employees and Contracted Workers
	2%	Contracted Workers Only

Fitness/Wellness

Although spa and fitness/wellness areas are similar in nature, each appears separately in this report. The AHLA 2012 Lodging Survey reported that 76% of resorts had an ‘Exercise Room/Health/Fitness Facility.’ Stringam (2008) reported 69% of resorts having ‘Gyms or Exercise Rooms’ and 41% having ‘In-room Exercise Equipment.’

The most detailed information on fitness facilities and services is available through the International Health, Racquet and Sports Association (2011). Although their research covers participation in U.S. fitness clubs (not resorts), this data can shed some light on the popularity of fitness offerings outside the resort industry (Table 5).

Table 5: U.S. Fitness Club Consumer Participation Data (in millions)

Resistance Machines 20.5	Yoga 7.1
Treadmills 20.5	Stationary Cycling (recumbent) 6.1
Free Weights (Hand) 16.9	Aerobics (high impact) 5.8
Free Weights (Dumbbell) 14.1	Stationary Cycling (group) 5.5
Elliptical Trainers 13.8	Rowing Machines 5.2
Free Weights (Barbells) 12.1	Aerobics (step) 4.4
Stationary Cycling (upright) 11.7	Aquatic Exercise 3.8
Abdominal Machines/Devices 11.4	Pilates Training 3.8
Stretching 10.8	Calisthenics 3
Aerobics (low impact) 9	Cardio Kickboxing 2.8
Stair Climbing Machines 7.8	Tai Chi 2.2

According to the 2012 Resort Survey, fitness/wellness was the second most common resort recreation offering. The study showed 63% of resorts having fitness/wellness facilities and/or services. Of those, thirty three percent (33%) open their facilities to the public. Table 6 and 7 identify the specific fitness facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Exercise equipment (cardio) areas were the most common resort facility, with 50% of resorts having this facility. The size of the fitness area ranged from 200 to 35,000 square feet. Fitness staff were most often employees of the resort (49%) and a wide variety of fitness services were offered, most popular being group fitness classes and fitness events/competitions.

Table 6: Fitness/Wellness Facilities

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Fitness/Wellness (N=77)	Type of Fitness/Wellness Facility
50%	80%	Exercise Equipment (cardio area)
43%	70%	Free Weight Room/Area
33%	53%	Walking/Hiking Trails
29%	48%	Aquatic Fitness Pool
21%	39%	Group Fitness Studio
9%	13%	Pilates Studio (Separate)
Facility Size:		Range 200 – 35,000, Mean 3875

Table 7: Fitness/Wellness Services and Staffing

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Fitness/Wellness (N=77)	Type of Fitness/Wellness Services and Staffing
28%	51%	Group Fitness Classes

17%	26%	Fitness Events/Competitions
16%	25%	Personal Training/One-on-One Fitness
5%	8%	In-Room Exercise Equipment
Staffing:	49%	Employees
	35%	Both Employees/Contracted Workers
	17%	Contracted Workers

Children/Teens

Both the AHLA 2012 Lodging Study and Stringam's (2008) research reported on children/teen activities and day care centers. Stringam's findings also included 'video game equipment.' A summary of data is found in Table 8.

Table 8: Industry Data – Resort Children/Teen Offerings

	AHLA 2012	Stringam 2008
Children/Teen Activities	29%	39% (children's activities)
Child Care	24%	26%
Video Game Equipment		9%

According to the 2012 Resort Survey, 61% of resorts have children/teen offerings. Of those, Forty-seven percent (47%) open their facilities to the public. Table 9 and 10 display the specific children/teen facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Playgrounds were the most common facility, with 39% of resorts having an outdoor playground, followed by thirty-six percent having a Children's Activity Center. Not surprising, staff were most likely to be employees of the resort (81%). Forty-three percent (43%) of resorts reported having day or evening activities for children and 23% for teens.

Table 9: Resort Children/Teen Facilities

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Children/Teen (N=70)	Type of Children/Teen Facility
39%	65%	Outdoor Playground
36%	60%	Children's Activity Center
34%	57%	Art/Craft Center
33%	55%	Arcade Game Room
14%	24%	Miniature Golf Course
12%	21%	Day Care Center
8%	14%	Teen Club/Lounge

Table 10: Children/Teen Services and Staffing

All Resorts	Resorts with	Type of Children/Ten Services and
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(N=115)	Children/Teen (N=70)	Staffing
43%	70%	Children's Day or Evening Activities/Events
23%	39%	Teen Day or Evening Activities/Events
21%	34%	Private Childcare (babysitting)
Staffing:	81%	Employees
	15%	Both Employees/Contracted Workers
	3%	Contracted Workers

Spa/Salon

The AHLA 2012 Lodging Survey reported that 36% of resorts had an 'on site spa with treatment rooms.' Stringam (2008) reported 34% of resorts having 'staffed health spa.' The International Spa Association (ISPA, 2012) reported data on the types of facilities available in resort spas. Facilities include treatment rooms (99%), retail (96%), locker rooms (88%), relaxation rooms (85%), wet areas (80%), salon (65%), consultation/education spaces (23%), and restaurant (10%). The average number of facility elements at 6.1 and the average spa size to be 12,517 square feet.

ISPA (2012) reported the average number of services available in resort spas was 5.9. Resort spa services included massage (100%), skin care (99%), body services (98%), salon services (85%), hydrotherapy (50%), mind, body, spirit programs (48%), complementary/alternative services (36%), wellness programs (25%) and medically supervised services (2%). The average number of resort spa 'employees' was 34.8, 6.6% of those are contracted workers (ISPA, 2012). The ISPA data is comprehensive and generated from a larger sample than the 2012 Resort Survey, the findings presented can be used with confidence for resort recreation benchmarking.

The 2012 Resort Survey showed 43% of resorts having spa/salon facilities and/or services. Of those, seventy six percent (76%) open their facilities to the public. Table 11 and 12 identify the specific spa/salon facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Of those with spas, locker facilities (82%) and treatment rooms (76%) were the most common facilities. The size of the spa facility (without fitness) averaged 6,888 square feet. Spa staff were most often employees of the resort (53%) and a wide variety of spa services were offered, most popular being massage, skin and nail treatments.

Table 11: Spa/Salon Facilities

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with (N=50)	Type of Spa/Salon Facility
36%	82%	Locker/Shower Facilities
33%	76%	Treatment Rooms
31%	72%	Sauna
29%	64%	Relaxation Lounge
27%	62%	Spa Retail Boutique
25%	58%	Steam Room
23%	52%	Salon Area
20%	46%	Whirlpool
6%	14%	Spa Café
4%	10%	Cold Plunge Pool
4%	10%	Warm Plunge Pool
2%	4%	Children/Teen Spa or Salon (separate facility)
Facility Size:		Range 0 – 36 treatment rooms, Mean 10
		Range 144 – 35,000 sq ft , Mean 6,888

Table 12: Spa/Salon Services and Staffing

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with (N=50)	Type of Spa/Salon Services and Staffing
37%	86%	Massage Services
38%	80%	Skin Care Services (Body and Face)
32%	64%	Nail Services
22%	50%	Make Up Services
18%	42%	Hair Cutting/Styling Services
17%	20%	Hair Removal Services
11%	23%	Wellness Programs/Education Classes
9%	22%	Children/Teen Spa/Salon (in primary spa)
6%	14%	Tanning Services
1&	2%	Medically Supervised Services
Staffing:	53%	Employees
	30%	Both Employees/Contracted Workers
	17%	Contracted Workers

Tennis

No recent research has been published on resort tennis facilities or services. A representative from the Tennis Industry Association stated that “3% of tennis facilities listed in the (TIA) facilities database are tennis facilities at a resort...most resorts, especially higher end resorts, have between 4 to 6 or more tennis courts” (Melton, 2012)

The 2012 Resort Survey showed 42% of resorts having tennis facilities and services. Of those, seventy three percent (73%) open their tennis facilities to the public. Table 12 and 13 identify the specific tennis facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Not unexpected, tennis courts were found in all resorts that offered tennis, and 39% of resorts with tennis reported having a pro shop. The number of courts ranged from 1 to 26 with an average of about 7. Forty-six (46%) of resorts reported having only asphalt court(s) and 38% had only clay courts (13% had a mixture of both). Tennis staff was most often employees of the resort (42%), but 36% also reported having a mix of both employees and contracted workers. Tennis instruction was offered at 71% of resorts with tennis.

Table 12: Tennis Facilities

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Tennis (N=48)	Type of Tennis Facility
38%	100%	Tennis Courts
15%	39%	Tennis Pro Shop
Size:		Range 1-26 courts, Mean 6.9
Type of Tennis Courts:	46%	Asphalt Only
	38%	Clay (Har Tru) Only
	13%	Both Clay and Asphalt
	5%	Grass

Table 13: Tennis Services and Staffing

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with (N=48)	Type of Tennis Services and Staffing
27%	71%	Tennis Instruction
26%	68%	Tennis Equipment Rentals
15%	39%	Tennis Tournaments/Events
13%	34%	Tennis Equipment Repair
Staffing:	42.5%	Employees
	30%	Both Employees/Contracted Workers
	27.5%	Contracted Workers

Golf

The National Golf Federation (2011) reported that 7.5% of all U.S. golf facilities are resort facilities. The total number of resort/real estate golf courses is 1,183 and the average number of holes is 14.06 (National Golf Federation, 2011). The AHLA 2010 Lodging Survey reported that 16% of resorts had golf on property.

The 2012 Resort Survey showed 40% of resorts offering golf opportunities, either on or off property. The study revealed 22% of all resorts have on-property golf. Of those, sixty-six percent (66%) of golf facilities are open to the public. Tables 14 and 15 identify the specific golf facilities and services, respectively, available at resorts. Golf course(s) were found at 98% of resorts with golf, (an indoor swing lab was available at the one site without an available course). The number of holes ranged from 9 to 54 with an average of about 28 holes and a mode of 18. Other popular resort golf facilities were putting greens (86%) and a driving range (86%). Golf staff was most often employees of the resort (73%). Equipment rental (77%) and golf instruction (72%) were common resort golf services. Eighty-one (81%) of resorts with golf had a pro shop.

Table 14: Golf Facilities

All Resorts (N=107)	Resorts with Golf (N=43)	Type of Golf Facility
22%	53%	On Property Golf Facilities
39%	98%	Golf Course(s)
35%	86%	Putting Green
35%	86%	Driving Range
33%	81%	Golf Pro Shop
24%	60%	Locker Rooms
9%	23%	Indoor Swing Facility
8%	21%	Short Course Center
Facility Size:		Range number of holes 9 – 54, Mean 28 holes

Table 15: Golf Services and Staffing

All Resorts (N=107)	Resorts with Golf (N=43)	Type of Golf Services and Staffing
29%	77%	Golf Equipment Rentals
29%	72%	Golf Instruction
28%	70%	Golf Tournaments/Events
30%	74%	Cart Rentals
16%	40%	Golf Equipment Repair
Staffing:	73%	Employees
	14%	Contracted Workers

	13%	Both Employees/Contracted Workers
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Skiing/Snowboarding

According to the National Ski Areas Association (2011), 125 U.S. Ski Areas have lodging. The AHLA 2010 Lodging Survey reported that 4% of resorts had skiing on the property. In the 2012 Resort Survey, 5% of resorts surveyed reported having ski facilities on site. With the small data set (N=7), the results are likely inaccurate.

Casino/Gaming

The AHLA 2010 Lodging Survey reported that 1% of resorts had a casino on property. In the 2012 Resort Survey, 5% of resorts surveyed reported having gaming facilities or services on site. With the small data set (N=6), the results are likely inaccurate.

Other Recreation Amenities

In the 2012 Resort Survey, 64% of respondents reported having other recreation amenity facilities or services available on property. Table 16 provides a summary. Some items reported in the table were not part of the survey selections, but written in when prompted for 'other' amenities (noted in the table with an asterisk); therefore each asterisked item is likely underrepresented (Table 16). Fishing opportunities were reported most often in the 'other' category (42%); basketball court(s) were present in 29% of resorts and a library in 18%. Resorts with equestrian facilities/activities and art museums/galleries (3% each) all welcomed resort guests and the public to the offerings.

Table 16: Other Amenities Facilities and Services

All Resorts (N=115)	Resorts with Other Amenities (N=74)	Type of Other Facility and Services	Open to the Public
42%	65%	Fishing Opportunities	
29%	45%	Basketball Court	67%
18%	28%	Library	
16%	26%	Croquet Lawn	72%
14%	22%	Bocce Lawn	44%
12%	19%	Nature Center	64%
10%	15%	Volleyball*	
8%	12%	Bicycle Rental/Use*	
8%	12%	Adventure/Challenge Facilities/Activities	67%
8%	9%	Theater/Auditorium Facility	43%

5%	8%	Shuffleboard*	
4%	7%	Historic Center/Museum	
3%	5%	Badminton*	
3%	5%	Ice Skating Rink	80%
3%	5%	Equestrian Facilities/Activities	100%
3%	4%	Art Museum/Gallery	100%
2%	3%	Racquetball/Squash Courts	50%

*‘Other’ category write in item, thus likely underrepresented.

Resort Recreation Report Overview

To summarize the 2012 Resort Survey, aquatics are the most established resort attribute, followed by fitness/wellness and children/teen offerings (Table 17). Not surprisingly, the most common resort facility offerings fall within the top three categories, including recreation pool, beach, exercise equipment area, free weight area and a playground (Table 18).

Table 17: Resort Offerings by Recreation Category

Percent of Resorts with Recreation Offering	Recreation Offering
84%	Aquatics
63%	Fitness/Wellness
61%	Children/Teen
43%	Spa/Salon
42%	Tennis
40%	Golf (on or off property)

Table 18: Top 25 Resort Facilities

Percent of Resorts with Facility	Resort Facilities
62%	Recreation Pool(s)
53%	Beach
50%	Exercise Equipment (cardio area)
43%	Free Weight Room/Area
39%	Outdoor Playground
39%	Golf Course(s)
38%	Tennis Courts
36%	Children's Activity Center
36%	Spa Locker/Shower Facilities
35%	Children's Pool(s)
35%	Putting Green
35%	Driving Range
34%	Hot Tub(s)

34%	Art/Craft Center
33%	Walking/Hiking Trails
33%	Arcade Game Room
33%	Spa Treatment Rooms
33%	Golf Pro Shop
31%	Sauna
29%	Aquatic Fitness Pool
29%	Relaxation Lounge
29%	Basketball Court
27%	Spa Retail Boutique
25%	Steam Room
24%	Golf Locker Rooms

The most common resort service offerings are children's day or evening activities/events, fishing, skin care services, motor or non-motor boat rentals, and massage services (Table 19). Resort employees likely provide these services. Children/teen, aquatic, and golf services are most likely to have an all employee staff. In spa, fitness, and tennis, approximately 50% of resorts report using either contracted staff or a combination of contractors and employees (Table 20).

Table 19: Top 25 Resort Services

Percent of Resorts with Service	Top 25 Resort Services
43%	Children's Day or Evening Activities/Events
42%	Fishing Opportunities
38%	Skin Care Services (Body and Face)
37%	Motor or Non-Motor Boat Rentals
37%	Massage Services
32%	Pool Games/Activities
32%	Poolside/Beach Games/Activities
32%	Nail Services
30%	Cart Rentals
29%	Golf Equipment Rentals
29%	Golf Instruction
28%	Group Fitness Classes
28%	Golf Tournaments/Events
27%	Tennis Instruction
26%	Tennis Equipment Rentals
25%	Chair/Cabana Rentals
24%	Aquatic Group Fitness Classes
23%	Teen Day or Evening Activities/Events
22%	Make Up Services
21%	Private Childcare (babysitting)

20%	Aquatic Rentals (non-boat/chair rentals)
18%	Hair Cutting/Styling Services
17%	Fitness Events/Competitions
17%	Hair Removal Services
16%	Personal Training/One-on-One Fitness
16%	Golf Equipment Repair

Table 20: Employee Staffing by Recreation Category

Percent of Resorts Utilizing Only Employees	Service Area
81%	Children/Teen
76%	Aquatics
73%	Golf
53%	Spa/Salon
49%	Fitness/Wellness
42.5%	Tennis

Limitations

Criteria used for sample selection included agreement to participate in the study, completion of all relevant amenity sections of the survey and that the survey respondent represented a resort. The term 'resort' has been known to be applied to a multitude of non-resort (or resort-like) properties. Called “faux resort properties” by Brey (2011), these properties are not resorts by strict definition, but have capitalized on the term as a competitive advantage in attracting consumers. When reviewing sample data collected, there were resorts represented in the sample that did not fit Brey's credentials related to recreation amenities, including providing one signature amenity and providing five secondary recreation/leisure/entertainment experiences. As noted earlier, 11% of the sample indicated "no sports, recreation or social activities/facilities beyond retail and restaurants." In addition, 3% of the sample had no signature amenity and less than five secondary experiences. The small response rate (10%) and overall sample size (N=126) limits the study results to deliver precise estimates of the resort industry.

Research literature has identified several elements used by consumers to choose a resort including location, guest room amenities, technology accessibility, and customer experience. Recreation amenities are just one of these elements. The purpose of this research was not to attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of the resort visitor selection process, but just a snapshot of resort amenity offerings. It is also recognized that merely offering the recreation amenities will not assure owner satisfaction (Masterson and Verhoven, 1995). This study does not make recommendations for resort amenities; these decisions are often

dependent upon location and the requisites of targeted guests (Stringam, 2008). The focus of this research was purely to generate a state-of-the-industry report to serve as a source for resort recreation amenity information.

Discussion and Conclusions

The challenge for resorts is to design and deliver properly, products and services commensurate with the needs of the market. A role of resort management is to identify what the market demands and work toward meeting those demands. Often, resorts are seeking a unique guest experience. Often this can come in the form of a recreation offering.

With a few exceptions, the 2012 Resort Survey was able to roughly replicate industry data. The study also extended the understanding of resort recreation offerings, expanding the number of facilities, adding services, sizes, staffing information, patrons, and in some cases location of facilities. Notable insight was realized in the area of children/teen activities and golf. The American Hotel and Lodging Association's 2012 data of 40% to the 2012 Resort Survey's 43% of resorts having children/teen activities is comparable; however, the Resort Survey identified that a much larger percent (61%) of resorts have some sort of children/teen offering. And although the 2010 AHLA data indicated that 16% of resorts have on property golf, due to the robust nature of the data collected, the Resort Survey was able to identify that 60% of resorts offer some type of golf offering, with 22% identifying on property golf as an option. Greater understanding of resort recreation offerings will be realized through repeated research and by attracting a larger sample size.

To date there has been no single source of information on resort amenity offerings. The report provides a comprehensive look at the most recent descriptive data on resort recreation amenity facility and service offerings. This research can be used by resort and recreation managers for benchmarking, comparison, or simply inspiration for the next new amenity offering. For the hospitality educator, the research was meant to provide current data to use in the preparation of resort management curriculum materials.

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