

In response to a recent survey, ASTA found that that most agencies saw stronger revenue and transaction volume in the first half of 2012 as compared to 2011. Further, the survey found agencies expect to see a stronger profit in 2012 and 2013, returning to pre-2009 profit levels. "The results of this survey, conducted earlier this summer, indicate that despite a slower than hoped for pace, the travel agency industry is rebounding well and set to recover fully," said ASTA President and Chair Nina Meyer. "Certainly some of this improved economic forecast can be attributed to the fact that consumers, realizing the value that comes in working with a travel agent, are again planning their next trip with the help of a travel professional."

When asked to compare performance for the first half of 2012 to the same time period in 2011, the majority of ASTA members said their performance for revenue (73%), transactions (72%) and client list (75%) was the same or better in 2012 than the first half of 2011. Only about a quarter saw a decrease in revenue, transactions and/or clients. While on par with results from a similar study done in 2011, this year's results are vastly better than those from 2010 when a third of agencies saw a decrease in performance and from 2009 when four-fifths saw a decrease.

For the first time in several years, the percentage of corporate agencies seeing a decrease in performance was less than leisure agencies. Whereas many corporate agencies reported increased performance for revenue and transactions, most failed to see an increase in their client list, suggesting that the revenue increase is not related to an increased clientele. Instead, their clients increased business travel in the first half of 2012.

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