

Sources Used and Positioning

Travelers use a variety of sources to obtain information when preparing for their trip, including: Canada Post outlets, the Passport Office, travel agents, tour operators, airlines, foreign embassies, health clinics and doctors, financial institutions, libraries, guide books, retail stores (e.g. bookstores, outdoors stores), and other travelers.

Ideally, travelers prefer a source which offers objective travel information. They also prefer ease of access to all the information they need to prepare for their trip. At the present time, there are no sources which fully meet these two requirements. While travel agents provide access to the broad range of travel information, not all are viewed as objective in their intentions (e.g. some travelers feel that agents are more interested in selling trips than providing objective information). Government offices (including the Passport Office) are viewed as objective, but are not always easily accessible. Other travelers are seen as the most objective source of information (because verbal descriptions of travel can provide sensitive information which might not be available in print), but it may be difficult for people to find others who have traveled to their target destination. The "Bon Voyage But..." booklet is ideally suited as a single source of travel preparation information. However, it is not reaching the majority of travelers under the current distribution system.

Perceived Role of Consular Services

Most travelers viewed Canadian embassies and consulates as places to go "in an emergency"; however, there were some misconceptions about the role of consular staff in providing legal and translation services.

Evaluation of Communications Materials

Participants displayed a very positive, spontaneous reaction to the "Bon Voyage, But..." booklet, saying that it offered all the information they need in a single source. They found the contents to be useful and relevant, and said that the size and format makes the booklet convenient to take on a trip.

The majority of people felt that the brochures and information kit repeat the information in the booklet, yet do not offer the convenience of a single source or the practicality of a small booklet format (for taking on trips).

The video series, which was shown as 20-minute television spots on regional stations (e.g. TV Ontario), received a positive reaction from participants in the