



AIR NEW ZEALAND

AIR NEW ZEALAND VACATION GAP STUDY Potential Story Angles

OVERVIEW

For the first time ever, an airline has objective scientific knowledge about what happens to its passengers – psychologically and physiologically – in-flight and directly before and after they travel. Using methodology developed while at NASA to continually measure brain, eye, muscle and heart rate activity, Air New Zealand studied passengers while in-flight from Los Angeles to New Zealand. Now, the results are in and the stories are waiting to be told.

POTENTIAL ANGLES:

Vacations Under a Microscope – Air New Zealand Studies the Science of Vacations

Air New Zealand gathered a diverse brain trust of specialists – from spa designers and sleep doctors to scientists and time/leisure experts – to decide how *science* could be used to dissect and improve the vacation experience. What resulted was the most extensive in-flight study of vacation travelers ever undertaken. Going beyond the traditional focus groups, surveys and market analysis, Air New Zealand worked with scientific professionals to become the expert on leisure travel and how it affects their customers. Interviews can be arranged with Roger Poulton, Air New Zealand Vice President – The Americas.

Study Shines Light on America's Dark Vacation Secret – We Don't Use Our Vacation Days

This year, more than 43 percent of Americans have no plans to take a vacation despite the fact that all evidence proves Americans need vacations now more than ever. Is this cultural programming gone haywire? According to Air New Zealand's revolutionary study, travelers who took vacations longer than two weeks reported higher stress levels than those on vacations shorter than 13 days, with possible reasons centering around guilt and work. This study demonstrates that despite the fact that Americans only have an average of 10 vacation days each year (compared to 20 – 30 days in other countries), that's all we actually need to experience a vacation's vast benefits. If Americans know better but still ignore their need for time away from the grind, Air New Zealand is asking the question, "What can we do about it?"

The Art of Relaxation Becomes the Science of Vacation

Looking equal parts science fiction and mad scientist, the good-humored subjects of Air New Zealand's Vacation Gap study were wired up with sensors, calibrated and armed with electronic devices that could easily have come straight off the set of Star Trek. This NASA designed equipment measured mood, alertness, relaxation and performance and was supported by additional electronic data gathered before, during and immediately after the vacation. Interviews can be arranged with Air New Zealand study participants and/or Alertness Solutions experts, including former NASA scientist Dr. Mark Rosekind.

Science Says that Vacations Improve Health: Is the Next Step a Vacation Rx?

In the survey phase of the study, 67 percent of Americans responded saying they think doctors should be able to write a prescription for vacations. Now, the second phase scientific study results are in and it turns out that there could be something to that ... Americans are constantly undercutting their goals by operating with high levels of stress and inefficient sleeping patterns. The quick fix? *Vacation*. Data from the Vacation Gap study suggests travelers sleep significantly better, feel healthier and improve their performance by more than 80 percent – more than ever recorded – just by taking a trip to New Zealand.

How Do You Make Americans More Productive? Send them on Vacation!

It seems contradictory, but it is the truth – to become more productive, *we need to take time off*. Recently articles have been published on companies reducing benefits fees for employees that lead a healthy lifestyle and go to the gym regularly. What if Air New Zealand could prove that employees who took their full vacation time each year – event if they were only given two weeks – actually had fewer sick days, less severe health issues and improved their performance considerably while at the office? The data from the Vacation Gap study suggests all of the above is rooted in fact: post-vacation performance levels were recorded at being nearly 25 percent higher than pre-vacation levels. All from a vacation that lasts two weeks or less. Expert opinions can be provided by Dr. Geoffrey Godbey, leisure studies expert at Penn State University, Joe Robinson, author of “Vacation Deficit Disorder” and/or Roger Poulton, Air New Zealand Vice President – The Americas.

Study Proves Women Perform Better Than Men ... In-Flight, At Least

Air New Zealand now has scientific data to demonstrate that men and women travel differently. According to Air New Zealand’s initial survey, men are more relaxed than women before they arrive at their destination: during the planning process, the week before, day of departure and on the plane, men rated their levels of relaxation up to 16 percent higher than women. However, despite men’s increased relaxation while en route to New Zealand, on the way home, women show 80 percent better performance than men. Interestingly, the performance of both men and women improved significantly post-vacation, men’s by 29 percent and women’s by 18. Expert opinions could be provided by Dr. Mark Rosekind of Alertness Solutions and/or an expert gender psychologist.

New Study Suggests Baby Boomers Vacation Better Than Gen X,Y

Under precisely the same conditions, travelers 45 and older reported 68 percent less stress throughout their New Zealand trip, 61 percent more enjoyment on their flights and demonstrated 50 percent better post-vacation performance than travelers 44 and younger. It looks like we all may have something to look forward to ... Expert opinions could be provided by Dr. Mark Rosekind of Alertness Solutions and/or a senior travel expert.