The Tourism Economy Study: CCU Lodging Update, May 8, 2014

Current Performance Estimates

Hotel, Condo-Hotel and Campsite Properties

Preliminary results from Coastal Carolina University’s voluntary sample of hotel, condo-hotel and campsite (HC-HC) properties along the Grand Strand during the week of April 27-May 3, 2014, indicate that the midweek occupancy rate averaged 46.4 percent, up 9.8 occupancy points or 26.7 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2013. During the Friday-Saturday night period, the occupancy rate averaged 61.5 percent, up 3.6 occupancy points or 6.2 percent compared to last year. The average daily rate was up 13.3 percent during the midweek period, but down 3 percent during the weekend period, compared with last year. Consequently, HC-HC occupancy for the week overall was up 7.8 occupancy points or 18.2 percent, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was up 25.4 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2013.

VRPs

Based on the Brittain Center’s observations of random samples of Internet websites of vacation rental properties (VRPs) in the coastal sections of Horry and Georgetown counties (338 of the 3,135 units) for which complete data are publicly available, 65.1 percent were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals during the nights of April 26-May 2. The percentage of VRPs reserved in Horry and Georgetown counties combined was up 18.5 occupancy points or 39.8 percent compared with the equivalent period last year. For the nights of May 3-9, 75.3 percent of the VRPs were reserved or blocked from reservation. The level of reservations was up 25.7 occupancy points or 51.7 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2013.

Six-Week Average Performance

During the nights of March 22-May 3, 56.4 percent of the lodging properties in the Brittain Center’s voluntary sample of HC-HC properties located along the Grand Strand were occupied, which was up 2.2 occupancy points or 4 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. The average daily rate for these properties was down 3.3 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. Consequently, RevPAR was up 0.6 percent compared with the equivalent period of 2013. During the same period this year, 66.4 percent of the VRP bedrooms in the Center’s random sample of Horry County VRPs were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals, up 9.1 occupancy points or 15.8 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. Advertised prices for this segment were down 2.4 percent compared with last year, leading to an increase in revenue per available bedroom of 13 percent.

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Forecast and Analysis

At the time of this writing, the forecast from weather.com for the weekend of May 10-11 calls for 0 and 30 percent chance of precipitation, respectively, with a high of 80 degrees. The Brittain Center predicts that average occupancy for its sample of HC-HC properties may be near or above 80 percent during the nights of May 9-10. Based on this week’s observations by Center researchers of 338 websites of VRPs available to rent in Horry and Georgetown counties, 68 percent are reserved for the week of May 10-16. VRP reservations in Horry and Georgetown counties for that week are up 15.7 occupancy points or 29.9 percent compared with the same period of 2013.

Additional Research Notes

The Brittain Center’s preliminary sample of 22 HC-HC properties reporting for the week of April 27-May 3 consisted of 10 hotels (all but five are oceanfront/view, and five are brand affiliated), 11 condo-hotels (all are oceanfront/view and one brand affiliated), and one campground resort property. The results for the current moving six-week period are based on an average sample size of 8,129 units per week average.

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Note: The above analysis is based on sample estimates. Actual business performance results may vary greatly. Therefore, neither the above Centers nor Coastal Carolina University warrant the use of the above data or analysis for specific business application.