The Tourism Economy Study: CCU Lodging Update, April 14, 2016

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 3-9, 2016, indicate that the midweek occupancy rate averaged 48.2 percent, down 32.2 occupancy points or 40.1 percent compared to the equivalent week of 2015. During the Friday-Saturday night period, the occupancy rate averaged 75.5 percent, down 20.2 occupancy points or 21.1 percent compared to the equivalent weekend last year. The average daily rate (ADR) was down 17 percent during the midweek period and down 9.4 percent during the weekend compared with last year. Consequently, HC-HC occupancy for the week overall was down 28 occupancy points or 33.8 percent, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was down 42.9 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2015, which in that year included Easter Sunday.

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 (318 of the 3,135 units) for which complete data are publicly available, 56.5 percent were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals during the nights of April 2-8, 2016. The percentage of VRPs reserved in Horry and Georgetown counties combined was down 11.6 occupancy points or 17 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2015. For the nights of April 9-15, 2016, 47.7 percent of the VRPs were reserved or blocked from reservation. The level of reservations was up 0.3 occupancy point or 0.7 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2015.

Six-Week Average Performance

During the nights of Feb. 28-April 9, 2016, 60.8 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 2.9 occupancy points or 5 percent compared with the equivalent weeks of 2015. The average daily rate for these properties was up 3.9 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year, leading to a 9.1 percent increase in average RevPAR compared with the equivalent period last year. During the same period in 2016, 61.3 percent of the VRP bedrooms in the Center’s random sample of Horry County VRPs were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals, up 2 occupancy points or 3.3 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. Advertised prices for this segment were down 3.3 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year, which would leave revenue per available bedroom even with the equivalent period last year.

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Forecast and Analysis

According to weather.com at the time of this writing, the forecast for the weekend of April 16-17, 2016, calls for a high temperature of 71 degrees and 73 degrees, and a 10 percent and 0 percent chance of rain, respectively. The Brittain Center predicts that average occupancy for its sample of HC-HC properties may be 72 percent for the weekend nights of April 15-16, even or within 3 occupancy points compared with the equivalent weekend of 2015. Based on this week’s observations by Center researchers of 318 websites of VRPs available to rent in Horry and Georgetown counties, 53.3 percent are reserved for the week of April 16-22, 2016. VRP reservations in Horry and Georgetown counties for that week are up 2.9 occupancy points or 5.7 percent compared with the same week of 2015.

Additional Research Notes

The Brittain Center’s preliminary sample of 27 HC-HC properties reporting for the week of April 3-9, 2016, consisted of 12 hotels (all but five are oceanfront/view, and five are brand affiliated), and 14 condo-hotels (all are oceanfront/view, one is brand affiliated), and one campground resort property. The results for the current moving six-week period are based on an average sample size of 8,955 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.