



Research Services

Regional Partners Research Program  
**REGIONAL INQUIRIES**  
**OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2004**

**April 2005**

Research Services  
Tourism British Columbia

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## SUMMARY

Research Services, Tourism BC coordinates the Regional Partners Research Program which provides centralized marketing research services to the six regional tourism associations.

This report presents the final quarterly summary of consumer inquiries for 2004. These inquiries were recorded by the six regional tourism offices from October 1 to December 31, 2004.

Over 3,100 inquiries were recorded by the regions during this three month period. This document summarizes the inquiries by month, region, method of inquiry, origin, and source code. This document also provides a summary of all inquiries recorded from April 1 to December 31, 2004, including information on month, method of inquiry, and consumer origin.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION ..... 1

2.0 METHODS ..... 1

3.0 QUARTERLY SUMMARY ..... 2

    3.1 Total inquiries ..... 2

    3.2 Inquiries by method ..... 3

    3.3 Inquiries by origin..... 4





    3.4 Inquiries by source..... 6

    3.5 Permission rates ..... 8

4.0 YEAR TO DATE TRENDS..... 9

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Research Services, Tourism BC coordinates the Regional Partners Research Program which provides centralized marketing research services to the six regional tourism associations. The goals of this program are to:

1. Collect information to accurately evaluate the impact of the Tourism Partners marketing program
2. Provide the regional tourism associations with timely and relevant information to assist their marketing activities.

As part of their marketing activities, the regional tourism associations fulfill travel information requests by mailing packages to consumers. This report is the final quarterly summary of the consumer inquiries collected in 2004 by the regional tourism associations.

The report is based on inquiries from October 1 to December 31, 2004 and presents inquiries by region, method, origin and source.

## 2.0 METHODS

All regions use the procedures outlined in the *Consumer Database Standards Manual* (March 2004) to collect the following information:

- *Inquiry method*: how the inquiry was made (phone, fax, voicemail, email, web, mail, etc.)
- *Contact information*: Name, address, country, postal code
- *Source codes*: what prompted the consumer to make the inquiry (i.e. newspaper, magazine, internet, etc.)
- *Permission*: where possible, consumers are asked for permission to contact them for a follow-up conversion study, which will examine trip characteristics and determine return on investment
- *Phone number*: collected from consumers who give permission for the follow-up research.

The regional inquiry databases are submitted monthly to Tourism BC where they are cleaned and compiled into a master inquiry database. The master database is used to monitor trends in inquiries (by region, by inquiry method, by source of inquiry, etc.) and to provide a foundation for inquiry conversion studies.

### 3.0 QUARTERLY SUMMARY

#### 3.1 Total inquiries

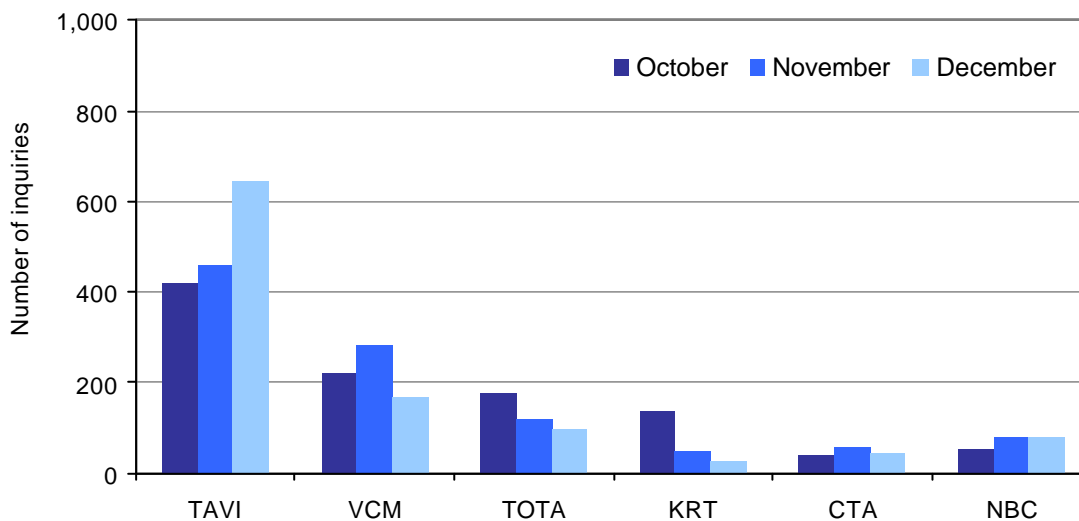
Overall, 3,135 consumer inquiries were recorded by the six regions between October 1 and December 31, 2004. Inquiries were distributed evenly between each of the three months in the reporting period (Table 1).

Table 1. Total inquiries by region and month.

Month	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Overall
October	27%	33%	45%	65%	27%	25%	<b>33%</b>
November	30%	42%	30%	22%	41%	37%	<b>33%</b>
December	42%	25%	25%	13%	32%	38%	<b>34%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,135</b>

Regionally, TAVI accounted for 49% of total inquiries. This continues the trend established in the previous two quarters. VCM accounted for 21% of all inquiries, while TOTA accounted for 12% (Figure 1). TOTA and KRT received the greatest percentage of their regional inquiries during October. Inquiries for VCM and CTA peaked during November, while inquiries for TAVI and NBC were highest in December.

Figure 1. Total inquiries by region and month.



### 3.2 Inquiries by method

Web-based forms on the regional websites again continued to be the most frequently used method of inquiry (76%), followed by email (8%), telephone (5%), and mail (5%) (Table 2). The use of Internet-based methods to contact the region has shown consistent growth over each quarterly reporting period.

Table 2. Total inquiries by method and month.

Method	October	November	December	Overall
Web	74%	80%	74%	<b>76%</b>
Phone	4%	7%	5%	<b>5%</b>
Reply <sup>1</sup>	1%	>1%	>1%	<b>1%</b>
Email	4%	5%	14%	<b>8%</b>
Fax	1%	>1%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Mail	12%	1%	1%	<b>5%</b>
Show			>1%	<b>&gt;1%</b>
Voicemail	4%	5%	3%	<b>4%</b>
Unknown	>1%	>1%	>1%	<b>&gt;1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,037</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>3,135</b>

Similar to the July through September period, web-based forms were again reported as the most frequent method of contact in all regions, with the exception of KRT (Table 3). KRT consumers were more likely to mail the region for additional information. TAVI, VCM, and TOTA reported that more than 70% of consumers used web-based forms, while for CTA and NBC web-forms were used by under 60%. In these two regions, it was more common for consumers to initiate contact by phone or e-mail.

Table 3. Total inquiries by method and region.

Method	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Overall
Web	88%	80%	73%	14%	54%	59%	<b>76%</b>
Phone	5%	2%	1%	7%	9%	23%	<b>5%</b>
Reply	>1%		5%				<b>1%</b>
Email	5%	8%	7%	12%	34%	5%	<b>8%</b>
Fax	>1%	>1%	2%	>1%		11%	<b>1%</b>
Mail	1%	2%	1%	56%		1%	<b>5%</b>
Show		>1%					<b>&gt;1%</b>
Voicemail	1%	8%	12%	9%		1%	<b>4%</b>
Unknown					3%	1%	<b>&gt;1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,135</b>

<sup>1</sup> Reply includes coupons and request cards returned to the regions.

### 3.3 Inquiries by origin

American consumers initiated the greatest percentage of inquiries, and during this reporting period consumers from overseas outnumbered those from Canada (Table 4). Canadian inquiries were highest in December (30%), but this was still lower than monthly totals from American consumers (which ranged between 34% and 40%) and those from overseas (31% to 36%). The majority of overseas consumers were from European nations.

Table 4. Total inquiries by origin and month.

Country	October	November	December	Overall
Canada	28%	29%	30%	<b>29%</b>
United States	40%	34%	39%	<b>38%</b>
Overseas	31%	36%	31%	<b>33%</b>
<i>Europe</i>	25%	28%	25%	<b>26%</b>
<i>Asia/Pacific</i>	4%	6%	5%	<b>5%</b>
<i>Other overseas</i>	2%	2%	1%	<b>2%</b>
Unknown		>1%	>1%	<b>&gt;1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,037</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>3,135</b>

Of all Canadian inquiries, the greatest number was from Ontario, followed closely by BC (Table 5). California, Oregon, and Washington were again the top three US states.

Table 5. Inquiries for Canadian and American consumers by month.

Province / State	October	November	December	Overall
<b>Canada</b>				
British Columbia	40%	28%	26%	<b>31%</b>
Alberta	14%	16%	15%	<b>15%</b>
Ontario	26%	37%	33%	<b>32%</b>
Other Canada	20%	19%	26%	<b>22%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>916</b>
<b>United States</b>				
California	11%	15%	14%	<b>13%</b>
Oregon	25%	6%	4%	<b>12%</b>
Washington	8%	10%	7%	<b>8%</b>
Texas	4%	8%	13%	<b>8%</b>
Florida	5%	5%	5%	<b>5%</b>
Illinois	4%	4%	3%	<b>4%</b>
New York	2%	5%	3%	<b>3%</b>
Colorado	3%	3%	3%	<b>3%</b>
Wisconsin	3%	2%	3%	<b>3%</b>
Minnesota	1%	2%	5%	<b>3%</b>
Other US	33%	41%	40%	<b>38%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>1,185</b>

There was considerable variation in the origin of inquiries across the regions (Table 6). TOTA, CTA and NBC had the highest percentage of inquiries from Canadian consumers (47% to 52%), while KRT and TAVI received the greatest percentage of inquiries from Americans (75% and 43%, respectively). VCM reported the largest percentage of overseas inquiries (59%).

Table 6. Total inquiries by origin and region.

Country	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Overall
Canada	27%	16%	52%	16%	47%	47%	<b>29%</b>
United States	43%	25%	24%	75%	31%	33%	<b>38%</b>
Overseas	30%	59%	23%	9%	22%	21%	<b>33%</b>
<i>Europe</i>	21%	52%	18%	8%	19%	17%	<b>26%</b>
<i>Asia/Pacific</i>	7%	5%	4%	>1%	2%	2%	<b>5%</b>
<i>Other overseas</i>	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	<b>2%</b>
Unknown			1%				<b>&gt;1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,135</b>

The origin of Canadian consumers varied markedly by region (Table 7). TAVI, VCM, and KRT reported higher numbers for consumers from Ontario, while TOTA, CTA, and NBC reported that the greatest number of Canadian inquiries were from British Columbians. Among American consumers there was regional representation from across the United States. The notable exception to this was records from KRT, which indicated that 61% of American consumers were from Oregon.

Table 7. Inquiries for Canadian and American consumers by region.

Province / State	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Overall
<b>Canada</b>							
British Columbia	22%	24%	42%	21%	52%	41%	<b>31%</b>
Alberta	15%	10%	19%	18%	15%	12%	<b>15%</b>
Ontario	37%	44%	21%	36%	19%	29%	<b>32%</b>
Other Canada	26%	22%	18%	24%	13%	18%	<b>22%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>916</b>
<b>United States</b>							
California	15%	12%	18%	4%	11%	15%	<b>13%</b>
Oregon	5%	1%	7%	61%	5%	4%	<b>12%</b>
Washington	6%	9%	13%	11%	16%	7%	<b>8%</b>
Texas	11%	7%	3%	2%		9%	<b>8%</b>
Florida	6%	9%	3%	1%	2%	1%	<b>5%</b>
Illinois	4%	5%	1%	1%	2%	3%	<b>4%</b>
New York	4%	4%	4%	1%	2%	1%	<b>3%</b>
Colorado	3%	3%	4%	2%	5%	1%	<b>3%</b>
Wisconsin	3%	3%	2%	1%	7%	6%	<b>3%</b>
Minnesota	3%	3%	5%	1%		6%	<b>3%</b>
Other US	39%	45%	38%	16%	50%	46%	<b>38%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>1,185</b>

### 3.4 Inquiries by source

Consumers inquiring at regional tourism offices were asked what prompted them to make their inquiry.<sup>2</sup> Overall, Tourism BC was again the most frequent source of inquiry, followed by Internet sources and tourism associations. Source was unknown for 13% of all inquiries (Table 8).

Table 8. Total inquiries by major source and month.

Major source	October	November	December	Overall
Tourism BC	26%	29%	33%	<b>29%</b>
Tourism Association	11%	13%	15%	<b>13%</b>
Other Internet	22%	25%	20%	<b>22%</b>
Newspaper	13%	2%	1%	<b>5%</b>
Consumer Show	>1%	>1%	1%	<b>&gt;1%</b>
Magazine	4%	4%	4%	<b>4%</b>
Guide	1%	2%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Referral	6%	6%	12%	<b>8%</b>
Past Visit	1%	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
Other	2%	1%	3%	<b>2%</b>
Unknown	15%	16%	8%	<b>13%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>1,037</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>3,135</b>

Tourism BC was the most frequently cited source of information for consumers in TAVI and NBC, while consumers mentioned other Internet sites most often in VCM, and newspapers most often in KRT. Fifty-three percent of all inquiries were missing information on major source code from TOTA and CTA (Table 9).

Table 9. Total inquiries by major source code and region.

Major source	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Overall
Tourism BC	39%	22%	9%	12%	22%	43%	<b>29%</b>
Tourism Association	20%	9%	1%	5%	3%	17%	<b>13%</b>
Other Internet	17%	47%	19%	6%	8%	17%	<b>22%</b>
Newspaper	1%	3%	1%	58%			<b>5%</b>
Consumer Show	>1%	>1%					<b>&gt;1%</b>
Magazine	4%	2%	9%	1%	6%	7%	<b>4%</b>
Guide	2%	1%	>1%	1%	1%	1%	<b>1%</b>
Referral	13%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	<b>8%</b>
Past Visit		1%	1%	1%	3%	3%	<b>1%</b>
Other	3%	1%	4%	>1%	3%	>1%	<b>2%</b>
Unknown	2%	9%	53%	12%	53%	8%	<b>13%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>3,135</b>

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the *Consumer Database Standards Manual* for more detail on source codes.

Table 10. Inquiries by source (level 2) by region.<sup>3</sup>

Secondary source	TAVI	VCM	TOTA	KRT	CTA	NBC	Total	% of Inquiries
Tourism BC website	417	101	16		13	51	<b>598</b>	<b>19%</b>
Search engine	198	295		5	6	27	<b>531</b>	<b>17%</b>
From a friend or relative	144	13		3	2	5	<b>167</b>	<b>5%</b>
VCM publication	142	18				1	<b>161</b>	<b>5%</b>
BC Vacation Planner	97	27	3		2	15	<b>144</b>	<b>5%</b>
Oregonian	1			115			<b>116</b>	<b>4%</b>
Tourism BC call centre	15	16	8	23	11	11	<b>84</b>	<b>3%</b>
Link from another site	59	6			3	8	<b>76</b>	<b>2%</b>
Other Internet - other / not specified			75				<b>75</b>	<b>2%</b>
TAVI publication	70						<b>70</b>	<b>2%</b>
TAVI website	35	28					<b>63</b>	<b>2%</b>
Referral - other / not specified	25	9	15	1	1	1	<b>52</b>	<b>2%</b>
BC Accommodations Guide	41	2			1	7	<b>51</b>	<b>2%</b>
Local tourism association or chamber of commerce	12	1	2	2		24	<b>41</b>	<b>1%</b>
Magazine - other / not specified			33	1	3		<b>37</b>	<b>1%</b>
BC Outdoor Adventure Guide	19	3	3	1	3	6	<b>35</b>	<b>1%</b>
TV/Radio	27	4		1	3		<b>35</b>	<b>1%</b>
Canadian Geographic	26						<b>26</b>	<b>1%</b>
From a travel or tourism business	18	3		2		1	<b>24</b>	<b>1%</b>
Past visit		9	2	2	4	6	<b>23</b>	<b>1%</b>
Newspaper - other / not specified		19	3				<b>22</b>	<b>1%</b>
www.travel.bc.ca		13		7	2		<b>22</b>	<b>1%</b>
Other guide or book	18	2			1		<b>21</b>	<b>1%</b>
Other tourism association	12	5		1		2	<b>20</b>	<b>1%</b>
Other - not specified		1	16				<b>17</b>	<b>1%</b>
VCM website	7	9					<b>16</b>	<b>1%</b>
Unknown	30	58	204	26	76	17	<b>411</b>	<b>13%</b>

<sup>3</sup> For source (level 2) codes that received 1% or more of total inquiries.

### 3.5 Permission rates

New privacy legislation was introduced in BC on January 1, 2004. According to the new laws, consumers must give their permission to be re-contacted for research purposes. During an inquiry, consumers are asked for permission to contact them for a follow-up conversion study. For some inquiries (received by mail, email, fax or voicemail) it was difficult or not possible to ask permission, and “no response” was recorded in the database.

Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13 present the permission responses by month, method of inquiry and by region. Overall, 27% of consumers gave explicit permission to be re-contacted in this reporting period. This is very similar to the 28% recorded in the previous quarter.

Table 11. Permission response by month.

Month	Yes	No response	No	Total
October	25%	25%	50%	1,041
November	30%	16%	55%	1,037
December	27%	16%	57%	1,057
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>3,135</b>

Table 12. Permission response by region.

Region	Yes	No response	No	Total
TAVI	34%	6%	60%	1,521
VCM	18%	24%	58%	667
TOTA	34%	32%	34%	387
KRT	6%	80%	14%	209
CTA	31%	24%	44%	143
NBC	16%	4%	80%	208
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>3,135</b>

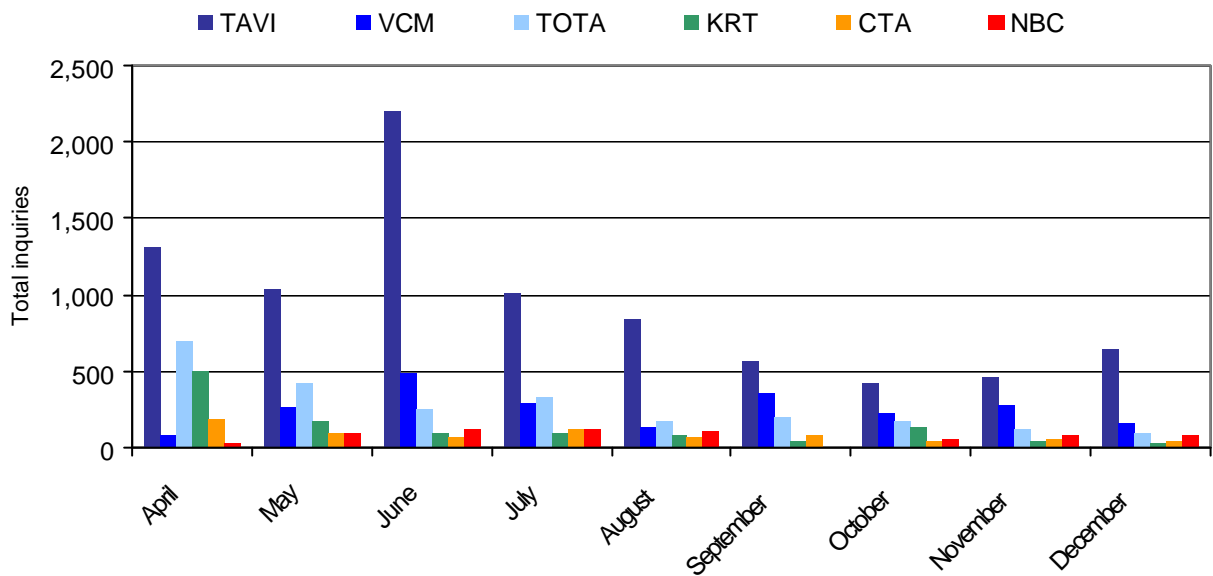
Table 13. Permission response by method.

Method	Yes	No response	No	Total
Web	31%	4%	65%	2,387
Phone	48%	14%	38%	162
Reply	13%	83%	4%	23
Email	8%	75%	17%	242
Fax		36%	64%	36
Mail		95%	5%	145
Show		100%		2
Voicemail	5%	94%	1%	131
Unknown	14%	43%	43%	7
<b>Overall</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>3,135</b>

#### 4.0 YEAR TO DATE TRENDS

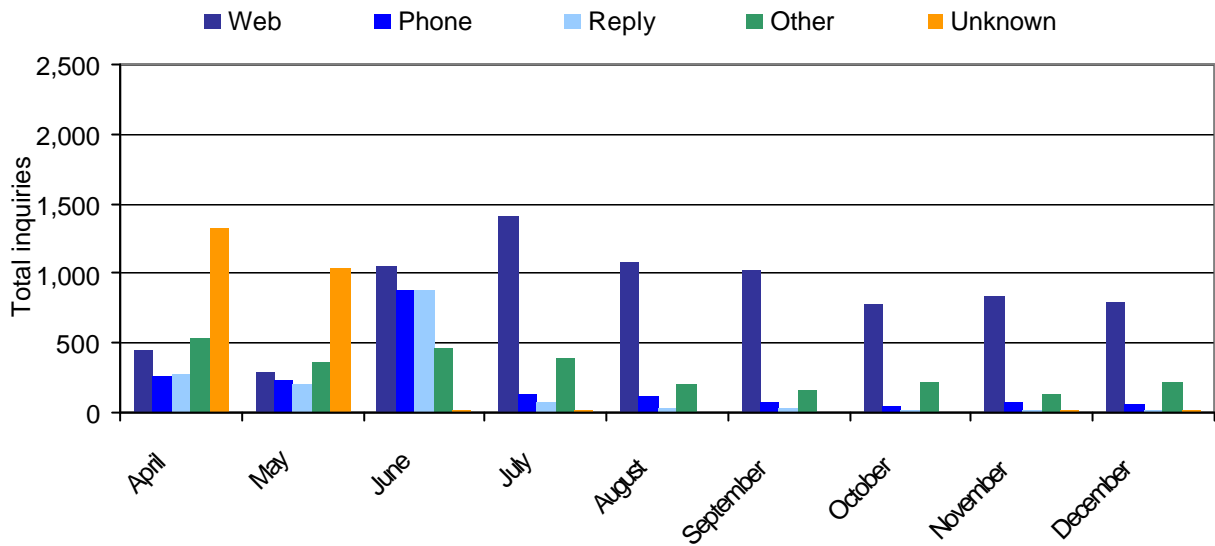
In total, 15,946 inquiries were recorded from all six regions between April 1 and December 31, 2004 (Figure 2). Overall, 53% of these inquiries were recorded by TAVI. TOTA reported the second highest number with 16% of all inquiries. The greatest number of consumers made inquiries during June, with 20% of all inquiries occurring in this month.

Figure 2. Total inquiries by region (April to December 2004).



Overall, 48% of all consumers contacted the regions via their web-based forms (Figure 3). This method of inquiry showed an increase during the final two quarters, as compared to the April to June quarter. Those methods classified as other methods (including email, voicemail, fax, mail, and consumer shows) represented 16% of all consumer inquiries by year-end.

Figure 3. Total inquiries by method (April to December 2004).



Inquiries from American consumers were recorded most often in all months except April and November (Figure 4). However, as seen in the quarterly reports the origin of the consumers varies considerably by region.

Figure 4. Total inquiries by origin (April to December 2004).

