



# **AVN Adult Entertainment Expo 2009**

## **Assessment Report**

### **Summary of Results**

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Daniel Sahl, Dr. Barb Brents, & Crystal Jackson  
Department of Sociology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

## INTRODUCTION

Every January, AVN Magazine sponsors the *Adult Entertainment Expo* in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 2009, the tradeshow took place January 8th-January 11th at the Sands Expo Center on the Las Vegas Strip. This report reflects the second collaboration between researchers in the Department of Sociology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the annual *AEE* event. The goal of this study was to collect data on a range of issues from both trade and fan participants related to their experiences attending *AEE*, their experiences in Las Vegas, and their attitudes about the sexual entertainment industry. The 2009 report confirms the preliminary findings from the 2008 report and builds on it with new insights.

In 2008, our first round of data collection, we collected approximately 165 surveys from both fans and some trade attending the *AEE* convention. Although the data collected from this suggested interesting trends about *AEE*'s fans, their experience at the expo and their attitudes towards Las Vegas and sexual entertainment, we felt that the survey instrument needed to be refined and expanded, and that we needed to capture a greater number of fans and trade attendees.

In 2009 we made two major changes. First, we redesigned our survey. The survey included better measures of tourism, social activities, and sexuality. Second, we altered our approach to collecting data in order to increase the number of participants for both trade and fans. Our new sampling approach used both paper surveys administered to fans waiting in line at *AEE* as well as a web-based survey that was sent via e-mail to all attendees (trade and fans). This new approach to sampling was very successful and has resulted in a much larger sample size for 2009. In total, we have 685 completed surveys: 482 from fans and 203 from trade. We feel that this sample size is large enough to fairly represent the attitudes of attendees at *AEE*. Therefore, we are confident that the following information is representative of *AEE* attendees in general.

This report is divided into four sections. **Section One** displays the demographic information for fans and trade attendees separately. **Section Two** looks at the financial impact of *AEE* on the Las Vegas tourist industry. Trade attendees answered questions regarding sales and business; these are summarized in **Section Three**. People in the trade took particular steps to weather the recession, including expanding services online. **Section Four** looks at fans sexual entertainment interests, how they access adult entertainment at home, and their attitudes about sharing adult entertainment with a partner.

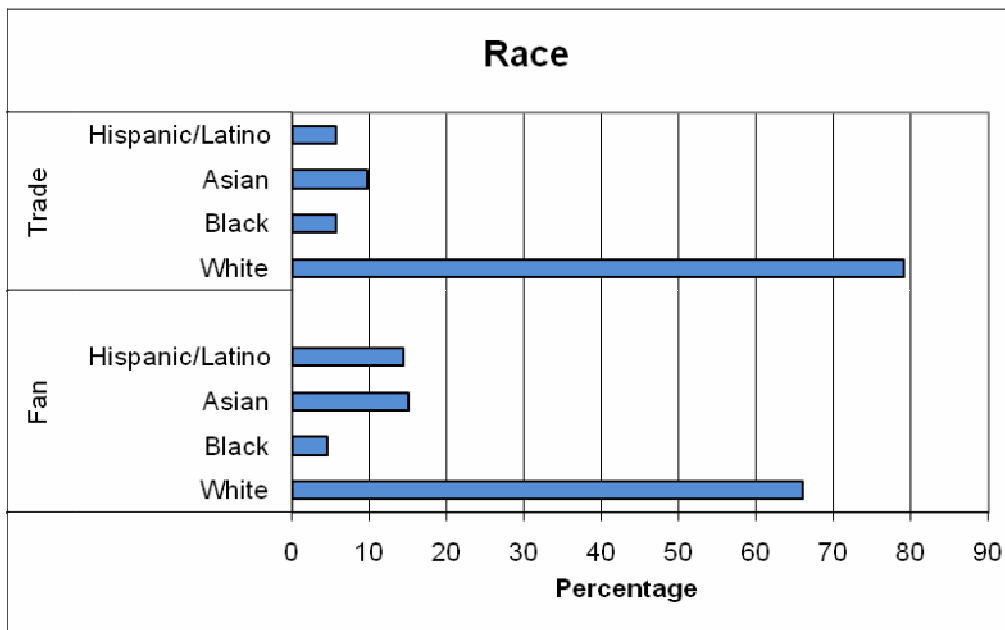
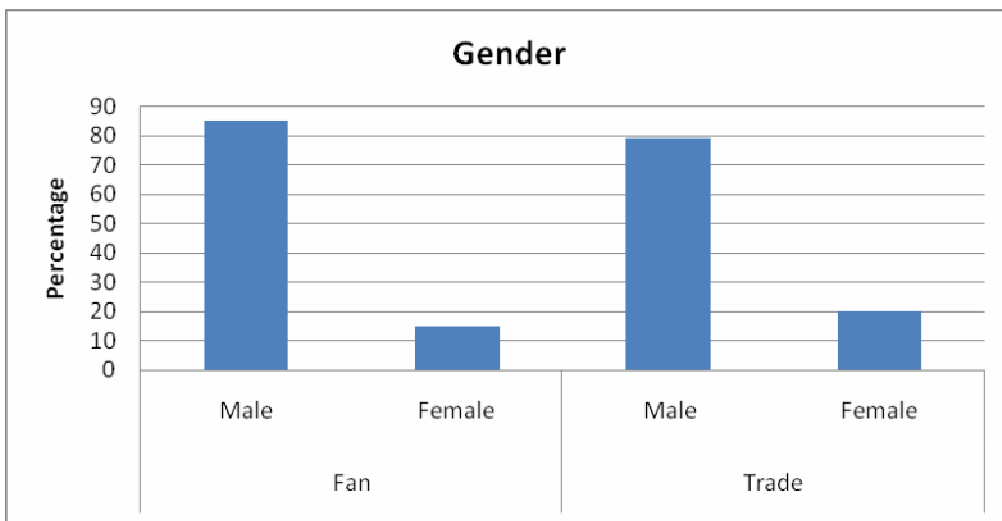
Taken altogether, the picture of the average porn fan/consumer begins to emerge: that of a straight, white man who is comfortable with his consumption of porn and with sharing porn with a partner. Fans and trade alike are contributing to the Las Vegas economy purchasing both sexual and non-sexual services and entertainment.

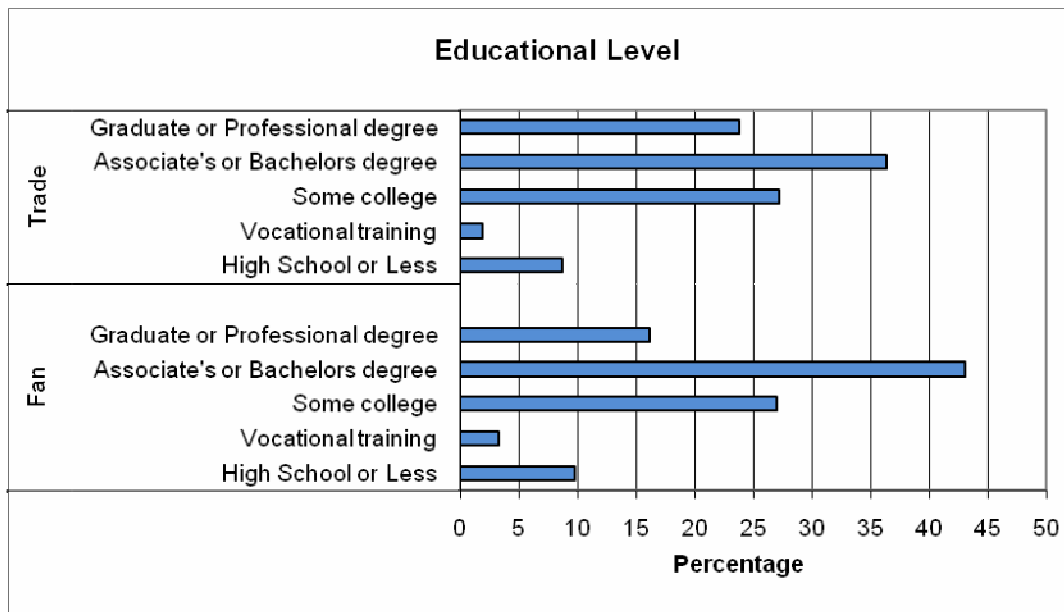
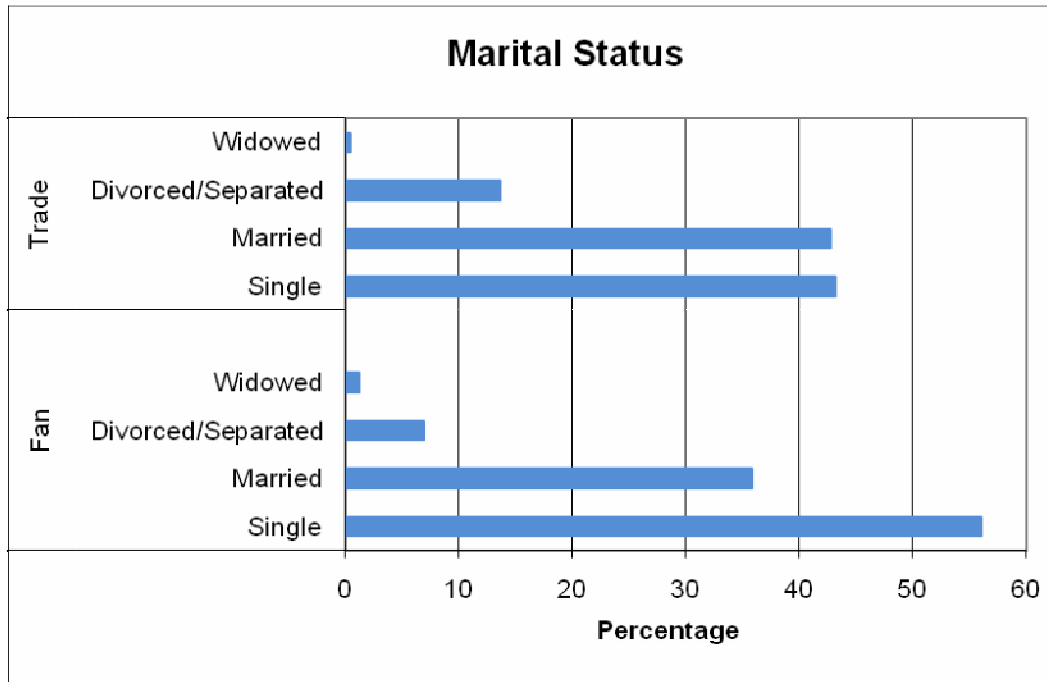
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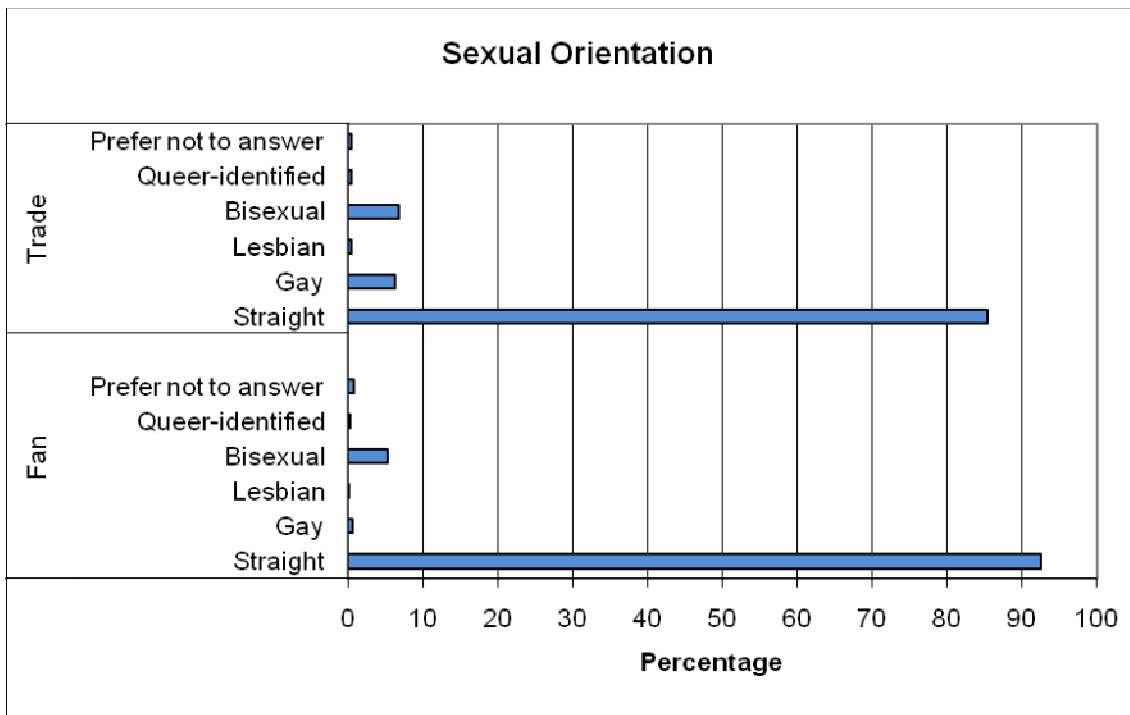
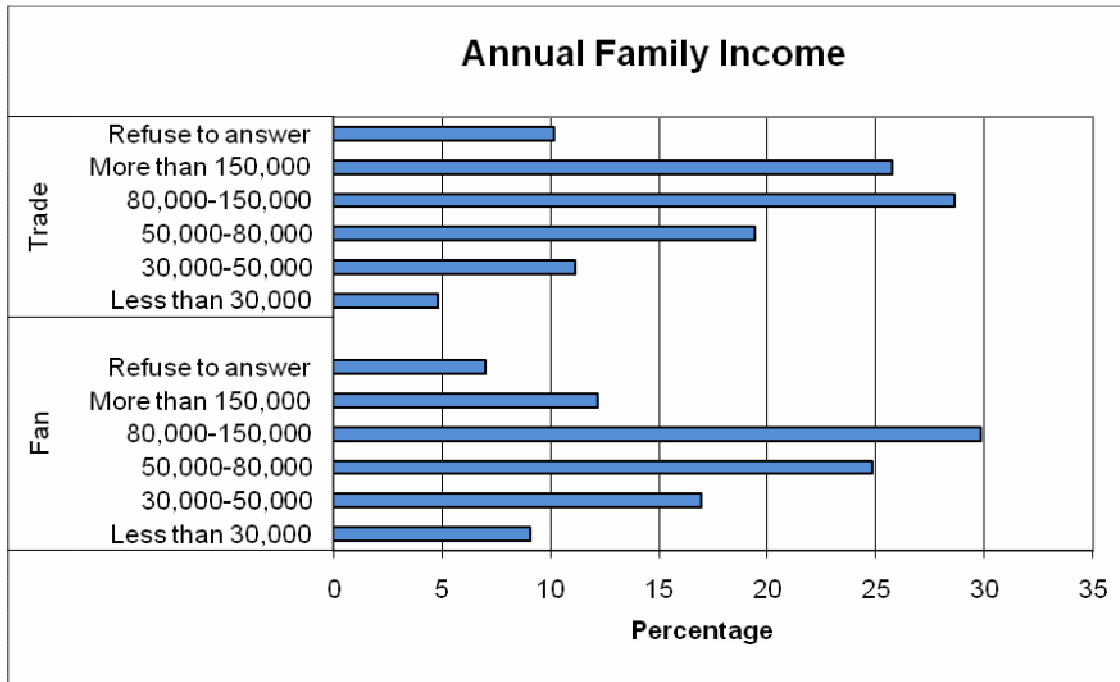
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## SECTION ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This section looks at the demographic makeup of *AEE* attendees. The following graphs detail the gender, race, marital status, education, income, and sexual orientation of our sample. In presenting our data, we have chosen to display fans and trade separately. The data reveals several interesting trends. Attendees to *AEE* are mostly male, white, and heterosexual. However, there is some diversity in these indicators. Also, it appears that attendees have a relatively high level of education: 59% of fans and 60% of trade have at least a college degree or higher. In addition, *AEE* attracts people who earn considerably more than the median family income (nationally, the median family income is roughly \$50,000/year). Over 42% of fans and 54% of trade reported an annual family income of at least \$80,000 or greater.

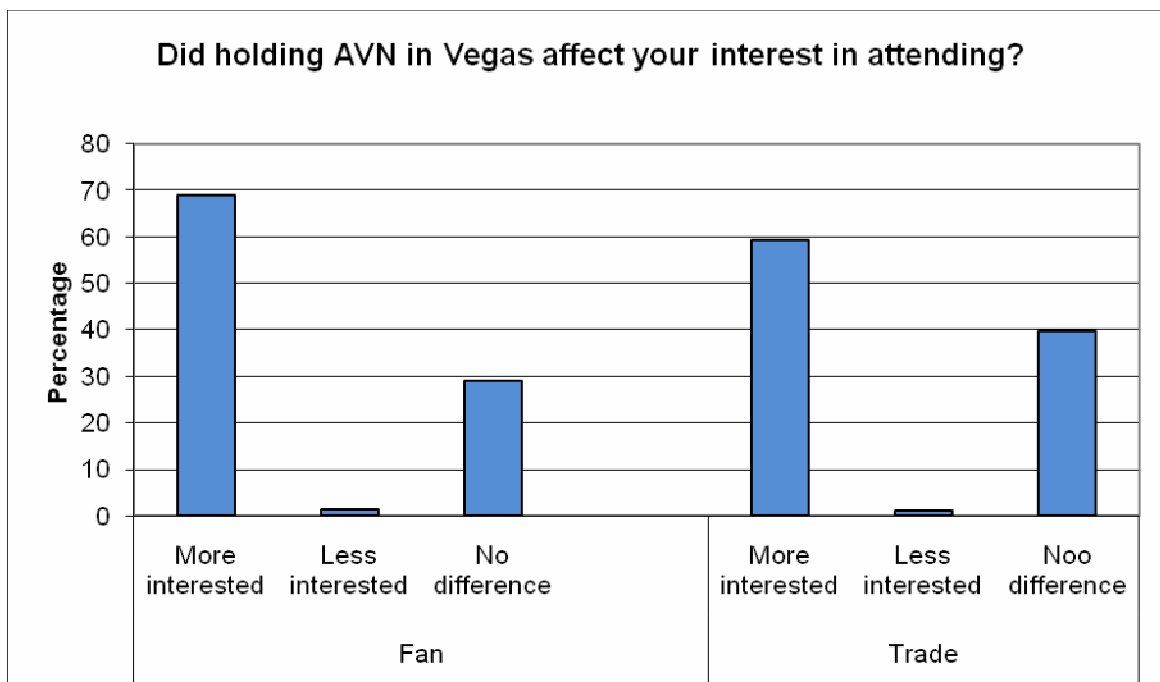




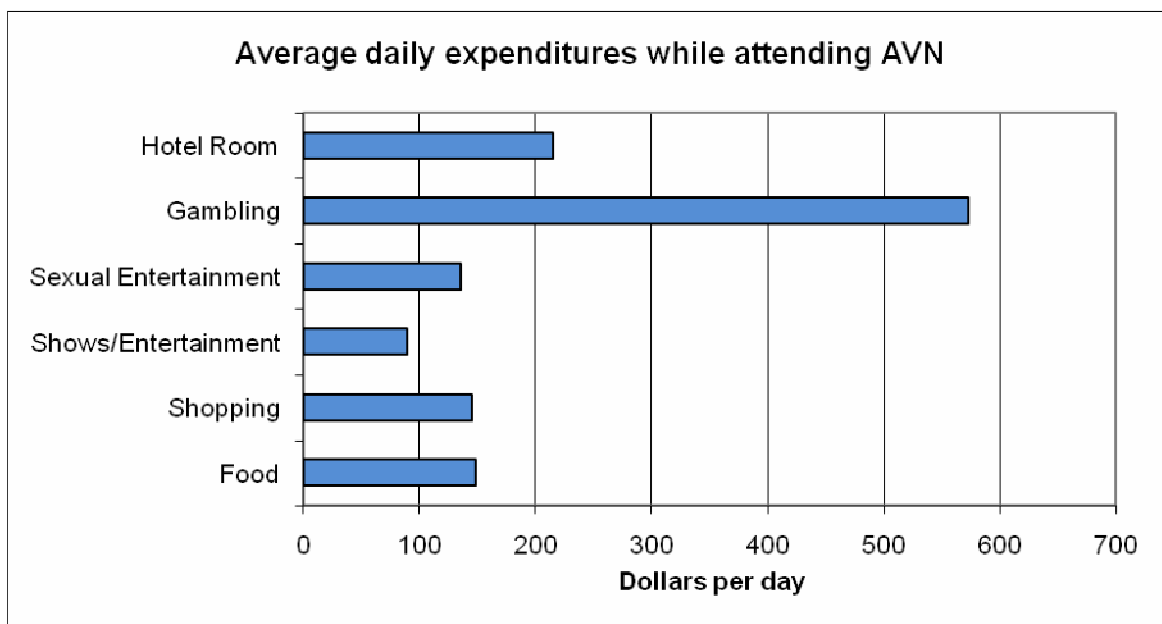


## SECTION TWO: IMPACT ON LAS VEGAS TOURISM

Las Vegas holds hundreds of conventions of varying sizes each year. The large supply of hotels, convention facilities, entertainment opportunities and the accommodating culture of Las Vegas make it a perfect fit for many industry meetings and shows. *AEE* is a large convention that generates interest and notoriety in Las Vegas. Those who attend *AEE* as either fan or trade appear to appreciate Las Vegas as a venue. Almost 70% of fans and 60% of trade indicated that holding *AEE* in Las Vegas increased their interest in attending. Less 2% of both fan and trade indicated that the location for the convention decreased their interest.



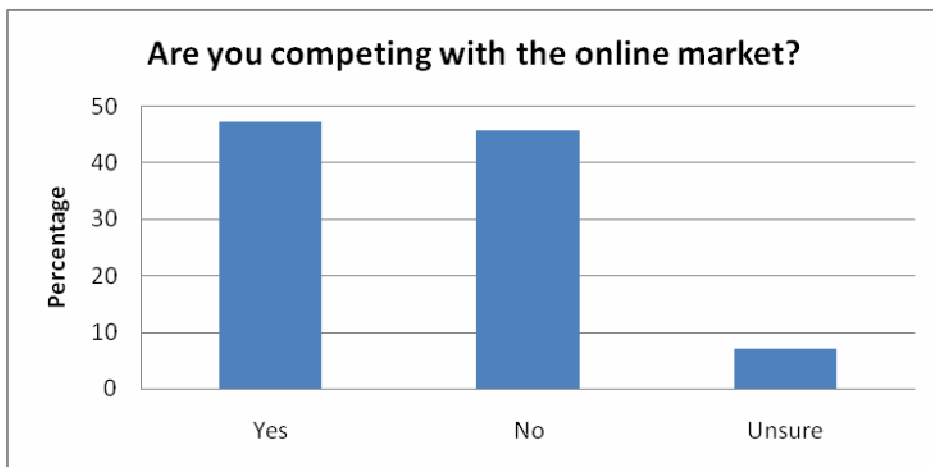
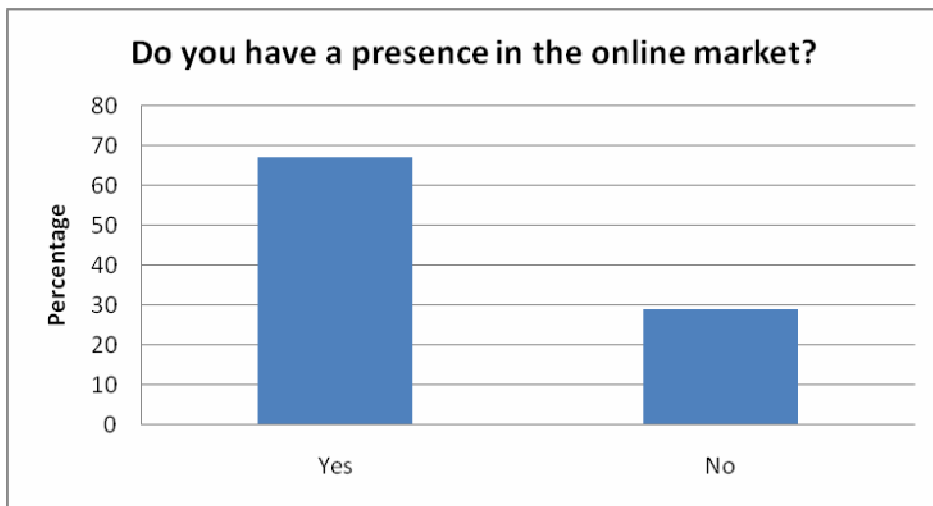
Does this interest in Las Vegas translate into dollars spent? The following table displays the estimated average spent each day by survey participants on various expenditures (while in town for the expo). It appears that Las Vegas (and by extension, Nevada) benefit from hosting the expo. The high incomes of *AEE* attendees are reflected in the high averages spent per day on such things as food, entertainment, and lodging. It should be noted that the daily mean average for gambling is quite high as a result of a handful of respondents who reported a daily gambling budget of \$10,000 or more. The median for gambling, which may be more reflective of what most attendees spend, is \$100. (The “median” refers to the exact mid-point, meaning that half of the attendees spent at or under \$100, and half spent over \$100.)

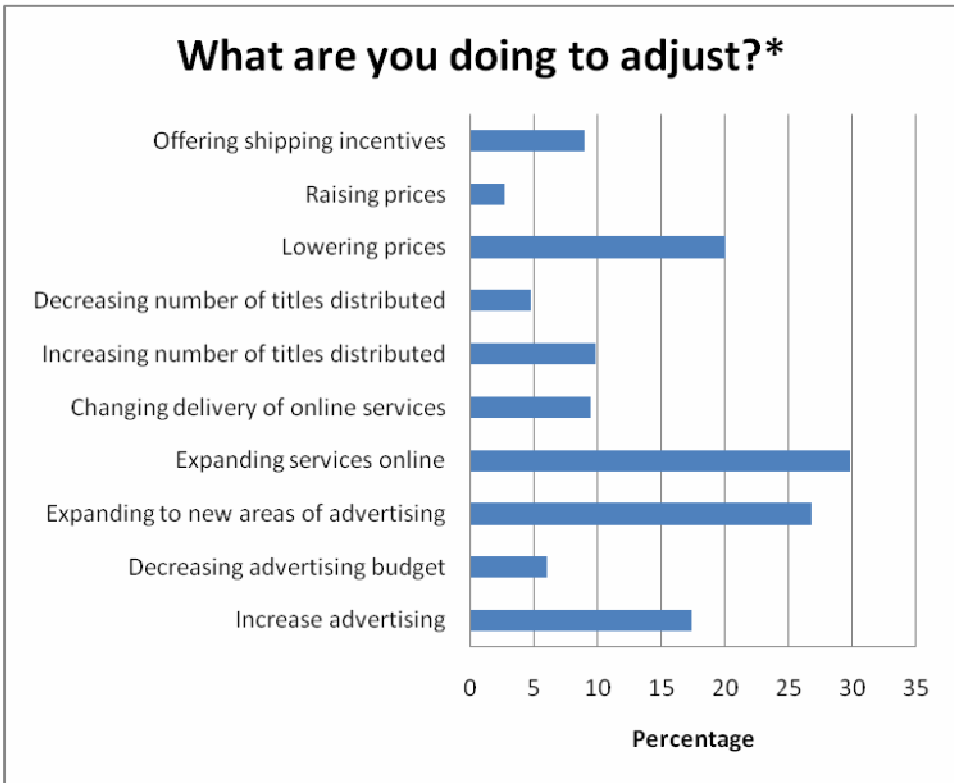
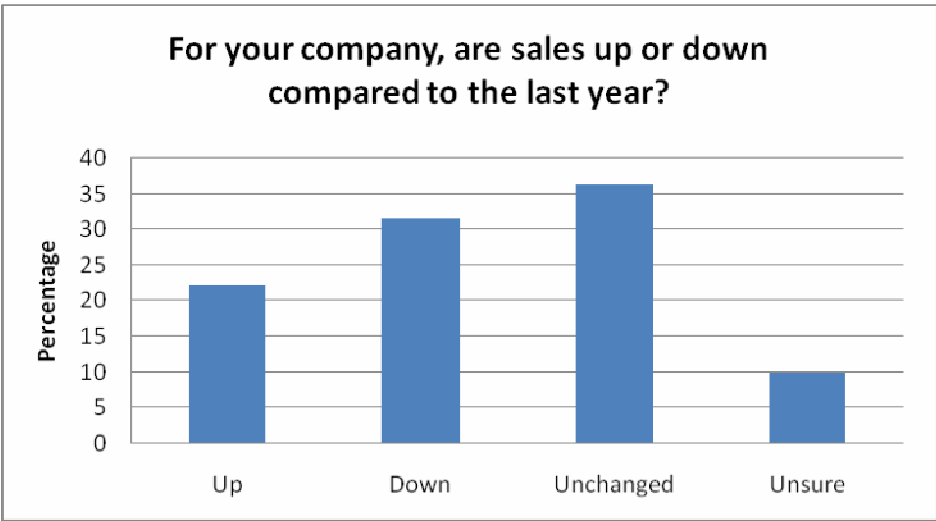




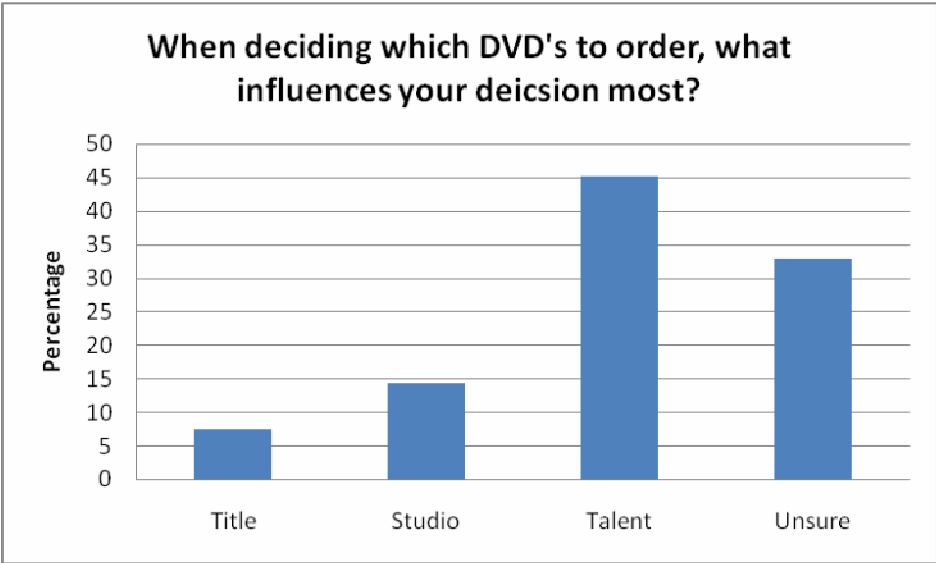
### SECTION THREE: TRADE BUSINESS PRACTICES

One section of the survey was given to trade attendees only. We wanted to assess the business practices of people who work behind the scenes in the porn industry. We were also interested in measuring the effect of the recession on their sales and what steps they were taking to address the changing marketplace. About 67% of respondents indicated that at least part of their business has an online component. Thirty-two percent of the sample reported sales were down for the 2008 business year; only 22% indicated sales were up. Although the data collected is limited in its level of detail, it suggests that 2008 was a difficult year for many vendors and distributors. When asked what steps they were taking to address the recession, 20% indicated they were lowering their prices, 30% indicated they were expanding their online services, and 27% indicated they were expanding the venues in which they advertised.





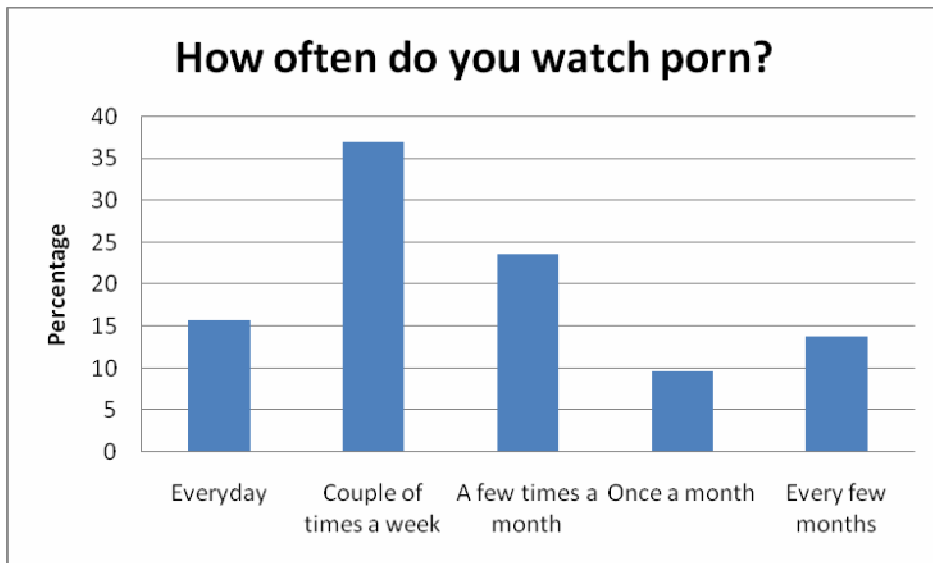
\*note: respondents were allowed to select all categories that applied

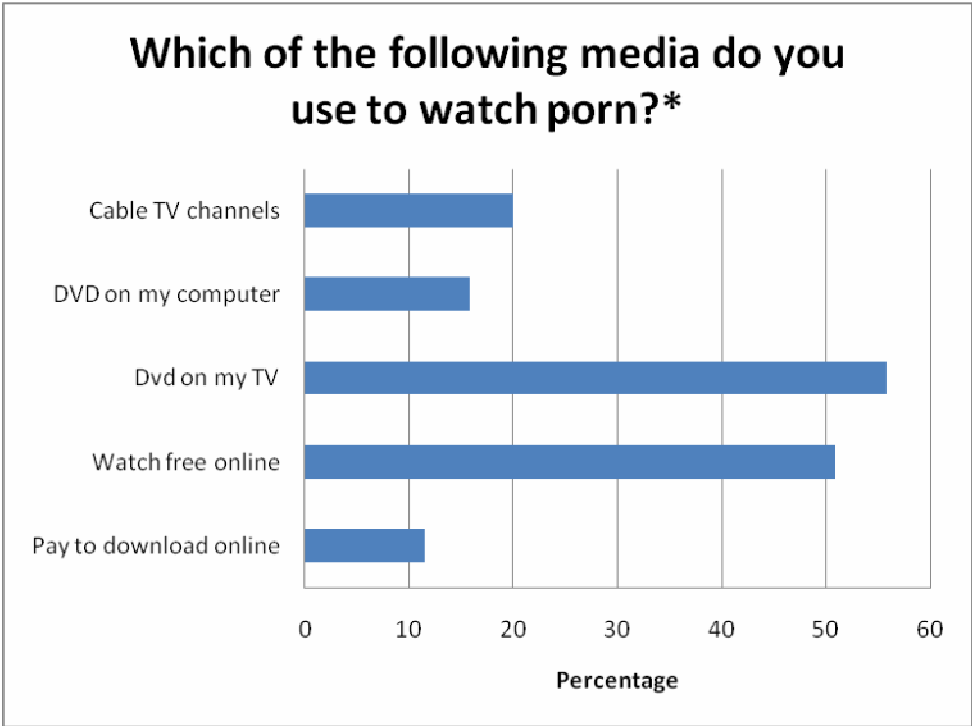


## SECTION FOUR: FANS CONSUMPTION OF, AND BELIEFS ABOUT, PORN

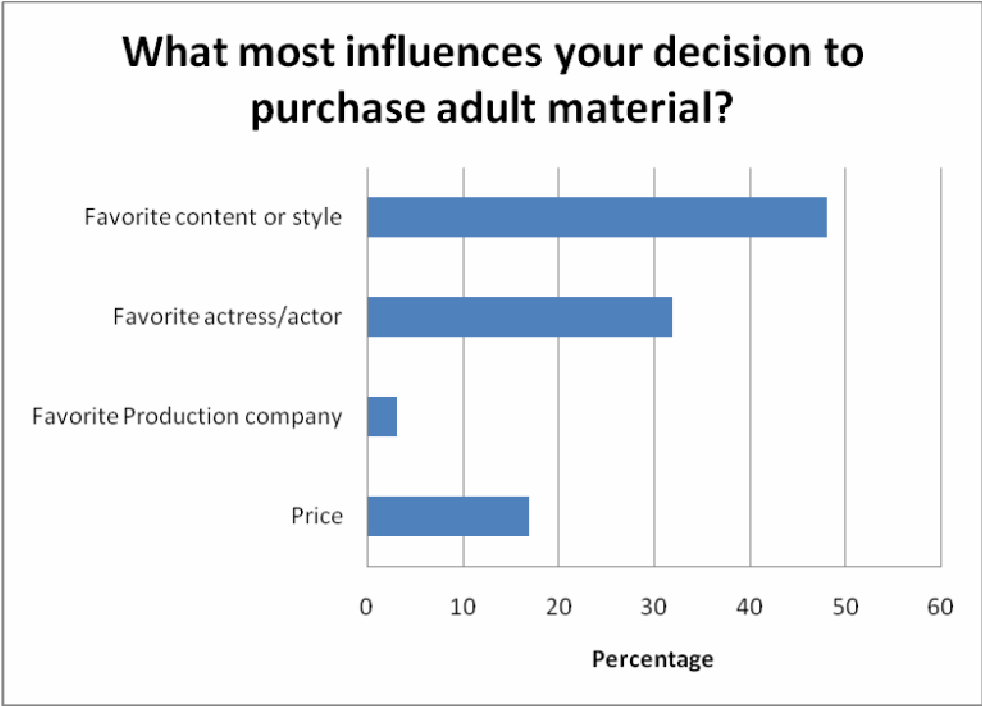
The final section of this report focuses on the part of the survey that was given to fans only. This section is interested in how fans consume porn, and how they feel about relationships and porn.

We asked several questions related to how often, and in what format, fans viewed porn. Of particular interest is the diversity of media used by respondents to enjoy adult entertainment, and the importance fans placed on talent when choosing a DVD.

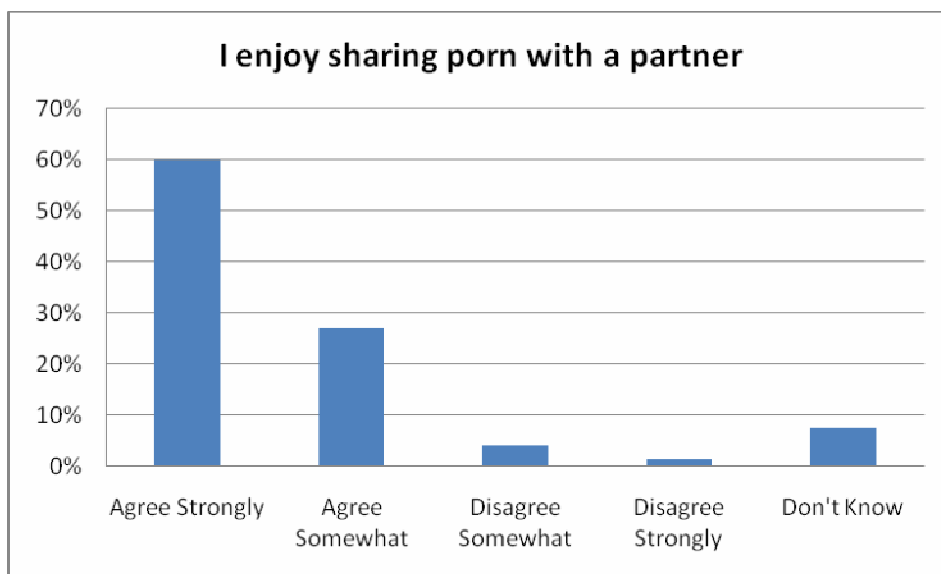
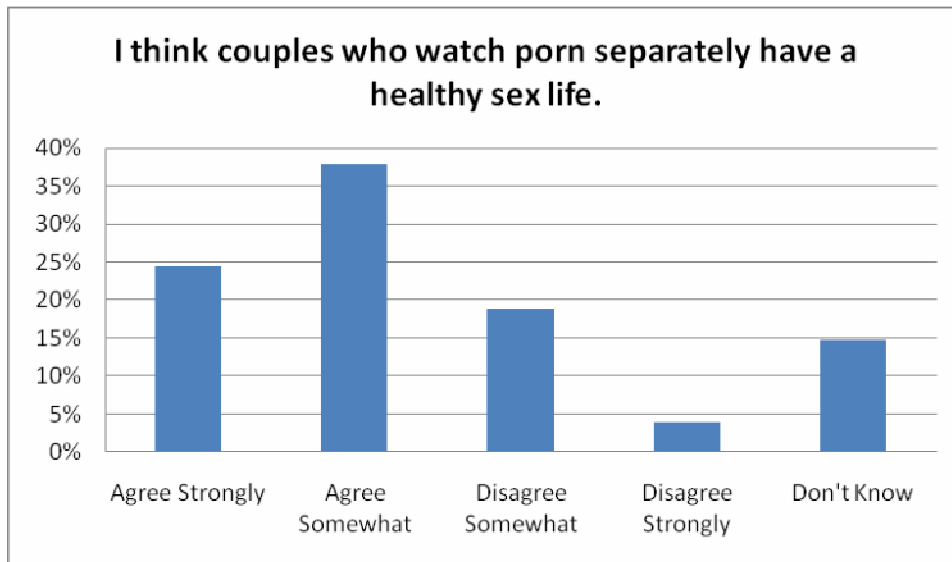


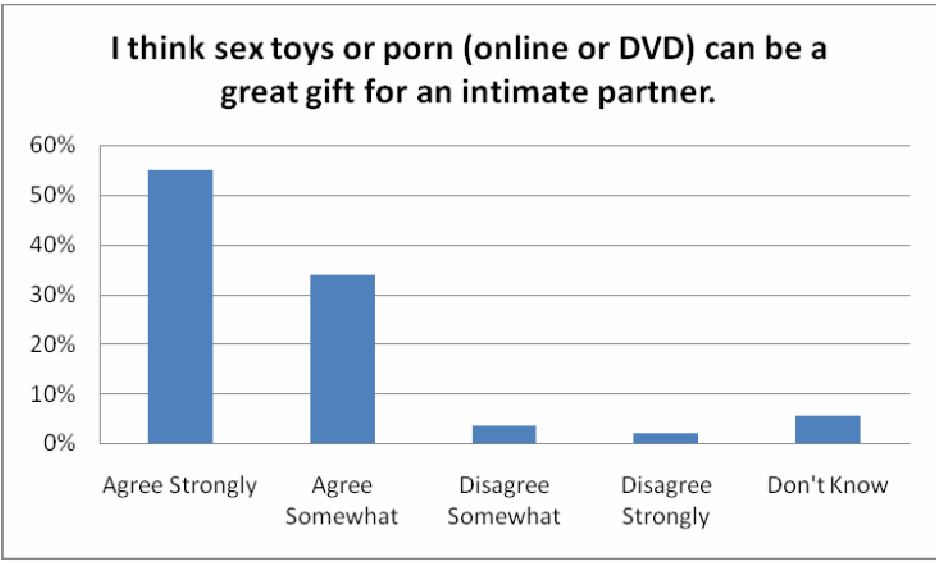
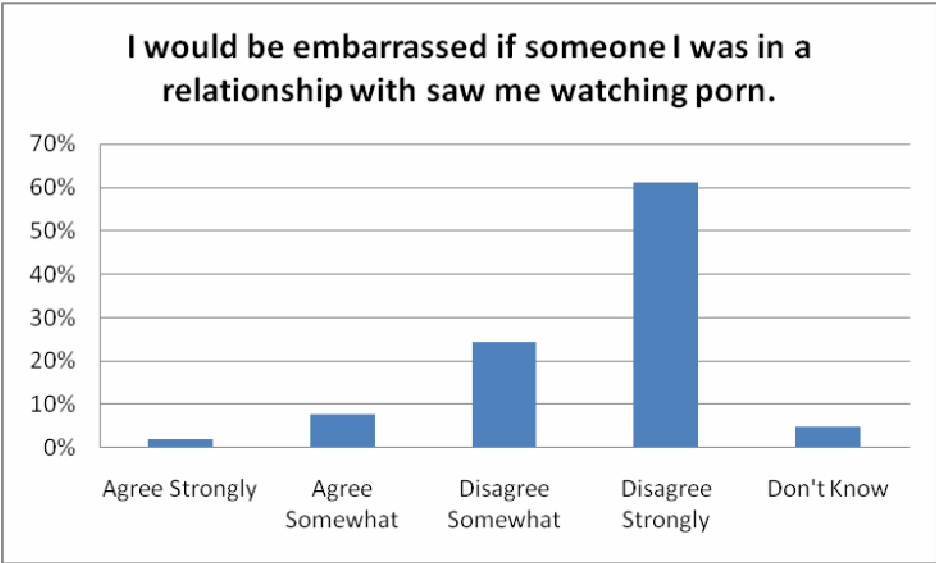


\*note: respondents could select more than 1 option



We also asked a series of questions designed to measure how comfortable each respondent felt sharing porn and sex toys with a partner. It is very telling that the vast majority of the fans seem to be very comfortable with porn on an individual level and as something to be shared with a partner.





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#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Department of Sociology - UNLV, extend many thanks to Monty McMahon, former publisher, *AVN Online*, and to the Adult Entertainment Expo organizers and crew for their collaboration and cooperation in this project. Thank you to Babeland for providing an online discount coupon code as an incentive for people to fill out a survey. We would also like to thank the Sin City Chamber of Commerce for their continued interest in adult industry research.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Daniel Sahl, M.A., and Crystal Jackson, M.A., are Ph.D. students in the Department of Sociology, UNLV. Sahl recently published a co-authored article on people's perceptions of statutory rape in *Sex Roles*, an academic journal. Dr. Barbara Brents is an Associate Professor of Sociology, UNLV. Brents & Jackson, along with Kathryn Hausbeck, recently published *The State of Sex: Tourism, Sex, and Sin in the New American Heartland* (Routledge, 2010).

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