

TOUR & TRAVEL DEPARTMENT

JUNE 2000 REPORT

Prepared by: Nancy Foster
Director - Tour & Travel

TRADE SHOWS/SALES TRIPS

Mark Travel – Milwaukee

June 5 – 7, 2000

Conducted all-day in-house training sessions for Funjet primary agents, along with 4 of our area suppliers, The Don CeSar Beach Resort & Spa, Sheraton Sand Key, Bilmar Beach Resort and the TradeWinds Island Resorts. Funjet Vacations, a division of the Mark Travel Corporation, is one of the largest tour operators in the United States.

Hosted a travel agent dinner function while in Milwaukee. Highlights included:

- Over 25 agents attended the evening function. All of the agents were extremely enthusiastic in our destination.
- Agents were educated on our new “Travel Agent Specialist Program”. The agents felt that referral was the best form of incentive for becoming a “specialist” for our area.
- All of the agents commented that we were the first individual destination to host a function in their area. (The state of Hawaii, in its entirety, puts on a tradeshow every couple of years.)

Overall response from our participants was positive. Milwaukee is a continually growing market for us, with an increase in business being noticed each year by area hoteliers.

Staffed by: Linda Lewis

Kingdom Tours/USAirways Vacations Blitz-Philadelphia/Plains, PA

June 14-16, 2000

Interesting dinner held for travel trade in Philadelphia. Fortunately for us, two of our suppliers went up early in the a.m. and the USAirways Vacations rep was based there, because the other three of us planning to attend had a 9 hour flight delay due to weather conditions and missed our own party! However, we had excellent reviews and our thanks go to Missy Pike of the Fl. Intl. Museum for a fine job of filling in, and close to 30 of the top USAirways Vacations agents learned a lot about Florida's Beach.

Over 30 sales calls were made the following day to Philadelphia area agents. Good response.

Also drove two hours north to Plains, Pa. Training there for 35 of their res. staff. Had a meeting with their Florida Product Manager and Marketing Manager on co-operative opportunities. Productive week.

Staffed by: Nancy Foster

I-75 Welcome Center**June 19, 2000**

Three of our area suppliers, the Holiday Inn Sunspree in Clearwater, the Four Points Sheraton in Tarpon Springs and the TradeWinds Resorts joined us as we made our annual visit to the I-75 Welcome Center.

- An estimated 150 vacationers received destination information. Approximately 80% were planning a 2-center holiday, with 30% planning on the Orlando and St. Petersburg/Clearwater area.
- 75% of those travelling were coming from the Midwest, primarily Ohio and Michigan.
- 100% of people questioned indicated no changes in their travel plans due to rising gasoline costs.
- A "Florida's Beach" clock is now hanging in the Welcome Center to further promote the area.
- Plans are currently being made for a Welcome Center training trip, later this summer.

Staffed by: Linda Lewis

I-95 Welcome Center**June 20, 2000**

The annual visit by the Tour & Travel Department to the I-95 Welcome Center was successful. Record numbers of visitors stopping at I-95 have been recorded. For example:

- March 2000-100,562, a 27.3% increase over March 1999
- April 2000-91, 810, a 31.4% increase over April 1999

Other Facts:

- Many of the visitors that we spoke with were interested in a two center holiday in conjunction with Orlando
- The center now has a Florida's Beach clock displayed
- A number of the employees that we spoke with are part of the training trip being readied for August

Staffed by: Cham Bowers

Vacations by Globetrotters Annual Picnic**June 22, 2000**

This was the first time we participated in this annual event sponsored by Vacations by Globetrotters. Also attending from our area was the Sheraton Sand Key.

- Approximately 500 travel agents attended, receiving updated collateral information on the area, some driving over 2-½ hours from as far away as Wisconsin.
- Globetrotters is enjoying a 50% increase in product over last year and the exciting news for our area is that our figures are up 79%
- Over 70 suppliers attended, with Florida representation including the Ft. Lauderdale CVB, Miami CVB, Universal and Disney World.
- Sales calls were made to 6 travel agencies, including a visit to GoGo Tours, another major wholesaler with a field office in the Chicago area.
- Arrangements were made to send area brochures to be distributed at the Travel and Tourism Day in DuPage County trade show.

Staffed by: Linda Lewis

New Brunswick-Prince Edward Island functions**June-26-28, 2000**

Centered on a training trip to our call center, Kimberly Hartley-McMurray and Nancy Foster hosted two travel agent functions.

- 21 agents in Moncton, New Brunswick. This was an excellent time to support Canada 3000's direct service from New Brunswick
- 24 agents in PEI. With an island population of only 135,000, this was our chance to educate most of the island's agents. Flight choices from here include PEI, New Brunswick (2-hr drive) or Halifax (3-hr drive.)

All were from the top agencies in the area. We did extensive destination training—universally they were eager to learn. They commented we did the best presentation they had ever seen, the best function, and at an excellent time for them.

Staffed by: Nancy Foster and Kimberly Hartley-McMurray

Southwest Airlines Baltimore Blitz**June 27-29, 2000**

A joint sales blitz of Baltimore and surrounding area was conducted in partnership with Southwest Airlines Vacations sales management and representatives from the Don CeSar Beach Resort & Spa, Holiday Inn SunSpree Clearwater Beach, and TradeWinds Resorts. Three days of sales calls were devoted to Southwest Airlines Vacations' top agencies and three AAA offices.

Reference items:

- AAA offices that were visited and presentations made to include Lutherville (the largest AAA office in Maryland), Columbia and Westminster.
- Florida's Beach clocks were presented to seven top agencies and were immediately installed
- Over 50 sales calls were made to travel agencies in the city of Baltimore and a 30-mile radius. (We met with Southwest Airline Vacations' top agency that puts together sport packages that include large groups.)
- Southwest Airlines vacations reservations office received material
- It should be noted that Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) is the second fastest growing airport in the United States and Tampa International Airport (TPA) is the third, which has been directly attributed to Southwest service
- Southwest Airlines is promoting its baseball package from BWI to TPA for August

The enthusiasm for our area by the travel professionals we visited was significant, and one agency had just booked the TradeWinds, which was exciting. Our sincere appreciation to the suppliers and Southwest Airlines Vacations for their participation.

Staffed by: Cham Bowers

US Airways Vacations/Southwest Airlines Vacations Res. Centers**June 28, 2000**

A total of 7 area suppliers participated with us for the US Airways Vacations/Southwest Airlines Vacations Res. Centers in Orlando.

- Updated area information was given to 150+ res. agents
- Hosted a luncheon for managers with US Airways Vacations, Southwest Airlines Vacations and Mark Travel Corporation.
- Made plans to host two Mark Travel training trips to our area, possibly in August.
- A tour of the facility was offered to all participating suppliers.

Staffed by: Linda Lewis

TRAINING TRIPS

JAC Tour Operator Buenos Aires - Paraguay

June 6 – 8, 2000

JAC Travel, wholesale tour operator based in Buenos Aires with operations in Paraguay, came to our area on an educational training visit with a diverse group of 14 travel professionals. Accompanying the group were two executives of TAM Airlines who provided air transportation for the group. This was the first visit to our area for the entire group except one.

The group first visited the Miami area before traveling to the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area. Many members of the group left Miami with the idea that our area was “quite (very few activities) and with mostly an elderly population.” However, after they had an opportunity to visit our area, every person in the group expressed sincere excitement for the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area.

Other comments and attitudes of the group included:

- An overwhelming admiration for the beautiful beaches and magnificent sunsets
- The upscale appearance of the area
- Two agents are returning to one of the host properties for a vacation in one week

This group resulted from a meeting with Jon Arthur at Pow Wow. We would like to recognize the following suppliers who graciously hosted this group, Dolphin Beach Resort, Safety Harbor Resort & Spa, Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Holiday Inn SunSpree-Clearwater Beach, Salvador Dali Museum, Starlite Princess and the Dolphin Encounter.

Staffed by: Jon Arthur and Cham Bowers

Condor Training Trip – Germany

June 11 – 14, 2000

Hosted a total of 14 travel agents and 2 Condor Reps for a 3-day training trip in our area, prior to continuing their trip in Orlando for another 3 days.

It was the first trip to Florida for all of the participants. The destination as a whole received high praise from the group not only for the diverse activities we have offer, but also for the beaches and friendly environment. Two group participants are now considering sending small tour groups to Florida with a 3-night stay in our area.

Many thanks to Barbara Schuch-Beckers for coordinating this group, the Radisson Sand Key for housing, and all of the other suppliers who contributed in making this training trip a success.

Staffed by: Linda Lewis

Tampa International Airport Public Information Officers

June 13 & 15, 2000

Tampa International Airport has just been ranked the third fastest growing airport in the nation. Airport traffic in 1999 was 15,122,326, with approximately 40% of the inbound passengers traveling to Pinellas County. As a result of an agreement between the CVB and Tampa International, we are now placing our brochures and pertinent information in their kiosks. The Public Information Officers who man the kiosks and all areas of the airport are on duty from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily to assist passengers with all types of information and assistance.

The in-county training trip included some of the following: classroom instruction with video, discussion, and review of facts quiz about Pinellas County, a motor trip through the county that included a visit to The Pier, Salvador Dali Museum, John's Pass, the beaches, downtown St. Petersburg, Clearwater and much more.

One very interesting fact learned was that so many passengers come to the area without having made room reservations—that includes international visitors.

A special note of appreciation to the following suppliers who were involved in putting this informative trip together, The Don CeSar Beach Resort & Spa, Salvador Dali Museum, and The Florida International Museum.

Staffed by: Cham Bowers

Visit Florida-UK Superfam 2000

June 17-20, 2000

Visit Florida United Kingdom held their second annual familiarization trip to Florida, cosponsored by Virgin Atlantic Airlines and Budget Rent a Car. Eighty travel professionals participated in the weeklong planned activities. After arriving in Orlando, the participants were divided into eight groups going to the following locations: Miami, Palm Beach, Sarasota/Tampa, Bradenton, Daytona Beach, Fort Lauderdale and the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area, with each group being hosted by each area's respective CVB.

We hosted 9 agents, which exemplified some of the foremost UK travel agencies and wholesalers, as well as two Visit Florida representatives from London and Tallahassee.

Some interesting facts and information about this delegation:

- Of the 9 professionals, 8 had never been to our area and 4 were experiencing their first trip to the United States
- The delegation evaluated the area by describing it as beautiful and upscale, and they would not hesitate to recommend it to their clients
- Several are arranging to take their holiday in our area
- One of the wholesalers in the delegation met a group from the UK on the Starlite Princess that had booked through his firm

We would like to acknowledge the following participating suppliers, Ramsea Condo (JC Resorts), TradeWinds Resorts, The Don CeSar Resort & Spa, Salvador Dali Museum, Florida International Museum, Starlite Cruises, The Bilmar Beach Resort, Busch Gardens, The Sheraton Sand Key, Holiday Inn SunSpree Resort Clearwater Beach, Clearwater Marine Aquarium, and the Belleview Biltmore Resort & Spa.

Staffed by: Nancy Foster, Cham Bowers, and Cindy Clydesdale

Visit Florida Study Tour to West Florida-Venezuela

June 21, 2000

This was a prestigious group of travel professionals. The group consisted of 13 managers of the top travel agencies in Venezuela, president of the top wholesaler and representative of Aeropostal Airlines and sales staff for Visit Florida from Tallahassee and Latin America rep.

The group visited the Salvador Dali Museum (several of the group were from the region in Spain where Dali was born) and the Florida International Museum. The Bilmar Beach Resort staff hosted a luncheon and site visit. The day concluded with a sightseeing tour up Gulf Blvd. and through Clearwater Beach.

The group was very impressed with the area and found it be very upscale. A special thanks to our area suppliers who were involved with this group.

Staffed by: Cham Bowers

OTHER

ITSA Conference – Miami

June 6, 2000

A tradeshow and luncheon was held at the newly opened Mikasoppee Resort and Casino in Miami. Over 30 Receptive Tour Operators representing international accounts around the world were in attendance. Our area received interest from Latin America, Europe and Asia. Requests also for bus companies and golf. Invitations for our Sept. receptive weekend were delivered, with a positive response.

Staffed by: Nancy Foster and Jon Arthur

UPCOMING EVENTS

Trade Shows/Missions

7/10-14	Southwest Airlines Vacations Sales Blitz-Raleigh
7/17-20	Southwest Airlines Vacations Sales Blitz-St. Louis/Columbia/Kansas City
7/29-8/2	Warsaw/Prague Sales Mission
8/15-17	Florida AAA Blitz
8/22-24	Southwest Airlines Vacations-Louisville
9/7-8	NTS-Syracuse and Albany NY
9/11-14	NTS-New England
9/12	Receptive Tour Operator Luncheon-Miami

Training Trips-Travel Agent

8/11-13	AAA/CAA
9/8-11	Condo Educational Training Trip
9/14-17	French Speaking Swiss Tour Operators-Normandie
9/15-17	Receptive Tour Operators
9/21-27	United Airlines-Germany (Frankfurt)