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ABA MARKETPLACE RETURNS TO CHARLOTTE IN 2013, NASHVILLE IN 2014

The American Bus Association (ABA) today announced that Marketplace 2013 will be held in Charlotte Jan. 9-13, 2013, and Marketplace 2014 will be in Nashville Jan. 17-21, 2014. The 2011 show is in Philadelphia Jan. 8-12; the 2012 event is in Grapevine, Texas Jan. 6-10, 2012.

Marketplace is the first motorcoach tourism and group travel event on the calendar every year, as well as the motorcoach, tourism and travel industry's premier show. Nearly 3,500 ABA member delegates and industry leaders participate in more than 110,000 quality appointments, attend more than 40 educational seminars, and do business while at numerous networking events.

"Going to Charlotte for Marketplace in 2013 will be like going to a new city, because so much has changed since the city last hosted Marketplace," said ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso, CTIS. "Charlotte's new attractions include the NASCAR Hall of Fame, the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, the Knight Theater and the Mint Museum Uptown; its freshly revamped tourist destinations include Discovery Place and Carowinds; and more attractions, hotels and dining options are coming soon."

When Nashville hosts ABA's Marketplace in 2014, it too will feel like being in a new locale even though the city has hosted the show before. The 2014 Marketplace show will be held downtown for the first time, in the new Music City Center.

"In addition to the new Music City Center downtown, Nashville will also offer several new hotels, restaurants and entertainment options," Pantuso added. "As always, we know we can count on Music City providing an authentic, creative and friendly experience."

"We showed Charlotte's got a lot when we previously hosted ABA Marketplace," said Visit Charlotte Executive Director Mike Butts. "By 2013, we'll have even more for ABA delegates."

"We look forward to hosting Marketplace downtown for the first time in 2014 and showcasing Nashville's city center and all it offers the group tour market," said Nashville CVB President Butch Spyridon.

Marketplace news also includes the recent decision of the Gaylord Texan in 2012 host city Grapevine to offer lower room rates for delegates in recognition of the still-recovering travel economy. Marketplace 2012 host city Grapevine first hosted the event in 2007.

"We are grateful to Grapevine and the Gaylord Texan, and Charlotte and Nashville, for being future Marketplace hosts, and for their commitment to the group travel industry," Pantuso added.