DESTINATION DC
WOMEN IN BUSES

Tuesday, August 16, 2016

Presenting: Theresa Belpulsi, VP Tourism
Lindsay Hill, Domestic Group Tour Manager
GROUP TOUR OVERVIEW
Importance of the Motorcoach Industry

- **JOBS:** Motorcoach travel and tourism generates over 1.4 million jobs in the U.S., $62 billion in wages

- **PASSENGERS:** nearly 700 million passenger trips annually. This is second behind the airline industry

- **MARKET MIX:** 30.1% of all motorcoach travel is student travel
Group Tour Overview

What this market means to DC:

❖ **VISITATION**: Over 1.8 million visitors of our 20.2 annual visitors come here on a group tour: (Including day trip + overnight)

❖ **ECONOMIC IMPACT**: Direct economic impact of over $1 billion

❖ **ROOM NIGHTS**: More than 1.1 million room nights annually

Source: ABA Foundation, District of Columbia economic impact study, 2012
Group Tour Overview

Who is visiting?
- + 54% student groups (above the U.S. average)
- + 40% boomers
- + 6% other

Booking pattern:
- 94% booking within 12 months
- 54% of those are booking within 6 months

Hotel pattern:
- 53% stay in VA/MD
- * Growing in DC
TACKLING THE
GROUP TOUR MARKET
TRENDS IN THE MARKET:

- Price is still important but convenience is becoming AS important
- Bus tracking system will be a factor in planning
- Cluster, cluster, cluster!

  • **STUDENT MARKET** continues to be the driving force:
    - Looking for engagement / interactive activities
    - Fulfillment of Curriculum
    - Introduction of new product
    - Dining and night activities

  • **BOOMER MARKET** results in younger, more flexible requests
    - Group is more mobile and demands more free time
    - Flexibility in schedule – don’t want to do what the entire group is doing.
    - Needs options
    - **Experience** and quality
Tackling The Group Tour Market

SECURITY:
• New normal
  • Increased security protocols at Smithsonian Museums and George Washington’s Mount Vernon
• Communication and understanding of process
  • Follow these two sites, for the latest developments and to monitor news:
    • hsema.dc.gov – you can sign up here for AlertDC, the official District of Columbia communications system that sends emergency alerts, notifications, and updates to your devices. This system enables the District to provide you with critical information in situations such as traffic conditions, government closures, public safety incidents and severe weather.
    • washingtonpost.com – latest news and information about local developments

PERMITS:
• International Registration Plan (IRP) now requires buses traveling outside their home state to register for apportioned plates or obtain a 72 hour interstate permit.
• IRP registered vehicles are able to operate in any IRP jurisdiction without purchasing a trip permit.
NEW ITINERARIES/NEW PRODUCT
• Helping think outside the box (examples: food tours/garden tours/African American History Tours)
• Alternatives if space is not available:
  • U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Survivor Talks
  • Lincoln’s Cottage
  • National Archives Learning Lab
  • Picnics in the park
• Connect with current products/members
• Introduction to upcoming museum and attractions

FAM’S ARE THE KEY
• Annual FAM every August
• Personal FAMs
How We Work With Groups

SALES MISSIONS
- Week-long trips to specific region
- Organize hour-long meetings
- Social and FUN dinners or cocktail hours

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION
- Hotel lead distribution
- Road closures and high-impact event emails

DC LOVES GROUPS DAY
- Every Spring
- Partnership with DDOT/NPS/ABA/UMA
- Thank you to drivers from DC and its partners
- Promote godcgo.com
EMERGING PROGRAMS
Emerging Programs

INTERNATIONAL MARKET:

• **STUDENT TRAVEL:**
  - Key student markets:
    - China/UK/Western Europe/Australia/Brazil/UAE/India

• **COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS:**
  - Relationships with area schools to compliment East Coast programs
  - Target key programs for tour operators
    - Summer camps/programs
    - Graduate programming
    - Campus visits

• **SPORTS TRAVEL:**
  - Spectator events
  - Participation in events
### What Are the Operators Saying About Us?

**Email Updates/Correspondence:**

“No one is in your position has EVER kept me notified of DC happenings like you have. Nor has anyone been as responsive, both in terms of the speed of the reply AND the completeness of the answer. I appreciate it more than you could ever know. And I just wanted to tell you so!”

**Itinerary Assistance:**

“Not only did I receive confirmation from Chris at the Capitol, I spoke to Amber at the Archives and got the group scheduled for the learning lab program and Emily from the Holocaust is working on getting us scheduled for the survivor program!! It is a Happy Wednesday. Thank you for all your help!”

**FAM Trips:**

“All the activities were phenomenal and a good balance of getting to see and do what our students do, while learning more about a few other activities that I didn’t know were available or as interesting as they actually were. In particular, I will now make an effort to send students to the National Archives if studying American History, and refer more arts trips to DC so they can do live theatre and visit Shakespeare’s Theater Company.”

**Sales Missions:**

“Thank you so much for dinner last night. It really was a fun night and the food was amazing! Probably one of the best meals I’ve ever had ever and absolutely the best industry related dinner ever. You knocked that one out of the park. I hope you enjoyed the rest of your sales mission. Thank you again for everything.”
THANK YOU