

**DOMESTIC TRAVELTRADE DEVELOPMENT
FY 2005
MARKETING PLAN**

Objectives

- * Maintain system for determining the increase/decrease of the escorted domestic tour business to Mississippi.
- * Increase awareness of Mississippi as a vacation destination to domestic tour operators, travel planners, the group trade industry and travel agents.
- * Increase the frequency and duration of Mississippi tours developed, tour visits, number of motorcoach passengers and number of retail agents selling vacation packages to Mississippi.
- * Increase tourism industry involvement of the State office's domestic group travel and travel agent promotional opportunities.

Strategy I

- * Assist and support Research Unit's efforts to secure available data on motorcoach travel in Mississippi for in-house database, economic impact trends, tracking and benchmarking.

Action Plans

- * Develop a recognition program for the welcome centers for providing more in-depth motorcoach/tour information.
- * Maintain through the Division's research unit the bi-annual motorcoach reporting system with Mississippi Convention and Visitors Bureaus, tourism organizations, and tourism entities servicing the escorted tour market.
- * Continue monthly the Mississippi Welcome Center Motorcoach Report Lead Program to tourism organizations.
- * Further develop major group travel operator company profiles (Automated Client Tracking) for individual follow-up and future solicitation (trace system).

- * Maintain monthly group tour inquiry lead system to Mississippi CVBs/tourism organizations; encourage reciprocal leads between State and local destination marketing organizations; encourage local dissemination of leads.

- * Maintain trade show appointment lead system for Mississippi CVBs / tourism organizations; encourage reciprocal leads between the State and participating Mississippi delegates.

- * Continue tour operator/ travel agent lead system through the Mississippi Inquiries Center.

- * Continuously update the CMTP database and produce bi-annual Mississippi Certified Travel Professional (CMTP) E-Newsletter located at www.visitmississippi.org.

- * Administer, maintain and update Certified Mississippi Travel Professional Certification Program managed by the domestic group trade program area located at www.visitmississippi.org.

- * Provide Certified Mississippi Travel Professional database to local tourism organizations and entities as requested.

- * Implement and administer Group Tour Incentive Program and acquire bi-annual tracking information on MS tour programs run from tour operators/travel professionals participating in the three-year partnership program.

- * Participate in Travel Alliance Partnership(TAP) and obtain bi-annual tracking information on MS Group Tour Programs sold by TAP tour operator members.

- * Coordinate group travel/trade information on the internet. Track hits/visits made monthly on domestic group tour page located at www.visitmississippi.org.

Strategy II

- * Increase level of awareness of Mississippi as a destination through participation in major industry associations, direct contact at trade shows and marketplaces, and through travel organization's promotional programs.

Action Plans

* Maintain membership in travel industry associations:

National Tour Association
 American Bus Association
 Travel South USA
 American Society of Travel Agents
 Bank Travel
 African American Travel Conference
 United States Tour Operators Association
 Florida Motorcoach Association
 Student Youth Travel Association of North America

* Participate in the following domestic travel/trade shows:

2004

August - TBA	Canada Sales Mission	Toronto/Montreal
Sept. 18 – 22	SYTA Marketplace/Conference	Kissimmee, FL
Nov. 12 – 16	NTA Marketplace	Toronto, Canada
Dec.6 – 9	USTOA Marketplace	Hollywood, FL

2005

Feb. 4 - 9	ABA Marketplace	Chicago, IL
Feb.10 - 12	Bank Travel	MS Gulf Coast
Feb. 12 –15	Travel South Showcase	Memphis, TN
March 28 – 30	African-American Travel Conference	Louisville, KY
April 21,	Mississippi Picnic in Atlanta	Atlanta, GA

* Attend special tour operator promotions/tradeshows as opportunities arise

Strategy III

* Develop sales aids and promotional materials

Action Plans

- * Broaden development of suggested itineraries/theme tours as needed.
- * Distribute new MS Group Tour Resource Guide upon request.
- * Implement postcard direct mail program for group tour market.
- * Utilize Mississippi posters to be distributed as part of follow-up to travel/trade shows.
- * Utilize brochure tour shells, postcards and MS video offered to tour packagers selling Mississippi tour programs.
- * Update Mississippi generic slides on CD rom as needed.
- * Develop a promotional campaign targeted to tour operators. Coordinate this campaign to include local tourism organization's participation.
- * Develop a direct mail promotional campaign targeted to Certified Mississippi Travel Professionals.
- * Produce Mississippi promotional items to compliment specific promotional endeavors and campaigns.

Strategy IV

- * Develop effective programs and relationships with the tourism industry both in-state and on a regional and national level to produce an expanded awareness of Mississippi as a vacation destination.

Action Plans

- * Plan and provide grassroots tourism development assistance to Mississippi communities by servicing local domestic group tour industry's needs in identifying, developing and promoting group travel products in a particular area/region.
- * Conduct post-convention caucuses for the Mississippi delegation following the destination marketing organization exchange at both the National Tour Association Marketplace and the American Bus Association Marketplace.

- * Maintain and update local CVB and supplier group travel representative list.
 - * Coordinate and host Mississippi Dinner with Mississippi ABA delegates during American Bus Association Marketplace, Chicago, IL, Feb.6, 2005.
 - * Co-sponsor Bank Travel opening night event with the MS Gulf Coast C&VB and Gulf Coast Tourism Industry. Feb. 12, 2005
 - * Coordinate a Mississippi hospitality direct mail campaign and gift for tour operators attending National Tour Association Tour Operator Spring Meet, Sacramento, CA, March 30- April 2, 2005
 - * Administer and maintain all facets of the group tour incentive program to Tourism's top twenty tour operators and advisory council members.
 - * Partner with Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) and assist in the development of "TAP Into Southern Treasures" regional tour programs along with Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee.
 - * Continue to seek development of regional tour programs with the bordering states of Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana and Arkansas.
- Participate in trade/group travel educational seminars as opportunities arise.
- * Plan and coordinate a drawing on website twice a year for a MS Getaway Weekend available only to CMTP graduates. Winners will be randomly selected.

Strategy V

- * Develop trade advertising and promotions to increase the tour operator's awareness of Mississippi's group travel product.

Action Plans

- * Coordinate the continuation of Mississippi's trade advertising efforts in the major travel/trade publications.
- * Contract with Travel World News to enhance Mississippi's group tour marketing efforts via internet.

- * Contract with North American Journeys for continuation of Mississippi's Online Itinerary and Destination Profile listing on their website. (Contract expense split with International)
- * Continue NTA, ABA, Travel South USA, USTOA, SYTA online member listing. Revise and update information as needed.

Strategy VI

- * Develop an awareness of Mississippi itineraries and offerings by showing tour operators, travel planners and travel agents the State firsthand (familiarization tours).

Action Plans

- * Plan, coordinate and escort a joint AL/MS tour operator FAM and LA/MS tour operator FAM tour at the conclusion of 2005 Travel South Showcase, Memphis, TN
FAMS - Feb. 16 – 20, 2005 .
- * Plan and coordinate Certified MS Travel Professional (CMTP) FAM tour, September 8 - 12, 2005.
- * Host and coordinate FAM tours/site visits for qualified tour operators on an individual basis as opportunities arise and when deemed necessary.
- * Provide assistance to local communities and the Mississippi Tourism Associations in planning FAM tours for qualified tour planners, tour operators and travel agents.
- * Continue to actively pursue co-operative FAM tours with Louisiana, Tennessee, Alabama, and Arkansas.
- * Coordinate joint FAM tours with Golf and Cultural Heritage program areas.