

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
DIVISION OF TOURISM
MEETING AND CONVENTION DEVELOPMENT
MARKETING ACTION PLAN
FY 2005

Objectives

- Build a positive image of Mississippi as a meeting and convention destination
- Maintain an overall coordinated effort for meeting and convention promotion with an emphasis on building the meeting and convention incentive program
- Acquire one major convention/meeting per year that offers prestige and substantial media coverage for Mississippi

Strategy I

- ★ Track and service the needs and requests of in-state and out-of-state meeting planners in search of a meeting site in Mississippi

Action Plans

- ✓ Continue meeting planner's resource guide to compliment meeting and convention website.
- ✓ Act as a resource to meeting planners for referral to appropriate agencies and professional meeting and convention contacts
- ✓ Support the Research Department's Inquiry Conversion Study on meeting and conventions; follow-up on leads derived from telemarketing research

Strategy II

- ★ Develop a high level of awareness of Mississippi as a meeting and convention destination through participation in industry trade shows

Action Plans

- ✓ Attend and exhibit at Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International Affordable Meetings Tradeshow, Sept 8-9, 2004, Washington, D.C.
- ✓ Attend and exhibit at Meeting Professionals International, Meeting Place Exposition, July 25-27, 2004, Denver, CO; utilize pre-conference direct mail attendance builder; co-op booth space with industry partners
- ✓ Attend and exhibit at National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners' Annual Fall Tradeshow, November 16-21, 2004, Honolulu, HI
- ✓ Attend and acquire a MS booth at following states' Society of Association Executives: Alabama Council of Association Executives, Annual Convention, October 13-15, 2004, Point Clear, AL; Georgia Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting, June 1-3, 2005, Savannah, GA; Louisiana Society of Association Executives Annual Convention, January 26-28, 2005, New Orleans, LA; Tennessee Society of Association Executives Annual Trade Show, November 10-12, 2004, Nashville, TN
- ✓ Attend and exhibit at the American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting and Exposition, August 15-17, 2004, Minneapolis, MN; utilize pre-conference direct mail attendance builder; sponsor exhibition floor brunch and directional banners for all participating Mississippi suppliers and Mississippi booths

Strategy III

- ★ Support statewide Convention and Visitors Bureaus and emerging convention centers in meeting and convention efforts and development of new prospects

Action Plans

- ✓ Offer marketing and development consultation to all new convention/civic centers and their CVB partners
- ✓ Maintain local CVB and convention supplier mailing lists; distribute meeting and convention leads to tourism offices per client request;

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follow-up on location decisions; produce promotional items to compliment conventions services and specific programs

- ✓ Request changes/additions to Mississippi Meetings Profile Directory and mail out by years end to participants
- ✓ Meet locally with tourism offices to assist in the identification, development, and promotion of the meetings market. Purchase meeting and convention directories as needed for reference guide use.
- ✓ Conduct annual trade caucus for Mississippi Tourism Offices; offer educational forum for latest trends and information on marketing plan promotions
- ✓ Coordinate with Tourism Marketing Directors and Convention and Visitors Bureaus for spring promotional to Atlanta and follow-up with fall/winter 2005 FAM to qualified planners from that market
- ✓ Offer services for convention bid solicitation:
 - * Facilitate invitation letter from Governor and MDA upon request
 - * Provide "I Am Mississippi" video and brochures for site selection committee
 - * Utilize generic brochure, lapel pins, and bags for convention services and attendance promotions based on availability and request
 - * Serve on planning committees of conventions that offer prestige and image enhancement for Mississippi
 - * Offer underwriting, sponsorship, staff support, or in-kind services for convention bids, conventions booked, or attendance promotions when of a prestigious nature
 - * Administer Meeting and Convention Incentive Program; promote statewide for new meeting recruitment; utilize new promotional brochure at all tradeshow

Strategy IV

- ★ Maintain a high profile in associations where convention meeting planners are members

Action Plans

- ✓ Maintain membership in the Mississippi Society of Association Executives with the following participation: Attend scheduled meetings and co-sponsor the Annual Conference/Tradeshow, November 14-16, 2004, Choctaw, MS; chair "Associations Advance Mississippi" committee
- ✓ Maintain membership in the American Society of Association Executives for awareness and recognition; acquire major tradeshow sponsorship for 2005 annual convention
- ✓ Maintain membership in the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International to recruit national organizations' meetings to Mississippi
- ✓ Maintain membership in Meeting Professionals International with the following non-tradeshow participation: Support and attend Gulf States Chapter Meetings; sponsor meetings held in Mississippi; serve as advisor to board
- ✓ Maintain membership in surrounding states' Society of Association Executives: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Tennessee
- ✓ Maintain membership with the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners to attract African-American meetings

Strategy V

- ★ Expand Meeting Planners' awareness of Mississippi as a meeting site through selective meeting and convention advertising

Action Plans

- ✓ Maintain advertising efforts in major meeting publication's selected, resource directories and other meeting publications; supply business reply cards as opportunity arises
- ✓ Follow-up to all advertising inquiries with meeting planner's resource guide; utilize MS Inquiry Center for fulfillment through 1-888-MEET-4-MS; utilize CD Rom of meeting images for travel writer and publication requests
- ✓ Offer co-sponsorships to meeting publication sponsored marketplaces/FAMS hosting out-of-state planners as opportunity is presented

Strategy VI

- ★ Maintain participation in the Mississippi Tourism Association offering expertise and support to Mississippi communities; continue to serve as non-voting board member

Action Plans

- ✓ Co-sponsor the Governor's Conference on Tourism, January 31-February 4, 2005, held at the Grand Casino and Resort in Tunica. Continue to serve on convention committee as speaker chairwoman
- ✓ Attend scheduled meetings, committee workdays and annual meeting