

## Board update:

### **Travel Week debuts in 2019; parks tribute film generated \$1.5B impact**

**B**rand USA will hold its first-ever Travel Week, Sept. 9-13, next year in London. The five-day event features a Brand USA Travel Expo, a B2B exposition that will allow U.S. destinations and suppliers to connect with buyers from the United Kingdom and across the European continent.

About two-thirds of the invited buyers will come from the continent and Scandinavia, and one-third from the U.K., Brand USA estimates. Also, a speaker series during Travel Week will update tourism partners with the latest trends in travel marketing.

Details of the event were presented at Brand USA's first board of directors meeting for FY2019, on Nov. 15, and the day before at the board's opening meeting of the Marketing Committee.

Most of the topics addressed at the meetings related to accomplishments for the 2018 fiscal year, which ended two months ago at the close of September. The following items were among the agenda items for the two meetings:

### **'National Parks Adventure'**

An economic-impact study regarding Brand USA's first giant-screen documentary, "National Parks Adventure," showed that Brand USA's cash investment of \$12 million (for the film's production and marketing) generated a 58:1 return-on-investment (ROI), spanning fiscal years 2017 into 2019.

The film, as Oxford Economics reported, led to nearly \$670 million in visitor spending and a total economic impact of about \$1.5 billion.

### **On the road**

During FY 2018, Brand USA arranged:

- Sixteen road shows, in which 241 U.S. destinations were represented and close to 4,100 travel agents participated.
- Seventeen trade shows, which provided venues for 2,000 appointments and involved 720 destinations as exhibitors.
- Four sales missions, in which 140 destination partners participated and 5,100 appointments were held,

Additionally, more than 2,600 new, international travel agents registered for Brand USA's online-training platform, the USA Discovery Program.

## **Partner marketing**

Here are four FY2018 highlights among Brand USA's interactions with partners:

- Secured more than \$100 million in partner and in-kind contributions by mid-September 2018.
- Engaged with 360 partners who participated in all 54 co-op programs during the year. (On average, 19 partners invested in each program.)
- Attracted widespread partner participation, with the most popular three programs being: Inspiration Guide, Road Trips videos, and Visit the USA city pages.
- Entered the Chinese market with six partners by participating in the yearly "Single's Day" shopping event through the "Fliggy" travel marketplace. "Fliggy" offers bookings for a range of travel products at discounted rates. This effort produced \$42 million in sales of U.S. travel products, 35 percent more than last year.

## **Integrated marketing**

Brand USA marketing in 2019 will use a "many voices" platform. This approach encourages four groups of people – locals, visitors, category experts, and the creative class – to connect with travelers in authentic and meaningful ways, in

order to guide them and instill a desire to see and do more during their U.S. trips.

With this in mind, Brand USA has allocated specific content themes for its upcoming marketing. The first two quarters of the year will focus on local perspectives. During the second and third quarters, an arts and entertainment theme will underscore how to see, hear, and experience the USA. The final quarter will signal a time for exploration from an individual perspective. As such, exploration will be more of an outlook, rather than an action.

### **'America's Musical Journey'**

The new fiscal year marks the second year since the release of Brand USA's giant-screen film, "America's Musical Journey." Now in worldwide release, the film traces the development of the nation's signature styles of music as they relate to particular locations across the country.

During FY2019, Brand USA will continue to introduce the film into new global markets. In support of these roll-outs, music-oriented promotional efforts – such as the "Hear the Music/American Sound" campaign, "Musical Cities" content series, and influencer campaigns tied to music – will be active across the Brand USA digital and platform ecosystem.

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