

TRAVEL SOUTH USA

Discover the Southern Way!



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2007

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TRAVEL SOUTH USA 25TH ANNUAL SHOWCASE CLOSSES WITH ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The 2007 Travel South Showcase in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina recently concluded and receives positive feedback across the board

(Atlanta) Travel South USA recently held its 25th annual Showcase marketplace in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The 10- month recruitment campaign designed by South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Myrtle Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau and Travel South USA's Showcase committee members resulted in 675 delegates enjoying the beautiful places and friendly places of the south. Highlights include:

- High marks for the first class networking opportunities
 - 106 buyers and editorial media experienced the pre & post fam's offered by South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia.
 - It's Showtime - Myrtle Beach Theatre Night hosted close to 400 delegates for dinner and shows at one of the six world class theatre productions
 - Over 45% of delegates participated in Myrtle Beach city tours and activities.
 - The South Carolina travel industry rocked the night at the House of Blues opening reception featuring entertainment and food from the entire state
 - Delegates were also educated and entertained at the nine Signature Events hosted by Louisiana, North Carolina, Virginia, Alabama, VISIT FLORIDA, Days Inn Worldwide and Aristotle WebDesign.
 - Guest speaker, Dr. Dale Brill, Chief Marketing Officer of VISIT FLORIDA shared humorous and insightful observations about how to communicate with customers and prospects
- Strong recruitment of well qualified buyers delivered more business for the south
 - Adjusting the schedule to add more appointment opportunities resulted in a 103% increase in the number of scheduled appointments from 18,657 appointments in 2006 to 38,040 in 2007
 - Average appointment per delegate 40% higher than other national associations

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- Strengthening the criteria for buyers assures meeting with credentialed tour operators that already have an interest in the southern region and the ability to deliver groups and FIT business
- Publication of a Best Practices Idea Book using interviews of veteran suppliers sharing their “tricks and tips” for working the marketplace
- Enhanced media marketplace programs resulted in strong attendance by consumer and travel trade press from both the United States and Canada

"Showcase is one of the best ways to promote South Carolina to the important group and leisure travel market," said Chad Prosser, Agency Director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and Chairman of the TSUSA Showcase Committee. "We know the opportunity to introduce and highlight the rich history and beauty of South Carolina and her many attractions to key tour operators and wholesalers as well as editorial media will pay off in increased tourism for our state. Based on research from previous host cities, we can expect immediate economic impact of close to \$750,000 and future revenues in the millions." "Plus the added bonus of hosting fellow southerners who will return with their families to vacation makes this program a winning proposition", Prosser added.

Year after year, the Showcase program works to deliver strong business value for all delegates by connecting key tour operators, destination marketing organizations, attractions, restaurants, hotels, advertising outlets and media who drive southern tourism. The focus on “showcasing” the host state and city allows the region to highlight tourism product and provide first hand experience for those attending. Planning has already begun for the next Travel South Showcase in 2008 to be held in Biloxi, Mississippi, March 1-5. Registration will begin in late August.

Travel South USA is America’s oldest and largest regional travel destination marketing organization. The non-profit company promotes travel to and within the 12 state tourism offices of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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