

# LEISURE TRAVEL

**May 2019**

**Prepared by:**

**Rosemarie Payne, CDME**

**Director Leisure Travel, USA & Canada**

## **RECAP**

### **Trade Shows/ Missions/ Events**

**May 2019**

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5/9-10	Travel Expo at The Villages & AAA Sales Calls, FL
5/14-16	Sunwing Travel Shows - Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon, Canada
5/16	Professional Travel Agents of North America (PTANA) - Baltimore, MD
5/28-29	Sunwing Travel Shows – Halifax, Canada
5/31	Visit Florida I-95 Welcome Center Showcase, FL
5/31-6/4	IPW 2019 - Anaheim, CA

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### **Travel Expo at The Villages – AAA Sales Calls, FL**

**May 9-10, 2019**

**ATTENDANCE:** 1,200 Consumers / 3 AAA Offices - Travel Counselors

**INDUSTRY**

**PARTICIPATION:** Camelot Beach Resort - Participation; Tarpon Springs, Holiday Inn  
Clearwater Beach & JC Resorts – Brochure Distribution

**COLLATERAL**

**DISTRIBUTED:** 500 Beach & Culture Maps, 280 Destination Magazines (full size), 280  
Sunglasses, 280 Reef Safe Sun Screen Samples

**RESULTS:**

- The consumers that came by our booth were, for the most part, familiar with the Clearwater and St. Petersburg area. They were extremely interested in accommodations options and beach get-a-ways are very popular with these residents.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater was able to engage and update these residents with information on the downtown St. Pete art district, new additions like the James and Imagine Museums and the growing culinary scene in the area. Many residents said they were interested in visiting for an extended stay.
- Contacts established at this community should increase overnight travel and room nights to the St. Pete/Clearwater beaches and to the cultural attractions.
- Travel Counselors at the AAA offices in Leesburg, AAA Lady Lake and AAA The Villages were very interested in receiving additional St. Pete/Clearwater collateral and hearing our destination update.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support travel shows up at The Villages. These residents are an excellent drive market for our area and they have time and money to spend on travel.

**STAFFED BY:** Michelle Poyet, Leisure Travel Sales Representative

ATTENDANCE: Winnipeg: 200 Travel Advisors  
Regina: 180 Travel Advisors  
Saskatoon: 160 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: St. Petersburg - Clearwater International Airport

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 200 Destination Magazines, 400 Beach & Culture Maps, 200 Sun Glasses and 100 Sunscreen Lip Balm

RESULTS:

- All three shows had great attendance to what was projected by Sunwing. The Travel Advisors wanted hotel updates and information on the new attractions.
- Currently we have 14 hotels in the Sunwing Vacation program; however, Sunwing does not have lift to PIE from these cities. Swoop (part of WestJet) will have Winter flights from Winnipeg into Tampa International.
- The Travel Advisors wanted information about beach resort properties and proximity to Disney. Orlando is one of the largest destinations for travelers from the central region of Canada and is also serviced by Swoop. Talked about two-center holidays for Canadians flying into ORL.
- Florida Destinations that attended the Sunwing shows included: Fort Myers, Orlando, Miami, Kissimmee and Universal Studios Orlando.
- Sunwing continues to bring Canadian vacationers into our destination and will have seasonal service from Toronto and Halifax this Winter.

RECOMMENDATION: VSPC should attend the Sunwing Travel Advisor Presentations next year.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess, Leisure Travel Sales Manager

**Professional Travel Agents of North America (PTANA) - Baltimore, MD**

**May 16, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: 82 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 85 Destination Magazines/Beach & Culture Maps

RESULTS:

- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater co-hosted the evening event with Ft. Myers/Sanibel, Florida's Space Coast and Visit Central Florida. The attendees are qualified Travel Advisors with a few Tour Operators, Group Incentive Coordinators, Meeting & Event Planners and Home-based advisors in attendance.
- The trade show format allowed us to meet the advisors one-on-one to update them on our destination, attractions and hotels. Each destination gave a 5-minute overview of their destination with a question and answer period.
- Most advisors sell Southwest Airlines Vacation packages to our area, as Southwest has non-stop service from BWI to TPA.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will consider attending the 2020 “Florida Destination” event. Baltimore continues to be a very strong NE market for our destination.

STAFFED BY: Gail S. Yeager, Sr. Sales Manager

**Sunwing Travel Shows – Halifax, Canada**

**May 28 – 29, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Halifax: 200 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: St. Petersburg - Clearwater International Airport

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 141 Destination Magazines, 200 Beach & Culture Maps, 200 Glasses.

RESULTS:

- Halifax continues to be a strong market for VSPC. Sunwing flies seasonally into PIE from January to April. Most of the Travel Advisors we met with, know the beach properties but wanted new hotel updates and information on new attractions, museums, restaurants, etc.
- This market is great for our hotel partners. Travel advisors said most of the travelers from Halifax stay in our destination an average of one to two weeks per vacation and spend an average nightly rate of \$175.
- Florida Destinations that attended the Sunwing shows included: Fort Myers, Orlando, Miami, Kissimmee and Universal Studios Orlando.
- Sunwing room nights continue to grow for our area and they are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest producer from Canada.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater should attend the Sunwing Travel Advisor Presentations again next year.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess, Leisure Travel Sales Manager

**Visit Florida I-95 Welcome Center Showcase, FL**

**May 31, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Consumers - Traveling into the State of Florida

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 500 Beach & Culture Maps, 280 2019 Destination Magazines (2019 full size version) + 300 Koozies, 300 Luggage Tags, 300 Reef Safe Sunscreen Samples, 300 Trade Show Bags

RESULTS:

- The travelers that came by our table were extremely interested in the destination. Many had heard of the St. Pete/Clearwater area, but had not visited. Some were not aware of our location or the popularity of our beaches and some were already on their way to our destination.
- The proximity to Orlando was a topic of great interest.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater’s presence allowed for interaction with these consumers and an opportunity to educate them on our area’s growing art scene, new museums, restaurants, festivals, etc.
- All collateral brought to the Showcase was distributed.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater should continue our presence and partnership with the Visit Florida Welcome Centers.

STAFFED BY: Michelle Poyet, Leisure Travel Sales Representative

**IPW 2019 - Anaheim, CA**

**May 31 – June 6, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Approximately 6000 Buyers, Suppliers and Travel Industry Media

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: 10 Industry Partners were in the VSPC Booth

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: Destination Magazines, Beach & Culture Maps, “New & Now” Fliers

RESULTS:

- The Leisure Sales Team had pre-scheduled appointments with tour operators, marketing partners, vendors and trade media. Between the US, UK, German and Latina American appointments, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater had 160+ meetings in our booth during the show.
- The overall sentiment was that things are looking good for Florida in 2019/20. The Gulf Coast is performing better than Orlando and Miami and markets like the UK and Canada are reporting continued interest in the beaches. The German market is flat and LATAM markets continue to grow.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater partnered with Lee County, Naples, Manatee County, Sarasota and Visit Florida for a client event in Anaheim. The evening was well attended by top selling clients that feature St. Pete/Clearwater in their international and domestic vacation package programs. This networking opportunity is a way to thank our best customers for their business and continued partnership over the years.
- Other key takeaways include:
  - Overriding theme was that international travel to the USA is “falling behind” according to Roger Dow and Brand USA. Although travel to the USA increased 3.5% in 2018, it was well behind the global long-haul travel increase of 7%. Strong US Dollar, Political Climate, Visa Requirements, US Violence, etc. were all contributing factors for long-haul travelers.
  - Canadian business to FL is increasing due to concerns for travel to the Caribbean and Mexico.
  - A few major tour operators expressed concerns with shortage of available inventory/favorable rates/blackout dates.
  - Discussed new strategic Marketing Opportunities with Apple Leisure Group, Air Canada Vacations, Hotelbeds, Expedia, Booking.com and other key operators both in the US and Canada.

RECOMMENDATION: VSPC and partners will attend IPW in Las Vegas, May 30 – June 3, 2020.

STAFFED BY: Rosemarie Payne, Director Leisure Travel USA & Canada

**UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS/MISSIONS/EVENTS**

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6/9-13 Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) - Cheyenne, WY  
6/12-14 CCRA Trade Show - New York, NY  
6/20 AAA Sales Calls - South Florida  
6/20-22 Travel Agents of Tennessee - Brentwood, TN

**EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

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7/12-14 Virgin Holidays UK