

## LEISURE TRAVEL

October 2020

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### RECAP

Trade Shows/ Missions/ Events

October 2020

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*Shows Suspended because of COVID-19*

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### Virtual Shows

#### **TTG - Travel Trade Gazette – UK Florida Fest – October 5 – 9, 2020**

- 17 Booths for DMO's across Florida + Visit Florida – first ever Florida specific training – hosted by TTG the week-long series focused on Florida 101, Family & Adventure Travel and Unexpected Florida.
- Opening event – Welcome from Dana Young, Panel discussion with Tour Operators – challenges for 2021 & 2022 – on the panel were representatives from Virgin, Gold Medal Travel and Do Something Different.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater presented a Masterclass with The Florida Keys & Key West.
- 69 Buyers from across the UK & Ireland were on the Zoom call for training.
- Key customers included Virgin Holidays, British Airways Holidays, Tour America, Gold Medal Travel. Currently Tour Operators in the UK and Ireland are seeing a strong demand for Easter 2021 and beyond. Florida is still their #1 long-haul travel destination and twin-center vacations (Orlando and the beach) have gained in popularity.
- TTG sponsored the grand prize which was a 2-week holiday - 7-nights in St. Pete/Clearwater and 7-nights in Orlando with theme park tickets

#### **AAA Auto Club Group – MR (Member Representative) Travel Expertise Series – October 5 – 30, 2020**

- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater, Visit Lauderdale, Visit Tampa Bay, Visit Orlando and Visit Central Florida partnered with AAA Auto Club Group for this month-long training series.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater had 3 posts each week on the ACB Facebook Page on topics that included Attractions, Places to Stay, The Arts, Culinary Experiences and Hidden Gems.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater also had a Facebook Live interview with the AAA host. 200 Travel Advisors logged-in to hear this 30-minute destination overview.
- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater had a dedicated Webcast Training with Visit Tampa on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Over 80 travel advisors attended this training and Sirata Beach Resort provided a 3-night stay as an incentive to attend. Winner was from the AAA office in Macon, GA.
- AAA Auto Club group is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest club in the US and the webcast is available to the Member Representatives for review through January.

## **Brand USA Global Marketplace – Travel Week Europe – October 26 – 30, 2020**

- Global Marketplaces' debut event. Visit St. Pete/Clearwater had 24 pre-set appointments with Buyers during the 4-day show. Rosemarie Payne and Marion Wolf were in the booth for VSPC.
- 750 participants from across Europe and the USA, 154 buyers from 18 countries.  
*UK/Ireland/Scandinavia:*
  - 40 buyers from the UK, 5 from Ireland, 4 from Denmark, 1 from Sweden, none from Norway & Finland.*Central Europe:*
  - 13 from Germany, 1 from Austria, 2 from Switzerland, 4 from Belgium, 16 from The Netherlands, none from Luxembourg, 2 from Hungary, 3 from Poland, 3 from Czech Republic.
- 130 U.S. supplier companies present in 7 regional pavilions.
- Southeast Pavilion comprised 37 exhibiting partners, 12 of which were Florida suppliers.
- Networking sessions by European region, with Germany, Austria, Switzerland / UK & Ireland among them.
  - Platform for buyers and suppliers to connect for candid exchanges following the appointment sessions.
- Participation reinforces our global footprint and commitment to these important international markets. Platform allows VSPC not only to maintain and further strengthen relationships built over several years, but also login to our own booth pod to check for customer messages or business cards dropped off.
- Personal service so important and continues to be greatly valued. Opportunity to strategize and share ideas for when mobility restrictions between countries are relaxed/lifted.
  - PowerPoint presentation developed specifically for this show containing new destination highlights, useful links, services we offer to tell the St. Pete/Clearwater story (including virtual FAM's, digital assets such as imagery, videos, social media posts, trainings/webinars, etc.).
- Re-entry & recovery – let's be ready!
  - Marketing initiatives – Tabled for now BUT review for potential in the coming months.
  - Marketing initiatives – Pooling resources advantageous, look for Visit Florida/Brand USA co-ops.
  - Destination updates are valued, particularly as related to newest news and safety measures being implemented.

### Client Feedback ...

- Waiting on air service - so much pent-up demand.
- UK Operators not selling Jan. – March 2021 – focusing on April and beyond – most bookings have resumed for April – Dec. 2021.
- BA Holidays – major January Sale – their biggest of the year - key selling time for UK.
- Disney incentives – buy 14 days, pay for 10 – 14-day park ticket for the price of 7 – good for our area as demand for Twin Center Holidays is more popular than ever!!!
- Clients are buying up! Better room categories, airline cabin upgrades, longer stays.
- Florida is still KEY for Brits wanted long haul – for most operators FL is their biggest value driver.
- Lots of downsizing of staff – most retail shops closed – moving to online bookings through operator websites.
- Lockdowns in the UK and Europe are concerning.
- Operator's cancellation policies have been relaxed considerably.

UK Newsletter – Monday, 10/5 - Deployed through Rooster – update Simpleview with any email bounce backs. 2<sup>nd</sup> Newsletter with details on Conde Nast Top 10 City List also sent in October.

Opening Ceremony for the Brand USA Global Marketplace was on October 21. Visit St. Pete/Clearwater has a virtual booth and will be participating in 6 Brand USA Shows, including Travel Week Europe.

**UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS/MISSIONS/EVENTS**

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*11/8-11*

*Connect Marketplace & RTO Summit – Orlando, FL*