

From the TTRA President:



Hello TTRA Research World!

As the holidays and the end of the calendar year draw ever closer, I am taking this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your hard work in the tourism field. We have endured together an unfavorable economy that has not only seen a downturn in travel but is coupled with decimated budgets that have resulted in reduced tourism marketing and research efforts, plus lost jobs by many a friend and colleague. While heart-wrenching, there *does appear to be good news on the horizon!*

First of all, as I write this on Thanksgiving Eve 2009, AAA is predicting that nationally “38.4 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more away from home over the holiday weekend, an increase of 1.4 percent over last year.” *(Based on research by IHS Global Insight and D.K. Shifflet & Associates.)*

Better yet, TNS measured travel expectations in a mid-November Omnibus study and found that “Most (travelers) are not expecting to alter their (holiday) travel plans because of the economy.” In fact, “fewer expect the economic climate to have any impact (31% “no impact”) than during the financial crisis last year (24%).”

While a lack of recovery in consumer spending remains the real problem, Dr. Suzanne Cook (US Travel Association) recently quoted the Bureau of Economic Analysis as noting that the “nation’s real gross domestic product increased at an estimated annual rate of 3.5 percent in the third quarter.” Along with this, Cook predicts that “a slow recovery will begin in 2010.”

This leads us to perhaps the best news of all: U.S. Travel Association announced in November that they projected “modest 2010 increases in leisure, business and international inbound travel (that) will enable the industry to add nearly 90,000 American jobs. Leisure travel is expected to rise 2.0 percent, business travel is projected to increase by 2.5 percent and international inbound travel will increase by nearly 3.0 percent.”

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza, etc. or just a celebration of life with your loved ones this holiday season, 90,000 jobs just might be the greatest present of all!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Dee Ann McKinney, Missouri Division of Tourism
President, TTRA



TTRA Board of Director's Recap

At the recent TTRA International Board of Directors meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas, the board took the opportunity to engage in a brainstorming and training session with a focus on evaluating the purpose, vision and mission of TTRA. From a strategic standpoint, the group felt the timing was right to step back and assess what works well within the organization and things that can be improved upon in the next year and beyond.

According to the TTRA bylaws, the purpose of the organization is as follows:

"TTRA shall be a non-profit organization whose major purpose is to increase the quality, value, effectiveness and use of research in travel marketing, planning and development."

With this purpose in mind, while our organization does not specifically exist to directly support its members, it is clearly in the purview of the organization to assist tourism research practitioners, educators and users of research globally. The mission of TTRA includes acting as a leading professional organization of users of travel research, advocating standards for research and analysis, promoting the training and education of professionals and promoting quality tourism research. In short, the goal of TTRA is to be member centric.

The board of directors spent time on a group activity of identifying the unique value of TTRA in terms of what it offers members that other organizations do not offer, and how to maximize the unique potential of TTRA. Lastly, the board discussed ways in which TTRA can improve to better serve its membership. From changes to the website to the engagement of members through committee involvement, TTRA is committed to strengthening the organization for all membership.

Join TTRA on the Web!

TTRA is expanding its presence on the web! Look for TTRA on the following social media sites:



TTRA TIDBITS

~The State of Maryland recently petitioned to join the SETTRA Chapter of TTRA. Following Board approval at the meeting in Little Rock, SETTRA has grown by one state! Congratulations to Maryland and to SETTRA on their new acquisition.

~Congratulations to long-time GWTTTRA member John Hope-Johnstone, whose company HPR Public Relations & Social Media has recently been contracted to provide management for GWTTTRA.

~Have a quick blurb, congratulations or "shout-out?" Submit your TTRA Tidbits to admin@ttra.com

Renew your TTRA Membership TODAY!

Did you know that TTRA recently launched an all-new online renewal system? It is easier than ever to process your 2010 membership by heading over to www.ttra.com and logging in to the “Members” section.

You’ll be greeted by the regular interface panel, but if it is time for you to renew you will have an extra message:



Clicking through this link will take you to a screen where you can update your contact information, confirm your Chapter participation and change your membership type (for example, upgrading from a Standard to a Premier membership).

After you complete the Renewal process, you will have the option to pay online or generate an invoice for the purposes of sending a check to the TTRA office.

Don't forget - not everyone's membership is near expiration. TTRA has two membership years: January 1 - December 31 and July 1 - June 30.

If you have any questions or need assistance with your renewal, please don't hesitate to contact the TTRA office. With the 2010 Conference quickly approaching, you won't want to miss out on vital communications and member discounts by letting your TTRA membership lapse.

Renew your membership TODAY at www.ttra.com!

TTRA HISTORY

~ In 1971, TTRA's Conference was held in Snowmass-at-Aspen, Colorado. Chuck Goeldner, local arrangements chair, was able to secure a room-rate of \$10!

~ 1971 saw bylaw changes that brought the Board structure closer to today's incarnation - the office of Second VP was created, and with it the designation that First VP would be Conference chair and Second VP would be Membership Chair.

~The 1971 Annual Meeting also saw the elimination of the ECTR, WCTR and Canadian Councils and the early stages of the chapter system begin to develop.

TTRA Connects is Changing Shape...

The TTRA Newsletter committee has been hard at work over the last several months, developing a plan to bring you the highest quality information in the most useful format. Committee members Marlise Taylor, David Sheatsley and Jerry Henry have worked to develop a survey that will poll members on the best format, delivery options and content for future issues of *TTRA Connects*. Make sure to keep an eye on your email for the survey - it should be out next week. Your responses will help to shape all future communications from TTRA.



Upcoming Events

~ TTRA International Board of Directors Spring Meeting
February 19-20, 2010
San Antonio, Texas

~SETTRA
2010 Symposium
March 22-24, 2010
Nashville, Tennessee

~GWTTTRA
Annual Symposium
April 15-16, 2010
Chico Hot Springs
Pray, Montana

~Have an upcoming event that you would like to report? Email admin@ttra.com to get your event included in the newsletter and the online calendar!

Have You Remembered...

1. ..to renew your membership? Memberships that expire on 12/31/09 should renew now! Don't let your membership lapse!
2. ...to make plans for the 2010 TTRA Conference? If you don't remember to include it in the budget now, it might be too late! Check the Conference page on www.ttra.com for current registration pricing .
3. ...to talk about TTRA with your friends? If someone is interested in joining the organization, send an email with their contact info to admin@ttra.com.
4. ...to attend a Chapter Meeting? Networking with local industry professionals is one of the many benefits of being involved with TTRA. Even better - bring your friends!
5. ...to prepare your presentation for the 2010 TTRA Conference? The Call for Papers deadline is December 15!



Questions or Contributions?

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2010 TTRA Annual Conference

June 20-22, 2010

The Grand Hyatt, San Antonio, TX

Rockin' & Rollin' Down the Research River



Please plan to join us at the Grand Hyatt in San Antonio as we go Rockin' & Rollin' Down the Research River!

This is the 41st Annual Conference for TTRA and it is sure to offer both practitioners and academics information on tourism research that couldn't be found anywhere else!

Registration, preliminary schedules and other information will be available soon at www.ttra.com

We have received a discounted rate of \$189.00 if rooms are booked at the Grand Hyatt by March 15, 2010. Please contact the Grand Hyatt to make your reservations by calling 210.224.1234 and using the booking code "TTRA."

Our conference program will begin on Sunday, June 20 with presentations starting in the afternoon. There will be a fabulous Welcome to San Antonio reception that evening. Monday's agenda includes a full slate of programming including general sessions that you won't want to miss and there will be many concurrent sessions that appeal to academic and practitioner attendees. Tuesday offers another full day of programming and ends with an extraordinary dinner sponsored by the host of the 2011 TTRA Conference!

Sponsorship and Exhibitor opportunities for this event are available now - book early to get maximum exposure for your company!

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Palmer, Conference Manager at 248-708-8872, ext 203.