

**Meeting & Convention Development
FY 2010 Marketing Plan**

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OBJECTIVES

- Build a positive image of Mississippi as a meeting and convention destination
- Maintain an overall coordinated effort for meeting and convention promotion with an emphasis on building all Internet marketing opportunities
- Increase the number of convention/meetings per year that offers prestige and substantial media coverage for Mississippi

STRATEGY I

- Assist and service the needs and requests of event coordinators and meeting planners in search of an event/meeting site in Mississippi

ACTION PLANS

- Continue Meeting Planners Guide to compliment meeting and convention website and to serve as primary collateral
- Continue a toll free number to assist meeting planners –1-888-MEET-4-MS
- Act as a resource to meeting planners for referral to appropriate agencies and professional meeting and convention contacts
- Continue to offer the Incentive Program application and Request for Proposals on the Internet
- Continue Convention Services for meetings held in Mississippi; produce promotional items to compliment meetings with Mississippi convention bags, lapel pins and brochures
- Promote Meeting and Convention Incentive Program with promotional brochure at tradeshow, thru direct mail, and internet site
- Educate meeting planners to the various sites available for meetings in Mississippi thru mini-fam tours in Spring 2010

STRATEGY II

- Develop a high level of awareness of Mississippi as a meeting and convention

destination through participation in industry trade shows and promotionals

ACTION PLANS

International Market:

- Attend and exhibit at the American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting and Exposition, August 15-18, 2009, Toronto, Canada; utilize pre-conference direct mail attendance builder; sponsor exhibition floor luncheon and provide all wait staff with Mississippi aprons; co-op a booth with Marketing Partners and Miss. Tourism Office in Canada
- Pursue Canadian Meeting and Incentive market with Lakeview Productions' internet banner ads and marketplace opportunities

National Market:

- Attend and exhibit at Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International, Affordable Meetings Tradeshow, September 9-10, 2009, Washington, D.C.; continue Marketing Partners co-op and pre-conference direct mail attendance builder
- Attend Rejuvenate Marketplace, October 27-30, 2009, Birmingham, AL; continue sponsorship and renewal of ad co-op to further awareness of Mississippi meeting sites

Regional/State Market:

- Attend the Mississippi Society of Association Executives Annual Conference, October 4-6, 2009, SanDestin, FL; continue sponsorship to further recognition and awareness of Mississippi
- Attend and exhibit at the Alabama Council of Association Executives Annual Conference, October 14-16, 2009, Biloxi, MS; utilize pre-convention direct mail attendance builder; continue sponsorship to further recognition and awareness of Mississippi

STRATEGY III

- Support statewide Convention and Visitors Bureaus and emerging convention centers and venues in meeting and convention efforts and offer programs for the development of new prospects

ACTION PLANS

- Offer marketing and development consultation to all new convention/civic centers and their CVB partners
- Maintain local CVB and convention supplier mailing lists; distribute meeting and convention leads to tourism offices per client request; follow-up on location decisions
- Request changes/additions to Mississippi Meetings Profile Directory and mail out Jan. 1, 2010 to participants and marketing partners
- Meet locally with tourism offices as requested to assist in the identification, development, and promotion of the meetings market. Purchase meeting and convention directories as needed for reference guide use.

Offer services for convention bid solicitation:

- Facilitate invitation letter from Governor and MDA upon request
- Provide video and brochures for site selection committee
- Utilize generic brochure, lapel pins, and convention bags for convention services and attendance promotions based on availability and request
- Serve on planning committees of conventions that offer prestige and image enhancement for Mississippi
- Offer underwriting, sponsorship, staff support, or in-kind services for convention bids, conventions booked, or attendance promotions when of a prestigious nature
- Offer Meeting and Convention Incentive Program for all groups that meet qualifications

STRATEGY IV

- Maintain a high profile in associations where convention meeting planners are members

ACTION PLANS

- Maintain membership in the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International, Meeting Professionals International, and the American Society of Association Executives to

recruit national organizations' meetings to Mississippi

- Support the Gulf States chapter of Meeting Professionals International with participation in Regional Chapter Meetings; sponsor meetings held in Mississippi
- Maintain membership in Mississippi and surrounding states' Society of Association Executives: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Tennessee
- Maintain membership with the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners to attract the African-American meeting market

STRATEGY V

- Expand Meeting Planners' awareness of Mississippi as a meeting site through various advertising mediums and high profile meetings

ACTION PLANS

- Maintain advertising efforts in major resource directories, direct mail opportunities and Meeting and Convention programs on the internet; continue coverage in Convention South, Meetings South, MS Business Journal, State Association Directories, and Rejuvenate Magazine as well as other advertising opportunities as available
- Follow-up to all advertising inquiries with Mississippi Meeting Guide; utilize MS Inquiry Center for fulfillment through 1-888-MEET-4-MS; utilize CD Rom of meeting images for travel writer and publication requests
- Work closely with state, regional and national publications/writers to further awareness of Mississippi's meeting product
- Expand State website meeting planner options to include a full copy of the Meeting Planner's Guide; follow-up to all internet driven Request For Proposals and Incentive Program requests

STRATEGY VI

- Maintain participation in the Mississippi Tourism Association offering expertise and support to Mississippi communities

ACTION PLANS

- Co-sponsor the Governor's Conference on Tourism, Tupelo, February 2010; continue to

serve on the convention committee

- Attend scheduled meetings and committee workdays as needed