

MEMORANDUM TO: Richard Benda
DATE: March 6, 2007
FROM: Billie Jo Waara
SUBJECT: Tourism's February Monthly Status Report

2010 Initiative

Please refer to the web site at 2010initiative.com for updates.

Agri-cultural and Heritage Tourism

Continued discussions on developing an Agri-Cultural Heritage Tourism brochure.

Reviewed a proposal on rural tourism and contacted the company to get their full business plan. Will meet with them to determine Tourism's role.

Media & Public Relations

Handled media calls and fulfilled requests for information: freelance writer from St. Paul who will be traveling to South Dakota this summer, Argus Leader, *Cabin Life* magazine, South Dakota Public Radio, Rapid City Journal, Black Hills Pioneer Press, Watertown Public Opinion, and several from MediaSD.com. Was interviewed on South Dakota Public Radio.

Finalized the first of three media blitzes to kick off the peak season campaign in Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin, with six appointments. Tailored gift packages and media kits for each writer, per their specific areas of interest. Set up appointments in Denver and Minneapolis for March. Sent South Dakota materials to writers with whom we are unable to schedule appointments.

Distributed following press releases: Planning a Film Production in South Dakota, National Treasure: Book of Secrets Casting Call, South Dakota Office of Tourism Media and Trade Blitzes Planned, iPod Film Festival, South Dakota Tourism FYI – February 2007, Travelsmart – February 2007, and Share your Experience with Us, Ice Fishing is a Different Kind of Sport, Planning a South Dakota Vacation, South Dakota Hosts International Tour Operators, and Uniquely SD series (Grant, Gregory, Haakon and Hamlin counties).

Compilation of earned media: February – estimated ad value of \$59,645 with circulation of 295,811; 2007 – estimated ad value of \$74,059 with circulation of 672,364; and Fiscal Year 2007 – estimated ad value of \$603,041.90 with circulation of 12,128,803.

Industry Relations

Began making arrangements for the 2007 Information Center fam, April 28 – May 3.

Designed hosting form to use when contacting Chambers of Commerce for assistance in organizing fams and other hostings. Sorted industry hosting inquiry responses by city and tourism region. Distributed lists of businesses willing to host media/fams to staff and to Chambers and CVBs.

Coordinated mailing of Annual Report, Tourism Assistance Directory, and Co-op Marketing Kit to the visitor industry, mayors, and economic development offices.

Trade Sales Group Tour/International

Fulfilled requests for information/tour assistance to Allied T-Pro and Central Church Senior Adults, Illinois.

Made preparations for Entrepreneur Fair in Eagle Butte in March.

Contacted Lisa Weyer, Sturgis, regarding a possible hosting for June/July for an Italian journalist with a motorcycle publication.

Began working on an October fam tour for 36 women from Ireland interested in agri-cultural tourism.

Researched the effectiveness of travel agent trade shows attended in 2006 to determine what shows will be worth attending again and what new shows to consider for the next fiscal year.

Created a TravelSD.com travel agent web page primarily for the purpose of offering an online opt-in form for the Travel Trade E-newsletter, but also including links to other parts of TravelSD that travel agents might find useful. Gained seven new subscribers as the result of the postcard mailing.

Assembled, routed, and sent the Travel Trade E-newsletter, which was received by 134 list members.

Coordinated Denver sales blitz arrangements for Tourism staff, CVB representatives, and regional tourism associations. Made appointments and verified with travel agencies and group tour operators. Sent appointment schedules and driving directions to blitz partners. Worked on arrangements for Minneapolis Sales Blitz.

Requested 50 appointments for the Bank Travel Conference and shared final appointment schedule with the 11 South Dakota attendees. Finalized preparations for the African American Travel Conference.

Approved ad for Discover America 2007 directory.

Attended American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace and met with 30 tour operators. Attended educational seminars and conducted caucus following DMO appointments to share leads with the more than 35 South Dakota suppliers in attendance. Requested leads from DMOs acquired to compile lead list to share with South Dakota's National Tour Association (NTA) and ABA members. Updated NTA/ABA member list and sent them the password to access leads from marketplaces.

Sent list of tour operators interested in 2Nation Tours to North Dakota, Minnesota, and Manitoba tourism representatives. Sent tour company information sheets to North Dakota Tourism, for the North Dakota/South Dakota 2Nation Tours fam planned for June.

Secured sixth member of the delegation to attend TIA Pow Wow in Anaheim, April 21-25.

Finalized preparations for Rocky Mountain International (RMI) ITB and BIT trade missions in Germany and Italy. Met with 26 tour operators and journalists during BIT, Milan, Italy. The show was productive with additional product being offered in South Dakota and the region.

Finalized preparations for Scandinavian trade mission in Denmark and Sweden. RMI staff will offer training sessions for key USA sales staff of tour and travel companies.

Provided information for Midwest editorial request for *Leisure Group Travel* magazine. Sent information on what's new for adult groups and amusement park information for sidebar.

Began working with Osamu Hoshino to bring Japanese group tour operators to South Dakota in late spring/early summer 2007 for a fam tour.

Press hits with estimated ad value and circulation include: *Tours Magazine*, Germany, (40,000) November/December issue with estimated ad value of \$47,160 and *American Journal Magazine* (45,000) November issue with estimated ad value of \$9,707.

Outdoors

Hosted Larry Myher, Sioux City Journal; Gary Howey, Adventure Outdoorsman; Jim McDonnell, Iowa freelancer; Adam Johnson/Casey Dingles, Adam Johnson Outdoor media Inc.; and Bill Scherk, Minnesota Boundon to ice fishing near Webster.

Was contacted by Rob Fancher from Rhode Island regarding a pheasant hunt in 2007. Will host him and seven writers from big-name publications (*Outdoor Life*, *Field and Stream*, *Sports Afield*, *American Hunter*, etc) and list of freelancers on a pheasant hunt in southern South Dakota.

Began discussions on a grouse hunt with Bill Dillon from Big Spur Ranch for a variety of big name writers in September. Garmin (a manufacturer of GPS, fish finders, etc.) will be hosting the hunt.

Participated in Hughes County Recreation Focus Group with topics related to recreation along the River in Hughes County. Attended the Ft. Pierre National Grasslands information meeting to determine what the road regulations will be.

Film Office

Sent letter of introduction along with a request to update crew and service listings on FilmSD to more than 200 listings.

Sent Film Guide to SDSU Film Society.

Was interviewed by *Markee* magazine for a story in the April edition

Worked with Tristan Barnard, Malamute Productions, on securing Rapid City Swim Center as film location for Web series; 24, 15-minute episodes. Continued work on possible film projects with National Treasure: Book of Secrets, 7 Spanish Angels, and Lost World.

Attended the Motion Picture Association of America's first annual symposium in Washington, D.C.

Information Centers

Reviewed applications for the seasonal travel counselor positions at the Interstate Information Centers.

Mailed letters to 87 applicants to schedule interviews. Conducted phone interviews for those who had previously been counselors and set up face-to-face interviews for March 6-8 in Sioux Falls, Chamberlain, and Tilford for others.

Continued working on the Information Center training tour, which will be April 28 – May 3. Organized training for supervisors through the Bureau of Personnel.

Will mail letters and information on the Information Center poster program on March 1 – traditional mailing date for this program.

Worked with Pheasant Land Industries on the design for new brochure racks at the Centers. Contacted Department of Transportation to schedule electronic details/hook-ups for opening the Centers in May.

Hospitality

Continued to work on revisions of the application form and will finalize after the March Tourism Board/staff planning meeting in March.

Began working on ways to make hospitality training available to the industry: reviewed training videos currently on file in the office and contacted Bureau of Personnel training office to inquire about non-state-government employees taking classes.

Corresponded with the Sioux Falls CVB and Rapid City CVB concerning 2007 spring training and the Office of Tourism partnering with them.

Corresponded with Craig Pugsley at Custer State Park, Laura Schoen Carbonneau with the Pierre Chamber of Commerce and CVB, and Jackie Fuks with Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association concerning hospitality training speakers.

Inquiries

Total FY2007 Inquiries through 03-01-07:	Mail:	12,908
	Internet (e-mail):	56,816
	Phone:	<u>5,928</u>
	Total:	75,652

Total FY2006 Inquiries through 03-01-06:	Mail:	15,282
	Internet (e-mail):	49,306
	Phone:	<u>7,358</u>
	Total:	71,946

For fiscal year 2007, there is an overall increase in inquiries of 5.2 percent over FY2006.

Native American Tourism

Coordinated a Tribal Tourism Roundtable in Rapid City and offered to set aside space in the Information Centers for information about tribal products, events, and activities – Tribal Marketplace.

Was invited to speak about tourism opportunities for tribal tourism businesses during the Badlands RC&D's Indians and Pioneers Conference.

Photo/Video

Fulfilled requests for photos/slides to Lawrence and Schiller, KELO-TV, South Dakota Ag Statistics Office, AAA South Dakota, Sioux Falls; *South Dakota* magazine, *Living Here* magazine, Yankton; Black Hills, Badlands and Lakes Association, Rapid City CVB, Hot Pink Ink, HMS Enterprises, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Rapid City; TDG Communications, Deadwood; Missouri River Sedimentation Action Coalition, Springfield; South Dakota Telecommunications Association, Bureau of Finance and Management, *Dakota Outdoors* magazine, Department of Social Services, Pierre; Laura Ingalls Wilder Homestead, DeSmet; High Plains Game Ranch, Nisland; Native American website in Japanese, New York; *American Cowboy* magazine, Wyoming; *Leisure Group Travel* magazine, Pennsylvania; and Amerikafoto.nl, Netherlands.

Fulfilled requests for video dubs and loans: Robert Sharp and Associates in Rapid City for several projects they are working on, including a video for the Sturgis Rally; stock footage to Big Imaginations in Vernon Hills, Illinois, for a series of educational videos they are producing.

Travel Market Advertising

Mailed letter and registration forms for the 2007 Great Getaways newspaper insert co-op. The insert will have a new format and marketing plan: three full-color, magazine-style marketing pieces for the peak season for insertion in newspapers in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota. One piece covers the northeast, one covers central South Dakota, and the other covers the southeast. Each piece will have a circulation of 660,000 and will be inserted beginning in early May. There is a reduced price for listings of B&Bs and waterfront resorts.

Finalized media markets for Giant Step: Tier 1 – Chicago, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Milwaukee, Charleston, West Virginia, and the Deadwood Co-op (Denver, WY – Casper, Cheyenne); Tier 2 – Des Moines, Mankato, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Omaha; and Tier 3 – SD, Sioux Falls, Fargo, Bismarck, Sioux City.

Developed timeline and specifics for two mailers for a marketing partnership with CVBs: Events direct mailer will be free to participate and each CVB can have up to five events that take place May through September. The other is a local flavor co-op mailer which is fee-based. Mailer can include travel specials, events, attractions and up to 50 words and picture submitted by each CVB. Tourism is also developing the See South Dakota Week with CVBs. A new aspect of this promotion is a match program, whereby Tourism is offering to match a CVB marketing proposals up to

\$1,000. Deadline to submit a proposal is March 15. See America Week also includes PR effort with radio stations/media interviews in local communities.

Finalized and shipped the following Giant Step co-op ads for the peak season campaign with the following theme and magazine noted for May issues: Chief Dave in *Child*, *Family Circle*, *American Heritage*, and *Midwest Living*; Rushmore Family in *Family Fun*; Deadwood in *Ladies Home Journal* and *Wild West*; Rushmore Kid in *Cabin Life*. L& S submitted ad slides for the PrairieWave music channel.

Created four, state-based segments from the mailing list for the Peak Travelsmart issues: Tier 1 (A) is Illinois, Wisconsin, and West Virginia; Tier 1 (B) is all other subscribers; Tier 2 is Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wyoming; and Tier 3 is North Dakota and South Dakota.

Assembled and routed the February issue of Travelsmart, which was received by 183,821 list members.

Winter Campaign

Sent winter e-mail on snow conditions to Tourism's winter segment of Travelsmart. Shared e-mail content with Deadwood Chamber so they could send to their database. Winter also included radio, newspaper ads, postcard, Super Bowl promotion, and Myspace.com site.

Publications

Ordered 10,000 copies of a reprint of the Guide to the Great Sioux Nation; expect delivery in March.

Received delivery of the 2007-2008 South Dakota Vacation Guides.

World Wide Web

On TravelSD.com: Visitor Services Directory has 5,051 entries; and 80 vacation packages/travel specials. Between January 28 and February 28, 67 e-postcards were sent by consumers. The state-wide Calendar of Events has 578 listings.

Worked on aspects of MediaSD.com redesign which includes adding it to TravelSD.com. Site will be thoroughly tested before it is added to the state's server and to TravelSD.com.

E-Commerce

Attended Blizzard Internet Marketing seminar to learn new E-commerce strategies regarding RSS feeds, blogs, Google maps, and search engine optimization.

Research

Will review summary of the three Focus Groups Tourism attended in March. Expect to gain insight into the opinions consumers have of South Dakota. Perceptions and knowledge displayed by focus group participants will help guide marketing campaigns in the three marketing tiers.

Continued reviewing RUF cluster data to determine Tourism's best markets. Will populate a RUF profile database for our direct mail campaigns and campaigns of our industry partners. Uses of the RUF clusters are expected to also help determine conversion abilities for hotel occupancy.

Created custom reporting package within NetGenesis. Continued research into best practice methods for future web analysis.

Logo usage

Sent script file to state VFW organization to use in a national print ad and to Real America – Atlantic Link in Denmark. Discussed use of logo and imprinting ideas with Marcia Erickson from the NESDCAP. She's working on a t-shirt design for a national conf. here in June. Sent to Chris Wheeler at Wheeler Tank regarding the Interstate welcome sign design/production.

Summer Internships

Reviewed applications for research internship and set up interviews; Visitor Industry Relations team scheduled three interviews; interviews for photographer will be conducted over the phone and in person with four applicants; Trade Sales interviewed three candidates; and the Media/Public Relations team has conducted one interview for the public relations position.

Great Events 2007

Czech Days, June 14-16, Tabor: Met with local committee. Finalized and sent oversized postcards to the printer. Finalized magazine display ad. Continued researching markets.

Corn Palace Stampede Rodeo, July 19-22, Mitchell: Met with local committee. Event information on TravelSD.com went live and continued working on schedule of events. Finalized logo. Finalized and sent oversized postcards to the printer with an order of 1,800. Finalized magazine display ad for *South Dakota* magazine. Will design newspaper ad and a poster.

Wheels & Wings Weekend featuring Sizzlin' Summer Nights, August 25-26, Aberdeen: Met with local committee. Sent postcard to printer, which will be delivered in March. Will send design for a rack card to local committee for review and approval; committee will be responsible for printing. Event information on TravelSD.com went live. Finalizing schedule of events. Sent e-mail to tour operators. Finalized logo. Sent oversized postcard to the printer. Set up an Outlook e-mail message for the weekend, including logo and text with live links for the Group Tour members of the Tourism database.

Mickelson Trail Trek, Mickelson Trail, September 14-16, Black Hills: Met with local committee. Event information on TravelSD.com went live. Finalized and sent oversized postcards to the printer. Working on promotion plan. Compiling schedule of events for TravelSD.com.

Tourism Office Funding

Deadwood gaming revenue deposited for January was up 19.4 percent at \$194,854 as compared to \$163,233 for January 2006. The tourism tax deposited for January was up 12.3 percent at \$301,510, as compared to \$268,537 for January 2006. The deposits for FY07 for gaming and the tourism tax are \$6,280,977, as compared to \$5,992,432 for FY06. This is an overall increase in revenue of 4.8 percent when comparing the same time period in FY06