

To: Secretary Richard Benda

From: Melissa Bump

Date: 03/10/09

RE: February 2009 - 2010 Summary

Accomplishing the 2010 Initiative will take the Office of Tourism, the visitor industry, and the State of South Dakota to a whole new level. Feedback and suggestions regarding this summary report are encouraged.

GOAL ONE: Double Visitor Spending from \$600 Million to \$1.2 Billion by 2010

Tourism Office Funding Update:	January 2008	January 2009	% Change
Deadwood Gaming Tax	\$ 205,673	\$ 203,896	-0.9%
Tourism Promotion Tax	\$ 307,525	\$ 319,379	3.9%
Total Monthly Deposits	\$ 513,198	\$ 523,275	1.96%
FY 2008 vs. 2009	\$6,871,751	\$7,017,943	2.13%

1A. Change the way we market South Dakota.

- Media Contacts: Began working on details for a spring media fam, June 1-4.
- Tour Operators: Began working on details for a group tour fam, April 29-May 5; travel agent fam, May 14-19; and one for Japanese group tour companies, June 21-25.

1C. . . . greater use of partnerships and cooperative efforts.

- Multimedia Press Release: Confirmed seven partners and eight releases out of 10 total. (As of this date in March, all spots have been filled.)

1E. Capitalize on the existing outdoors opportunities in our state.

- Media Activity Highlights: Compilation of earned media: February estimated ad value is \$36,143 (circ. 1,023,881) and Fiscal Year 2009 estimated ad value is \$780,114 (circ. 18,059,148).
- Hostings: Ice fishing fam: Gary Howey, Outdoorsman Adventures; Larry Myhre, Sioux City Journal; Jim McDonnell, freelancer from Iowa; Jason Mitchell, Jason Mitchell Outdoors; Dave Genz, Ice Team; and Tom Hadlestick, Fishing Minnesota. Other participants were from Vexilar, Sno Bear, and Scheels All Sports.

Media and Public Relations		
	Jan-09	FYTD
Circulation	1,295,523	11,055,686
Earned	\$238,772	\$620,022

Online Marketing		
Websites	Travelsd.com	Sdvisit.com
Visitors	81,177	3,898
1/08 % Chng	-2.4%	12.0%
FYTD	624,800	19,180
Time On Site	-5.4%	-11.4%
Pages/Visit	-0.5%	-13.0%
Email	Emails Sent	Emails Read
Jan-09	243,440	10.6%
FYTD	1,710,651	10.0%

Office of Tourism Indicators					
		Jan-09	Jan-08	% Change	% FYTD
Tax	Tourism Tax	\$319,379	\$307,525	3.9%	1.9%
	Gaming Tax	\$203,897	\$205,673	-0.9%	2.4%
Travel Activity	State Parks	168,230	156,179	7.70%	
	Natl. Parks	40,569	41,309	-1.7%	
	Traffic Cnts	140,518	143,111	-1.8%	
	Gas Prices	\$1.77	\$3.02	-41.3%	
	Overnights	241,268	245,970	-1.9%	
	Occupancy	37.3%	39.2%	-4.9%	
	Avg Rates	\$63.44	\$61.21	3.6%	
Inquiries	Total	14,064	16,422	-14%	-6%
	Online	13,071	13,880	-6%	40.0%
	Mail	189	1,540	-88%	36.0%
	Phone	804	1,002	-20%	-25.3%

2010 Initiative

Please refer to the website at 2010initiative.com for updates.

Media & Public Relations

Media Activity Highlights: Compilation of earned media: February estimated ad value is \$36,143 (circ. 1,023,881) and Fiscal Year 2009 estimated ad value is \$780,114 (circ. 18,059,148).

Fulfilled information requests from the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, AAA *Home & Away* magazine, *Midwest Living* magazine, *American Cowboy* magazine, *Minnesota Monthly* magazine, Omaha World Herald, Trivett Public Relations, KDLT-TV, and several inquiries from MediaSD.com. Gave interview to *Minnesota Monthly* – What to do in the Rapid City area. Updated the “Recent News” section of the Travel South Dakota Facebook group that now has 269 members.

Sent information to Bill Stevens, President of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, on the various ways the Office of Tourism promotes historical and cultural tourism in South Dakota.

Sent story pitch to the Minneapolis Star Tribune regarding the King Tut exhibit in Watertown.

Developed media list for the Cultural Heritage Center, for a promotion of a new book on Black Hills Tourism; list included 11 regional magazines plus other media contacts that cover tourism.

Press releases – In-state media (posted to www.MediaSD.com and the State News Web): Applications Being Sought for New Public Relations Co-op, Primal Quest Adventure Racing: Who is Don Mann?, Wonderful Things from the Pharaoh’s Tomb, and New Group Tour Planning Guide Now Available; and Marks of History releases included Legend of Punished Woman’s Lake, First Permanent Fur Post, Legend of Hugh Glass, and The Sioux Quartzite of Falls Park. Posted three industry releases to MediaSD.

For the Multimedia Press Release, confirmed seven partners and eight releases out of 10 total: Black Hills Digital Strategy, Yankton CVB, Aberdeen CVB, Custer BID Board, Redlin Art Center, Mount Rushmore Gold Jewelry Company, and Fort Sisseton State Park.

Initiated or replied to 60 contacts/stories on a variety of topics, including snow fall, Million Dollar Challenge, Custer State Park, state parks, hostings, multimedia press release co-op, spring fam, *Best of the Midwest 2009*, heritage list, food magazine, balloon race, western vacations, car show, events, Missouri River, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Black Hills recreation, and interviews on KDLT.

Sent press releases on behalf of Black Hills Digital Strategy (BHDS) PR partnership: Black Hills Heritage – customized a media list and distributed via Vocus in order to analyze results and Black Hills News Bureau – distributed via Vocus to the overall Tourism list. Compiled an analytics report for the January media activity and presented at the February BHDS meeting.

Industry Relations

Sent e-FYI industry newsletter to visitor industry contacts on Tourism’s database of 1,339 list members on Listrak.com and Tourism’s database on ACT! of 2,453 addresses. Topics included Peak Season Great Getaways Registration, Spring Hospitality Training, Information Center Poster Program, Information Center Fam Tour, Group Tour Operator Fam Tour, Visitor Services Directory, Million Dollar Challenge, Vacation Packages, Tour Operator Leads, and Travel Indicators.

Worked with staff to gather information on itineraries on upcoming fams: group tour fam, April 29-May 5; travel agent fam, May 14-19; media fam, June 1-4; and Japanese tour operators fam, June 21-25. Staff will be contacting visitor industry members regarding each fam for complimentary lodging, meals, and other assistance.

Worked with Million Dollar Challenge projects and contacts to discuss marketing ideas and elements of the letters of agreement for each project. The next application deadline is March 18.

Trade Sales Group Tour/International

Sent Issue 2 of the 2009 Travel Professionals E-Newsletter to 167 list members – tour operators, travel agents, and meeting and event planners across the country. Topics included Summer Sizzles in South Dakota, City Highlight: Hot Springs, Travel Professionals Tip, Featured Itinerary: Archaeology, Paleontology and Geology plus Featured Attractions and Events.

Fulfilled requests for Vacation Guides from AAA/CAA Offices in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, plus Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada.

Sent requested information to Colonial Tours, Pennsylvania; Blue Lakes Charters & Tours, Ohio; Over-The-Road-Tours, New Mexico; Brenner Vacations, Michigan; N.E.W. Coaches, Wisconsin; and Bank of Sullivan, Missouri.

Drafted preliminary itinerary and invite letter for “From the Prairies to the Mountains” familiarization tour and mailed to 600 tour operators that have expressed interest in attending a South Dakota fam. Mailed 2Nations Tours postcard to 1,226 tour operators notifying them of the upcoming fams to be held in South Dakota, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba. This group was also invited to participate in the group tour fam as there will not be a separate South Dakota 2Nations Tour.

Input leads obtained from attending American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace onto the database so a report can be compiled and sent to South Dakota ABA and National Tour Association (NTA) members for follow-up.

Designed group tour co-op coupon (a list of print materials available from Tourism) and mailed it and the group tour co-op ad to 4,250 tour operators on our database. Another mailing was sent to 1,800 group tour operators in an attempt to gain additional companies that would offer South Dakota tours.

Coordinated with South Dakota Association of CVBs co-op to place a full page ad in the March 2009 issue of *Midwest Meetings*. Mailed Meeting Planners Guide to four meeting planner names obtained from reader services; forwarded their contact information to the CVBs.

Worked with *Meetings Media* to redeem added value from last year’s co-op ad in their publication; received 71 meeting planner profiles.

Met with 17 inbound tour operators at the North American Journeys (NAJ) conference. The tour operators bring series tours to United States destinations. Provided technical tours, What’s New, and profiles of South Dakota.

Tourism will be emailing the tour operator show leads instead of mailing them; emailed World Travel Market leads and NAJ tour operator leads.

Sent listing of 2009 rodeos and powwows to Swanson’s Travel, the largest tour operator in Sweden. The list will be added to their website along with rodeos and powwows from the rest of the Rocky Mountain International (RMI) partner states of North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming.

Emailed vendor information to South Dakota suppliers on the April RMI Roundup, to be held in Idaho this year, for international tour operators.

Shipped brochures to Bradipo Travel Designer, Italy, for their new Native American tour that includes South Dakota. Shipped brochures to Gastaldi 1860 for their new motorcycle tour to the region that

includes South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. Provided South Dakota information to ITB for their virtual marketplace.

Gave presentation at the South Dakota Indian Business Alliance meeting regarding tour operator fams, press hostings, and press on Native cultural experiences. Provided information and ideas to company on promoting their chuckwagon/trail ride package tours to the international market and through co-op marketing with the Office of Tourism. Gave presentation to Black Hills Central Reservations on attracting the international market.

Sent story ideas for possible trip to South Dakota to journalist Godfrey Hall, United Kingdom. Provided information on motorcycle rentals and discussed possible June hosting dates with Wyoming and Montana for Irwin Kennes and a photographer for the monthly magazine *Motoren & Tourisme* (circ. 170,000). He also writes for *Het Laatste* news, a daily newspaper in Belgium, (circ. 290,000).

International press hits include: *Qui Touring*, Italy, a bimonthly magazine, produced a special 2009 USA issue in which the RMI region was featured: 10 pages of editorial covered the national and state parks in the RMI region and resulted in an estimated ad value of \$547,239. *Mototurismo*, Italy, a monthly magazine dedicated to the world of motorcycles, published 30 pages and the cover on motorcycling in South Dakota and the Black Hills for an estimated ad value of \$231,000. This was a result of a fam tour in summer 2008 summer. *America Journal*, Germany, "Der den Bison verehrt" (the one who worships the bison), January/February 2009 (circ. 45,000) with an estimated ad value of \$11,911: 1.5 page article written by Margit Brinke and Peter Kraenzle. The article describes Kevin Costner's Tatanka: Story of the Bison and includes the history of the Lakota Sioux tribes. The writers were hosted on a press trip to the RMI region in 2007 and attended the Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup. *Kidsweek* magazine, The Netherlands, article is Op zoek naar vlokjes goud (looking for flakes of gold in the Black Hills), January 2009, by Marije Sietsma & Sander Koenen (circ. 40,000) with an estimated ad value \$3,650.

Outdoors

Hosted the following to an ice fishing fam on Pickerel Lake, Jesse Slough, and Lardy Slough with overnights at Roy Lake Resort in northeastern South Dakota: Gary Howey, Outdoorsman Adventures; Larry Myhre, Sioux City Journal, Jim McDonnell, freelancer from Iowa; Jason Mitchell, Jason Mitchell Outdoors; Dave Genz, Ice Team; and Tom Hadlestick, Fishing Minnesota; and representatives from Vexilar, Sno Bear, and Scheels All Sports.

Initiated or replied to 38 contacts/stories on a variety of topics, including kayaking, lady hunters clinic, pheasants, hunting trips, walleye fishing, spring fam, ice fishing fam, and spring turkey.

Sent monthly outdoors story for February on ice fishing in the Black Hills to 1,400 editors and outdoors writers. Will work with staff to develop a monthly e-newsletter to send to outdoors writers.

Working on hostings for April, May, and June for turkey hunting, hiking, and canoeing.

Film Office

Fulfilled 18 requests for information.

Made preparations to host three people on a locations scout in March, per script for a feature film. Assisted crew from BBC to locate a ghost town to film for two days in March.

Will assist Fairfield University with a casting call location and location arrangements for a student project they'll be bringing to South Dakota in March.

Sent locations information to a producer of a thriller movie, which is set to start production this summer.

Waiting to hear back from Curiosity Quest, a national television show looking/waiting for funding for a film project. They would film in May for a fall airing.

Continue to work on details with RFD-TV: Best of America by Horseback.

FilmSD Postings: Doorpost Film Competition: \$500,000 in prize money, Call for Artists: Dakota Cultural Connection, Small Town Silver Screen Available on DVD, Wyoming Film Office Announces Short film Contest, and Film Locations in South Dakota.

Working on the Film E-newsletter; asked film contacts to sign up for emails to make tracking and reporting easier.

For the South Dakota Film Festival, contacted Michael Blake, writer of Dances with Wolves, and January Jones, actress from Sioux Falls.

Submitted a scholarship application to receive additional funding for one masters film commissioner course and travel expenses to attend Cineposium this fall.

Contacted *P3Update* and *Screen* magazine to pitch an article on film locations in South Dakota.

Information Centers

Reviewed 114 applications for travel counselor positions at the Information Centers. Arranged interviews with 78 applicants in March at Tilford and Chamberlain; interviewed 70 applicants over the phone. Will conduct meeting for supervisors May 4-6.

Continued to review and approve brochures for display at the Information Centers.

Hospitality

For the Great Service Star (GSS) Program, sent plaques to 48 new GSS designees and sent 2009 tabs to 77 renewing GSS designees to place on their plaques.

Sent certificates, signed by the Governor, to the 10 finalists for the George S. Mickelson Great Service Award. This award is through an application process. Applications will be sent to the industry in mid-August as well as being available online at that time for the 2008 award.

Provided information and directions to representative of the Belle Fourche Alternative High School about the online customer service training for her students.

Wrote an informational announcement about the online training for the Custer Chamber of Commerce's weekly e-newsletter.

Developed an application form and wrote accompanying letter for the spring training co-op program. Mailed to CVBs, regional tourism offices, Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corporations, and other visitor industry organizations.

Forwarded customer service tips from speaker/trainer, Shep Hyken, to several CVBs/Chambers for possible use in their newsletters.

Prepared information for Black Hills State University's College of Business and Technology workshop on events planning.

Staff member agreed to serve as the Office of Tourism's representative on the National American University's (Rapid City) advisory board on a new Hospitality and Tourism degree they will be offering for Fall 2009. Several key visitor industry people have also agreed to serve on this board.

Tribal Tourism

Scheduled next tribal tourism roundtable, April 16, 2009, in Pierre.

Photo/Video

Fulfilled requests for photos/slides to State Publishing, Game, Fish and Parks, Capitol Creek Center, Department of Transportation, South Dakota Historical Society, Bureau of Finance & Management, South Dakota Housing, Pierre; Lawrence & Schiller, Regency Management, Media One, Sioux Falls; Chamberlain Chamber of Commerce, Register Lakota Printing, Chamberlain; Corn Palace, Mitchell; RP Enterprises, KSLT radio, Rapid City; Northern State University, Aberdeen; Sica Hollow State Park; Black Hills Travel Blog, Deadwood; *South Dakota* magazine, Yankton; Bob's Resort, Gettysburg; Sturgis Motorcycle Museum; *American Cowboy* magazine, DHM Design, Colorado; *Group Tour* magazine, Michigan; AAA, Nebraska; North American Journeys, California; and GEO Solutions, France.

Have compiled 10,423 images in the digital database; continued scanning slides from older files and inputting images into the database.

Fulfilled requests for video dubs and loans: Sent buffalo and buffalo roundup footage to High Plains Films in Missoula, Montana, for a documentary they are making on buffalo. Loaned stock footage to the state FFA chapter to use in a video they are producing for a convention. Loaned glacial lakes video to Media One in Sioux Falls for a campaign they are doing for the Sisseton area. Loaned stock footage to Wiese Design in Mitchell to go with hunting and outdoors shows they are producing.

Sent copies of the TV spots and raw film footage to Crazy Horse Memorial for their archives.

Began building a video hit list for the upcoming summer season. Identified needed video to start building a Hi-Definition library.

Multimedia projects: Put the horseback ride version of the new TV spots on the YouTube channel. Added State Fair footage to the YouTube channel.

Travel Market Advertising

Finalized and shipped the following ads: *Winter 2008-09* – Deadwood Co-op Winter newspaper ad in the Bismarck Tribune for February 8. *Peak 2009* – Giant Step Crazy Horse Spirit ad for Budget Travel, March issue on sale March 24; Giant Step ads in May issues: Sylvan Lake ad for *Guideposts* on sale April 22, Pioneer ad for *Cookie* on sale April 21, Pioneer ad for *Parents* on sale April 14, Crazy Horse Spirit ad for *Better Homes & Gardens* on sale April 21 for *Midwest Living* on sale April 28; Giant Step ads in June issues on sale May 12: Sylvan Lake ad for *Family Circle* and Mount Rushmore ad for *Ladies Home Journal*; TravelMeredith.com copy (250 words); Oprah Ezine (e-newsletter) 50 words of copy and one image for the spring edition; newspaper ads in Eau Claire, Des Moines and Omaha; truck wrap – Badlands/buffalo graphics for truck #3; and Tier 3 radio spots. *Deadwood Co-op*: TV, radio, and print ads; newspaper ad – inserted in Minneapolis Star Tribune on February 22, and Denver Advertorial shipped on February 27. *Rapid City Co-op*: Minnesota Monthly ad shipped February 24 and St. Paul Go Guide ad shipped February 27 for March 22 insert. *CSP Co-op*: Reviewed newspaper ad mock-ups; first ads ship March 3.

Mailed the Great Getaways co-op registration flyer and had all 50 spots filled in a little over a week. The 24-page newspaper insert will follow our new marketing campaign design. The ad will be placed in Tier 3 markets on April 26.

Continued to update the watts line for the snowmobile report two to three times a week.

Sent the March issue of Travelsmart in February. It featured Experience South Dakota series – George Washington, Road Trip Tips, Frontier History, and South Dakota Great Events.

Publications

Prepared a work timeline for copy and design of the Greenhorn's Guide to Archaeology & Paleontology, which will only be available online.

Received the 2009-2010 South Dakota Vacation Guides.

World Wide Web/E-Commerce

On TravelSD.com: Visitor Services Directory has 5,240 entries, and 62 vacation packages are listed for 14 cities/locations. Registered 19 new hot deals during the month. From January 28 through February 23, 21 e-postcards were sent by consumers. The Travel Community site has 447 active photos, nine videos, and 19 diary entries. Placed Great Service Star logo on those businesses that earned it.

Will post pdf of the campground guide on TravelSD.com when it is sent by the South Dakota Campground Owners Association.

Added a text link to m.TravelSD.com in the TravelSD.com site header.

Research

Continued to test all high traffic pages of TravelSD.com with low conversions to determine the "calls to action" that perform the best and draw the highest percent of Travelsmart and Vacation Guide signups.

Logo Usage

Fulfilled requests for logo to Wild Horses Media in Sioux Falls for a Million Dollar Challenge project; sent logo and state seal to Raymond's Jewelers in Sioux Falls; sent logo to Pastor David Baer in Whitewood; and sent logo to Dwaine Chapel, Lake Area Improvement in Madison.

Great Events for 2009

Outdoor Expo, Huron – June 13-14: Designed new logo, which the committee approved. Will design a brochure and event guide (newspaper insert). Will send file for brochure to event organizer for them to print. Wrote ad copy for their newspaper ad, radio ad, and oversized postcard and sent to committee to review.

Redlin Art Center's Annual Summer Celebration, Watertown – August 8-9: Worked on marketing plan and will meet with event organizer to final.

South Dakota Walleye Classic, Akaska – August 10-15: Will meet with organizers when contacted.

South Dakota Festival of Books, Deadwood – September 25-27: Attended a meeting with committee to discuss marketing ideas. Designed several options for logos for the event and sent to the committee for review and a decision.

Media One FunSki, Sioux Falls – January 2010: Will meet with committee when they begin planning for the 2010 event.