

To: Secretary Richard Benda

From: Melissa Bump

Date: 04/08/09

RE: March 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:	February 2008	February 2009	% Change
Deadwood Gaming Tax	\$ 230,943	\$ 230,398	-0.2%
Tourism Promotion Tax	\$ 245,210	\$ 210,339	-14.2%
<b>Total Monthly Deposits</b>	<b>\$ 476,153</b>	<b>\$ 440,737</b>	<b>-7.4%</b>
<b>FY 2008 vs. 2009</b>	<b>\$7,347,904</b>	<b>\$7,458,680</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

**1A. Change the way we market South Dakota.**

- Media Contacts: Planned and attended media blitz to Sioux City, Omaha, Kansas City, and Des Moines. Met with five freelance writers, KTIV-TV (Sioux City), Omaha World Herald, Urban Times (Kansas City), and editors from Meredith Corporation for a total of 15 contacts.
- Tour Operators: During the March French Mission, RMI had appointments and trainings with 18 French tour operators and one journalist; and at the March ITB Show in Germany, held meetings with 41 tour operators and journalists.

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

- Great Getaways Newspaper Insert: Finalized 24-page co-op insert for 50 partners and sent to printer. Inserts will be placed in Tier 3 markets on April 26.
- Spring Hospitality Training: Tourism co-oped with nine entities to offer spring hospitality training at 11 sites across the state in April and May.

Media and Public Relations		
	Feb-09	FYTD
Circulation	1,293,398	18,059,148
Earned	\$31,650	\$802,392

Online Marketing		
Websites	Travelsd.com	Sdvisit.com
Visitors	118,634	2,160
2/08 % Chng	0.4%	2.6%
FYTD	843,916	23,554
Time On Site	-4.7%	-9.1%
Pages/visit	3.6%	-13.3%
Email	Emails Sent	Emails Read
Feb-09	244,527	12.2%
FYTD	1,940,863	10.2%

Office of Tourism Indicators					
		Feb-09	Feb-08	% Change	% FYTD
Tax	Tourism Tax	\$210,339	\$245,210	-14.2%	1.1%
	Gaming Tax	\$230,398	\$230,943	-0.2%	2.4%
Travel Activity	State Parks	154,036	147,963	4.10%	
	Natl. Parks	43,522	41,239	5.5%	
	Traffic Cnts	149,359	146,381	2.0%	
	Gas Prices	\$1.89	\$3.02	-40.9%	
	Overnights	258,507	247,868	4.3%	
	Occupancy	44.0%	43.7%	0.7%	
	Avg Rates	\$66.20	\$64.45	2.7%	
Inquiries	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,261</b>	<b>16,148</b>	<b>-12%</b>	<b>22%</b>
	Online	11,835	13,421	-12%	40.0%
	Mail	1,299	1,223	6%	36.0%
	Phone	1,127	1,504	-25%	-25.3%

## 2010 Initiative

Please refer to the website at [2010initiative.com](http://2010initiative.com) for updates.

## Media & Public Relations

Fulfilled information requests from the Rapid City Journal, Omaha World Herald, *Minnesota Monthly* magazine, Metro Source News (Phoenix), KDLT-TV, *American Road* magazine, and several inquiries from MediaSD.com.

Continued to update the "Recent News" section of the Travel South Dakota Facebook group once a week, which has up to 281 members with 12 new members this month.

Sent story pitch to *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel* magazine regarding inexpensive adventure travel in South Dakota.

Planned and attended media blitz to Sioux City, Omaha, Kansas City, and Des Moines. Met with five freelance writers, KTIV-TV (Sioux City), Omaha World Herald, Urban Times (Kansas City), and Meredith Corporation (Des Moines – five editors from Midwest Living magazine, Senior Editor of Successful Farming, and Senior Editor of Better Homes & Gardens). Sent follow-up to each, based on discussions.

Posted press releases: To in-state media (posted to [www.MediaSD.com](http://www.MediaSD.com) and the State News Web): Primal Quest Adventure Racing: Training Involved, Marks of History releases: First Territorial Capital, Rockerville, Frontier Log Cabins, and Spirit Mound. Posted 15 industry releases to MediaSD.

Confirmed partners for the Multimedia Press Release co-op: Black Hills Digital Strategy (x2), Yankton CVB, Aberdeen CVB, Custer BID Board, Redlin Art Center, Mount Rushmore Gold Jewelry Company, Fort Sisseton State Park, Custer State Park, and Reptile Gardens. Completed release schedule/calendar and worked with partners on their copy and photo and video content. Will work on media list and keywords in Vocus.

Sent press release on behalf of Black Hills Digital Strategy (BHDS) PR partnership: March 12 – Bear Butte and distributed via Vocus in order to analyze results after the release. Compiled an analytics report for the March BHDS meeting, which reflected the February media activity as well as YTD activity.

Sent invitations to writers for the Spring Fling Media Fam in June in southeast South Dakota. Have two confirmed; fam is limited to six writers. Working with industry partners to finalize arrangements.

Initiated or responded to 49 phone calls and emails for information on spring media fam, Sturgis Motorcycle Museum Hall of Fame, Harvey Dunn birthday exhibit, food festivals, ULHRA on the Speed Channel, First Territorial Capitol, Badlands National Park, Oyate Trail, JazzFest headliners, Bear Butte, Belle Fourche, Tourism tax, rodeos, media blitz, Falls Park, kayakers, and Native American art.

## Industry Relations

Sent e-FYI industry newsletter to visitor industry contacts of 1,334 list members on Listrak.com and Tourism's database on ACT! of 2,459 addresses. Topics included 2009-2010 South Dakota Vacation Guide, Toolkit for See South Dakota Week, Ask South Dakota Tourism, Spring Hospitality Training, Spring Fling Fam Tour, and industry reminders.

Continued to work on three major hostings: group tour operators, travel agents, and spring media fam for outdoor writers. Began working on itinerary for a writer on a hiking tour of the central Black Hills.

Taught a class through video-conference with Black Hills State University faculty on event planning and execution.

Interviewed by South Dakota Public Radio on programs available through the Department of Tourism and State Development to assist young entrepreneur artists in marketing.

Placed information on Ask SD Tourism Sessions on SDVisit: April 22 – Great Lakes, Pierre, King's Inn Hotel and Conference Center; May 6 – Black Hills, Badlands & Lakes, Rapid City, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center; May 7 – Southeast South Dakota, Mitchell, World's Only Corn Palace; and July 17 – Glacial Lakes & Prairies, Milbank, location to be determined.

Placed See South Dakota Week, May 9-17, online at SDVisit; working with CVBs on promotions.

Sent email to Million Dollar Challenge (MDC) partners reminding them of the June deadline for submitting invoices and receiving funds. Reviewed the new MDC applications and made recommendations for the Board to consider.

#### Trade Sales Group Tour/International

Sent Issue 3 of the 2009 Travel Professionals E-Newsletter to 171 list members; articles included Native American Culture, Eagle Butte, 2009-2010 Vacation Guide, and US Highway 212-The Prairie Highway.

Fulfilled requests for Vacation Guides from AAA/CAA Offices in Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and West Virginia, plus Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada.

Sent requested information to Roadrunners Travel Club, Missouri; Time Lines LLC, Oklahoma; and Trafalgar Tours, Iowa.

Fulfilled request for materials from the Principal of Robert Frost Elementary in Sioux Falls to distribute at the National Association of Elementary Principals conference in New Orleans.

Continued working on itinerary for "From the Prairies to the Mountains" familiarization tour for tour operators to be held April 29-May 5. Itinerary includes Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Spearfish, Deadwood, Hot Springs, and Rapid City for overnights and traveling across I-90 and in the Black Hills. Have 15 domestic tour operators and six representatives from Suriname confirmed.

Mailed Group Tour Planning Guide to 2,450 tour operators on our database who have expressed interest in South Dakota. Mailed 2009-2010 Group Tour Planning Guide to 220 South Dakota businesses participating in the guide.

Compiled American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace lead list and sent to the South Dakota ABA members who attended marketplace. Completed follow-up to 34 tour operators with whom we met.

Researched tour operators and requested 100 appointments for Travel Industry Association (TIA) International Pow Wow in May. Five South Dakota suppliers will co-op the booth with us – Crazy Horse Memorial, Rapid City CVB, Regency, Durst Investments, and Hospitality Central/Alex Johnson Hotel.

Assisted David and Amanda Gaffney, United Kingdom, with travel suggestions for their September trip. Offered information for lodging and restaurants and suggestions on activities and entertainment.

Revised the South Dakota portion of the 2Nations Tours Signature Tour "City Nights and Northern Lights" for an ad to be placed in *Itineraries Midwest* magazine. The itinerary will include South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, and Manitoba.

Assembled 158 information packets for Japanese sales missions and a trade show attended by Osamu Hoshino.

Shipped materials to Thema Nuovi Monde, RMI Italy, for Visit USA Roadshow.

During the March French Mission, RMI had appointments and trainings with 18 French tour operators and one journalist. Held invitational VIP dinner for 47 people, including tour operators and journalists. France had the biggest increase of visitors to the U.S. last year with 26.2% increase in visitors to the U.S. and a significant number of those visitors came to the RMI region. For 2009, bookings and interest in the region remain strong. At the March ITB Show in Germany, RMI meetings were held with 41 tour operators and journalists. German consumers will continue to travel with an expected decline of only 1%. The BIT-RMI Germany and Travalco receptive tour operator attended the BIT show in Milan, Italy, on behalf of RMI and had 94 contacts with tour operators and travel agents plus 34 press contacts.

Completed plans for the RMI Roundup for tour operators in Boise, Idaho, in April. Researched 37 tour companies to provide background information to the nine South Dakota suppliers who will attend Roundup to meet with receptives, tour operators, and overseas RMI office representatives.

Provided itinerary, name badge, and hostings letter for Billabong, Italy, tour operator fam for their trip to South Dakota following RMI Roundup in April.

International press includes: Erwin Kennis hosting: contacted Black Hills Harley-Davidson for motorcycle rental for the trip that will take place in Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota, May 29-June 11.

#### Outdoors

Developed an itinerary and contacted the forest service to begin making plans to host Peter Potterfield in May, a prolific adventure writer who will be featuring the Black Elk Wilderness and Harney Peak in his upcoming book, Classic Hikes of North America.

Sent monthly outdoors story on turkey hunting in the Black Hills to 1,400 outdoors writers and editors. Continued to develop a monthly e-newsletter to send instead of a basic email to contacts.

Continued to work on hostings for turkey hunting in April and May, hiking in May, and canoeing in June.

Initiated or responded to 40 phone calls and emails for information on spring opportunities outdoors, deer hunting, Black Elk Wilderness hike, turkey hunting in the Black Hills, ad rates, multimedia press releases, dream hunt, pheasant hunts, golfing, goose hunting, fishing, grouse hunting, fall drives, and video streaming.

#### Film Office

Hosted Diane Cornell, Portia Scott-Hicks, and Eric Hicks to Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Custer State Park, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Badlands National Park, and Triple 7 Buffalo Ranch for an upcoming film.

Helped make arrangements and met the BBC crew when they filmed at Capa for BBC Vision: How the Earth Made Us.

Assisted with a student scouting/production for Bridget Lake, Fairfield University, at 1880 Town, 1880 Train, Etta Mine, Cascade Falls, and Wild Horse Sanctuary. Held a casting call and conducted 13 auditions. They will be back to film in June.

Helping with promotion of a WWII movie, which was completed by a South Dakota filmmaker.

Assisted with arrangements for a film documentary in April for Jeremy Peek, Australia, who will be bringing a crew of three to Sioux Falls to film for the Discovery Channel's, Deadly Women #3.

Submitted location ideas for original and unique landscapes as well as 1950s style diner/restaurant/drive-in through requests from the Association of Film Commissions International (AFCI).

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

FilmSD postings include: Casting Call: Auditions held in Rapid City, March 28; SD Featured in *P3Update* Magazine; AFCI Locations Trade Show, April 16-18; and WWII Film Posting Information.

### Information Centers

Received 114 applicants for the travel counselor positions at the Information Centers. Conducted interviews in Tilford and Chamberlain and by phone. Sent hire packets to 70 applicants; waiting to hear on acceptance of job offer. New Center hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily.

For the poster co-op program, we currently have 83 partners. Wasta EB, Salem EB, and Wilmot each have one spot left to fill.

Continued to review brochures for placement in the Information Centers; and notified companies.

### Hospitality

Forwarded weekly hospitality/customer service articles by Shep Hyken to all Chambers of Commerce and CVBs in the state for use in their newsletters. Articles have started appearing in several newsletters.

Provided Rapid City CVB with information about the online hospitality curriculum training for inclusion in their upcoming newsletter. Visited with Anne Klenke from Southwest Louisiana Lake Charles CVB and Stanislaus County Regional Tourism Roundtable, Modesto, California, inquiring about the process we went through to develop the online customer service training.

Reviewed nine requests for matching funds for spring hospitality training in April and May; many requests included several partners. All nine were funded at full or partial requested amounts totaling \$10,000: Sioux Falls CVB, Sisseton Economic Development Corporation, Watertown CVB, Chamberlain/Oacoma Chamber of Commerce, Pierre CVB, Wagner Chamber of Commerce, Custer State Park Resort, Visit Spearfish, Inc., and SD Innkeepers Association. Training sites and dates can be found at SDVisit.com under the Industry Marketing Programs heading and then under the Hospitality Program heading.

### Tribal Tourism

Scheduled Tribal Tourism Strategic Planning for April 16 in Pierre.

### Photo/Video

Fulfilled requests for photos/slides to State Publishing, South Dakota Wheatgrowers, Governor's Office, Department of Education, Cultural Heritage Center, Department of Human Services, Public Utilities Commission, Pierre; Game, Fish and Parks, ARC International, HMS Enterprises, Rapid City; Outdoor Campus, Wild Horses Media, Sioux Falls; Timber Lodge Retreats, Hill City; Huron CVB; *South Dakota* magazine, Southeast South Dakota, Yankton; TDG Communications, Deadwood; South Dakota Hall of Fame, Chamberlain; *Outdoor Life* magazine, Massachusetts; Rocky Mountain International, Wyoming; Go Timelines, Oklahoma; Rand McNally, Illinois; *Midwest Living*, Iowa; Mercury Ads, Montana; AAA, New Jersey; Omaha World Herald, Nebraska; theonlinekeepsack.com; Minnesota Monthly, Minnesota; and *SALT* magazine, The Netherlands.

Posted photos and information about movies filmed in South Dakota at CNN.com; gathered input and interest in potential "Photographers Rally" at several Internet forums and websites for viral marketing efforts.

Was interviewed for Oahe TV "City Limits" program with Pierre Mayor. Agreed to be presenter at Great Lakes Tourism Association's annual meeting in April.

Fulfilled requests for video dubs and loans: Sent footage of the Black Hills and the Badlands to Primal Quest for use in videos leading up to the event; started work on a video loan to the Primal Quest production team. Loaned snowmobile footage to the Jamison Company in Sioux Falls. Talked with the Rapid City CVB on developing video for use on their site and on the Digital Strategies website.

Compressed all of our 2009 TV spots and added them to YouTube.

Continued working on a video hit list for the upcoming summer.

Edited a short video for Custer State Park's Multimedia Press Release and sent to be approved; worked with the Redlin Art Center to edit a video for their release.

### Travel Market Advertising

Finalized and shipped the following ads: *Peak 2009*: Weekly newspaper ads in Eau Claire, Des Moines, Omaha, Winnipeg, Rochester, Gillette, Sheridan, and Sioux City and ad for Manitoba *Magazine* shipped March 12. *Deadwood Co-op*: Weekly newspaper ads in Bismarck, Casper, Cheyenne, Denver, Dickinson, Minneapolis, Sioux Falls, and Williston. *Rapid City Co-op*: Weekly newspaper ads in Minneapolis, St Paul, Denver, Loveland, and Ft Collins; Denver advertorial; FSI – drops in Winnipeg on April 4 and May 9 and in Regina on April 6 and May 4; and ad for *Sioux Falls Mom's Magazine*. *Custer State Park Co-op*: Weekly newspaper ads in Colorado Springs, Ft Collins, Greeley, and Loveland.

Sent the April issue of Travelsmart in March to 211,000 subscribers. It featured Experience South Dakota series – Thomas Jefferson, Rails To Trails – Biking, Spring Spectacular – Birding, South Dakota Great Events, and Family Memories Made Here – Travel Community.

Finalized Great Getaways peak season newspaper insert and sent to the printer; 719,081 inserts are being printed. The 24-page insert has 50 partners and it will be placed in Tier 3 markets on April 26.

Worked on landing pages for a scaled down promotion to Wisconsin on the Web and CRM efforts. A promotion on Comcast will include developing a landing page for a promotion offered as a value-ad by Comcast for a package in cooperation with Rapid City. Worked on a landing page for the Aberdeen co-op that is planned to go live May 1 since ads will be dropping the week of May 3.

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

### Publications

Wrote letter to the motorcycle guide partners giving them some options concerning the shortage of guides, due to the big demand for it. Asked if they would be willing to give back some of their supplies of the guide for us to use to fulfill requests or help pay for a reprint.

Received permission from Native Discovery, Inc. to reprint some of their written materials in our new Native American guide.

Proofed draft of *Greenhorn's Guide to Archaeology*, which will be available as a pdf on TravelSD.com.

### World Wide Web/E-Commerce

On TravelSD.com: Visitor Services Directory has 5,233 entries, and 93 vacation packages are listed for 16 cities/locations. Registered five new hot deals during the month. From February 24 through March 29, 57 e-postcards were sent by consumers. The Travel Community site has 482 active photos, nine videos, and 20 diary entries.

Posted a link on the homepage and a banner ad on the Sturgis Rally page regarding the 2009 giveaway. Routed revisions to four new and four updated pages for TravelSD on rock climbing, geocaching, horseback riding, and motorcycling (new); and Missouri River, De Smet, Corn Palace, and the Lewis &

Clark Trail (updated). Continued working with the South Dakota Campground Owners Association to get camping information added to TravelSD.

On SDVisit.com, continued working with Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) on adding additional fee-based co-op programs to the online payment system; updated the webpage with details about the Spring Hospitality Training opportunities across the state; created a page under "About Us" for Ask South Dakota Tourism; made updates to the Industry Calendar page; and updated the National Tourism Week page and added pages/content for the new Toolkit.

### Research

The daily download of reservation data is in place for Navigator. RUF analysts are currently reviewing the data and building our customized reports.

The Information Center Count data collection project is designed to ensure that each Information Center submits their car counts daily and which has several criteria built into the system.

Decided to proceed with the social media monitoring at the basic level and lower cost option.

Met with Black Hills State University executives to discuss the future of the South Dakota Travel Monitoring System and ensure everything has been communicated for the cancellation of the existing contract. Will keep the historical data in place for South Dakota Tourism's use. An agreement was also reached to enhance the system so that it can be useful to our industry partners.

### Logo Usage

Fulfilled requests for logo to Kyle Mattison at LaMar signs; to Sue Sutton for Brandt's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary; logo script to Dana Svendsen for a highway patrol banner; and to Craig Pugsley and Jean Lacher for promotional materials for Custer Service/Hospitality training.

### Great Events for 2009

Outdoor Expo, Huron – June 13-14: Mailed print-ready files for the Outdoor Expo brochure to organizer. Working on layout of the online banner ads and the 3x5 newspaper ads. Checking on mailing standards for the oversized postcard; will get print quote when quantity is determined. Drafted radio script.

Redlin Art Center's Annual Summer Celebration, Watertown – August 8-9: Updated the events schedule on the Redlin Art Center's page. Drafted radio script.

South Dakota Walleye Classic, Akaska – August 10-15: Logo has been chosen. Finalized marketing plan. The Walleye Classic committee will need a postcard; placed online banner ad with sd-outdoors.com for April and May; and newspaper ads will be produced in May. Drafted radio script.

South Dakota Festival of Books, Deadwood – September 25-27: Designed several options for a logo for their event and the committee has chosen one.

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