

To: Secretary Richard Benda

From: Melissa Bump

Date: 05/07/09

RE: April 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**

<b>Tourism Office Funding Update:</b>	March 2008	March 2009	% Change
Deadwood Gaming Tax	\$ 238,498	\$ 241,869	1.4%
Tourism Promotion Tax	\$ 269,418	\$ 246,034	-8.7%
<b>Total Monthly Deposits</b>	<b>\$ 507,916</b>	<b>\$ 487,903</b>	<b>-3.9%</b>
<b>FY 2008 vs. 2009</b>	<b>\$7,855,820</b>	<b>\$7,946,583</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

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

- Tour Operators: At Rocky Mountain International (RMI) Roundup of tour operators in Idaho, met with 37 international tour operators.

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

- Million Dollar Challenge: New projects for FY2009 include: Motorcycle Tourism Alliance with partners in Rapid City, Sturgis, Deadwood, Hill City, Sioux Falls, and Watertown; and Masters Walleye Circuit Tournament, September 12-13, Waubay Lake near Webster. FY2010 projects include: Distinctive Destinations, Hot Springs; South Dakota SmartAlec GPS Adventures and Summer Nights, Rapid City; Uptown Festival of Arts & Crafts, Watertown, June 13; Gateway to the West Fest, Mitchell, July 2-4; Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Annual Fourth of July Wacipi; Great Aberdeen Pig Out, July 10-11; South Dakota Walleye Classic Festival near Akaska, August 12-16; Brown County Fair, August 17-23; Holy Terror Days: Little House on the Prairie TV Series Cast Reunion, Keystone, September 4-6; and Ribs, Rods & Rock n' Roll, Vermillion, September 11-12.
- MultiMedia Press Release Co-ops: Tracked the first two multimedia press releases (MMPR): Custer State Park was released on April 15 had an open rate of 28.59%; The Native American Story was released on April 20 and had an open rate of 36.65%.

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

- Hostings: Media hosted to turkey hunts included: Bob Groene, Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW); freelance writer Mike Lambeth; freelance writer/photographer John Haffner; Joe Blake, *Bowhunting* magazine; and Dave Carlson, Northland Adventure TV – also included walleye fishing and prairie chicken Leks.

<b>Media and Public Relations</b>		
	Mar-09	FYTD
Circulation	1,627,903	19,687,051
Earned	\$53,924	\$834,043
<b>Online Marketing</b>		
<b>Websites</b>	Travelsd.com	Sdvisit.com
Visitors	118,634	2,160
3/08 % Chng	0.4%	2.6%
FYTD	843,916	23,554
Time On Site	-4.7%	-9.1%
Pages/Visit	3.6%	-13.3%
<b>Email</b>	Emails Sent	Emails Read
Mar-09	244,527	12.2%
FYTD	1,940,863	10.2%

<b>Office of Tourism Indicators</b>					
		Mar-09	Mar-08	% Change	% FYTD
Tax	<b>Tourism Tax</b>	\$246,034	\$269,418	-8.7%	0.6%
	<b>Gaming Tax</b>	\$241,869	\$238,498	1.4%	2.3%
Travel Activity	State Parks	206,831	203,008	1.90%	
	Natl. Parks	71,486	77,320	-7.5%	
	Traffic Cnts	155,019	157,133	-1.3%	
	Gas Prices	\$1.94	\$3.22	-39.8%	
	Overnights	285,894	287,252	-0.5%	
	Occupancy	43.3%	45.5%	-4.9%	
	Avg Rates	\$64.68	\$63.20	2.4%	
Inquiries	<b>Total</b>	<b>24,275</b>	<b>23,663</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6%</b>
	Online	18,191	16,552	10%	N/A
	Mail	4,525	4,967	-9%	N/A
	Phone	1,559	2,144	-27%	N/A

## 2010 Initiative

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

## Media & Public Relations

Fulfilled information requests from the Family Radio Network, Ad Fax Media, *Iowan* magazine, *Group Tour* magazine, *Working Horse* magazine, KSTP-TV, KEVN Fox News, TravelMeredith.com, and several inquiries from MediaSD.com. Coordinated interview on KDLT regarding upcoming tourism season. Was interviewed by Capital Journal on Twitter usage, Family Radio Network regarding Black Hills caves, and State News regarding recession and “in your own backyard” promotions.

Sent story pitch to Arthur Frommer’s Budget Travel’s senior online editor on how the Black Hills Digital Strategy group makes planning easy. Sent story pitch to Denver Post for their “Get Outta Town” feature.

Social Media Relations: Reviewed 154 blog posts; responded to 15. Transitioned the Facebook group into a South Dakota Fan Page on Facebook, which has more interactive functionality. Fan page grew to include 522 fans in less than 20 days, and there are currently over 750 fans. Began a South Dakota Tourism Twitter account, made daily updates/posts, and, as of April 28, had 138 followers. Other efforts include SDoutdoors and TravelSD.com blogs, YouTube, Flickr, and monitoring of external posts about South Dakota. Organized/participated in a social media webinar offered by Cision on Social Media 101 for Tourism staff. Worked with staff to develop an internal social media task force.

Posted press releases – To in-state media (posted to [www.MediaSD.com](http://www.MediaSD.com) and the State News Web): Mark Your Calendar: Family-Friendly, Affordable Events; Ask Questions, Get Answers; South Dakota Office of Tourism Enhances Online Services; Primal Quest Adventure Racing: Not Just for Men; and New Million Dollar Challenge Partners Announced. Marks of History releases: Murdo Mackenzie, Crazy Horse Mountain, Medicine Rock, Verendrye Monument, and Campsite of General Custer’s Expedition. Posted 15 industry releases to MediaSD.com.

Tracked the first two multimedia press releases (MMPR): Custer State Park was released on April 15 and had an open rate of 28.59%; The Native American Story was released on April 20 and had an open rate of 36.65%. The releases for May include Mount Rushmore Black Hills Gold and Fort Sisseton Historic Festival.

Sent press release on behalf of Black Hills Digital Strategy (BHDS) partnership: Black Hills Fat Tire Festival was distributed via Vocus in order to analyze results after the release. Compiled an analytics report for the May BHDS meeting, which reflected the April media activity as well as YTD activity.

Participated in an interview with Conservation Impact, a group under contract with Mount Rushmore National Memorial to do strategic planning.

Initiated or responded to 20 phone calls and emails for information on tourism in general, sales tax revenues from tourism, biking in the Black Hills, Ask SD Tourism, ad campaigns, web enhancements, spring media fam, industry magazine list, February/March statistics, Southeast Digital Strategy, Black Hills Digital Strategy, multimedia press releases, Mount Rushmore Junior Ranger Day, Spirit of the West Festival, Million Dollar Challenge, and events.

## Industry Relations

Sent e-FYI industry newsletter to visitor industry contacts on Tourism’s database. Topics included 2009 See South Dakota Week, Spring Hospitality Training, Free Social Media Seminar, Tour Operator Lead Lists, 2009 Greenhorns Guide, Free Online Customer Service Training, Group Tour Fam, Press Release Sign Up, Lit Swap Reminder, and Interstate Information Centers.

Held “Ask South Dakota Tourism” session during the Great Lakes Tourism Day in Pierre.

Developed itinerary for Governor's Office of Economic Development hosting in the Black Hills area.

Held meeting for 2010 Tourism Conference committee leads.

Prepared fact sheet on the South Dakota Kayak Challenge and presented at the monthly Pierre Chamber Hospitality Committee meeting.

Began researching what other states are doing in the area of sustainable tourism as part of the green initiative, per discussions at staff Strategic Planning Sessions.

#### Trade Sales Group Tour/International

Fulfilled requests for Vacation Guides from AAA/CAA Offices in Colorado, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, and West Virginia, plus Ontario, Canada.

Fulfilled travel agent information requests to New Richmond, Wisconsin; Havre, Montana; AAA Wisconsin in Milwaukee and Waukesha; St. Louis, Missouri; AAA Chicago; and Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Researched and presented information on hosting familiarization tours for tour operators, press, and travel agents at the Great Lakes Annual meeting.

Updated hosting tips and lead information on SDVisit.com.

Placed DVD of South Dakota on Travel Professionals page. Drafted a wineries itinerary for Travel Professionals website; E-Newsletter will feature wineries and the new itinerary.

Will develop two postcards for distribution at trade shows – one for consumers and one for trade which will direct them to the websites to download publications. The trade postcard will also provide information on signing up for the Travel Professionals E-Newsletter.

Registered for American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace, January 2010, in Maryland. Submitted three events for ABA Top 100 Events in North America for the 2010 issue.

Sent advertising information from Canadian Traveller's Yours to Discover to South Dakota's ABA and National Tour Association (NTA) members. A South Dakota overview will be published, and Tourism will have a banner ad on their website.

Finalized itinerary for "From the Prairies to the Mountains" familiarization tour for tour operators, April 29-May 5, for 10 domestic tour operators and three tour representatives from Suriname. Itinerary includes Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Spearfish, Deadwood, Hot Springs, and Rapid City for overnights.

Fulfilled request from *Group Tour* magazine for additional information on the Oyate Trail itinerary for their July issue; itinerary is listed on the Travel Professionals website.

Contacted lodging property in Keystone to check on availability of rooms during Sturgis Rally for *Custom Freeway* magazine writers.

Fulfilled requests for maps for Japanese tour operators as a result of Osamu Hoshino's sales mission to New York: H.I.S. New York, H.I.S. Los Angeles, and JTB USA.

At Rocky Mountain International (RMI) Roundup of tour operators in Idaho, met with 37 international tour operators, conducted two presentations on getting more out of the Roundup meetings for regional suppliers, and held a state caucus to provide leads and information about the international tour

operators. Participated in RMI Summit and Directors Meeting – reviewed the current year and began planning for FY2010 international efforts. Input show leads into RMI database.

Followed up with Billabong, Italy, tour operator fam about his trip to South Dakota following RMI Roundup.

Shipped booth and materials to TIA International Pow Wow in Florida in May. Received 36 pre-scheduled appointments from requests; most of these were mutual requests. There are five co-op partners in the South Dakota booth.

RMI Megafam dates will be October 2-12, in South Dakota and Wyoming; South Dakota tour will be October 7-12. Itinerary includes the Black Hills and the South Dakota suppliers who attended RMI Roundup.

Checked with international offices on A4 format for downloads and printing of brochures we have listed on the web site to be sure that our website is compatible for the international market.

Expect delivery of Chinese translation (new) of the Great Parks and Monuments brochure in May. Trade Sales also provides other translations of this brochure for other overseas markets.

Working with international journalists on their future assignments: Erwin Kennis hosting – contacted Black Hills Harley-Davidson for motorcycle rental regarding this trip to Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota, May 29-June 11. Thomas Jeier hosting – provided hosting information, Wild West story ideas, Web links, events information, and campground information for his motorhome article. He'll spend six days in South Dakota. Ole Helmhuesen – sent 2010 Buffalo Roundup dates. Claire David-Tartane – provided information and contacts regarding her upcoming documentaries in August.

Received article from Sarah de Beuckeler on Deadwood that will coincide with HBO Deadwood series currently showing in Belgium. Sarah was an attendee on the 2007 Buffalo Roundup hosting and this is her second article on South Dakota as a result of that trip.

### Outdoors

Continued to develop activities for adventure travel writer Peter Potterfield in May. Potterfield will be featuring the Black Elk Wilderness and Harney Peak in his upcoming book, *Classic Hikes of North America*.

Worked with Ron Schara's office to finalize details for the Pheasantennial Dream Hunt that was given away last fall to a man from Idaho and three of his friends; projected dates are November 20-23 in Gregory.

Sent monthly outdoors story on Prairie Chicken Leks on the Grasslands to 1,400 outdoors editors and writers.

Hosted the following media to turkey hunts: Bob Groene, Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW); freelancer Mike Lambeth; freelance writer/photographer John Haffner; Joe Blake, *Bowhunting* magazine; and Dave Carlson, Northland Adventure TV – also included walleye fishing and prairie chicken Leks.

Initiated or responded to 12 phone calls and/or emails for information on lady huntress clinic, outdoor adventure expo, pheasant numbers, Black Hills turkeys, public relations opportunities, golf courses, and tourism in general.

### Film Office

Press coverage includes: Primal Quest: Black Hills Travel Package featured for PQ guests/families, blog coverage; KEVN Fox News: in-studio interview, panel discussion on the film industry with Linn Brothers and Jim Hatzell, will air May 3; Philip Pioneer Newspaper: front page story on the BBC film shoot in Capa; *Locations Magazine*: 3-page spread on National Treasure: Book of Secrets and filming in South Dakota; and Argus Leader: The Battle for Whiteclay film – story on the border town and alcohol consumption on the reservation.

Attended meeting in Rapid City with film industry people to discuss Locations Trade Show, upcoming film projects, hostings, financing, and investment options.

Fulfilled 17 requests for information and distributed 105 Production Guides.

Attended Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Trade Show in California. Met with several people at the booth, completed a class, and attended a seminar with a panel of studio executives, including Jerry Ketcham.

Worked with Svenja Wolter regarding a German film crew filming a documentary in May for a week. Provided filming permit information. She has been in contact with many of the locals.

Provided contact information to Kim Crabb, 2008 Buffalo Roundup guest, for the Homestake Mine and the Minuteman Missile Silo for a feature film. Provided Impossible Pictures, BBC, with names of abandoned villages/towns. Working with a location scout for a feature film and her request for a railway that runs through the Badlands.

Researched NBC American Road Trip Series for Black Hills contacts. Discovered that the series is run by the BBC.

Working on developing a Twitter account for the Film Office, to be combined with the social media task force within Tourism.

### Hospitality

Prepared a two-page handout for the 2009 Spring Inter-Agency Information Exchange meeting held in Custer State Park.

Prepared power point presentation on the development of the online training curriculum for the annual Rapid City CVB Hospitality Banquet.

### Tribal Tourism

Held a planning meeting for the Tribal Tourism Roundtable. Worked on setting goals for 2010.

Part of a panel, with Kerry Frei from Native Discovery, to brief the Four Bands funding groups.

### Photo/Video

Fulfilled requests for photos/slides to South Dakota Lottery, Department of Agriculture, South Dakota Building Authority, State Publishing, Department of Education, Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre; Midland Pioneer Review; Lawrence & Schiller, Wild Horses Media, Henkin-Schultz, Sioux Falls; TDG Communications, Deadwood; Quality Quick Print, Aberdeen; Southeast South Dakota Tourism Association, *South Dakota Magazine*, Yankton; South Dakota Wildlife Foundation, Rapid City; Rand McNally, Illinois; Rocky Mountain International, Wyoming; Armed Forces Radio, Tennessee; *American Road Magazine*, *Group Tour Magazine*, Michigan; *Midwest Living Magazine*, Iowa; *Prairie Business Magazine*, North Dakota; *Outdoor Life Magazine*, California; Greenspottravel.org; and Tampa Travel Examiner, Florida.

Fulfilled requests for video dubs and loans: Loaned Mount Rushmore National Memorial footage to the Price is Right in Los Angeles to compliment a package being offered on their show. Loaned Black Hills, Badlands, and Pierre footage to FilmHouse in Nashville for videos they are producing for Armed Forces Networks. Loaned stock footage to KSTP in Minneapolis for a segment they are doing on traveling in South Dakota.

Edited and compressed a video for the Custer State Park multimedia press release. Received video from the Black Hills Gold company and the Redlin Art Center for future releases.

Met with staff to create a social media team and discuss internal projects dealing with social media.

Updated the YouTube channel graphics to better match the home page look of TravelSD. Updated and deleted old video on the channel.

#### Travel Market Advertising

Finalized and shipped the following for Peak: weekly newspaper ads in Eau Claire, Des Moines, Omaha, Winnipeg, Rochester, Gillette, Sheridan, and Sioux City; Great Getaways co-op newspaper insert was dropped on April 26 in newspapers in Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota for a circulation of 718,000; there are 50 partners in this co-op.

Finalized first in a series of electronic elements for the Wisconsin campaign – Road trip giveaway in a series of email messages; have received 1,122 entries. Denver Comcast promotion runs through May 19 for a giveaway trip to Rapid City; have received 659 entries. Deadwood Co-op includes weekly newspaper ads in Bismarck, Casper, Cheyenne, Denver, Dickinson, Minneapolis, Sioux Falls, and Williston; Deadwood FSI drops April 26 in the Denver Post (circ – Zoned to 102,000), Bismarck Tribune (circ – 30,641), Williston Herald (circ – 4,800), and Dickinson Press (circ – 7,800). Rapid City Co-op includes weekly newspaper ads in Minneapolis, St Paul, Denver, Loveland, and Fort Collins. Custer State Park Co-op includes weekly newspaper ads in Colorado Springs, Ft Collins, Greeley, and Loveland. Aberdeen Co-op includes weekly newspaper ads in Bismarck, Fargo, Jamestown, and St. Cloud; other elements include TV and Web.

Sent the May issue of Travelsmart in April to 227,045 subscribers, which featured: Experience SD series – Theodore Roosevelt, Celebrate 100 years of South Dakota Parks with a Free Weekend, South Dakota's Great Outdoors, and Uncover an Ancient Past.

#### Publications

Continued working on updates to the Native American guide.

#### World Wide Web/E-Commerce

TravelSD.com: Registered 14 new hot deals during the month.

Continued testing all high traffic pages with low conversions. The tests are in place to determine the "calls to action" that perform the best and draw the highest percent of Travelsmart and Vacation Guide signups. Currently, testing the Things To Do and Homepage for conversion rate.

Presented information on using social media for marketing purposes at the Great Lakes Tourism Day.

#### Logo Usage

Sent South Dakota script to Terry Nimitz at Outlaw Graphics in Brookings and logo to Debbie Ketel with Mount Rushmore National Memorial Society.

#### Governor's Tourism Advisory Board

Board met in Pierre to review 15 applications; approved FY2009 projects: Motorcycle Tourism Alliance with partners in Rapid City, Sturgis, Deadwood, Hill City, Sioux Falls, and Watertown; and Masters

Walleye Circuit Tournament, September 12-13, Waubay Lake near Webster. Approved FY2010 projects: Distinctive Destinations, Hot Springs; South Dakota SmartAlec GPS Adventures and Summer Nights, Rapid City; Uptown Festival of Arts & Crafts, Watertown, June 13; Gateway to the West Fest, Mitchell, July 2-4; Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Annual Fourth of July Wacipi; Great Aberdeen Pig Out, July 10-11; South Dakota Walleye Classic Festival near Akaska, August 12-16; Brown County Fair, August 17-23; Holy Terror Days: Little House on the Prairie TV Series Cast Reunion, Keystone, September 4-6; and Ribs, Rods & Rock n' Roll, Vermillion, September 11-12.

Board also met with the staff and regional tourism directors to brainstorm/develop goals for FY2010. Group discussed new ideas for marketing and green practices. Creative presented a Black Hills photo event plan outline to Bill Honerkamp and got some good feedback from him as we move forward on this event for 2010.

#### Great Events for 2009

Outdoor Expo, Huron – June 13-14: Placed ads online at SouthDakota-outdoors.com and Argus leader.com; completed brochure and postcard. Secured radio spots.

Redlin Art Center's Annual Summer Celebration, Watertown – August 8-9: Worked on design of online banner ads and newspaper ads.

South Dakota Walleye Classic, Akaska – August 10-15: Designed and placed ads online at SouthDakota-outdoors.com and walleycentral.com. Two more online ads will be due in July, and there will be four newspaper ads due in July.

South Dakota Festival of Books, Deadwood – September 25-27: Will meet with the committee as directed.

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