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1. DIVISION'S IN-STATE MARKETING CAMPAIGN GARNERS NATIONAL AWARD

The U.S. Travel Association's National Council of State Tourism Directors awarded the 2009 Mercury Award for Co-op Marketing to the Division's campaign supporting in-state leisure travel. The Division's resident campaign is an ongoing effort that has become increasingly important during the economic downturn as consumers look for opportunities for getaways closer to home.

Already difficult conditions were exacerbated by rising gasoline prices and availability issues in summer and fall 2008. The comprehensive multimedia effort benefited greatly

from a variety of public relations initiatives and the support provided through partnerships with the N.C. Association of Broadcasters, the N.C. Press Foundation and UNC-TV that generated millions of dollars in exposure promoting North Carolina and the state's official travel planning Web site, VisitNC.com.

The Mercury Awards are presented annually by U.S. Travel Association's National Council of State Tourism Directors to recognize excellence and creative accomplishment in state/territory tourism marketing and promotion.

2. 2008 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Division has released its 2008 Annual Report; as a cost saving measure, the report was distributed exclusively this year in .pdf format for the first time ever. While 2008 was a challenging year for the travel industry, the state saw visitor expenditures increase 2.1 percent to \$16.86 billion and market share gains making North Carolina the nation's sixth most visited state. The tourism industry remains a vitally important part of the economic fiber of North Carolina, generating \$1.39 billion in state and local taxes and supporting 190,500 jobs for North Carolinians.

"It is because of strong partnerships and the collaborative efforts of all our tourism industry partners that we have seen growth even in difficult times. With tall hurdles still ahead in 2009 and beyond, the Division will continue to emphasize these relationships in our work to strengthen North Carolina's position as one of America's most desired travel, film, wine and sports destinations," Assistant Secretary Lynn Minges said as the report was released.

To view the report, click [here](#).

3. REGISTER NOW FOR MID-YEAR MARKETING UPDATE

The 2009 Mid-Year Marketing Update is less than three weeks away, so now is the time to [register](#) and help shape the Division's future planning.

A fresh approach to this year's partner forum will highlight a variety of successes and opportunities including media missions, co-op advertising, VisitNC.com and consumer sweepstakes, while also welcoming input to help fuel development of the Division's 2010-2011 strategic plan. The partner forum will conclude the day's program, which also features the Division Update along with remarks from N.C. Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco, N.C. Secretary of Cultural Resources Linda Carlisle and Dr. Mike Walden, economist from N.C. State University.

Widely known for his ability to relate larger economic trends to individual consumers, Walden will give an overview of the broader economy and how it may influence North Carolina's travel and hospitality sector in the coming year. Walden recently addressed the N.C. World Trade Association's meeting where he spoke about "Trends in the International Business Climate and the State of the Economy." Calling the current recession the "Great Recession," Walden said it will eventually end, and the U.S. economy will begin a positive turn in late 2009 or early 2010. He pointed out some recent encouraging news about the economy, with one of the bright spots being the growth in exports driven by the weak dollar.

For the complete agenda and registration information for the Mid-Year Marketing Update, Sept. 22 at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh, click [here](#).

4. CANADIAN OVERNIGHT VISITATION UP BY 10 PERCENT IN 2008

Over 452,000 Canadian visitors stayed overnight in North Carolina in 2008 – a 10 percent increase over last year – according to recent data received from Statistics Canada. Total Canadian visitors (including daytrippers) topped one million for the first time last year.

North Carolina remains 20th in overnight visitation to a U.S. state by Canadians. Almost three-fourths of Canadian overnight visitors to the state were from Ontario, while approximately 14 percent came from Quebec. The average length of stay for overnight visitors was 3.5 nights, with the majority of Canadians visiting during the first and second quarters of 2008. First quarter visitation was up an astonishing 29 percent and second quarter visitation was up 10 percent over the first and second quarters last year. Shopping (82.3 percent), outdoor activities (63.5 percent) and sightseeing (59.2 percent) were the most popular activities of Canadian overnight visitors to North Carolina.

The Division aggressively markets North Carolina to Canadian visitors through an office in Toronto, with a focus on both consumers and group tour operators in Ontario and Quebec. The Division has also developed an online presence in French-speaking Canada as part of the visitnc.com family of Web sites, www.gc.visitnc.com. For more information about the Division's international marketing programs, contact Heidi Walters at (919) 715-6702 or hwalters@nccommerce.com

For a complete summary of 2008 Canadian visitation, click [here](#), or contact Marlise Taylor at (919) 733-7278 or via mtaylor@nccommerce.com.

5. LATE LABOR DAY TO REDUCE NUMBER OF VACATIONS, BUT WILL BE THIRD BUSIEST LABOR DAY WEEKEND THIS DECADE, AAA SAYS

AAA projects that the number of Americans traveling on vacation this Labor Day weekend will be heavily impacted due to when Labor Day falls on the calendar this year. Approximately 39.1 million travelers are expected to take a trip of 50 miles or more away from home, a decrease of 13.3 percent from 2008 when Labor Day travel was the highest this decade. Labor Day fell on Sept. 1 last year, allowing for a long weekend trip before a new school year started in many regions of the country. This year, however, Labor Day is Sept. 7, when the school year has already started for many children. AAA also reports its forecast shows Labor Day travel will be up over this summer's Fourth of July holiday, which is a positive sign. For more information, <http://www.aaanewsroom.net/Main/Default.asp?CategoryID=8&ArticleID=705>.

6. ROAD TRIPS REMAIN POPULAR IN RECESSION

Millions of Americans continue to hit the highways, seeing car travel as the best alternative in a difficult economy. Over Memorial Day, about 32.4 million travelers made a trip of more than 50 miles, and about 83% of them traveled by automobile. For the July 4th holiday, the number of people traveling by air increased slightly from the

previous year due to lower airfares, AAA spokesman Geoff Sundstrom said. But about 88 percent of travelers still went by automobile. And signs are that road trips will continue to dominate American leisure travel. According to the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, despite the decline in sales of these large, gas-guzzling vehicles, a survey of RV owners said 64% planned to travel over Labor Day, which is up slightly from last year. To find out more, visit <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204047504574387090738650458.html>.

7. GOV. PERDUE SIGNS FILM INCENTIVES BILL

Gov. Bev Perdue last week signed Senate Bill 943 allowing production companies a 25 percent tax credit for film projects in North Carolina, up from the previous credit of 15 percent. The bill also sets minimum spending and hiring requirements for qualifying film companies working in the state. "This legislation is vital to the growth of our \$91 million motion picture industry in North Carolina," said Gov. Perdue. "This bill will preserve thousands of jobs for our deserving residents, increase investment in our economy and help showcase our state's rich offerings to film and TV audiences around the world." Companies must spend a minimum of \$250,000 on production costs in the state to be eligible for the tax credit. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Linda Garrou (D-Forsyth) also requires companies to meet hiring requirements for North Carolinians and other criteria to qualify for the incentive. To find out more, visit

<http://www.ncfilm.com/news/355/109.html>,

http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/hr/content_display/film/news/e3icb4369b575a64547eb038b4f8efddf72 and

[http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20090827/ARTICLES/908279983/1177?Title=Gov-v-Perdue-signs-N-C-film-incentive-bill](http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20090827/ARTICLES/908279983/1177?Title=Gov-Perdue-signs-N-C-film-incentive-bill).

8. GOV. PERDUE SETS TWO-WEEK TRADE MISSION TO CHINA, JAPAN

Gov. Bev Perdue, Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco and a handful of executives from North Carolina will visit China and Japan in October in an effort to drum up business for the state, officials said Wednesday (today). China is North Carolina's second-largest trading partner, while Japan is the fourth-largest. The two nations combined for \$3.6 billion worth of business with North Carolina last year. With the tight state budget, officials have gone over expenses line by line to ensure as little public money is spent on the trip as possible, Crisco said. To find out more, visit

<http://www.wral.com/news/local/politics/story/5918473/>.

9. MARKETING OUTLOOK FORUM, OCT. 26-28 IN LITTLE ROCK, ARK.

Make no mistake, in these tough times, every dollar spent must be justified, which is why you can't afford to miss U.S. Travel's Marketing Outlook Forum (MOF), Oct. 26-28 in Little Rock, Ark. In one place at one time, you'll gain actionable insights and market intelligence needed to help grow your business and prepare for the future. MOF provides research based strategies that give tangible results and a solid return on marketing investment. To provide budget relief, this year's registration fee is \$50 less than 2008. Save another \$100 by registering before Sept. 11 and get entered in a drawing to win complimentary Executive Suite accommodations. This year, registrants may also attend Acxiom's Travel Marketers Continuing Education Workshop on Oct. 29 for free, featuring Forrester Research's Henry Harteveltdt and Acxiom CEO John Meyer

and other Acxiom executives. For complete program information and to register, visit www.ustravel.org/mof.

10. GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK REDEDICATED TODAY

About 2,000 people gathered at Newfound Gap today (Wednesday) to participate in the rededication event for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Those in attendance included dignitaries, people who were born in the park and people who helped build it as members of the Civilian Conservation Corps. On September 2, 1940, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stood at the North Carolina-Tennessee on Newfound Gap Road and dedicated Great Smoky Mountains National Park “for the permanent enjoyment of the people.” The rededication is one of many events scheduled this year to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. To find out more, visit <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090902/NEWS01/90902033> and <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2009/08/great-smoky%E2%80%99s-highway-441-be-closed-temporarily-75th-anniversary-rededication-ceremony4471>.

11. STUDY: TROUT FISHING CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMY

Trout-fishing opportunities provided and managed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission make a significant contribution to the local economies of Western North Carolina and to the state as a whole, according to “The Economic Impacts of Mountain Trout Fishing in North Carolina,” a recent study released last month by the Commission. An estimated 92,765 resident and nonresident anglers fished for trout 1.42 million days in North Carolina in 2008, with Transylvania, Watauga, Haywood, Cherokee, Henderson, Jackson and Ashe counties seeing the most fishing activity. The study also found that a typical resident trout angler fished nearly 10 days in 2008, spending \$65 per day on trip expenses, while a typical nonresident angler fished five days in 2008 and spent \$158 per day on trip expenses. The average resident trout angler spent \$502.92 per year on equipment. To find out more, visit <http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2009/aug/15/outdoors-notebook-trout-fishing-contributes-to-eco/> and <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200990813075>; to view the study, visit http://www.ncwildlife.org/Fishing/documents/ExecutiveSummary_TroutEconomicImpact_sFinal_08062009.pdf.

12. CHEROKEE OPENS NEW GOLF COURSE

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians unveiled a new golf course on Monday in Cherokee, the latest project to further economic development in the area. Sequoyah National Golf Club, a 263-acre, \$16 million project was christened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that included Gov. Bev Perdue, U.S. Rep. Heath Shuler and U.S. Sen. Richard Burr. The par-72 layout is the first Western North Carolina design of renowned architect Robert Trent Jones II. To find out more, visit <http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009909010323>.

13. COASTAL LIVING IDEA HOUSE OPENING IN SOUTHPORT

The 2009 Coastal Living Idea House at Seawatch at Sunset Harbor in Southport is scheduled to open for tours starting Sept. 3. This year’s home celebrates the best in coastal home innovation, décor, and construction while also representing a

consciousness and sensitivity to shoreline preservation. The Idea House will also be featured in the November issue of Coastal Living magazine. To find out more about the Coastal Living Idea House, visit <http://www.seawatch-nc.com/idea-house.html>.

14. U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION CONDUCTING H1N1 SURVEY

The U.S. Travel Association is preparing resources to help the travel industry best prepare for and communicate about the virus' threat as the situation evolves. It is seeking input to better develop its plans and activities. Therefore, the association is conducting a brief survey to obtain insights into H1N1 readiness within the travel and tourism industry and to obtain input from members regarding potential U.S. Travel initiatives related to the H1N1 outbreak. Click [here](#) if you are interested in taking this short survey.

15. GREENING N.C. TRAVEL: IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

A bed and breakfast recently installed a new tankless water heater. The B&B owners were excited about the prospect of providing endless hot water to guests while reducing their rising energy bills. Unfortunately, after the new appliance was installed some rooms in the inn no longer had hot water. A Mexican restaurant found itself in a similar predicament when they installed energy efficient lighting that caused their tortilla chips to appear green in color. The lesson learned from these two stories is that, like with any changes, there are problems that can arise when installing energy saving appliances. It is important to research not only the products you are installing but also the installers themselves. For more information on energy saving appliances, visit www.energystar.gov. For a database of green building projects in N.C., visit www.ncgreenbuilding.org. A directory of renewable energy professionals in N.C. can be found at www.greenprofessionals.org. For more information on implementing sustainable practices, contact Tom Rhodes at tom.rhodes@ncdenr.gov, or Alex Naar at (252) 737-1346 or via anaar@ncommerce.com.

16. SURVEYS, MARKETING, TRAVEL & INDUSTRY TRENDS

Ypartnership Survey Finds U.S. Travelers Seek Value Over Green – U.S. travelers are more familiar with sustainable travel terminology than they were two years ago, but remain unwilling to pay more for eco-friendly travel options, according to the July travelhorizons. Only nine percent of consumers say they are willing to pay more to use travel service suppliers that offer eco-friendly options for travelers, and only three percent have purchased a carbon offset when booking travel. Travelhorizons is a quarterly consumer survey co-authored by the U.S. Travel Association and Ypartnership. To find out more, visit <http://www.travelpulse.com/Resources/Editorial.aspx?n=59911>.

Hotels' Charges for Internet Irk Some -- Many travelers are disturbed by hotels that charge a daily fee for Internet access. Many business travelers book less-expensive hotels with free Internet access, even if their company will pay for a more expensive hotel that charges for online access. Yet, charging guests for Internet access in their rooms remains common as hotels continue to look for revenue, especially as occupancy rates have fallen during the recession. According to a USA TODAY survey of 80 hotel brands, 40 percent charge such a fee at all or most of their U.S. hotels. The charge can vary at hotels within the same brand but often ranges from \$9.95 to \$14.95

daily. To find out more, visit http://www.usatoday.com/travel/hotels/2009-08-31-hotel-internet-wifi_N.htm.

17. COASTAL LIVING INCLUDES OUTER BANKS AMONG BEST ROAD TRIPS

In its September issue, Coastal Living includes the Outer Banks among its “10 Best Road Trips” in the U.S., noting the area’s small towns that dot the islands’ landscapes of dunes and long, sweeping beaches plus, on the mainland, weaving through marshlands and historic towns like Edenton. To find out more, visit <http://www.coastalliving.com/travel/ten-best-road-trips-00400000053582/>.

18. WILMINGTON AMONG USA TODAY’S 10 GREAT PLACES TO STREAM THROUGH CITIES

Rivers and canals helped great cities grow – and many are spurring waterfront redevelopment with cruises and tours. On USA Today’s “10 Great Places to Stream Through Cities,” Wilmington is noted for the Cape Fear River. To find out more, visit http://www.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/10great/2009-08-27-city-river-cruises_N.htm.

19. NETTLES NAMED NEW DIRECTOR FOR OUTER BANKS VB

Lee Nettles has been named the new managing director for the Outer Banks VB. Nettles leaves as vice-president of marketing for the Wilmington/Cape Fear Coast CVB on Sept. 11.

20. “NORTH CAROLINA WEEKEND”

For the week of Sept. 3 on UNC-TV's “North Carolina Weekend,” canoe and camp at the New River State Park in Laurel Springs. Tour Poplar Grove Plantation in Wilmington. Enjoy the great outdoors at Boone’s Cave Park near Lexington. Hike or bike along the American Tobacco Trail in Chatham, Durham and Wake counties. The “Marker Minute” steps back in time at the taverns of Historic Halifax. And the “House Special” samples the fare at the Wild Onion in Randleman. (*Please note: listings are subject to change.*) Exclusively underwritten by the N.C. Division of Tourism, “North Carolina Weekend” airs Thursdays at 9:00 p.m. with repeats on Fridays and Saturdays (*please check local listings*) on UNC-TV. In addition, UNC-TV has made recent editions of “North Carolina Weekend” available online. For more information or to download a podcast, visit <http://www.unctv.org/ncweekend>.

21. UPCOMING INDUSTRY MEETINGS & EVENTS

Sept. 9-10 -- Blue Ridge Parkway Association Regional Membership Meeting, Natural Bridge, Va.

Sept. 10 – N.C. Business Travel Association Education Day Meeting, Charlotte

Sept. 11 – N.C. Grape Day, Raleigh Farmers Market

Sept. 16-17 – Travel Leadership Summit, Washington, D.C.

Sept. 22 – Mid-Year Marketing Update, Raleigh

Oct. 26-28 – Marketing Outlook Forum, Little Rock, Ark.

Nov. 12-13 – NCTIA Annual Meeting, Greensboro

Nov. 19-20 – MPI-CC Meeting, Raleigh

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FEEDBACK WELCOME

The N.C. Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development is committed to serving North Carolina's tourism industry. If you have feedback regarding any of the Division's programs, let your voice be heard at visitnc@nccommerce.com.