

LEISURE TRAVEL

October 2022

Prepared by:

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Director Leisure Travel

RECAP

Trade Shows/ Missions/ Events

October 2022

10/10-14	ASTA – Detroit & Grand Rapids, MI
10/17-20	AWTA – New York (Alliance of Westchester Travel Agents)
10/18-21	Travel Agent Owners Forum – Ocho Rios, Jamaica
10/19-23	Apple Leisure Group Ascend Conference – Cancun, Mexico
10/23-26	AAA – CAA Event – Bonita Springs, FL

October 2022

ASTA – Detroit & Grand Rapids Michigan

October 10 - 14, 2022

ATTENDANCE: 171 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 150 Destination Magazines and Assorted Logo Items

RESULTS:

- This was a great opportunity to be a part of two regional ASTA Travel Advisor Trade Shows. The ASTA Great Lakes Chapters Detroit had 93 travel advisors in attendance and Grand Rapids Chapter had 78 travel advisors. These chapters are currently planning two spring events in 2023 and members of both are familiar with Visit St Pete/Clearwater. Looking at a possible FAM for advisors from this region for summer 2023.
- Many have not visited since the pandemic and would like to see the destination in person, giving them valuable sales tools to grow business to our destination.
- Lots of questions regarding the growing arts scene in our area and several of the advisors were inquiring about loss or damage created by Hurricane Ian. Many will be rebooking their clients from Southwest Florida to St Pete/Clearwater.
- Specific bookings discussed with AAA Warren (two bookings):
 - Christmas family booking at the Sandpearl – December 23 – 28, 2022
 - Girlfriends Spa Getaway at the Don CeSar – December 2 – 5, 2022

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support ASTA events in Michigan and will move forward with plans for a possible FAM for summer 2023.

STAFFED BY: Gail Yeager, Sr. Sales Manager Leisure Travel

AWTA – New York**October 17 - 20, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: 88 Travel Advisors
INDUSTRY
PARTICIPATION: N/A
COLLATERAL
DISTRIBUTED: 100 Destination Magazines and Partner Collateral

RESULTS:

- The AWTA (Alliance of Westchester Travel Agencies) had 88 advisors in attendance for this Florida Destination event. AWTA has a membership base of 250 travel advisors across eastern NY. The advisors welcomed the updates on St. Pete/Clearwater and had many questions about relocating their clients from Southwest Florida due to hurricane Ian.
- Because of VSPC's longstanding relationship with AWTA, we were invited by the Board Members to join them for their annual meeting, Discussions included suggestions on how Visit St. Pete/Clearwater can be more involved with their membership base for 2023. We will be adding their names to our "New & Now" distribution list.
- The Alliance has also requested a FAM trip for their top selling Florida travel advisors. We also provided details on our new VISIT FLORIDA destination training to become a Visit St Pete/Clearwater specialist.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support AWTA, as NY continues to be a strong market for SPC. Most advisors are home-based in NY but sell to clients across the USA.

STAFFED BY: Gail Yeager, Sr. Sales Manager Leisure Travel

Travel Agent Owners Forum – Ocho Rios, Jamaica**October 18 - 21, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: 300 Travel Advisors
INDUSTRY
PARTICIPATION: N/A
COLLATERAL
DISTRIBUTED: Destination Magazines, Logo Items mailed Post Conference

RESULTS:

- The Travel Agents Owners Forum is a full 2-day appointment show with networking events. This show offers a way to sell the destination to vetted travel agency owners that work with their network of advisors that are part of their storefront, host agency or consortia. The owners attend this forum to learn more about destinations like St. Pete/Clearwater and how we can help grow their business. They are the liaison between their agency staff and the resorts/hotels and attractions in St Pete Clearwater.

- VSPC had great meetings and we are sending out 25 individual destination magazines with partner collateral, 2 boxes of magazines to two storefront agencies, follow up on 2 destination training webinars, dropping off a welcome beach bag for a VIP client staying at The Don CeSar on November 22nd (the advisor originally booked this client at La Playa Golf and Beach Resort in Naples, Florida and moved the booking to St Pete Beach), assisting with a leisure group of 16 for 3-nights already booked at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort, and passed along client contact info. to the VSPC Meetings Department regarding an opportunity for a corporate group booking.
- Rate in our destination is a bit of a challenge for agency owners. Demand for domestic beach options is still high, but the ADR for most beach front hotels is not within travelers' budgets.
- Most agency owners are actively seeking to add advisors to their team.
- Amazingly, we met with 5 advisors that have never booked and/or did not know anything about the destination and only booked Orlando and Southeast Florida. They were delighted to hear about our destination and have potential business for our area.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to attend this owner's forum to keep St. Pete/Clearwater top-of-mind with these key advisors and provide updated sales tools to grow business from their travel networks.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess, Sales Manager Leisure Travel

Apple Leisure Group Ascend Conference – Cancun, Mexico October 19 - 23, 2022

ATTENDANCE: 557 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: Sheraton Sand Key, TradeWinds Island Resorts, The Don CeSar and Sirata Beach Resort, Visit Tampa Bay

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: Destination Magazines, Logo Items

RESULTS:

- Ascend 2022 was attended by 557 travel advisors from across the USA. Visit St. Pete/Clearwater and Visit Tampa Bay were gold sponsors for the event. Our one-hour workshop was attended by 50 travel advisors and several Apple Leisure Group salespeople, and we met one-on-one with 116 advisors in our booth over the 2-day trade show. Partners that also attended were The Don CeSar, TradeWinds Island Resorts, Sheraton Sand Key and Sirata Beach Resort. Traffic at their booths was also very busy. Other Florida destinations attending included Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Disney's Swan & Dolphin, and Walt Disney World in Orlando.

- Had a lot of questions regarding Hurricane Ian and many agents said they needed to find alternative beachfront accommodations on the Gulf coast to move customers. They were very pleased to learn that St. Pete/Clearwater was not impacted. Participation in this show will result in additional sales through Apple Leisure Group. Will track ROI from this show.
- Specific business discussed included:
 - Doug Thompson, Cruise One in Cilia, TX – sends lots of clients and LOVES the welcome bags we provide his customers. So does Dawn Schmidt with Trips by Dawn in Des Moines, Iowa. They have repeat clients to our area. Will track in Simpleview.
 - Jessica Zurcher, Bucket List Travel, eastern Wisconsin loves the Allegiant Appleton/Green Bay flight to PIE. The direct service and price are why her customers like this option.
 - Molly Friend, Friendly Travel out of Chickasha, OK has clients looking at the Wyndham for spring break. She loves the new Breeze Air service from Oklahoma City into Tampa.
 - Chantelle Nye, KHM Travel Group in Brunswick, OH said she is selling Florida more than ever. Customers still do not want to travel abroad and many of her clients do not have passports. She spoke to the Don CeSar about a honeymoon client.
 - Victoria Redwine with Vacations and Voyages by Victoria in Toms River, NJ loves our area and has booked it many times. Has a gymnastics group for Feb. looking at Sirata.
 - Blue Timber agency in Evanston, IL is looking at booking TradeWinds RumFish Resort – 13 rooms for 3-nights this summer.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support Apple Leisure Group's Ascend Conference in 2023. Considering an increased sponsorship in 2023, possibly adding Visit Lauderdale to the partnership.

STAFFED BY: Rosemarie Payne, Director Leisure Travel

AAA – CAA Annual Conference – Bonita Springs, FL

October 23 - 26, 2022

ATTENDANCE: Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION:

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: Destination Magazines, Logo Items

RESULTS:

- AAA/CAA hosted their annual conference in Florida. This conference is for AAA Florida Inc. and the upper-level management of all the National and Canadian Clubs. Visit Florida sponsored a breakout session and was given the opportunity to be a part of a networking trade show. The following VF partners were invited to participate in the conference:

Orlando, Miami, Tampa, Treasure Coast, Sarasota, Crystal River, and VSPC. The trade show/networking event was more about exchanging information and not immediate bookings for the destinations.

- VSPC is going to work with Rosenda Callaway, Manager for Independent Travel Agency Sales, she handles all the at home travel agents and is willing to do a webinar with us on the destination.
- Karen Taaffe, Manager Product Development Travel CAA, is going to send us Canadian opportunities for 2023. We are also participating in Northeast AAA Threads event in Orlando next month to meet with actual AAA travel advisors.
- With AAA Inc. being in Heathrow, Florida we are sending Destination Guides to promote staycations for their Florida customer base.
- The sessions were great, and AAA/CAA had incredible speakers and really have some huge marketing and sale objectives for 2023. The association is pushing to gain market share with the Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z and not depend on the Boomers to remain competitive.
- AAA Inc. is creating a new digital tool called “Trip Canvas” to allow members to build a custom itinerary with hotel, air, car rental and attractions.
- Incredibly, AAA/CAA does over 4 billion annually in just travel business. Overall, the AAA/CAA partnership with Visit Florida was a success because we were the first CVB/DMO to partner with the association and be allowed to attend this annual meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support AAA & CAA during their many training events to grow business from these key travel advisor partnerships.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess, Sales Manager Leisure Travel

UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS/MISSIONS/EVENTS

11/3-4	Cruise World – Fort Lauderdale, FL
11/6-9	WTM (World Travel Market) – London, United Kingdom
11/10-14	Munich Germany Mission
11/15-16	AAA Threads – Orlando, FL

FAM/EDUCATIONAL VISITS

11/2-4	Virgin Atlantic Inaugural Media/VIP FAM
11/10-12	Virgin Holidays FAM
11/29 – 12/1	Virgin Atlantic Mega FAM
11/30	Ocean Florida UK FAM
12/2-5	DERTOUR Germany FAM
12/10	USAirtours UK FAM