

Meetings & Conventions

2010-2011 Sales Plan

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GOAL

Generate 90,000 definite room nights as a result of the leads generated by the Meetings and Conventions Department.

STRATEGIES:

Continue working with our partners and encouraging them to involve the CVB on booking business into the county. Assist meeting planners with all aspects of their requests for proposals. Inquire about flexibility with the client's proposed dates when distributing leads thus allowing as many properties as possible to submit a proposal for consideration.

Assist our hotel partners by participating in site inspections as well as FAM trips and providing meeting planners with all of the information on the services available to them.

Encourage properties to contact us when they are unable to accommodate a clients meeting requirement so that we can then contact the client and assist in the search to find an available property in the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area that will fit their group needs.

Continue to host quarterly Meetings and Conventions Committee meetings where we update our industry partners on our sales efforts.

Attend and exhibit at educational conferences and tradeshow, organize sales missions and host client events in all geographical markets.

Corporate trade shows (Meeting Professionals International)

Association trade shows (Florida Society of Association Executives (FSAE), American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), Springtime in the Park, and Destination Showcase)

SMERF market (Social, Military, Educational, Religious and Fraternal) trade shows (Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA), Fraternal Executives Association (FEA), Rejuvenate and Connect Marketplace)

Government market trade shows (Society of Government Meeting Professionals, Affordable Meetings and Quest)

Multi-cultural market trade shows (National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP))

Our 'Backyard Marketing Campaign', will focus on telemarketing to associations and corporations in our own region. We will focus our sales effort to promote that local planners keep their meetings here, which will save them money on transportation, and stimulate the local economy.

Increase staff involvement in industry associations, such as MPI, with in each geographical market and plan to attend/sponsor monthly meetings to increase awareness of our destination amongst their meeting planner members.

GOAL

Increase the number of groups receiving services, and MINT reportable room nights.

STRATEGIES:

Promote comprehensive planning services by attending event planning meetings to provide promotion and attendance-building ideas, planning assistance, supplier referrals and destination materials.

Maintain history-reporting to Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), Meetings Industry Network (MINT) database program, for research specific market and date-available leads.

Encourage meeting referrals from hotel sales and services department for groups that did not originally book through the CVB.

Promote CVB concierge link for attendees to access destination information and activities using pre-meeting promotion and registration materials.

GOAL

Increase awareness and knowledge of the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area as a meeting destination to corporations and associations in the northeast and southwest market.

STRATEGIES:

Meet USA- East Coast Tradeshow and Conference focuses on meeting planners from the NJ, Philadelphia and metro NY areas. The conference attracts approx 250 meeting planners from the corporate (52%), association (25%), independent planners (13%), non profit (2%) and government (2%) markets.

MPI New England Chapter- Meeting of the Minds Conference and Networking Tradeshow. The conference and tradeshow attracts over 75 meeting planners from the Boston metro area for their annual meeting and supplier networking opportunity.

Participate in both Connecticut- River Valley and Westfield, NY- MPI Chapter Events. These events focus on the planners in the Hartford, CT and Westchester County, NY corporate and association headquarters. We will pursue partnership with Tampa Bay & Co. hosting these events.

Attend and sponsor MPI- Philadelphia Chapter Luncheon, and make additional sales calls to key clients. The demographic and airlift is favorable to yielding additional bookings from this market.

Attend and sponsor MPI- GNY Mix Event (Greater New York Chapter). NY Mix has established itself as the premier networking and educational event in the metro area attracting both corporate and association planners from the tri-state area. VSPC will pursue a sponsorship opportunity, while continuing to co- partner with Tampa Bay & Co.

NJ- MPI Golf Invitational.-The NJ MPI Chapter membership has a ratio of 58% planners to 42% suppliers. This chapter has an annual buying power of \$320 million, and the average MPI- NJ planner spends \$1.5 million annually. We will attend and sponsor a golf hole during this event.

Participate in MPI Houston Chapter luncheon and MPI Dallas Tradeshow opportunity in TX. We will support these events with sales calls to key accounts in the area. The focus will be on corporate, association, and key third party planners from the area. The Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) will also be holding their Annual Conference in Dallas in 2010, and VSPC will pursue possible sponsorship opportunities.

GOAL

To increase new group business to our area by bringing qualified meeting planners to Pinellas County to experience the destination, and meet directly with the hotel partners. The objective is to increase visitation and familiarity with VSPC and increase bookings overall. Grow our database by encouraging and rewarding planners who already book our destination to provide us with new referrals on planners who would benefit from using VSPC services. Continue our efforts to aggressively build our relationships with our A list clients to produce more business.

STRATEGIES:

In conjunction with both Destination Showcase's (Chicago and DC) we will once again participate in the "Hosted Buyer Program" with DMAI. This program provides us with exclusive access to pre-qualified key decision makers that are outside of the DC and Chicago territory. DMAI and the hosts will provide the round trip air and accommodations, to their choice of the 2 tradeshows as well as access to the educational sessions. In addition all "hosts" will have pre-set appointments with each of these planners aside from the tradeshow.

Continue with the rewards program for association and corporations that book multiple meetings with our hotel partners annually. Host luncheons and other client events in all geographical territories in order to recognize these clients and thank them for their continued business.

Organize a post conference familiarization trip after RCMA, which will be held in Tampa in January of 2011. Target key planners whose meeting specifications fit at our partner hotels and have them tour each property as well as other offsite venues in Pinellas County.

Prospect, plan and organize new sales missions in the southeast market to help increase our leads coming out of this territory.

Huntsville, Alabama has a new chapter of Society of Government Meeting Professionals and several major contractors are in the area such as CAS/Raytheon. Birmingham has quite a bit of corporate business and both cities can be planned on one trip.

New Orleans, LA is another territory we would like to penetrate. Southwest airlines have affordable lift and not a lot of prospecting has been done in that area for transportation and government business.

Due to the economy and the competition in the Florida market we need to keep up our presence strong while also focusing on areas where our competition is not as strong. We will add more sales trips to Miami, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Gainesville and Orlando.