

# PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

## 2008/2009 Public Relations Plan

Prepared by: David Downing  
Public Relations Director

### **GOAL**

**Update the functionality of the PR department using new technologies, new press materials and new web initiatives.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

Create new press kits, develop new key messages and revamp and revise pitch lists. Adopt new expandable format that drives journalists to the web site, rather than the traditional folder filled with CD's and paper releases.

Work with Miles Media and internet marketing to refine and re-think the contents of our current PR Web site, FloridasBeachMedia.com. Create similar look and feel between it and our new press kit collateral. Possibilities include the addition of rich media such as streaming video, podcasts, etc., with substantial in-house administrative controls.

Institute production of video podcasts by purchasing the necessary equipment and training appropriate staff members on technical aspects of production. Aim to create video clips and stories both for the consumer site, our PR site (FloridasBeachMedia.com) and the industry site (PinellasCVB.com) that would raise awareness of CVB efforts throughout the industry. Link videos to or from industry newsletters, press releases, etc., to create.

Launch and co-developm an industry partner PR site. Already in production with the Internet Marketing department, this web-based PR initiative will provide a vehicle for partners to broadcast news to the industry, thereby reserving the Press Release for news of interest to the industry at large.

## **GOAL**

**Institute a “PR saturation” initiative that places special emphasis on one destination each year to achieve maximum in-market exposure.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

Designate New York City our PR saturation destination area for FY 2008-2009.

Target previously untapped media by securing placement in two specific commuter-focused newspapers: Metro and AM New York. These are widely read on all subways, commuter trains and buses in the NY metro area, with a combined readership far greater than the NY Times, and our area has never been featured in them.

Work with Ad Department to leverage editorial coverage from all area-specific media buys. Suggest/coordinate possible placement areas/publications.

Partner with the CVB Leisure Sales and Meetings Departments to co-produce a larger-scale event in New York City in February/March. With the combined resources of several departments focused on one event, we would create a much bigger splash than any single departments could create individually.

Target television travel expert Valerie D’Elia, travel host for NY 1, New York City’s 24-hour cable news channel, for coverage of the St. Pete/Clearwater Area. D’Elia, who also appears regularly on the Today Show, features getaways aimed specifically at time-crunched New Yorkers and also does a “D’Elias Deals” segment wherein hotel or air partners offer segment-specific discounts, so there’s a possibility for partner advertising as well.

## **GOAL**

**Generate 300 stories that promote St. Petersburg/Clearwater in domestic and international print media. Target internet-based outlets to take advantage of latest trends in distribution of travel information via the web and digital devices.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

Work with our domestic New York City-based PR Agency -- Development Counsellors International (DCI) – and our international PR firms News Plus and Fleischman Hillard to target specific print media for placement of stories covering the St. Pete/Clearwater area.

Work with AuCoin & Associates, our contract nature/outdoors PR agency, to do niche work on our specialty area. The agency will produce six feature releases each year, pitch individual media visit and/or a group media trip, assist in hosting the media and follow up on articles. This cost is comparatively minimal and covers a completely separate market for our area, and the results have been extremely cost-effective.

Continue to regularly issue newsworthy press releases in order to draw national attention to newsworthy facets of our destination.

Work with Visit Florida to participate in three media receptions and media missions in key domestic markets (as well as in our Canadian markets).

Pitch travel trade publications such as Travel Agent magazine and Travel Trade Gazette both in person on media missions and by continuing our strong presence at the major international travel shows including World Travel Market (London), the Internationale Tourismus-Borse (Berlin), the Travel Industry Association's POW WOW trade show (Miami) and Florida Huddle trade show (Orlando).

Continue capitalizing on the Dr. Beach rankings of both Caladesi Island State Park and For De Soto to maximize exposure. Invite Dr. Stephen Leatherman (aka Dr. Beach) to travel with us on a European Media Mission. Also promote the TripAdvisor ranking of Ft. De Soto Beach as the nation's top beach of 2008.

Identify and host three travel television crews to the area, including the continuation of our ongoing relationship with the Discovery Channel Canada. Work domestically and in our international markets to generate stories on travel TV programs.

Team with at least four other tourism marketing organizations to promote visitation to our area. Potential partners include: Orlando/Orange County CVB, Visit Florida, Busch Entertainment Corporation, the Tampa Bay CVB, Greater Fort Lauderdale CVB and Walt Disney World.

Establish working relationships with four previously untapped web journalists, who sometimes have different needs and expectations than print journalists.

Conduct three CVB individual Media Missions making personal media calls to travel and consumer publications in three of our top feeder markets.

## **GOAL**

**Showcase the destination to 30 travel media from our top key markets, as well as print, on-line and broadcast.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

Work with our international PR agencies to develop CVB media missions in the US, UK and Central Europe. Develop carefully-targeted lists of media outlets to go after, with special attention given to placement in publications that have yet to feature the area.

As an enticement to secure coverage, offer “plus one” press trips to appropriate high-end or high-circulation publications (i.e.: a journalist and a significant other).

Invite high-value travel media from national publications and publications in our top feeder markets to make individual visits during the year. We will conduct several themed press trips for travel writers, both in groups and on an individual basis.

Promote the area’s best and newest assets at 15 trade shows and media missions throughout the United States and internationally.

## **GOAL**

**Generate 75 media stories in local publications that promote CVB efforts and the value of tourism to St. Petersburg/Clearwater**

### **STRATEGIES:**

Edit and distribute regular editions of CVB E-News to area media and community leaders. This electronic newsletter informs our audience of all the ongoing projects from every department in the CVB.

Integrate new video podcast initiative into E-News, with links directly to videos hosted on the PR Website, FloridasBeachMedia.com.

Regularly feature CVB staff members on the PR web site with photos and “favorites” lists of things they love about the destination. Possible use of videos in this initiative as well.

Maintain a local media presence for the CVB through radio appearances on programming through Pinellas County Communications and city-sponsored television.

Work with Hospitality Education Department to assist in publicizing local education initiatives as part of the continuing “Value of Tourism” campaign.

Work with all local governmental bodies and Chambers of Commerce to coordinate promotion and publicity of newsworthy festivals, events and additions.

## **2008/2009 Public Relations Action Plan**

### **October 2008**

- Sunrise to Sunset Media Fam with Fort Lauderdale CVB
- Purchase video-podcast equipment; start training staff
- Clearwater Jazz Holiday TV/individual media opportunities
- Co-Branded South American PR initiative with Tampa Bay & Co in Brazil and Argentina
- PRSA International Conference
- Writers Cup Golf Press Trip with other Florida CVB's

### **November 2008**

- "Water, Water Everywhere" boat-oriented FAM trip
- Attend World Travel Market (WTM) in London
- Joint pre-or-post WTM German Media Tour with four other Florida-based tourism agencies (tentatively planned)
- Individual Media Calls to major domestic markets
- Continue training for video podcast production

### **December 2008**

- Advance publicity for Outback Bowl media/press kits and B-Roll footage
- Bowl Beach Day--Clearwater Beach TV/individual media opportunities
- Pending press support for proposed ESPN Bowl at Tropicana Field
- CVB Individual Media Mission - major market TBD

- CVB Wedding Specialist press release and media outreach

### **January 2009**

- PR Support and Press Opportunities for Super Bowl 43 at Raymond James
- PR Mission to Toronto/Canada with Visit Florida
- TWIGS (Travel Women International Golf Society)
- Florida Huddle trade show in Orlando w/post Huddle Disney co-FAM
- Professional Golf Association (PGA) Merchandise Show in Orlando

### **February 2009**

- “PR Saturation” PR/media event in New York with Meetings and Sales
- Travel Media Association of Canada Conference (TMAC)
- Press event with the Toronto Blue Jays/Philadelphia Phillies
- Multicultural press visit (one or two writers)
- Individual boat-centered media fam visit (UK)

### **March 2009**

- ITB Trade Show in Berlin
- PODS PGA Tour Press event – Joint Golf FAM with Disney
- DMAI Development Conference
- Dr. Beach’s Beach Management and Tourism Conference
- Media Mission with NYC PR Firm to U.S. Top Feeder Market
- Canadian Press Group

### **April 2009**

- Eco/green FAM and media tour
- FLA USA Latin American press group
- PR Mission to TBD Northeast city with FLA USA
- PRSA Travel & Tourism Section Conference
- POW WOW trade show
- Media Mission with DCI, our NYC PR Firm, to U.S. Top Feeder Market

### **May 2009**

- National Tourism Week Community Relations opportunities
- UK Media Mission planned with CVB UK PR office
- Tampa, St. Pete/Clearwater domestic press group
- North American Travel Journalists Association (NATJA) Annual Conference and Media Marketplace
- Outdoors/Eco activities Press Group
- CVB Individual Media Mission - Canada
- CVB Individual Media Mission – Florida
- Luxury & Dining Press Trip with Disney

### **June 2009**

- Society of American Travel Writer's (SATW) Chapter Meeting/Associates Conference
- MediaBistro podcasting workshop and seminar in NYC
- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Travel & Tourism Conference
- German media mission with Central European PR agency

- Tampa Bay Rays & Blue Jays Press Event in Canada

### **July 2009**

- PR Mission to TBD Midwest city with FLA USA
- DMAI Annual Conference in Atlanta
- Emerging PR technologies workshop TBD
- Media Training for PR staff and Senior CVB staff
- Media & PR Professional Development certifications & training

### **August 2009**

- FLA USA Governor's Conference on Tourism
- Visit FLA Canadian Media Mission (Toronto, Montreal)
- Family Press Group (with magazine writers)
- ESTO Conference (Travel Industry Association Conference)

### **September 2009**

- UK Press Group (with BA Holidays or other carrier)
- Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) Convention
- Media Mission with Visit Florida to key U.S. Market