

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

June 2010

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Hospitality Education

EDUCATION

Industry Partnership

The Florida Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (FACVB) represents the 54 official county destination marketing organizations that promote their communities throughout the world. Their twice yearly conferences are extremely educational and an opportunity to learn from our peers in an exchange of best practices. Our June Destination Industry Summit was no exception and had a special atmosphere of camaraderie due to the oil spill situation that was intensifying. Visit Florida is the host of this conference so opened with a detailed description of their marketing plans for the state, primarily the panhandle area most impacted at that time. They talked about the Super 7 Markets that they were targeting information to and different media outlets as well as stepping up their Internet interactivity. Programs like “Share a Little Sunshine”, that invites people to visit Florida through an online postcard video; “Florida Live”, which are webcams set up all over the state and posts real photos from recent visitors; “Visit Florida Insiders” program which invites consumers to share real stories with freelance journalists that promote all the great travel products and destinations in Florida. They also encouraged all of the CVB’s to let their tourism partners know that any travel related business could have a free listing on the Visit Florida web site, with a description and picture for a year. In addition to the main presentations we heard about travel trends, forecasting, the future of social media, and had numerous breakout sessions from industry leaders in their areas. Some of the topics included: working with the media; communicating with your communities on the value of tourism; partnerships with government; tourism, economic development and chambers working together; the newest in customer data bases; and balancing priorities while increasing your market activities, which DT Minich lead. This conference reinforced a favorite quote of mine from Henry Ford, “Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success.”

We held another successful and well attended offering of Telephone Customer Service Skills for County Employees. We had representation from the Sheriff’s Dept, Health Dept, 911, county volunteer program, and a number of Municipalities. The class was from 1:00 to 4:30 and included hands-on activities, role-playing, audio, self evaluations, presentations and brainstorming sessions. We received very good evaluation comments.

An ongoing program new this year that we have brought to our CVB staff meetings is a “First Monday” presentation. The first Monday of the month we have an extended staff

meeting so that we can share a brief update on what everyone is working on, recent successes and breaking news. Before our meeting starts we now have one of our partners or a service provider, give a 15-20 minute educational overview. Some of the topics we've had presentations on: new transportation companies, eco-tourism providers, dinner cruise ships, dolphin awareness, destination management services and the new Florida Dept of Transportation pedestrian safety and flag crossing program. These are valuable opportunities for us to learn more about the ancillary services we offer our clients.

Spread across our county and extending throughout the entire Tampa Bay Area, positives steps are being taken to be a more environmentally friendly destination. Green Lodging certifications, Tampa Bay Watch, Blue Wave Beach designations, ongoing recycling programs, the first Green Government in Florida, to Sustainable County Education Committee, The Green Business Partnership and addressing public transportation that include 13 Diesel-Electric Hybrid Buses, expanded Trolley service as well as 'Free Beach Rides' on golf carts. The Tampa Bay Regional Planning, local governments and electric utility companies are working on "Project Get Ready" to prepare for an electrical vehicle program. They held a press conference and information session at Tropicana Field for the public to see the stations and announce their intentions in preparing our region for the arrival of electric vehicles.

Value of Tourism Presentations

County Volunteer Orientations: Animal Services, Heritage Village
PTEC Volunteers, St. Pete Library
Fountains Assisted Living

HOSPITALITY

VSPC Representation

BACA (Bay Area Concierge Association) Blue Martini Restaurant
Sustainable County Education Committee
County Exempt Meeting
TBBCoC (Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber) Ambassador fundraising committee
TBBCoC Ambassador Orientation & site visit St. Pete/Clearwater Airport
St. Pete/Clearwater Airport Media Day unveiling recent Renovations
Women in Tourism - Brio Tuscan Grille, International Mall
Clearwater Chamber Anniversary and Retirement Dinner for Sheila Cole
St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce – panel discussion on Offshore Oil Drilling
Palladium– panel discussion on Offshore Oil Drilling
Toastmasters Officer Training

VSPC Planning

Healthy Hotel workshops for Superior Small Lodging & Condo Alliance
FAM for Concierge – Tampa Bay Area and Orlando
Hospitality Law educational workshop