

UK OFFICE

NOVEMBER 2010 REPORT

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TOUR OPERATORS

The following meetings were held with tour operators at World Travel Market.

Stella Travel Services

Meeting held with Brian Hawe, Contracts Manager. Stella represents 2 brands, Travel 2 and Travelbag. Travel 2 sells through the trade and Travelbag sells direct to the consumer. Both have shown increases in business to the US in 2010. Room night stats for the brands combined are as follows:

Room nights to end of October:

Clearwater 106 room nights + 20%

St Pete 173 room nights + 22%

Discussed training of their retail stores and awaiting a marketing plan from Brian for co-op opportunities with Travelbag.

Expedia

Met with Vicki Wickens, Head of Media Solutions. Discussed bigger promotional opportunities to include Orlando Tourism and SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment. Expedia are tied in with Nectar points which are a loyalty scheme with over 11 million members. If we can provide a big enough promotion for them, they would look to include some sort of nectar tie-in.

Room night stats are 4454 to end of October.

THG Holidays

We were advised that that recent local newspaper advertisements in conjunction with Orlando Tourism generated 35 enquiries, 5 forward bookings and 35 room nights in 2011 from direct calls. We still have another advertisement left to run in January as part of this co-op activity. Total room night stats to end of October 2010 = 320

BA Holidays

Met with Kathryn Brownrigg, Destination Manager. Room night stats are very low for BA compared to the number of passengers coming off their Tampa flight with only 800 on the books to end of October 2010. Kathryn advised that this was down to the fact that the West Coast of Florida had not been well promoted on BA.com but this was now changing with a dedicated West Coast section on the site. VSPC has now been added to the drop down menu of destinations and optimised for search.

Tour America

Met with Mary McKenna, Managing Director and discussed options for co-op marketing in 2011. Orlando Tourism and Busch Gardens are interested in working with VSPC to make this a more far-reaching campaign and currently awaiting a proposal.

Virgin Holidays

Met with Alison Leslie, James Killick and Sonia Powell. Virgin Holidays are down for VSPC and discussed how to turn things around. Their customers are very price driven and Orlando has proved more cost effective for the consumer in 2010 than moving to a coastal destination for a 2nd week. All their coastal destinations are down. Virgin Holidays have launched a number of early booking offers for 2011 and numbers for VSPC are currently up on 2010. Discussed a number of co-op marketing options and scheduled a follow-up meeting after WTM.

American Holidays

Meeting held with Ciara Corcoran, Marketing Manager and Dee Burdock, Product Manager. Discussed area updates and possible joint activities for 2011. We were advised that VSPC were faring well compared to other Florida beach destinations and that sales were on a par with 2009 at around 1500 YTD. American Holidays will be forwarding a bespoke co-op marketing plan for us to view and consider for 2011 activity.

Trailfinders

Met with Jane Poyser, Product and Contracts Manager. Trailfinders are up to the US as a whole, up to Orlando by 20% and up to VSPC by 9%. Room night stats to end of October:

Clearwater – 700

St Pete – 396

We also discussed training their sales staff in Manchester, Newcastle, Birmingham and Dublin.

Miki Travel

Met with Nikki Beszant, Florida Contracts Manager to discuss the area in general and whether Miki needed any assistance from us. We were advised that Miki would like assistance with contracting new hotels in the area as they are looking to expand the product so a sales lead was sent out to our industry partners.

Jetsave

Meeting held with Suzanne Harvey, Product Manager. Discussed the recent joint co-op marketing activity in conjunction with Orlando Tourism (results still to follow) and possible opportunities for 2011, again in conjunction with Orlando Tourism and also as a standalone. Jetsave to forward details of proposed activity.

Total room night stats to end of October 2010 = 2150

Total advance room night stats for 2011 = 1000

Sunway Holidays

Met with Tara Flanagan, Product Manager at Sunway Holidays based in Ireland. Discussed the recent joint co-op activity that was taking place during September & October 2010. Results to follow. We were advised that 2010 had seen a downturn in business to Florida and to our area also. Sunway are currently down around 40% year on year and feel this is mainly due to the current economic crisis in Ireland. Sunway are keen to look at co-op promotions earlier on in the year for 2011 to capture the peak summer booking period. A proposal has been received for consideration.

Gold Medal Travel

Met with Kristie McGovern, Product Manager for Gold Medal Travel. Discussed area updates, training opportunities and also requested up to date room night stats and a co-op marketing proposal to be sent to us.

Premier Holidays

Meeting held with Heidi Blades, General Manager of Premier holidays to discuss co-op marketing opportunities for 2011. A bespoke proposal will be sent to us in due course to include trade, consumer and retail activity. We were advised that Long Haul holidays are currently up by 20% YOY and that this looks set to continue in to 2011.

Total room night stats to end of November 2010 = 882

Funway Holidays

We were advised that the recent co-op activity in conjunction with Orlando Tourism generated a total of 77 bookings, which equated to a total of 295 pax. The banner ads received a total of 851 clicks and the e-mail open rate was 18% with a click through rate of 3.5%

Total room night stats to mid November 2010 = 568

Total room night stats to mid November 2009 = 317

Total advance room nights stats for 2011 = 106

Funway are looking at doing a dedicated West Coast beach promotion early next year and we are currently awaiting a proposal.

British Airways

Met with the team at British Airways and British Airways Holidays to discuss co-op marketing opportunities. Confirmed participation in the 2011 'Sun' Campaign due to take place in April/May 2011 as well as a dedicated landing page promotion for a period of 6 months in conjunction with Busch Gardens Tampa Bay on BA.com.

Cosmos Holidays

Met with Neil Garner, Head of Product & Commercial at Cosmos Holidays and Nikola Roberts, Partnership Executive for Monarch Airlines to discuss opportunities for 2011 in particular with Monarch Airlines. A proposal has been received and at present being reviewed. We were advised that Monarch were not cutting capacity into Orlando for 2011 and that the airline will continue to offer 28,000 seats into Sanford International.

Barrhead Travel

Met with Kelly Hillman and Caroline Donaldson to discuss future co-op marketing opportunities. A bespoke proposal has been received and is at present being reviewed. We were advised that the recent joint co-op marketing activity in conjunction with Orlando Tourism generated a total of 69 room nights to our area over a four week period.

Value Added Travel

Met with Martin Gold at Value Added Travel and advised of area updates. Advised Martin we are able to provide their staff with training and he will be in contact when this is needed. We also arranged to have literature sent to their staff.

Other Meetings Held at WTM

Legoland Florida

Met with Nigel McShine-Jones, the new UK rep for Legoland Florida to discuss the new theme park in the central Florida area and how we can use this as a value add en route to VSPC.

Orlando Tourism

Met to discuss possible joint co-op marketing activities in conjunction with SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment with various tour operators including Barrhead Travel, Expedia, Jetsave, Tour America and Virgin Holidays. Orlando Tourism are still finalising their 2011 budgets and will be in contact in due course.

Travel Uni

Meeting held with Travel Uni for a general update. Advised Travel Uni that we would like to see more agents sign up to our training programme and are currently awaiting a proposal of activity we can do with no cost attached to encourage further sign. Discussed the possibility of sending out a questionnaire to ask about our training programme as well as offering more competitions and offering giveaways, posters etc for prizes.

Selling Long-Haul

General update meeting was held with Sally Parker, Selling Long Haul's Publisher. Discussed the recent adverts that we have had in SLH over the past four months and also asked if Sally could check that they continue to receive our pr updates and have since been advised that they do on a regular basis. Also discussed the possibility of further adverts in 2011.

Tour Operators

Travelpack

A meeting was held with Heena Bhudia, Marketing Executive for Travelpack to discuss our area with them. Travelpack are now a mass market 'flight heavy' tour operator who focus on website offers and are very aggressive with their pricing. They advertise with companies like Travel Supermarket and have consumer database of 120,000. We were advised that they do not have any St. Pete/Clearwater product and only focus on Orlando and Miami. Advised them to let us know should this directive change in the future.

Virgin Holidays marketing

Meeting held with Andy Reekie and Sonia Powell to discuss 2011 co-op plan. Discussed a more targeted approach than last year as well as co-op activity specifically including Alamo and Busch Gardens to promote their Orlando and Beyond Campaign. Currently awaiting a proposal due in mid-December.

TRADE LIAISON

- Tour America Show, Dublin Ireland – Peter Hannaford attended the annual sale day on behalf of 'Florida's Beaches' coalition (St Pete's, Ft Lauderdale, Miami and Ft Myers & Sanibel). The event was held over one day versus two in 2009 at Dublin's Red Cow Inn. Approximately 20 suppliers were in attendance. Key highlights from the event were:

- Revenue up 9.5% *
 - Visitor numbers down 9.6% *
 - Conversion rate 51.4% v 35% 2009
 - Average selling price up 19.9%
 - Repeat clients up 39.2%
- *2010 show was 8hrs v 2009 12hrs

- National consumer promotion will launch in early January in conjunction with Giraffe Restaurants. Details as follows:
 - In-Restaurant: 120,000 promotional cards to be provided with each bill in 33 restaurants across the UK with 60,000 diners per week
 - Online: banner on homepage with 200,000 unique users / month linking through to the competition page
 - Inclusion on email to 270,000 members with link to competition page
 - Regular tweets to what will be over 8,000 loyal followers
 - Facebook messages to 3,553 fans with pictures and link to website page
 - Datacapture

Promotion will feature copy and images on VSPC as well as a vacation prize for a family of four to VSPC and special holiday offers provided by Virgin Holidays.

- Extensive liaison with Alamo re joint co-op initiatives. Spoke about being a preferred supplier for the VSPC UK Office but eventually decided this would be too hard to administer. Will work closely with them on co-op initiatives to push fly-drive visits to the destination via tour operators. Currently awaiting proposals from Jetsave and Virgin Holidays to include this activity.
- Provided BA Hols with images, copy and logos for the dedicated landing page on ba.com. In addition liaised with Busch Gardens who will underwrite 1/3 of the costs for inclusion on 1/3 of the page.
- Finalising the 2010/11 ad plan but awaiting a number of proposals from operators per meetings held at WTM.
- Cosmos Holidays Training – Training was held at Cosmos Holidays call centre in Stockport. A total of 25 call centre staff were trained on our area. Literature and giveaways were also handed out and this included Visitor's Guides, Area Maps and a list of Key Selling Points.
- Bon Voyage Campaign Results: We have now received the campaign results in conjunction with Orlando Tourism from Bon Voyage and were advised of the following: Bon Voyage booked a total of 119 room nights in Orlando and a total of 29 room nights in St. Pete/Clearwater. The trend was to book one or the other, they had very few bookings combine the two areas as a twin-centre. The promo included 1 E-news, spotlight feature on the website and special offers in the main destination section of the website.
- Virgin Travel Centres Incentive Results – We have now received the final results from the recent Virgin Travel Centres Staff Incentive and have been advised that the agents made a total of 23 bookings, which was a total of 75 passengers and just over

100 room nights booked. Prizes have been forwarded to Virgin Holidays for distribution to the relevant travel agencies.

- Visit USA Association UK – Confirmed VSPC participation in the VUSA Brochure Request Direct Mail opportunity and forwarded a copy of the Visitor’s Guide and 50 words of copy to the design agency.
- Florida’s Beaches Consortia – Signed off production of displays and promotional materials for the forthcoming trade and consumer shows being held from January to March 2011.
- Tour America: Provided Tour America with our FTP site details to download video footage of the VSPC area for them to add to their consumer website.
- Travel Uni – Provided Travel Uni with VSPC area video footage to include on The Hive, their new online travel community.
- Barrhead Travel: Also provided Barrhead Travel with our FTP site details to download video footage of the VSPC area for use on their consumer website and are looking at providing their flagship store in Glasgow with framed posters to be utilised in store.
- Hefferman’s Travel – Provided a travel agency based in Cork, Ireland with images of our area to utilise on their website.
- THG Holidays – Provided brochures and giveaways to THG Holidays Travel Agents who were running Florida promotional days. All three travel agencies were based in and around the Swansea area in Wales.
- VIA Tours - A request was received from VIA Tours in Norway for a selection of literature to be sent. A selection of visitor’s guides, area maps, beach pamphlets and key selling points were sent.
- Trailfinders – Discussions have been taking place and requests have started to be sent to Trailfinders offices in and around the UK to arrange training for front line sales staff. Discussions on-going and TBA.
- Travel 2 & Travelbag – Discussions taking place with Travel 2 & Travelbag to arrange training at their call centres in London and Glasgow for 2011.
- Visit USA Ireland – The recent information on the new Salvador Dali Museum Opening in downtown St. Pete that we provided the Visit USA Association in Ireland with featured in the December Newsletter that is distributed to both their trade and consumer databases.

ENQUIRIES:

Telephone/website enquiries for information and/or literature

60

MARKET INTELLIGENCE:

01 November 2010 – Source Travel Daily

Industry criticises APD rise

More than half of Virgin Atlantic's customers may consider cutting the number of stays away when Air Passenger Duty (APD) is increased today, according to the airline. A customer survey of

2,000 flyers has found that 56% of holidaymakers are thinking about taking fewer long-haul trips, while 58% said they would spend less when at the destination. Despite this, only 44% of respondents were even aware of the charges and ABTA research has found that 70% of consumers do not even know how much tax they will pay on a flight. As a result, Virgin Atlantic and ABTA have warned that the 55% rise in taxes will make long-haul travel unaffordable for customers, as each passenger will now pay up to £75 in economy class. Destinations such as the Caribbean, US and Australia are set to be hit the hardest, although Egypt will also see a 33% increase in tax. "For too long our customers have been taken advantage of with successive governments seeing flying as a convenient cash cow," said Mark Tanzer, ABTA chief executive. "These latest huge increases in APD will disproportionately affect families on tight budgets when they are under considerable financial pressure." The association has urged holidaymakers to make their views known to their MPs. However, Julie Southern, chief commercial officer at Virgin Atlantic, added that things could get worse. "Given the forecasted rises in APD over the next five years, all travellers will be more than paying their fair share and in fact contributing more to the treasury than the banks via the new banking levy," she explained. Meanwhile, Willie Walsh, BA's chief executive said the tax was 'unhelpful' to the economy and the airline's future outlook.

Editor's Note:

Remember, remember the first of November." Or so the travel trade will be saying from this morning. Forget this weekend's Guy Fawkes Night, the spinning Catherine wheels, skyrockets and bangers – the real fireworks surround the incensed consumers, long-haul airlines and travel agents and the growing furore about today's introduction of Airport Passenger Duty (APD). Though sounding more like a crime-fighting Hollywood police department, APD – not the Atlanta Police Department I can assure you – will undoubtedly change the economics of the travel industry. Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic, a major carrier to the Caribbean, has slammed the rise saying it penalises the consumers and Willie Walsh, BA's chief executive, labelled its introduction as a 'disgrace'. Virgin's COO Julie Southern even warned that a £450million price tag would be added to long haul trips next year – with the detrimental knock-on effect of making family holidays to popular British tourist destinations, like Florida, Australia and the Caribbean, unaffordable for many. From today, passengers flying economy to Barbados, the West Indies, Aruba or Antigua will each pay £75, a staggering rise of 50%. A family travelling to the US may face paying an additional £240 and for a solo holidaymaker the fee to Australia may rise £170. Flights within Europe haven't been ring-fenced either: the £12 rise on flights

within Europe, means APD will have increased by 140% since 2007. While the government is considering replacing APD with a per plane tax, it remains a divisive issue. "The Government should reform Air Passenger Duty to make it fairer for the public and to encourage greener behaviour by airlines," explains EasyJet's chief executive Carolyn McCall. "APD is already higher in the UK than anywhere else in Europe and UK passengers and the environment would be better off if the tax was shifted from per person to a per plane tax." But what does this mean for you? Well, rumours are already rife that small independent travel agents will take the brunt as more and more holidaymakers opt for a 'staycation'. Airports and local tourist boards will also be directly hit, as demonstrated by Air

Asia's decision last week to choose Paris over Manchester for its latest direct link to Kuala Lumpur because of APD's impact. And, as this is the third time in three years that APD has risen, the question to ask is what's to stop it from being increased in another 12 month's time? The issues surrounding the tax's fairness also remain unaddressed. Transfer passengers in the UK pay no tax and those travelling on private jets remain exempt, while ordinary passengers bear the full burden of the tax. It's a complex proposition. The fireworks look set to continue – just in time for November 5th.

01 November 2010 – Source Travel Daily

British Airways returns to profitability

British Airways has reported a six month operating profit of £298 million – a significant improvement on its loss of £111 million for the same period last year. With revenue up £345 million due to improved yields, BA announced it had returned to profitability with profit before tax of £158 million compared to a loss of £292 million in 2009. “Our concerted efforts to introduce permanent structural change across the airline has led to a reduction in non-fuel costs and a return to profitability,” said British Airways’ chief executive Willie Walsh. “Revenue has increased, driven primarily by yield improvements and, while fuel costs have risen, they are in line with our expectations.” Next summer BA is increasing flights from Gatwick to Barbados and Antigua and between St Lucia and Port of Spain, as well as to Tampa and Cancun. Flights from Heathrow to Buenos Aires will fly direct.

02 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Online travel company ceases trading

Dublin-based Chase Travel International, which sold exclusively through the trade, has ceased trading just three months after opening an office in Australia. A message on the online travel company's website reads: "Dear Travel Agent, it is with great sadness that as of the 1st of November Chase Travel has ceased trading. The company is seeking professional advice on the next steps and a further update will be provided accordingly." No-one was available for comment today. Chase Travel was founded in 1990 and had operations in Ireland, the UK and France as well as Australia. Around nine years ago it switched to become an online provider. In an interview with Travelmole TV in 2007, director Michael Stevens said the business had been boosted by the booking trend from package to tailor-made, dynamically-packaged holidays. The company sold hotels, apartments, flights, cruises, transfers and attractions, with services available to travel agents 24 hours a day. It did not hold an ATOL.

02 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Midlands confirms it will join Thomas Cook merger

Thomas Cook has confirmed that Midlands Co-operative Society is to join the merger with the Co-operative Travel Group to become part of the UK's largest travel agency chain. The Midland Co-op's 103 travel stores and other travel-related businesses will be included in the merger, giving the combined group around 1,300 shops. As a result, Thomas Cook's share of the merged business has been cut from 70% to 66.5%, The Co-operative Group has 30% and Midland Co-operative Society has 3.5%. The deal remains subject to anti-trust clearance by the European Commission, which is anticipated in December.

09 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Tourism ‘five years away from recovery’

The travel and tourism industry fears it will take at least another five years to recover from

the global financial meltdown, research from World Travel Market has revealed. The banking crisis has led to pressure on price, profits and demand, said a quarter of the senior industry executives questioned at WTM on Monday. More than 40% expressed concern about exchange rates and 25% said they were worried about oil prices, although these were only considered by a handful to be the single biggest issues. WTM chairman Fiona Jeffery said: "It is clear that the concern runs deep, with many worried about what will happen to the demand, with a similar number concerned about what happens to their bottom line."

09 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Only one in three tourists uses social media

Social media has only a small and waning influence over travellers' choice of holidays, according to research from World Travel Market. Only one in three UK holidaymakers use sites such as TripAdvisor as part of their research, although more than a third of those who do change their travel plans as a result. Of the 36% who did use social media sites, two out of three used TripAdvisor, around one-third referred to Facebook and one in five looked at YouTube. Only 17% looked at Twitter. Travel and tourism chat rooms and forums attracted 28% of the social media users, compared with blogs which accounted for 9%. WTM concluded from its research that holidaymakers' interest in social media is not as great as the travel and tourism industry thinks. More than 60% of 1,257 senior travel industry professionals questioned said it had influenced their business over the past year. More than four out of 10 believe social media represents an opportunity for their businesses over the next five years. WTM chairman Fiona Jeffery said; "It has long been believed social media plays an important role in holidaymakers' decision making process. However, WTM research shows that social media doesn't play a central role. "Furthermore, less than a quarter expect to use social media to book next year's holiday, so its small influence is waning. "It is a concern that the travel and tourism industry plan to invest heavily in social media over the next five years believing it's one of the major opportunities for the industry. This investment could be a waste of time and money as holidaymakers do not appear to rely on social media as much as the industry believes."

10 November 2010 – Source Travel Daily

Global travel and tourism economy expected to rise by 2%, says report

The global travel and tourism economy is expected to rise by two percent in real GDP growth – much higher than originally anticipated, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC). Having revised its forecast of only 0.5 percent from earlier in the year, the WTTC said that international travel, particularly in the Asian markets, was rebounding faster than expected. Additionally, the council now anticipates that this boost will lead to the creation of an extra 946,000 jobs worldwide. The travel and tourism market share of total GDP and investment will also increase by one percentage point this year. "The longer-term prospects for travel and tourism remain positive, boosted by rising prosperity in Asia," explained Jean-Claude Baumgarten, president and CEO of WTTC. "We remain confident that travel and tourism will remain a dynamic force for wealth and job creation." Over the next ten years, WTTC forecasts that the global travel trade will grow by nearly five percent per year, helping create an additional 66 million jobs by 2020, 50 million of which will be in Asia. In particular, the UK's travel and tourism economy GDP will contract further before the end of 2010, before growth starts to accelerate from 2011.

11 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

British Airways' olive branch withers under union gaze

British Airways' attempts to bring to a close the ongoing dispute between management and cabin crew with a peace deal has faltered. The carrier has made an offer which it has asked airline union Unite to recommend as a precondition for putting it to members but branches of the union Bassa and Cabin Crew 89 have both rejected the offer. BA has offered the use of conciliation service Acas to the 16 crew who have been sacked over the dispute in the past year but there are parts of the offer which shop stewards have expressed concern about, namely the airline's request that all legal action concerning the dispute be abandoned. A spokesman for Bassa said: "There are some good parts within BA's offer, in particular their acceptance of binding independent Acas arbitration, but there are many other clauses which we simply, as a trade union, cannot recommend." Bassa said there were still plans to arrange a consultative ballot on the offer. If it is turned down by members, it is thought that both Bassa and Cabin Crew 89 will introduce a strike vote. It is likely Unite will recommend the offer in a consultative ballot later this week. The union said in a letter to members it was "technically" recommending the deal because there was nothing better on the table right now. But it added that it would hold a strike ballot if the deal is rejected.

11 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Tri-carrier deal gets US approval

The US Department of Transportation has issued a final order granting anti-trust immunity to United Airlines, Continental Airlines and All Nippon Airways which will allow the three carriers to ink the deal on a Trans-Pacific joint venture. The deal will mean the airlines can develop joint flight schedules and sales drives allowing passengers flying between the Americas and Asia to experience more convenient connections and flight times. There will also be a greater variety of product and fare choices. President and CEO of United Continental Holdings Jeff Smisek said: "Today's final approval by DOT enables us to begin working toward a more convenient, more seamless experience for travellers on both sides of the Pacific. We thank the DOT for their thoughtful review." President and CEO of ANA Shinichiro Ito said: "ANA would like to express its appreciation to the U.S. Department of Transportation for this final order, which recognizes the positive benefits from our joint application. The clearance enables us to begin the preparatory work necessary to launch our joint venture next Spring, and to co-operate more closely with United and Continental for the benefit of customers."

17 November 2010 – Source Travelmole

Royal Wedding is bad news for overseas travel market

Inbound tour operators are rubbing their hands together with delight at the news of a Royal Wedding next year. But agents and operators selling overseas holidays are preparing themselves for a dip in bookings as Brits decide to stay home or delay their holiday plans until after the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton. The date for the wedding has not yet been set, but is planned for Spring or Summer. The overseas travel industry will be hoping that a date is set soon and will be cheering for a Spring wedding, which will have less of an impact on next year's bookings. But according to the calendar of Royal events, August, the peak month for the industry, looks like the most likely month. Paddy Power, the bookmaker, has chosen Saturday August 13 as the favourite date, with odds as low as three to one. An ABTA spokesman said: "It's fair to say, as we see with major sporting events like the World Cup, it may well cause people to delay booking overseas holidays until after the wedding takes place." For inbound and domestic tour operators, however, the wedding is great news. "This is the best possible showcase for the UK as a travel destination and will present great business opportunities for inbound and domestic tour operators and for ABTA travel agents wanting to sell packages to London," said the ABTA spokesman. "In addition,

all of the thousands of hotel rooms that are being provided for the Olympics in 2012 will mean that there will be extra bed space available." Sandie Dawe, chief executive of VisitBritain, said: "This is absolutely wonderful news for William and Kate. It will also be an enormous boost for the British tourism industry. "Our research indicates that in a typical year the places, events and history associated with Monarchy generate well over £500 million in revenue for the British tourism industry. We would expect that in a Royal Wedding year we would do even better than that. "The youth and vigour of the couple is very attractive. Millions of people around the world are certain to see the wedding as the perfect moment to come to Britain to see the young Royals and our much loved Queen." Mary Rance, chief executive of Ukinbound added: "Yesterday's announcement of the Royal Engagement between Prince William and Kate Middleton is not only fantastic news for the couple and their respective families, but could also be a cause for celebration for the UK's inbound tourism industry. "All eyes will be on London as the marriage will be broadcast to hundreds of countries worldwide and millions will descend upon the city to be part of the festivities, providing a vital boost to visitor numbers." The group said the wedding and the Queen diamond jubilee would both have a significant role in attracting visitors to the UK in the next two years.

22 November 2010 – Source Travel Daily

UK arrivals to America fall, says government report

UK passenger arrivals to the USA have fallen, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. While more than 40 million international visitors travelled to the United States for the first eight months of 2010, the figure from the UK was one of only three countries to register a decline. The surge in overall visitors, a 12 percent increase over the same period in 2009, confirmed the end to recession travel plans as international visitors spent £55 billion up to end of August, 10 percent more than the same period in 2009. But the UK, along with Ireland and Venezuela, were the only countries out of the top 20 visitor countries that registered declines. "Resident visits from the United Kingdom dropped two percent," the report stated. "But overall air arrivals (140,000) were up eight percent for the month of August and land arrivals (962,000) were up 23 percent." Elsewhere, the report found that twelve of its top 20 markets registered double-digit increases including Japan, France, Italy, Brazil and India.

30 November 2010 – Source Travolution

Two thirds of Brits will take a long haul holiday in 2011 – TripAdvisor

Brits are likely to travel more often in 2011 and spend more money doing so, according to a TripAdvisor survey of 6,200 European travellers. The reviews site's survey found that 66% of people are planning to take a long-haul holiday next year, with just a third planning a stay-at-home break. "Overall, 2011 looks more positive for both travellers and the travel industry," said TripAdvisor spokeswoman Emma O'Boyle. "Brits intend to travel more often and will spend more money, but will proceed with caution as the industry emerges slowly from a very difficult year." However, 15% of travellers are worried about another volcanic ash cloud disrupting their travel plans and 31% are fearful of further strikes. Concerns over Air Passenger Duty are likely to affect the travel plans of 28% of Brits. These worries will prompt an increase in customers buying travel insurance - 28% said they were more likely to buy it than last year.