



MRC Strategic Planning Session Notes
November 10, 2009
(revised December 15, 2009)

- I. Introductions and State updates
 - a. Minnesota: Cheryl Offerman
 - b. Iowa: Nancy Landess
 - c. Illinois: Jan Kemmerling, Roger Carmack
 - d. Missouri: Deb Lee
 - e. Kentucky: Liz Chewning
 - f. Arkansas: Nancy Clark
 - g. Mississippi: Kristen McCaskill
- II. Objectives
 - a. Reviewed the outlined objectives from the past strategic planning session (2007-2010)
 - b. Revised and prioritized objectives
 - i. Increase travel into and within the ten states of Mississippi River Country, USA.
 - ii. Increase positive awareness of the Mississippi River and its attributes among all stakeholder and customer groups.
 - iii. Effectively leverage the resources of the travel organizations and businesses in ten Mississippi River States for marketing and awareness programs.
- III. Goals
 - a. Reviewed the goals set in the past strategic planning session.
 - b. Revised and prioritized the goals
 - i. Market the MRC in Japan to the travel trade and media
 - ii. Support Mississippi River states group tour marketing promotions
 - iii. Optimize domestic Web and e-marketing programs
- IV. Tactics and Tracking
 - a. Reviewed the tactics set in the past strategic planning session
 - b. Revised tactics and include tracking mechanisms
 - i. Market the MRC in Japan to the travel trade and media
 - 1. Maintain representation in Japan
 - a. Include representation in the budget and through a contract
 - 2. Host at least three media to Mississippi River Country
 - a. Report the media pick-ups including samples and media value
 - 3. Maintain regular travel trade communication



- a. Include quarterly e-newsletters in the budget
- b. Provide statistics on the e-newsletters performance
- c. Report the number of calls to travel trade
- d. Report on the meetings attended with the travel trade
4. Maintain and update Japanese Web site
 - a. Provide usage statistic
 - b. Provide an annual report with website statistics
5. Investigate and pursue providing travel agent training (through webinars, conferences, other ideas)
 - a. Train 100 number of travel agents on the Mississippi River states
6. Generate tour operator product offering for MRC
 - a. Baseline based on quarterly reports by 10%
7. Host tour operators or Japanese receptive operators
 - a. Two per year
8. Leverage online opportunities including social media and travel blogs at advice of Advanced International
 - a. Provide the number of followers and fans in the quarterly website reports
 - b. Provide usage statistic
9. Develop multi-state itineraries
 - a. 5 itineraries per year
10. Attend JATA
 - a. Include JATA in the annual budget
 - b. Report the number of leads received from the show
- ii. Support Mississippi River states group tour marketing promotions
 1. Develop multi-state itineraries
 - a. 5 itineraries per year
 2. Place itineraries on the Web and distribute to 10 states group travel representatives
 - a. 5 itineraries per year
 3. Maintain the MRC profile sheet
 - a. Distribute the profile sheet to 10 states group travel representatives
 4. Increase earned media regarding group travel opportunities
 - a. Distribute releases to group travel media at least ten times a year
 - b. Receive five group travel media-related pick ups
 5. Develop and distribute photo CDs to group travel representatives



- a. Maintain digital assets and look to update five times a year
- iii. Optimized domestic Web and e-marketing programs
 1. Consumer research on web functionality
 - a. Provide quarterly reports on website statistics
 - b. Establish a mechanism for states to access statistics on-line
 2. Continue to grow the number of opt-ins for email opportunities
 - a. Increase the number of opt-ins by 10% a year
 3. Send quarterly monthly e-newsletters
 - a. Provide statistics on the e-newsletters performance
 4. Optimize Web site
 - a. Monitor search engine optimization
 - b. Communicate website usage statistics
 5. Include video footage and links to videos on the website
 - a. Video representation of each of the 10 states on the website
 6. Develop social media and interactive marketing opportunities
 - a. Provide the number of followers and fans in the quarterly website reports
 - b. Provide usage statistic
 7. Provide annual reporting
 - a. Provide an annual report with website statistics
 - b. Establish a mechanism for states to access statistics on-line
 8. Add weather content to the website
 - a. Create an opportunity for website users to find weather information from the site
 9. Add an opportunity for weather related information to be
 - a. communicated on the website (especially in the event of flooding or other major weather events)
 10. Increase earned media
 - a. Distribute releases to media at least ten times a year
 - b. Receive five media pick ups
- iv. Provide an annual report