

**Aspen Chamber Resort Association  
Marketing Advisory Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009  
Annabelle Inn**

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:06am. Casandra Foister and Rob Henderson chaired the meeting. In attendance: Alan Cardenas, Kristin Drake, Tahnee Perry, Susan Hamley, Warren Klug, Jeanne Mackowski, Helen Klanderud, Eileen Tucker, Laura Smith, Alex de' Larbe, Maureen Poschman. Staffed by: Julia Theisen, Joanna Eisler, Annie Dockter.

**1) Marketing Budget / Tax Revenues**

The Aspen City Council agreed to maintain the \$615k budget for 2009 at the work session on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. Since that meeting the ACRA executive board is requiring written agreement from the City of Aspen to specify whether any deficit this year will need to be paid back and if so, what are the terms for such loan.

Follow up: ACRA working with City Finance Director to confirm the loan terms, and will inform MAC once an agreement is reached.

**2) Summer Marketing Plan**

Frontier Airlines: the remaining \$10k in marketing funds will be put towards a promotion with ACRA and TOSV. General concept: book airline and lodging package and the first 100 people to book receive \$100 off the package; create a value added card with Aspen/Snowmass merchants that would accompany the promotion. Decide whether we use card for just Frontier promo or throughout the entire summer. For activities, look to discount venerable favorites such as gondola, maroon bells, aspen music festival and school. \$100 discount off package is not enough impact to get PR attention, need to work on the messaging.

**Follow up actions:** Follow up meeting with ACRA/ TOSV/ Maureen and Jeanne to brainstorm on effective use of frontier funds - either using the dollars to effectively market a promotion or put funds towards a discounted package.

Aspen Music Festival & School, L. Smith: Several of the cultural organizations are looking to do a "free tickets board" or discounted tickets at the Wheeler Opera House. The risk with free tickets is that people will take tickets but not use, suggested that discount or ½ price tickets be offered.

**Follow up actions:** ACRA communicate with cultural groups to see how to partner together.

Everyday's a Weekend package: Continue promotional package that was started last summer highlighting discounted lodging rates for Sun – Thurs. Include discounts to Aspen activities and segment / highlight Aspen's branding: Adventure, Culture, Food & Fashion, Serenity. Promotion will include an "Enter to Win" to drive traffic to newly launched website and capture new visitor information. Distribution will be email blast in early May and ad in May issue of 5280.

Colorado Welcome Centers: It is imperative that we reach out to the welcome centers/AAA for this summer's drive market. Original ideas: hosting FAM trip with Welcome Center staff will not work b/c of state laws do not allow employees to accept comps; Advertising at the Welcome Centers, very expensive to have backlit advertising displayed; Mailing Poster to AAA locations in CO, TX, FL, NY, CA – can we brainstorm on a "higher-end catchy" item rather than a poster?

**Follow up actions:** ACRA will do a "Road Show" this spring to the welcome centers around the state as well as several AAA locations educating them on all there is to do in Aspen over summer months. Look to partner with TOSV on Road Show – sharing the Aspen/Snowmass message. Instead of posters, research a "viewfinder" or other unique Aspen gift to send to AAA locations.

Advertising

Print buys:

2 page spread in 5280 May issue– looking to co-op with Lodging Partners on this.

2/3 page ad buy in 5280 in June and August.

Already committed to a ½ page ad placement in Colorado Special Advertising section in April Travel & Leisure and May Food & Wine Magazine

Recommendation: Cut back on print advertising – only advertise in multiple placements – not a single ad buy.

Online buys:

F&W, T&L email blast to 50k list

Aspen dedicated email blast to NYTimes Great Getaways – coop with 4 aspen lodging partners.

Colorado.com welcome email and advertising on email blast out to existing database.

Tripadvisor: advertise on Colorado "What to do" Activities pages May – August.

Recommendation: Focus more effort on online ad buys. Work with community partners to cross promote seasons – possibly send out email blast to skico's list a few times throughout the summer without "spamming" their database that is requesting winter information.

Last Minute Lodging: Post last minute lodging specials at the Guest Pavilion and Wheeler Opera house daily. Hotels will log into new database to update their daily rate – first thing in the morning – and our staff will print and bring to the visitor centers in town. ACRA will create signage for the "Stay & Play" specials, but we will not do any additional promoting of the last minute deals.

**Follow up action:** Look into securing more signage to the ACRA welcome centers, be cognizant of how the Galena street one-way traffic will affect travel into our downtown core.

**3) PR Update: M.Poschman / A. de Larbe:** Just returned from trip to NYC. It was harder to secure the appointments, but once in appointment very positive response to Aspen in general. Promo met with CBS, Travel+Leisure, Conde Nast Traveler, strategic partners: Food & Wine, Colorado Tourism Office, PRSA.

Distributed Aspen USB media kit in a eye-catching black box with the Aspen leaf on the exterior and filled with Cloud Nine Brownies. Brought the media kits to all appointments in NY, and will mail to additional 100 a-list journalists. In total we have 400 USB's for media and gifts. All media that have received media kit have given very positive feedback.

Aspen Fashion Week is going on this week. It is an impressive inaugural year for the event with great potential for growth. Good opportunity to promote Aspen in need period. William Morris Agency has invested in the event for future years.

**4) Website Update:** On target to launch new website end of March. Will be sending letter out to membership this week with log-in capabilities to update listings and add logo. We are hosting a meeting Thurs. Mar 5<sup>th</sup> at 10am at the Limelight Lodge to go over Meeting/Sales section.

**5) Aspen Groups Update:**

Eisler will be in Minnesota March 9-11 for sales calls and a tradeshow. The next week will attend the Colorado Meetings & Events "Best-of" Award Banquet. Both the Destination Marketing Team and Aspen Groups are nominated for awards. While in Denver, will make sales calls and also attend the Meetings Industry Council Annual Conference.

Meeting adjourned: 10:56am.

Next **MAC meeting Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 9am, location TBD.**