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A Message from Interim State Tourism Director Jim Greenhalge

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at the Ohio Travel Marketing Conference April 24-25 at North Point Conference Center. We hope all who attended gleaned some helpful marketing ideas and information.

Lt. Governor Lee Fisher and First Lady Frances Strickland delivered a warm welcome to the travel audience indicating that the new administration considers the travel industry an important part of the economic development fabric of Ohio. And yes, for those of you who were unable to attend the conference but have heard the rumors, the Lt. Governor and Mrs. Strickland did surprise and entertain the crowd with a couple of musical numbers including a duet. Certainly an encore is in order down the road!

Please see the story in this issue for a recap of the two-day conference and where to locate presentation information on DiscoverOhio.com/industry.

With Memorial Day growing ever closer and the Division's in-state advertising and public relations campaigns under way, our next order of business is to welcome Alicia Reece as the new Assistant Director of the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism. She will begin work with the Division on May 15.

As many of you know, I will be staying on with the Division through May 25 to help transition Alicia into her new role and responsibilities. I want to take the opportunity now, however, to thank you for welcoming me to the camaraderie of the Ohio travel community and wish you continued success in marketing Ohio tourism.

Division Welcomes New Asst. Tourism Director

Please join the Division in welcoming Alicia Reece to the Ohio travel and tourism industry. Alicia will begin her post as Assistant Tourism Director for the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism on May 15. Reece comes to the Division from Cincinnati where she has most recently served as senior vice president for Communiplex Promotional Services, a marketing and consulting firm. She is, however, no stranger to public service. Prior to her work with Communiplex, Alicia served as vice mayor of Cincinnati and as a member of the Cincinnati City Council. Jim Greenhalge will stay on with the Division to provide transitional support through May 25.

The Month in Numbers

Statistics represent a fiscal-year-to-date figure unless otherwise noted. The Division's fiscal year began July 1, 2007 and lasts until July 31, 2007.

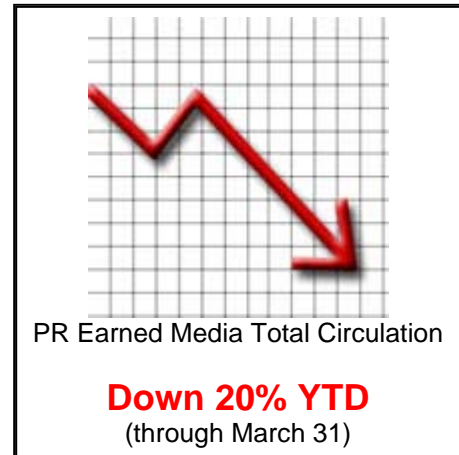


DiscoverOhio.com Pageviews

**Down 5% since
March 2007**
(through April 30)

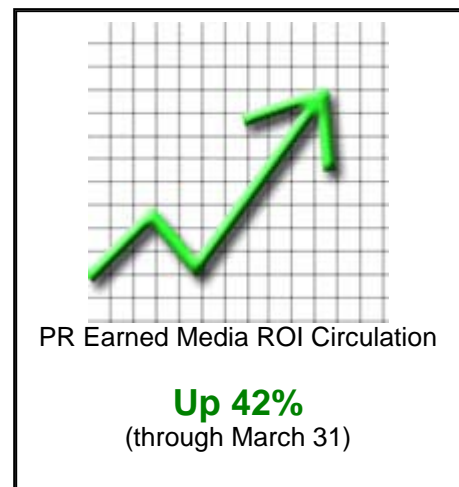
Phase Two Cooperative Marketing Deadline June 1

All applications for Phase Two of the 2007 Cooperative Marketing Program are due in the Travel and Tourism Office by 5 p.m. on June 1. Applications that arrive later than 5 p.m. will not be accepted. All for-profit tourism organizations must submit applications to their destination marketing organization (DMO) before this deadline. If this applies to you, please contact your DMO to work out a time frame for this process. The guidelines and registration form for the program, formerly known as the Marketing Assistance Program (MAP), have been posted to the industry Web site. Please read through the guidelines [here](#) and contact Julie Camp (jcamp@odod.state.oh.us) with any questions. Please be aware that there is a set budget for this program. If qualifying funding requests for Phase Two exceed the budget, all funding requests will be reduced to fall within the allowable budget.



June Dates Available for 1-800-BUCKEYE Partner Days

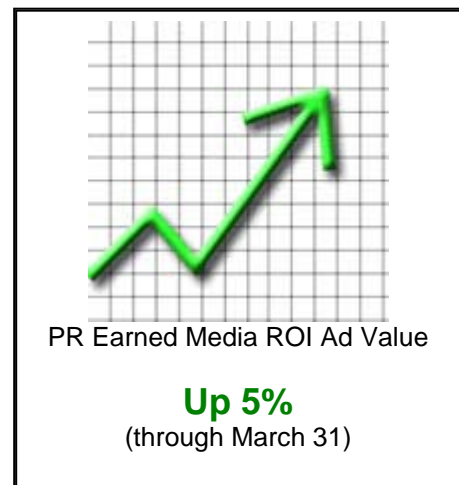
The Tourism Information Office has several dates available in June for Partner Days with the 1-800-BUCKEYE Travel Counselors. To see available dates, visit the [Travel Buzz](#) or contact Eric Herzog at ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-0338 for more information.



Ohio Travel Marketing Conference Re-cap

Thank you to all the sponsors and speakers who shared their expertise at the Ohio Travel Marketing Conference April 24-25. For those of you who were unable to attend the conference, we have posted several of the presentations online. The PR 101 and Public Relations Role in the Marketing Mix presentations are located at: <http://industry.discoverohio.com/contentindex.asp?ID=26&rootid=535>.

Liliana Ramirez of McDonald Marketing from Dallas, Texas, spoke to us about the country's growing population diversity and ways in which we can begin to retool and tweak our tourism messaging to better convey Ohio's multitude of travel opportunities. Her presentation can be found online [here](#).



Day two of the conferece offered full-day workshops devoted to AgriTourism and Culinary Tourism. [Jane Eckert](#), one of the nation's leading experts on AgriTourism, helped define the term for workshop attendees and helped to understand how to market this unique travel experience.

Culinary Tourism Marketing focused on the idea of unique food and drink as a destination. The workshop included a working definition of "one of the hottest new areas in tourism," along with details on how to develop and market your own Culinary Tourism product. More information can be found at www.culinarytourism.org.

2008 Discover Ohio Travel Planner Listing Deadline July 27

Be part of the 2008 Discover Ohio Travel Planner! All Ohio travel entities are invited to submit a free listing to be considered for inclusion in the printed 2008 Discover Ohio Travel Planner (400,000 printed). The planner features free listings of attractions, recreation, convention and visitor bureaus, restaurants, lodging and shopping. Each listing includes: business name in bold, address, city, ZIP, phone and Web address. Enhanced listings and advertising services may be purchased by contacting Emily Vanuch, Great Lakes Publishing advertising coordinator, at evanuch@ohiomagazine.com or (216) 771-2833, ext. 175.

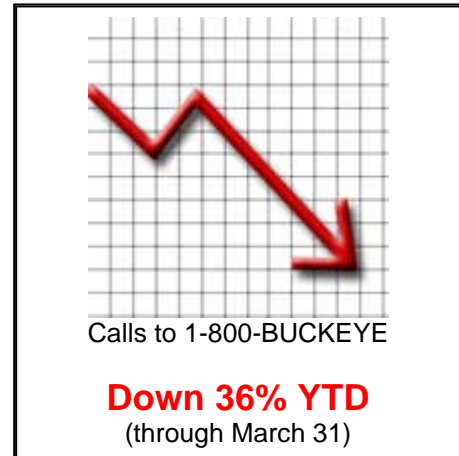
Please submit/update your information in the [Buckeye database](#) by **5 p.m. on Friday, July 27.**

If your database entry is current, there is no need to re-submit. Please review your entries to ensure information is current and accurate. Due to space limitations, not all listings submitted and approved will appear in the travel planner, however, all approved listings will be available on DiscoverOhio.com.

Log on to the Buckeye database today to add your listings.

Convention and Visitors Bureaus are invited to sign up for free reports to see which travel entities from their county have listings in the database. CVB personnel can then contact hotels, restaurants and attractions that aren't in the database to encourage them to sign up. Only entities with active database listings are eligible for publication in the Division's publications.

Please contact Eric Herzog at ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-0338, or Roger Barker at rbarker@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-5158, with questions about the Buckeye database.



The Division is increasing its motorcoach tracking efforts to calculate the estimated economic impact for this market segment. CVB group sales staff will receive a monthly electronic survey from Celeste Krolak beginning in May requesting the following information:

- How many day trips did you have this month?
 - How many of these were adult/senior groups?
 - What was the total number of adult/senior passengers?
 - What sites did they visit?
 - How many of these were student groups?
 - What was the total number of student passengers?
 - What sites did they visit?
- How many overnight trips did you have this month?
 - How many of these were adult groups?
 - What was the total number of adult/senior passengers?
 - What sites did they visit?
 - How many of these were student groups?
 - What was the total number of student passengers?
 - What sites did they visit?

Attraction, hotel, restaurant or special event group tour partners are asked to compile this information monthly and provide it to your CVB group sales representative so they can submit it to Celeste. Thanks for your cooperation with this research effort. General results will be shared at Travel Advisory Council meetings and featured on the Division's Industry Web site, www.DiscoverOhio.com/Industry. If you have any questions about this project, please contact Celeste at ckrolak@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 728-4668.

PR Office Wins Four PRism Awards

The Division earned four awards from the Central Ohio Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America for its PR efforts in 2006. Entrants competed for PRism Awards (first-place) and Awards of Excellence (runner-up) in 27 categories. Senior members of the Denver Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America judged the entries.

Demonstrating the strongest local award performance in years, the Division earned two multifaceted campaign PRism awards and two single-item entry PRism awards for the following:

Multifaceted campaign award in the corporate/institutional positioning category: *"Discover Ohio in Bloom" campaign*

- Multifaceted campaign award in the media relations category: *Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism Media Relations Program*
- Single-item entry award in the media/press kits category: *Ohio Division of Travel & Tourism Media Kit*



When updating your listing to keep it current, be sure and save before submitting it for approval. This ensures that after approval it will be available on the website for the next 6 months.

- Single-item entry award in the online communications category: *Electronic Image Archive and B-Roll Library*

Congratulations to the many other tourism businesses that took home awards!

DiscoverOhio.com Online Press Room Improvements Ready!

This month the Division will launch a new, improved online Press Room featuring an online B-roll footage (broadcast quality video) library. The new section will make Ohio one of, if not the only, tourism Division in the country equipped with an online, browsable, B-roll footage library. The new library will enable us to fulfill media requests quickly and efficiently via digital or tape/DVD delivery. The library houses more than 1,000 viewable clips of Ohio's tourism destinations available to qualified media outlets.

There are two ways you can participate in the new press room. All Ohio tourism entities are invited to submit their news releases to prinfo@odod.state.oh.us. Not only is this a great way to keep Division staffers up to date on your news, but releases with broad media appeal will be posted to the [Ohio Travel Industry Releases](#) page on the online Press Room. CVBs are invited to submit a backgrounder or fact sheet in pdf format to Joe Vargo at jvargo@odod.state.oh.us for use on the [City/County Backgrounders](#) page of the press room.

UK Daily Telegraph Reporter Explores Ohio UGRR

The Division hosted Teresa Machan (a freelance writer for the *Daily Telegraph*, the UK's largest circulation daily newspaper with nearly 1 million readers) in Ohio April 30 – May 3. Teresa discovered Ohio's Underground Railroad heritage with guidance from Joe Vargo, public relations coordinator for the Division.

Many thanks to all the entities and sites that hosted and educated Teresa about Ohio's Underground Railroad heritage including: Cincinnati USA CVB, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the Ripley Heritage Trust, Experience Columbus, the Mount Pleasant Historical Society, Guernsey County CVB, Colonel Taylor Inn Bed and Breakfast, Rider's Inn, the Lake County VB, Hubbard House and the Ashtabula County CVB.

Division Reaps Rewards of Participation in GLNA Splash Bash

Joe Vargo attended Splash Bash on behalf of the Division April 3-5 in New York, NY. Produced by Great Lakes of North America for its member states, the event provided Ohio with an opportunity to meet one-on-one with receptive tour operators. Joe participated in four desk-side meetings with tour operators who specialize in European markets and also networked with representatives from nearly two dozen receptives. Most exciting was the announcement that ATI, a major receptive operator, is offering two Great Lakes tours with Ohio stops in its tariff book for 2007-2008. Another lead through Splash Bash has already generated 30 room nights and a full day of activities in Western Ohio.

Division's Travel Buzz Offers Industry Its Own Communication Tool



Travel Buzz, the new message board system built into the Division's [Industry Web site](#), provides industry members with a way to communicate directly with each other. Whether it's coordinating with other travel professionals in your area to put together a package or sharing ideas on how to improve business, Travel Buzz is the perfect "meeting place" that helps with the problem we all face: not enough time to leave work and meet face-to-face.

You can register with Travel Buzz using the same Login Name and Password you currently use to submit your database information. To get started, simply go to our [industry home page](#) and look for the Travel Buzz section in the top right corner of the page. Just below the first few messages, you'll see three links: Post a Message, View All Posts and Login/Register. Click on the last link, Login/Register.

You'll see a new screen that says "Groupee Login To: DiscoverOhio Travel Buzz" with two buttons below, one say "I have a Groupee Account" and the other says "I do not have a Groupee Account"

If this is your first time using Travel Buzz, select the second button, "I do not have a Groupee Account" and you'll see a message appear below "Please register the following information. All fields are required." Just enter the same information you use to login to your DiscoverOhio.com database account -- your e-mail address and the password you selected when you first created your account with us - - check the boxes below and click the "Join" button.

You're all set! You'll see a screen where you can select a Display Name (screen name), which can be your real name or however you'd like people to identify you. Other information there is optional, though you can even upload a picture of yourself so that people can see who you are, add a personal signature that will appear with your messages and include your location. We highly recommend including the city where you're located. Click on the Submit button and you'll be ready to start posting, or just reading if you prefer.

While it's easy to login to Travel Buzz and post a message or join in a "conversation" already started, it's not always easy to get back to your computer to see who has replied to your latest posting. With the "Notification by Email" feature, you never have to worry about

missing a comment or question. Just follow these steps:

Login to your account.

- Open a message (or create a new one).
- Across the top of the message you'll see a row of tabs labeled Go, Post...
- Click on the "Notify" tab.
- Place a check in the Immediate Notification by Email box and click "Update My Notification."
- You're all set. Whenever there is activity on this message, you'll receive an e-mail letting you know about it. Try it out!

So take a look around TravelBuzz, read a few messages, post a message and see what happens; tell your friends and fellow industry members about it. We've created this just for you.

If you have any questions feel free to contact Roger Barker (rbarker@odod.state.oh.us; 614-466-5158), Kim Towne (ktowne@odod.state.oh.us; 614-466-5349) or Eric Herzog (ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us; 614-466-0338).

Best Practices: Reaching Out to Business Travelers

The Division of Travel and Tourism focuses its efforts on marketable leisure travelers. But as everyone in the business knows, the travel industry is much more than leisure travelers. There are a lot of business travelers in market, so here are two trends that can help you determine how to increase your share of visitors.

Business travelers are booking their own travel arrangements more often. Fewer rely on travel agents and corporate travel offices to plan the details. This is good news for most small scale operations. You can market to business travelers through the same channels as leisure travelers and don't have to invest a lot of marketing dollars in reaching travel agents. Make sure you are easy to find in search engines and on leisure visitors bureau Web sites and DiscoverOhio.com. Work with your CVB's convention planning staff to familiarize them with your property.

Business travelers are increasingly looking for distinctive lodging at a good value. Many people are no longer content to rely on the ease of same-anywhere-you-go chain hotels, and are branching out into inns, bed and breakfasts and independent hotels. To gain a share of those travelers, reach out with services that appeal to business travelers and include the cost in the nightly rate. A high-speed wifi network and quick, convenient breakfast offerings are two amenities you can add to appeal to business travelers. Chances are good that your leisure travelers will also appreciate the upgrades.

Tech Corner: Free and Low Cost Business Software

If you think you can't afford the latest business software, think again. You can stay up to date with software that can not only streamline your processes but help you keep track of your customers for a price that won't break the bank. If you're fed up with the cumbersome nature of working with remote colleagues or you aren't using customer relationship management software, here are a few ideas.

For teams working at remote locations, www.CentralDesktop.com offers a great alternative to standard software. The program allows users to share files and access them from anywhere with an Internet connection. Large files can be shared and stored, files on all the computers in your user group can be searched, and multiple users can contribute to the same document in real time. Audio conferencing and instant messaging are free and integrated.

Salesforce.com offers good value customer relationship management software that can help you record information about your customers and analyze it. [Vertical Response](#) integrates with SalesForce.com to help you produce customized direct marketing vehicles like email newsletters and postcards. It has lower pricing for non-profits: you can send 1,000 emails for \$12.75, and price per 1,000 decreases as your volume increases.

Where in the World

May 18 – Jim in Marion for the Marion Area CVB Annual Meeting
 May 20-22 – Aimee at PRSA/SATW conference in Los Angeles
 May 23 – Celeste at Regional Tourism Workshop in Mahoning County
 May 24-25 – TIA Spring Marketing Smackdown in San Antonio, Texas

Discover Ohio!

www.DiscoverOhio.com - 1-800-BUCKEYE - AskOhioTourism@odod.state.oh.us
 Ohio Department of Development, Division of Travel and Tourism,
 77 South High Street Columbus, Ohio 43215-6130
 Ted Strickland, Governor; Lee Fisher, Lt. Governor