



Feb. 9, 2007
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Save the Date!

The Division's Travel Marketing Conference will be held April 24-25 at the Conference Center at North Pointe in Lewis Center. Stay tuned for more details.

A Message from Interim State Tourism Director Jim Greenhalge

Winter greetings! While many of us have until recently enjoyed the unseasonably warm temperatures, it is certainly good for some of our industry partners to see the chair lifts running again and the possibility of ice fishing returning.

This also is a great time to sit down with a cup of hot chocolate and explore the new DiscoverOhio.com and DiscoverOhio.com/industry Web sites that are now live. The Tourism Information Office and our Web contractors have worked hard to deliver plenty of exciting, helpful new functions to both sites and to make it easier for you to input your listing information.

The Ohio Tourism Industry Web Site at <http://www.DiscoverOhio.com/industry> will help you stay abreast of industry news, develop new business partnerships, and provide plenty of helpful marketing information, programs and ideas.

One of the many new features is a news feed that appears on the front page of the industry Web section every weekday by mid-morning. Just visit the site and click on the stories of interest to you. And to allow for more interaction among industry and staff members, there is a new section called Travel Buzz. Check it out and let us know what you think. Our hope is that it will create an opportunity for helpful dialogues and networking in the industry regarding marketing challenges, ideas, and connections to create travel packages.

Also watch for more industry podcasts to be posted in coming months. We know there is much to digest on the new industry site, so we'll highlight a different feature of the site in each of the next several issues of BuckeyeLine.

As for the consumer site at DiscoverOhio.com, there are several new ways for travelers to search for information – by keyword, pillar, region, what to do, etc. The Travel Guide is especially help as it allows the user to narrow their search several times to arrive at the listings of greatest interest to them.

We are attempting to engage consumers with the new site through a feature called, "Share Your Ohio." Within this section Web site users can upload their Ohio travel related videos (via YouTube) and submit photos and stories of their memorable Ohio travel experiences making the site truly interactive.

The features I have described here only touch the surface of all the new functions and sections on the DiscoverOhio.com Web sites, so please take a moment to read the overview stories in this issue of BuckeyeLine. Then go exploring and let us know what you think.

The Month in Numbers

All statistics represent a fiscal-year-to-date figure. The Division's fiscal year began July 1, 2006 and lasts until July 31, 2006.

Division Seeks Ideas for Discover Ohio Week by Feb. 21

For the second year, the Division is planning a statewide campaign to encourage Ohioans to visit the travel and tourism gems in their own back yards. The timing will correspond with National Tourism Week May 12-20.

To help us build on last year's initiative, we are seeking your input. How can we work together to make a strong impression in Ohio during this time frame? We know many of you engage in some type of local or regional activities during this time as well, so we are seeking your thoughts and ideas as to how we can maximize our dollars and collaborate on a bigger, better, further reaching campaign.

Please send your feedback, plans and ideas to Jim Greenhalge at jgreenhalge@odod.state.oh.us by Wed., Feb. 21.



DiscoverOhio.com
Pageviews

**Up 68% since
December 2006**
(through January 31)

Division Launches New Industry Web Site

The state's new Tourism Industry Web site offers a fresh look, streamlined access to information you can use and an exciting new feature to help you communicate. At www.DiscoverOhio.com/industry, we put the tools you need to market your business in your hands.

You will continue to have easy access to one of the best resources we have to offer, our staff. The Division Resources tab at the top of the page provides links to information from each office within the Division. You'll also find tabs linking to a BuckeyeLine archive and subscription form (in case you know anyone who isn't already getting this newsletter) and under Contact Us, you will find direct contact information for everyone here in our office.

You'll also see a couple of additional tabs at the top of the page: Travel Buzz and Podcasts. Each of these, in its own way, is meant to connect you with other members of our industry. Travel Buzz is our innovative new message board exclusive to Ohio's tourism industry. Click on the link and check it out. You can read messages that have been posted and register for an account (a Travel Buzz account is separate from your listing account, and requires a simple registration process) to reply and to post messages of your own. You'll find an area to discuss Ohio Tourism, General Tourism and to "meet" fellow tourism partners in your area to put together packages and specials. And, we're always eager to hear ideas for new topics!

Podcasts is another new area for our industry site. While podcasting isn't new, we wanted to create something that was unique to our industry. Here you can subscribe to, or listen online to, regular audio recordings on topics relevant



Calls to 1-800-BUCKEYE

Down 36% YTD
(through November 30)

to how you do business. We'll discuss new technologies, share marketing ideas, talk to industry experts and more. Be sure to visit the Podcast page and subscribe so you don't miss out on any of the upcoming topics.

The site's new, easy-to-navigate homepage includes a number of convenient features. See Special Features for news from the Division that you won't want to miss and Industry News that brings Ohio-related tourism news direct to you daily. Enjoy easy login access to your database listings, complete with a password reminder. And, see recent postings on Travel Buzz and the coming events from the Division's industry calendar of events.

We hope you find the new tourism industry site helpful. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Barker (rbarker@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-5158 or Eric Herzog (ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-0338.

DiscoverOhio.com Offers Better Searches, More Features

With the launch of the newly redesigned DiscoverOhio.com, the Division has improved the site's functionality and added new features. The improvements not only give the site a new look, they also provide visitors easier and more accurate access to your information.

This project began more than a year ago. We held Web site evaluation focus groups to compare our site with other state tourism sites to determine the kind of information visitors look for, how they prefer to search/browse a travel site and to get an overall impression of our site. The focus groups included a broad cross-section of users, from young and tech-savvy to the more traditional traveler.

One thing we learned is that everybody looks for information their own way... and is sure their way is best. So, one of our primary goals was to offer multiple ways to get to your listing information. We now offer a traditional keyword search (powered by Google search technology) for a focused approach; The Travel Guide that allows users to page through listings by category; and our new "I want to..." interactive planner that asks users what they want to do and offers great recommendations. The "Where To Go" button on the homepage allows users to browse by region, while the "What To Do" button is another route to listings by category.

Another common request was to provide ideas of places to visit on the homepage. We decided the best way to do this was to let the people speak. Our "Top Searches" feature

shows what people are looking for on DiscoverOhio.com, while “Experience Ohio” lets visitors enjoy videos and photos submitted by site users.

The “Share Your Ohio” is one of the most innovative new features of the site. Drawing on the excitement of Consumer Generated Media (CGM) sweeping the Internet, we’ve provided a place where users can tell the world just how great Ohio is. We’ve developed a way for users to upload their Ohio travel-related videos to YouTube (www.YouTube.com) and have them appear on our site. Likewise, users will be able to submit photos and stories of their favorite trips to Ohio.

We’ve included a scrollable calendar of events on our site’s homepage, with a searchable calendar to be added within the next few weeks. Visitors can see a list of events for the current month and scroll to future months. The new search function will offer the option to search by date and category.

We are reaching out to some new markets with the redesigned DiscoverOhio.com. Special marketing sections in Spanish, French, German and Japanese provide international travelers with a little insight into what Ohio has to offer. Our new “Reunions” section reaches out to groups of all kinds looking for the perfect place to get together and have fun. Our Reunion Planning Form allows users to provide some basic information such as the region they’re interested in, approximate number of people attending and the type of accommodations/attractions they’d like information on. We’ll collect those forms and forward them to a CVB in the appropriate area for follow-up.

With a new look and exciting new features, we’re sure DiscoverOhio.com is going to help travelers discover more to see and do in Ohio than ever before. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Barker (rbarker@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-5158 or Eric Herzog (ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-0338.

Listing Submission Process on DiscoverOhio.com Improved

Everyone knows that the Internet is now travelers’ preferred source for tourism information. Our research has shown a steady increase in the number of travelers turning to DiscoverOhio.com for tourism experiences in the Buckeye state. We know how important it is that your information be current and readily available to those potential customers.

To that end, we’ve also made enhancements to our online submission system to entering and updating your information easier than ever. We’ve considered all the suggestions from Ohio travel industry members and have come up with a system that incorporates many



PR Earned Media ROI
Clip Circulation

Up 16%
(through Dec. 31)

improvements.

One of our most common requests has been for help with the Description field. It's easy to mistype a word or leave out a space, so we've added a text editor that allows you to check your spelling with the click of a button. The editor even lets you cut, copy and paste text and undo/redo changes. (Some functions may not work due to your particular browser's security settings.)

Another much requested enhancement is a more detailed Info section. You can now let visitors know exactly when your event takes place – each Friday between March 1 and Aug. 31 or the third Saturday of each month – and travelers end up with a much more accurate list of events to choose from.

We've also eliminated a step in getting your listing to us. Now, once all information has been entered, simply click on the last tab labeled "Submit Listing," and your information will be sent directly to our approval queue for review.

You'll find other improvements to the submission process as you begin to use the system. For example, from the Manage Listings section you now can Preview any of your listings. Just click on the "Preview" link on the right side of the screen next to any of your listing and see exactly what the consumer will see. This is a great opportunity to review your listings and make any necessary updates – maybe add some spacing to your description or include a photo.

We hope you find these improvements. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Barker (rbarker@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-51585 or Eric Herzog (ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us) at (614) 466-0338.

New York Media Mission Educational/Successful

Seven representatives of Ohio travel destinations and attractions joined the Division Jan. 23-24 for a slate of face-to-face appointments in New York City with national travel publications.

This year's trip was especially interesting because there were a number of publications we visited for the first time including: *Food and Wine*, *Nick Jr. Family Magazine*, *Travel + Leisure Family*, *Culture & Travel*, Family Travel Forum (online) and *More* magazine. We also met with *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, *Country Living*, *American Heritage* and *American Legacy*. As a result of calls for the mission, we are following up with Ohio travel information to *Sherman's Travel Magazine*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Child*



PR Earned Media Total
Circulation

Down 11% YTD
(through Dec. 31)

Magazine, New York Post and Me Magazine.

Media interest in Ohio travel experiences was widely varied, but we did hear about a couple of stories on the horizon. *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel* will be running a piece on the Purple People Bridge Climb (Cincinnati) in their April issue and *Travel + Leisure* will feature the new Akron Art Museum expansion in an upcoming issue. As always, the media were keenly interested to hear about new attractions and exhibits of national importance opening in Ohio this year.

Representatives from the following Ohio travel entities participated in the mission: Robert Rothschild's Farm, Lake Co. VB, CVB of Greater Cleveland, Cincinnati CVB, Experience Columbus (CVB), Greater Toledo CVB and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Another 13 partners took part in the Division's CD Press Kit program in which their press materials were left with editors and writers from each of the publications visited. Thank you to everyone for making this another successful venture for the Ohio travel industry!



PR Earned Media ROI Ad Value

Up 22%
(through Dec. 31)

2007-08 Fall/Winter Calendar of Events Deadline April 27

To have your Ohio event considered for inclusion in the printed 2007-08 Fall/Winter Discover Ohio Calendar of Events, please submit/update your information in the [DiscoverOhio.com/Buckeye database](http://DiscoverOhio.com/Buckeye_database) by **5 p.m. on Friday, April 27.**

Database Submission Tips

When entering dates for Specials and Packages, keep in mind that they will only show up on your listing page during those dates.

2007 Annual Discover Ohio Travel Planner Available

We are pleased to announce availability of the new 2007 annual *Discover Ohio Travel Planner*, the state's official travel guide. The free, full-color, 172-page planner features captivating photography and provides information for sports & recreation seekers, family fun buffs, connoisseurs of arts & culture, and history & heritage enthusiasts. The publication's main focus is on the more than 3,000 listings featuring attractions, recreation, shopping, dining, visitor services and lodging, organized by the state's seven travel regions. Each regional listing section begins with a detailed map.

Listings featured in the 2007 annual *Discover Ohio Travel Planner* were created using data from the Division's [DiscoverOhio.com/Buckeye Database](http://DiscoverOhio.com/Buckeye_Database). All Ohio travel

entities are invited to submit listings, free of charge, to the database at www.DiscoverOhio.com/edit to be included in future issues of the travel planner. Information also was supplied by the Ohio Bed & Breakfast Association, the Ohio Campground Owners Association, the Ohio Golf Course Owners Association, the Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association, the Ohio Restaurant Association, and the Ohio Wine Producers Association.

Quantities of 100 planners will be sent automatically to convention and visitor bureaus. Bulk quantities of the *Travel Planner* can be ordered online (link to the Bulk Publication Request).

Teleperformance (Call Tech) Partner Days

Beginning in April we will again offer "Partner Days" at Teleperformance. Partner Days provide a forum for Ohio tourism related-business to train the 800-BUCKEYE travel counselors. Sessions are two hours in length with four 30 minute trainings. Visit the Ohio Tourism section of the [Travel Buzz](#) for available dates and times. For additional information or to sign up, email ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us

MAP Phase Two Reimbursement Requests Due Feb. 28

Please note that Phase Two of the Marketing Assistance Program (MAP) ended on Dec. 31, 2006. Reimbursement requests may be submitted to Fahlgren as early as Jan. 1, and must be in their office no later than 5 p.m. on Feb. 28. When submitting your reimbursement request, please provide all back-up media for the phase. The required materials for back-up are described in the [MAP guidelines](#).

In addition to the reimbursement application and back-up, please provide a summary of the ROI achieved in all efforts using the Marketing Assistance Program. If you have any questions in regard to this request, please contact Julie Camp.

Please remember that failure to complete 80 percent of the approved media plan or failure to submit reimbursement forms will result in a one-year disqualification from the Cooperative Marketing Program. We want to work with you to ensure that this doesn't happen. An electronic version of the reimbursement form can be found [here](#). Please keep copies of all of the back-up materials accompanying your reimbursement request. In the event that questions arise regarding compliance with the program rules or logo guidelines, you will need these materials for reference.

Your invoice must be on your company's letterhead, billable to Fahlgren, Inc. Due to accounting procedures involved, please allow up to eight weeks for receipt of your reimbursement check. Please send the original reimbursement form, invoice and all back-up media to:

Fahlgren, Inc.
Attn: Ann Oliver
585 South Front St., Suite 300
Columbus, OH 43215

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Camp at (614) 466-3734, or via email at jcamp@odod.state.oh.us.

Best Practices: Innovative Super Bowl Ads

Buying an ad during the Super Bowl is the pinnacle of advertising. For a price tag of \$2.6 million, it could be yours. Seem like a hefty fee? Many marketers find it worthwhile because plenty of viewers tune in just for the ads and talk about them the next day while others are recalling a play-by-play of the game.

Super Bowl ads were once closely guarded until game day. This year, Ohio-based Nationwide Insurance made front-page news by announcing well before the game that its Super Bowl ad would feature [wannabe rapper Kevin Federline](#).

Doritos also made the news by letting amateurs create its Super Bowl ad. It bought ad time, and sponsored a contest that gave an aspiring videographer airtime during the game. One entrant spent just \$12.79 producing his ad, while the budget for many Super Bowl ads tops \$1 million. Moreover, Doritos gained customer loyalty and recognition by encouraging consumers to embrace and personalize its brand. The ads were posted to YouTube and attracted thousands of viewers in the days leading up to the game. (Click [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) to view several ads.)

GoDaddy.com also gained notoriety for submitting a Super Bowl ad that didn't pass the censors' scrutiny. By using the banned ad online rather than on air, the company was able to claim the cache of a Super Bowl ad without the cost. And thousands of people watched the ad and sent it to friends.

None of us likely has an extra \$2.6 million in the advertising budget this year, but we can still learn from the successes of these ad strategies. Sometimes, it's not really the ad that matters. If you can generate enough buzz around your ad by being innovative, the PR value may be worth just as much as the ad buy.

Tech Corner: Online Lead Generation

For years you've heard us preach the gospel of email marketing. It's an extremely cost effective way to keep in touch with people who care about your product or service. If you've started an email marketing program from scratch, congratulations. But you may have experienced some disappointment with its results. That's because even in the seemingly infinite world of the Internet, you are facing stiff competition for subscribers.

If you are relying only on your Web site to generate new names for your email list, you're probably not reaching your program's potential. These leads are known as "organic" because they come through your Web site by nature of visitors' interest in having a dialogue with you. Organic leads will always perform better than leads from other sources. These recipients will open their emails at a higher rate and they will convert to sales at a higher rate. The bad news is that their numbers are never going to be large enough to reach an economy of scale with your e-marketing program.

The next step is to reach out to consumers and ask them to have a dialogue with you. The people you contact likely will rebuff your advances. They will unsubscribe from your email list at a much higher rate and won't convert to sales as well as your organic list. But you'll rarely gain the traction you need without them.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind when searching for a reputable lead-generation service.

- Always know where your offer will be placed. Lead generation often involves placing a small ad on a third party site. These sites and you should have similar target audiences.
- Know how your offer will be positioned. Often, your email program will be offered alongside several others. Yours will have to be the most attractive to get the best results. This is called co-registration, and ideally, you will be able to offer your email program without the competition.
- Finally, communicate with your new leads as soon as possible, preferably with an auto-respond email welcoming them and informing of them of what valuable information they're in store for.

Where in the World?

Feb. 16-18: Joe in London, Ontario for Travel Media Association of Canada Annual Conference

Feb. 21-23: Jim in Washington, D.C., for National Council of State Tourism Directors Spring Forum

Feb. 22-25 – Joy and Celeste in Cincinnati for Heartland

Travel Showcase

Feb. 24-25 – Jim in Cincinnati for Heartland Travel Showcase

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
