

To view this email as a web page, go [here](#).



March 7, 2006
Welcome!

In this issue...

[A Message from State Tourism Director Claudia Vecchio](#)
[Register Today for the Travel and Tourism Marketing Conference April 11-12](#)
[Discover Ohio! Week May 13-21](#)
[XML Offers Industry Members Access to Buckeye Database](#)
[2006 Spring/Summer Calendar of Events Now Available](#)
[Order Copies of 2006 Ohio Travel Planner](#)
[New DiscoverOhio.com Features Launched](#)
[DiscoverOhio.com Monthly Contest Sponsorships Available](#)
[Best Practices: Courting Your Local Audience](#)
[Tech Corner: Online Public Relations](#)
[Where in the World?](#)
[Group Tour Survey](#)

A Message from State Tourism Director Claudia Vecchio

Spring is in the air and with it comes an enthusiasm about the remarkable variety of new experiences that will be available for Ohio travelers during the upcoming travel season. It's also a time when marketers across the state are developing advertising, public relations and web campaigns designed to drive business. The Division is engaged in this effort as well. We will continue to incorporate the *Ohio...So much to Discover!* brand, but within a campaign unlike any you've ever seen in state tourism promotion.

In the advertising arena, many of you are involved in the cooperative advertising programs and we hope these will track well for you. The Division has two promotions coming up that are very different and we believe will introduce Ohio to new audiences. The first is a presence at the All-Star Baseball Game in Pittsburgh. Working with the Ohio Historical Society and baseball history enthusiasts, we are going to highlight Ohio's remarkable baseball heritage. We also will showcase the destinations in Ohio that fit the historic/heritage traveler, and will roll out a blogging sweepstakes. This could, potentially, be the greatest opportunity for Ohio. I don't believe it will start off with a bang, but the relevance of blogging, especially to a young audience, cannot be underestimated. We will let you know how this promotion tracks, in case you

The Month in Numbers

(Statistics reflect a fiscal year-to-date figure. FY 2005-2006 runs July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006.)



DiscoverOhio.com Page Views (through Feb. 28)
Up 30% YTD

want to try something similar.

Our public relations efforts continue to tout Ohio's experiential offerings with pitches including gardening/horticulture, Appalachian Ohio, aviation and the Lake Erie Islands. Our PR efforts recently won two Columbus Advertising Federation ADDY Awards for the Underground Railroad Media Kit CD.

Information about the 2006 Travel and Tourism Marketing Conference in April is included in this BuckeyeLine. Be sure to attend to see all these campaign components unveiled.

We thank all in the industry for your great effort on behalf of the Accommodations survey and other research projects of late. Your commitment to gaining this solid sample size creates a much-needed foundation for the other research efforts that build on this information.

And, finally, I applaud all those who so capably promoted Ohio during the recent group travel show season. I attended ABA in Nashville and Heartland Travel Showcase in Cincinnati and was thrilled to see a great representation from Ohio. As a Division, we are looking very hard at the packaged travel marketing efforts and look forward to rolling out an exciting education and marketing program with the FY07 marketing plan.

Let us know if we can assist you in any way.

Register Today for the Travel and Tourism Marketing Conference April 11-12

The Ohio Travel and Tourism Marketing Conference will be held April 11-12, 2006 at Cherry Valley Lodge. Go [here](#) for the agenda.

Formerly known as the Partnership Forum and Industry Day, this will be a very different conference from those in years past. First, it will be two full days, but two very different days. April 11 will be devoted to cultural and heritage tourism. The event will feature nationally recognized speakers including Steve Zickman, Cheryl Hargrove, one of the country's leading heritage tourism experts; Dan Kaercher, editor-in-chief, Midwest Living magazine; Tim Anderson, a cultural geography professor at Ohio University; Bill Theroux, the mastermind behind the downtown arts revitalization of Bradenton, Florida; and Dannette Render, the Division's new multi-cultural marketing consultant.

April 12 will be a marketing day. This is the day the Division will provide its program overview, and we will discuss topics such as generational marketing with Chuck Underwood, a leading expert in this area. We also will have a panel comprised of people representing various generations so you, as a marketer, will be able to see the preferential differences of these groups. Judy Randall, a travel industry marketing expert, will discuss the latest travel trends and the afternoon will be chock full of workshops in the various marketing



PR Earned Media Total
Circulation
(through Jan. 31)
Up 57.7% YTD

disciplines.

Go [here](#) to register today!

Discover Ohio! Week May 13-21

Discover Ohio Week will be the largest in-state promotion in recent history. The idea is to raise pride and awareness about Ohio's tourism destinations to Ohioans. The Division will have a significant amount of advertising throughout the state, however, there is also a need for local DMOs to promote the week as well. To this end, materials are available [here](#) that allow each destination to maintain its identity while participating in the promotion. We hope you will participate. It is an extremely cost-effective way to promote Ohio tourism. Let's all work together to ensure Ohioans take at least one getaway in Ohio this year. It will benefit us all. Order your materials now.



PR Earned Media ROI
Circulation
(through Jan. 31)
Up 49.5% YTD

XML Offers Industry Members Access to Buckeye Database

A new administrative feature for account holders allows industry members to automatically "download" information from the Buckeye Database and display it on their own Web sites. Using a custom system created specifically for the Division, users can completely customize the information displayed. By selecting Geographic Options, Categories and even the font size and color, you have total control of what shows up on your site. Both event and attraction information is available.



Calls to 1-800-BUCKEYE
(through Feb. 28)
Down 22% YTD

Completion of the process will require assistance from your Web site developer, as it requires placing special code generated by the system. However, this simple process can quickly and easily be accomplished by anyone with a basic understanding of html and Web design.

For more information, contact Roger Barker at rbarker@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-5158 or Eric Herzog at ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-0338.

2006 Spring/Summer Calendar of Events Now Available

The Division is pleased to announce availability of the new 2006 *Spring/Summer Ohio Calendar of Events*. Along with the new calendars, we are continuing with a new distribution plan for bulk quantities of the Calendar of Events. Due to continually increasing numbers of visitors to DiscoverOhio.com, the need for printed events calendars has decreased. We, therefore, have lowered the number of Spring/Summer calendars printed this year to 100,000. Initial bulk orders will be limited to one box (100 quantity) of calendars until approximately April 14. This will allow sufficient time to fulfill a majority of consumer requests before resuming fulfillment of bulk orders. Thank you in advance for working with us on this new distribution plan. Bulk quantities of the Calendar can be ordered [here](#).



E-Newsletter Subscribers
(through Feb. 28)
Up 5.5% YTD

Order Copies of 2006 Ohio Travel Planner

Copies of the 2006 *Ohio Travel Planner* can be ordered from Andy Doty at the Buckeye Fulfillment Center at (740) 773-3729 or online at www.DiscoverOhio.com/industry; click on Tourism Information and then Bulk Publication Request.

New DiscoverOhio.com Features Launched

Visitors to the state's official tourism Web site will discover two new features to help them find more great things to see and do here in Ohio. Launched in late February, the enhanced Interactive Map and new Calendar Date Picker provide users with the tools they need to find detailed information.

The enhanced Interactive Map builds on the site's existing map, but now features the seven new travel regions highlighted in the state's recently published *Ohio Travel Planner* and *Ohio Calendar of Events*. In addition, the larger more colorful map offers both a statewide view and detailed views of each region. By clicking radio buttons, users can add region borders, county borders, designated Ohio byways and more. To view the new Interactive Map at DiscoverOhio.com click Visitors then Interactive Map.

The new Calendar Date Picker provides users with a quick, easy way to complete date fields when searching for events, packages and special offers. With the pop-up calendar, visitors can view a month to find the exact dates they're looking for and enter the dates in the correct format with just a few clicks. The Date Picker also allows users to scroll to future months and years, sure to be handy for finding the exact date of the third Friday in February 2007 when the family will be visiting again. It's never too early to begin searching for the perfect outing - or hotel package!

For more information, contact Roger Barker at rbarker@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-5158 or Eric Herzog at ehertzog@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-0338.

DiscoverOhio.com Monthly Contest Sponsorships Available

With DiscoverOhio.com's Monthly Contest sponsorships sold out for 2006, the Division is now accepting sponsors for 2007.

In exchange for a contest prize package valued at \$500 or more, the sponsoring destination is featured on the DiscoverOhio.com Monthly Contest page. The feature copy includes up to 500 words of text and five digital images. The sponsor also receives a list of all contestants with permission to use the contact information as a one-time marketing list. That's a list of potential customers who have already shown interest in your destination and have seen what you have to offer.

To request sponsorship for a 2007 Monthly Contest, complete the [Monthly Contest Sponsorship form](#). Sponsorships are

awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact Roger Barker at rbarker@odod.state.oh.us or (614) 466-5158.

Best Practices: Courting Your Local Audience

In the tourism industry, we naturally focus the vast majority of our marketing efforts on tourists. And tourists usually come from a distance away. But what about the people in your own back yard?

While it may not make much sense at first, marketing to your neighbors can be a great way to build a grassroots marketing campaign. These people are essential to getting marketing messages to travelers who are visiting friends and relatives, which form a large proportion of Ohio tourists according to Division studies. The research also shows that personal recommendations are one of the major factors travelers use to make their decisions.

If you don't already promote your tourism business to locals, here are a few reasons to do so. Your neighbors are likely searching for things to do when guests come to town. Why not make a place for yourself at the top of that list? Local people travel, too. And when they do, you can give them a reason to talk up your hometown at their vacation or business destination. No one will be a better advocate for you than someone who has experienced your tourism business.

Reaching your neighbors doesn't have to mean buying ads in the local paper - you can achieve much more with by welcoming your local audience into your establishment. If you operate a bed and breakfast, invite the community to an event showcasing your property's highlights. If your business is a museum, promote low-or no-charge admission day and have your VIPs on hand to meet the local community.

One of the ways the Division is reaching the local market is through Discover Ohio Week, May 13-21. While we are promoting travel within Ohio, take the opportunity to showcase your business to your local community. Maybe then, the next time your neighbor's in-laws come to town, they'll be treated to a stay at your inn!

Tech Corner: Online Public Relations

It's more important now than ever before to integrate your public relations program with your Web site. There are some basic components that have been around for a while, like the online pressroom. Other methods of online PR are just now coming into use, such as search engine optimization for news releases.

One of the newest frontiers in online public relations is search engine optimization - not for your Web site, but for your news releases. There are dozens of news search engines, like Yahoo! News and Google News, which scan sources from around the world to return relevant news to users each day. By

modifying your news releases slightly, they can be more easily found by these news search engines. This circumvents the normal model for public relations practice - providing content for the public through the media. Here, you get to give your message directly to them, just as you want it to be read.

To improve the chances of seeing your news releases in the top spots on news search engines, here are a few tips.

- Always post your releases in html (Web page) format rather than as a pdf.
- Include at least one or two relevant, embedded links to pages within your Web site. This ensures that once a reader comes across your release, he or she has an outlet to click through to your site for more information.
- Check your site architecture to ensure news releases are no more than four clicks away from your homepage.
- And use all of the tools available for standard Web site search engine optimization - make a point to use your desired keywords in meta tags, page headers and within the text of your release. Just take care to write the release primarily for the reader and secondarily for the search engine.

With a few minutes of extra work, your news releases could appear in news engine search results, giving you a direct audience of more than 27 million people a month.

Where in the World?

March 6-8 - Claudia and Julie in Toronto for Governor's trade mission and tourism event

March 10 - Claudia in Cincinnati

March 14 - Celeste at Tourism Council of Greater Cincinnati Meeting

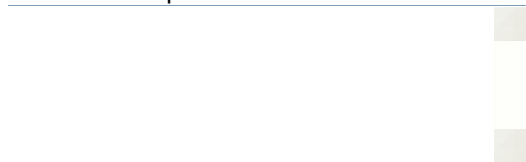
March 24 - Claudia at Wayne National Forest for Appalachian Ohio Underground Railroad meeting

March 29-30 - Tammy at Chicago Media Mission

April 4-6 - Claudia in New York for Great Lakes of North America (international marketing) Splash Bash event

Group Tour Survey


1. What role do you feel the Division should have in working with the Group Travel market?




2. Have you taken advantage of the Division's Group Travel programs? If so, please describe your experience.



3. In which areas of marketing to group travel does the Division excel?




4. Which areas need attention or improvement?



5. What does your DMO or property currently do to promote to the group/package travel industry segment?



6. What do you see as the future of the packaged travel industry, i.e do you see a particular segment/audience that you feel should be a key focus?



Submit

If you do not receive a confirmation page after clicking submit, please click [here](#).

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
Bob Taft, Governor; Bruce Johnson, Lt. Governor

This email was sent by: Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism
77 S. High St. Columbus, OH 43215 USA



We respect your right to privacy - [view our policy](#)

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [One-Click Unsubscribe](#)