

Division releases 2001 travel and tourism statistics

The Ohio Division of Travel & Tourism recently released the travel and tourism statistics for 2001 as compiled by Longwoods International and Rovelstad & Associates.

Total visitor spending in Ohio for 2001 was \$23.1 billion, down from \$25.7 billion in 2000 and \$27.1 billion in 1999.

This was due in part to an 18 percent drop in the number of day trips and day visitor spending. In 2000, Ohio had 120.6 million day trips as compared to just 106.4 million in 2001. Dr. Colleen May, research & heritage tourism manager for the Ohio Division of Travel & Tourism, said the top two factors that affect day trips are weather and the amount of the visitor's time and money.

Accordingly, full time direct employment in 2001 dropped to 552,000 jobs down from 617,000 in 2000.

Looking at Ohio's weakness versus the

U.S. norm, May said, while the weather cannot be controlled, the tourism industry did have control over last three factors: first class resorts, excellent value for the money and good vacation packages.

"Ohio has only five percent of visitors

traveling with pre-paid packages," May said. "There is an opportunity here."

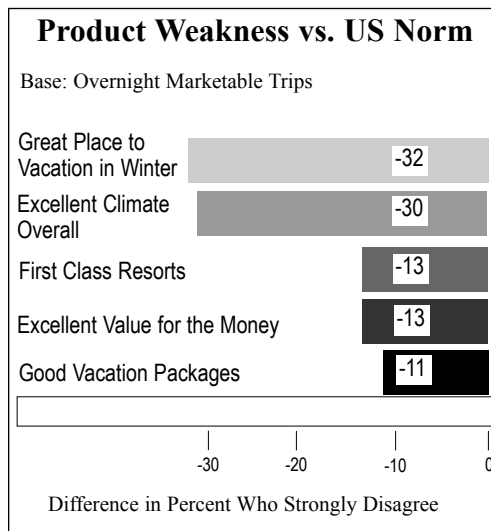
The top product strengths for Ohio versus the U.S. Norm were great professional/college sports (29% difference of percent who strongly agree), interesting local people (16%), excellent hunting (15%), great for theater and the arts (15%) and interesting festivals/fairs (12%).

According to the study, the three top places visited in 2001 were small towns and villages, lakes and rivers and rural farming areas.

Private campground user's spending increased and state parks overnight visitors and spending was down slightly.

Spending per person/day:

Day trips	\$71.88
Hotel/Motel Inns	\$107.98
Campers	\$239.43



Conference on Tourism a must attend event for industry

by Gregg Mervis

2002 Conference on Tourism Chair

The Conference on Tourism Committee has been working hard all year to ensure there will be many reasons you will want to attend this year's Conference.

OTA President Vicky Branson will kick-off the Conference on Wednesday night with her State of the Association address. Paul Sherlock Chair Joan Van Offeren will present the 2002 Paul Sherlock Award recognizing one of our colleagues as the Tourism Pioneer of the Year.

The next morning nationally reknown speaker Joe Veneto will present our keynote address, "Driving Opportunities" and provide us insight into creating strong products for greater impact in the drive market. Break out

sessions will focus on a number of hot industry topics including attracting Ohio's conventions, the nature-based tourism market, delivering a vacation package, tourism and Ohio's taxes, agri-tourism and much more!

The Director of the Ohio Department of Development, Bruce Johnson, will be on hand to introduce the new director of the Ohio Division of Travel & Tourism. And we'll hear the Division's plans for tourism promotion in 2003.

Who will win the 2002 Ruby Awards competition? Find out who will walk away with the top award in each category during the Ruby Awards Luncheon on Thursday. Browse the finalists' entries before the lunch and cast your vote for the Delegates Choice Award.

On Thursday night, come prepared to

bid on some spectacular items in the Silent Auction. Snag a great deal on weekend getaways and one-of-a-kind gifts. It's a great way to get a jump start on your holiday shopping.

Take advantage of fun Pre-Conference activities on Wednesday. And you won't want to miss a great opportunity to play a great golf course. Roses Run Country Club is one of the newest jewels in the Northeast Ohio golf community along the Cuyahoga River. The "Take Another Look" Fam Tour will highlight the breathtaking sights and culinary fare that Greater Akron has to offer.

For more information or to register for the 2002 Conference on Tourism, go to www.ohiotravel.org and click the Conference link or call the OTA office at 800-896-4682 or 614-572-1931. I look forward to seeing you in October!

OTA Slices and Snippets

Shatzer elected to OTA Board

Debbie Shatzer, executive director of the Delaware County Convention & Visitors Bureau, was elected to the OTA Board of Trustees to fill an unexpired term in the Central Region which will run through October 2003.

Winchell receives Monteith Trophy

OTA Board Member Donniella Winchell, executive director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association, was awarded the Monteith Trophy at the Virginia Wine Festival. The trophy is awarded annually by the Vinifera Wine Growers Association to an individual or organization that has made outstanding contributions to the growth and development of the U.S. wine industry.

OTA to partner on Bicentennial CD

In conjunction with five Signature Events and 40 Legacy Projects scheduled for next year, the Toledo-based American Retrospects in partnership with the Ohio Travel Association and the Ohio Historical Society has unveiled plans to release a unique Bicentennial audio production titled "Ohio, A Sentimental Journey". This CD is available to OTA members at the wholesale price. The project has earned the endorsements of the Bicentennial Commission and the Regional Growth Partnership of Northwest Ohio. A Sentimental Journey will give listeners a fascinating perspective of Ohio's lifespan beginning with events dating back to 1778, twenty-five years before Ohio was admitted to the Union as the 17th state. Covering everything from Buckeye celebrities to crazy inventions, the highly entertaining, fun-filled narrative reflects on little known Ohioans and facts as well as the famous names and major events that have shaped Ohio's history. The CD documentary will tour numerous cities, towns and villages as it covers geography, science, business & industry, politics, arts & literature, sports, entertainment and trivia. For more information or to hear an audio sample, visit www.americanretro.net

Campolito joins Akron CVB team

Alicia Campolito was named destination sales manager of the Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau and will be working primarily with the motorcoach market. She was previously director of special projects for the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad for four years.

Ohio Caverns named a top cave

Ohio Caverns in West Liberty, Ohio, was recently named to the Top Six Best Caves list by *Parade*, a national Sunday newspaper magazine. The magazine wrote, "Under forward-looking, environment-conscious management for 75 years., Ohio Caverns has escaped the souvenir-hunting and exploitation that destroyed the beauty of many caves."

Legislative News...

Legislative lunch to host senate leaders

Senator Randy Gardner will host a Tourism Awareness Lunch for key Senate Leaders from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on September 27 at the Lodge at Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron. Senate leaders attending include Senate Majority Whip Randy Gardner, the next Senate President Doug White and Senator Bill Harris. Join us and these influential legislators to showcase the strength and impact of Ohio tourism. For more information contact OTA Executive Director Marc McQuaid at 800-896-4682 or mmcquaid@ohiotravel.org.

Supreme Court overturns smoking ban

In late August, the Ohio Supreme Court issued its ruling which overturns the Toledo/Lucas County smoking ban that had been adopted by the local board of health. In a defeat for anti-tobacco forces, the court ruled 6-1 that state law limits the power of health boards in enacting comprehensive smoking bans. Although the court called the goals of anti-smoking activists well intentioned but said state law does not allow them to overrule the Legislature. "We refuse to extend by mere implication the authority of local boards of health beyond clearly stated and well-defined limits," said Justice Andy Douglas, writing for the majority.

\$20.02 in 2002 for Ohio Hospitality PAC

OTA needs your help to support a bright future for our industry! In 2001, OTA lobbied to protect the Division of Travel & Tourism biennial budget from being cut. With the latest round of state budget cuts, the future is in our hands. OTA continues to discuss travel and tourism issues with key state legislators for next year's budget. We are asking OTA members to spread the message that promoting tourism in Ohio will create additional sales tax revenue for the state. Tourism is part of the solution to Ohio's budget crisis! Please support the Ohio Hospitality PAC, a political action committee of OTA and the Ohio Restaurant Association, with a check for \$20.02 in 2002. Monies raised by the Coalition are used solely for the purpose of donating to the campaigns of elected officials who recognize the importance of tourism. Please make your personal check payable to the Ohio Hospitality PAC and send to: Ohio Hospitality PAC, c/o OTA, 130 East Chestnut Street, Suite 301, Columbus, OH 43215.

THE SOURCE Is the newsletter of the Ohio Travel Association

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Vicky Tabor Branson, President
Marc McQuaid, Executive Director
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The Mission of OTA is to lead the Ohio travel and tourism industry to promote hospitality and economic development.

Editorial contributions and press releases are welcome and subject to editing. Job openings can be posted on OTA's web site. E-mail or fax job descriptions to Mark (e-mail: mbennett@ohiotravel.org). ©2002

IMPACT ON TOURISM

Ohio Film Commission closes

The state Department of Development is shutting down the Ohio Film Commission, which promotes Ohio as a location for movies, television programs and commercials, in the latest round of state budget cuts. The commission, part of the Division of Travel and Tourism, closed September 6 and will save the state about \$100,000 a year. The tourism division will absorb the commission's job, said Gail Crawley, spokeswoman for the development department.

"(The division) will continue to be pro-active in promoting on-location filming in Ohio," she said. "Someone will pick up the responsibilities. The same resources will be made available."

As part of the state's budget woes, the department is eliminating 60 positions, mostly through early retirement and attrition. Eighteen jobs are being abolished right away, including that of film commissioner Steve Cover, who has run the commission as a one-man operation since 1999. Started in 1979, the commission was one of about 10 nationwide. Now, there are more than 300, including separate nonprofit film commissions in Cleveland and Cincinnati. The commission scouts locations, arranges support services and helps in-state filmmakers make and export their work.

Business travel grows

The Travel Industry Association of America's (TIA) official Travel Forecast projects that the decline in business travel that many sectors of the travel industry are feeling will turn around. After three straight years of declines, TIA forecasts that business/convention travel volume will increase slightly (+1.4%) in 2002. However, business travel is not forecast to climb back to 2000 levels until some time in 2003. Despite the terrorist attacks and economic downturn of last year, leisure travel increased (+3.1%) in 2001 and is forecast to increase again (+1.3%) this year. Overall, total domestic travel volume rose by 2 percent in 2001. This gain was driven by a strong leisure market the first half of 2001, which offset the drop in business travel(-3%) over 2000.

"Gains earlier in the year in leisure travel and the modification in travel patterns following the September 11 attacks aided the annual growth," remarked Dr. Suzanne Cook, senior vice president of research for the Travel Industry Association of America.

"Consumers feel travel is an important part of their lives and they didn't stop traveling last fall because of the attacks or the weak economy. They simply modified the way they took their leisure trips by traveling closer to home, taking shorter trips and taking more auto trips."

Reunions big for tourism

Family reunions and travel seem to go hand-in-hand, judging by the fact that one in three (34%) U.S. adults have traveled to a family reunion in the past three years, according to the latest Travel Poll by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA). This translates into nearly 72 million U.S. adults. In fact, one in five (22%) U.S. adults say they took a trip to attend a family reunion in just the past year. Travel Poll results are based on a representative sample survey of 1,300 U.S. adults.

Traveling to a reunion truly is a family affair. Among the U.S. adult population, those married are more likely to take a trip to attend a family reunion than those not married (38% vs. 30%). Likewise, people with children under 18 are more apt than those without children to take a family reunion trip (39% vs. 32%). Travelers go the distance to attend their family reunions, with 34 percent traveling 500 or more miles one way away from home. Another 34 percent traveled between 150 and 499 miles, while 32 percent traveled less than 150 miles to their reunion.

Need for smarter use of existing transportation capacity

As a 2002 summer travel season characterized by disrupted service and bad financial news from Amtrak and the airlines draws to a close, the American Bus Association (ABA) announced that it has launched a focused grassroots effort to urge Congress and the Administration to shift its transportation focus from crisis management to smart planning and growth. ABA's members have been asked to make a common-sense appeal to Congress to encourage the broader use of the nation's existing intercity bus capacity, and hold transportation planners more accountable for failing to examine cost-efficient and flexible bus service that is readily available to them.

"The bad transportation news this summer has only served to bolster the case for wider inclusion of intercity bus service in all transportation planning," said ABA President and CEO Peter J. Pantuso. "It is inexcusable to overlook the readily accessible, cost-efficient and underutilized passenger carrying capacity of the private motorcoach industry. We must keep the trains and planes running, but not in a wasteful or short-sighted way."

Private intercity buses or motorcoaches carried 774 million passengers in year 2000, substantially more passengers than the commercial airlines and Amtrak combined, and have a highly acclaimed safety record. Scheduled motorcoach service is available in more than 4,000 U.S. communities every day, and is not as readily vulnerable to system-wide delays and equipment headaches as are the centrally controlled airline and rail systems. While bus, airlines and Amtrak frequently rely on one another in an "intermodal" system, there are certain markets and routes that ABA believes would be more sensibly served by scheduled bus service.

Traveler Sentiment Index declines

Despite slight increases in travelers' interest in taking pleasure trips and perceptions that travel is affordable, the Travel Industry Association of America's (TIA) latest Traveler Sentiment Index (TSI) shows a decline in the third quarter of 2002. The drop is mainly due to consumer concerns about not having enough time or money to travel. The overall index fell 5.5 percent to 98.1 in third quarter 2002, down from 103.8 last quarter.

For two of the five components that make up the TSI—consumer perceptions of their ability to travel considering demands on time and considering demands on personal finances—significant declines occurred (down 13.9% and 12.9%, respectively).

Thanks to all sponsors and donors of
the 2002 Tourism Scholarship
Golf Classic!

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and all of those who donated prizes

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**Preview the
2002 Ruby Award
Finalists at
www.ohiotravel.org/ruby.html**

Ohio Travel Association

Calendar of Events

Oct. 9-11 Conference on Tourism, Sheraton Suites
Akron/Cuyahoga Falls, Cuyahoga Falls, OH

Oct. 10 The Ruby Awards Luncheon presented by the
Publishing Group, Sheraton Suites, Cuyahoga
Falls, OH

2003

Feb 13-16 Heartland Travel Showcase, Navy Pier, Chicago,
IL

Oct. 15-17 Conference on Tourism, Radisson Hotel, Sharonville,
OH

www.ohiotravel.org

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www.ohiotravel.org.**