

Trade Show Report

NTA Travel Exchange – Atlanta, GA

January 31 – February 5, 2016

Montana Representation:

- Glacier Country – Debbie Picard
- Glacier Park Inc. – Jason St. Clair
- MOTBD – Kim Birrell
- TownHouse Inns of MT – Paula Ruark
- Butte CVB – Maria Pochervina
- Red Lion Kalispell – Chuck Carter

Overview:

- National Tour Association (NTA) Travel Exchange took place in Atlanta, GA where more than 1,400 attendees gathered for the packaged travel event.
- 230 tour operators were in attendance.
- 33 countries were represented at NTA 2016.
- This year NTA partnered with Faith Travel Association to combine their conferences and trade show floors.
- Glacier Country was matched with 34 tour operators for pre-scheduled appointments and picked up 2 more appointments at the show.
- Glacier Country had appointments with 13 NEW operators.
- There were several networking events scheduled in the evenings that allowed for more interaction with the tour operators.
- The health of the packaged travel industry is strong and growing.

Trends:

- Hotel occupancy has continued to increase up in most regions throughout the US.
- Travel is a way of life and people continue to see it as vital.
- Smaller motorcoaches with fewer passengers for a more effective and relaxed tour.
- Amtrak/Rail travel is up.

Recommendations for 2016/17:

- Demand for Montana Tourism product is big right now and the buzz about the 2016 National Parks Centennial has been beneficial.
- Tour operators are still looking for authentic Montana. They are always looking for that unique experience to offer their clients that the client couldn't get if traveling on their own.
- We need to work with Glacier Country partners on these special offerings. They need to be hands-on, innovative, specialty, experiential, behind the scenes/back of the house experiences.

The next NTA Travel Exchange: St. Louis, MO – February 25 – March 2, 2017