

Trade Show Report

Go West Summit – Fort Worth, Texas

January 28-31, 2013

Montana Representation:

- Glacier Country – Debbie Picard
- MTOT – Pam Gosink
- TownHouse Inns of MT – Paula Ruark
- Butte CVB – Maria Pochervina
- Red Lion – Chuck Carter

Overview:

- Go West Summit gathers international and receptive tour operators and travel agencies that focus on offering tours to the American West made up of a 13 state region to international clients. These tour operators specialize in group travel, FIT, and fly/drive programs.
- Nearly 500 attended Go West Summit.
- Glacier Country was matched with 31 buyers for 12 minute appointments.
- 166 tour operators/travel agencies/receptive operators attended.
- Next Go West Summit: Tacoma WA – February 23-27, 2014.

Trends:

- Most first time international travelers are drawn to the well-known places: New York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Disneyland.
- On their second and third visits they are showing strong interest in the National Parks. Yellowstone is the most well known as their concessionaire has been selling internationally for years.
- International visitors are attracted to Montana for our wildlife viewing, wide open spaces, soft adventure, our unique culture that includes lodging and activities.
- Customers are looking for special treatment, unique experiences.
- Younger customers (20-40 years) are coming to tour operators asking for adventure, more independence (don't make everyone do the same thing at the same time).

International Tourism Stats: Helen Marano, World Travel & Tourism Council

- In 2012 global travel was up 3%, air travel up 6%, international travel to the US up 7% and expected to rise significantly.
- The US experienced 29 straight months of growth in tourism.
- Global tourism accounts for 1 in 12 jobs, and will increase by 10% by 2022.
- Summary: Travel is a way of life and continues to grow even in a down economy.

Recommendations for 2013:

- Educate our member partners on international tourism, and make them aware of cultural customs that they should be aware of before hosting an international group.
- Recognize the developing need for multi-lingual step on guides.
- Work with the state office on multi-lingual promotional materials.