



Trade Show Report
Go West Summit – Salt Lake City
February 16 - 19, 2018

Montana Representation:

- + Glacier Country – Debbie Picard
- + MTOT – Kim Birrell
- + TownHouse Inns of MT – Paula Ruark
- + Billings CVB – Aly
- + Big Sky CVB - Candace
- + Butte CVB – Maria Pochervina
- + Red Lion – Chuck Carter

Overview:

- + Go West Summit gathers international and international inbound receptive tour operators and travel agencies that focus on offering tours to the 14 western states in the United States. These tour operators specialize in group travel, FIT, and fly/drive programs.
- + 520 attended Go West Summit. 189 buyers from 19 countries.
- + Glacier Country was matched with 28 buyers and I was able to pick up 4 more prior to Go West through direct email connections, for 12-minute appointments.
- + Increased our database with 13 first time appointments.
- + Next Go West Summit: Boise, ID – February 24 – 28, 2019.

Trends:

- + First time international travelers are drawn to the well-known places: New York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Disneyland. National Parks are considered for a second or third visit so we are considered a 2nd or 3rd tier destination. Yellowstone is the most well known as their concessionaire has been selling internationally for years.
- + While I used to hear about tier one cities, most tour operators are now asking for authentic experiences for their clients and are ready to come to our destination.
- + International visitors are attracted to Montana for our wildlife viewing, wide open spaces, soft adventure, our unique culture that includes cowboys and American Indians.

Recommendations for 2018 and beyond:

- + We are making headway with our B2B workshops. We are providing education to our member partners on international tourism and how to work with U.S. international inbound receptive tour operators. We are making them aware of cultural difference and customs before hosting an international group.
- + We have a plan to develop welcome pages on our new website for our key international markets
- + Develop a one sheet in German, French and Chinese
- + Recognize the developing need for multi-lingual step on guides.
- + Work with the state office on multi-lingual promotional materials.