

Centerpoint

Volume II Issue 1

A Newsletter for the Tourism Industry

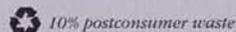
Winter 1994

In this issue...

- **Tourism Coalition Success Story**
- **Crookston Goes High-Tech**
- **Trends in International Tourism**
- **Censtates Comes to Minnesota**
- **Endowment Update**
- **Hotel/Motel Profile**



MINNESOTA EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



International Tourism Conference Focuses on Trends and Challenges Facing the Industry

In May, WTO, the World Tourism Organization, held a two-day seminar on international tourism. WTO, the world's leading international tourism and travel organization, promotes and develops travel and tourism to stimulate business and economic development, and to foster peace and understanding between nations. Its membership includes 113 of the world's governments and over 180 affiliate members from the travel and tourism industry world-wide, including the Tourism Center. The Center's Dr. Daniel Erkkila participated in the conference.

The international tourism conference sponsored by the World Tourism Organization focused on trends and challenges facing the industry. Meeting these challenges and taking advantage of these trends will be key to the success of the travel and tourism industry in the next century.

International travel is predicted to double worldwide from 476 million arrivals in 1992 to 937 million arrivals by 2010. Demographic and social effects will greatly influence tourism through the next century. Such trends as increasing numbers of women business travellers, later marriage, childless couples, double incomes, and increased retirement population are factors that will significantly alter products, services, and packaging. Political and legislative structures will affect travel world-wide. Changes and constraints such as in eastern European communities may mean more congestion for travellers, but will likely reduce airfares and greatly increase choices. Security will increasingly affect tourism demand given an increase in crime and terrorism.

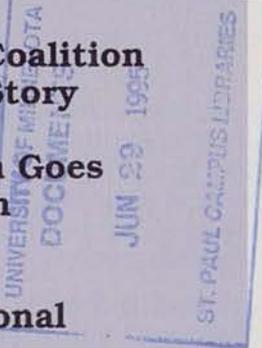
There is growing power concentration in the industry with more mergers and more alliances. Internationally, airlines, computer reservation services, tour

operators and other industry segments are banding together to provide integrated travel packages and seamless vacations. Such consortiums allow one-stop shopping for the client and create a successful, value-rich travel experience. Following this international example in Minnesota will be increasingly important if our industry is to remain competitive.

Other trends suggest that there is greater segmentation of markets, with growth in adventure and ecologically-based tourism. With the advent of technological advances such as home computer reservation systems, more technological information transfer will be a fundamental element in the tourism and travel industries' response to change. To meet the marketing challenges of the future, the tourism and travel industry must view human nature and emotion as an influence equal to economic forces.

How international trends will affect Minnesota remains to be seen. Growing competition will arguably spill over to affect all of Minnesota's tourism and travel industry. Whether Minnesota's industry benefits from or is hampered by these trends will depend on whether we look at change as an opportunity or as a threat.

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Centerpoint

A Newsletter for the Tourism Industry

1990 Hotel and Motel Profile Released

A profile of Minnesota hotel and motel facilities for 1990 was developed from surveys conducted by the Minnesota Office of Tourism. Approximately 1,000 facilities were surveyed with a 67% response rate.

Findings on amenities were especially notable. They showed a significant decrease in rooms for those who travel with pets or who smoke. There are, however, 2.8% more facilities with at least one room that is wheelchair-accessible and a 4.6% increase in rooms with whirlpools.

Interestingly, over the 1986 to 1990 period, travel price indices reflecting inflationary trends suggest that the minimum daily rates for 1990 rose less than the inflation rate. Maximum daily rates, however, increased 2% above inflation for lodging over the same period.

The survey also showed that Minnesota hotels and motels ranged in size from 2 to 686 rooms and that the Metro region has 22% of all facilities and also the largest facilities. With a mean size of about 130 units, they represent 51% of the rooms in the state. Hotels with 41 or more rooms make up 35% of all facilities, but account for 80% of all rooms available. The northwest and north central regions of the state report the smallest average sizes at 32 and 30 rooms, respectively. The study reported that 33% of Minnesota lodging facilities have 15 or fewer rooms representing less than 6% of all rooms available.

Of the 660 hotels and motels responding 10% had resort facilities, 6% had campground facilities, and 4% had both resort and campgrounds which is twice as many as in 1986.

The complete research summary, *Minnesota Hotels and Motels: A Profile of the Industry*, is available through the Tourism Center.

Minnesota, Wisconsin Communities Form Coalition

How do twelve rural communities divided by the Mississippi River become a tourist destination? Mississippi Valley Partners (MVP) tackled this dilemma by forming a rural tourism coalition. Their emphasis is on improving community communication, cross-selling among businesses, and joint attraction development.

The twelve MVP communities are Frontenac, Lake City, Camp LaCupolis, Reads Landing, Wabasha, and Kellogg in Minnesota and Nelson, Alma, Pepin, Stockholm, Maiden Rock, and Bay City

in Wisconsin. All have populations of 5000 or less, with most under 500.

According to coalition organizer, Toni Smith of the Minnesota Extension Service, "The cooperation between the private and public sectors was the real key to MVP's success." In only a year and a half, MVP membership boasts 120 business owners. MVP is currently collaborating with the Minnesota Extension Service on their second regional tourism workshop. For more information on MVP call Toni Smith, 612/565-2662.

For the Asking ...

Q: How can a tourism community encourage the development of overnight accommodations?

A: Assess the feasibility of new lodging. What is the potential demand? Is it constant, seasonal or concentrated on weekends? Get information from existing lodging in the community or nearby communities. Find out about local regulations such as zoning that support or restrict lodging development. Consider what type of lodging is most appropriate. Hotels, motels, resorts, or B&Bs. Based on your current visitor market and an assessment of potential new markets, decide if it should be an upscale, moderate or budget operation. First, find out if your community has prime property for development that could be sold or leased to developers or developed by the community, such as a municipal campground. Compile this information in a prospectus. Find a developer. Look in the community or region. There could be a homeowner with the perfect house for a B&B development or landowners interested in developing a resort. There may be interest from local business operators or construction firms. If local interest isn't there, economic development agencies can help you promote the idea. If your project is sound and has a good money-making potential, investors and developers can be found.

For the Asking is a regular feature of Centerpoint. Readers should direct brief tourism questions to the Tourism Center, 116 Classroom Office Building, University of Minnesota, 1994 Buford Ave., St. Paul, MN, 55108. Center faculty will answer questions in each issue.

SHORT TAKES...

Tourism Lecture Series

Starts... Beginning in January, a midday lecture series will focus on pertinent tourism topics. The free, public lectures will be held on the U of M's St. Paul Campus. Contact Cynthia Messer, Tourism Center, 612/624-4947 for more information.

Censtates Conference Comes to Minnesota...

The Tourism Center, and the Minnesota Office of Tourism, will co-host the 1994 Annual Conference of the Censtates Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) at Cragun's Conference Center on September 7-9, 1994. Censtates provides members with the latest research techniques, trends and results. For more information call the Tourism Center, 612/624-4947.

New Staff Members Join Tourism Center...

Recent additions to the center staff are Eileen Costello, secretary and office manager; Research fellows Janet Cocciarelli, Cynthia Messer, Jonathan Prastein and Bryan Lohmar, graduate students, and Dawn Kaluza, student assistant.

Tourism Center staff can be contacted via electronic mail...

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Tourism Library Donated to Center...

Jeanne Gay of Menomonie, Wisconsin has donated her tourism collection. It contains over 10,000 books, travel and tourism law bibliographies, and 28,000 articles. This material will be made available to the public.

Technology at Crookston a Plus for Hospitality Industry

New technology at the University of Crookston can link people in the hospitality industry to the latest in business information. With Crookston's PALS database, businesses can now access several business indexes and bibliographies of current articles and data published in major journals. Using a modem and telecommunication software, businesses can hook up to these resources and get citations to order articles from their local libraries. In addition, businesses will soon be able to access CD-ROM through the Crookston network providing them with an even larger information base. Crookston's emphasis on technology in its curriculum will provide the business sector with a new crop of graduates with technology acumen.

Technology has also linked the University of Minnesota-Crookston to several other educational institutions via interactive television. Schools on the Moose Network and the Northwest Educational Link system can now be accessed as well as the University of Minnesota's main campus. Users linked to network sites across the country can access a wide range of educational programs and lectures. This system will allow businesses to conduct customized workshops and minimize costs in travel and time with network sites nearby.

This technology promises unlimited new opportunities for knowledge-sharing between industry, the University of Minnesota, and other institutions.

CPSU Offers Research and Results

The Cooperative Park Studies Unit (CPSU) at the University of Minnesota was established in 1989 by the National Park Service. Unit head, David Lime, is a faculty member of the Department of Forest Resources and is affiliated with the Tourism Center, and other U of M programs. Serving as an information network between parks and the University, CPSU provides administrative support for park-based research and Minnesota Extension Service activities.

The CPSU holds workshops, provides continuing education for recreation professionals, and offers customized natural resource-based research for the tourism industry. CPSU conducts research on topics such as marketing and customer satisfaction and behavior as well as providing social and economic impact assessments. For more information contact David Lime, 612/624-3699.

Now Available!

Q & A about Rural Tourism Development

Compiled by Barbara Koth, Glenn Kreag and Mathew Robinson, Tourism Center.

This 100+ page book is a must for everyone involved in community tourism. Based on call-in questions from the University of Minnesota's *Turn it around with Tourism* teleconference, it includes tips and strategies from 60 expert contributors on attractions, marketing, planning, funding, community involvement and more.

ORDER TODAY! ONLY \$15.95

To order by credit card call the Distribution Center, Minnesota Extension Service 612/624-4900 or contact the Tourism Center, 612/624-4947.



Off the Top

In the last ten months, the Minnesota Extension Service and the Department of Applied Economics (formerly Agriculture and Applied Economics) have provided substantial support for the Tourism Center. This has allowed us to get permanent office space in 116 Classroom Office Building, new computers, funding for new projects, and several new staff members.

We will now be able to provide more educational services. We will launch a tourism lecture series for faculty and students on the Twin Cities campus this winter. International tourism experts will provide their perspectives on what tourism means to people, businesses and governments around the world and how tourism studies fit into a University curriculum. This lecture series complements our newly acquired affiliate member status with the World Tourism Organization, our first step toward becoming a WTO-designated training center.



It is exciting to be associated with the Tourism Center during this period of growth. We look forward to working on new initiatives but will maintain our commitment to provide quality educational materials on tourism development to rural communities in Minnesota and across the country.

William Gartner
Director

ENDOWMENT UPDATE

Proceeds from the Carlson Tourism Industry Endowment are now being realized. Some of the recent projects supported by the Endowment are:

Curriculum Development for the Hotel/Restaurant Program at Crookston.

Recently the University of Minnesota Board of Regents approved the Crookston program for four year degree status. Endowment proceeds are helping to make that transition easier.

Business Management Series.

The Tourism Center has entered into an agreement with Michigan State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison to produce a series of publications targeted at tourism-dependent small business. Endowment proceeds are being used to hire graduate students to assist Tourism Center faculty in publication development.

Campground Economic Impact Study.

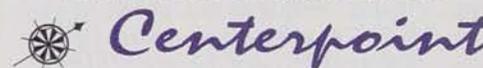
Endowment proceeds have funded a study on the campground industry's economic contribution to Minnesota. Results will be detailed in the next *Centerpoint*.

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