NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Appoints Leah Chandler as Chief Marketing Officer

February 13, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 13, 2025) — Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, announced today the appointment of Leah Chandler, CDME as its new Chief Marketing Officer, beginning March 17. With over 20 years of experience in branding, advertising, and destination marketing within the travel and tourism industry, Chandler will lead Brand USA's global marketing strategy. She will spearhead efforts to inspire international travel to the United States through innovative campaigns and by elevating the country's presence as a premier global destination.

"I am thrilled to welcome Leah to the Brand USA team as Chief Marketing Officer," said Fred Dixon, president and CEO of Brand USA. "Her extensive destination marketing and leadership experience will greatly enhance our long-term marketing strategies, help expand global brand awareness and strengthen the USA's position as the leading aspirational travel destination in the world.

Chandler joins a strong leadership team put in place by Dixon following his appointment as the organization's chief executive officer in July 2024. Her arrival comes at a pivotal moment as the United States' international inbound travel industry shifts from recovery to growth and new records.

"Since July, we've expanded focus on global communications, trade and product development, strategic partnerships, AI and innovation and the meetings and events sectors. Bringing Leah on board completes our leadership team and prepares us well to advance our strategic approach to consumer marketing, content creation, partner programs and analytics," said Dixon. "With the decade of major events ahead, Brand USA is better positioned than ever to capitalize on these opportunities to grow inbound visitation, visitor spending and economic impact."

Before joining Brand USA, she served as the Chief Marketing Officer of Discover Puerto Rico, where she re-positioned the brand, laying the foundation for four years of record-breaking tourism growth. Under her leadership, Discover Puerto Rico launched its most successful marketing campaign, "Live Boricua," which celebrates the island's vibrant culture. Since 2018, the campaign has driven significant growth in perception, awareness, and visitor interest, solidifying Puerto Rico's position as a premier global destination.

Prior to her move to San Juan, Chandler was the Chief Marketing Officer for Explore Branson, where she led the growth of the community's tourism industry for five straight years.

"I am honored to join Brand USA at such a transformational time for the industry," said Chandler. "The opportunity to lead global marketing efforts for the USA—one of the most diverse and dynamic travel destinations in the world—is thrilling. I look forward to working with Fred and the entire team to bolster our efforts to inspire travelers worldwide and drive meaningful economic impact."

Throughout her career, Chandler has earned numerous awards, certifications, and industry recognitions. In 2024, Skift honored her as one of the "Top Women Shaping Travel's Future" in its inaugural "Generation Next" list. That same year, the American Marketing Association named her "Nonprofit Marketer of the Year", recognizing her outstanding contributions to the field of marketing.

Additionally, Chandler earned her Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME) credential in 2014. Awarded by Destinations International, this designation represents the highest individual educational achievement in the tourism industry.

At Brand USA, Chandler will oversee the organization's brand, advertising, content, digital marketing, and research efforts.

To learn more about Brand USA, visit thebrandusa.com/about.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.

Media Contacts

Chris Heywood
Senior Vice President, Public Relations & Chief Communications Officer

Andrew Felts
Senior Manager, Media Relations & Communications