BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA board of directors elects Tom Klein chairman

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The board of directors of Brand USA, the destination-marketing organization for the United States, has elected Tom Klein, president and CEO of Sabre Corporation, chair of the board. Klein succeeds Arne Sorenson, president and CEO of Marriott International, Inc., who originally joined the Brand USA board on Oct. 1, 2012, and has served as board chair since Jan. 22, 2015. Sorenson, who is in his second term as a board member, will continue to serve as a member of the board.

“The Brand USA team has made tremendous progress getting industry and government resources all working together to support the important economic and cultural benefits of increasing international visits to the United States,” said Tom Klein, president and CEO of Sabre Corporation. “It’s an honor to serve as chair of the Brand USA board as we find new ways to market the USA to the rest of the world.”

Klein was one of the original 11 Brand USA board members appointed in September 2010 by the Secretary of Commerce. In September 2011 and December 2014, the Secretary of Commerce reappointed Klein to the board. Prior to his election as chair, he served as vice chair of the board. Klein is eligible to serve on the board of Brand USA through the expiration of his consecutive terms on Dec. 1, 2017.

“Serving on Brand USA’s Board of Directors and as Chair has allowed me to advance our industry through a substantive and impactful platform, and I look forward to continued involvement as we identify innovative ways to grow international travel,” said Arne Sorenson, president and CEO of Marriott International. “I’m proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish and I know that strong progress will continue under Tom’s leadership.”

Chris Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA, acknowledging the commitment and contributions of Sorenson and Klein, said “We thank Arne for his leadership as board chair and look forward to his continued guidance as a member of the board. As we enter our seventh year as the nation’s destination marketing organization, we look forward to Tom Klein’s leadership of the board. As one of Brand USA’s original board members, Tom has seen Brand USA’s growth from a start-up organization to one building upon a strong foundation of success. We are fortunate to have him at the helm as we enter the next fiscal year and phase of our development in fueling the nation’s economy through international tourism to the USA.”

Brand USA is governed by an 11-member board of directors appointed for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security. To allow for staggered term expirations, of the members first appointed to the board, three were appointed for terms of one year, four were appointed for terms of two years, and four were appointed for terms of three years. All members of the board are United States citizens and are either current or former chief executive officers, chief financial offers, or chief marketing officers, or have held equivalent management positions.

Designated board members have leadership expertise in specific sectors of the travel industry including: hotel accommodations; restaurants; retail or a related association; travel distribution; attractions or recreations; state-level tourism office; city-level convention and visitors bureau; passenger air; land or sea transportation; and immigration law and policy. At least two members of the board are audit committee financial experts. In addition, at least five members of the board have expertise in international travel promotion or marketing broadly representing various regions of the United States.

Brand USA board members receive no compensation for their service on the Brand USA board and, although eligible to seek reimbursement for actual travel expenses and per diem, have voluntarily elected not to seek reimbursement for allowable expenses.

Each year, Brand USA deploys a number of market-driven platforms and programs to increase In-bound visitor travel to the United States and drive tourism dollars to communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five territories, as well as promote tourism to rural and urban areas equally, including areas not traditionally visited by international travelers. To accomplish this, Brand USA utilizes a combination of brand marketing, public relations, travel trade outreach, and cooperative marketing programs that provide opportunities for partners of all shapes and sizes to participate.

As one of the best levers for driving economic growth, international travel to the United States currently supports 1.8 million American jobs (directly and indirectly) and benefits virtually every sector of the U.S. economy. According to studies by Oxford Economics, in the past three years Brand USA's marketing initiatives have helped welcome more than three million incremental visitors to the USA, benefiting the U.S. economy with more than $21 billion in total economic impact, and supporting, on average, nearly 50,000 incremental jobs a year.

Support for Brand USA's operations comes from a combination of non-federal contributions from partner organizations representing destinations, travel brands and private-sector companies, and matching funds collected by the U.S. government from international visitors who travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program.

To see the full list of Brand USA board members, please visit TheBrandUSA.com/about/directors.

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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.