NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2020 Kicks Off with CEO Keynote Conversation Featuring Christopher L. Thompson (Brand USA) & Arne Sorenson (Marriott International)

October 26, 2020

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 26, 2020) — Today, Brand USA hosts its first event on the Brand USA Global Marketplace platform, Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2020, which will kick off with a CEO Keynote Conversation between Christopher L. Thompson, Brand USA president & CEO and Arne Sorenson, Marriott International president & CEO. The four-day virtual event (October 26-29, 2020) connects Europe with the U.S. travel industry, providing more than 150 buyers from across Europe and approximately 115 U.S. exhibitors the opportunity to discuss the trends, challenges, innovations, and scope to grow visitation to the United States from Europe via one-to-one appointments, networking sessions, and customized Pods featuring digital resources and marketing collateral, such as videos, images, and itineraries. Throughout the week, attendees will be able to join a daily Enrichment Series that provides valuable marketing insights from tourism leaders including but not limited to CEOs, category specialists, and major media.

Christopher L. Thompson, Brand USA president and CEO comments, “Combining inspiring speakers, innovative topics and the latest research, this year’s Enrichment Series promises to inspire fresh thinking and stimulate thought-provoking conversation, at a time when it is needed most. Europe is a priority inbound travel market for the U.S. and through this initiative we are signifying our commitment to driving demand, further fueling the U.S. tourism industry’s recovery.”

Leading off the Enrichment Series, Christopher L. Thompson and Arne Sorenson will partake in a CEO Keynote Conversation about the challenges the tourism industry is facing, the opportunities the coming months and years may bring, and the steps they are taking within their business to address these issues. The following day, Tuesday, October 27 at 11:15AM EDT, Josh Earnest, United Airlines chief communications officer and Adam Sacks, Tourism Economics president will explore the state of the aviation industry and the expectations for restoring travel. This "Aviation: The Transatlantic 'Airscape'" fireside chat will discuss how the experience of flying will change the implications of consumer behavior and how this is impacting regulations and operations.

On Wednesday, October 28, Damon Embling, Euronews World Affairs reporter, will lead the "European Travel Trends" panel discussion with Donald Leadbetter, National Park Service tourism program manager, Andrew Gibson, Wellness Tourism Association chairman, and Jenny Southan, Globetrender editor and founder about the types of products and services European travelers will find appealing post-COVID, and how destinations across the U.S. can position themselves accordingly. During this panel, the impact of the pandemic will be traversed through various European travel trends, from eco-tourism and a new appreciation for the Great Outdoors to the newfound availability to work from anywhere and the prioritization of wellness.

Closing out the Enrichment Series on Thursday, October 29, Stephanie Jones, National Blacks in Travel and Tourism Collaborative founder & CEO, Cheraé Robinson, Tastemakers Africa founder & CEO, and Al Hutchinson, Visit Baltimore president & CEO will dive into how travel companies are beginning to make commitments to support Black employees and Black-owned businesses and share specific examples of how the travel trade can more effectively engage with Black-owned businesses. "This Supporting Black-Owned Travel Businesses" session will explore what this looks like in practice; how companies in Europe and the U.S. can make real change in their purchasing and supply chains, and put impactful actions behind their pledges.

Building off the success of the inaugural event in London last year, Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2020 continues to connect the U.S. travel sector with the biggest players in the European travel industry, laying the foundation for the highly-anticipated return of the European traveler to the USA. The event furthers Brand USA’s efforts in invigorating U.S. tourism as the world recovers.

“After the unprecedented challenges that 2020 has brought, Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2020 provides a welcome opportunity to

future of U.S. tourism," says Thompson.

For more information on Brand USA Travel Week Europe 2020, including the full schedule of events, please visit BrandUSATravelWeekEurope.com.

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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.

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