BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. economy gets $15 billion boost from Brand USA marketing

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Brand USA – the United States' destination-marketing organization – generated more than 2 million incremental visitors to the U.S. from around the globe over the past two years, according to a recent study by Oxford Economics. Those visitors accounted for $6.5 billion in incremental spending, which injected nearly $15 billion into the U.S. economy. The influx of incremental visitors also supported an average of 50,000 incremental jobs each of the two years.

Brand USA was created through the 2010 Tourism Promotion Act as a public-private enterprise to coordinate international marketing efforts in order to increase tourism to the U.S. and enhance the United States' image as a premier travel destination. It began operations in May 2011. Today, Brand USA is working with a network of nearly 500 private-sector partners.

"As a result of welcoming more international visitors to the United States, the U.S. economy grows, jobs are created and more importantly, there is a more favorable image of the United States around the world," said Christopher L. Thompson, President and CEO of Brand USA.

Oxford Economics, an international economic forecaster based in the UK, looked at nine global markets for the ROI study: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. Brand USA is fully deployed in each of those markets – implementing campaigns for consumer, travel trade and cooperative marketing.

Oxford documented that Brand USA marketing brought 903,400 incremental visitors to the United States during fiscal 2014 (October 2013 – September 2014). Those travelers spent $3.1 billion on travel with U.S. carriers, producing $7.1 billion total sales. Overall, during fiscal 2014, the United States welcomed 75 million international visitors. This translated into a $222-billion boost for the U.S. economy.

Half of Brand USA funding comes from the private sector. The other matching half comes from the $10 ESTA fee charged to visitors who are from countries that do not require visas for travel to the U.S.

Highlights of Brand USA activities and programs during Fiscal Year 2014, as discussed in the annual report, include:

• Brand USA began production of a giant-screen film that pays tribute to America's national parks. It is being produced with independent filmmaker MacGillivray Freeman Films and will be released early in 2016 at more than 800 IMAX theaters and other giant-screen theaters in nearly 40 countries. The film is a major element in Brand USA's campaign to promote the United States' Great Outdoors.
• Brand USA launched a new culinary-tourism initiative in July 2014 in partnership with the James Beard Foundation. The program recently expanded to include a new consumer website, "Flavors of the USA," and a new guidebook in six languages by the same name.
• Brand USA's partnership network jumped from 339 partners in fiscal 2013 to 475 in the following year. The number of programs for partners surged from 30 to more than 100. This helped to sustain a 94-percent retention rate among partners.
• Brand USA's international representation now covers 20 markets.
• Brand USA hosted U.S. pavilions at regional tourism expositions in Brazil, Mexico, China, Italy, Germany, Singapore, Russia and Sweden.
• Brand USA continued to create MegaFams – large-scale, multi-destination U.S. itineraries for international travel agents. The programme started in 2013 with one MegaFam from the UK and Ireland. In 2014, Brand USA hosted four MegaFams.
• Brand USA continued to develop and create new content for its USA Discovery Program – an online training platform for international travel agents, which allows the agents to become officially accredited.
• Thomas Cook and Brand USA launched a pan-European social-media competition, "Discover America: United Stories of America."

In December 2014, President Obama signed the omnibus-spending bill into law that included provisions for reauthorizing federal funding for Brand USA until 2021. The measure had received bi-partisan support in both houses of Congress.

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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.