2020-2021 NYS DOMESTIC GROUP MARKETING CO-OP PROGRAM
OFFERED BY: BREAK THE ICE MEDIA & ALON MARKETING GROUP
The motor coach industry is thriving and growing. With our longevity in the tourism industry, we recognize that with this growth also comes challenges that destinations and their stakeholders face in New York State when marketing to the domestic group tour sector. The human and financial resources needed to reach these tourism professionals can be beyond what a destination or supplier can support individually.

Break The Ice Media and ALON Marketing Group have teamed up with New York State Tourism Industry Association (NYSTIA) to offer a comprehensive program to increase market share for New York State in the domestic group tour market. Through this Domestic Group Tour Marketing Co-Op partners will have an opportunity to amplify and enhance the hard work already being done in the group tour market and share the expense across many partners to make this initiative more effective and affordable for you.
**ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR NYS – MOTORCOACH MARKET**

- New York serves a total of **9,859,827** motorcoach group tourist people on day trips, and an additional **3,231,261** on overnight stays, for a total of **13,091,088** group tour visitors.

- It is estimated that approximately **374,031** motorcoaches visited New York in 2018.

- The motor coach industry is thriving and growing. Tour group sizes, demographics and behaviors are evolving. Many tour operators reported that 2018 and 2019 have been some of the best years for business, in fact, a recently quoted tour operator said, “some people have called this not the golden years of tourism, but the platinum years of tourism.”

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**Economic Contribution of Motorcoach Group Tourism in New York (2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Supplier</th>
<th>Induced</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td><strong>Wages</strong></td>
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<td>$1,228,120,000</td>
<td>$1,831,057,300</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: John Dunham & Associates, Inc. New York: 2019, from ABA

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DOMESTIC GROUP TOUR MARKETING PROGRAM GOALS

- Increase overnights – focus on soft periods
- Increase group tours to NYS
- Build awareness of group tour product with domestic and Canadian tour operators
- Offer strategic training for domestic group product development
GROUP TOUR PROGRAM RAMP-UP

Discovery phase: Once our 20 co-op partners are on board, our team will review all current programs, sales collateral and itineraries for co-op partner organizations, becoming knowledgeable on the assets of each member destination and begin to identify opportunities for collaborative sales strategies, target markets and themes for statewide itineraries. This process will provide us with a deeper understanding of the individual co-op partner’s sales and marketing strategies and will assist in uncovering potential opportunities for future business growth.

Planning phase: A two-year work plan will be developed and presented to co-op partners. The plan will identify goals and priorities, implementation tactics and a timeline for activities. The plan will serve as a guide for activities during the term of the program.

Execution phase: As a team, BTIM and ALON will roll up our sleeves and begin marketing efforts keeping in touch with you along the way! See next slide!
The co-op program will encompass a mix of these tactics to achieve the program goals. The slides that follow describe the approach to each tactic. The final work plan will be customized for the co-op partners and based on the make-up and mix of partners in the program.

The collective partners will set the direction for the exact plan.
We will do direct sales outreach, respond to tour operator requests for information on co-op partners and communicate details of those leads to designated partner representatives. This will include:

- Email marketing to domestic group tour operators on behalf of the co-op partners
- Provide initial follow up and connect co-op partners to leads interested in their destination
- Work as the conduit to pull together various stakeholders to help ease the work of the tour operator in building multi-destination NYS itineraries
Our approach to travel trade shows will be one of enhancement rather than duplication of effort. This tactic will be added to the work plan after understanding what each co-op partner is doing with travel trade shows on an individual level. We will look for ways to enhance co-op partners presence at shows without duplicating efforts. This could include:

- An appointment taking rep for the co-op program to attend select shows, taking detailed notes at each appointment and disseminating the notes and contacts to co-op partner reps
- Coordinate show appointments with partner reps to augment their existing appointments
- Coordinate statewide sales collateral
- Coordinate initial follow-up after the show
- Potential shows: ABA, NTA, SYTA, TAP, OMCA, Heartland Showcase, etc.
GROUP TOUR FAMS

We will arrange, escort and begin initial follow-up on group tour operator familiarization tours as they are a key piece to grow the group tour market.

Based on budget and number of co-op partners, we will consider including regional, 2-5 night FAM Tours, with a robust, yet intimate audience, of domestic group tour operators from multiple, neighboring regions. The co-op partners will assist in developing the FAM tour itinerary and we will:

- Invite travel trade and keep track of RSVPs
- Assist with itinerary building and preparation
- Escort and aid in navigation
- Book transportation
- Prepare itinerary documents, handouts and travel trade welcome bags
- Provide pre-FAM preparation call with destinations and stakeholders
- Follow up with travel trade post-FAM
SALES CALLS & MISSIONS

We will utilize our vast industry contacts and close relationships in the group travel trade sector to plan and conduct sales calls and sales missions on behalf of, and with, co-op partners. The sales calls and missions will be developed as part of our overall workplan and may include multiple opportunities for co-op partner reps to participate. We will seek to enhance and augment the work that is already being done and will provide new opportunities for co-op partners to participate in. We may also decide to leverage sales missions already organized by ILNY by sending a NYS co-op rep on those missions.

Based on the information we find in our discovery phase, we may recommend in-office/deskside sales calls or sales missions to domestic travel trade buyers located in regions within motor coach driving distance for both one day and multiday tours/itineraries.

Potential regions:
- New England: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut
- Canada: Toronto, Mississauga, Niagara Falls, Hamilton areas
- New Jersey/Pennsylvania
- Ohio: Cleveland, Akron area
MEET & GREET

Meet & Greets may be suggested in the workplan to provide a consolidated sales opportunity where co-op partners can meet with domestic group tour operators from the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions that bring and send groups to NYS. This two-day event will include a seated dinner, networking exchange, overnight, local private tour/activity, etc. These are particularly helpful for creating deeper relationships between suppliers and tour operators which helps in attracting expanded business to the area.
We understand co-op partners goal is to capture measurable business growth in overall travel trade (group tour) volume. The following are proven ways in which to provide measurements:

1. Start with a baseline - we must look for existing data to understand the group tour volume for NYS before this program begins. This data may come from national associations, such as ABA or from local data provided by each co-op partner and aggregated into a statewide benchmark.

2. A successful travel trade program takes at least 3 years to show true results. It will be important to understand the first year of this program will be focused on foundational steps that will lead to those notable increases in years 2 and 3.

3. Methods of measurement will include; number of leads generated, number of bookings realized (as reported by co-op partner reps and/or group tour companies we are actively working with), marketing measurements such as number of trade show appointments, sales calls, FAM tour participants, group-tour readiness training participants, etc.
We will provide regular communications around co-op program initiatives.

- Participating partners will receive monthly communication detailing program goals, upcoming initiatives, leads generated and overall program effectiveness.
- A year-end report will be provided at the end of 2020 and 2021 to recap all initiatives and deliverables across all program partners. Reports will detail activities, leads generated, secured bookings, and marketing effectiveness.
DOMESTIC GROUP TOUR PROGRAM CO-OP BUY-IN

Program Timeline:
January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021 (24 months)
* in order to gain traction in this market, partners must commit to a two-year program

Annual Program Budget:
Program services $110,000
Out of pocket expenses $30,000 Total program budget: $140,000

Program is limited to 20 partners with a $5,500 investment per year.
Out of pocket expenses will be billed separately. We recommend each partner have a budget of $1500-$2000 for out of pocket expenses. These will be contingent on the final plan. Out of pocket expenses may include; travel shows membership & registration fees, show travel expenses, show collateral, FAM tour expenses, sales mission expenses, etc. Partners may be able to balance offset their commitment with in-kind opportunities.

This program requires a two-year commitment and is only available to NYS destinations and tourism businesses belonging to NYSTIA.
The most significant and vital element for a destination while promoting their region to the travel trade is knowing their stakeholders are ready, willing and prepared to handle the group tour business based on their sales and marketing leads.

Through this training best practices will be shared in navigating and working with the domestic group travel trade. The co-op program will offer an opportunity for destinations to include a series of group tour readiness training and education seminars. Through this face-to-face method of gaining information, knowledge, advice and confidence, individual tourism businesses will be prepared to best work with the group travel market. This result will benefit all partners who currently market their destination/business as ‘group-friendly’ with examples of stakeholders that are truly group tour ready. Partner destinations’ branding and positioning will achieve a higher level of accountability and authenticity for the group market.
GROUP TOUR READINESS TRAINING (OPTIONAL)

All sectors of tourism suppliers should participate:
- Accommodations
- Arts & culture
- Attractions/activities
- Dining
- DMOs, CVBs, Chambers
- Services
- Shopping
- Tour guides
- Transportation (where applicable)

Training will be conducted by ALON Marketing Group. As the country’s leading training and inbound marketing firm, ALON currently powers NYC & Company’s Tourism Ready educational program as well as International Inbound Travel Association’s (IITA) Inbound Insider: Steps to Success.

These tourism training and education programs provide tourism destinations an opportunity to empower their partners and stakeholders with the insight, tools and guidance to build their tourism businesses to become travel trade ready!
Program Timeline:
Flexible dates

Program Partners:
The group tour readiness program is available to individual TPA’s, regions or a collaborative group of TPA’s

Group Tour Readiness Buy-in:
$3,000 per location plus travel expenses for two representatives (Overnights, mileage/airfare, meals, as needed).
Rhonda brings more than 20 years of sales and new business development to the table. This translates into great partnership strategies that produce compelling travel packages and itineraries for our tourism clients. Rhonda’s a master at creating relationships and her deep understanding of sales strategies help her create win-win opportunities for her clients. Rhonda and her team act as a much-needed sales and marketing arm for Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs), providing travel trade marketing, program management, partnership development, tracking and reporting, and of course—successfully closing sales.

Rhonda serves on ABA’s Marketplace Education Committee, I Love NY’s China-Ready Committee and Canadian Roadshow Committee, the New York State Tourism Industry Association’s Empire State Tourism Conference Scholarship Committee and is a co-chair of the Professional Women of the Finger Lakes’ Women of Distinction Awards Committee. Rhonda is 2005 past chairperson of the Visitor Industry Council for Visit Rochester.
Jennifer Ackerson, President of ALON Marketing Group, is a 25+ year veteran of the travel industry with direct experience working with all tourism supplier business categories. In 2000, Jennifer founded ALON Marketing Group, a tourism consultancy company, which cultivates tourism supplier companies and destinations for effective tourism business development, marketing, partnerships, and successful operational initiatives.

Jennifer provides high-quality consulting services and industry representation for suppliers and destinations alike. She has also participated in numerous global trade shows and produced industry events with the goal of facilitating and developing domestic and international travel trade and tourism supplier relationships. Jennifer’s passion and extensive experience over twenty-five years has culminated in the creation and implementation of two highly effective tourism training programs. Jennifer is the official educator for NYC & Company through the Tourism Ready program, and she has also brought her expertise nationwide through ‘Steps to Success,’ a national tourism training program in partnership with International Inbound Travel Association (IITA).
Break the Ice Media has more than just a deep understanding of the tourism industry. We have the pleasure of working exclusively with tourism clients. That means our team members are experts in reaching audiences and driving sales, and our clients constantly benefit from our deep understanding of the tourism industry. It’s like choosing to see a brain surgeon over a generalist.

By working to drive visitation to our clients every single day, our team stays up-to-date on current trends and understands a wide variety of tourism marketing strategies and tactics. We spend all our time understanding this field and will help New York State destinations do the same, while delivering maximum results.
ABOUT ALON MARKETING GROUP

ALON Marketing Group is a leading tourism industry training, business development, and marketing consulting company in the USA whose focus is B2B (business-to-business) travel trade and tourism supplier relationship building. ALON Marketing Group believes that your destination and your company can have a successful domestic and international tourism business and should take its share of the $156 billion that 76.9 million international visitors spend yearly in the United States and is dedicated to making that happen through: Strategic Tourism Business Development, Internal Tourism Training & Education, Key Partnership development, business development co-operatives, Co-op Participations and Representations at Tradeshows, Sales Calls, Sales Missions, and FAM Tours/Event Planning/Execution.

We have developed strong partnerships with reputable and credible organizations, such as Destinations of New York State, with who we have been partners for the last 20 years. NYC & Company, the official DMO of New York City, and International Inbound Travel Association (IITA), to lead destinations and individual tourism suppliers to success. Working together with our partners allows ALON to reach destinations and tourism suppliers nationally and offer highest standards and quality.
THANK YOU

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