

Tourism office adopts economic development

The pandemic, with all its disruption, has caused a variety of groups and businesses to work together more than ever before. Hotels, for one, have jointly lobbied for economic relief.

Competing chambers of commerce and pro-business groups are joining on pandemic survival programs.

Another melding of tasks is happening in Sarasota, where the county's tourism marketing arm, Visit Sarasota County, is taking lead on a mission that's long belonged to the Economic Development Corp. of Sarasota County: wooing businesses to relocate to the county.

"We're taking on a role we've never done before," Visit Sarasota County Vice President Erin Duggan says. "It's an example of how [organizations] are able to collaborate. It's the trend right now, and I think we will start to see a lot more of this."

Visit Sarasota County has earmarked \$100,000 for a digital business relocation ad campaign. It's 100% social media and other digital channels.

– *businessobserverfl.com*



Photo: Sarasota Jungle Gardens



Download a copy of the presentation at <https://www.smarinsights.com/home/traveler-behavior-insight/>

Research shows little change in attitude but a greater change in actual behavior

Throughout the Marketing Outlook Forum (MOF) in October, we saw line charts showing that consumer attitudes during the pandemic have not changed very much.

This is definitely true, but SMARInsights has found that even though attitudes have not significantly changed – behavior has.

SMARInsights' Denise Miller presented highlights from our tracking research at MOF, and we wanted to share some of the deeper insights we have observed.

- Travel is happening! There are opportunities to influence both additional travel and to expand the types of activities – and thus the economic impact from travel.
- People who say they are “not traveling” really mean they are not

traveling in the same way as before. But they are probably taking trips and can be influenced to take more trips.

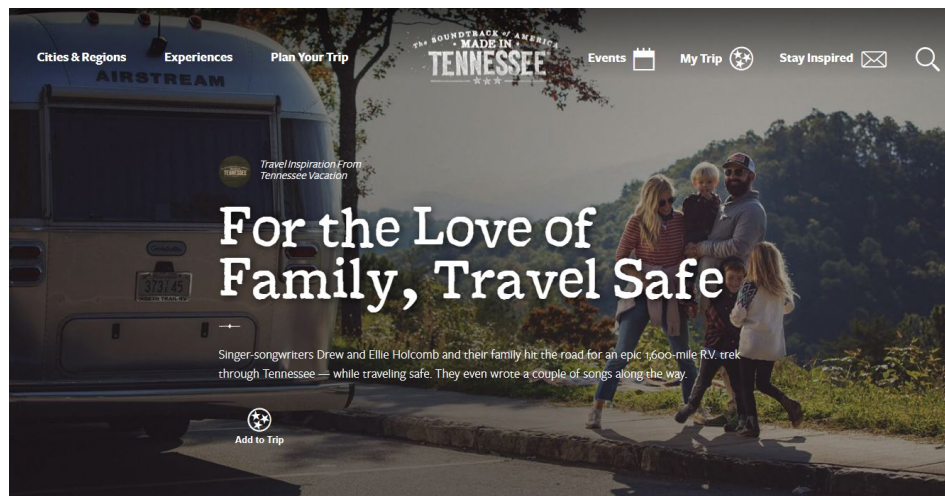
- People respond positively to destination ads – if you can advertise, you probably should.
- Pre-testing the ads can help uncover small changes that will increase the impact.
- Since the biggest segments of potential travelers are more cautious, selling the safety of your destination and encouraging safe travel behavior is effective.
- There is polarization, so expect some negative reactions, especially on social media. But realize that these are generally a small number of consumers – don't let them derail your efforts.

Tennessee promotes safe family road trip

From tnvacation.com:

Tennessee's given us a lot to love. And when you're ready to travel, we look forward to welcoming you with our famous, warm hospitality. There are currently no travel restrictions in Tennessee; however, we encourage everyone to follow health and safety practices.

Details on the safety precautions businesses are encouraged to follow are available at TNpledge.com. Guidance for residents and visitors is available



<https://www.tnvacation.com/articles/love-family-travel-safe>

at the CDC Guidance for Travelers. So come for the mountains, the music, the rivers, the food, the attractions. But for the love of

Tennessee, wear a mask, wash your hands, practice social distancing and travel safe.

CARES Act funding helps hurting local tourism groups

Explore La Crosse (Wisconsin) will see a reduction of \$652,213 in room tax collections, which in total will bring the local tourism hub down \$850,000 in revenue.

To help offset the loss, Explore La Crosse received \$473,752 in tourism relief through the CARES Act Travel Grant program. AJ Frels, the executive director, said that it puts the DMO at about half of what they should have made this year.

Frels said this grant money would promote the region through advertising and marketing on various social media platforms. The funds will also go toward enhancing the website and visitors guide.

— wxow.com

The **Yankton Convention and Visitors Bureau** (South Dakota) has received \$49,707 from the CARES Act to be used on new marketing to help recoup lost revenue due to the

COVID-19 pandemic.

The South Dakota Department of Tourism, Gov. Kristi Noem, and the South Dakota Legislature worked together to make this funding available to destination marketing organizations across the state.

The money will be spent on marketing projects that will encourage safe visitation to Yankton as well as showcasing Yankton as a great destination to host safe and socially distanced events.

— yankton.net

Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced that the **City of Boston**, as a part of a thorough Request for Proposals (RFP) review process, has selected a partnership between Colette Phillips Communications, the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Proverb to create a campaign that will position Boston as a safe, welcoming and vibrant travel

destination.

The goal of the campaign is to increase awareness and active promotion, and drive trips to Boston from diverse local and regional visitors, while supporting the public health guidance that's in place.

— *City of Boston*

A mural project in Pahrump's Petrack Park was among the grant recipients as the **Nevada Commission on Tourism** Nov. 4 approved \$1.65 million in COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grants to Nevada tourism agencies and \$44,921 in grant funding for a separate program, the Volunteer Impact Program.

Both grant programs were made possible through Coronavirus Relief Funds through the CARES Act, and both programs will be administered by the Nevada Division of Tourism.

— pvtimes.com