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Development

Influencers prove they have influence

Forty percent of Millennials now consider how “Instagrammable” their holiday will be, and 48 percent of Instagram users turn to the app for travel inspiration.

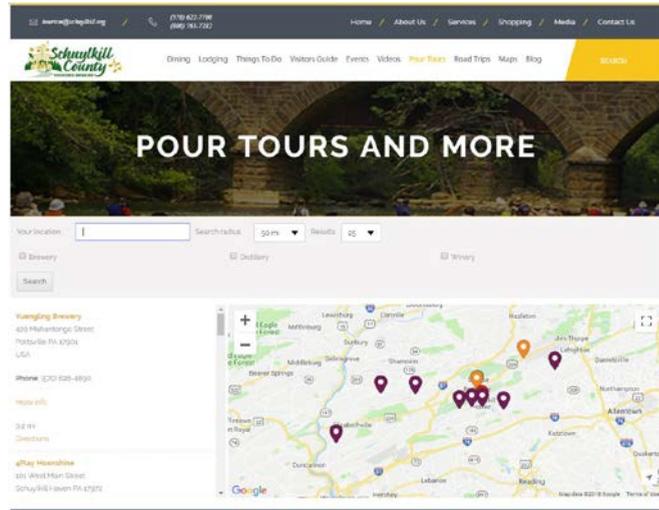
When done well, influencer marketing is incredibly effective at reaching the desired audience on the channels they spend the most time. The average time spent on social media now is 135 minutes per day.

Influencer posts feel more authentic than traditional ads. Influencers also have high engagement rates with their audience.

Their followers thrive on the fact that they are “relatable” and trustworthy.

Moreover, an incredible 92 percent of consumers trust earned media more than traditional advertising methods.

Source: Travel Weekly



Explore the trail at www.schuylkill.org/pour-tours-and-more/

CVBs brew connections with craft breweries

Campaigns in Pennsylvania and Ohio illustrate the potential gains as well as the problems with such partnership arrangements.

The old joke about there being a Starbucks on every corner has a new twist: Craft beverage makers are bubbling up everywhere.

Alert CVBs are taking advantage of this trend by partnering to create beer/beverage trails in their communities. Both locals and tourists are their target.

In Pennsylvania, the Schuylkill County Visitors’ Bureau created a craft beverage trail designed to provide an easy way to explore craft beverage makers throughout the region using its interactive website.

The goal of the trail is to increase member visitation by featuring a successful and growing segment of tourism. The trail has been designed to drive visitation to and build awareness of each of its member locations.

Currently there are 11 member breweries, wineries, and distilleries

on the trail that want visitors to experience, discover, sample, and buy their products.

Breweries and CVBs in northeastern Ohio had a similar idea.

The official Passport Brew Tour featured 20 regional locations in Stark, Tuscarawas, Wayne and Holmes counties. The tour was being promoted in collaboration with four regional convention and visitors bureaus. Created by Lunar Cow Publishing in New Franklin, it began Sept. 1 and was expected to run through December.

But the organizer posted a meme on the trail’s Facebook page Sept. 9 listing 12 reasons “Why Beer Is Better Than a Woman.” The reasons ranged from the vulgar to the chauvinistic such as “You don’t have to wine and dine a beer.”

It also had an image of a beer can

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Ohio CVBs quit Passport Brew Tour

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with a silhouette of a woman and a red line through it.

The social media reaction was swift, with people bashing the organizers and flooding the participating 20 breweries and bars with complaints. The participants, caught off guard by the post, began pulling out of the program the next day.

"We don't want anything to do with that tour," said Amanda Conrad, co-founder of Sandy Springs Brewing Co. in Minerva. "I'm just disgusted."

She said female bartenders started throwing away the Passport Brew Tour coasters that were provided to promote the program after seeing the post.

At least 13 of the participants announced that they would not take part anymore, with several sharing messages on Facebook condemning the post. Lunar Cow issued three separate apologies on the Passport Brew Tour Facebook page.

Dee Grossman, executive director of the Tuscarawas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, said the agency was pulling all the marketing materials for the program and recycling them. The tourism agencies in Stark and Wayne counties were doing the same, she said.

"I hope visitors don't punish the breweries," Grossman added.

The Stark County Convention and Visitors' Bureau, in a post on Facebook, said it was "shocked and

offended." "Although we hoped this egregious act could be addressed, it simply cannot be adequately apologized for ..." the agency wrote about why it was ending its support. The promotion has been shut down, according to its website.

Sources: Akron Beacon Journal, Skook News



As seen (and spent) on TV...

The cost to be featured on an episode of "The Bachelor" cost the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau and show producer NZK Productions, Inc., \$313,000, according to published reports.

"It's a highly rated show, it has six million viewers per episode, and we figured we could get a great deal of bang for the buck when six million people are watching you on prime time," said Stacey Ritter, the tourism agency's CEO.

The agency initially declined to release the information until after further review the county attorney decided the documents were not exempt from public records laws after all.

Source: Miami New Times

Non-tourism entities seek to divert taxes

Funds that are ear-marked for tourism promotion are often coveted for other uses by non-tourism officials.

St. Augustine Mayor Nancy Shaver and St. Augustine Beach Mayor Undine George are exploring ways to get some of the local "bed tax" revenue for their respective cities.

Both mayors recently spoke out about it a Tourist Development Council meeting. The TDC administers the bed tax money that is collected on short-term rentals in the county. Both George and Shaver are members of the TDC board.

"I think we've understood for

years that the cities that play host to wonderful visitors, it's a great economic impact, but we don't have the population base to really support those demands on the infrastructure that are tourism related," Shaver said.

Elsewhere, Sarasota County's Tourist Development Council will hear a proposal to reduce future tourism promotion funds by up to 5 percent a year in order to pay for repairs at the Ed Smith Stadium.

The tourist development council will hear the proposal at a special meeting later this month.

Sources: St. Augustine Record, Sarasota Herald Tribune