

News & Notes

TRAVEL • MANUFACTURER • RETAIL • TRADE SHOW • ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL

More People Expected to Travel in 2010

World class events are putting more people on the road and in the sky in 2010 than since the Great Recession began. The crowds are going to these headline-grabbing destinations:



- **Vancouver** — Winter Olympic Games, Feb. 12-28
- **South Africa** — FIFA World Cup soccer games, June 11-July 11
- **China** — Shanghai World Expo, May 1-Oct. 31 (world's fair, 21st Century-style)
- **Oberammergau, Germany** — the oldest continually acted Passion Play in Europe has been performed by the locals roughly every 10 years since the 1600s, May through October
- **Spain** — the Camino de Santiago and the cathedral said to house the remains of St. James the Apostle, July 25 (St. James' Feast Day)
- **Orlando** — Universal Orlando and the opening of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Islands of Adventure, spring
- **California** — Disneyland's California Adventure Park and the debut of World of Color, spring



Changes in Security Measures for International Travelers

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) continues to tweak security measures for international travelers after the failed terrorist attack on Christmas Day. As of January 4, 2010, TSA mandates that every individual flying into the U.S. from anywhere in the world traveling from or through nations that are state sponsors of terrorism or other countries of interest will be required to go through enhanced screening.

Travelers need to be aware that security directives can change at any time, and for the time being, TSA is allowing the captains on individual flights to make decisions on what security measures will be implemented. Security measures may be different from airport to airport as well. As the TSA site reports: "TSA has a layered approach to security that allows us to surge resources as needed on a daily basis. We have the ability to quickly implement additional screening measures including explosive detection canine teams, law enforcement officers, gate screening, behavior detection and other measures both seen and unseen. Passengers should not expect to see the same thing at every airport." □

Source: Transportation Security Administration

TRAVELmetrics

- Domestic leisure travel is expected to increase 2 percent in 2010, with an increase in leisure travel spending of nearly 5 percent, according to the U.S. Travel Association.
- According to a quarterly consumer survey released last fall by the U.S. Travel Association and Ypartnership, a travel marketing outfit, travelers have become much more familiar with sustainability lingo over the past couple of years. Just 12 percent knew the term "carbon footprint" in July 2007, while 54 percent recognized it two years later. During

the same period, the percentage of travelers aware of the phrase "green travel" more than tripled.

- Is flying worth the hassle? More than one-quarter of Americans say no, according to a new *USA Today*/Gallup Poll. The survey, taken January 5-6, 2010, reveals that "27 percent of those who've flown roundtrip at least twice during the past year are more likely now than in the past to travel by car, train or another mode of transportation to avoid the inconveniences of flying." □

The Ten Commandments of Customer Service

Barbara Wold, speaker, author and business strategist, has come up with a Ten Commandments for Customer Service:

1. **Know who is boss.** You are in business to service customer needs, and you can only do that if you know what your customers want.
2. **Be a good listener.** Take the time to identify customer needs by asking questions and concentrating on what the customer is really saying. Do you know what three things are most important to your customer?
3. **Identify and anticipate needs.** Customers don't buy products or services. They buy good feelings and solutions to problems. Most customer needs are emotional rather than logical.
4. **Make customers feel important and appreciated.** Treat them as individuals. Always use their name and find ways to compliment them, but be sincere. People value sincerity — be sure that your body language also conveys sincerity.
5. **Help customers understand your organization.** Your organization may have the world's best systems for getting things done — be careful that your systems don't reduce the human element of your organization.
6. **Appreciate the power of "Yes."** Always look for ways to help your customers.
7. **Know how to apologize.** When something goes wrong, apologize. It's easy and customers like it. The customer may not always be right, but the customer must always win.
8. **Give more than expected.** Since the future of all companies lies in keeping customers happy, think of ways to elevate yourself above the competition. Consider the following:
 - What can you give customers that they cannot get elsewhere?
 - What can you give customers that is totally unexpected?
 - What can you do to follow-up and thank people even when they don't buy?
9. **Get regular feedback.** Encourage and welcome suggestions about how you could improve.
 - Listen carefully to what they say.
 - Use a focus group to gain customer feedback and new ideas.
 - Provide a method that invites constructive criticism, comments and suggestions.
10. **Treat employees well.** Employees are your internal customers and need a regular dose of appreciation. Thank them and find ways to let them know how important they are. Treating customers and employees well is equally important. ■

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eBags Delivers Record Holiday Sales, Up 29%

eBags announced that December sales eclipsed the company's previous single month record, increasing 29% year over year. Visitors to the site also were strong, increasing 28% versus the previous year. Said Vince Jones, eBags' CEO, "the holidays kicked off with our Black Friday up 66% and we rode the momentum from there. When all was said and done, eBags had four of its five largest sales days ever during holiday '09. One highlight was our luggage sales, which were up 68% in December. And although value was key in consumer's minds this holiday, we were able to keep our average ticket equal to last year."

eBags, known for allowing shoppers to comment on any of the 43,000 products they feature, also announced they surpassed 1.9 million customer reviews on their website. In addition, the company is continuing to grow its Facebook and Twitter fan bases as well. ■

New Luggage and Travel Boutique Opens in Aventura, Fla. Mall

Premiere Travelware opened its second Luggage and Travel Boutique in Aventura Mall, Aventura, Fla., in December 2009, just in time for the holiday shopping season. Like the original store, located in Fort Lauderdale, the Aventura location will sell brands such as Tumi, Rimowa, Briggs & Riley, Victorinox, Samsonite, Zero Halliburton, Hartmann and Heys' Britto Luggage Collection. ■

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Bloomie's Hosts Britto for Heys USA Launch

Bloomingtondale's hosted a launch event at its store in the Aventura (FL) Mall to introduce the bold and beautiful Britto Collection by Heys USA. The event was held on the main floor, adjacent to cosmetics, to accommodate the crowd. Famed Brazilian pop artist Romero Britto personally autographed the luggage for the hundreds of people in attendance. ■



Peter Doval (left) gets a personalized note signed by famed Brazilian pop artist Romero Britto (seated).



Romero Britto takes a moment away from the launch event to pose with Bloomingtondale's customers.



Heys USA sales manager Tom Nebeling (center) looks on as Romero Britto signs a Butterfly Carry-on for a Bloomingtondale's customer.



Mercedes Anglade (left), art director for Heys USA, shares a moment with the famous pop artist.



Artist Romero Britto (front/center) poses with the Bloomingtondale's team from the Aventura Mall during the Bloomingtondale's launch event of the Britto Collection by Heys USA.



The Heys USA team is on hand for the exclusive Bloomingtondale's launch: (from left) Thomas Pedrazas; sales manager Tom Nebeling; Ammie Lackey; and President/CEO Harry Sheikh.

Eagle Creek Celebrates 30 Years of EVP Ricky Schlesinger's Success

Executive Vice President and a pioneering leader of Eagle Creek Ricky Schlesinger celebrated his 30th anniversary with the company recently. Schlesinger joined Eagle Creek in 1979 as the East Coast sales rep. During his years with the company, he developed the concept of adventure travel gear and packing organization. Today, Schlesinger oversees domestic and international sales and marketing efforts for the brand. He served as chairman of the Travel Goods Association from 2006–2008, and continues to help set the vision and direction for the travel industry as a whole. Schlesinger is the recipient of numerous industry awards over the years, including the Outdoor Industry Leadership Excellence Award in 1998 and the TGA Award in 2001. He is the only recipient of awards in both the luggage and outdoor markets.

"Ricky's passion for the brand, his innovative approach and experience are integral to our success," said Eagle Creek Founder Steve Barker. "We wouldn't be the company we are today without his early influence on our direction and his vision for what we could become." ■



Ricky Schlesinger receives a gift in honor of the occasion from Eagle Creek Founders Steve and Nona Barker.

INVISTA's CORDURA® Brand Launches New Sustainability Platform

Based on its commitment to the environment, as well as health and safety, INVISTA has introduced a new sustainability platform under the CORDURA® brand. The CORDURA® Cares Program covers three main objectives: sustainable performance, enduring materials, and corporate citizenship. Through the program, the company will increase communications with consumers about a product's sustainable features, will eliminate manufacturing waste, and will develop initiatives with an environmental focus.

"We are constantly looking at increasing the utility and durability of our products and other ways we can benefit the environment," says Cindy McNaul, global CORDURA® brand manager. "For us, durability is nothing new. It's who we are and will continue to be." ■

Award-winning FUMI

The Canadian Gift and Tableware Association recognized Je'Marie Pursehook and Accessories for its product, the FUMI, which was named a Top 10 Product in 2009. The FUMI, which stands for Fashionable, Unique, Multipurpose, Innovation and invented by sisters Nichole and Natascha Shamlan, is a pursehook that also doubles as a bangle bracelet or a bag accessory when it is not in use. ■

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in THE NEWS

Zoobies Spotlighted as a Toy to "Keep Your Eye On"

Elizabeth Werner of Todayshow.com highlighted Zoobies as a toy parents and kids might be unfamiliar with but should look for. Werner touted Zoobies as an excellent way to minimize packing for trips to Grandma's house, as the stuffed animals also serve as a pillow and blanket. In addition, the Green Parents' List named Zoobie's Ping the Panda to its list of safest infant toys. ■

Source: MSNBC.com, The Green Parents' List

Travelpro Luggage Stars in George Clooney Movie

"Up in the Air," the movie starring George Clooney as a corporate downsizing expert, has received rave reviews from critics and moviegoers alike. In the film, Clooney's character constantly travels from city to city and lives out of his suitcase. Or more specifically, he's living out of his Travelpro luggage. Travelpro partnered with movie studio Paramount Pictures to supply the film's luggage needs. "Many of our industry-leading brands can be seen throughout the film," said Scott Applebee, Vice President of Marketing at Travelpro. "It's exciting to showcase our products in such an organic way." ■

Heys USA Crowning Achievement

Heys USA's Crown Edition XX Carry-on Spinner (21" x 15" x 9") was recognized as the bag that is "Best for Frequent Flying" in the November 2009 issue of Inc. Magazine. This sleek and durable polycarbonate roller bag with 4-dual Wheel Spinner System can expand to accommodate extra clothes for longer trips. Weighing just eight pounds, the hardside bag is small enough to carry on, but is equipped with a three-digit TSA-accepted lock that can be opened by airport security if the bag is checked. With a fully lined interior, a clear-view multiuse organizational pocket that doubles as a divider and deluxe tie-down straps that provide additional support for clothing during travel, the bag is available in both a carbon-fiber pattern and brushed gold and in a color palette that includes black, blue, metallic brown and silver. MSRP \$450. For more information, visit www.heidsusa.com. ■

Heys USA's Crown Edition XX Collection



Summer Luggage, Gift and Travel Goods Show

The 7th annual Summer Luggage, Gift and Travel Goods Show will be held at Navy Pier in Chicago on June 23 and 24, 2010. NLDA welcomes all buyers and vendors to participate. They anticipate over 100 exhibitors will showcase their best and brightest merchandise, perfect for fall and holiday selling seasons. The breadth of fabulous show specials will help offset buyers' expenses.

Go online to <http://www.nlda.com/show.html>; contact the NLDA office at 847-998-6869; or email us at inquiry@nlda.com to get an exhibitor application or attendee registration form. Booth rates are discounted by 10% until March 15, 2010. ■

NLDA News

On December 31, 2009, all 34 ALDA members officially joined with NLDA to create one larger and united buying group. NLDA will now adapt best practices from both ALDA and NLDA to make the association even better with more programs and services.

"This is a good event for our industry," says Jeff Izensen, president of NLDA. "A stronger group of retailers will ensure that manufacturers have customers that are viable and growing. On behalf of NLDA, I would like to welcome our new members and look forward to a brighter future."

Izensen also announced the 2010 NLDA Board:

President: John Mori, Mori Luggage & Gifts

Vice President: Robert Wolfe, Wagner's

Directors 3 Years

Jay Friedman, Lazar's Luggage & Gifts
 Jeff Izenson, Specialty Luggage
 David Niven, Kidd Russ Luggage & Gifts
 Michael Noymer, Leather World
 Marty Reininger, Edwards Luggage

Directors 2 Years

Tim Bleish, Bag and Baggage
 Rick Gilger, Luggage & Leather
 John Heth, Groskopf's Inc.
 Cheryl Hughes, Nicholas Luggage
 Chuck Weisbart, It's...In the Bag!

Directors 1 Year

Bob Brenner, Brenner Luggage
 Maggie Greco, Village Luggage & Gifts
 Leslee Richards, Lieber's Luggage
 Stephen Silver, Silver of Westport
 Jim White, Bankhardt's Luggage & Gifts Co.

2010 Committees

Advertising

Chair: Robert Wolfe, Wagner's
 Jay Friedman, Lazar's Luggage & Gifts
 Cheryl Hughes, Nicholas Luggage
 Maggie Greco, Village Luggage & Gifts
 Chuck Weisbart, It's...In the Bag!

Gift, Small Leather and Travel Goods

Chair: John Heth, Groskopf's Inc.
 Tim Bleish, Bag and Baggage
 Devon Corley, Luggage & Leather
 Shelley Norcross, Leather World

Luggage & Business Cases

Chair: Jeff Izenson, Specialty Luggage
 Bob Brenner, Brenner Luggage
 John Ebb, Brett's Luggage & Gifts
 Leslee Richards, Lieber's Luggage
 Gregg Simon, Portland Luggage