

News & Notes

TRAVEL • MANUFACTURER • RETAIL • ASSOCIATION • TRADE SHOW

TRAVEL

National Travel Promotion Act Signed into Law, Making History



President Obama signed into law the Travel Promotion Act, the first time a travel promotion has been established as a national effort. With the purpose of drawing more international visitors to the United States, the Act will allow the U.S. to build a multi-million dollar promotion program to compete on a global level for the billions of dollars that come with additional overseas travelers.

“With the best minds coming together from government and private industry to boost international travel to our country, we can make travel an even stronger economic engine for America,” says Caroline Beteta, president and CEO, California Travel and Tourism Commission and chair, U.S. Travel Association.

Oxford Economics estimates that a successful national promotion will yield \$4 billion in new spending annually, create 40,000 new jobs and generate \$321 million in new tax revenue each year.

“The Travel Promotion Act will enhance our nation’s status as a premiere destination in the competitive global tourism market and ensure job creation. It is a great example of the innovative solutions government and industry can create when they work together toward a common goal,” adds James Rasulo, senior executive vice president and chief financial officer, The Walt Disney Company and past national chair, U.S. Travel Association.

The Congressional Budget Office reported that the Travel Promotion Act would reduce the federal deficit by \$425 million over 10 years. □

Source: U.S. Travel Association

Facts and Figures

TAKING A TRIP THIS SUMMER? A recent survey of moms planning vacations in 2010 indicates 80% will make sacrifices to guarantee a family trip this year. 57% will get away this summer, while 24% will vacation during spring break, making spring break the second-busiest travel period. The survey was conducted by WhyMomsRule.com, a blog based out of Nashville that tracks trends affecting moms and their buying habits.

ACCORDING TO A NATIONAL survey by D.K. Shifflet and Associates, reported in HotelInteractive.com, travelers use and trust professional travel websites more than online communities and social network sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter.

WHILE TRAVEL SPENDING IN THE U.S. saw a decline of 9% in 2009*, Mintel expects to see more people taking off in the new decade with a 6% increase in travel spending expected for 2010.

2010 SAW A NEW ONSLAUGHT of increased baggage fees. According to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, around \$740 million were collected in just the third quarter of 2009 for baggage fees alone. Continental Airlines took in \$270 million last year and predicts it will take in \$350 million in 2010 for checked bags fees.

THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IS poised for growth in 2010, concludes a new report from Ernst & Young’s Global Hospitality practice.

Titled Global Hospitality Insights: Top Thoughts for 2010, the report analyzes trends in valuation, financing, government, tourism and acquisitions, among other things, and predicts the results will bode well for hotels in the next 12 months. □

**This amount includes domestic business and leisure travel as well as spending by international visitors.*

Sources: Internet Travel Monitor — Marketing & Research, Resource Nation, Southeast Tourism Society, Successful Meetings

Technology — Your Best Carry-On



Get techy with it and streamline your travel. The newest apps and web-optimized content allow you to search for a hotel, find the lowest rates, make reservations securely, order room service, request a specific pillow, view maps and get directions, even check in and out of a hotel — all without face-to-face interaction. Take technology to the air — many carriers like American, Continental, Delta and United allow you to use your smart phone as a boarding pass. Just scan the phone at the gate! Technology isn't just limited to smart phones, though. You'll want to capture a snapshot of this: The Panasonic Lumix camera has built-in GPS so you can geo-tag photos for over a half million locations.

For the iPhone, the Theodolite application provides you with a modern-day compass, GPS, map, zoom camera, rangefinder and two-axis inclinometer all in the convenience of a phone. Lodestone AR Compass coordinates with Google maps to make it easy to find out which direction you're looking, handy for hikers exploring new territory. ■

Source: CBS The Early Show

Panel Aims for "Blue Ribbon" When it Comes to Security

The U.S. Travel Association has formed a "Blue Ribbon Panel for Frictionless Security" to create a vision for the world's most secure, efficient and customer-friendly air travel security screening process. The group, formed on the heels of the attempted 2009 Christmas Day bombing, features prominent security and facilitation experts, including Tom Ridge, former secretary of Homeland Security, Robert Crandall, former president and CEO of American Airlines, Jim Turner, former Democratic Congressman and chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, Dave Bronzek, president and CEO of FedEx Express and Sam Gilliland, president and CEO of Sabre Holdings.

"The U.S. Travel Association understands the frustration of American travelers, and we, too, believe there is a better way," says Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association.

The panel, which includes experts in aviation security, queuing, technology, privacy and economics, will provide a fresh evaluation of the air travel security system, exploring new technologies and best practices from around the world. Setting politics and current cost constraints aside, the panel will engage in a fact-based analysis of: Process improvements; Technology; Human capital management; Physical infrastructure; Capital investments; and Privacy protections. The U.S. Travel Association will also solicit the opinions of frequent travelers.

The group expects to deliver a blueprint for a secure and efficient air security screening system to Members of Congress and the Obama Administration in the summer of 2010. ■

Source: U.S. Travel Association

Airlines Say "No" to Carry-On Fees

In the wake of Spirit Airlines' decision to institute a charge of up to \$45 each way for passenger carry-on luggage stowed in the overhead compartment, five major airlines have given their commitment to New York Sen. Charles Schumer that they will not follow suit. Schumer and five other senators — Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, Ben Cardin of Maryland, Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Robert Menendez and Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey — are supporting legislation that would tax airlines if they charge carry-on fees.

Under current laws, airlines pay a 7.5 cent tax for every dollar they collect in fares, but no tax is imposed on fees collected for "nonessential" services. The Block Airlines' Gratuitous Fees Act, or BAG Fees Act, introduced Wednesday, would require that carry-on bags be considered essential and taxed at the same rate as fares. The bill introduced Tuesday, the Free of Fees for Carry-On Act, is based on pending legislation to reauthorize funding for the Federal Aviation Administration. It would prohibit fees for carry-on bags that meet existing standards for weight and size, and require carriers to make detailed information about the fees available to passengers in advance.

The senators want to ensure that passengers are not penalized for bringing items such as medication, food and laptop computers on board. ■

Sources: The Washington Post and CNN Travel

Fashionistas Flock to Buy Case Voted "Best Luggage" in 2010 Design Awards



RIMOWA has been voted "best luggage" by *Travel + Leisure* magazine for the new Salsa Deluxe Multiwheel case.

Advantages of the Salsa Deluxe Multiwheel line include its light weight, high-impact resistant, wear-resistant and flexible 100% polycarbonate shell, with the largest case weighing only 12.1 pounds. With tonal edging, stitching, zipper and handle, the line screams style and is available in a variety of sizes and in four colors. Plus, the new "add a bag" system makes attaching a smaller case uncomplicated so you can transport several cases, like a true fashionista, while keeping your catwalk.

Voted by a jury of industry leaders, which includes fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi, museum curator Valerie Steel, interior designer and author Michael Smith, museum founder Terence Conran, renowned architect Jean-Michel Gathy, New York City official Amanda Burden, architect Rafael Viñoly and museum director Holly Hotchner, the annual Travel + Leisure Design Awards recognizes the best of the best in travel for the year. ■

HP Marketing Corp. Appointed Boblbee Distributor

HP Marketing Corp. has been appointed the U.S. distributor of Boblbee. Sweden-based Boblbee was founded in 1997 and specializes in making cases that afford the maximum



protection for computers, cameras, personal electronics and people, including hard shell, water- and impact-resistant backpacks that are practical yet beautifully styled and offer maximum protection. Available in a full range of colors, Boblbee cases have been featured in major motion pictures, including "Charlie's Angels," "Nutty Professor 2" and "The Italian Job," as well as TV shows like "Star Trek" and the MTV Awards. Boblbee also offers a complete range of add-on cases and attachments to increase the capacities of the backpacks as well as cargo nets, rain covers and accessory pouches. For more information, contact HP Marketing Corp. at 1-800-735-4373 or visit www.hpmarketingcorp.com.

Leisure Merchandising Corp. Signs "Amelia" License



Leisure Merchandising Corp. recently signed the license for the "Amelia Earhart" brand.

"Her very name is synonymous with travel and adventure like no other woman in American history," says Cliff Ensley, CEO and founder.

Leisure is now developing Amelia luggage and travel products to be shipped in the 4th Quarter of 2010.

"Ultimate Backpack" Put to the Test at Alpine National Ski Championships

High Sierra Company provided the Ultimate Winter Backpack to the 2010 Alpine National Ski Championships, which took place on March 20-23, 2010 at White Face Lake Placid. The 2010 Alpine National Ski Championships featured members of the United States Ski Team as well as the leading up-and-coming racers who competed in slalom, giant slalom and super G.

With features like tuck-away boot holders, quick-release compression straps to carry a snowboard and adjustable webbing straps to carry skis, the Ultimate Winter Backpack is the monster truck of backpacks. Additional features include an MP3 player pocket, a tuck-away mesh sport flap for a helmet, and a zippered hanging pocket for accessories.

"The Alpine National Ski Championship is an excellent event," says Hank Bernbaum, president of High Sierra. "We hope High Sierra's Ultimate Winter

Backpack will allow ski enthusiasts an ease of mind during their travels to ski racing events."



Travelpro Announces "Up in the Air" Sweepstakes Grand Prize Winner



Cynthia Todd-Flick of Middleport, New York, won the grand prize in Travelpro's "Up in the Air" Movie Hollywood Trip Sweepstakes: an exciting trip package to Hollywood. Sponsored by Travelpro, the prize package includes roundtrip airfare for two to Los Angeles, Calif., a three night stay at The Beverly Hilton, two Travelpro® Maxlite™ 22" Rollaboard® suitcases and two Hollywood tour packages.

"I was in a state of disbelief when I heard that I won and couldn't wait to tell everybody that I was going to Hollywood," says Todd-Flick, a print buyer for the University at Buffalo who also serves on the staff of the Niagara Youth Marine Cadets in Niagara Falls, New York. Todd-Flick noted that she was also thrilled to receive the Travelpro Maxlite luggage. "It is very stylish and lightweight with a strong, sturdy handle system," she says. "They thought of everything."

Bloomies to Host Re-launch of Briggs & Riley Transcend Collection

Briggs & Riley Travelware will re-launch its Transcend Collection beginning July 10 at more than 500 specialty luggage stores in North America, in select Bloomingdale's stores in the United States, and online at www.briggs-riley.com.

A 10-15% weight reduction across its 12 redesigned styles means Transcend is as easy on the arms as it is on the eyes. A sleek silhouette features a durable, clean, modern, monochromatic design, available in two colors: Rainforest and Sunset. And, the company's proprietary Tuff-lite™ outer fabric means these bags are not only stylish, but offer up unparalleled strength and abrasion resistance.

"Briggs & Riley gives sophisticated travelers the solutions they need to transition stress-free from one destination to the next," says Jim Lahren, vice president for marketing at Briggs & Riley.

The Transcend Collection features 12 new styles, including cabin bags, carry-on and large-wheeled uprights and duffels, priced from \$39 to \$389. ■

Customer Service Reigns Supreme at L.L. Bean

L.L. Bean was recognized as the retailer with the best customer service by the fifth annual NRF Foundation/American Express Customers' Choice survey which was awarded during the National Retail Federation's 99th Annual Convention and Expo in New York City, January 10-13, 2010. The results were garnered from 8,600 consumers who were polled by BIGresearch regarding thoughts and attitudes toward retailers' customer service. Consumers were also asked to provide a listing of the top customer service retailers. L.L. Bean, Inc. has been a trusted source for quality apparel, reliable outdoor equipment and expert advice for more than 95 years. ■

NLDA News

The new, larger National Luggage Dealers Association (NLDA) gathered for its annual Winter Convention in Las Vegas before and during the March Travel Goods Association Show.

During its 85th Winter General Membership meeting, NLDA honored outgoing 2009 Board and Committee members of the American Luggage Dealers Association (ALDA) and NLDA, including outgoing presidents Jeff Izenson (NLDA) and Kim Clark (ALDA). NLDA welcomed John Mori as its new president, the fourth Mori after his grandfather, uncle and father to preside over NLDA. The Association was established in 1925 and represents 220 luggage stores throughout the country. ■

Source: NLDA

Summer Luggage, Gift and Travel Goods Show

All qualified buyers are invited to attend the 7th Annual Summer Luggage, Gift and Travel Goods Show, June 23-24, 2010 at Navy Pier in Chicago, Illinois. Buyers can see over 100 exhibitors showcase their best and brightest merchandise, perfect for fall and holiday selling seasons. The breadth of fabulous show specials will help offset buyers' expenses. Vendors don't delay — booths are selling out fast. For more information along with exhibitor and attendee forms, please go online to www.nlda.com/show.html; contact the NLDA office at 1-847-998-6869; or email NLDA at inquiry@nlda.com. ■

Source: NLDA

Buyers and Sellers Get Down to Business at Housewares Show

Buoyed by double digit increases in both exhibitor participation and buyer attendance, the 2010 International Home + Housewares Show sent a clear signal that the U.S. and global housewares and home-goods business is among the leaders in the economic recovery.

"Our exhibitors have reported brisk business in their booths and a positive response from buyers to the innovations they had readied for the Show," says Phil Brandl, president of the not-for-profit International Housewares Association, which owns and operates the Show. "We were encouraged by the significant increase in international buyer attendance this year as well as by the reports that U.S. retailers and senior executives were present in large numbers."

The Show hosted 1,960 exhibitors, a 13% increase over 2009, and included 550 new companies, Brandl says. In addition, total buyer participation increased 10.5%, including a 20.7% increase in international buyer participation. ■

