

International Marketing

Kansas enjoys a robust cooperative international marketing partnership with Oklahoma. We target well-traveled, repeat, USA visitors who live in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, United Kingdom, & Ireland. Our annual program activities are equally balanced to include in-country product development with wholesale travel trade, in-country positive publicity through travel media, and in-country consumer awareness via travel fairs, cooperative advertising, and brand wrapped vehicles traveling throughout each targeted country. Marketing the two states as one destination allows Kansas a tremendous fiscal leverage, while too, delivering diverse traveler experiences sought from our target market travelers.

1) Why international travelers, and why these countries?

International travelers spend more money per day, per person, over domestic travelers. They stay longer per trip (average 12-14-days). When marketing leisure travel, it is best for destinations to diversify the market mix, allowing for growth in all travel seasons. The countries Kansas target are well established, primary, feeder markets for USA, and moreover, have large numbers of annual repeat USA travelers. It is these travelers who have a high comfort level of traveling independently in the USA, and are seeking off-the-beaten-path, authentic USA destinations.

2) What does Kansas do to increase international market share?

We created a larger region to become 'a' destination. Repeat USA visitors from our target markets will typically travel to more than one state during each trip. Before the Kansas/Oklahoma partnership (2000), Kansas was not internationally published as a destination, today (2014) Kansas/Oklahoma is published by 33 wholesale tour operators within 78 fly-drive itinerary and ranch holiday programs, all within our target markets. Both Klaus and Matt manage in-country fulfillment for consumer requests generated via travelks.com. We are active members of the Visit USA Committees in the five countries. We identify wholesale travel trade who offer USA as a destination to establish 'retail ready' KSOK fly-drive programs. We qualify travel media for hosted press trips to Kansas, and attend annual international consumer travel fairs in Munich, Augsburg, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Leipzig, Berlin, London, Dublin, and Belfast. We participate in numerous annual cooperative marketing programs with tour operator partners

which, in 2014/2015 include a travel trade and consumer promotion with Wicked – The Musical in London, Leeds, Birmingham & Edinburgh.

3) How does my community/establishment get international traveler business?

International travelers plan in advance, book in advance (typically via a travel agent), and need assistance with knowing what to do. If you are a community and you want overnight visitors, you need to have lodging that will work with wholesale tour operators. (Lisa Weigt will help you understand how this works). You too, need to have good restaurants (local is best) who serve dinner and breakfast. You need to anticipate what a multiple day itinerary that includes your community might look like – where does it go before and after you? If you are a day trip community/establishment, think what the nearest Kansas 'feeder' DMO will be – and establish a strong working relationship. Day trip communities also need good restaurants who serve lunch. If you are an establishment, be sure you have developed good relationships with your local destination marketing organization (DMO), feeder community DMOs, and above all, no matter who you are, let Kansas tourism know your interest.

The Kansas/Oklahoma program is managed by Destinations by Design (Lisa Weigt) and two in-country representatives. Klaus Boog is based in Braunschweig, Germany and Matt Bates is based in Troon, Scotland. Klaus is the first point of contact for travel trade, travel media, and consumers in Germany, Austria & Switzerland, while Matt is the first point of contact for UK & Ireland.

The staff contact is Kelli Hilliard.

