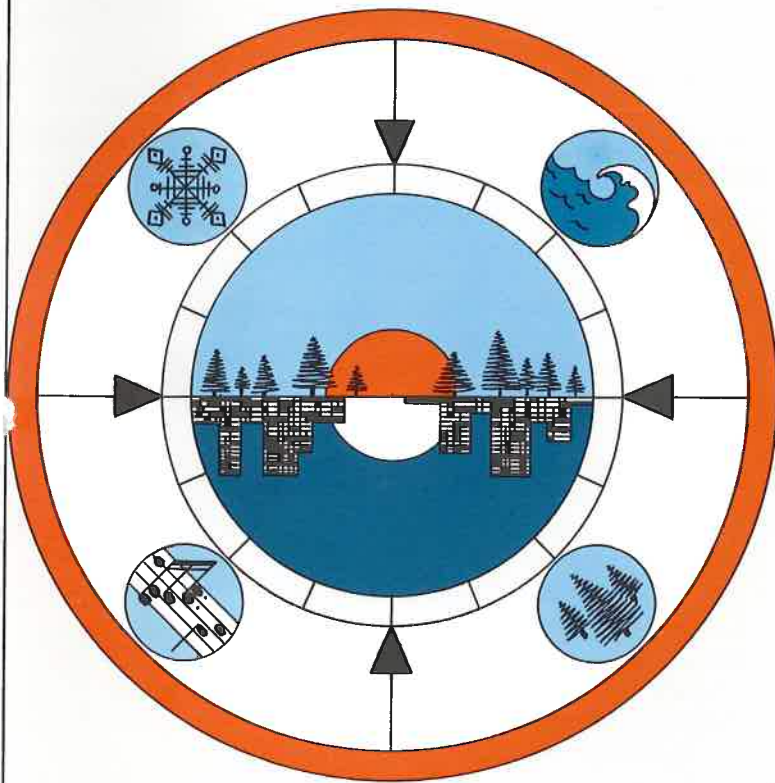


# MINNESOTA TOURISM



## Economic Recovery Commission Report

*February 11, 1983*



**The Honorable Rudy Perpich  
Governor of Minnesota  
State Capitol  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155  
February 11, 1983**

Dear Governor Perpich,

Attached is the report of the Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission with the recommendations on how Minnesota, in a joint effort with the public and private sector, can substantially increase tourism in our state.

Your commitment and support of a \$12.4 million investment by the state for promoting Minnesota tourism in the 1984-85 biennium is the cornerstone of our report. The full commission unanimously endorsed this figure and, in addition, has reaffirmed the private sector's support in promoting our state tourism as well as proposals for additional private sector financial support. In addition, the state's investment of \$12.4 million will more than be returned to the state through revenues generated by tourism.

The commission, which consisted of 36 members, dedicated hundreds of hours in the four task force reports that make up our recommendations to you. These four task force reports are Funding, Structure, Marketing/General and Marketing/Conventions.

It is the type of commitment that was shown by our commission members that proves that Minnesota tourism has the support of the private sector. Working together with the state, we can strive to make Minnesota once again competitive with other states.

On behalf of the Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission, I want to thank you and Lieutenant Governor Marlene Johnson for the high priority your administration has placed on the tourism industry in Minnesota. It is imperative that proper funding and support be given this important industry in our state if we are to enjoy the market share to which we are entitled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curtis L. Carlson".

Curtis L. Carlson  
Chairman  
Minnesota Tourism  
Economic Recovery Commission  
cc: Lt. Governor Marlene Johnson



# **Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission Report**

**Curtis L. Carlson, Commission Chairman**  
President & Chairman of the Board  
Carlson Companies, Inc.

Submitted: February 11, 1983

# Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission

## Members

Curtis L. Carlson, Commission Chairman  
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Mr. Curt Beckmann  
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Mr. Daniel Prins  
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Assn.  
Owner, Blue Horse Restaurant

Mr. William Wells  
Senior Vice President  
Hill & Knowlton, Inc.

Mr. Vic Zukanoff  
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Minneapolis Star & Tribune

# Funding Task Force

The Funding Task Force of the Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission met on Thursday, January 27, to recommend funding for the Tourism Division for the 1983-85 biennium.

The Task Force recommends a \$12.4 million budget for the Minnesota Tourism Division for the 1983-85 biennium, basing this recommendation on the proposal of the Minnesota Tourism Promotion Council. The Task Force noted that over 90 organizations representing thousands of Minnesota businesses, employers and employees — including the Minnesota Association of Commerce and Industry, the AFL-CIO and numerous tourism and retail organizations — have endorsed this proposed budget. The Task Force pointed out this recommendation is based on the projection that this level of tourism funding would create 10,000 new jobs, \$300 million in additional sales and \$30 million in additional tax revenue for Minnesota, making it a "self-funding" investment.

The Task Force stated the tourism industry currently contributes several million dollars worth of in-kind services and materials to promote tourism in the State, including complimentary food, transportation, admission tickets, and promotional pieces for sales blitzes, familiarization tours for travel agents and travel writers, and events such as Scandinavia Today. They further cited the dollar value of complimentary vacations and

publicity for special promotions such as those with Coca-Cola and Kentucky Fried Chicken, and the dollars tourism organizations provide to publish directories to the state's hotels, resorts, restaurants, campgrounds, motels, and local organizations, which are needed to supplement the promotional materials available for distribution by the Tourism Division. The Task Force further noted that tourism spending impacts 18 sectors of the state's economy and that a healthy tourism economy provides needed dollars to fund other areas of the state's budget.

The Task Force recommends an immediate survey of key businesses and organizations to determine the value of current contributions the industry is making to promote tourism in Minnesota, with the survey to be completed by March 15 and to be followed by a more comprehensive and systematic study and analysis of current industry contributions, using a valid agency, such as the University of Minnesota.

The Task Force also encourages the Governor to take the initiative to ensure that the tax revenues previously designated for local tourism promotion for use by Convention and Visitors Bureaus be fully utilized for that purpose.

The Task Force discussed other matters but felt the major emphasis at this time should be directed to its recommendation for a \$12.4 million tourism budget for the 1983-85 biennium.

## Funding Task Force Members

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# Structure Task Force Report

## Background

At the present time tourism-related activities are handled by 17 different divisions of state government. These departments have functioned well, considering the relatively low priority tourism has received as a function of or investment by state government in the past.

The Structure Task Force of the Tourism Commission makes the following recommendations:

## Major Recommendations

- Tourism should be established as a distinct and separate, self-standing entity.
- A balanced, on-going, policy-making tourism commission should be established.
- A set of overall state tourism development goals should be established.
- A structure must be created which would allow for interaction by all agencies and enable the adoption of a managed, comprehensive state and national tourism promotion program.
- Major policy decisions should be studied and changes implemented where desirable (see Other Issues).
- There should be full utilization of the capabilities of the higher education facilities for research, extension education and classroom teaching as it applied to the tourism industry.

### 1. Tourism As a Self-Standing Entity

Tourism is a major economic factor in our state. Establishment of a separate tourism office will allow for high visibility, easier access (elimination of the current complex system) and accountability. Moreover, such a separation will ensure that conflicts due to differing goals and objectives within departments does not occur.

Such a change may be carried out by including enabling legislation for a separate tourism office and budget within the overall budget of the Department of Energy, Planning and Development, to take place in conjunction with the reorganization of that department. The Governor may by Executive Order direct the placement of the self-standing office.

### 2. Establishment Of An On-Going Tourism Commission

The essential criterion for this Commission is that it must be well-balanced to represent all aspects of tourism development as an industry.

The Commission should serve autonomously, but utilize the staff of the Tourism Office; have the authority to obtain information from any and all government agencies involved in tourism related activities, conduct in-depth examination of present systems, regulations, programs, goals and reports; and make recommendations for necessary change or future plans. These reports may be submitted to the Lt. Governor by Executive Order of the Governor.

### 3. Development of Overall State Goals

The Commission's first major task should be the development of concise, short and long-term state goals for the tourism industry to be used as guidelines by individual departments in establishing criteria for their tourism-related activities.

### 4. Creation Of A Comprehensive Tourism Promotion Program

This is an area needing major reform. Some departments spend considerable time and effort in tourism-related activities within their budgetary and staffing capabilities. However, at present, there is no formal structure whereby a comprehensive plan can be developed and carried out. Consequently, a proliferation of various brochures and public relations pieces is created, which may or may not reach the desired market or provide the recipients with a comprehensive review of all state activities that are available.

### 5. Use Of Our Higher Education Facilities

Minnesota's higher education facilities offer much in the area of tourism planning, development and training. The resources available within these facilities should be considered in developing our state's long-term plans.

Of particular importance may be the assistance of our higher education facilities in identifying potential "tourist bases" for future development, as well as training our tourist industry personnel.

## Other Issues For Consideration

During discussions with various department heads and interested parties, the Committee identified the following issues that, while not precisely related to government structure, nevertheless are considered important enough to deserve serious review:

Our natural resources are one of our greatest attractions, therefore:

- The Department of Natural Resources must retain and maintain state trailways, waterways, parks, forest and wildlife areas.
- The DNR should coordinate and provide material outlining state lakes (other than those customarily identified) which are good camping and fishing areas.
- The DNR should review current fee structure for possible increase. However, it is critical that such fees remain competitive both in relation to other states and to the private sector.
- Allow dedication of camp and park fees to be used for upkeep of those facilities.
- Broaden the current base of promotional efforts to include the trail systems.

Information and assistance to visitors is a critical element of state tourism services, therefore:

- The Department of Transportation should complete the planned one additional information center.
- Funding should be sufficient to allow these facilities to remain open seven days per week during peak tourism periods.

Minnesota's arts, history and urban attractions are receiving growing use and national attention. Therefore:

- The state Historical Society and local counterparts should be continually strengthened.
- Arts and cultural activities and facilities should be recognized, encouraged and supported to the greatest extent possible.
- Cities and metropolitan areas must be recognized as full complements to the state's outdoor activities in generating tourism income.

Further, it is recognized responsible regulatory processes are a necessary part of government involvement in private-sector activities. However, those agencies whose regulations have impact on the tourism industry should communicate more fully and participate jointly with affected parties to resolve problems while meeting the overall state goals of good regulatory policy and tourism industry growth.

Minnesota's image as an "abundant outdoors, fishing and arts" center seems to be suffering from perceptions that may not be accurate. To reverse this trend, a coordinated public/private effort of "Pro-Minnesota" marketing needs to occur.

Moreover, several other controversial and potentially volatile issues should be addressed and resolved for such a partnership to occur.

- Determine whether a limitation on gill net fishing should occur (financial offset to fishing industry could be resolved through private license increases).
- Decide whether some lakes should be restricted for spear fishing. Establish a balance of priority and secondary lakes where this should occur.
- A plan to aerate some southern lakes to rebuild good fishing and camping potential.

## Conclusions

The three most significant factors in redeveloping tourism in Minnesota from a governmental structure viewpoint will be 1) establishing a separate Office of Tourism; 2) creating comprehensive, overall state goals; and 3) creating a structure whereby coordination of activities, exchange of ideas and future plans can be developed in a coherent fashion (creation of the Tourism Commission).

These three major steps, supplemented by enactment of several other changes as outlined above, will do much to place Minnesota in the position of being able to proceed with long-term goals and to obtain the greatest return on the state's tourism investment.

## Structure Task Force Members

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# Marketing Task Force

Our report is a cross section of input, recommendations and creativity put together by the Tourism and Economic Recovery Commission appointed by Governor Rudy Perpich and chaired by Curt Carlson. This report reflects a very sincere effort to share with the legislature what we feel represents one of the most important programs that can and will have a lasting effect on the economic recovery of Minnesota. It simply reflects a most important willingness from the private sector to contribute to appropriations from the state in order to generate twelve and one half million dollars to provide the following opportunities for the State of Minnesota.

These opportunities are based primarily on the creation of 10,000 new jobs in the tourism section of this state's economy, and will result in approximately \$30 million in additional taxes generated to the State of Minnesota.

When this report is presented to the 1983 legislative session we must let them know that, beyond any shadow of doubt, the amount of dollars we are talking about is a bare minimum in comparison with our surrounding sister states. As we know, there are other states which are outspending us to the point that it reflects our being in the minor leagues. We have a choice which we must share with the state legislature which simply states that if we are to become a major league state for tourism we will have to spend the dollars that will give us the kind of return on our investment that will place us in the world series of booming tourism. Both the private sector and the state have an enormous responsibility to provide 10,000 new jobs in times like these. It is no longer a question of whether we should consider it an alternative to increase the budget in order to increase revenues. In this period of economic recovery, not only for the State of Minnesota but for the nation, it now becomes an extreme necessity to do so. With the adoption of this comprehensive plan, Minnesota tourism will become a very dominant force in terms of revenues which will benefit all the people. It is now a matter of the private sector in concert with the state legislature becoming immediately responsive.

The State of Minnesota must become competitive in order to increase its tourism market share. The time is now! The private sector is ready, willing, and able. Last but not least, I would like to thank this wonderful group of people who gave their time and talent in hopes that this program and the necessary resources will be available so that Minnesota can and must become a dominant force in the nation's tourism business from 1983 on.

Respectfully submitted:

**Chairman:**

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# Marketing Task Force — Advertising Sub-Committee

**INTRODUCTION:** This report was prepared with the information at hand. It represents a "snapshot" of the programs currently being implemented, and a downrange look at programs which could be considered if the proposed new tourism budget is approved. There are no firm recommendations in this document. It is meant to outline parameters of the potential impact of the new budget, and to estimate the extent of the potential private support of the tourism industry.

This report represents the collective view of the following members of the Advertising Committee of the Marketing Task Force:

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## Objectives:

1. Increase tourism expenditures in Minnesota.
2. Increase inquiries to the Minnesota Travel Information Center.
3. Increase the current level of repeat visitors.
4. Increase the number of first-time visitors, with particular emphasis on the spring/summer season.
5. Increase Minnesota's share of vacations to the North Central Region (possibly defined as "Great Lakes Region").
6. Position the Minnesota vacation experience as one appealing to general sub-segments (based on vacation motives and lifestyles):
  - a. Social/Cultural/Self Improvement Motivated
  - b. Sports/Outdoor Recreation Participation Motivated
  - c. Historical/Educational Motivated

## Strategies:

1. To utilize appropriate local, regional and national media in three separate seasonal campaigns: Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer.
2. To allocate budget to seasonal programs as outlined on the attached.
3. To target adults with household income of \$25,000 or more, regardless of age, through a segmented approach to the following interests:
  - a. Social/cultural/self-improvement
  - b. Traditional outdoor activities
  - c. Leisure/fitness activities

## Segments:

1. Those whose vacation time is spent pursuing activities that might loosely be called SOCIAL/CULTURAL/SELF IMPROVEMENT:
  - Eating out (interesting or unusual dining experiences)
  - Going to nightclubs/cafes/discos or "popular entertainment" places
  - Going to museums/galleries/historic places
  - Attending theater/opera/ballet/concert performances
  - Watching team sports
2. Those whose vacation time is primarily spent participating in traditional outdoor activities.
  - Fishing
  - Canoeing/hiking/backpacking
  - Camping
  - Hunting
  - Snowmobiling
3. Leisure/fitness/outdoor activities.
  - Boating/sailing
  - Tennis/Golf
  - Skiing (downhill)
  - Skiing (X-Country)

The prime prospect and its various segments could further be segmented by length-of-vacation stay:

- Extended pleasure travel . . . 11 or more days
- Weeklong pleasure travel . . . 6 thru 10 days
- Weekend pleasure travel . . . 5 days or less

Since our overall objective is to increase tourism expenditures in Minnesota, we should target those who vacation at least 6 days . . . i.e., the weeklong and extended vacation traveler. (Weekend vacations are higher numerically, but lower in dollar sales).

## Tactics:

Before media budgets are finalized, it is recommended that the following action be taken:

- a. A comprehensive market research effort be made to determine attitudes toward Minnesota, awareness of Minnesota, most attractive attributes of Minnesota, highest potential markets for Minnesota, and which of Minnesota's attractions will generate the highest return on investment of advertising dollars. Attached are outlines of research projects the Committee feels are essential to the success of the promotional program.
- b. A comprehensive survey of the Private sector be made to determine the weight and extent of media support the Private sector is willing and able to provide within the context of the total state promotional requirements.

## Media Expenditure Considerations:

One of the major questions concerning the proposed tourism budget is the degree of impact it would have upon markets considered to be prime targets for Minnesota Tourism.

The first question addresses the size of the budget.

Is it big enough to effectively reach all of our target markets?

Is it excessive to the point where dollars would be wasted on over-exposure?

The committee addressed this question by drawing up a list of 35 markets that appeared to have good potential for tourism business.

The Committee also examined the potential Private sector support level during the critical March-April period when Minnesotans are planning their vacations. This examination revealed a potential serious problem. In spite of heavy and generous support from the media with Public Service Announcements there is no apparent way to "heavy up" the promotion for specific seasonal productions. The media support will be at a high, but even, level all 12 months.

It will be necessary, therefore, to provide additional funding for paid advertising in the State of Minnesota.

## Media Conclusions:

- The proposed budget is not out of line with the State's tourism promotion requirements. In fact, it will not allow for covering an "ideal" list of markets.
- A study of the potential of individual markets is absolutely a requirement before target markets are selected.
- Additional paid advertising in Minnesota will be required during peak tourism seasons, whether the funding comes from the Private or Public sectors.

## Anticipated Private Sector Support:

The Committee has been very impressed with the voluntary private support which has already been offered to the tourism campaign.

The Committee is convinced that the private sector will respond strongly to the promotion of tourism if the State makes the budgetary commitment that is under discussion.

The Twin Cities television media alone is anticipated to contribute in excess of \$3,000,000 in Public Service Announcements.

The Twin Cities newspapers have pledged their support, and there have been strong expressions of support from all segments of the outstate media.

The Outdoor industry has indicated that it will also support the program.

The Committee estimates that private sector support from Minnesota media will exceed \$8,000,000 annually.

There are many other ways in which the private sector can contribute to the tourism support program . . . market research, purchase of special radio and television programming that features the "Explore Minnesota" theme, paying for advertising in direct support of "Explore Minnesota," and purchasing paper for posting outdoor boards.

Businesses that advertise outside of the state can also contribute by tagging their advertising with the "Explore Minnesota" theme.

It is the opinion of the Committee that these things will happen as the program begins to pick up momentum.

## Overall Conclusions:

The advertising portion of the proposed tourism budget is reasonable.

Spent wisely, the advertising budget will have a very favorable impact upon the state's tourism industry.

The private sector will respond with very significant advertising support programs if the tourism budget becomes a reality.

## Minnesota Tourism Research Projects Needed

1. Benchmark study — pre-campaign
    - To determine prospects' present awareness of Minnesota as a vacation destination.
    - To determine the current level of preference for Minnesota as a vacation destination
    - To determine current intentions to visit Minnesota.
  2. Post-campaign study — on-going.
    - To measure changes in the above variables.
  3. Prospect Problem-Tracing — focus groups
    - To determine positive and negative perceptions of Minnesota as a vacation destination.
    - To uncover problem areas among "non-users", i.e., why Minnesota was not selected or considered as a vacation destination.
    - Generally to determine motivational factors.
- Prime prospect in all cases is first-come visitors with above average household income.

Studies of segments within the prime-prospect group should be done as budget increases, e.g., studies of outdoor enthusiasts market, city-vacationer market, singles market, etc.

## Tourism Division of Minnesota Positioning Research

The State of Minnesota currently uses the theme line "Lakes. And a whole lot more." While this is certainly descriptive to those of us who know the state, its impact on out-of-staters is unknown. Therefore, we propose the following:

### A. Survey of non-Minnesota residents

The purpose of this survey would be to determine exactly what people think of Minnesota (and surrounding states), and how well each of them can deliver on certain categories.

Specifically, we would need to find out exactly what people would look for in a vacation in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Canada. Here we would be looking for precise reasons why someone would vacation in these areas.

Next we would ask the non-residents to rate these areas in terms of quality in the following areas:

Arts (theater, symphony, museums)	Historical/Educational Sites
Fishing	Skiing (x-country and downhill)
Hunting	Snowmobiling
Night Life	Golfing, Tennis
Major Sports	Luxury Resorts

Through the responses to these questions, we could determine exactly how potential tourists view the state, which are our most attractive attributes, and from that information develop an effective theme for the state.

B. Secondly, the same types of questions would be asked of first time, as well as traditional, Minnesota vacationers. These would also focus in more on their experiences and determine if their preconceived expectations are being met. This again would tell us what is best to say to people, how to position Minnesota as different from surrounding areas, and as a place that meets and exceeds expectations.

C. Survey of Minnesota residents, which would cover the same subjects.

# **Marketing Task Force Public Relations Sub-Committee**

## **Recommended Considerations for Presenting the Tourism Program of the Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission**

1. Public Relations efforts should be an integral part in helping communicate and gain support for this program among the Legislature.

The Public Relations Subcommittee proposes that it act as counsel to the Commission. The Subcommittee would help in developing methods to communicate and gain support for the complete findings of the Commission.

Among the methods available are:

A. Coordination of support from professionals among public relations, advertising, and graphic arts agencies to create an effective audiovisual presentation.

B. Emphasis should be placed on creation of jobs as the major result of increased tourism activity.

C. Efforts should be implemented to gain grass-roots support of tourism. Letter writing campaigns should be organized to solicit support of each legislator.

D. Information should be gathered and distributed to emphasize the importance (and support) other states are placing on tourism. Statistics indicating success in other states should be communicated.

E. Care should be taken in projecting a dollar return on the funding being requested.

## **Report of Public Relations Subcommittee of the Minnesota Tourism Economic Recovery Commission**

I. Public relations strategies and activities can be an important element in increasing Minnesota's tourism — and, in turn, increasing jobs.

Current efforts are to be commended because of the budget and staffing limitations that constrain them. On the other hand, increased and improved public relations programs can be a major contributor to tourism growth. Creation of third-party endorsement (the media) can be highly effective in creating for Minnesota a favorable image among state, regional and national audiences.

Examples of opportunities.

A. Creating an increased awareness of Minnesota and what it offers:

1. Minnesota is a year-round tourism destination (and promotional efforts should be directed accordingly).
2. Recreational opportunities exist for year-round participant as well as spectator sports; scheduled events, including important local, regional, and state-wide programs, contests, and ethnic-heritage festivals are abundant.
3. Extensive art and cultural programs throughout the state, including theater, concerts, and museum presentations.
4. Minnesota offers opportunities for a variety of weekend vacations, extended vacations, or asides to convention attendance.
5. And, of primary importance, emphasis must be placed upon the advantages offered to Minnesota residents to vacation in Minnesota.

### **II. Elements of the Public Relations activity:**

An essential ingredient is creation of an enlarged News Bureau to publicize Minnesota tourism activities. This includes responding to and working with travel and outdoor writers,

photographers, and electronic media reporters. (Consider the fact that our current staffing is two persons who also have duties other than those of media support. Florida, for example, has a total of 79 people in its industry and tourism department, including a travel publicity chief, assistant chief, two secretaries, seven travel writers, an audiovisual person, a photo supervisor, four photographers, and two photo-librarians).

Specific programs that can be implemented include:

1. Increased coordination with carriers to bring travel and outdoor writers to Minnesota. This offers regional and national media coverage that can reach millions of potential visitors.
2. Using News Bureau-generated material to stimulate interest in well-known events such as winter Carnival or Aquatennial, as well as in local and regional activities. "Minnesota Has Something for You this Weekend" can become a theme directed toward encouraging residents to spend leisure time in Minnesota, as well as in attracting out-of-state visitors.
3. Available from local television stations is film and tape on Minnesota's cultural and sporting events. This can be developed into short features for use in-state as well as out, on stations donating air time.
4. Creating radio and television news items about upcoming events, for in-state and out-of-state distribution (on "free" air time).
5. Utilization of overseas sources including U.S. Travel Service Offices to spread the "Minnesota message." Consideration of an office in Europe (as many states now have).

## **Public Relations Task Force Members**

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# **Marketing Task Force**

## **Sales Promotion Sub-Committee**

**Objective:** To define the role of sales promotion in accomplishing an increase in tourism to and within Minnesota.

Sales promotion is a key element in the marketing process and the Minnesota Tourism Division has recognized the need for effective sales promotion in its budget request for fiscal year 1984-85. Critical to the success of the state's efforts in sales promotion, however, is the need to secure private sector commitments that will complement and expand the scope of promotional efforts undertaken on Minnesota's behalf. It is important to note that while the private sector has taken unilateral initiatives to promote Minnesota, apart from state funded efforts, a multilateral sales promotion plan coordinated by the tourism division is clearly preferable to the fragmentation currently being experienced. The key to launching the joint effort is approval of the tourism budget proposal. Without a commitment of State of Minnesota funds, there is no basis for the private sector to change the present course of highly individualized initiatives.

**Strategy:** To determine the programs possible within the budget constraints coupled with coordinated private sector spending.

A list of programs with which the subcommittee dealt, but by no means considered inclusive, is:

1. Use of 800 number for information and central booking agency.
2. Travel agents packets.
3. Familiarization tours.
4. Trade shows.
5. Contests
6. Labor Day to Memorial Day School Year
7. Film
8. Theater Presentation

### **1. Use of 800 Number and Centralized Reservation Concept.**

A good example of where the state, working with the private sector, could promote Minnesota more effectively is the 800-line centralized reservation concept (CRC). The tourism division's package tour brochure (introduced in 1981, expanded in 1982 and 1983) is assembled beautifully in its present state, but is very difficult for out of state travel agents to use effectively. The missing link is a vehicle to "close the sale." The majority of travel agents today are under the same profit squeeze experienced by the airline industry. The agent who would absorb the cost of a number of long distance calls to develop an itinerary and determine space availability for a Minnesota destined client is clearly in the minority in today's environment. The client, faced with a service charge to arrange his Minnesota vacation may be convinced to travel elsewhere out of frustration. The solution proposed is for the state to contract with a vendor who can perform the "one call does it all" concept. (The state would not want to operate CRC on its own.) The start up costs would require an up front capital commitment but clearly the objective would be for the concept to be self-liquidating. In essence, tourism components receiving revenue from the CRC would contribute a percentage of the revenue they received back to the state in the form of a user fee. The tourism components not receiving any direct benefits from the CRC would not participate in the costs of operation.

The CRC concept would be a major step in improving Minnesota's image with travel agents but there are additional promotional efforts required to retain a high profile in the marketplace for tourism to Minnesota.

### **2. Travel Agents Packets/Travel Brochures**

Production and distribution of a travel agent's packet on Minnesota featuring the tourism division's package tour brochure and promotional literature subsidized by the private sector would be another example of where the public and private sectors could work together more efficiently. One alternative available would be to produce a collection of feature articles written by travel writers who have "experienced" Minnesota. Production and printing costs could be offset by sale of advertising space to Minnesota-based concerns. This concept is not new by any means (other states have introduced similar publications) but it would be one more step launched on a "trade" level that could be expanded to a consumer level as Minnesota's overall tourism effort matured.

### **3. Familiarization Tours**

Bringing travel writers, editors, tour promoters and other travel industry people to Minnesota requires well-planned itineraries and programs set up for all geographical areas of the state which would demonstrate not only the physical beauty but also the arts and the history as well. These tours should be geared to all seasons of the year and should be carefully staged by travel industry and entertainment specialists. The implementation would include the participation of both the private and public sectors and should feature many of the same approaches used for trade shows and advertising. The more synergy that can be employed at all levels and all phases of the travel and tourism mission, the farther the dollars will go and the better the product. The same formats used for familiarization tours could also form the basis for educating and bringing more Minnesotans in closer contact with their state.

### **4. Trade Shows**

Using a similar approach to trade shows as was discussed in familiarization tours, there could be several possible formats established that would use the talents and energies of both the private and public sectors. Minnesota should have a presence at the National Tour Brokers Association, American Bus Association, The Canadian National Exposition and The 1984 World's Fair. Tour packages for the fair must be ready by September 1983. The theme, "Fresh Waters and Rivers — the Source of Life," is made to order for Minnesota.

The sport, vacation and travel shows are another opportunity for coordinated efforts by the regions, the Department of Natural Resources and our traveling troupe of tourism professionals.

Once again, the same programs and materials that are used for one facet of our tourism promotion should be applicable to as many other forms as possible.

### **5. Sales Contests and Incentives**

One of the methods for building excitement within the State of Minnesota is to hold tourism theme contests. Some examples would be:

- The best bumper sticker slogan for promoting Minnesota.
- The best children's essays on vacationing in Minnesota.
- State-wide fishing contest held throughout the year.

Contest awards could be Minnesota vacations, tickets or membership in the Zoo, arts presentations, tickets to sporting events.

In addition to contests, incentives through recognition could also be employed. For instance, awards by the Governor for travel agencies promoting Minnesota and for companies based in Minnesota that do an outstanding job promoting Minnesota to their employees.

There are firms that specialize in contests and incentives. Perhaps we could seek their counsel.

## **6. Labor Day to Memorial Day School Year**

Promote among school boards the benefits both to the state's economy through tourism and to education of a school year that runs from Labor Day to Memorial Day. In some school districts this would lengthen the vacation season by one month.

## **7. Minnesota Tourism Film**

The idea of using a professionally produced film as a tool in all areas of promotion is one that is consistently mentioned as a much needed aid. There is an excellent opportunity for private sector financial participation in this enterprise if it is structured properly. It is possible to promote both Minnesota and Minnesota companies in the same vehicle.

## **8. Functional Theater**

Theater designed to promote Minnesota could produce a selling aid of great flexibility which could be used on Familiarization Tours, trade shows and at special events. Once again this approach could allow participation by the private sector through sponsorship.

Of the themes most often mentioned by the committee when discussing the promotion of Minnesota tourism was the harnessing of business dollars through well-coordinated, mutually beneficial projects.

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# Marketing Task Force Conventions and Events

## Introduction:

The need for aggressive marketing of convention business to come to Minnesota, plus the many special events that take place in Minnesota, are an important part of the state's marketing of tourism.

The Marketing Task Force/Conventions and Events report is broken down into four sub-committee reports which are: Arts and Tourism Promotion; Bus Groups; Conventions and Events-Metro and Convention and Events-Outstate.

## Arts and Tourism Promotion Sub-Committee

I. The subcommittee on arts met in two separate sections during the last week of January 1983. The results were combined by the chairman. Committee members expressed that first priority should be given to endeavors which bring people into Minnesota for the first time. They noted that there are recommendations to improve Minnesota's resources, but that there are currently many quality attractions which are underutilized.

They stated that the role of the arts in tourism is to lure and to entertain. They noted that the quality and wide variety of cultural resources are able to attract the target market of people between the ages of 35 and 64 years of age and with household incomes of \$25,000 or more.

II. **Objective:** To entice more key decision makers to choose Minnesota as a convention site.

Issue a "gold card" to key decision makers from throughout the marketing region. This card would admit two people to any of the cultural organizations listed on it, encouraging them to familiarize themselves with the cultural attractions of the state while visiting for other business.

Let key decision makers know that a similar card could be issued to the conventioners. This card would offer discounts to various cultural attractions.

Place Minnesota ads which feature the quality and variety of Minnesota's cultural resources in the programs of regional arts events. For example, in the Chicago and LaCrosse Symphony programs, feature the musical attractions of Minnesota. In the theatre programs throughout the region, feature Minnesota's rich theatrical culture.

Offer aid in convention planning from someone familiar with the cultural attractions of Minnesota. This would include recommendations for outside activities, help in finding entertainment to bring in to the convention site and side trips for the spouses.

**Objective:** To entice the identified target group of tourists from outside of Minnesota to choose Minnesota as a vacation spot.

Integrate the cultural attractions of the state into the ads and other promotions for the state which will be used throughout the region.

Place more specific ads in the program brochures of cultural events throughout the region, as described above under the first objective.

Be aggressive in getting Minnesota features into airline magazines, AAA's magazine, women's magazines, etc.

**Objective:** To keep conventioners and tourists in Minnesota longer, spending more money. To entice Minnesotans to vacation in Minnesota.

Publicize a WATS number with tourist information and train staff to be knowledgeable about the cultural attractions of the state, as well as the hiking trails and fishing holes.

Be aggressive about integrating the state's cultural attractions and events into all publications for tourists. Be aggressive about integrating cultural events into the quarterly calendar and the regional calendars.

Help communities to promote themselves. Offer a conference or workshops on how to make the most of a community. Offer low interest loans to make the main street more appealing by tying it to ethnic or cultural heritage. Encourage imaginative endeavors such as Sauk Center holding a summer study session on Sinclair Lewis, or Walnut Gove holding special programs on Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Organize and promote "day trips" throughout Minnesota which take advantage of ethnic and cultural heritage.

Make spots for PSAs which feature various communities and their highlights.

Simultaneously encourage and take advantage of the flux of tourists in the state by holding more events by local, as well as the major metropolitan arts organizations, in the high traffic areas. For example, the Grand Rapids Showboat attracts 15,000 people over three weekends in July and tourists schedule their vacations around the Showboat season. For the last two years the west central town of Terrace, population 31, has sponsored the Minnesota Orchestra to play a single outdoor concert for a crowd of five thousand the first year and seven thousand the second. The department of tourism could specifically aid these efforts by offering stipends for rain insurance, publicity assistance, etc. Encourage greater use of the park system by having an artist, as well as a naturalist, in each park. Short classes could be offered to summer visitors. Artists, interns and art teachers could be employed at low cost to teach and organize the programs.

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# ***Marketing Task Force Conventions and Events Bus Sub-Committee Report***

## **Introduction**

Bus charter and tour business is an important element in Minnesota's Tourism Industry, despite inadequate recent efforts to attract motorcoach groups to the state.

The American Bus Association estimates that in 1981 bus passengers spent \$318 million dollars in Minnesota. It is also estimated that the average bus tour group spends \$3500 each day they spend in our state.

Motorcoach business is the fastest growing of all the travel industries, and is expected to continue to expand. The entire committee feels there is a tremendous potential to expand bus tour business by promoting Minnesota, both as a destination and as a pass through stop for national and regional tours.

The committee hopes that the same amount of effort that is expected to be spent attracting visitors by the car-load will be spent attracting them by the bus-load.

The goal of the committee was to develop a plan of action for Minnesota to create an environment conducive to increased bus business. The plan involves developing an advertising program, informational publications and a public relations campaign. It includes the following recommendations.

1. The state should launch a promotional campaign to attract tour business.
2. This marketing effort should be aimed at tour brokers, agents and operators.
3. The state should focus this campaign at the regional market, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, etc., before expanding into the national market. In addition, the state should not overlook the Canadian bus tour market.
4. The state should study ways to more effectively promote Minnesota as a gateway into Canada for tours originating in other states.
5. The state should get more involved, and just as importantly, encourage the private sector to get involved in the various motorcoach trade associations. They include the NTA (National Tour Association), ABA (American Bus Association) and the OMCA (Ontario Motorcoach Association). It is also recommended that the State make a strong bid to host the ABA and NTA national conventions.
6. The state should develop comprehensive information resource publications detailing Minnesota attractions, accommodations, restaurant stops, etc., to be distributed to tour brokers, agents and operators. (Michigan's guide is a fine example.)
7. A high priority should be given to better promote events that attract bus groups to the state. The state should try to get more events listed in the ABA's Hundred Most Popular Events in the U.S. and perhaps develop a guide for Minnesota events attractive to bus and charter groups.

The state needs a top-notch salesperson to take responsibility for this program. This person must develop a personal working relationship with key individuals in the bus tour business, both in Minnesota and at the national level.

In addition, he/she should coordinate and encourage Minnesota attractions, accommodations, restaurants, etc., to work together to promote Minnesota's bus tour industry.

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# **Marketing Task Force Conventions and Events Metro Sub-Committee Report**

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The convention industry in the Twin City Metro Area not only has a tremendous impact on the hospitality industry of the Twin Cities but plays an important role in the total economic picture for tourism in the State of Minnesota. Every national or regional convention that is held in the Metro Area not only brings new money into the Metro Area but has a residual effect by those delegates filtering throughout the state and into our resorts, campgrounds, restaurants, state tourism attractions, and practically all major communities within the state. The people from the five-state area that surround the Twin Cities most often will drive to the convention site and, therefore, are using facilities within our state for both arrival and departure. Most major national conventions that meet within the Twin City Area plan pre or post convention tours to our major resort destinations and not only leave fresh money in the Twin City Area but throughout the state. The Department of Tourism for the State of Minnesota has in the past supported us in our efforts to attract major national and regional convention business. Their support naturally has been limited by the funds available to them to inform our national convention customer of what is available for him in Minnesota for major national conventions. The Metro Area Committee feels that when funds are available the state must play an important role in de-mystifying the convention facilities available in Minnesota through a well thought out marketing plan to attract major national convention and group business to our state. To accomplish this goal our committee is recommending several plans of action.

**I.** In the new biennium tourism budget, a major effort is to be made by the state in a nationwide media campaign. It is the opinion of our committee that an appropriate amount of this advertising budget be directed to the promotion of convention and group business in an aggressive advertising campaign in National Trade Media publications. This type of an aggressive

campaign, media advertising and direct mail, can show immediate results for the dollars invested and put to rest for all-time the rumor that Minnesota is the nation's best kept secret for convention business. Our committee feels that the advertising agency must work directly with the cities within the state that have convention facilities for their input and guidance, but not necessarily limit the ad campaign to just those communities. Convention and group business is available to all Minnesota communities but a major thrust must be made to support the efforts of the communities capable of handling national convention business.

**II.** An organized state effort to work with those communities that are making a major promotional effort to attract a piece of convention business to its community that will have a major impact not only to that community but to the entire state. The Twin Cities were very deeply involved in the promotion of the two national political conventions for 1980, and it is our intention to extend bids to both conventions to host the 1988 meetings. To be successful in this effort, we need to pull in resources, both financial and organizational, beyond our present means and we would hope that in the state's marketing plan they will have provisions to offer those cities that are trying to attract this type of business this kind of support.

**III.** Minnesota has long been a leader in the national sports scene and major sports activities have been good to Minnesota in the national publicity that they have generated. We feel that within the state marketing plan there should be a special effort made to obtain for Minnesota such events as the Super Bowl. We also feel that with the facilities available in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, an Annual College Bowl Game could be generated, and the publicity from both a Super Bowl and Annual College Bowl Game would be one of the biggest tourism efforts in the middle of the winter that we could attract and would open up the entire state for many other winter sports during such events. The Twin Cities has also been asked to present a bid to hold the National Sports Festival in 1986, 1987 or 1988 and to consider the Winter Olympics. The National Sports Festival is two weeks long and covered by all national media but will take a great deal of promotion in making a successful bid and financial assistance in staging the event. These sporting attractions would not only be a shot in the arm to our tourism business, but with the national exposure we would be giving our facilities they would also give great support to our convention sales efforts.

**IV.** In promoting convention business for the State of Minnesota, exposure to our national customers is of the utmost importance. A national media and direct mail advertising campaign is one method to accomplish this, but another tool that our committee suggests using is that of hosting the trade associations that our customers belong to. In the summer of 1984 Minneapolis will play host to the American Society of Association Executives. This convention will bring major national association executives in North America to the Twin Cities. This venture is a first for Minnesota and is requiring a great effort by the private sector and the governmental sector in cooperation with all the Convention Bureaus in Minnesota.

It is our feeling that the state must be very deeply involved in this and that special funding for this event and future shows must be included in our total marketing. We feel that we should go after the Professional Convention Management Association,

the National Association of Exposition Managers, the Religious Convention Managers Association, Meeting Planner International, and also extend our efforts into the travel industry of America, American Bus Association and National Tour Brokers Association. By having these professional convention and travel meetings in our city it gives us a first-time opportunity to show our customer the great facilities and attractions our area has to offer its members and customers and is by far one of the most effective ways in selling our market place.

V. Our last suggestion is that the state develop a quality audio-visual presentation for the purpose of attracting group business into the state. This presentation should also be accompanied by the production of a state-wide convention brochure to be used as a promotion piece at special presentations throughout the country in conjunction with the audio-visual show, and also as response sheets to the media advertising campaign. We feel it is important that the State of Minnesota include in its marketing plan a travel budget that will enable it to travel in support of the above events with whatever city is making a presentation. This should be to all major industry related shows and to special travel or convention sales blitzes in major headquarter cities.

# **Marketing Task Force Conventions and Events — Out-State Sub-Committee Report**

## **Conventions and Events — Out-State Sub-Committee Report**

### **I. Introduction**

1. Out-state cities often market themselves to state organizations, some regional and a few national organizations. These cities provide inexpensive meeting facilities, personalized service and their community's commitment to a group when chosen as the convention site.

Many communities are now vying for this type of business because of its broad-based economic impact, downtown redevelopment possibilities, and easy access through existing attractions and people to get group business. Most are marketing towards state-wide organizations or a few obscure, but profitable national events/tournaments. Promoting additional group business to out-state communities should be the same for promoting group business to the state as a whole. The greatest aid to developing business in the out-state cities would be to increase the tourism professional staff with a convention sales/services staff person to help industry representatives research, cultivate, attract, promote and sell group business for the State of Minnesota.

### **II. Recommendations**

1. Tourism division to employ a professional staff person charged with the responsibility of group convention sales.

2. Establish a 'grant system' to encourage and financially support bidding and hosting highly visible national events and tournaments in Minnesota communities.

3. Encourage Motor Coach travel in the State by hosting the trade conventions of the American Bus Association and the National Tour Brokers Association.

4. Staff an information booth at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport to promote state sites. (More public/private partnership — Mutual of Omaha is willing to share its space with tourist organizations. They'll even have their staff trained to answer tourist inquiries.)

5. Strongly encourage publication of a statewide promotion booklet that would contain information regarding campgrounds, resorts, fishing and visitor attractions in the State as a whole, not broken out into separate directories.

6. Encourage increased cooperative advertising programs with banner advertisements, and supported by out-state communities and private sector facilities' advertisements.

7. Division to take memberships in national travel associations and participate in their trade shows with a booth, allowing the private sector to provide the personnel under the state's membership to promote Minnesota. These trade associations include: American Bus Association, National Tour Brokers Association, POW-HOW, National Travel Agents, and other international travel opportunities.

8. Establish a system to provide expertise and possible financial support to smaller communities that host national events or conventions.

### **III. Additional Recommendations**

We feel these additional points should be made to this task force for consideration:

1. Strongly encourage state government personnel to invite their national association to meet in the State of Minnesota.

2. Encourage Minnesota's private sector to hold its corporate meetings in the State.

3. Most out-state cities market to state organizations. We strongly encourage the majority, if not all of the State's advertising

program, should be geared to attractions of the out-of-state market, leaving it up to the private sector and local communities to nurture tourism and convention sales in state.

4. Some emphasis should be placed in the Canadian market because of its broadbased benefit to Northern communities.

5. Funding for establishing major attractions, festivals, and hosting national events should be made available on a one time, matching basis, to spur development of these attractions in our State.

6. Cultivation of the international market should be by establishing fly and drive programs to tourists.

### **IV. Summary**

Communities in out-state Minnesota believe we should act as resource and manpower personnel to support the effort of the state's promotion. We can attend trade shows, produce blitzes, make bids, rally our properties and attractions for matching funding as well as mobilize our communities. We do not believe there is a 'one time program' or single attractive advertising campaign to solve the problems of our out-state tourism community. With ongoing professional staff attention, mixed with private sector follow-up into several markets, we believe it'll prove beneficial over the long run for everyone involved.

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