

Tourism Program Strategy Summary

Post: Atlanta

Territory Covered: Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands

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- Major opportunities and challenges: With burgeoning population growth in younger age groups, and the luxury of excellent direct air service to Eastern Canada, Florida represents the greatest potential for leisure traffic. Similarly, as one of the largest net gainers of Fortune 500 companies moving into the state, Georgia remains the focus of MC & IT potential. Overall, the southeast is home to 32 of the largest industrial Fortune 500 companies.

- Potential for market growth: With American Airlines non-stop Nashville-Toronto service, Tennessee should provide more fly-drive business to Ontario and points beyond. There are more motorcoach Tour Operators active to Canada from North Carolina than from any other state in the southeast. Overall, there is excellent potential for outdoor/adventure traffic from the SEUS with 65 outdoor clubs and some 30 outdoor shows annually. In addition to the strong corporate meetings market, there is excellent association market potential to be found in the Research Triangle area out of Raleigh/Durham, N.C. and growing incentive potential in Jacksonville, Florida. Putting aside speculation about the effects of dramatic detente on the U.S. defense budget, the SEUS is home to a dozen major military communities providing a ready-made market segment with the disposable income, interest and predisposition to travel.

- Specific strengths and limitations including brief competitive analysis: Despite Canada's continuing appeal as a Spring/Summer/Fall destination which represents a retreat from the heat, and despite non-stop air service from Florida and Tennessee, Canada is still largely inaccessible by air and suffers from lack of awareness due to a dearth of consumer advertising throughout the SEUS. Excellent air connections to Europe and the Caribbean backed by strong advertising and promotional campaigns will continue to hive off Canada's market share.