



## THIS SPRING IN AMERICAN TOURISM April, May and June 2009

### NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ROUND-UP:

Continuing through the spring, travel consumers were more and more discerning with their discretionary dollars, scouring the Web for the best deals and waiting longer to book. Previously, hotels across the country were accustomed to a hotel booking window of weeks or more. Now consumers expecting prices to drop lower are waiting mere days to book a stay. As the booking window contracts, hotels find themselves in a cat-and-mouse game: Either risk a significant supply of unoccupied rooms or drastically lower rates on a slew of online discount sites. This trend demonstrates how customer expectations are self-fulfilling, as hotels are rewarding the sentiment that if you wait, you will find a better price. Like GPTMC, several destination marketing organizations (DMOs) nationwide debuted campaigns this spring to highlight the variety of attractions visitors can experience in their destinations. With economic times as tough as they are, DMOs left no market segment untapped, introducing versatile campaigns designed to inspire many different kinds of travelers to take a trip. Click on the following links for a few examples:

- A Detroit Free-Press [article](#) celebrated *Forbes* magazine's ranking of Michigan's \$26 million *Pure Michigan* campaign as one of the Top 10 tourism marketing campaigns of all time.
- A Maryland Gazette [article](#) described Baltimore's new \$400,000 *Waterfront Invasion* campaign.
- A [press release](#) illustrated Virginia's *Live Passionately* campaign, built on the equity Virginia has acquired over the years with the *Virginia is for Lovers* tagline.
- A [press release](#) described the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism's campaign using animation to showcase both urban and regional attractions in a thirty-second television spot.
- A [press release](#) announced NYC and Company's *NYC: The Real Deal* promotion, offering a variety of buy one, get the second 50% off discounts on hotels and attractions.

### TOURISM MARKETING FUNDING FOR OTHER DESTINATIONS:

State budgets, charitable foundation budgets and hotel occupancy tax revenues are at their lowest levels in years. This fact doesn't bode well for tourism marketing funding. Meanwhile, DMOs continue to make a persuasive case for tourism marketing investment since those that undergo the least severe cuts now will be better positioned to capitalize when the economy recovers.

- A [pressofatlanticcity.com article](#) lamented Governor Corzine's proposed \$2.5 million cut to New Jersey's investment in tourism marketing.
- A National Public Radio [segment](#) documented the potential reallocation of the Cleveland DMO's primary funding stream.
- A Hartford Courant [article](#) described Governor Rendell's plan to phase out Connecticut's regional tourism districts.
- A St. Petersburg Times [article](#) covered the \$10.5 million cut to Visit Florida's budget.

## THIS SEASON in Philadelphia and the Countryside®

### Situation Analysis:

“Of course, there will be winners and losers. ... Those destinations favored by close proximity to major population centers, adept at understanding the consumer, and having the wherewithal to market and promote effectively could well outperform the overall market.”

- Dr. Suzanne Cook, U.S. Travel Association

Despite these challenging times, GPTMC continues to promote Greater Philadelphia as a premier destination. Philadelphia’s tourism industry is better positioned than some due to our diversity of experiences and price points, as well as the region’s accessibility. In 2008, 72% of visitors to Philadelphia arrived by car. This statistic isn’t surprising given that one-quarter of the U.S. population is within a half-day’s drive. According to Tourism Economics, rural vehicle miles, a key indicator of non-local auto travel, increased by 2% in April, the first monthly year-over-year increase in the past 12 months. While rural vehicle miles saw the first monthly increase in the last 12 months, Amtrak ridership and domestic plane trips continued to decrease. The apparent shift in transportation habits towards driving is a positive trend for Philadelphia, a premium destination ready to replace a more expensive trip for visitors originating from the New York, Washington, DC and Baltimore areas.

### With Love, Philadelphia XOXO™:

On May 12, GPTMC launched [With Love, Philadelphia XOXO™](#) to boost leisure visitation and overnight hotel stays in Philadelphia. The versatile, multi-year campaign speaks to many different audiences through love letters penned by the city itself. Guided by the knowledge that it’s easier to encourage a visit the closer the potential visitor, GPTMC is concentrating media dollars on 18 counties in the Philadelphia designated marketing area (DMA) and radiating outwards to 10 counties in the Harrisburg DMA and 13 counties in the New York City/northern New Jersey DMA. As part of GPTMC’s recessionary strategy, the 54 advertising executions speak to a variety of high-yield trip types that we believe will continue to travel despite tough economic times: families educating children, travelers visiting friends and relatives, affluent travelers, GLBT travelers, festival- and event-goers, weekend getaway travelers, loyal returning visitors and younger, tech-savvy African-Americans.

### Exhibitions and Launches:

*Cézanne and Beyond*, a one-time, Philadelphia-only exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, ran February 26 through May 31 and was a major attraction for visitors this spring. The exhibition featured masterworks by Cézanne and a multitude of subsequent artists who considered him a primary influence. [gophila.com/cezanne](http://gophila.com/cezanne) was constructed to encourage visitors to see the exhibition, experience French Philadelphia and stay overnight in a hotel. *Cézanne and Beyond* drew 220,137 people to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

*Galileo, the Medici and the Age of Astronomy*, a one-time, Philadelphia-only exhibition at The Franklin Institute, began April 4 and runs through September 7. Celebrating the 400 year anniversary of Galileo’s astronomical discoveries, the exhibition features one of Galileo’s original telescopes on loan from the Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza in Florence, Italy. At [gophila.com/galileo](http://gophila.com/galileo), visitors can peruse an interactive gallery and timeline of Galileo’s contributions to science. To date, 85,000 people have visited The Franklin Institute to see the exhibition.

*Audacious Freedom*, a new permanent exhibition at The African American Museum in Philadelphia, opened in June. It chronicles the many contributions of African-Americans to the history of our nation's first 100 years (1776-1876). GPTMC is promoting *Audacious Freedom* as the anchor stop among Pennsylvania's Quest for Freedom sites online at [gophila.com/questforfreedom](http://gophila.com/questforfreedom) and through our *Quest for Freedom: Philadelphia* brochure.

The second annual *Roots Picnic* on June 6 at Penn's Landing featured a stellar lineup of talent, including TV on the Radio, The Black Keys, Santigold, Public Enemy and The Roots. Philadelphia's own The Roots performed two sets of their high-energy sound to the more than 7,000 people who purchased advance tickets for \$47.50. The hometown heroes serve as honorary creative ambassadors for GPTMC's *Philly 360°* program that aims to attract younger, tech-savvy African-Americans to Philadelphia. At the day-long concert, GPTMC introduced *Philly 360°: The Book* filled with creative ambassadors' inside scoop on Philadelphia's unofficial cultural scene, nightlife, music, history, food and more. *The Roots Picnic* resulted in a notable amount of positive press, including coverage on major blogs such as Jaunted, Village Voice, *Rolling Stone's Rock Daily*, Maxim Music and Blender. In June alone, there were 13 blog hits covering *The Roots Picnic* on sites that collectively had site visitation of more than five million unique visitors. (Source: Quantcast)

### **Parking Wars:**

With the third season of A&E's *Parking Wars* premiering soon, the media has focused its attention on the issue of parking in Philadelphia. GPTMC is working together with the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) to make parking as visitor-friendly as possible. In the spring, GPTMC provided assistance to the PPA in the production of their parking brochure and facilitated the distribution of the brochure to high-traffic visitor locations throughout the city. In addition, GPTMC created two new Web pages: [gophila.com/parking](http://gophila.com/parking) and [gophila.com/parkingdeals](http://gophila.com/parkingdeals) feature all the information a visitor might need to come to Philadelphia, park, explore the city and stay in a hotel. Coming soon, GPTMC will be producing a series of fun, tongue-in-cheek webisodes, tentatively titled *Parking Peace*. The purpose of these webisodes will be to illuminate the hard-to-comprehend quirks of parking in Philadelphia for visitors and residents alike. Look for them on [gophila.com/parking](http://gophila.com/parking) soon!

### **Twitter and Facebook:**

GPTMC was an early adopter of Twitter, a free online social messaging tool. We communicate with potential travelers, local residents, news media, bloggers and stakeholders through the exchange of 140-character updates. GPTMC runs three Twitter accounts: Our @visitphilly account has 3,000+ "followers", our @uwishunu account 1,700, and our @philly360 account 450+. Every time we update, or "tweet," we get our Philadelphia messages out there to those followers who can then "re-tweet" them to their followers. In the spring, @visitphilly was ranked among the 15 highest performing DMO usernames on Twitter. Sign up and follow us at [twitter.com/visitphilly](https://twitter.com/visitphilly) today!

On June 12, GPTMC launched a Facebook fan page, [facebook.com/visitphilly](https://facebook.com/visitphilly), and to date has approximately 3,000 fans. The page features an interactive wall, discussion forums, photo albums and links to [gophila.com](http://gophila.com) and [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com). Updated daily with fresh content, the page enables GPTMC's social media staff to listen, interact and respond to consumers with up-to-date information. We expect the page will continue to be a valuable means of staying in touch with potential visitors accustomed to having insider information at their fingertips.

**Major Media Placements:**

In the months of April, May and June, GPTMC placed 991 Philadelphia stories, reaching millions of potential visitors. Three major hits GPTMC played a role in placing were: “[36 Hours in Philadelphia](#)” in the May 9 edition of *The New York Times* that heralded Philadelphia’s evolution from a day trip into an overnight destination; “[25 Reasons We Love Philadelphia](#)” in the April edition of the national magazine *Budget Travel*; and “The Nation Celebrates its Birthday in Philly” in the June 28 edition of *El Nuevo Herald*, the primary Spanish daily in south Florida. As always, GPTMC regularly hosts journalists individually and in groups. In the months of April, May and June, GPTMC hosted 40 journalists, many of whom wrote articles as a direct result of their trip.

**Media Resources:**

Ever notice the beautiful shots of Philadelphia during an Eagles game or a Travel Channel show? Frequently, GPTMC provides background footage (b-roll) to media outlets for these types of broadcasts. GPTMC just completed building an extensive high-definition video library. We partnered with the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau, Select Greater Philadelphia, Comcast and Liberty Property Trust on the project. Footage is available in several formats for broadcast and cable media, for news and features and for use in dozens of other applications by stakeholders and visitors.