

# RED EMERALD RESILIENCE TRAINING PROGRAM



UTAH OFFICE OF TOURISM | INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM

## TAKEAWAYS AND RESOURCES

### SESSION 3: HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE RETURN OF INTERNATIONAL GUESTS AND VISITORS

#### PANELISTS

- Rachel Bremer, Tourism Director of Global Markets, [Utah Office of Tourism](#)
- Lance Syrett, Resort Level Hotel General Manager, [Ruby's Inn](#)
- Raelene Davis, Vice President of Marketing & Operations, [Ski Utah](#)

WATCH THE FULL SESSION

HIGHLIGHT REEL (COMING SOON)

#### WHY SHOULD WE BE THINKING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL VISITORS?

- International tourism was a critical segment of Utah's economy pre-COVID-19. Marketing to domestic travelers was the norm over the last two years and was successful for many businesses. There are displaced customers out there who once the world opens up, may not come back.
- This is a proven market, and international visitors are starting to return.
- Internationals are high spend/high-value visitors with longer lengths of stay on average. Belgium visitors tend to stay 6 - 7 nights in Utah, and Australians stay 7 - 8 nights. Most international skiers stay 7 - 14 nights, ski for 10 days, and spend upwards of \$350 per day.
- Marketing to the international visitor is a long-term commitment. Utah's Office of Tourism shared Utah's story with international partners throughout the pandemic. With sales missions to the UK, France, and Germany in 2022 and wholesalers booking for 2023, pre-pandemic visitation is expected to be surpassed by 2024 in most markets.

#### HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO RETURN?

- Utah has many unique experiences cultivated over time. With pent-up demand and money saved, internationals are willing to spend a little more on an extra night, fine dining, local guides and outfit experiences.

- Internationals are excited to return to the U.S. and are looking for "bucket list," life-changing experiences.
- When planning itineraries, think about what else can be added to make our attractions even better. Make sure those packages are in tour operators' brochures.
- Utah's ski and national park package is something that no one else can provide.

#### WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO BE READY TO WELCOME THEM?

- Remember the tools we've used for years that provide a welcoming atmosphere:
  - Reconnect with prior international relationships.
  - Dust off or bring out new international signage
  - Hire staff with multi-lingual skills
  - Speak slower and succinctly, not louder, and refrain from using jargon
- Remember the cultural nuances of certain visitors to make them feel more comfortable, like:
  - Asking European visitors if they would like ice in their drink or not
  - Training wait staff on standard tipping processes and including this in menus
  - Supporting small sustainable practices like avoiding plastic cutlery and styrofoam in to-go boxes
  - Avoiding hidden costs when packaging things together



- Prepare to upsell an extra room night or guided experience. Your services are worth the money.

## WHAT ROLE DO INTERNATIONAL WORKERS PLAY IN UTAH'S TOURISM ECONOMY?

- The ski industry and many businesses in gateway communities rely heavily on internationals during peak seasons through the [Exchange Visitor J-1 Visa program](#).
- These workers (college students) make great employees who bring an international flair to your property. They provide the languages and cultural knowledge during their stay and act as ambassadors when they return home.
- Businesses can leverage growth using international programs including supporting year-round jobs.

## HOW WILL THE NEW SALT LAKE CITY AIRPORT AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AFFECT THE RETURN OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS?

- The new Salt Lake City airport puts Utah on the map as a major international hub, with international flights expected to increase exponentially in the next 5 years.
- New direct flights into SLC start in May 2022 from Frankfurt (with new Eurowings Discover - Lufthansa), London, Toronto, and Seoul (coming soon).
- New direct flight marketing can support travel for leisure, business, and entrepreneurship.
- Having international events creates positive visibility for Utah as a destination, such as:
  - World Ironman Competition in St. George
  - NBA All-star Game in Salt Lake City
  - Possible Olympic Games in 2030 or 2034
  - Outdoor Retailer Show in Salt Lake City, June 2022
  - Sundance Film Festival
- This is a perfect time to build international itineraries for Utah's northern regions.

## HOW CAN COUNTY TOURISM OFFICES PREPARE FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS?

- [Utah's Office of Tourism](#) (UOT) can help with marketing opportunities, international business questions, and contact needs, as well as supporting regional partnerships and figuring out where it makes sense to put your energy with webinars and trade shows.
- Tour operators are looking for authentic, locally-cultivated products and services to sell. Opportunities exist even for the smallest tour operator to get into international business.
- Business models have changed since COVID-19 with labor and upgraded technology. International contacts are easy to set up online with very little maintenance.
- Everyone should attend the [Utah Tourism Conference](#) to meet the international reps and share what your company and community can offer. (Vernal, UT, Sep 27-30, 2022).

## RESOURCES FOR MARKET INSIGHTS

- [Utah's Office of Tourism](#) and [US Commercial Service](#) co-hosted several Market Insights Webinars for specific core markets. Hear about trends, and how to work with and welcome visitors from these countries back to Utah:
  - [Australia](#)
  - [Canada](#)
  - [China](#)
  - [France](#)
  - [Germany](#)
  - [India](#)
  - [UK/Ireland](#)

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