



Trade Show Report

US Travel Association, IPW – Denver CO

May 19 – 23, 2018

Montana Representation:

- Glacier Country Tourism - Debbie Picard
- Destination Missoula – Kara Bartlett
- MOTBD – Marlee Iverson
- MOTBD – Kim Birrell
- Helena TBID – Andrea Opitz
- Southeast Montana – Brenda Maas
- Billings CVB/TBID – Stefan Cattrin
- Bozeman Chamber – Dan Martin
- Town Pump Hotel Group – Paula Raurk
- West Yellowstone – Wendy Swenson
- Butte CVB – Maria Pochervina
- Big Sky Chamber – Candace Carr Strauss

Additional Representation with:

- Rocky Mountain International

Overview:

- More than 6,800 total delegates attended IPW including 1,200 buyers from more than 70+ countries and 500+ journalists. IPW is expected to generate more than \$4.7 billion in future travel to the US.
- MOTBD purchased three booth spaces and the Montana delegates shared in approximately 125 appointments with international tour operators and additional meetings with journalists for 20-minute appointments over 3 days. We added 16 new operators our database.
- The Montana booth was very busy again this year with three sets of back to back appointments throughout the 3 days. International travel to the US is down over last year however bookings to the Great American West region are up. The major cities are taking the hit from the slight decline in international bookings. The Brand USA campaign has been a huge success marketing the U.S. to the rest of the world as a travel destination.
- International operators from the traditional markets (European and Australia) are very familiar with Montana and were either offering product or looking for more information to add product to their current inventory. Most of our new operators



were from emerging markets such as Brazil, Japan and China and they were looking for information on the region. Montana is becoming more recognizable as a stand-alone destination along with the Great American West Region. It is considered a unique destination for most international travelers and the mystery intrigues them. It offers an authentic experience that travelers are looking for. Yellowstone National Park continues to be more well-known than Glacier National Park. However, US national parks are a desirable destination for the international traveler.

- RMI hosted an evening cocktail hour “Buckle Club” party and invited those operators that had been to IRU in the past and had received a buckle. As a marketing partner, Glacier Country participated as an event sponsor. There are many parties that the operators are invited to on this evening. We appreciate when they choose to come spend time with us in the Great American West region. This is always a great opportunity to get to know them better and see them in a more relaxed setting.
- There were several other networking lunches and evening events that provided opportunities to meet and discuss Montana attributes to international tour operators as well.
- There is no other travel trade show that can connect Glacier Country to the reach of international travelers like IPW does. I highly recommend we keep this show in our budget for 2019 and beyond.
- The next IPW is scheduled to take place in Anaheim CA, May 31 – June 6, 2019.