

# CONNECTICUT

## Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism Tourism Moving Forward November 2009

The recently passed State of Connecticut budget allocates one dollar (\$1.00) for FY10 and FY11 to the Statewide Marketing Fund for tourism marketing, down from \$4.2 million. The Statewide Marketing Fund is the Commission on Culture & Tourism's (CCT) multi-faceted account for tourism that includes all advertising, marketing, public relations and direct sales efforts, among other outreach efforts.

These are challenging economic times for all, including Connecticut's travel and tourism industry. As a result, a new model is needed on the State level to promote Connecticut's destinations, attractions, lodging and tourism services. The State's role in tourism marketing is to provide leadership as the statewide marketing umbrella to reach as many target-market travelers as possible with a broad branded message. The Commission on Culture & Tourism focuses on marketing efforts that tourism districts and tourism industry members cannot do alone as efficiently.

The Commission is committed to taking on this new budget challenge by maintaining tourism foundation program elements, creating cooperative partnering opportunities, and discontinuing marketing elements, while worthwhile, are no longer affordable. CCT staff will provide strategic guidance and coordination driven by the needs of the industry and major consumer motivators. State sustaining funds will be essential to support CCT's tourism foundation program elements.

### CCT Moving Forward

- In-house priorities
  - Responsible for maintaining foundation programs: Official state tourism website, welcome centers, toll free information lines, public relations.
  - Industry outreach, workshops & provide consulting services
  - Revise Tourism Strategic Marketing Plan to reflect new funding limitations & model
    - Evaluate all previous strategies
  - Create, coordinate & promote cooperative efforts
- Begin discussions to build Connecticut's Brand Image
- Retool State's official tourism website [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com) and Connecticut Tourism consumer e-newsletter with expanded industry partnering opportunities
- Replace the Connecticut Vacation Guide and seasonal Culture & Special Events Calendars with a 100% advertising supported magazine-style lure piece that will be inserted into newspapers (FSI)
- Official Connecticut Welcome Centers remain open in Darien, Westbrook, North Stonington and West Willington
- Toll free 888-CTvisit line answered by staff travel counselors during normal business hours
- [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com) primary source of travel information featuring attraction, lodging, special events and other visitor listings and social networking interfaces
- Limited consumer public relations outreach
- Revamp the Connecticut Ambassador program for residents to make it a no cost advocacy promotion
- Discover New England (DNE), international marketing consortium

## **CCT Suspends**

- All national and instate advertising campaigns including Greater Metro NY & NJ
- Traditional Connecticut Vacation Guides
- Connecticut Culture & Special Events Calendars
- Mailing Vacation Guides, maps, special events and brochures
- Official Connecticut Welcome Centers in Danbury and Greenwich closed temporarily
- Connecticut Welcome Centers Literature Distribution program for constituents; direct delivery option still available
- National and In-state public relations campaigns
- National & International direct sales program targeting tour operators, travel trade and meetings/conference planners
- Market research
- Memberships in travel trade associations
- International advertising

## **Potential Co-ops Moving Forward**

- Advertising in Connecticut Official Tourism E-Newsletter (550,000+ consumers monthly)
- Connecticut Official Tourism Website [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com) advertising & affiliate partnerships
- Advertising Co-ops (spring/summer & fall)
  - New magazine-style free standing insert
  - Online lead generation campaign
  - Out-of-home billboards
- Sponsorship of Official State Tourism Map
- Welcome Centers
  - Adopt-A-Center sponsorships
  - Fees for premium rack space to brochure distributors
  - Display advertising
- Media familiarization tours hosting opportunities
- Annual Connecticut Open House Day sponsorship
- Research
  - Economic Impact Study of Connecticut's Travel & Tourism Industry
  - VISION Syndicated Intercept Study

For further information or comment, contact:

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[www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com) (consumer)

[www.cultureandtourism.gov](http://www.cultureandtourism.gov) (b2b)