

Lee VCB Launches Team Tourism Program

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Lee VCB launches new Team Tourism program, unveils leadership platform

LEE COUNTY, FL-The Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) launched its new Team Tourism program and unveiled a new leadership platform for the organization during today's "Team Tourism Summit" at Sanibel Harbour Resort & Spa.

The new Team Tourism initiative is a year-round informational program to bring together the VCB staff, industry partners and community leaders for two purposes: 1) to strengthen teamwork throughout the destination, and 2) to empower travel industry leaders to maximize marketing opportunities available to them.

"To succeed in today's exceedingly competitive marketplace, we need a renewed emphasis on teamwork," said VCB executive director Suya Davenport. "Breaking down silos, pooling our resources and strengthening our collaborative efforts across the destination will help our marketing outreach sing with one voice and achieve maximum efficiencies. That's what Team Tourism is all about."

The program expands upon educational workshops that the VCB rolled out earlier this year and were met with resounding industry accolades. The presentations addressed how to participate in Florida's certified green lodging program, secrets of effective vacation packaging, guidelines and tips for successful cooperative marketing and other topics.

Given the success of these previously held programs, the VCB plans to continue quarterly Team Tourism programming on a variety of topics to help tourism industry partners increase their marketing effectiveness. Whatever the topic, Davenport says Team Tourism will provide increased information from expert sources – all to make the day-to-day jobs of industry marketers more productive.

The next Team Tourism program is scheduled for Jan. 21, 2009, when the VCB will present a workshop to discuss the destination brand and how industry partners can piggyback their efforts onto the VCB's for greater collaborative marketing outreach to target audiences. Future programs will follow later next year.

Team Tourism also is an outgrowth of the VCB's new leadership platform, which Davenport simultaneously unveiled during today's Summit. The platform stresses a collaborative style that unites diverse constituents that is based on two simple cornerstones – teamwork and a customer-centric

approach.

"Our renewed emphasis on these two basic principles will help us maintain the destination's well-earned reputation for long-range vision, strategic thinking and innovative leadership," said Davenport. "Our destination is facing challenges from shifts in supply and demand and room inventory as well as the tight economy and increased competition. That means we have to be more customer-centric than ever before to win our share of visitors, and it means we need to work together at new levels."

Davenport added that unveiling the new Team Tourism program caused the VCB to change the format for its annual meeting. The brand new format – a full day of expert speakers and workshops – adds an educational component to the VCB's traditional approach to this event. It allows for sharing the latest travel industry developments from renowned experts while simultaneously providing a platform for introducing the VCB's annual marketing plan.

Davenport invites input on potential speakers and topics for future Team Tourism programs from members of the area's tourism community. Suggestions can be sent to sdavenport@leegov.com or (800) 237-6444.

For details and a summary of the Team Tourism Summit presentations, visit www.leevcb.com.

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