



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

AOT invites you to submit nominations for the 2012 Governor's Tourism Awards in celebration of the great achievements that occur throughout the Arizona tourism industry!

From impactful cooperative marketing projects to valuable tourism champions, astounding work is continually conducted by our industry to promote the Grand Canyon State. The Governor's Tourism Awards is a wonderful way to recognize these efforts.

Please note that we have a revised timeline this year, so don't miss your chance to nominate an individual or organization you feel deserves one of these distinguished awards! We are accepting nominations until **Friday, April 6**. More information can be found in the **AOT News** section below.

Have a great week!

Sherry Henry
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News

AOT Now Accepting Nominations for the 2012 Governor's Tourism Awards!

The Arizona Office of Tourism and industry partners are busy coordinating plans for the 2012 Governor's Conference on Tourism, July 11-13, at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix. The conference is the premier event for members of the travel industry to participate in dynamic work sessions and listen to informative guest speakers.

In addition to the conference, AOT coordinates the Governor's Tourism Awards, honoring individuals and organizations that have contributed noteworthy achievements over the past year to the betterment of the tourism industry. These award recipients are excellent examples of leadership, commitment and teamwork that make the Grand Canyon State a premier travel destination.

AOT invites you to review the 2012 award categories and guidelines and submit nominations of individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to the tourism industry. The winners will be awarded at the Governor's Tourism Awards Dinner Gala on Thursday, July 12. All submissions must be received by **5:00 p.m.** on **April 26**. Look for future editions of ***AOT in Action*** for Governor's Conference on Tourism registration information!

Learn How to Develop Unique Marketing Strategies through AOT's New Workshop Series

Struggling with your attraction's marketing efforts? Join us for AOT's next Arizona Tourism University workshop series and learn ***How to Creatively Market Your Destination's Culture and Charisma***. This informative workshop will focus on how to develop destination marketing plans and creatively reach your region's target demographic.

Independent marketing consultant, Susan Sternitzke of the [LimeLight Creative Group](#), will present the workshop material, provide examples of creative campaigns and facilitate an interactive session to develop ideas and strategies for attendees' destinations. Prior to her consultation work, Susan led the marketing initiatives for the Yuma Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn how to develop creative and unique marketing plans for your destination!

Be sure to review the complete [FY12 ATU schedule](#) for information on future ATU workshops.

All workshops are complimentary!

March 21

[Camp Verde Town Hall](#)

Room 206/207

395 S Main Street

Camp Verde, AZ

March 28

[La Hacienda de Sonoita](#)

34 Swanson Road

Sonoita, AZ

March 30

Webinar

To register for the workshops, please visit the link below.

<http://www.azot.gov/marketing-programs/arizona-tourism-university/workshop-registration>

For more information, contact Glenn Schlottman, Community Relations Manager, 602-364-3727 or via email at gschlottman@azot.gov.

New Update to AOT's Research Web site!

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- Airport Passenger Traffic December 2011
- Bed Tax Rates March 2012
- Gross Sales & Tourism Taxes December 2011
- County Lodging January 2012
- National, Regional, Arizona Lodging January 2012
- National Park Visitation January 2012
- State Park Visitation December 2011

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at melkins@azot.gov.

Upcoming Events & Activities

AZAP FAM Tour

Date: April 10-15

Location: TBA

New York Media Mission

Date: April 16 – 20

Location: New York City, NY

US Travel Association's International Pow Wow

Date: April 21 – 25

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Industry News

Congratulations Debbie Johnson being Among Valley's Most Admired CEOs!

VH&RA President & CEO, Debbie Johnson, has been selected as one of the Valley's Most Admired CEOs and will be honored at a special dinner event and featured in the Phoenix Business Journal. Debbie and 24 other leaders across the Valley were selected by the Phoenix Business Journal's news team for their leadership, dedication and impact on their organization and our community. She will be recognized at a special dinner on Tuesday, April 10 at the

Montelucia Resort & Spa and will be featured in a special section of the April 13 issue of the paper.

Airport Security Heads List of Biz Traveler Pet Peeves

The most important air travel "extras" include more legroom on airplanes and avoiding the middle seat, concludes Expedia's 2012 Business Travel Report. Among findings:

- To improve their air travel experience, corporate travelers cited more leg-room, avoiding the middle seat and moving to the front of the security line as the most desirable items.
- The most common tactic to avoid in-flight conversations: read a book or magazine.
- Almost half or 48% of biz travelers condense their travel time into a single day to avoid hotel charges.
- When asked what standard amenities they wanted, travelers wanted mobile/MP3/computer chargers (59%) most, followed by toothpaste (50%), voltage converters (44%) and slippers (32%).
- Asked about little luxuries they wanted, respondents cited the use of the swimming pool as well as the spa and fitness center.
- Respondents said their pet peeves about travel cited airport security restrictions and procedures (60%) as the No. one item, followed by time away from home and family (48%) and filing expense reports afterwards (28%).

The report also found that half or 50% of business travelers take time to sightsee when they travel. (*Travel Mole, February 28*)

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index® Increases

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index®, which had decreased in January, increased in February. The Index now stands at 70.8 (1985=100), up from 61.5 in January. The Present Situation Index increased to 45.0 from 38.8. The Expectations Index rose to 88.0 from 76.7 in January.

The monthly Consumer Confidence Survey®, based on a probability-design random sample, is conducted for The Conference Board by Nielsen, a leading global provider of information and analytics around what consumers buy and watch. The cutoff date for the preliminary results was February 15.

Says Lynn Franco, Director of The Conference Board Consumer Research Center: "Consumer Confidence, which had declined last month, posted a sizeable improvement in February. The Index is now close to levels last seen a year ago (Feb. 2011, 72.0.). Consumers are considerably less pessimistic about current business and labor market conditions than they were in January. And, despite further increases in gas prices, they are more optimistic about the short-term outlook for the economy, job prospects, and their financial situation. "

Consumers' assessment of current conditions was more favorable in February. Those claiming business conditions are "good" increased slightly to 13.3 percent from 13.2 percent, while those claiming business conditions are "bad" decreased to 31.2 percent from 38.3 percent. Consumers' appraisal of the labor market was also less pessimistic. Those stating jobs are "plentiful" increased to 6.6 percent from 6.2 percent, while those saying jobs are "hard to get" decreased to 38.7 percent from 43.3 percent.

Consumers were more optimistic about the short-term outlook than they were last month. The proportion of consumers expecting business conditions to improve over the next six months increased to 18.7 percent from 16.7 percent, while those anticipating business conditions will worsen decreased to 11.8 percent from 14.6 percent. Consumers' outlook for the labor market was also more upbeat. Those anticipating more jobs in the months ahead increased to 18.7 percent from 16.4 percent, while those anticipating fewer jobs declined to 16.9 percent from 19.1 percent. The proportion of consumers expecting an increase in their incomes improved to 15.4 percent from 13.8 percent. (*The Conference Board, February 28*)

PhoCusWright: 10 trends that will shape 2012

The evolution of technology, the fluctuating economy, as well as many other factors have played significant roles in hotel industry performance in recent years. During a webinar titled "PhoCusWright's Hot Topics 2012," PhoCusWright analysts weighed in on 10 topics and trends that will shape the travel landscape this year.

- Consumer sentiment
- Social media
- Capital
- Emerging markets
- Marketplace maturity
- Supplier vs. OTA
- Travel agents
- Search
- Flash sales
- Mobile

Be sure to read the [article in its entirety](#). (*HotelNewsNow.com, February 29*)

IATA Reports Global Air Passenger Traffic Keeps Growing

Airline passenger traffic keeps going up, according to the latest figures from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). IATA's global traffic results for January show a 5.7 percent rise in passenger demand but an 8 percent decline in air freight compared to the same month in 2011. The occurrence of Chinese New Year in January (rather than in February as in 2011) exaggerated the increase in passenger demand and the fall in air freight. Stripping this out, the underlying trend was for stronger passenger growth, while stabilized weakness in cargo markets continues.

"The year started with some hopeful news on business confidence. It appears that freight markets have stabilized, albeit at weak levels," said Toby Tyler, IATA's director general and CEO. "And this is having a positive impact on business-related travel. However, airlines face two big

risks: rising oil prices and Europe's sovereign debt crisis. Both are hanging over the industry's fortunes like the sword of Damocles."

Total January passenger demand rose 5.7 percent compared to January 2011, a slight acceleration from the 5.6 percent year-over-year increase recorded for December 2011. With January passenger capacity up 4.2 percent, average load factor rose 1.1 percentage points to 76.6 percent compared to the same month a year ago.

The decline in air freight stabilized in the fourth quarter of 2011, at levels 4 percent below the 2008 pre-crisis peak. There was a 2.5 percent fall in global freight markets from December to January, but this is almost totally attributable to the impact of factory closures due to the Chinese New Year. (*Travel Pulse, February 29*)

Grand Canyon National Park = visitors, money and jobs for local economy

A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that almost 4.4 million visitors spent more than \$415 million in Grand Canyon National Park and in gateway regions around the park in 2010. In addition, visitor spending supported 6,167 jobs in the local area. The four economic/job sectors most impacted by this visitor spending were lodging, restaurants, retail trade, and entertainment/amusement.

These figures are based on \$12.1 billion of direct spending by 281 million visitors in and around 394 national park units around the country and are included in an annual, peer-reviewed, visitor spending analysis conducted by Dr. Daniel Stynes of Michigan State University for the National Park Service. According to the analysis, the 22 national park units in Arizona alone attracted more than 10.5 million visitors who spent approximately \$671 million and supported 9,661 jobs in the state. Across the U.S., local visitor spending added a total of \$31 billion to the national economy and supported more than 258,000 jobs, an increase of \$689 million and 11,500 jobs over 2009.

To download a copy of Dr. Stynes' report, please go to <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/products.cfm#MGM> and click on Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2010. The report also includes information for visitor spending at individual national parks and by state. For more on how the NPS is working within Arizona, go to www.nps.gov/arizona.

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!

Become a fan on Facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/arizonatravel>

Follow us on Twitter! <http://twitter.com/ArizonaTourism>