



Tourism Tuesday

A Message from Director:

Good afternoon,

The countdown is on to the Governor's Conference on Tourism.

We are now 46 workdays away from [GCOT 2017](#), which will take place July 19-21 at the JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa. And this year's conference is shaping up to be fun and rewarding.

The keynote speakers will be Wharton School marketing professor Jonah Berger and Midwest Living publisher Melissa Luebbe, and the workshop sessions will explore topics such as the female traveler, film tourism, visual-content creation, FAM best practices, product development, media buying and more.

Berger is one of the nation's leading authorities on social influence—he studies how it works and how it makes ideas catch on. He teaches Wharton's top ranked online course, and his research and bestselling books have been the subject of articles in the New York Times and Harvard Business Review.

Luebbe is the national director for Meredith Travel Marketing and a renowned speaker on the tourism-conference circuit. She has given the presentation "Redefining the Female Traveler with Generational Insights" at nearly two dozen state and national tourism conferences.

We're also bringing back the [Grand Pitch](#) to GCOT 2017. This contest is designed to put your most innovative marketing ideas into motion, and this year there will be two Grand Pitch winners—one from an urban market and one from a rural market. Victors from each category will receive free digital media buys from AOT media partners.

Nominations are also being accepted for the [2017 Governor's Tourism Awards](#), which recognize outstanding accomplishments within our industry. Know a worthy individual, community or organization? [Nominate them](#).

Before signing off today, I want express how thankful I am to live in Arizona and promote this beautiful state every day. Last week, during National Travel and Tourism Week, I tried five things I'd never done before: [hydro biking](#), [trike gliding](#), [horse riding and roping](#), [mountain biking](#) and skydiving. The last of those things blew my mind. Free-falling from 15,000 feet with a full view of the Grand Canyon was possibly the most fun I've ever had in my life.

I know skydiving isn't for everyone, but Arizona is full of adventures, and I encourage you to find yours. The more you do in our state, the more you know about our state—and personal experience is the best asset a destination marketer can have.

Debbie Johnson
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism
#AZTourismTuesday

AOT in Action

Tell Us About Your 2018 Community Events

Global publications and international journalists are asking for details about 2018 events in Arizona. If you're planning an annual event for your community and have the specific date for 2018, please send that info to Marjorie Magnusson at mmagnusson@tourism.az.gov. The only information needed is the name of the event and the 2018 date. Additional details about the event can be sent later. The deadline for this request is May 31, 2017.

Submit Your Nominations for Governor's Tourism Awards

AOT invites you to submit nominations for the 2017 Governor's Tourism Awards. From innovative marketing programs to valuable tourism champions, astounding work is accomplished every day by our industry. The Governor's Tourism Awards is a great way to recognize these efforts. The deadline to submit a nomination is May 31. For nomination forms and more information about the Governor's Tourism Awards, visit azgcot.com.

Grand Pitch Returns to Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism

Calling all hotels, restaurants, destinations and attractions—we want to help you bring your innovative marketing ideas to the masses. Enter your idea in our Grand Pitch for your chance to win free digital media buys from AOT media partners. Two winners will be selected—one from an urban market and one from a rural market. Three urban and three rural finalists will have the opportunity to present their ideas to a team of judges at the 2017 Governor's Conference on Tourism. Learn how to enter your Grand Pitch at azgcot.com.

AOT's Rural Marketing Cooperative Coming Soon!

Guidelines and application for AOT's FY18 Rural Marketing Cooperative program will be available beginning **June 5**. AOT's Rural Marketing Cooperative program is designed to help drive visitation to Arizona's rural and tribal destinations. The program features a robust media plan that includes online, print, outdoor and AOT publications. The campaign runs from Sept. 1, 2017 to Aug. 31, 2018.

Arizona's rural destination marketing organizations (DMOs), Tribes and statewide tourism-marketing groups are invited to apply. AOT welcomes regional partnerships between metro DMOs, rural DMOs and Tribes. Qualifying applicants will receive subsidized rates. Budget allocations are contingent on AOT's available funding.

On **June 7** AOT will host a Rural Marketing Cooperative webinar where we'll discuss the program guidelines, including eligibility and the application process. We'll also review the marketing plan (target markets, list of opportunities and AOT's supporting campaign).

Upcoming AOT Events & Activities

Early Bird Registration Extended for GCOT

Date: July 19 - 21

Location: JW Marriott Desert Ridge

The Early Bird Registration rate for the Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism has been extended to May 31. GCOT is the premier professional-development event in the state for travel professionals and destination marketers. Don't miss this chance to exchange ideas with peers, learn from expert panelists and draw inspiration from nationally renowned speakers.

Upcoming Industry Events & Activities

US Travel Association's IPW

Date: June 3-7

Location: Washington, DC

IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S. During three days of intensive pre-scheduled business appointments, more than 1,000 U.S. travel organizations and more than 1,300 international and domestic buyers conduct business negotiations that result in the generation of more than \$4.7 billion in future Visit USA travel. Participation is open to anyone in the tourism industry.

TAP Dance

Date: June 11-15

Location: Tucson

Travel Alliance Partners' TAP Dance will take place in Tucson this year. This is an annual event in which 200 appointment-taking delegates meet with PPTPs (Professional Preferred Travel Providers, or "suppliers" in other circles). AOT will coordinate an evening event for TAP attendees and tourism partners. If you need more information on TAP, please visit www.tapintotravel.com/tap-dance.

Arizona News

Arizona State Parks and Trails Selected as "Final Four" Candidate for Gold Medal Award

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) announced the top four candidates for the Gold Medal Award, including Arizona State Parks and Trails as a finalist. Over the last two years, Arizona State Parks and Trails has established a self-sufficient funding structure, achieved record visitation and revenue and implemented a plan to reinvest in the system and create new parks. The other 2017 "final

four" candidates include Tennessee State Parks; Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission; and Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails. The winner will be announced on September 28, 2017.

Industry News

4 Arizona Locations Chosen as Up and Coming Destinations

Peak travel season is around the corner when Americans take their week of vacation and hit the road for something new. With that in mind, we fed our data nerds an extra ration of sugar cubes and had them scribble up the top emerging travel destinations in the U.S. and internationally by looking at trivago user searches.

Did You Know?

According to Arizona's Official State Historian, [Marshall Trimble](#): In September 1927, MGM Studios in California, decided to send their new mascot, a 400-lb. African Lion named Leo, on a goodwill trip by airplane to New York City. The aviator in charge was a stunt pilot named Marty Jensen.

Unfortunately, Marty's plane couldn't get enough elevation to fly up and over Arizona's "Backbone," the 1,000-foot-high Mogollon Rim. On September 16th, he crash-landed near Hell's Gate on Tonto Creek, east of Payson and spent the next three days trying to reach civilization.

Marty was able to enlist the help of some Rim Country cowboys to ride into the canyon and bring Leo safely out of the wilderness. Leo was then driven back home to California.

Statewide Calendar of Events

Visit www.VisitArizona.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>