



The Insider  
Newsletter of the Utah Tourism Industry Coalition  
March 2008

**From the President:**

**Bill Malone**

Will impact of recession impact travel plans in Utah? With the national economy in a slump, it's no wonder all you hear about in tourism circles is ...Will people be altering their vacation plans? Two recent nationwide surveys say yes. More than two-thirds of respondents to a Ypartnership survey co-authored w/ TIA said they had downsized their trips in some way during the past six months because of personal financial concerns. And a survey by AIG Travel Guard found that 47% of travelers polled plan to downscale their vacations to save money. But the good news has been that while Americans may be cautious about how much money they spend on vacations this year, they're not about to give them up. Trading down, not out is what Peter Yesowich, CEO of Ypartnership has said. "In the next few months we will see a transformation of vacations, not cancellations."

It appears that some will take fewer trips, stay fewer nights, select less expensive lodging, and maybe drive shorter distances. But the good news is that in the Travel Guard survey, more than two-thirds said that they wouldn't reduce the number of leisure trips they take in 2008.

Some segments of our Utah product may even benefit from these adjustments in vacation patterns ...As members of the Utah hospitality industry, we are fortunate to work in a state with such a diverse product that appeals to a wide variety of customers be they from the region, the east/west coast, as well as international...This bodes well for us as strong tourism destination.

**From the Director:**

**Nan Anderson**

We look forward to the upcoming Utah Tourism Conference, May 12-14 at the Hilton Salt Lake City Center in Salt Lake. UTIC & UOT partner to produce this annual event, and we invite anyone involved in tourism in Utah to participate. The agenda includes sessions addressing a wide variety of topics such as Tourism Trends, Social Networking, Tech Trends in Travel, Generational Marketing, and more. Keynote sessions will feature Roger Dow, President of the Travel Industry Association of America; Bill Geist, tourism marketing expert; and Frank Hugelmeier, Outdoor Industries Association of America.

To participate in the Tourism Advertising & Marketing Contest, please download the form:

<http://travel.utah.gov/documents/MarketingContestentryform.pdf>  
Registration is open and on-line, visit [www.utahtourism.org](http://www.utahtourism.org) for a preliminary agenda and to register. Conference

fees are \$175 per person, if 2 or more representatives register from the same organization/company, the fees are reduced to \$150 per person. Accommodations: <http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/SLCCCHH-UTC-20080506/index.jhtml>

**Save the Date!**

UTIC Membership Meeting	Monday, May 12
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Hilton Salt Lake City Center
Utah Tourism Conference	May 12-14
	Hilton Salt Lake City Center
UTIC Membership Meeting	Wed. Nov. 12
	Provo

**FYI:**

\* New Department of Commerce data reveal that the United States continues to suffer from a decline in overseas arrivals despite a worldwide boom in international travel and an extraordinarily favorable exchange rate.

\*According to Arthur Frommer: "The reason they (visitors) are not coming here is ....because we have made visiting the U.S. a procedural nightmare. To visit the U.S., most foreign citizens must apply for a visa, in person, at a U.S. consulate in their country, submit to an interview by a consular official and sometimes travel hundreds of miles to that consulate. Just to apply for such an interview often takes two months and the payment of \$131 per visa, to be paid whether or not the visa is issued. If it is denied, you are out the \$131.

Every month, one or another department in our government erects another barrier to incoming tourism, without consulting any other department having broader responsibilities. The recent increase in the visa fee to \$131 was a typical misguided decision by someone in the State Department, who should have been reducing the fee rather than raising it. Not a single terrorist will be deterred by the extra \$31 added to the former \$100 fee. This month, the Department of Homeland Security has confronted millions of Canadian motorists with the need to show a birth certificate in order to drive over the U.S./Canada border to go shopping. Not a single terrorist will be thwarted from entering by this need to obtain an easily forged document—but millions of Canadians will decide that they can put off that shopping trip.

Just as recently, the Department of Homeland Security has required that even those foreigners who need not obtain visas (because they are in a "visa waiver" country) must provide the Department, 72 hours in advance of arrival, with a proposed itinerary for that trip. What will be done with that itinerary has never been explained, nor has anyone suggested that we have the manpower to check on whether foreigners adhere to their itineraries. After the foreigner provides this wholly absurd piece of paper, they then must be fingerprinted—all 10 digits—upon clearing U.S. immigration at their arrival airport. Imagine how you would feel if you faced such indignities on a trip to London or Rome." Source: *Houston Chronicle*, Feb. 25, 2008