



Trailways Traveler Newsletter - August 2016

The purpose of the Trailways' network of companies is to cooperatively work together to build relationships and market strength.

Trailways' BIG THREE Goals:

Charters, Tickets & Branding

As the new President & CEO, Eva Hotard's primary goals are to strengthen and grow the Trailways Family. "I believe flying a brand flag is serious business," she said.

"A brand is only as good as the companies that fly its flag. We thank you for your brand loyalty and for flying the flag so proudly. Our goal is to help you become the best brand ambassador you can be to provide excellent service to our customers.

We must all be very committed to growing our businesses through a powerful brand flag: Trailways. We can draw from multiple examples: Coke, Mc Donald's, Chick fil-A, Hilton, Marriott, Apple, and others. We must all strive to capitalize on our brand power and strength together."

Looking ahead, Trailways is focused on the three main goals: Charter Sales & Promotion; Ticket Sales and Branding Enhancement. These are outlined in the Board-approved Strategic Plan 2016-18.

Here is the latest news on each goal:

1.) Charter Sales & Promotion:

- The 2017 Trailways Travel Guide is in the process of being compiled (Naylor Publications is contacting all companies for contact information). It will be enhanced this year to feature more description about each company. The print

quantity will be increased, from 800 to more than 5,000, in order to provide each company with a case as well as increase distribution to group charter clients worldwide across every key segment (schools, sports, corporate...)

- Charter Leads are received by various channels at the Trailways Virginia home office: via the online website Quote Form, E-mail and Telephone. Web leads are sent quickly to the nearest Trailways company, based on the trip zip code, for your *prompt response* directly with the customer.
- The Trailways Quote Form leads are qualified leads: Please be sure to respond to these free leads within 24 hours or less, if possible. Your good customer service is appreciated and is a reflection on the entire brand.
- Charter Promotion: Trailways is working to significantly improve the website SEO to drive more customers to the new website in order to book more charters with Trailways operators.
- Charter Sales Promotion - Trailways attended IPW (Pow Wow) in New Orleans in June. Reports and lead sheets are being compiled. Trade shows are open to all Trailways companies on a cost-shared basis.
- Next, Trailways will attend the Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) meeting in August in Orlando.
- We also attend state bus associations meetings to connect, learn and share Trailways news and opportunities.

2.) Ticket Sales:

- Through the Trailways website (www.Trailways.com), we are executing a full force plan to grow the brand strength.
- In June, we maximized our SEO on ticketing content to have more than 135,000 indexes on all the various search engines (Bing, Google, Facebook, Trip Advisor, etc.) and page code tags that are specific, relevant and in turn drive traffic to the site overall. Purchasing "results" are returning to 2014-15 levels.
- We are already seeing ticket sales increasing. In the next month (August) our analytics will combine traffic to both URLs (Trailways.com and webstore.trailways.com).
- In addition, more city pairs / origin to destination options are being added through ticketing partners in locations Trailways may not serve. This will add to travel options that can actually be sold.
- We will also be adding route maps in the near future allowing a buyer to "see" the route they're looking to purchase.

3.) Branding

- The main showpiece for the Trailways brand, its website www.trailways.com was completely redesigned last year. The new streamlined and responsive website premiered in October 2015 (Phase I).
- As a "responsive" website, it is easily viewed on all mobile devices, a feature Google now uses to determine the best and most viable websites.

- We are now working on Phase II with a branding agency in Washington, D.C., Finn Partners. A professional and robust plan to grow the brand strength through the website is underway, including:

Updates to Homepage slider creative:

- Redesign current slides with color photography (destinations)
- Create seasonal slide (Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring) with Sales Message

Updates to Tours page:

- Adding click-through tags and images
- The *first three companies* to be featured offer online (web) booking capability and one from each region were selected---East, West, Central. Plans are to add: Burlington Trailways (Iowa), Fullington Trailways (PA), Amador Trailways (CA)(If your company provides *online* bookings for tours, please let us know. (Tracey@trailways.com)

Updates to "Our Network" page on the Trailways website:

- Create Legend (C=Charters; T=Tours; S=Schedules) for each company
- Add a company description line
- Add main 800 telephone numbers for each company
- Add click-through tags

Social Media:

- Improve the level of professionalism for the Trailways brand on social media sites with the Finn Partners' young and tech-savvy digital team.
- Drive interest in travel through use of new and better travel photos to accompany posts for campaigns.
- Strategically work to improve Trailways visibility through high-level travel & media social media outlets: Budget Travel, Travel & Leisure, Redbook, Independent Traveler, New York Times Travel, etc.
- Integrating OG: tags into all the SEO pages highly impacts social media channels. (Social media catalogs search content with OG: tags).
- Add Instagram when Trailways' company photo library is robust (photos will match the 2017 Travel Guide now in progress with Naylor Publications)

Brand Growth:

- Looking ahead, Trailways is in search of high-quality companies with respect for customer service and those who strive to always deliver great service.
- We will be contacting you for assistance in bringing into the Trailways family these types of companies. Trailways is a strong group of companies sharing resources to help all of our businesses grow. We also need to expand the market reach of the brand to help *you* grow.

- Please contact eva@trailways.com or terri@Trailways.com or call us at 703-691-3052 x 3 (main) with your recommendations. Thank you.

Save the dates! The 81st Trailways Stockholders Meeting & Conference will take place March 26-28, 2017 in Newport Beach on the Pacific Ocean in California.



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