



DISCOVER PUERTO RICO WILL LEAD THE RECOVERY ONCE IT IS SAFE TO TRAVEL

San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 1, 2020- Discover Puerto Rico (DPR) will be leading the recovery of the tourism sector of the island, after the pandemic of COVID-19 anticipates a loss of 1.9 million room nights, which is three times what was lost months after Hurricane Maria. The organization has based all of their planning on research and have been working to maintain the island top-of-mind of the consumers.

“Puerto Rico is facing two battles, the public health and the financial crisis this pandemic has caused around the world. For us, the most important thing is to speed the recovery cycle and save the 80,000 jobs that represent the tourism sector on the island. Every week we are seeing updated research from our partners based on facts and data, that are driving us the direction of what the consumer is thinking and if they want to travel after it is safe to travel,” stated Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico.

During their second virtual industry update regarding the effects of COVID-19 on the Puerto Rican tourism sector, relevant data was shared with over 350 participants. Throughout the past two months changes in air capacity is down 13% through the end of 2020. An increase in seats starting September through December has been seen, a strong signal in the return of leisure visitors in the 3rd and 4th quarters.

Through the research done by Destination Analysts, the consumers are looking to relax on a beach or in remote spaces that connect with nature, which positions Puerto Rico in a product advantage. Continuous monitoring of the consumer sentiment helps the organization in understanding the messaging, as well as, the correct audience and timing, segmenting consumers by geographic and demographic differences.

“Following our COVID-19 Action Plan, we are still on the Regroup Phase, it is important to understand that before entering the next phase we’ll be looking for key benchmarks like a decline in the number of new COVID cases on the island, travel restrictions into and on the island are lifted or reduced, and of course, we need to see a critical mass of tourism related businesses reopen in order to accommodate tourists,” explained Leah Chandler, CMO of Discover Puerto Rico.

The organization has been constantly working on various efforts to maintain Puerto Rico in the minds of everyone, targeting those travelers that are dreaming of traveling again soon. Discover Puerto Rico together with local industry partners, has worked on 13 activations of virtual tours, from salsa lessons to cooking demonstrations, generating over 451 million impressions. Also, launching virtual backgrounds for Zoom, virtual puzzles with images of Puerto Rico, sounds of Puerto Rico video series and upcoming guided live tours with Google Earth and virtual postcards, among others.

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In order to help local business owners, Discover Puerto Rico has launched a series of online training videos in Spanish, covering eight to ten topics, that will be very beneficial to help them succeed their business in these times of crisis. Some of the topics that will be covered will be, “5 Ways to Optimize Partnerships During COVID-19,” “Best Practices for Managing Your Social Media Presence During a Crisis,” “10 Tips for Connecting with Journalists and Influencers Throughout COVID-19,” “Google My Business Update and Instructions”, among others. You can find these training videos in our YouTube channels, and in our Industry Social Channels.

In a recent global poll by the Northstar Meetings Group, it suggested that meeting planners continue to work, reporting 83% still working full time. For this reason, our sales team continuous to work on obtaining leads for future events and travel to the island. Although there is no doubt that lead volume is substantially down, we are still seeing activity and have produced 40 new leads for over 23,000 rooms or close to \$20M in economic impact since the lockdown began. On the leisure side, Discover Puerto Rico is working with partners to create a variety of promotions that will call the attention of future travelers to the island.

“Discover Puerto Rico has not, and will not, stop promoting Puerto Rico. While this is not a time for paid advertising or customary sales activities, we will continue to keep Puerto Rico top-of-mind with our future visitors. We know this is not the time to travel to Puerto Rico, that does not mean that need to stop talking about the island. For those who are dreaming of their next vacation, we want them to be dreaming about Puerto Rico. For those who are planning a future meeting or convention, we want them to be planning to come to Puerto Rico. For those who are tired of working from home, we are ready to provide them a temporary escape, reminding them of beautiful beaches and sunsets, as well as, our rich culture, food and coffee” finalized Dean.

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About Discover Puerto Rico

Discover Puerto Rico is an established private, not for-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) whose mission is to make Puerto Rico visible to the world as a premier travel destination. The DMO brings prosperity to the people of Puerto Rico by collaboratively positioning the Island's diversity and uniqueness for leisure, business and events. It is responsible for all global marketing, sales and promotion of the destination and works collaboratively with key local governmental and non-governmental players throughout Puerto Rico's visitor economy and community at large, to empower economic growth. You can visit us at DiscoverPuertoRico.com.

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