



DISCOVER PUERTO RICO INTENTS TO DRIVE FUTURE PLANS AND BOOKINGS

San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 15, 2020- During Discover Puerto Rico's monthly Industry Update, relevant data from its research partner Destination Analysts was shared, showing that 56.4% of consumers are "ready to travel," with over 40% expecting their next trip will take place before the end of the year. For this reason, the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) has adjusted their messaging to meet travelers where they are in the travel cycle with "It's Time to Plan" and "It's Time to Book," with the purpose to instill confidence in travel and inspire consumers to start planning their next trip to the Island, while continuing to reference the travel guidelines.

"Even though the current Executive Order, which expires on October 16, prohibits the DMO from marketing to drive current demand, with the support of the Marketing and Sales Advisory Committee, we started slowly investing paid media on October 5th, with the intent to drive future plans and bookings. Our evolving strategy is focused on refilling the demand funnel, with heavy focus on video, the reintroduction of over-the-top TV (OTT), and social engagement to get Puerto Rico back in travelers' future consideration set. After rebuilding awareness, we will stair-step our media investment and layer in mediums to reach travel intenders who are actively searching and planning their next trips," explained Leah Chandler, CMO of Discover Puerto Rico.

"While the organization has not received funding for tourism promotion, the current marketing and promotion strategy is being supported by the reserve of the funding in past months. We have made difficult decisions and scaled back on what we were investing so that we would be able to help the destination and local businesses when the time was right, and that time is now. We remain hopeful that we will eventually receive federal funds to help with promotion, like the CARES Act funding or CDBG funding. No federal funds will be used for salaries, administration or overheads, whatever we receive will be used with one purpose in mind, helping rebuild local businesses," expressed Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico.

A key part of the DMO's recovery strategy, they will be searching for travelers who profile as responsible and conscientious, those who are willing to follow local rules. This will be done by using available research to determine additional targeting strategies to include on mediums where efficient and effective.

On the MICE side of the business, Discover Puerto Rico has hosted more than 200 tradeshow, presentations and virtual events including the first virtual tradeshow. A total of 60 leads have been generated in the period of July through September to bring our total leads to 147 since March 16, when the restriction was put in place, which equates to roughly 140,000 rooms or \$121M in potential revenue. Through a survey completed by event planners, 97% said they intend to hold in-person events before the end of 2021 with 46% believing they will occur in the first half of the year and 75% of them would travel to the Caribbean to hold these events.

"We are inspired by the commitment, determination and resolve of our tourism industry. Our team at Discover Puerto Rico remains committed to ensuring that the best days of Puerto Rico's tourism industry lie before us, not behind us," finalized Dean.

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