

VOLUNTEER GROUP OF DESTINATION TRAVEL RESEARCH SPECIALISTS—INSIGHTS COLLECTIVE -- JOINING FORCES TO ASSIST DESTINATION TRAVEL WITH TRANSITION TO “NEXT NORMAL”

(Resources and advice being offered free of charge to help with tourism recovery)

DENVER, Colo, June 7, 2020—Driven by a collective concern about how the tourism industry can most effectively start recovering from the devastation brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, a group of destination tourism veterans with decades of experience are joining forces to ‘give back’ to the industry they love.

Brought together by Ralf Garrison, mountain travel, and tourism veteran, the initial group includes individuals from a variety of specialty niches. Their stated goal is to help any destination-related tourism business create a plan based on updated data and best practices to navigate a path to whatever the new normal will be for the tourism industry. Recommendations will be based on the ever-changing and emerging guidelines for operating a variety of tourism-related businesses in this new environment.

Initial efforts are focusing on quantifying the economic impacts of the pandemic—specifically on the travel and resort industries and their communities, establishing a set of metrics to track the return to economic viability and establish best practices for re-opening. Ultimately, the plans is to establish and test a set of assumptions about the new realities that consider consumer confidence, comfort, and financial security in the months ahead.

Plans also call for a resource center that will be provided free of charge and contain a data library contributed, an information table collated by independent tourism specialists; and the first results of various polls conducted and provided by a market research firm.

From the data gathered and analyzed by the Insights Collective Team, a destination transition strategy will be developed for more individualized reporting and consulting using a new platform under development to navigate for the new normal in leisure travel. This more advanced and targeted guidance will become a commercial venture. Initial Committee Members:

Chris Cares - RRC & Associates
Tom Foley – Inntopia
Carl Ribaud - SMG Consulting
Brian London – London Tourism Publications
Jesse True – True Mountain Consulting
Susan Rubin-Steward – SRS Consulting
Barb Taylor Carpender – leisure travel specialist
Jane Babilon – leisure travel specialist

“I felt compelled to do what I could for an industry where I have spent my entire professional life,” explained Garrison, co-founder of Mountain Travel Symposium and founder of DestiMetrics. “When I saw the huge impact that Covid-19 was going to have on the leisure travel industry, I started by calling old friends and seeing what we could do to provide guidance for these struggling businesses by using some of the data we had already collected to help build a new future,” he continued.

Using a “group-think” approach that taps into their varying industry expertise, the group will also be inviting the participation and collaboration with destination resorts along with input from representatives from the public sector involved with tourism-dependent businesses. The group

is already grappling with the constantly changing issues and questions that are emerging from the pandemic and how to manage the economic consequences.

“Our only goal is to take this world-class team of volunteers and to tap their decades of experience to help anyone in the tourism business from lodging and local visitor’s center to restaurants and attractions, and provide them with fact-based data to help them make the best possible decision for their businesses,” Garrison concluded.