NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Touts Strength of International Inbound Travel Industry, Prepares for New Leadership in July 2024

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LOS ANGELES, CA (May 5, 2024) — Chris Thompson, president & CEO of Brand USA, the nation's destination marketing organization and premier sponsor of U.S. Travel Association's IPW 2024, delivered his final press conference after over a decade of service. As the U.S. international inbound travel industry continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience, Brand USA is poised to further elevate the United States' position as a premier travel destination.

"There is a clear resurgence in travel enthusiasm with the United States continuing to lead the world in long-haul travel arrivals," said Thompson. "And while retiring is bittersweet for me personally, the industry is strong, and Brand USA is well positioned which gives me the confidence to step aside."

Last year, the country welcomed nearly 67 million visitors who spent $213 billion on travel and tourism-related activities within the United States—representing a 28 percent increase over the prior year. Inbound visitation from India has already surpassed 2019 visitation levels, and the following countries are set to do so in 2025: Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

Brand USA's recent research shows that the United States is the top aspirational destination, ranking first among likely international travelers in Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, and Mexico. Particularly noteworthy is the surge in intent to visit the USA among Chinese visitors, which began increasing towards the latter half of last year and reached its highest level in March 2024 at 55 percent.

The USA is set to welcome 90 million visitors who will spend $279 billion annually by 2027, goals outlined in the 2022 National Travel and Tourism Strategy. The latest forecast by Tourism Economics shows that nearly 78 million visitors are expected to visit the USA by the end of 2024, and spending by international travelers is expected to grow by 74% between 2023 and 2027.

Brand USA aims to engage consumers in a new way as it sets to capitalize on the global events taking place in the United States over the next 3-4 years, such as WorldPride in Washington, DC, 100th Anniversary of Route 66, FIFA World Cup, and the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

"Brand USA's commitment to inviting international travelers to the United States is a key reason why the USA remains the most aspirational travel destination in the world," said Thompson.

At the conclusion of the press conference, Todd Davidson, Brand USA board chair and chief executive officer of Travel Oregon, welcomed Fred Dixon, Brand USA's incoming president and CEO. Dixon, who currently serves as the CEO of New York City Tourism + Conventions, will take the helm of the organization on July 15, 2024.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.

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