BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Selects James Huang as Regional Director to Manage Travel Marketing in China

Beijing, China - March 19, 2018

Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, today announced that it has selected Contineo Marketing Group in China and, effective May 1, 2018, will appoint James Huang – a well-respected tourism leader with extensive destination marketing experience – as the regional director to manage its strategic travel trade and marketing efforts in China. As the regional director, Huang will be responsible for working with Brand USA to create an integrated strategic plan and ensure it is successfully executed. He also will coordinate the work of Brand USA's four China offices of AVIAREPS, the tourism destination marketing agency representing Brand USA in China for the past several years.

Brand USA's Vice President, Global Trade Development Cathy Domanico made the announcement, via video message, at Brand USA's China Sales Mission this week. Brand USA's appointment of Huang concludes an extensive search for a regional director for China which began in September 2017.

"With the addition of James Huang as our new China regional director, we'll be able to build on the momentum were made during our celebration of the U.S. – China Tourism Year in 2016 – a year of special events, dedicated programming, and new products designed to promote and enhance travel between our two countries," said Domanico. "This appointment will help us keep up that momentum and ensure that Brand USA's strategic marketing plans in China are achieved."

According to the National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the USA has experienced 13 consecutive years of growth in arrivals from China, 12 of which exhibited double digit growth rates. According to Domanico, the boom is a primary reason that Brand USA is investing, expanding, and enhancing its efforts in the vast China market.

With significant marketing experience, Huang's career highlights include: the Scandinavian Tourism Board office in Shanghai responsible for Eastern China region; Tourism Victoria, where he was the head of marketing in promoting Melbourne, Victoria as a must-see destination in the China market through implementation of a multi-million-dollar campaign; and most recently, since 2013, Visit California where he is known as "Mr. California." He has extensive knowledge of China outbound tourism and has expansive contacts and relationships in both trade and media.

"I look forward to helping Brand USA achieve its mission of encouraging more visitors from China to experience the spectacular travel experiences available in the United States," said Huang. "I want to see the growth of visitors from China continue its double-digit rise in the coming years."

"I have no doubt that James Huang will be a tremendous asset to Brand USA in encouraging continued growth of Chinese visitors to the United States," said Thomas Garzilli, chief marketing officer of Brand USA. "The breadth of his experience and his work ethic will help Brand USA showcase all the unique U.S. travel experiences to fuel that growth."

Chinese travel to the United States has risen sharply in recent years. According to the NTTO, 2.97 million Chinese visited the USA during 2016 – a 15 percent increase over the previous year. That level of volume made China the fifth-largest source market among international travelers arriving in the United States. In addition, the Chinese are the number one international spenders. During their 2016 trips to the United States, they spent $33.2 billion – a 10 percent jump over the year before.

About Contineo Marketing Group

Contineo Marketing, headquartered in Shanghai, is a boutique marketing firm inspired by the spirit to unite and connect. With the focus on the opportunity brought by the fast growing Chinese market, we provide a wide range of marketing solutions for travel, tourism, hospitality, aviation and events industries. Our core values guide us to be innovative, inspiring, effective, and forward-thinking. Contineo Marketing knows the market, understands the consumer, and owns distribution insights; and these are the competitive advantages differentiating our services from others. We help destinations, airlines/carriers, tourism operators, product owners, service providers, hotel properties, retailers and wholesalers to enter and grow in China. Aiming to achieve renowned reputation within the China travel and tourism industry, excellence for Contineo Marketing means achieving high-level customer satisfaction. Our strength lies in our way to help clients approach the Chinese consumer and the Chinese travel distribution channels. Contineo Marketing is managed by senior industry professionals with sophisticated eastern and western marketing experiences. We have been physically based in China for many years and guided western businesses to succeed here. We understand the Chinese culture and customs comprehensively and bring the knowledge to live for our clients. For more information, please visit ContineoMarketing.cn.

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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.