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Make PR pop by highlighting unique angles - by Stanley Hurwitz

July 23, 2021 - Front Section



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Coming out of the pandemic, a client with three hotels in Provincetown, Mass., needed ways to let the world know his properties were open for business for the 2021 tourist season.

Everybody has either been to Provincetown (P-town) or heard of it, right? As a refresher, the small resort town is located at the extreme tip of Cape Cod. It has a year-round population of 3,000 but its summer population swells to 60,000. P-town is known for beaches, harbor, artists, tourist industry, and as a vacation destination for the LGBTQ+ community.

The hotel industry was severely impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis. The American Hotel and Lodging Association reported that over 670,000 hotel industry jobs and nearly 4 million hospitality jobs were lost during 2020 and projected a rough recovery. The industry was among the first impacted by the pandemic and among the last to recover.

P-town boasts some 75 hotels so competition is always tough. To get ahead of the pack, my hotel owner client commissioned a local writer/historian to put together a series of “eco-tours” that would entice new and past guests to The Breakwater Hotel, The Cape Colony Inn, and Truro Beach Cottages. Each guest would receive a free tour of their choice. Announcements were emailed to guest lists and posted on social media. The organizer described eco-adventures as “the perfect way to get fresh air, exercise, stay safe, learn interesting stories, and see the hidden beauty of the Outer Cape. If hiking isn’t your thing, we’ll direct you to performances, gallery shows, fishing expeditions, mountain bike trails and more.” The general public could purchase tickets at the hotels.

The free tour offer was promoted on each hotel website and on travel, tourism and business organization sites. News stories were distributed to media across New England plus NY and NJ, highlighting hotel locations, amenities, and tour descriptions. Enticing language stirred excitement: “Off-the-beaten-path day trips led by local scientists, actors, and writers.” One tour was promoted as “the first-ever adults-only Provincetown tour featuring history not taught in schools.” In that tour, musician, actor and writer Billy Hough led small groups on an exciting and surprising tour of Bohemian Provincetown –The Wild West of the East–walking to spots where stuff went down with noted luminaries ever since the Pilgrims landed in 1620. Early guest reviews on TripAdvisor have been glowing!

No matter the business, many experts recommend that business owners budget 5 – 10% of sales revenues to marketing/PR/advertising. Business owners should run their business and leave creative PR to proven pros. Let’s talk: stanhurwitz@gmail.com.

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