

New Ideas, New Resilience, New Plans Preparing Your Community

Presented by National Travel Center,
Inc. A Delaware Benefit Corporation
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Welcome to Our National Conversation

I'm Dr. Maree Forbes Gaughan, Chief Strategist and CEO of National Travel Center

and with me are

Deb Brown, NTC's Community Action Specialist and

Elaine Gizler, NTC's Economic Development and Tourism Specialist

National Travel Center is a 10-year-old Delaware Benefit Corporation (B Corp) that assists communities of all sizes to increase economic development to increase quality of life.





Why Are We Here?

We're here to discuss what could, may, or may not happen in the tourism industry and the economy in general in the coming months and years

We're going to confront right up front the challenges that could be floating around

Most importantly, we're going to address what you can do about them, to plan proactively and be ready to react to whatever scenario comes to pass with new resilience, new ideas and new plans

This time we don't have to be surprised

Economic Development

At National Travel Center we take a broad view

NTC considers all the activities of tourism, economic development offices, Chambers of Commerce and Main Streets as aiming to increase economic development to improve quality of life in the community

Tourism is foundational to economic development and since it supports businesses right in the community can be built on year after year to increase prosperity

We implement asset-based economic development starting with the assets and resources you already have and maximizing those through agile strategic planning



Dramatic Events were and can be a Surprise!

Most of us were not prepared for Covid
Caused untold devastation for families
Caused untold devastation in the tourism
industry.

Budget were slashed

The entire industry suffered incredible
anxiety

We watched our friends get laid off,
families put in turmoil

No matter what the press says,
destinations and communities are just
now completely recovering



New policies could have an even bigger impact

- Tariffs, deportation, draconian budget cuts, they're all on the table
- It doesn't appear that anyone has completely thought through the consequences
- The cost of tariffs are always passed on to the consumer – it will raise prices even further – visitors will have less spending power
- Immigrants clean our hotel rooms, and the dishes and pots and pans in restaurants – tourism suppliers could be turned upside down
- Draconian budget cuts will disrupt the economy – no matter what anyone says

Right now, creating uncertainty seems to be the point

If we don't know specifically what will happen, it's assumed we can't plan

The very high level of uncertainty is intended to prevent focusing on the important things

Continuing and unforeseen chaos that keeps things churning keeps us from reacting decisively and proactively



But this time we can plan!

There so are many practical steps we can take to plan for uncertainty even though we don't know specifically what will occur

We can strategize and plan for eventualities

We can generate new ideas and sort through possible scenarios


If "x" happens, we will do "y"

If a different "x" happens, we will do this different "y"



Begin Now!

- There are many more combined economic development and tourism offices than there was before Covid
- They didn't lose their budgets because they are not funded by tourism tax
- If tourism isn't now a part of economic development, reach out to those people
- If you're in economic development, reach out to tourism
- Both economic development and tourism work together with your Chamber of Commerce – you're all working to help the businesses in your town stay in business!

A photograph of a business meeting. Several people are gathered around a table, looking at and pointing to various charts and documents. The charts include bar graphs and line graphs. One person is holding a pen over a document. In the background, there is a vase with flowers.

Take a look at your own budget

- If your efforts are totally dependent on hotel tax, plan to implement other diversified revenue streams that are outside of traditional tourism activities
- These can shore up cash flow
- Refrain from any new planned hiring
- Make it appear to others that you are interested in taking your own prospects in hand before asking for handouts from others



Don't depend on international visitors

- Already stressed-out visitors only go to places that are attractive and where they can relax
- If disruption and deportation occurs in the US, international visitors will plummet
- They will not be able to feel like they can relax in a United States where chaos is reigning



Become a part of your COMMUNITY

- The community is not going to rescue an organization that does not appear to believe residents are important
- Get involved, roll up your sleeves and contribute locally
- Find out what locals perceive about tourism – and economic development for that matter – get truthful opinions
- Determine what your office can to do assist

Implement New Ideas in the Community

- New ideas and actions will let you neighbors, officials, constituents, members and marketing partners know that you have their best interest in mind
- Make the pitch that tourism is economic development
- Get others on board with your organization





Think about the positives

- Count your blessings and take actions that show you understand all is not lost
- Hold teaching sessions for small businesses to work through ways to survive
- Bring forums together to determine collective action
- Build on the assets and resources you have

Now Deb, over to you



COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

Now wrapping up, it will take COMMUNICATION

- Getting through this will take a lot of communication, investment in success, leveraging resources, asking for help
- And not expecting tourism to function outside of the community and not be affected by any of what could or may occur
- This is the time for collaboration and action, getting beyond faceless texts and email
- It will take people in every community pulling together and working together for the betterment of all

NTC is paying close attention to what is happening in the US

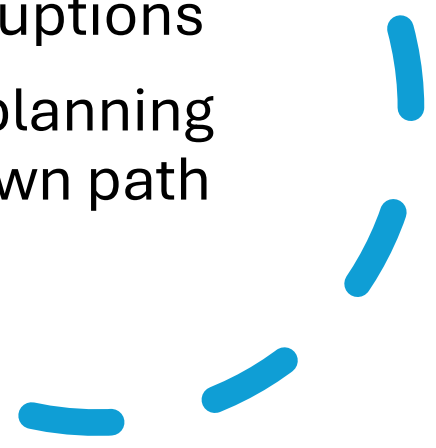
- We follow the news each and every day (I am a news junkie)
- We will follow new events as they begin to occur
- We will report weekly on how tourism can best respond
- And wrap up each month with a summary and ways to move forward





National
Travel
Center is
here to help

- We have all held jobs in the trenches and have a lot of experience reacting to whatever has happened
- We will help you plan strategically for different possibilities and scenarios
- We will help revamp your existing plans
- We will help you react more quickly to disruptions
- There's a lot of homework to be done, yet planning proactively is the only way to chose your own path



Reach Out to Us!

We've love to have a conversation and find out what you are thinking

And help you with New Resilience, New Ideas and New Plans

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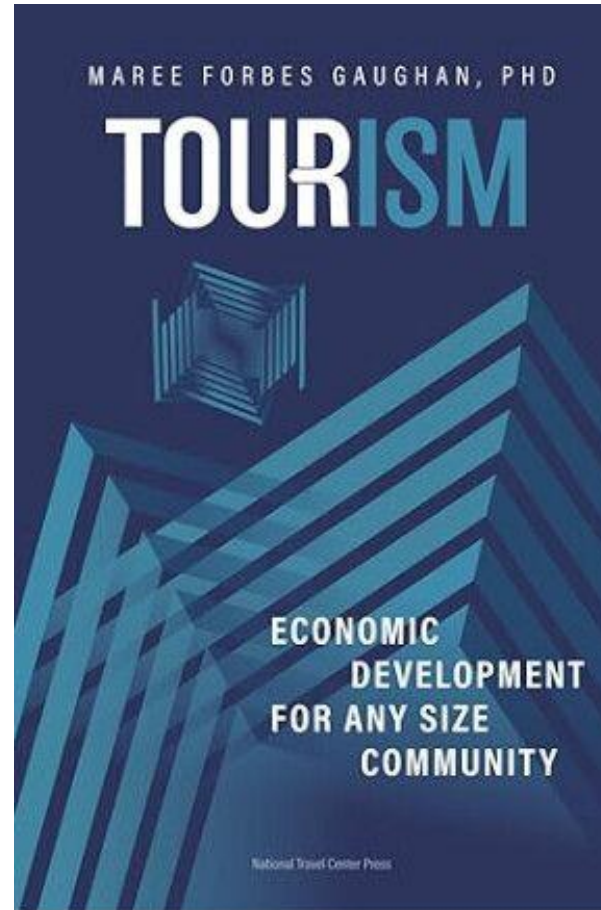
Call:

717-617-2051

Always happy to talk!

And always happy to Zoom.

www.nationaltravelcenter.org



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