



U.S. TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
DESTINATION ORGANIZATIONS

2011 DESTINY AWARDS
CALL FOR ENTRIES



ENTRY DEADLINE: MAY 20, 2011

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

U.S. Travel Association's National Council of Destination Organizations (NCDO) created a national awards program in 1993 with two purposes in mind: 1) to recognize its members for excellence and creative accomplishment in travel marketing and promotion, and 2) to foster the development of imaginative and innovative destination marketing promotion programs and activities.

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHO IS ELIGIBLE:

The NCDO Destiny Awards are for urban, regional, and local destination marketing organizations that are members of the U.S. Travel Association. Public relations, marketing and advertising agencies, and other entities that work with DMOs may submit entries on behalf of a DMO; however, the President/CEO must send an email to Patten Wood (ncdo@ustravel.org) authorizing the entry.

ENTRY FEE:

A \$95 entry fee must accompany each entry. Room has been provided on the entry form for credit card information. If submitting multiple entries and paying by check, please submit a **single check for the combined fee**. Please indicate the categories you are entering on the check or on a separate piece of paper if you don't have enough room. Mail checks to:

U.S. Travel Association
Attn. Finance Dept. – Destiny Awards
1100 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 450W
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934

HOW TO SUBMIT:

All files must be submitted through the online file sharing website DivShare.com. Please submit one compressed file per award category being entered (including entry form, summary, PowerPoint presentation, and if applicable, Video/audio clips). Please see page 5 for detailed entry guidelines. An entry submission checklist and directions on how to use DivShare.com can be found on page 6.

ONLINE DISPLAY OF AWARDS:

U.S. Travel will feature an online awards display highlighting top entries from each award category following the Destiny Awards Ceremony at ESTO (excluding entry forms). Entry submissions will be password protected and visible to NCDO members only. The online awards display will serve as an educational tool and aims to foster the development of imaginative and innovative destination marketing promotion programs and activities. If you prefer that your entry/entries not be featured on the online awards display, please check the appropriate box on your entry form.

DEADLINE:

Entries and payment must be received by close of business, Eastern Daylight Time **Friday, May 20, 2011**.

AWARDS PRESENTATION:

The winners of the 2011 Destiny Awards will be announced and honored at a special awards ceremony on August 30th during **ESTO: Where Destinations Grow**. Please note that since the winners will be announced at the awards banquet, **no notifications as to the status of the entries will be made prior to that time**.

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

RULES

1. The competition is open to all NCDO members excluding those on the judging committee. It is permissible for the NCDO member's agency or public relations firm to prepare the entry on behalf of the NCDO member; however, any such entry selected as a winner will be honored under the name of the NCDO member. If a public relations, marketing, advertising agency, or other entity submits an entry on behalf the NCDO member; **the President/CEO must send an email to Patten Wood (ncdo@ustravel.org) authorizing the entry.**
2. Each NCDO member **may submit one entry in each category/subcategory.** The same program, activity or campaign may be entered in a single category only.
3. Entries may represent one-time events that took place in 2010 or continuing campaigns/programs that occurred or were launched sometime during 2010. Campaigns launched in late 2010 must have concluded no later than March 1, 2011.
4. Entries must include specific, **quantitative** results. Judges look for real numbers, not just anecdotal support. See the judging criteria on page 5 entry guidelines on page 6 for further details. **IMPORTANT: If definitive results are not available in time for submission in this year's program, it is recommended that you hold the program for submission in the 2012 Destiny Awards competition.**
5. A non-refundable entry fee of **\$95** must accompany each entry. If sending a check, please make payable to the **U.S. Travel Association.** Members submitting more than one entry should submit a **single check** for the combined entry fees. See page 2 for more info.
6. Entries become the property of U.S. Travel/NCDO unless a written request is made at the time of entry.
7. **ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME, FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2011.**

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

CATEGORIES

There are 4 categories/subcategories in the Destiny Awards. Urban, regional, and local destination marketing organizations **may submit one entry** in each category/subcategory. The same program, activity or campaign may be entered in a **single category only**.

1. **MARKETING PROGRAMS**

Entries may include individual or cooperative destination marketing programs or campaigns, including special promotions, events/festivals, direct marketing, electronic, technical, or interactive marketing efforts, creative elements in all forms of media, public relations efforts, etc., targeted to either the domestic or international market. It is anticipated that one award will be presented in each of the following sub-categories:

A. Single, targeted promotion

One component of an overall marketing strategy that has a defined beginning and end and which is targeted to a specific audience.

B. Interactive Marketing

Projects that put a DMO on the "cutting edge" of promotion. May include electronic, interactive, or telecommunications systems applications in travel promotion. Following are some of the technical areas you may wish to consider: website; CD-ROM; multi-media; custom e-brochures; interactive kiosks; search engine optimization; pay-per-click; social media efforts; mobile marketing; and film and audio/visual.

C. Full campaign

Two or more elements of an overall marketing strategy. The submission may, but is not required to, represent an entire year's work. It can be for a limited period or product, but it must be multidisciplinary in approach (that is, you cannot present just one marketing tool). It should demonstrate how various marketing tools (advertising, public relations/publicity, trade development, publications, promotions, special events, research, etc.) complemented each other on a single campaign. The judges will look at how two or more aspects of your program worked together to create an effective campaign.

2. **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Examples of entries in this category may include but are not limited to:

- Development projects (building a new tourism information center, implementing an initiative that addresses particular access issues, language/translation and other services that facilitate travel or enhance the visitor experience in your community);
- Tourism awareness activities (programs or initiatives that promote a wider understanding of travel and tourism as a major U.S. industry), building and maintaining stakeholder relations;
- Programs that focus on the education, training or employment of current or future employees in the travel and tourism industry;
- Crisis management programs;
- Creative employee recognition; or
- Socially-responsible efforts, such as hunger relief, community outreach (financial support of a cause, volunteerism of staff, donation of goods, etc.), environmentally sensitive programs (such as recycling or a reduction in usage of precious natural resources).

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

ENTRY GUIDELINES

1. Entrants must complete an official entry form for each entry. The form may be downloaded at: <http://www.ustravel.org/member-services/award-programs/destiny-awards>. **Please submit one entry form per entry as a PDF** (see page 6 for submission details).
2. In addition to the entry form, entrants must submit a **concise** summary of the entry. This summary **must not exceed** two 8 ½" x 11" pages, typed in 12 pt. Arial font, single-spaced, with one inch margins. **LESS IS MORE IN THIS CASE, as quality is more important than volume.** For ease of judging, you should reference specific slides from your PowerPoint presentation in your entry summary. For example, if talking about your website, please refer to a specific PowerPoint slide containing a screen shot of your website.

Prior to submitting an entry, be sure to **proofread your entry summary**. Please make sure that your summary addresses the six required description elements outlined below. **What's left out could make a difference!** Also, please keep each judging criterion in mind when preparing your entry/entries (page 7). **Please submit one summary per entry as a PDF.**

- **Program Description, Time Period, and Target Audience/Market**
 - **Purpose/Objectives:** Objectives must be **clearly stated, specific, and measurable** (what is to be achieved, by when, using what resources, etc.). This will aid judges in determining how well the stated results met the stated objectives.
 - **Program Cost:** Entries in the Marketing Program categories should indicate the budget allocated for the promotion or program.
 - **Implementation Plan or Strategy:** Describe the various elements of the program, activity or campaign; techniques used; tactics undertaken and how they support the objectives; creative steps taken; and difficulties encountered. Identify any partners and their roles.
 - **Evaluation Methodology:** Describe the methodology used to evaluate this campaign/project. Please explain measurements used in obtaining results to date.
 - **Impact/Results:** State clearly the **quantified** results achieved (i.e., percentage increase in visitors, inquiries or website usage, or market share over the previous period; reduced unit costs; greater economic impact; etc). **Results must be tied to the objectives.** If specific, quantitative results are not available at the time of submission, you are advised to hold the project for submission in the 2012 competition. Entries lacking specific quantifiable results will not be strongly considered.
3. Accompanying images must be submitted in PowerPoint presentation format (i.e. brochures, inserts, tear sheets, posters, exhibits, photos, or other visual material relating to the program). You may submit **no more than 10 slides and must include concise descriptive copy** on your PowerPoint presentation slides. For ease of judging, you should reference specific slides from your PowerPoint presentation in your entry summary. Please submit the highest quality images possible. If your entry is chosen as a winner, your images will be projected on a 9'x12' screen at the ESTO Awards Gala. **Please submit one PowerPoint presentation per entry.**
 4. If applicable, Video/audio clips must be submitted as Windows Media or RealPlayer readable files separate from the submitted PowerPoint presentation – meaning, please do not embed such files in your PPT. If the clip is available on a video sharing website such as YouTube or Vimeo, **please include this website address in your PowerPoint presentation.**
 5. **File Naming Structure:** The file/s you intend to upload should be compressed with a program such as [7-zip](#), [winzip](#), etc. and should include an entry form, summary, PowerPoint presentation, and, if applicable, Video/audio clips. **One compressed file per award entry.** For each compressed file, please include the name of the entry category, name of your organization, and title of your campaign in the name of each compressed file (Sample File Name: Special-Projects-Visit-Milwaukee-Bronz-the-Fonz. compressed file extension). For each file within a compressed file please follow this naming structure; name of the entry category, name of your organization, entry material type (i.e. summary, entry form, etc), and title of your campaign.

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

ONLINE SUBMISSION PROCESS

About DivShare.com

All entry materials must be submitted to U.S. Travel via DivShare.com. DivShare is a free, easy-to-use online platform that allows you to upload and submit your entry materials (i.e. PDFs, PowerPoint presentations, videos and audio files). Each upload generates a unique download URL. As a closed site, only those who you share the unique URL will have access to the file.

I. HOW TO SET UP AN ACCOUNT

1. Visit DivShare.com and click on the “Sign Up” tab in the top right corner of your screen.
2. Enter your first name, email address, choose a password, enter the security words, and click the “Sign Up” tab. On the next page, click “Skip To Dashboard” on the right hand side of the screen. Then choose “No thanks, continue to my account.”
3. **IMPORTANT:** Check your inbox for a confirmation email from DivShare. Once you have opened an account with DivShare you have **24 HOURS** to click on the confirmation link and login to your account.
4. After you login for the first time, you’ll be asked if you wish to upgrade your account. With 5GB of free available storage on your account you shouldn’t need the upgrade, so simply click on “Continue to FREE Divshare” located on the top right of your screen.
5. Click on the “My Account” link at the top of the page. Under the “Preferences” section on the right of your screen, be sure that you **DO NOT** have checks within boxes preceding the following statements; “Do not convert my videos to Flash”; “Do not convert my documents to Flash”; “Don’t show embed code for my Flash players”; “Don’t allow downloads of my MP3s and videos.”
6. Now that you’ve created an account you’re ready to upload documents and files.

II. HOW TO UPLOAD AND SHARE ENTRY FILES

1. Click on the link located at the top right of your screen titled “Upload.”
2. Click the “Upload a new file” link. Browse your computer for the **compressed file/s** you’d like to upload. Click the “Upload” tab. **Please submit one compressed file per award category that your organization is entering.** Please adhere to the file naming structure on page 5.
3. Once your compressed file/s have been uploaded, you’re ready to share with U.S. Travel.

III. SUBMITTING ENTRY FILES TO U.S. TRAVEL

1. Click on the “Dashboard” link at the top of your screen.
2. Under the “All Files” tab you’ll see a listing of all of the documents/files that have been uploaded to your account.
3. To share your compressed files with U.S. Travel for judging, click the “Share” button below each compressed file and **type ncdo@ustravel.org** within the “Email To” box. You will receive a confirmation email from Patten Wood, Manager, Council Programs within five (5) working days listing the received files.

IV. ENTRY SUBMISSION CHECKLIST (see the **Entry Guidelines** on page 5 for more detail)

- One (1) Entry Form per submission. Refer to payment information on Page 2.
- One (1) Concise Summary per submission.
- One (1) PowerPoint presentation containing creative images and descriptive copy.
- Audio and video files if applicable.
- Please submit one compressed file per award category being entered via DivShare.com.
- Please adhere to the file naming structure on page 5.

2011 NCDO DESTINY AWARDS

JUDGING

A panel of experts will be selected by the U.S. Travel Association to judge entries in the Destiny Awards competition and select the winners in each category. The judges will be chosen based on their knowledge and expertise in tourism marketing and promotion and may include representatives from advertising and public relations agencies, travel corporations, travel educators, and former or current destination marketing organization professionals.

Entries will be judged individually against the criteria listed below, not against other entries in the competition. Therefore, no matter the size of the organization, each entry will be judged in a fair and balanced process. NCDO members large and small have an equal opportunity to win based on the merits of the entry.

It is anticipated that one Destiny award will be presented in each category/subcategory. However, judges may use discretion in giving special awards in any category, or to give no award in a particular category where the entries submitted are not deemed to merit special recognition.

Judges will review the entry summaries on an individual basis to determine how well the entrant addressed the key elements described under the Entry Guidelines (i.e., were the objectives clearly stated? do the stated results pertain to the stated objectives?). Remember, please be clear and concise. **Less is more in this case and quality is more important than volume.**

In making their selections, the judges will be looking for more than simply competence; they will be looking for programs that excel in one or more of the following criteria. Please keep each criterion in mind when preparing your entry/entries.

- **Effectiveness** . . . in stating clear objectives;
- **Creativity** . . . in project design, development, implementation, message delivery and originality, selection of media or promotional vehicle, and use of visual or written material, etc.;
- **Innovation** . . . in approach, developing new markets, unconventional approaches to old markets, or pioneering use of technology, etc.;
- **Results** . . . achieved in relation to the stated objectives. What was the return on investment? Results should be stated in measurable terms, i.e., percentage increase over previous year, actual numbers achieved versus projections stated in objectives, etc.

Decisions of the judges are final.

QUESTIONS

**Questions pertaining to the NCDO Destiny Awards program should be directed to:
Patten Wood, Manager, Council Programs, ncdo@ustravel.org or (202) 218-3614**