

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Planners and Exhibitors From Across U.S.
Attend Destinations Showcase Chicago**

*Expanded Hosted Buyer Program draws attendees from as far as Miami and Renton, Wash.;
along with exhibiting destinations from throughout North America and beyond*

Chicago (June 29, 2010) – More than 300 attending meeting professionals attended last week's Destinations Showcase Chicago; along with 60 exhibiting destinations from 24 states and the District of Columbia, as well as Aruba, Canada, Dominican Republic, and Mexico. The annual event, produced by Destination Marketing Association International, took place at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Ill., on Wednesday, June 23.

Highlights included six morning breakout sessions, a keynote luncheon, and the Midwest's largest expo exclusively featuring exhibiting destination marketing organizations (DMOs). Author and broadcaster Bill Kurtis delivered the keynote address, courtesy of Leading Authorities; following lunch provided by Branson Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. Kurtis anchored the *CBS Morning News* and Chicago's *Channel 2 News*, produced *Investigative Reports* and *Cold Case Files* for A&E Network, and also served as host of A&E's *American Justice*.

An expanded Hosted Buyer Program provided complimentary travel and accommodations for 24 association, corporate, government, and independent meeting planners from outside of the Chicagoland area—including participants from as far away as Miami and Renton, Wash. In addition to participating in regular Destinations Showcase activities, the hosted buyers were treated to a welcome reception hosted by Rosemont Convention & Tourism Bureau and small group appointments with sponsoring destinations, which also included Beaches of South Walton, Branson Lakes Area Chamber & CVB, Daytona Beach Area CVB, Dominican Republic Tourism Board, Mexico Tourism Board, Visit Jacksonville, and Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater.

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Destinations Showcase Chicago 2010 – page 2

DMAI is now accepting exhibitor and sponsorship commitments for Destinations Showcase Washington, taking place on Thursday, Feb. 24, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in downtown Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.DestinationsShowcase.com.

About Destination Marketing Association International

Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) is the world's largest and most reliable resource for official destination marketing organizations (DMOs). Dedicated to improving the effectiveness of professionals from over 600 DMOs worldwide, DMAI's membership represents more than 3000 DMO professionals, students, educators, and industry partners in over 30 countries. Meeting professionals will benefit from DMAI's empowerMINT.com program, a new online tool for meeting and event planners. Connecting planners and their events to destinations and their experts, empowerMINT.com simplifies the researching, distribution, and selection of DMOs and partnering hotels and meeting venues. empowerMINT.com leverages and integrates the existing MINT historical database and thousands of existing customer relationships to create the DMO industry's first lead generation and sales network.

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