



=====*It's like a*=====  
**WHOLE OTHER COUNTRY**  
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# TEXAS TOURISM FY 2017 MARKETING PLAN

*United Kingdom*

## **OVERVIEW:**

The United Kingdom and Ireland travel markets continue to be extremely resilient. The UK and Ireland travelers continue to take leisure trips whether it be domestically, within Europe, North America or worldwide and sees this as a part of their fixed general annual expenditure.

With unsettling events in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe, the consumer is looking at destinations which they perceive to be “safe” and appear familiar to them even if they have not visited before. Texas is viewed by the UK and Ireland as a desirable, exciting and diverse destination offering many kinds of experiences within one state which include and are not limited to, ranching and cowboys, music, cuisine, history, the great outdoors, cruising, beach holidays and city, state and national parks. Many visitors will try to accomplish this vast array of activities within one holiday thereby incorporating a fuller holiday experience.

In June, 2016, the United Kingdom voted on a referendum on whether to exit or stay in the European Union resulting in a 52% to 48% decision to leave. With this news, the British Pound has had a marked decrease in value and early signs show that bookings and travel searches are declining for long-haul travel. The U.S. Travel Association predicts a 7.7% decline in UK travellers to the U.S. in 2017. Travel trends for international travel will continue to be scrutinized and actively adjusted as economic factors play out. .

In the UK, depending on the type of trip being booked the consumer will either book through a travel agent, tour operator or online travel agency (OTA). In some cases, the OTA and the tour operator are the same company. For the diversity of product and because the consumer still would like to speak to a live person, they will continue to book via a travel agent for most long-haul travel, as the agent will share their destination knowledge with the client. The consumer also has the peace of mind that the travel agent has financial backing should anything go wrong. For these reasons it remains vitally important that we continue to engage with the agents/tour operators. This also enables Texas to benefit from the tour operator/travel agent market penetration getting Texas product in front of more consumers.

The cruise sector continues to be an important market and is experiencing growth for new destinations in both the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Texas has excellent direct flight connectivity from London Heathrow to the main hubs of Austin, Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth. There are also travellers who travel indirectly from regional airports in the United Kingdom via various hub cities, therefore bypassing London completely. Singapore Airlines will begin direct service five times per week from Manchester to Houston at the end of October 2016.



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### **VISITOR DATA:**

An estimated 210,000 travelers from the United Kingdom visited Texas in 2015, an increase of 17.3% over last year. The UK is the largest overseas market for the state by visitor arrivals. Travelers from the UK in 2015 stayed an average of 10 nights in Texas and generated \$189 million in direct spending. Travel from the UK to Texas is forecasted to increase by 46.7% by 2020.

UK TO TEXAS (2015)
Visitor Volume: 210,000
Direct Travel Spending: \$189 million
Avg Nights: 10

Arrivals from the United Kingdom to the United States were estimated at 4.9 million, an increase of 18% over the previous year. Direct spending from the UK in the US decreased in 2015 to \$12.6 billion. Travel from the UK to the US is forecasted to increase by 19% by 2020.

### **MARKETING ACTIVITIES:**

In order to increase awareness, demand and retain booking numbers, it is important that Texas Tourism continue marketing activities within the United Kingdom and Ireland. Texas Tourism will increase presence at consumer shows and consumer promotions in order to keep Texas top of mind when budgets may be restricted due to the devaluation of the British Pound. Texas Tourism promotes directly to consumers through a variety of media and consumer activities which complements advertising and the co-operative programs to increase Texas product development and front line sales.

Texas Tourism's goal in the U.K. market is to increase visitation, room night stays and travel spending. Texas Tourism will continue to evaluate promotional activities with tour operators and travel companies in order to increase knowledge and awareness of the Texas travel product among U.K. consumers. To achieve and complete its goals, Texas Tourism coordinates and attends both consumer and trade events/shows, sales missions, develops and coordinates co-op marketing opportunities, conducts travel agent and tour operator training and hosts familiarization trips for both media and travel trade.



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Trade Shows		
Event	Date	Location
World Travel Market	November 7-9, 2016	London, United Kingdom
United Kingdom Sales Mission	March 13 – 15, 2017	To be confirmed
Unite	March 16, 2017	London, United Kingdom

Travel Trade Training / Events		
Event	Date	Location
Visit USA / Brand USA BFI Event	September 17, 2016	London, United Kingdom
Visit USA Roadshow	October 4, 2016	Newcastle, United Kingdom
Visit USA Roadshow	October 5, 2016	Bristol, United Kingdom
Visit USA Roadshow	October 6, 2016	Brighton, United Kingdom

Media Events		
Event	Date	Location
British Guild of Travel Writers	November 6, 2016	London, United Kingdom
World Travel Market	November 7-9, 2016	London, United Kingdom
Media Market Place	January 2017	London, United Kingdom
International Media Marketplace	March 13, 2017	London, United Kingdom
Visit USA Media Awards	July 2017	London, United Kingdom

Consumer Events / Shows		
Event	Date	Location
Destinations: The Holiday and Travel Show	January 19-22, 2017	Manchester, United Kingdom
Holiday World Dublin	January 27-29, 2017	Dublin, Ireland
Destinations: The Holiday and Travel Show	February 2-5, 2017	London, United Kingdom

MICE Events		
Event	Date	Location
International Confex	March 1-2, 2017	London, United Kingdom
The Meeting Show	June 13-15, 2017	London, United Kingdom