



MEMO

To:
From: Michele Cota
Date: October 23, 2023
Subject: BrandUSA Travel Week 2023 London



Discover New England (DNE) participated in the third annual BrandUSA Travel Week in London, UK from October 16 – 20, 2023. DNE had pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings with 40 tour operators based in countries throughout Europe and attended educational sessions on sustainability, accessibility and federal policy.

The state of Rhode Island shared a table with DNE; however, was present for the final 12 appointments in order to cover for a COVID positive colleague in the media marketplace for the first two days. The states of Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Vermont, Discover Newport and MeetBoston had separate tables and appointment books. The media marketplace has Discover Newport represented and the Executive Forum was attended by the State of New Hampshire.

BrandUSA greatly limits the USA vendors and highly vets the trade and media they allow to come. As a result, this show sells out very quickly and the quality of appointments are very high. The general feedback from tour operators is that interest in fly-drive holidays to the United States are strong for 2024 holidays; however, the strong U.S. dollar and the need for more New England hotels and attractions continue to challenge.

DNE has observed the following:

- 2023 is still slightly under 2019 levels; however, 2024 is projected to be at or over for most operators.
- Most clients desired “easy” holidays for their first big trips out of COVID so they booked places like all-inclusive stays in Orlando and Vegas or to New York City where they stayed put. Now,

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operators are building out their websites and programs for fly/drives to more complex destinations such as New England and TravelSouth states as these inquiries are coming back strong.

- Because many operators are now fully staffed and are also building out their product to secondary U.S. destinations, they have a strong immediate need for destination training.
- DNE is seeing some of the strongest inquiries from The Netherlands. For the first time, DNE is also hearing more interest from the large tour companies in Spain.
- Luxury and attainable luxury is in high demand. Attainable is referencing accommodations or exclusive experiences that clients will book within a broader itinerary that includes other mid-scale bookings. They are willing to splurge for a few nights within a two to three week package.