



Spotlight On Members

GETTING TO KNOW THE "WHO'S WHO" IN FAITH TOURISM

June 18, 2009

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Featured Spotlight Members - Meeting the "Who's Who" in Faith Tourism

The organizations listed below are this week's featured Spotlight on Members. In addition to reading and learning about the companies below today, be sure to also keep each and every issue of *Spotlight on Members* for future reference - by doing so, you will end up with an encyclopedia of the "Who's Who" in Religious Travel and Hospitality and develop a strong network of connections in the industry.

Travel Bound



If you could summarize your organization in one sentence, what would it be?

Selling exclusively to the travel trade, Travel Bound is a leading wholesale

FIT and group tour operator, offering more than 90,000 hotel rooms every night in over 110 countries worldwide plus a wide range of sightseeing tours, excursions, transfers and other travel services.



How is your organization involved in religious travel and hospitality?

Offering flexible tours to a wide variety of religious destinations to all religious faiths.

What specific products and/or services does your organization provide for faith-based travelers, groups and organizations?

Besides Hotel and services, Travel Bound can arrange religious services as part of the tour experience.

What is your organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace, and more specifically, within religious travel?

As a brand of GTA by Travelport, Travel Bound maintains a global network of over 25 offices to ensure local coordination and assistance.

Tell us about the "people behind your organization." What makes your personnel among the best in the industry for both the travel trade and consumers to work with?

The Travel Bound team comprises of 21 different nationalities spread across all continents around the globe. All staff are highly knowledgeable and well travelled to the destinations on offer to the religious tour operator.

If there is one thing about your organization that you would like for every travel professional and planner to know about (and remember you by), what would it be?

Flexibility - Travel Bound is flexible to the needs of every group. We have a wide database of contracts and can adapt any pre-set tour to suit the needs of any religious group.



Contact Information

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McAllen Convention & Visitors Bureau



If you could summarize your organization in one sentence, what would it be?

The McAllen Convention & Visitors Bureau is ready to make your next stay or meeting a positive and memorable experience.

How is your organization involved in religious travel and hospitality?

We assist religious conventions with various complimentary incentives if 500 room nights are booked at McAllen hotels while utilizing the New McAllen Convention Center.

What specific products and/or services does your organization provide for faith-based travelers, groups and organizations?

If they qualify, we would offer an array of awesome incentives.

What is your organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace, and more specifically, within religious travel?

Great weather, wonderful restaurants, and airport is 3 minutes from the New McAllen Convention Center.

If there is one thing about your organization that you would like for every travel professional and planner to know about (and remember you by), what would it be?

We are friendly, hard-working, and ready to assist in the planning of your next event in McAllen, "The Texas Tropics".



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Ed-Ventures, Inc.



If you could summarize your organization in one sentence, what would it be?

Ed-Ventures is a family owned and operated company specializing in worldwide tours with a purpose.

How is your organization involved in religious travel and hospitality?

Ed-Ventures has been customizing tours for operators and travel agents for over 30 years. In recent years our focus has shifted to faith-based travel with a special emphasis on the Passion Play, Footsteps of Paul, the Holy Land and Egypt, and the Reformation era. We have also arranged travel and volunteer opportunities for mission groups in Central America and pilgrimages to Italy and other destinations.

What specific products and/or services does your organization provide for faith-based travelers, groups and organizations?

We are operating many tours to the Oberammergau Passion Play, Foot Steps of Paul, Egypt, Rome, the Holy Land, and the lands of the Reformers. In addition, we are cooperating on the promotion of university classes on the Sea of Galilee and have operated several tours to Catholic World Youth Day.

What is your organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace, and more specifically, within religious travel?

Our advantage in the marketplace lies in the relationships we have established throughout the world. Our office staff is diverse in church affiliations and active within their churches. Most of our twelve member staff are bi-lingual and all are sensitive to cross-cultural and inter-religious issues. We have contacts in several countries that have approached us about promotion of faith based travel.

Tell us about the "people behind your organization." What makes your personnel among the best in the industry for both the travel trade and consumers to work with?

Our company is special because of our staff. They are culturally informed due to the fact that 98% of our tours are international. Most of our staff are bilingual and 50% have spent extended time in foreign lands. Our approach to travel arrangements is collaborative. We view the planning process as a dialogue between us, our travel partners, and our suppliers. In so doing, we can make special things happen. A tour becomes a life-changing experience. It is our goal that those who travel with Ed-Ventures learn not only from "ancient stones," but from "living stones."

If there is one thing about your organization that you would like for every travel professional and planner to know about (and remember you by), what would it be?

We would like them to know we are a company of integrity. What you see is what you get! What we promise is what you will receive!



Contact Information

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Decatur Travel Agency



If you could summarize your organization in one sentence, what would it be?

Our clients are my priority to plan their dream vacations.

How is your organization involved in religious travel and hospitality?

Getting involved in our community.

Tell us about the "people behind your organization." What makes your personnel among the best in the industry for both the travel trade and consumers to work with?

We speak different language, world travelers and have many years experience in the travel industry.



If there is one thing about your organization that you would like for every travel professional and planner to know about (and remember you by), what would it be?

We are patient and trustworthy.

Contact Information

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Submit Your Profile - and Be Featured!

Are you a WRTA Member? If so, [complete your profile](#) online for possible publication in an upcoming issue of *Spotlight on Members*.

Just a reminder.....only WRTA Members are eligible to have their profiles published. Non-members are welcome to complete and submit the questionnaires, however - before WRTA can publish your profile, you will need to register as a WRTA Member.

Who's On Deck for Upcoming Issues of Spotlight on Members?

Here's a look at a few of the companies to be featured in our upcoming publications....

Rail Europe

RS Travel Developments

206 Tours

MTS TRAVEL

Tarpon Travel

World Religious Travel Expo - Updates

Looking for details about the World Religious Travel Expo 2009?

The following links will allow you to access information and details about the Expo.

[Official Expo website](#)

[Expo video](#)

[Expo brochure](#)

[Expo Sponsorship & Exhibit Guide](#)

WRTA Notes & More

[Join WRTA](#) on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and our own Social Network
Watch the newly released [Discover the World of Faith Tourism video](#)
Get your online version of the [2009 Religious Travel Buyer's Guide](#)

Personal Note from the WRTA President



Dear Faith Tourism Friends & Colleagues,

Are you a WRTA Member? If so, we'd love to feature and highlight your organization in future issues of Spotlight on Members.

Be sure to fill out your online profile questionnaire and submit to us. We look forward to promoting your organization to the religious travel and hospitality industry at large.

Best Wishes,
Kevin J. Wright
WRTA President