



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Brand Atlanta Restructured

Scaled-back operations will continue until long-term funding is identified

After three years in operation, Brand Atlanta is downsizing. Due to a lack of long-term funding, spending on marketing has been suspended and the organization will operate without staff for the foreseeable future. The Brand Atlanta board of directors has been restructured, and will now include the president of the Atlanta Development Authority, a delegate from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and two mayoral appointees.

Some marketing activities will continue under loaned staff from the Atlanta Development Authority. The Brand Atlanta "ATL" trademark has been licensed to retailers at the airport who will sell Atlanta-branded merchandise, providing a small revenue stream to Brand Atlanta while maintaining brand visibility in the marketplace. The Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau will continue to use the brand and marks in all of its initiatives, providing hundreds of millions of brand impressions yearly in all segments of the Atlanta travel market. Many city stakeholders continue to endorse and utilize Brand Atlanta's trademarked logos and marketing platform wherever possible.

Brand Atlanta's latest campaign began on February 19 with advertisements in four outer markets: Birmingham, Ala.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Greenville, S.C.; and Savannah, Ga. Early indicators show a strong response. "The current ad campaign, called Treasures Fit for Kings, promotes Atlanta as the only destination in the U.S. with simultaneous exhibits of both King Tut, at the Atlanta Civic Center, and China's Terracotta Army, at the High Museum," says Melinda Ennis-Roughton, former executive director for Brand Atlanta. "Combo ticket sales through Atlanta.net for the exhibits have increased by over 50 percent, primarily from out-of-state visitors."

Brand Atlanta was created in 2005 to develop an integrated marketing campaign so that all of Atlanta's business and civic leaders would be telling Atlanta's story with a unified and amplified voice. The objective was to lead the way in establishing Atlanta as a preferred destination city, thereby delivering economic growth by distinguishing and communicating what makes Atlanta special and desirable for leisure tourists and convention meeting planners.



The five-year goals (by 2011) included:

1. Increase the market share of room nights from 5.8 percent to 6.8 percent, as measured by the Top 25 Smith Travel Markets in the US.
2. Improve destination appeal among meeting planners. Atlanta ranked high among this important group as a city with the right infrastructure to handle large conventions, but near the bottom as a fun place where people would choose to go.
3. Improve perception among potential tourists that Atlanta has lots to offer and is exciting place to visit, as measured by recognized sources.

Brand Atlanta was created as an economic development initiative. Before the current economic downturn began, the needle had started to move positively on the campaign's economic goals, despite the fact that the initiative was 1) outspent by peer cities, 2) funded below projected budget.

Brand Atlanta's original budget of \$28 million over three years fell short by 32 percent. Brand Atlanta's seed capital contributors included the city of Atlanta, the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Woodruff Foundation and a number of corporate sponsors who donated cash or made in-kind contributions. It was envisioned that a permanent funding stream of \$15 to \$20 million each year would be identified for 2009 and beyond. Due in part to the current economic climate, this has not happened.

Despite being underfunded, Brand Atlanta did see the needle start to move in measures commonly used by the hospitality industry. Atlanta saw an increase in its share in the top 25 U.S. travel markets, from 5.8 percent in 2004 to 6.0 percent by 2006. The city rose from 18th place to 12th place in a ranking of top meeting destinations, according to national annual survey of meeting planners. Atlanta also saw significant growth of 10.7 percent in overnight tourists and leisure visitors in 2006, representing an increase of 1.4 million tourists who spent more than \$100 per day, on average, at area restaurants, museums, shops, and hotels.

"Place branding is a long-term endeavor," says Dr. Jonathon Day, president of Placebrands.com and past president of the Travel and Tourism Marketing Association. "It requires years of consistent and persistent investment and actions for the brand to take shape. Atlanta needs to continue its focus on branding and telling its story in a way that makes people want to visit our great city."

"Our greatest accomplishment is that we invested in branding and marketing with the teamwork of countless stakeholders, civic partners and corporate donors," says Peggy McCormick, chair of the Brand Atlanta board of directors and president of the Atlanta Development Authority. "Dozens of local organizations, venues and partners came together to seek new and varied ways to tell the Atlanta story collaboratively and more cohesively than ever before. The level of partnership is to be commended. We wish to thank the many organizations and hope we can count of them when long-term funding for marketing the city is a reality."

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin says she will continue to support Brand Atlanta. "Brand Atlanta as a marketing program is as needed today as it was five years ago. This is the next phase, given current market conditions and challenges," Franklin says. "Investing in marketing the City of Atlanta is critical to the economic vitality of our city. The City should partner with the business community so that Atlanta is a destination place for visitors. A new, permanent funding source needs to be developed as we move forward."



**Brand Atlanta
2008 Accomplishments**

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| <p>New Campaign Developed new direction for campaign (based on extensive analysis of existing data and new research). Modifications included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target changed to 25-44 (young professionals) • Campaign positioning • Media mix • Campaign theme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept/positioning development • Quantitative research • Marketing media plan development for national print, cable TV (three markets) • TV campaign development; spot concept developed and produced with existing footage for less than \$25K • Promotions included focus on dining, arts and attractions | <p>Brand Atlanta Impressions National print: 32.8 million Spot Cable: in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Jacksonville, Fla.; 30 percent reach/ 8+ (18+) Bonus Media negotiated value: Total = 450K = 35 percent</p> |
| <p>Launched Major Internet Web Campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted young professionals (70 percent of all travel decisions now are made online) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed first social networking city tourism site, ATL Insider. The site provided user-generated content by Atlantans for tourists • Launched “How Do You ATL” promotion with display ads and email campaigns | <p>Results (first month): Network traffic total: + 10 percent Atlanta.net: + 25 percent ATL Insider: + 70 percent</p> |
| <p>Airport Marketing and Merchandising for City of Atlanta</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new signage, videos and materials at airport (a key touch point for tourism) • Brand Atlanta merchandising developed with Paradies and Areas stores at airport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stores to open in 2009 with licensing revenue for logo use and merchandise with logo |
| <p>Improve Tourism Experience: Explore Atlanta City Pods</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed interactive tourism kiosks with custom vides for Atlanta's attractions to help provide visitor information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locations in test at ACVB Visitor Center, Georgia World Congress Center and Woodruff Arts Center |
| <p>Treasures Fit for Kings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlanta the only city with two “blockbuster” exhibits simultaneously (King Tut and Terracotta Warriors). Used to develop tourism “call to action” campaign. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand Atlanta developed and raised funds and in-kind donations for a \$1.5 million regional campaign to support two cultural blockbusters as a tourism draw for the city. Funds included Brand Atlanta contribution, ACVB, High Museum, Tut exhibit and State of Georgia; in-kind included MARTA and Delta. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional campaign debuted February 2009 in Birmingham, Chattanooga, Savannah, Jacksonville, and Greenville/Asheville. |
| <p>Major Event Support highlights</p> | <p>National Black Arts Festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programming and national marketing effort including Steve Harvey & Essence • Record Attendance at 2008 NBAF | <p>Good Morning America Christmas Window Display</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted concept; chosen as one of 3 cities on Good Morning America/ABC • Window display coverage for Atlanta on GMA, 12/3/08 • Award winning campaign. Results TBD in 2009 measures. |
| <p>Meeting Planner Campaign</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed new meeting planner ad campaign under new branding umbrella. Ran in trade pubs 2008. | |