

## Marketing Partnerships

# How International Plaza Makes Hotel Partnerships Pay

By Carolyn J. Feimster, SCMD, President, CJF Marketing International, North Brunswick, NJ



### "Pamper Yourself" Shopping Package



**Package amenities include:**

- Room and breakfast for two at PELAGIA Trattoria
- Nightly "Turndown Service"
- Concierge Club level upgrade (Based on availability)
- \$25 Dining certificate at International Plaza
- International Plaza Gift
- Passport to Savings shopping discount card
- Exclusive "Gift with Purchase" offers
- Complimentary valet parking at Renaissance Tampa Hotel



**For reservations please call 800-666-2685 and ask for rate code SHT or visit us at [www.renaissance.com](http://www.renaissance.com)**

**Package dates/rates:**  
 Now through 4/17/05 - \$220  
 4/18/05 through 9/17/05 - \$204  
 9/18/05 through 11/18/05 - \$214

Commissionable to travel agent \$75. Rate based on Single/Double occupancy. All applicable taxes not included. Based on availability and is available for general use in accordance with other American Express.

**International Plaza**  
 AND BAY STREET

Nearly 200 stores and 15 restaurants.  
 Visit [www.internationalplaza.com](http://www.internationalplaza.com) for more information.  
 Most restaurants have outdoor seating and outdoor patio seating.  
[www.internationalplaza.com](http://www.internationalplaza.com)

**EVERY YEAR, SHOP AMERICA ALLIANCE AWARDS EXCELLENCE IN TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAMS WITH ITS SASI (SHOP AMERICA SALUTES INNOVATION) AWARDS. This year at the eighth annual Shop America Tourism Conference, there were nine SASI Award winners. This month we are going to feature one of the winners and discuss why the program was so successful.**

Many of my tourism articles emphasize the importance of developing and maintaining effective partnerships. International Plaza in Tampa, FL, has aggressively sought tourism partners with hotels and developed a very effective program called "Shop, Stay and Play Hotel Packages."

International Plaza and Bay Street is a 1.26 million-square-foot shopping and dining venue with almost 200 stores, 15 full-service restaurants, an outdoor lifestyle center and a luxury hotel, the Renaissance Tampa Hotel at International Plaza. The center features the area's most exclusive retailers, such as Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Tiffany & Co., St. John, Gucci and Movado.

The Tampa Bay area is Florida's third-largest tourism destination behind Miami and Orlando. There are nearly 58,000 hotel rooms and a variety of major attractions, museums, beaches and, of course, shopping. With its merchandise mix, design and proximity to Tampa International Airport and major highways, the management team knew that if properly marketed, International Plaza would be a tourist magnet.

"We started our tourism marketing program almost one year before opening because we understood the importance of developing the relationships and partnerships in advance so that programs could commence immediately upon the opening of the center," explained Marketing Director Nina Mahoney, CMD. "We also realized from our research that the visitor market comprised 35% of the International Plaza market. More important was the opportunity to focus on the wealth of the visitor market. They spend two to three times that of the local market." The best opportunity to capitalize on this market was to identify and partner with other entities that also attracted the wealthier visitor, the area's more upscale hotels.

International Plaza set out to develop attractive shopping packages with select hotels and called the program "Shop, Stay and Play Hotel Packages."

Goals established for the program included:

- Produce a minimum of 100 room-nights for each hotel partner.
- Generate one \$25 dining certificate for each room-night booked.

- Generate four percent more visiting shoppers over previous numbers.

"We started by identifying the upscale hotels that best matched the demographics of our shopping center and met with their sales/reservations department managers and staff to explain the program. Our goal was to get each targeted hotel to 'buy into' the program and promote the package with us," explained Mahoney.

As part of the program, a dining certificate was developed with nine restaurants. A collateral piece for each hotel was also developed and used to market the program by both the shopping center and the hotel. This piece was distributed in-mall at the concierge desk, mailed to leads generated from reader responses from tourism ads (such as in CVB Visitor Guides, FLAUSA co-op ads, and AAA Going Places), placed on the International Plaza website and the individual hotel sites and distributed by individual hotels to travel agents' leads, trade shows and sales missions. Packages are commissionable at 10% to travel agents.

While some hotels may be concerned with cutting into their own food and beverage sales, International Plaza is as much about dining as shopping, and they realize that the customer wants to experience a variety of dining venues when traveling. Furthermore, properly packaged, the dining pro-

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vides an excellent value to the hotel guest.

What is included? That varies, but a typical package could include one or two room-nights, complimentary breakfast for two at the hotel, a welcome gift provided by the hotel, a goody bag provided by the shopping center, the center coupon book, concierge-level upgrades, gift-with-purchase offers, complimentary valet parking and, in the case of International Plaza, the \$25 dining voucher. "That pretty much guarantees that the hotel guest will visit the shopping center during their stay and not get sidetracked by the beach and other tourist attractions," said Mahoney.

Packages are sold by the hotels through the reservation number and/or hotel web site. They are also available on the mall's website. (Go to shopin-

ternationalplaza.com, click on tourism, then click "here" for package information.)

International Plaza made sure there were a variety of ways to track its program. Each month the participating hotel reports the number of packages sold, number of room-nights produced and the number of adults purchasing the package. After the second year of the program, hotel package production was up 97% and the number of adult shoppers generated by the packages was up 91%. Two hundred eighty-eight dining certificates have been redeemed for a value to the restaurants equaling \$5,760.

Additionally, excellent press was achieved through Visit Florida. They included the International Plaza packages in their press releases distributed to 2043 members of the media and posted on the Visit Florida

web site: <http://mediaVISIT-FLORIDA.org>.

What is even more important is that the hotels love it and see the benefits. According to Darryl McGarity, director of sales and marketing, Renaissance Tampa Hotel International Plaza, "Today's travelers are significantly more sophisticated and desire destinations with diverse amenities. International Plaza has allowed our hotel to create and immediately capture additional guests that previously would have considered the Westshore district as only a business destination. Evidence of this has been the extremely successful 'Shop, Stay and Play Hotel package' our best performing package since opening in August, 2004!"

Cost to the shopping center was only \$3000 total, plus \$1000 to design and produce

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**Grand Shopping Getaway**

**Package amenities include:**

- One night deluxe accommodations and breakfast for two. (Fri.-Sun.)
- Passport to Savings Shopping Discount Card
- International Plaza gift
- Exclusive "Gift with Purchase" offers
- Complimentary valet parking at the hotel and International Plaza.

Single or double occupancy.  
For reservations call:  
**800-233-1234**  
Complimentary to hotel guests at IPI.

**HYATT**  
www.grandtampabay.hyatt.com

**Package dates/rates:**  
Now through 4/30/05 weekends only. - \$209  
5/1/05 through 11/18/05 weekends only. - \$179

**International Plaza**  
AND BAY STREET  
Nearly 200 stores and 15 restaurants.  
Hours of operation and location subject to change without notice.  
Must reservations have entered hours and location into system.  
www.internationalplaza.com

## Hints for Developing Effective Hotel Partnership Programs

Why should you consider forming a partnership? Because it will:

- Extend the reach and frequency of your message
- Strengthen your message
- Extend your budget
- Identify appropriate hotels for your shopping center, ones that have similar tourism goals to yours.
- Make sure the demographics and psychographics of your potential hotel partner mirror those of your tourist clientele. That will ensure greater success.
- Be creative and flexible when developing your proposal. Structure the deal so it is beneficial to both parties. Be willing to negotiate.
- Establish what your goals are for your partnership programs. For example, they could be to develop a certain number of packages, to increase your tourism traffic, to increase sales from the tourism market, etc.
- Develop comprehensive shopping packages. Include not just hotels but also transportation companies, cultural centers, sports arenas, city events, attractions, your retailers, other shopping centers, etc.
- Participate with your hotels on sales missions and sales calls.
- Write up ideas of how you would like to structure a partnership. Be creative!
- Consider various levels of partnerships/sponsorships. The more they provide you, the more they get from you.
- Ask for a meeting with your potential partner to determine what their needs are so you can structure your proposal to help them meet their needs. Goals of a potential hotel partner could be to increase consumer awareness, maintain or strengthen their presence in the marketplace, increase room-nights, etc.
- Write and submit a proposal. Include an executive summary, your goals for the partnership, an overview of your shopping center, details about your demographics and psychographics, the potential benefits of the partnership, program strategies and what the partner will receive for its commitment.
- Benefits you offer a partner could include participation in sales promotions and events, participation in sales missions, mentions in your advertising, inclusion in the web site, public relations efforts, access to your customer database, etc.
- Make sure the proposal is a win-win for both parties.
- Include a system of evaluation.
- Continue to monitor and nurture your partnership on a regular basis so it becomes a long-term relationship.

## Seeing Red, White and Blue

# Macerich Spreads the Glory as More Developers Join Flag Celebration

**F**OR THE PAST SIX YEARS, THE MACERICH COMPANY HAS SPONSORED AN OLD GLOR\*OUS CELEBRATION TO CELEBRATE PATRIOTISM AND THE AMERICAN FLAG. This year, nine other shopping center developers have answered the company's invitation to join the celebration.

The 2005 An Old Glory\*ous Celebration, commemorating patriotism and the American flag for Flag Day, will expand to more than 410 shopping centers nationwide through an historic partnership among 10 developers.

Participating companies include: CBL & Associates Properties, Inc.; Coyote Management, L.P.; Forest City Enterprises; General Growth Properties; The Macerich Company; Madison Marquette; Pennsylvania Real Estate Investment Trust (PREIT); Richard E. Jacobs Group; Urban Retail Properties Co., and Westfield Group. The AMVETS (American Veterans) and the Veterans of For-

eign Wars (VFW) organizations are also lending national support.

Beginning Memorial Day weekend, mall patrons were encouraged to show their patriotism by signing a Flag Day pledge card promising to fly the American flag on Flag Day, June 14. Old Glory will be flown across the nation when the malls host community flag recognition ceremonies on June 14 and simultaneously raise the

flag at 1:00 p.m. EDT. AMVETS and VFW volunteers will take part in the celebrations and help shopping centers secure pledges to fly the American flag on Flag Day.

"There is no better occasion than Flag Day to unite in celebrating patriotism," said Susan Valentine, senior vice president of marketing for The Macerich Company. "We are excited about the new partnerships that will provide a broader nationwide forum to raise awareness and honor the American flag and all who have served and continue to serve this wonderful nation."

The historic united effort among the shopping center developers for this year's Flag Day campaign will also recognize the contributions of Amer-

ican troops and veterans.

"We are pleased to help bring together Americans in not only celebrating patriotism but in also honoring our military here and abroad," said Wally Brewster, senior vice president of marketing and communications for General Growth Properties.

Initiated by The Macerich Company in 1999, the An Old Glory\*ous Celebration has helped to bring communities together in support of our country and during monumental times of remembrance following 9/11, the 60th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor Invasion and the war in Iraq. The program was awarded the coveted PRSA Silver Anvil in 2001 and an ICSC MAXI Award in 2000. ■

## Hotel Partnerships

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each of the hotel collateral pieces.

Tourism marketing is all about relationship building!

We are continuing this series of articles on tourism every other month and would like to focus on some of the more innovative tourism programs. Please submit your programs to me, either via e-mail (CFeims1000@aol.com), fax 732/545-3138 or mail. If possible, include samples of your graphics via e-mail. Full credit will be given to the person or team responsible for the program. Visit our new web site: [www.cjfmktginternational.com](http://www.cjfmktginternational.com).

al.com. ■

*CJF Marketing International offers a range of services for creating and implementing strategic tourism, economic development and marketing programs for shopping centers, urban entertainment projects, downtown retail districts, communities and commercial properties globally. The firm also offers educational programs and seminars for corporate meeting planners, shopping center developers, communities and re-development agencies. Feimster can be reached by phone at 732/249-6080 or by fax at 732/545-3138. Visit her website at [cjfmktginternational.com](http://www.cjfmktginternational.com).*



### Shop and Stress-Away Spa Package.



- Package amenities include:**
- One night standard accommodations
  - \$50 spa coupon good on any spa or salon service during stay
  - Breakfast for two
  - Spa welcome gift
  - \$25 Dining Certificate at International Plaza
  - International Plaza gift
  - Passport to Savings Shopping Discount Card
  - Exclusive "Gift with Purchase" offers
  - Complimentary valet parking at International Plaza & Safety Harbor Resort and Spa
  - Unlimited use of spa facilities, fitness classes and daytime tennis
  - Complimentary coffee, newspaper and incoming faxes
- For reservations call 888-237-4772 and ask for Package #111. For more information about the Safety Harbor Resort and Spa, visit [www.safetyharborspa.com](http://www.safetyharborspa.com).



**Package dates/rates:**  
Now through 11/18/05 - \$219

### International Plaza AND BAY STREET

Nearly 200 stores and 15 restaurants.  
West Shore and Bay Street - Mon - Sat, 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM, Sun, 12-6  
Most restaurants have extended hours and outdoor patio seating.  
[www.internationalplaza.com](http://www.internationalplaza.com)



### Shop 'til You Drop



- Package amenities include:**
- Nightly deluxe accommodation in a two room suite (up to 4 persons)
  - Automatic upgrade to the highest floor (the best view!)
  - Welcome drink on arrival
  - Breakfast for 2 at Watercolour our waterfront restaurant
  - \$25 Dining certificate at International Plaza
  - International Plaza Gift
  - Passport to Savings Shopping Discount Card
  - Exclusive "Gift with Purchase" offers
  - Complimentary valet parking at International Plaza



For reservations call 1-800-228-9299 and ask for code SHKT. For more info about the Marriott Suites Clearwater Beach on Sand Key visit us at <http://clearwaterbeachmarriott.com>

**Package dates/rates:**  
Now through 2/14/06 - \$269  
2/15/05 through 4/30/05 - \$329  
5/1/05 through 8/27/05 - \$249  
8/28/05 through 11/18/05 - \$219

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