



**Illinois
Department of Commerce**

& Economic Opportunity

OFFICE OF TOURISM

Bruce Rauner, Governor

FOR DISTRIBUTION

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Illinois Office of Tourism's 'Find Something More' campaign wins U.S. Travel Association's Mercury Award

Campaign designed to encourage visitors to extend their stay in Illinois wins best integrated marketing award at U.S. Travel's annual Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations

Chicago – The Illinois Department of Commerce's Office of Tourism's 'Find Something More' campaign received the U.S. Travel Association's Mercury Award for best integrated marketing campaign at the 2016 Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO).

In market from March 2015 through July 2015, the 'Find Something More' campaign sought to increase the economic impact of travel in Illinois by encouraging visitors to extend their stay in the state.

"'Find Something More' showcases how transformative the experience of travel can be – travel allows us to reconnect with the most important people in our lives," said Cory M. Jobe, Director of the Illinois Office of Tourism. "With all its wonderful contrasts and cultural diversity, Illinois is the perfect backdrop to tell stories that reveal basic human truths about why we travel to begin with – to not only relax, have fun and see interesting sites, but to discover those places that connect us with the ones most important in our lives."

The campaign strategy was inspired by revelations from the U.S. Travel Association's *Project Time Off* initiative, which found that Americans leave more than 429 million vacation days unused each year. Bolstered by these impactful statistics, the emotionally charged campaign reminded travelers of the myriad benefits of travel through television and online advertising, social media and strategic partnerships with Orbitz and Yahoo!

The ESTO awards committee gave 'Find Something More' high praise for the campaign's emotional sentiment and stunning creative. Most importantly, the campaign achieved important business results, including:

- Visits to EnjoyIllinois.com increased 45 percent during the campaign, versus the previous year (*Source: Illinois Office of Tourism*)
- The median number of nights Illinois leisure travelers stayed in paid accommodations increased to 2.6 during the campaign (*Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates*)
- Hotel & Motel tax revenue between March and July 2015 increased by 13 percent versus the previous year (*Source: Illinois Department of Commerce*)

ESTO is the premier annual learning and knowledge-sharing forum for destination marketing professionals from across the country. ESTO was created nearly 35 years ago by and exclusively for this specific audience. Restricted only to destination marketing organizations, ESTO is the place where destination professionals go to learn about new tools and techniques, share best practices and debate pressing issues affecting destinations in a non-sales environment.

For more information about planning an Illinois getaway and to order a free copy of the all-new fall/winter edition of *Travel Illinois* magazine, visit EnjoyIllinois.com, [Facebook.com/EnjoyIllinois](https://www.facebook.com/EnjoyIllinois) or follow @EnjoyIllinois on Twitter and Instagram.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.