

**MAINE OFFICE OF TOURISM**  
**“Motorcoach on Main”**

Maine Downtown Center  
December 5, 2012

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## Why Care About Coaches?

- The daily expenditure for each person traveling on a **one-day tour in North America is \$74.93**. This figure includes what the tour traveler spends and what the tour operator spends on behalf of the tour traveler. **For a multi-day tour traveler the daily expenditure per person is \$156.16.**
- **One motorcoach spending one night at a destination generates as much as \$11,660 for that local economy in meals, lodging and other spending.**
- Motorcoach traveler and tourism demand generates more than \$55 billion annually in economic transactions nationwide.
- Motorcoaches account for 751 million passenger trips annually, moving more people in some years than commercial airlines.

# Maine's "Downtown"

## Opportunities

- Many are positioned along or on well-worn Motorcoach tour routes
  - Tour operators are looking for unique and authentic experiences – a perfect fit for historic, arts & cultural corridors
  - Nearby lodging properties are already investing in marketing to Motorcoach and need attractions to "sell" with their beds
  - Existing reputation for great shopping and dining
  - Some are on Maine Motorcoach Network's 2013 FAM Route!
  - Unique, nearby attractions and special events that already draw group tours
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## Learn From Farmington's Success



*"Emily Hartung, Shelby Childs and Paul Mills from the Downtown Association welcome a bus tour from Arkansas to downtown Farmington on Wednesday. The red carpet was rolled out and greeters met the 45 visitors who stopped for lunch and shopping."  
- Sun Journal 9/26/11*

[http://m.sunjournal.com/news/franklin/2012/09/26/downtown-farmington-rolls-out-red-carpet-bus-tours/1256854?utm\\_source=Sun+Journal+List&utm\\_campaign=9692873faf-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email](http://m.sunjournal.com/news/franklin/2012/09/26/downtown-farmington-rolls-out-red-carpet-bus-tours/1256854?utm_source=Sun+Journal+List&utm_campaign=9692873faf-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email)

# Industry Definitions

## **Motorcoach Operator**

Operators own motorcoaches and provide services such as charters, tours, sightseeing, scheduled service, school bus service, special operations, and/or local receptive operations.

# Industry Definitions

## **Tour Operator**

A person or company that contracts with suppliers, such as transportation, accommodations, restaurants and attractions, to design and market a tour.

# Industry Definitions

## **Receptive Tour Operator**

A multi-faceted destination specialist whose company provides some or all components of a tour package for resale by a motorcoach/tour/wholesale operator; or sells directly to a preformed group.

# Industry Definitions

## **Group Leader**

An individual who arranges packaged travel and tours  
for a pre-formed group

## **Pre-formed Group**

Senior citizen centers, a church, a club (Red Hats)  
or individuals who work together or share a common interest  
such as skiing, history or sightseeing

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# Industry Definitions

## **Tiered Pricing**

A graduated rate structure designed to offer professional operators (Buyers) percentage discounts based on volume, production and/or their position in the distribution channel from wholesaler, motor coach/tour operator, receptive operator and travel agent. Sellers providing tiered rates protect the Buyer relationship with customers and Group Leader. Each Buyer in the distribution channel must mark-up the price to realize a profit, and be able to present the traveling consumer a cost-effective tour product.

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## Group Tour Business Chain

**YOU ARE HERE → TOUR SUPPLIER/SELLER**

(Lodging, attractions, restaurants, etc)



**RECEPTIVE TOUR OPERATORS**

(Contract with you for 20 – 40% off rack rate)



**MOTORCOACH OR TOUR OPERATORS**

(Contract with you for 15 – 20% off rack rate)



**GROUP LEADER/TRAVEL AGENT**

(Contract with you for 10% off rack rate or earn a commission on the sale)



**VISITOR/TRAVELLER**

(Should never pay more than your published rates!)

*In the cruise industry...  
InterCruises = Receptive  
Tour Operator*

*Cruise Line = Motorcoach  
or Tour Operator*

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# Universal Standards

- Motorcoach drop-off, parking and turning space must be adequate.
  - Overhead wires, tree branches that can scratch the paint or parking surfaces that “drag” the bottom of the coach should be addressed.
  - This should be a paved or graded parking lot with good drainage that does not get soft and mushy when it rains.
  - It should allow passengers to unload and load safely, away from main road traffic. Groups consist of a variety of ages and needs requiring unobstructed, level pathways that aren’t muddy, wet or rutted.
  - It should be easy to turn a coach around.

# Universal Standards

- The facility must have clean and accessible public restrooms that can accommodate multiple members of the group.
  - Motorcoaches carry as many as 55 people, and while it is unlikely that everyone will need to use the restroom, the possibility exists that they will.
  - A single restroom with one toilet is not adequate.

# Universal Standards

- A representative from the business should board the motorcoach prior to the group unloading and provide an overview of the site.
  - This might include a history of the location, what the group will experience during their visit or offer benefits that the general public does not receive.

## Universal Standards

- Have enough staff to handle the impact of up to 55 guests all arriving and departing at the same time.
  - Staff should be specially trained to handle your group tour business.
  - Operators have resold your product to their customers with the expectation you will deliver as sold.
  - This industry requires strict attention to their timetable. Be ready to move the group through your property as described to the operator when they booked with you.

## How Can You Get Ready?

- **Dedicate a section on your website to group tours.**
  - Post information about parking, dining, lodging and attractions as well as any other nearby coach services like dump stations, garages, etc.
- **Work with town officials on parking and traffic control.**
  - Create a hand out to post on your website and distribute to area businesses that participate in Motorcoach marketing
  - Advocate for Motorcoach-friendly parking and dedicated pick-up and drop-off points in your downtowns.
- **Develop programs and services that draw coaches to your community (and that create revenue for you!)**
  - Tommyknockers Tour (Bangor CVB), step-on guides, coupon books, meet a local programs, etc.



## Motorcoach Marketing

**Profile Sheets: A color-printed, two-side, three-hole punched sheet of paper that tells a tour operator everything they need to know about you.**

- Your town name
- Contact information
- Photos of your downtown
- Description of your town & why a group would want to visit
- Amenities of your community
- Motorcoach parking & pick-up/drop-off locations
- Location of your office
- Other nearby group-friendly events & festivals, hotels and restaurants



## Motorcoach Marketing

**Leads: A list of operators generated by the Office of Tourism each year after attending major group tour industry sales events.**

- Email [Margaret.Hoffman@maine.gov](mailto:Margaret.Hoffman@maine.gov) to request the current Motorcoach leads.
  - When using the list be sure to read the notes and only send information appropriate to that operator. For example, a tour operator specializing in seniors is not going to be interested in receiving information about a youth dormitory.
  - Send information via email when possible. Attach a PDF of your profile sheet!
  - Don't harass – an email once or twice a year is appropriate. Do not just add leads to your regular e-news list.
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## Motorcoach Marketing

**Maine Motorcoach Network: grew out of a grassroots effort by the Maine Office of Tourism and tourism vendors to engage the tourism community in capturing more Motorcoach business to all regions of the State.**

- Membership is open to any Maine businesses committed to serving the Motorcoach market or wanting to learn more about how to work with the Motorcoach industry.
  - Meets on the second Tuesday of the even months at locations throughout the State. Members take turns hosting meetings.
  - Has no staff, office, or budget
  - Has planned and executed two Motorcoach FAMS, completed a sales mission to PA in 2011 and helped to revise MOT's group-friendly guidelines and the group tour section of [www.VisitMaine.com](http://www.VisitMaine.com)
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## Motorcoach Marketing

**[www.VisitMaine.com/group-tour](http://www.VisitMaine.com/group-tour): Private section of the VisitMaine website just for the Motorcoach market.**

- Includes an optimized search for Group Tour Friendly Businesses.
  - When you add or update a FREE business listing on [www.visitmaine.com](http://www.visitmaine.com) be sure to complete the Group Tour section of the questionnaire (page 3.) This information is what becomes a searchable listing for your property within the Group Tour section of the website.
- A work in progress.
  - The microsite will be updated in Spring/Summer 2013.

# Travel Trade Sales Events

- American Bus Association (ABA)  
Marketplace
  - National Tour Association (NTA) Travel  
Exchange
  - Ontario Motorcoach Association (OMCA)  
Annual Marketplace
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# Membership Associations

## American Bus Association (ABA)

[www.buses.org](http://www.buses.org)

- Founded in 1926, ABA represents approximately 800 motorcoach and tour companies in the United States and Canada. Its members operate charter, tour, regular route, airport express, special operations and contract services (commuter, school, transit). Another 2,300 member organizations represent the travel and tourism industry and suppliers of bus products and services who work in partnership with the North American motorcoach industry. ABA has a total membership of more than 3,000.
  - Marketplace, GroupConnect online member directory, Destinations magazine, annual Motorcoach Marketer directory, e-newsletter, ABA Top 100 Events

# Membership Associations

## **National Tour Association (NTA)**     [www.ntaonline.com](http://www.ntaonline.com)

- NTA is an association for professionals serving travelers to, from and within North America. Since its founding in 1951, the association has served a broad and diverse membership and helped them expand market reach with innovative business tools, strategic relationships and collaboration within the industry. NTA membership represents more than 40 countries: 1,500 tour operators, 600 destinations, 1,500 tour suppliers
  - Travel Exchange, Contact, Partner2Partner online member directory, Courier magazine, e-newsletters



**Innovate & Differentiate:  
Strategies for Success**

January 30-31

Samoset Resort

[www.maintourismconference.com](http://www.maintourismconference.com)

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**Thank You!**

*Maine Downtown Center*

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