

Business travelers, incentive companies and events: the new SPTuris bet to increase tourism activity in the city economy.

The new promotional guide goal is to show São Paulo as a city with great and different options to host events and also has an important point for an incentive travel.

São Paulo Turismo (SPTuris), the company responsible for tourism and promoting event in the City of São Paulo, has been betting on the most growing segment in the world – the corporate travels – to widen tourism participation in the city economy. The manual “Destination: São Paulo – Business and Incentive Travel” - focused on specialized tour operators and travel agencies, event promoting companies and businesspeople responsible for the department of travel and incentive at their companies - was released in the “3rd Meeting: São Paulo, my Destination”, last August at Anhembi Park. The manual will be given to the specific public in trade fairs, congresses, business events, and during trainings provided by SPTuris in other cities.

The guide goal is to show areas and service infrastructure available, as well as uncountable attractions and entertainments that can make São Paulo not only a charming and different destination for events, but also the top level place for an incentive travel for the employees.

The 76-page guide covers themes like “Why São Paulo is the best destination for your events and business”, “Reasons to make São Paulo the highest point of an incentive program”, as well as reasons to break eventual resistances and myths about São Paulo as a destination. The manual also highlights the wide food and cultural options, service and event infrastructure, one-day theme tour suggestions, music, arts, shopping some of the main tourist points of the city divided into regions and a calendar with the main annual events.

For events and business infrastructure, São Paulo offers areas for trade shows and exhibitions, convention centers, areas at hotels, different places, and special areas. The manual gives tips and a travel guide with transports, useful telephone numbers, tourist information, security, addresses to make the life easier for those coming to the city.

Starting with 5,000 copies, the Portuguese-English-Spanish guide includes a CD-ROM to support the sales of the city providing pictures to be used for leaflets and promotional materials, maps, videos, tours and presentations for training.

For Caio Luiz Carvalho, the president of SPTuris, this is a great opportunity for the growing tourist consolidation of the city as business interests and benefits can be added by the destination. “São Paulo's economic power and infrastructure show it”. According to the president, São Paulo has been consolidated as the Latin American city for business and events. This segment brings an average of 5 million tourists every year for the city, 50% of the total figure.

“Now we want to improve the sector showing the wide options of spaces and facilities the city provides for all types of events and keep highlighting São Paulo as the biggest economic center in Latin America. We also want to show leisure options so that visitors can join business and entertainment”, says the president. He also remarks the participation of tourism in the Service Tax of the city has been significantly growing.

As an example, the Service Tax collection due to Tourism in the city of São Paulo, considering the first five months of the year*, grew 18% from 2006 to 2007. A 60% increment since 2004 and an 85,5%

increment compared to the first year of this decade – 2001. Hotels keep an historical mark of 70% of use, showing the sector is very different from the end of the last decade and the beginning of this one.

São Paulo hosts almost 90,000 events a year – one every 6 minutes. 75% of the big trade fairs happen here, a market representing R\$2,6 billion/year for the city. According to the *International Congress & Convention Association*– ICCA, São Paulo is the main destination for international events in the Americas and it is in the Top 20 in the world (18th) leaving behind destinations like Madrid, Sidney, Atenas, Vancouver and Rio de Janeiro.

Also according to the annual study done by *America Economia Intelligence*, São Paulo is among the five best Latin American destinations for business. This survey ranked the 40 best Latin American cities for business considering innovative potential, capacity to generate new business, telecommunications, security, quality and cost of life.

The city of São Paulo was greatly highlighted by the survey “Characterization and Dimensioning of International Tourism in Brazil”, of the Ministry of Tourism/Fipe/Embratur, that analyses the profile of foreigners that come to visit Brazil. In the item “Business, Events and Conventions”, São Paulo has 49,4%, half of total, and double of percentage of the second ranked city, Rio de Janeiro, with 22,3%. The city of São Paulo is also the leader when the travel has “other purposes”. São Paulo is the 3rd best city for leisure, just after Rio de Janeiro and Foz do Iguaçu and before famous cities, like Florianopolis, Salvador de Bahía, Fortaleza and Natal.

São Paulo’s leadership in events explains the impressive demand for the Anhembi Park, the biggest convention center in Latin America, an area covering almost 400,000 square meters. There are areas booked for 2007-2008 and even 2011. Anhembi has almost 20 big trade fair and convention centers (including the biggest in Latin America: the Anhembi Park) and other several smaller areas.

The city has also the biggest and most qualified hotel industry in Brazil: there are 410 hotels (112,31 rooms each, an average) and 46.047 rooms totally (each room booked generates 0,4 to 2 jobs, according to the hotel class). Great international hotel chains like Hyatt, Hilton, Marriott, Renaissance, Sofitel, Meliá, Radisson fights for customers together with exclusive options like Fasano, Emiliano or Unique, high class and customized “boutique hotels”.

Source: PRODAM – Group 13 – Lodging, tourist packs and events.