

December 28, 2009

\$500,000 campaign kicks off 2010 tourism promotional drive in the US

Filed in Tourism on December 28, 2009

Tourism Ireland kicked off its promotional drive for 2010 in the all-important US market this week with an extensive, week-long national TV campaign. Beginning on 26th December and continuing through New Year's Day, the Ireland ads are running on national cable channels including CNN, Fox News, Golf Channel, BBC America, Discovery Science and the Travel Channel, among others.

The TV campaign is complemented by online advertising, direct marketing activity and newspaper advertising this week in prominent newspapers The New York Times (27th December) and The Boston Globe (29th December). The total spend on the week-long campaign is almost US\$500,000.

This campaign heralds the start of a busy promotional drive for Tourism Ireland in the US next year. The organisation has set ambitious targets for growth in 2010, including a target of +2% for growth in visitor numbers from North America.

Niall Gibbons, Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland, said: "North America is a very important market for tourism to the island of Ireland. Despite the anticipated decline in access from North America to the island of Ireland and Europe in general next year, Tourism Ireland will work closely with the tourism industry to target our best prospects and deliver a +2% growth in visitors. We will instil a sense of urgency to encourage travel now and execute strong campaigns emphasising the convenience and value of a holiday on the island of Ireland, as well as compelling reasons to visit."

Tourism Ireland activity in North America next year will include:

- o a Recovery Campaign which will incorporate a promotional blitz with island of Ireland industry and market trade partners across key cities in the US;
- o co-operative marketing campaigns with all carriers serving the island of Ireland and year-round co-op tour operator promotions. Tourism Ireland will continue to work with carriers, making the case for maintaining and increasing access to the island of Ireland as the economic environment improves;
- o specific Northern Ireland campaigns which will include advertising in newspapers in the Southern States of the US and a campaign to target the Scots-Irish. Specific Northern Ireland promotional events in the US will include staging a major 'Titanic: Made in Belfast' exhibition in New York.

The creative for the TV ads was developed by global agency JWT, under the brand tagline rolled out earlier in 2009 'Go Where Ireland Takes You'. The TV ads have been designed to capture the spontaneity and fun of holidaying here and to show that some of the most wonderful and memorable experiences you are likely to have here will be stumbled on by chance.

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