



**BEFORE/ DURING/ AFTER MARKETPLACE
SECTION 3**

STEPS TO BE A SUCCESSFUL STAR

An exclusive ABA designation given to **first-time Marketplace attendees**.

- Visit the Marketplace Service Center to learn the do's and don'ts, will's and won'ts and participate in our STAR Program.
- Meet one-on-one with an experienced Marketplace delegate in our Ambassador Program.
- Attend the Orientation Q&A Panel.
- Participate in a Floor Tour. You'll get a jump-start on how to navigate the Marketplace Networking and Business Floors.
- Spend quality time researching potential clients and learning about their business.
- Attend Education Seminars to keep up on what is happening in the industry.
- Relax, have fun. Remember to get a good night's sleep before your business appointments.
- Carry Business Cards – and plenty of them.
- Ask Questions – Marketplace volunteers are ready to help.
- Use all meal functions and social events effectively. These networking opportunities provide you with time to learn more from your colleagues in the industry.
- Sellers, listen carefully during your appointments. Learn what the Buyer's needs are and then tell them how you can realistically fulfill them.
- Sellers, remember to do your Marketplace follow-up. Ask the Buyer when the best time is to send the information to their office and follow-up accordingly.
- Follow ABA on Facebook and Twitter for the latest information.

PRE-MARKETPLACE CAUCUS LEADER CHECKLIST

PLAN YOUR PRE-MARKETPLACE CAUCUS

- Get a list of members from your state through your ABA Passport.
- Plan your program agenda.
- Confirm your caucus speakers. ABA will be happy to help you locate an operator in your area to speak at your caucus.
- Put together packets of materials to be distributed at your caucus.

SET UP AN IN-STATE MENTORING PROGRAM

- Ask for volunteers to serve as a mentor to your first-time state delegates.
- Pair each first-time delegate with an experienced Marketplace attendee.
- Ask the mentor to call the first-time delegate to answer any questions they may have.
- Make sure both the mentor and the first-time attendee know that there is information on the ABA website, www.buses.org/marketplace, specifically designed to help first-time delegates prepare for Marketplace. All delegates should use this site when preparing for Marketplace.

KEEP YOUR DELEGATES IN THE LOOP

- Send your delegates a list of your prescheduled appointments to help them prepare their targeted “hot list” for on-site contacts.
- Send your delegates your schedule for the week: when you are volunteering for ABA, when you may be working at a state or sponsor booth, when you will be taking a city tour, etc.
- Reconfirm the on-site caucus times with your delegates. State/provincial Leaders are responsible for on-site caucuses set up (time and location).
- If you are planning a state dine-around function, confirm these invitations and plans with your attendees.
- If you are sponsoring a booth or function, ask your delegates to volunteer and confirm the work schedule with them.

LET YOUR DELEGATES HELP YOU PREPARE FOR MARKETPLACE

Collect your delegates’ recommendations on their top five clients with whom they are doing group tour business. Give this list to your delegates so they can request appointments with these operators.

HOW TO MAKE MORE CONTACTS

WALK THE MARKETPLACE BUSINESS FLOOR

The Marketplace Business Floor will be open to all Appointment-Takers and Business Floor Seller delegates for the entire Marketplace week. Appointment-Takers and Business Floor delegates can access the Business Floor all day Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday regardless of when they have pre-scheduled appointments and/or when their segment session (DMO, Lodging, Attraction, Receptives, Charter Operator, Associate, Allied Associations) is scheduled.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO FILL OPEN APPOINTMENTS

Sellers and Buyers are encouraged to sit together at meal functions and learn more about each other. Remember, meal functions are a great opportunity to make long-term contacts and meet new people.

Identify new ABA Motorcoach and Tour Operator members attending Marketplace. Many of these new companies will not have prescheduled appointments and will be looking to develop their programs. They could be important clients for future business.

It is encouraged that you do homework prior to your arrival at Marketplace. You may also visit the Marketplace Service Center and do your homework. Search the Motorcoach and Tour Operator Database, review the Buyer's Profile form, and research operators using their websites. These tools will provide more information on the Buyers and help you conduct a great appointment.

SPONSOR AT MARKETPLACE

The Marketplace sponsorship program is tailor-made to give your organization big name recognition with hundreds of bus and tour owners and operators throughout North America who plan tours for millions of passengers each year. Through a Marketplace sponsorship, you can make valuable contacts that will lead to profitable business with the very people who make the decisions.

From contract to post-Marketplace follow-up, ABA staff will work directly with you to create the perfect sponsorship to meet your unique needs, because flexibility is the key to making your sponsorship successful and effective. With our varied sponsorship levels, you decide how much exposure you need. You not only get what you pay for, but you also only pay for what you want. This means more value for your dollar, and you can't put a price on that.

Whether you are a longtime Marketplace sponsor or considering sponsoring for the very first time, you won't be disappointed. ABA is committed to making sure sponsors get the best possible attention and visibility. A Marketplace sponsorship is your key to success in the group tour market.

Check out the list of sponsor benefits and the listing of your competitors already sponsoring at www.buses.org/marketplace so you don't miss your piece of the business.

APPOINTMENT SAMPLE QUESTIONS

OPEN PROBES

- After reviewing your profile online, I still have some questions that I need answered to assist in bringing your tours into our (area, region, attraction, property, etc.).
- What specific types of tours does your company bring into our region?
- What percentage are public tours or preformed tours?
- Would you describe what your customers' expectations are when they go on one of your tours?
- Why do your customers purchase your product(s)?
- What types of activities or sites do your customers really rave about?
- How does your company market its products? (i.e., directly to customers, to other operators, through travel agencies, other, explain: _____)
- How would your company include our product(s)/destination(s) in your tours?
- What companies are your major competitors?
- Would your company be interested in using a receptive operator or step-on guide in our region for your tour?
- How many coaches would you be bringing into our area for a tour? A series tour? What season(s)?
- If you do not have coaches of your own, what coach company do you charter from?
- What category of hotels are you looking to work with?
- What are your major concerns in choosing a working relationship with a supplier?
- What hotels have you used successfully in the past and why were they successful?
- How do you prefer to book your space with hotels? Directly? Regional office? National office?
- Within your office, who manages choosing your tour products?
- Is there more than one person making the choice? Or is your staff responsible for a geographical region or type of product line?

CLOSED PROBES

- How would you classify your business? (tour operator, motorcoach operator, wholesaler, international inbound/outbound operator)
- Does your company publish a catalogue? How often? (Annually? Quarterly? When?)
- Do you list which hotels, restaurants, sites, or activities that are included within your published tour products?
- Would you consider non-contracted hotels for preformed tours or ad-hoc groups?
- When you bring your tours to our region (destination) what type(s) of transportation do you use for your itinerary? (Motorcoach only, intermodal? Other, explain: _____)
- Do you include meals with your tour programs? Are any meals arranged at the hotel?
- Do your clients have special menu needs to be considered?
- Are meals planned as a banquet function, coupon basis or other style?
- Do you mind if I work with others in providing follow-up information to you for your tours?

It is key to carry the energy and excitement of Marketplace back to your company and put it into action. Don't let all your hard work and business connections fall on the To Do List. Make your follow-ups a priority!

EVALUATION

Complete an evaluation online at www.buses.org/marketplace. This will help us find areas for improvement as well as develop new tools to make your future Marketplace experiences even more profitable.

BUSINESS FOLLOW UP

- Make certain that you follow up on the appointments that you had during your business sessions.
- Contact delegates that you met during networking sessions.
- Keep your company's profile updated to reflect all current products and services.
- Research and contact operators/sellers throughout the year using the My Member Search function in My ABA.
- Review new members listed in the ABA Insider for new business prospects throughout the year.
- Nominate yourself to serve on a leadership committee. This is a great networking and business development opportunity.
- Sponsor an ABA meeting or event outside of Marketplace to keep your name in front of the buyers.
- Purchase ad space in one of the ABA publications to extend your reach.
- Budget for the next Marketplace so you can build your business relationships for long-term sales success.