

SECTION TWO: MARKETPLACE PREP

PRESCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

More than 140,000 appointment requests slots are scheduled for the Marketplace 2027 week. Beginning on October 6, all Appointment-Takers can request appointments with the organizations they most want to meet with during Marketplace.

ABA gives you the flexibility of requesting your appointments on our website, www.buses.org/marketplace, allowing you to change and update your requests up until the minute they are scheduled. Requests not received by January 5, 2027 will not be included in the appointment scheduling process.

TIPS ON REQUESTING ONLINE APPOINTMENTS FOR MARKETPLACE

- ▶ Start with the materials ABA will send you electronically. The Appointment Request Mailing will contain valuable information on how to research and request your appointments.
- ▶ Your Marketplace Passport contains the Motorcoach and Tour Operator Database and Travel Database. Both can be used as a search engine to find up-to-date information on registered companies. You may then select these companies for an appointment and submit your requests online using the appointment request software.
- ▶ ABA will show you which companies have requested your organization and will allow you to review and change your requests so you can have more mutually requested appointments.

UNDERSTAND THE ABA SCHEDULING PROCESS

- ▶ Appointment codes are assigned to you on the day you register, and appointments are prioritized and scheduled in order of your appointment code. Appointments are not prioritized based on the date your appointment requests are returned.
- ▶ Keep a copy of your requests for your records.
- ▶ ABA's appointment scheduling program schedules nearly 95% of mutually requested appointments (meaning both the Buyer and Seller requested to meet with each other), and 90% of the Buyer requested appointments. Requesting the maximum appointments allowed increases your chances of getting those mutual requests.
- ▶ ABA's goal in scheduling appointments in this manner is to provide you with the absolute best quality appointments possible.

BUYERS: SEARCH THE MEMBER PROFILES ON ABA'S WEBSITE

- ▶ Profile forms for all companies attending Marketplace are available online through your Marketplace
- ▶ Passport. Using the interactive Seller database will help you determine which companies meet your criteria; these will be the profiles you want to research.
- ▶ In using the database, popular searches are by: Tour Destinations, Amenities.
- ▶ Remember when searching the profile database, the more criteria you select, the smaller the results of your search will be.
- ▶ You may want to start with your ideal group. Choose your city as a top destination, the type of service/property. Your search may result in only a few companies, but these will be your top priority prospects when requesting your appointments.
- ▶ Keep in mind that the data is only as good as the information supplied by the travel industry members when completing their ABA membership profile form. Some information may be incomplete. If your first, most specific searches result with nothing, keep trying by broadening your search criteria.

SELLERS: SEARCH THE MEMBER PROFILES ON ABA'S WEBSITE

- ▶ Profile forms for all companies attending Marketplace are available online through your Marketplace Passport. Using the interactive Motorcoach and Tour Operator database will help you determine which companies meet your criteria; these will be the profiles you want to research.
- ▶ In using the database, popular searches are by: Tour Destinations, Intermodal Programs, Marketing Activities, Operator Size, Customer Base, and Facilities Used.
- ▶ Remember when searching the profile database, the more criteria you select, the smaller the results of your search will be.

- ▶ You may want to start with your ideal group. Choose your city as a top destination, the type of market you would prefer to cater to, or search for operators who use your type of facility on their tours. Your search may result in only a few companies, but these will be your top priority prospects when requesting your appointments.
- ▶ Keep in mind that the data is only as good as the information supplied by the operators when completing their ABA membership profile form. Some information may be incomplete. If your first, most specific searches result with nothing, keep trying by broadening your search criteria.

APPOINTMENT REQUESTS BY THE NUMBERS

Different member categories are scheduled for appointments during the same sessions, but appointment requests are made separately to ensure even distribution of appointments among DMOs, Lodging, Attractions, Receptives, Charter Operators, Allied Associations and Associates registered as appointment-taking Seller delegates. ABA allows delegates to submit more requests (75) than the (50) prescheduled slots to increase their potential for matches.

Appointment-Taking Buyer Delegates

- ▶ 75 Requests for DMO and Receptive/Charter Operators registered for the DMO session
- ▶ 75 Requests for Lodging
- ▶ 75 Requests for Attractions, Receptive/Charter Operator and appointment-taking Associates registered for the Lodging/Attraction sessions

Appointment-Taking Seller Delegates

- ▶ 75 Requests for Buyers

YOUR GOAL SHOULD BE TO FIND THE “VALUE PROPOSITION” OR “SALES MESSAGE” FOR THE OPERATOR

- ▶ Remember the 80/20 rule: 80% of your visitors come from 20% of your feeder areas.
- ▶ Go after a targeted group of prospects based on your search findings. The number of appointments you schedule is not your primary objective. It is better to have 2 great opportunities than 20 okay prospects.
- ▶ Finally, look up the website of specific companies that you are interested in to get more information on their current tour product.