



Creative Cities & Tourism Opportunities

UNESCO Creative Cities of Crafts & Folk Art Annual Meeting
September 25, 2017
Paducah, Kentucky

What is NTA & who are our members?

NTA is a professional community where members:

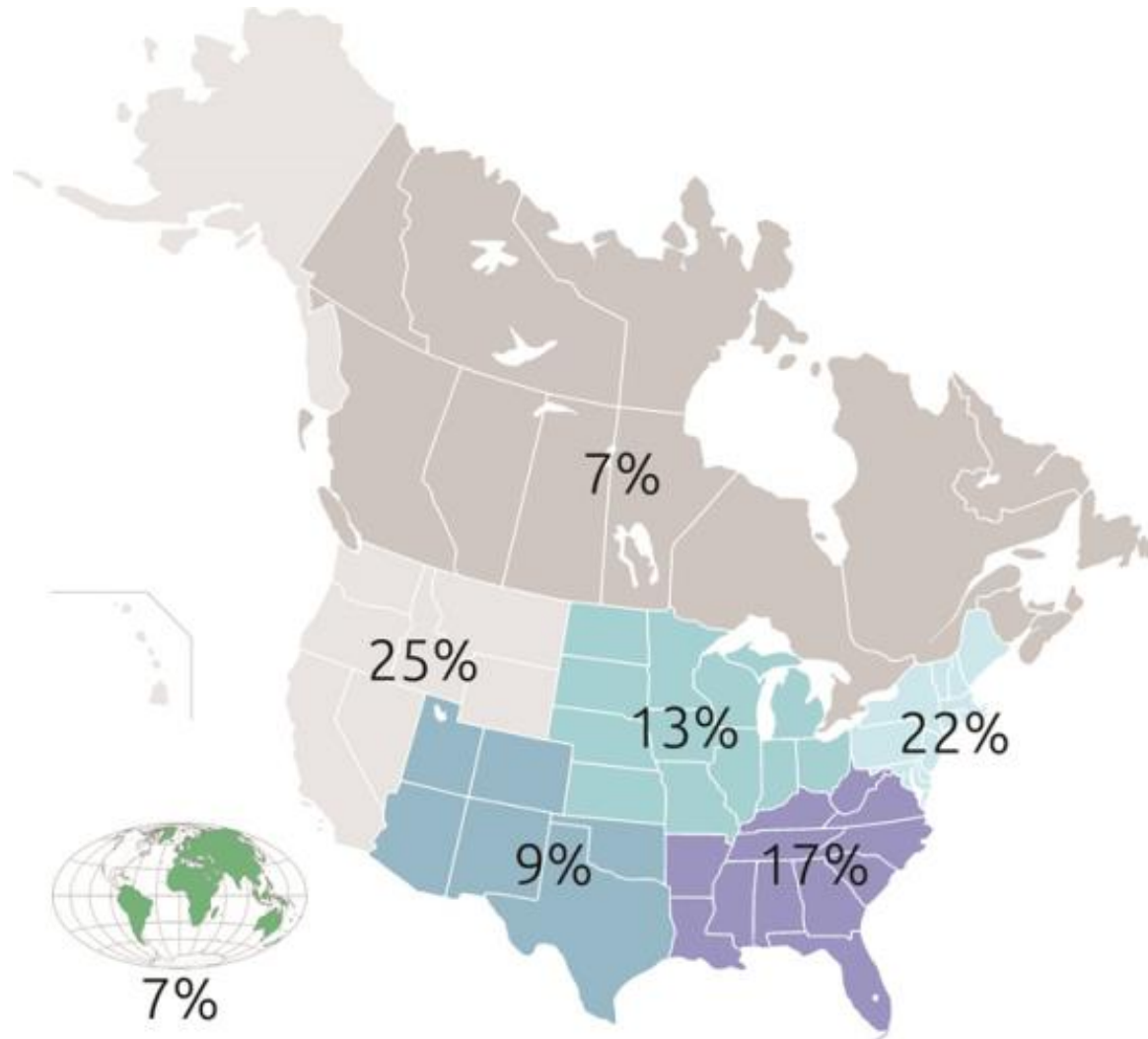
- Make business connections
- Learn from their peers
- Advocate for travel and tourism

Our members are:

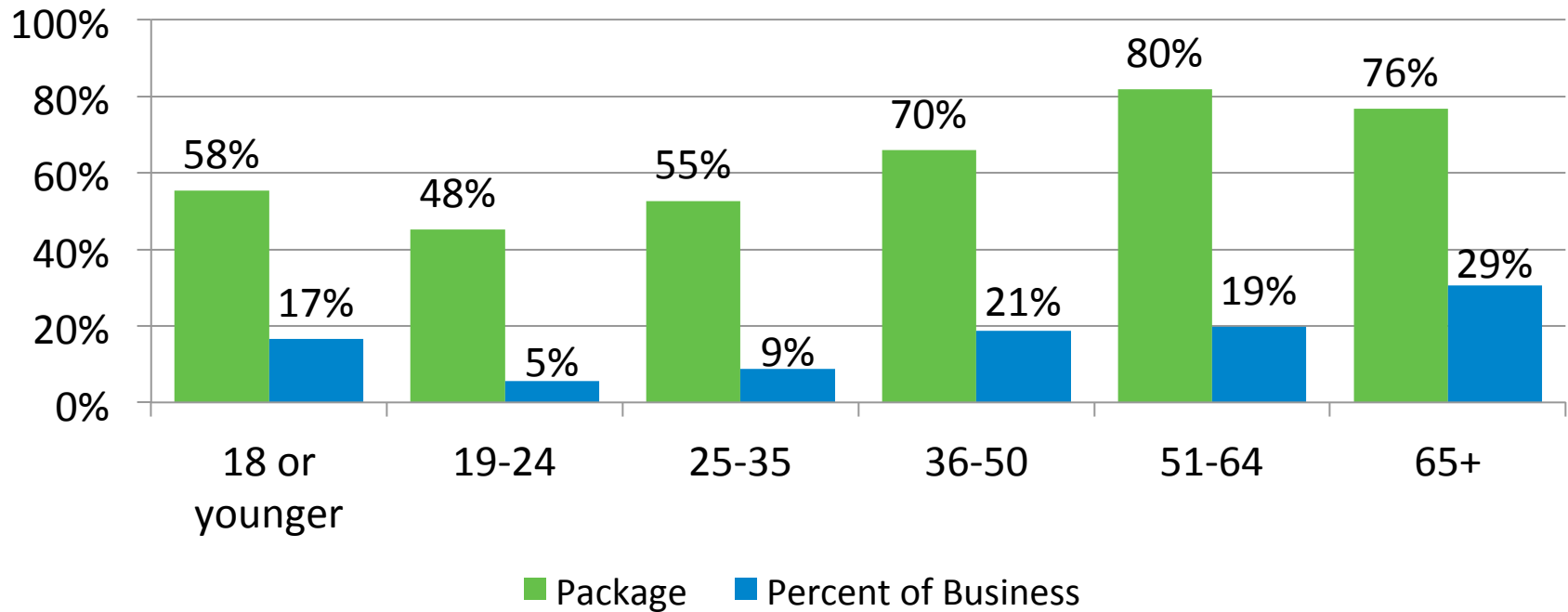
- Tour operators
- Travel agents
- Suppliers
- Destinations



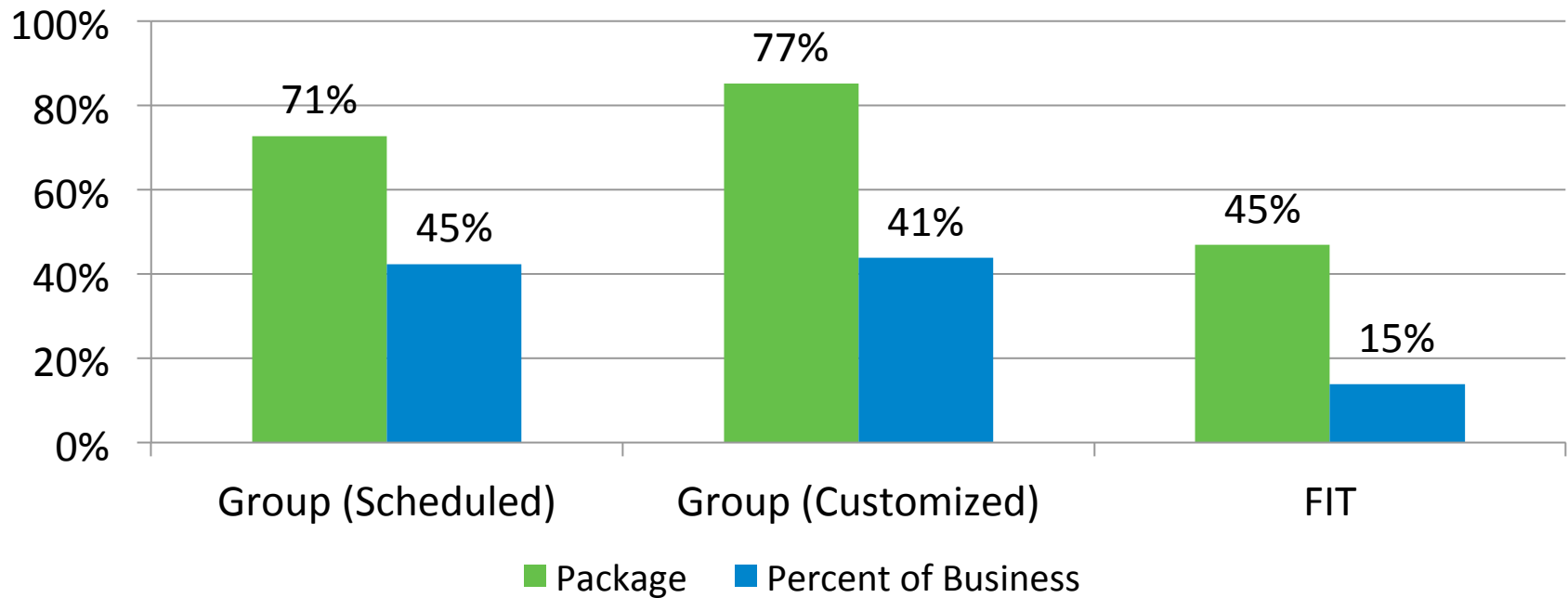
NTA members by location



Age of NTA tour operator clients



NTA tour operator business model



The NEW landscape of packaged travel

Smaller groups

- Changing demographics of travelers
- Demand for experiences; special interest activities

FIT or independent travel

- Choice, customization and freedom
- Family groups

Individual experiences within group itineraries

- Best of both worlds
 - Choice + customization + group camaraderie



Paducah CVB

The NEW landscape of packaged travel

Demand for higher quality products/services/amenities

- Savvy travelers know what they want; this includes “value”
- Expectation of special treatment

Unique/special experiences

- Authenticity & cultural immersion

Late booking

- Not only want it all ... but want it now!

Adapting to and incorporating technology

- Instant gratification society
- Expect same technology platforms with their travel experience



Fabriano, Italy - Radha Pandey

NEW landscape = tourism opportunities

Smaller groups & FIT

- New markets
- Review comp policies and group pricing

Higher quality services/amenities & unique/individual experiences

- Showcase customer service
- Audit product offerings; highlight USP

Late booking

- Review deposit policies
- Respond quickly to operator requests



Santa Fe, New Mexico

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

How can creative cities become a part of an operator's package?

- “Give us something that the general public cannot do.”
- “What I want is that unique experience or attraction that sets your destination apart.”
- “We tour operators like to simplify, so if you add value to our package by putting tour parts together, it makes our life easier!”



Paducah CVB

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

How can creative cities become a part of an operator's package?

- “We sell full programs, not parts. We would rather work with a supplier who can offer several things in an area than have to take all the parts and make them into a tour.”
- “Give us slower dates when we can package 5-star properties at 3-star rates.”
- “E-blasts that cold-call hundreds of tour operators will likely be deleted.”



Nassau, Bahamas - Creative Nassau

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

How can creative cities help promote a tour's bookings?

“Send us high-quality images for Web and print.”

“Send us a video for email blasts or a DVD to show on the coach.”

“Send us blurbs or write-ups that talk about what's special at your place.”

“Cross-promote on social media.”



Hangzhou, China - Catherine Prather

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

What do you need from attractions?

“We have a check list:

- Adequate restroom facilities. If you don't have them, you need to own up, and we'll stop before we get there.
- Someone to greet the group, especially if they understand group dynamics
- Somewhere for the group to sit—a staging area
- Docent to help us if we need help
- Gift shop and dining facilities
- A special gate or group entry area
- After-hours contact”

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

Additional guidance ...

- Provide solid information on dates, possible services and prices in advance
- Offer reasonable group or tour operator rates
- Step up the marketing to tour operators; build awareness
- Show your interest: Get involved with the industry and have a designated packaged travel market representative



San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico - Visit Mexico

Creative cities & (more!) tourism opportunities

Additional guidance ...

- Educate operators on your special cultural offerings
- Maintain dialogue with tour operators; ask for feedback and act on it
- Take that knowledge to train others in your creative city and build infrastructure that works
- Represent—with authenticity—your culture



Al-Ahsa, Saudia Arabia

Target your market & know your market

For example, who are Chinese international travelers?

- Chinese growing middle class
- Millennials: nearly half were born in 1970s and 1980s
- 56% are female
- Family/Multi-generational
- Spending higher share of income on travel
- Less shopping; more spent on meaningful experiences
- 90% use mobile apps for planning, sharing and reviews
 - 70% use mobile apps for booking
- Chinese collective culture (KOLs)



Suzhou, China

Creative cities & tourism opportunities

Tour operators need your creative, cultural, authentic product.

It's an exciting, win-win situation!

