



2012 BHCVB Ambassador Program

Background:

Beverly Hills is known world-wide as a destination synonymous with luxury and impeccable service. When visitors come to Beverly Hills, they expect to be greeted by a friendly face that will go the extra mile to assist every need they might have. One of the best executions of this type of service is the hotel concierge. With the opening of the new Beverly Hills Visitor Center, Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau has the opportunity to help make every customer-facing employee who works in the city become a Beverly Hills subject matter expert focused on providing the best experience possible to anyone who stays, shops, dines or comes to events and attractions in the city.

Objective:

To utilize the expertise of the Beverly Hills hotel concierges to create a structured Ambassador Program that will make every Beverly Hills customer-facing employee a destination subject matter expert. Upon completion of the program, participants will be certified as a BHCVB Ambassador trained specifically to answer questions and provide insider tips on all the places to visit and see in the city. They will be an extension of the Visitor Center, versed in the unique experiences offered in Beverly Hills and will be able to readily share this information to enhance the overall visitor experiences.

Methodology:

BHCVB would like to create an "Ambassador Training Program" that will certify individuals working in front-line roles in a curriculum of enhanced knowledge of Beverly Hills and provide them with tools for reference so that they are consistently able to deliver outstanding service and guidance. The program will also train participants on how to utilize BHCVB tools and communications like lovebeverlyhills.com, social media pages and eNewsletters to provide information. The program would consist of a mixture of on-line and in person training techniques with the following incentives:

1. Certificate of completion
2. Awarding of the Beverly Hills Shield Pin
3. Invitation to special Ambassador events hosted by BHCVB
4. Destination expert designation and enhanced sense of community belonging
5. Positive attributes for resume, corporate offices and referrals

Tactics:

1. Concierge Roundtable
 - The program will begin with outreach to compile a thorough database of local concierges. An invitation will be sent to each to meet as a group to discuss the meaning and deliverables required for "impeccable service" to visitors and

guests. During the discussion, tools and training materials which are currently being used by the local concierges will be collected.

2. Materials to Train Candidates

- Following the roundtable discussion with the hotel concierges and after careful review of the materials they use, BHCVB will develop a comprehensive training program on Beverly Hills and the Visitor Center. The training will be conducted in person at the Visitor Center and will also include a trolley tour and walking tours. Participants will have materials that they can take with them that they can use as reference tools throughout their life as an Ambassador. Renewal courses will be mandatory (annual or semiannually depending on content). The materials will eventually have an online component as well (please refer to *online training component* below).

3. Have A Hospitality Aimed Opening Event

- BHCVB will host an opening event for the Visitor Center to kick off the new Ambassador Program. The event will be an afternoon event, 4pm-7pm so the hotel concierges can participate for at least one hour. Invitees will also include retail and restaurant partners and will provide the opportunity to sign up for the program. BHCVB will also offer prizes via drawing for all who sign up at the reception upon correct completion of Beverly Hills destination questions.

4. Online Training Program

- The training materials will also be made available online. BHCVB will compose and distribute an RFP to a third party specializing in the development of the program objectives utilizing technology and other visitor experiences. Candidates will then go through a track able online certification program. Renewal courses will be mandatory (annual or semiannually depending on content). The content could also possibly be adapted for travel agents for a Travel Trade Ambassador Certification offered worldwide on the website in multiple languages.

5. Hands-On Experience

- Candidates who go through the training program might also be called upon to spend a couple of hours in the Visitor Center when a group is scheduled to visit so that they may experience firsthand working with visitors. Additionally, Ambassadors might also be utilized, upon volunteering to participate in Familiarization Visits (FAMS) that utilize walking and trolley tours. The Familiarization Visits are prearranged tours offered to both media and trade groups wanting familiarize themselves with the Beverly Hills product. Having the Ambassadors participate in these FAMS would be additional exposure of the program to these constituents.

6. Recognition

- With the success of the program, BHCVB could plan and host an annual Gala Dinner recognizing achievement and excellence in the Ambassador program and feature the recipient's photo and story in BHCVB communications and in the Visitor Center.