PRESERVE AMERICA PRESIDENTIAL AWARD
"Explore the Highway with Hampton, Save-A-Landmark™" Program

OVERVIEW

Hampton Hotels' red, white and blue logo represents what the company and its guests are all about – traditional American values. With more than 1,350 Hampton hotels along U.S. highways, 75 percent of the guests travel by car. Faced with the task of creating a community relations program that resonates with and attracts travelers, Hampton established the "Explore the Highway with Hampton, Save-A-Landmark™" initiative. Dedicated to restoring quirky, cultural and historical roadside attractions, Save-A-Landmark is an "Americana" program that Hampton team members, the media and, most importantly, hotels and their surrounding communities have enthusiastically embraced.

Local Hampton Inn hotel employees are key to the Save-A-Landmark program's success. Responsible for painting, cleaning and landscaping, as well as other preservation and beautification efforts, the ongoing refurbishments provide an outlet for Hampton volunteers to get involved by maintaining important landmarks in their own backyards. Banding the hotels together in communities across the U.S., the volunteers provide the labor while the national office provides the dollars to refurbish selected sites, up to five locations per year. With only the help of the volunteers and their energetic enthusiasm, Hampton is responsible for researching landmarks in need, promoting landmark sites and their importance, facilitating thousands of volunteer hours, donating hundreds of supplies and working with matching grants – all at an investment of nearly $2 million toward the preservation of 25 uniquely American roadside landmarks in just five years.

The hotelier isn't simply resting on its successes either – Hampton has set a goal to help restore a landmark in every state by 2010, saving *another* 25 landmarks for future generations to enjoy.

OBJECTIVES

As its name implies, the Save-A-Landmark program is dedicated to encouraging the preservation and appreciation of America's landmarks. Further, the program strives to generate national and regional awareness of Hampton's commitment to preserving landmarks in the communities it serves, and encourages travel in a tough economic and competitive travel market. Secondary objectives include increasing visits to – and potential business through – Hampton's Web site (hamptoninn.com); providing print, online and broadcast coverage for the landmark receiving assistance; reinforcing the presence of Hampton hotels all along U.S. highways and byways; and further associating Hampton as being well connected with local communities.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The Save-A-Landmark campaign speaks to several target audiences. First and foremost, local communities in which landmarks reside constitute an essential target audience, since the program counts on support from community leaders and landmark submissions from the public. Hampton also considers its team members/employees an important target audience as it heavily relies on their support and involvement. In addition, Hampton reaches out to consumers – both potential and current leisure travelers – to inspire more culturally relevant reasons to get out and hit the road. Lastly, media relations are a strong component of the campaign, including outreach to national, regional and local travel and lifestyle journalists.

RESEARCH

According to a 2003 Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) study, there is growing interest in "travelers' desire to experience cultural, arts, historic and heritage activities." In fact, more than 80 percent of U.S. adults who traveled in the past year, or 118 million, are considered historic/cultural travelers. Additionally, Hampton learned through its 2000 "Explore the Highway" survey that 92 percent of it guests think it is important to preserve our roadside landmarks. A full 65 percent said they would be more likely to frequent a business that is involved with preserving America's landmarks, giving further credence to the idea that good social responsibility is also good business.

STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION

In 2000, Hampton set out to create community and team member involvement opportunities and further connect with its guests. As the program progressed, Hampton realized that the issue of landmark

preservation was larger than initially anticipated. In 2003, America's national parks are getting just two-thirds of the funding they need, leading to the deterioration of park facilities, according to the National Parks Conservation Association. With preservation funds dipping every year, America's cultural and historical landmarks are threatened by decay and in danger of disappearing. Without the support of donors, such as Hampton's Save-A-Landmark program, the stories that these sites tell could fade away forever.

Restoration Projects – Hampton has completed 25 landmark restorations to date, ranging from the World's Largest Santa Claus in North Pole, Alaska and the Uncle Sam statue in Ottawa Lake, Mich. to the "See Rock City" Barn in Sevierville, Tenn. Each project takes extensive planning and research, which includes:

- Identifying uniquely American landmarks – from covered bridges to drive-in movie theaters – that may disappear without assistance from the private sector
- Creating working relationships with the owners or directors of identified landmarks for restoration events, including working with local contractors to secure work order details and determining the size of the grant
- Recruiting and organizing employee volunteers in the communities surrounding the chosen landmarks
- Conducting outreach to editors to garner media attention for the landmarks, and Hampton's role in helping to preserve American history

In 2003, Hampton Hotels worked with historian and preservationist Jim Conkle and Route 66 associations across the country to raise awareness about the "Mother Road" and protect its endangered locales. The program also created a new visual "road map" along the route, marking 60 historic landmarks with new signage. Hampton Hotels' Route 66 efforts resulted in seven historic sites refurbished along Route 66, thanks to funding and the volunteer labor of local Hampton Inn hotels near the sites.

Encouraging Tourism – After the volunteers have completed their work and the shovels, paintbrushes and cleaning supplies have long been put away, owners report that their landmarks receive additional press attention in the months following the event, as well as a significant increase in the number of visitors.

For example, in February 2005 when Hampton announced its plans to refurbish the Admiral Twin Drive-In in Tulsa, Okla., prior to Memorial Day and the opening of the busy summer movie season, the landmark owner received such an overwhelming interest from the community and drive-in enthusiasts that he opened the theater *two months early*. As a result, the Save-A-Landmark program helped him to record additional income, more newspaper and broadcast coverage, and sparked a renewed interest around the country (via the power of the Internet) for the memories and fun associated with the drive-in experience.

Based on the success of the Save-A-Landmark program, Hampton knew it was in a unique position to continue to capture travelers' interests. In 2004, Hampton created an online tool promoting more than 1,000 lesser-known pop culture and hidden landmarks to travelers looking for places and tours that harbor some of the country's unknown, unconventional and most unbelievable secrets and legends. The result was "Hidden Landmarks"– an interactive Web-based component showcasing fun and quirky all-American landmarks – from the location of Babe Ruth's first home run to where Elvis Presley first plucked a guitar string. The site also assists with increasing the number of landmark submissions the program receives and encouraging tourism and cultural travel interests. (Hidden Landmarks can be found at www.hamptonlandmarks.com.)

25 LANDMARKS SAVED!

Since 2000, the Save-A-Landmark program has preserved up to five landmarks each year; below is the complete list of landmarks saved:

The Rain of Arrows (Mancos, Colo.)
"See Rock City" Barn (Sevierville, Tenn.)
Hollywood Walk of Fame (Hollywood, Calif.)
The Big Duck (Flanders, N.Y.)
El Camino Real Bells (Oceanside, Calif.)
World's Largest Santa Claus (North Pole, Alaska)

Odell Standard Oil Gas Station (Odell, Ill.)
Uncle Sam Statue (Ottowa Lake, Mich.)
One-Room Schoolhouse (Northville, Mich.)
Monument of States Statue (Kissimmee, Fla.)
The Blue Whale (Catoosa, Okla.)
Meteor City Trading Post (Meteor City, Ariz.)
La Plaza Park (San Bernardino, Calif.)
The "Oldest House" in the U.S. (Santa Fe, N.M.)
The Eat-Rite Diner of Route 66 (St. Louis, Missouri)
Streetcar #30, the "Clover Belle" (Surrey, B.C.)
Cadillac Ranch (Amarillo, Texas)
National Monument to the Forefathers (Plymouth, Mass.)
Tybee Island Lighthouse (Tybee Island, Ga.)
Harsson-Goyer-Lee House (Memphis, Tenn.)
The Gingerbread Castle (Hamburg, N.J.)
Hogback Bridge (Winterset, Iowa)
Admiral Twin Drive-in Theater (Tulsa, Okla.)
Enchanted Forrest (Ellicott City, Md.)
Jesse Owens Memorial Park (Oakville, Ala.)

FUNDING

The Save-A-Landmark program is wholly funded by Hampton. The hotelier has invested nearly $2 million toward the preservation of uniquely American roadside landmarks in just five years. These funds include not only monetary donations, but also include the costs associated with researching landmarks in need, promoting landmark sites and their importance through public relations and marketing initiatives, mobilizing volunteers and donating thousands of supplies.

ACCOLADES

In late 2004, Hampton received the ultimate distinction – the hotelier was recognized by The Traveler's Conservation Foundation and *SMITHSONIAN Magazine* for its efforts as the **winner of the Sustainable Tourism Award in the preservation category**. The Sustainable Tourism Awards were created to encourage and promote sustainable tourism projects around the world. Nominations must demonstrate excellence in preservation or conservation, a clear connection with tourism, and how this award will help a project advance its goals. Hampton Hotels is the first hotel chain to ever win this honor, and used its entire $20,000 award money toward its first landmark restoration in 2005. Winners were determined by international public vote through the award's Web site, with Hampton receiving the most votes worldwide.

This year, Hampton's Save-A-Landmark program was selected as the **winner in the Public & Community Service category of the Odyssey Award from the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA)**. The TIA judging committee, comprised of executives representing a broad cross section of the travel industry, is the ultimate distinction and honor in the travel industry.

FORWARD MOTION

In addition to the work completed with volunteers on-site, the excitement generated often leads to additional interest and movement from the community, an influx of donations toward the landmark and ongoing media interest. A few examples:

- Due to the extensive local and regional media coverage of Hampton's refurbishment efforts during the restoration of the historic Harsson-Goyer-Lee House in an area of Memphis known as the "Victorian Village," the community rallied behind the cause donating an **additional $35,000 in individual contributions**. Additionally, community members and preservation historians throughout Memphis sent countless letters and phone calls thanking Hampton and its volunteers for their part in restoring an important piece of the city's history. Finally, the president of the Memphis chapter of the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities nominated the program for the Memphis Heritage Award.
- In October 2005, 25 volunteers assisted in a makeover of the Jesse Owens Memorial Park outside of Decatur, Ala., to commemorate one of the world's greatest athletes and humanitarians for his accomplishments on and off the track field. But beyond recognizing the man who embodied the American spirit, Hampton was able to **affect public opinion and create a public call to action with an editorial in the *Decatur Daily*** challenging the community to bring more state and national attention to the park.
- Save-A-Landmark has generated more than **5,000 news articles and broadcast clips about landmark preservation,** including placements on CNN.com and in the *Associated Press, New York Times Syndicate, American Spirit Magazine, National Geographic Travel, USA Today,* and numerous local papers where the refurbishments were conducted.