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INVEST IN YOUR PROGRAM'S NEXT TRIP, ESPECIALLY IN A "DOWN" ECONOMY!

As the CEO [director] of your company [music program], your employees [students] and your customers [parents, community] look to you for strength and leadership even more now than they usually do, based on the current state of our economy. They look to you for signs that you still believe in the value of your company's [music program's] product, and that you believe in the number of benefits it can provide during these less-than-perfect economic times.

Sure, it is hard to consider traveling with a large group of high school musicians when the daily media coverage provides a constant reminder of our current economic downturn. And yet, at this VERY time, the best CEO's [directors] of the best companies [music programs] are able to focus on long-term goals and production as a means of keeping their companies [music programs] prospering, and their employees [students] excited about coming to work [class] each day! NOW is precisely when the best CEOs [directors] show why they are the best! They plan, guide, encourage, outline, set goals, share ideals, and truly LEAD their employees [students] through this difficult period!

Having recently returned from a 5-day trip to the “Disney Honors” National Music Festival in Orlando, Florida with over 200 students and chaperones, I know full-well the difficulties of making this a viable and valuable experience during these troubling economic times. And yet, I can honestly say that it was one of the most rewarding student-travel experiences of my 26-year career as a music educator!

“How can that possibly be the case?” you might ask. The concept of “synergy” has never been more applicable than it was in the case of our recent trip. Many different facets of the trip all working together produced a “sum” that was larger than the individual parts!

1. As directors, we began planning our trip over a year in advance. We kept our students very interested and very excited about the trip during the entire year of preparation. We used the extended lead-time to break the cost of the trip into smaller “payments” for the students and their families, in an attempt to help make it more financially manageable. We also “advertised” the trip and its many values at each of our concerts, thereby keeping prospective parents and other community members informed of our intentions.
2. As students, our kids took advantage of fundraising efforts that were provided to help earn portions of the funds needed for the trip. They took responsibility for following timelines of necessary trip payments and other deadlines. Most importantly, they used the excitement of the trip as motivation for practicing, for keeping their grades up and remaining academically eligible, and for pushing themselves and their friends to improve in each rehearsal.
3. As parents, they trusted our professional judgment regarding the value of the trip. They stayed current on payments and deadlines, and they fed off the enthusiasm of their children in all aspects of the trip.
4. As school administrators, they provided us with the time to travel. They allowed us to take many school employees as chaperones (which greatly contributes to the smooth running of the overall trip!), and they trusted our professional decision-making in regards to all elements of the trip. They enjoyed the enthusiasm being spread throughout the school as students prepared for and returned from the trip!
5. Finally, Bob Rogers Travel provided us with exquisite, detail-oriented plans and services. They were in constant communication with us throughout the entire process, providing updates and recommendations along the way. They understood and respected how hard everyone had to work to make the trip a reality!

Go ahead and INVEST in your company’s [music program’s] next travel experience! Lead the way! Show your employees [students] and your customers [parents, community] that you

believe now more than ever in the value of your company's [music program's] product, and in the number of benefits it can provide, ESPECIALLY in these less-than-perfect economic times!

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