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South Carolina State Museum Wins South Carolina Governor's Cup Award

South Carolina's Top Tourism Award for Travel and Tourism

COLUMBIA, S.C., February 18, 2016 – The South Carolina State Museum was awarded the prestigious Governor's Cup Award, South Carolina's top award for travel and tourism. The award ceremony was held on Wednesday, February 17, at the annual South Carolina Governor's Conference on Tourism and Travel in Charleston, South Carolina, held Monday, February 15 through Wednesday, February 17. The conference is an annual gathering of industry leaders to discuss emerging trends and marketing strategies that help improve the business of tourism. Award are given to recognize outstanding achievements in tourism development, marketing, events, business practice and study.

"The state museum is proud to be awarded for its innovative marketing and increased economic impact on South Carolina," said, Willie Calloway, executive director of the State Museum. "The "Windows to new Worlds" project has now been awarded 8 awards ranging from design, educational content, historic preservation and context and now tourism."

Since the grand opening of its award winning \$23 million renovation and expansion project, "Windows to New Worlds," the State Museum had its highest revenue earning year in history, going from \$1.2 million to \$2.4 million and increased attendance by 44%, which is the second highest attendance record in the museum's history. The main focus of the project was to allow the museum to compete on a national scale to attract visitors by adding facilities that creatively rotate content, allowing the museum to market new messages and increase the frequency of visit per guest.

The State Museum had an estimated \$22 million economic tourism impact on South Carolina. It is also improving the quality of life in South Carolina by educating and inspiring its residents and visitors and is supporting businesses by contributing to the number of visitors who stay in local hotels, shop in local stores and dine at local restaurants. The museum, in increasing its length of stay per visitor, has the ability for the first time in its history to appeal to visitors from beyond our state.

The State Museum has not only had an impact on the state financially, but it has opened new "Windows" to learning as well. The Boeing Observatory is a focal point in the museum's science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education initiatives. With state-of-the-art technology that allows students all over South Carolina to physically control the telescope remotely and take images without leaving their classrooms, our impact on education in South Carolina is paramount.

A year prior to opening, the marketing team started creating an integrated campaign called "Brighter Than Ever" to reach all possible audiences through a variety of channels. The marketing initiatives included a PR campaign that went beyond the borders of SC, a targeted comprehensive media buy, a new website, social media campaign and a rebranding of the museum. The creative campaign celebrated what the museum knows to be true, that it was now one of the brightest "stars" in the state of South Carolina.

To see the State Museum's Governor's Cup Award Submission [click here](#).

About the South Carolina State Museum: *As the state's largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum, offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000*

square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia's Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its greatest artifacts, an 1894 old textile mill full of character and charm. In addition to beautiful meeting spaces throughout the facility, guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch an interactive 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These exciting opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science/technology that guests can experience. Visit scmuseum.org.

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