

“The Pennsylvania Experience”

Remarks by Diane McGraw  
President, McGraw Productions

to the  
Senate Committee on Economic and Recreational Development (CERD)  
June 3, 2015

Good morning Chairwoman Ward and members of the Senate Committee on Economic and Recreational Development. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning to present the “Pennsylvania Experience.” As you know, I was the former Executive Director of Tourism and, as such, I had the opportunity to visit each region and corner of the State. I became overwhelmed by the many great assets that are tucked away in the many small towns, rural areas, and beautiful state parks throughout our 67 counties that many people, even including state residents are not aware of. I certainly wasn’t before I took on the role. So, while I am no longer the Director of Tourism, I continue to embrace the mission to help promote the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

I decided to return to the private sector and to my own company, McGraw Productions, because I felt that I could be more effective working outside state government, with more flexibility to bring together the talent, resources and contacts to help promote tourism. McGraw Productions is made up of a dynamic team of television and marketing executives, Emmy Award producers, and technology experts who have come together to create the Pennsylvania Experience. One of my partners, Jim Barger, our Director of Operations is here with me today. Jim brings 38 years of experience at NBC, as Vice President of Technology and Operations, and will oversee the build out and operations of the Pennsylvania Experience. In your packets, I have included background on all the individuals and companies who are part of this exciting project.

So what is this PA Experience? It is an experiential mobile marketing vehicle which helps promote the many great assets and tourism destinations throughout Pennsylvania, through interactive displays, video content and messaging that will be presented to millions of people at major events, state fairs, sporting events and conventions in state and out of state.

While our original concept started out mainly as a tourism project, we came to realize that there are multiple applications that could help promote PA businesses, products and our outstanding educational institutions, colleges and universities. In fact, we are designing the vehicle to be versatile and interchangeable to promote whatever message we want to convey. For example...

This month, Philadelphia is hosting the International Bio Convention. Imagine The PA Experience parked in the Pennsylvania Convention Center, with interactive kiosks, displays and video content showcasing the many great Life Science programs and companies right here in Pennsylvania. When the Pope visits in the fall, what better opportunity to promote the entire Commonwealth to the millions of visitors who will be on the Parkway in Philadelphia? As the country’s eyes and national media are here at next year’s Democratic National Convention, what a great way to showcase our great State condensed into a 1,000 sq. ft. footprint.

Each of the various state agencies can use the PA Experience to promote their programs and have an opportunity to interact on a one-to-one basis with millions of people and residents across the state. For example, the Department of Agriculture can showcase all the great PA Preferred products; the Fish and Boat Commission can feature the beautiful streams on video screens while selling fish and gaming licenses; the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources can promote our beautiful State Parks; DCED can spread its message about community and economic development opportunities and PennDot can enlist more EZ Pass customers and promote road safety. The PA Experience can also be the perfect vehicle to promote the new brand for Pennsylvania which the PTP is getting ready to launch in a few months.

This does not even include the millions of impressions and eyeballs who will see the PA Experience travel up and down the interstate or parked at Service Plazas on the turnpike where travelers can take a break from their long drive to explore Pennsylvania and perhaps even book their reservations right there on the spot.

It doesn't stop there.....The Governor and public officials can use the vehicle as a platform to promote various initiatives and meet and greet local constituents. The in-state possibilities are endless and we haven't even addressed the out of state opportunities that we hope to include as part of the Pennsylvania Experience Tour.

Another one of our goals is to be socially responsible, particularly when it comes to supporting our own. Therefore, we have invited a well-established state-wide non-profit called Unique Source to become a strategic partner by helping us with volunteer and staffing solutions, while we serve as a platform to help promote their mission to hire people with disabilities.

The Pennsylvania Experience is another fine example of a public private partnership that offers private companies and industry an opportunity to promote their businesses, while supporting the Commonwealth's initiatives to promote itself. We estimate the cost of build out, operations, marketing, staffing and tour costs to be in the area of \$1M. Although the PA Experience footprint doesn't come cheap, with minimal investment and state support, we believe that will help generate additional tax revenue, as well as millions of impressions and good publicity that will benefit Pennsylvania, its residents, the tourism industry and companies who call Pennsylvania home.

And now I would like to ask you to take a look at a short video to get a first-hand look at the PA Experience. Afterwards, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

Diane McGraw,  
Executive Producer,  
"The Pennsylvania Experience"