



Public
Relations

Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) / BP Oil Spill

On 3 Public Relations was hired by the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association to organize and coordinate an earned media campaign as a result of the April 20, 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion. In early May, television coverage of the spreading oil spill off the Louisiana coast began to border on the sensational, and confirmed tourists began cancelling their long-awaited vacations to Northwest Florida beaches. Later-deciding vacationers were taking their dollars elsewhere.

Memorial Day is the traditional start for the Northwest Florida tourism season, with many hoteliers and restaurateurs enjoying 70 percent of their annual revenues through Labor Day. By the middle of the month, some hoteliers were reporting occupancy rates down nearly 30% from their usual near 90% level of hotel rooms occupied, and some experiencing occupancy rates in the teens. Restaurant tables were empty, charter boats were in port and layoffs from much-needed jobs were becoming part of an unthinkable business model, and the Memorial Day weekend was fast approaching.

FRLA and On3PR held hospitality and tourism briefings in the hardest hit areas, including Pensacola on May 6, Destin on May 14 and Key West on May 25, which started the phones ringing again. This, combined with a \$250,000 media effort through two radio spots and a full page advertisement in USA Today, is credited by FRLA members to have provided a bump in Memorial Day bookings.

For the Fighting for Tourism video detailing the 30-day earned media campaign click below and go to "NW Florida Tourism." http://www.associationinternetvideo.com/Publisher_Main.aspx?PublisherId=129

On3PR continues its work with FRLA on the BP Oil Spill crisis through marketing, communications, tourism briefings, claims procedures, and press conferences to let the world know that Florida is Open for Business.

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