

# Seattle

metronatural™

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*Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau*

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## Press Release

For Immediate Release  
October 20, 2006

### **NEW SEATTLE TOURISM TAGLINE AND BRAND PLATFORM UNVEILED**

Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau Highlights City and Nature Together

**SEATTLE** – Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau (SCVB) today unveiled a new Seattle destination brand position designed to increase tourism to the city. "Metronatural," the new trademarked tagline, is the centerpiece of a powerful new brand platform that will define and promote the unique Seattle visitor experience and drive the city's tourism marketing programs. The metronatural brand concept was designed to highlight Seattle's rare and uniquely marketable combination of urban and outdoor experiences.

Beginning today, metronatural will be visible in Seattle and around the world. SCVB has launched a new convention trade media advertising campaign featuring metronatural-themed photography and messaging. A worldwide publicity campaign announces and promotes the new Seattle brand to travel, features, lifestyle, trade and business media. Many of SCVB's more than one thousand member businesses are expected to incorporate the new brand into their marketing programs, including advertising, web sites, brochures and promotional collateral, graphics and public relations.

SCVB led Seattle's brand development initiative over the course of more than year, drawing critical input and support from a broad-based steering committee comprised of representatives from the City of Seattle, Port of Seattle, local hotels, airlines, attractions, restaurants, cultural organizations, SCVB members and many other travel industry stakeholders. Seattle-based branding and advertising firm EXCLAIM served as the creative partner and introduced the metronatural logo and brand concept.

The brand development process involved extensive research and testing that included stakeholder interviews, as well as surveys and focus groups involving key tourism industry clients such as meeting planners, group tour operators and others. A survey yielded impressions from more than 2,500 leisure and business travelers.

Feedback from all audiences drew a common conclusion: Seattle boasts an impressive array of both urban and outdoor experiences that are easily accessible to visitors. "Seattle offers the best of both worlds," said Don Welsh, SCVB President & CEO. "We have a vibrant urban center surrounded by pristine wilderness and outdoor recreation. For many of the same reasons that Seattle is a great place to live, Seattle is also great place to visit."

However, Seattle's embarrassment of riches presented the brand development team with a communications challenge: How to convey Seattle's wealth of attributes in a single, marketable tagline that would resonate with travelers.

## Press Release

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“We explored many concepts and crafted many prospective taglines,” said Ken Grant, Partner and Brand Strategist at EXCLAIM. “Ultimately, we realized that no single word in the dictionary could adequately convey Seattle’s impressive combination of attributes. Branding a city like Seattle required a brand new word – so we created one.”

Once metronatural was embraced by key members of Seattle’s tourism and business communities, as well as a sampling of leisure, business and convention visitors, SCVB quickly trademarked the word and a new destination logo was born.

“Seattle is known worldwide as a center of innovation,” said Welsh. “Seattle re-defines lifestyle, popular culture and business. Seattle is an original, so it deserves an original brand.”

The new brand debuts at a critical time in the city’s tourism development. A record 9.1 million visitors were recorded in the city last year. Seattle continues to cultivate the lucrative meeting and convention market, its cruise port is burgeoning, its position on the editorial calendars of travel and features media is growing and exploration of a joint summer Olympics bid with Vancouver, B.C. has begun. However, notes Welsh, “Tourism cannot be assumed. Success comes from aggressive and sustained marketing initiatives such as destination branding. Metronatural will help build a competitive advantage for Seattle in the highly competitive tourism industry. Our message to prospective visitors is that Seattle offers everything you’d expect to find in a great city – and more.”

Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau is a non-profit economic development agency responsible for competitively marketing Seattle as a destination for meeting and convention groups and leisure travelers. Visitors spend \$4.3 billion in Seattle and King County annually, contributing \$342 million in state and local tax revenues. Direct visitor spending benefits hotels, retailers, restaurants, attractions, transportation services and other businesses, and supports jobs for nearly 60,000 people in the Seattle region.

EXCLAIM is a performance-driven full-service agency that provides brand strategy, design and advertising to a diverse array of clientele. Based in Seattle, Washington, EXCLAIM has worked with companies large and small to realize their full potential. Whether it is brand repositioning, advertising and graphic design and web design, collateral development or media services, EXCLAIM brings senior-level strategy to each project. Clients include: American Heart Association, UW Medicine, Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau, Space Needle Corporation, Clipper Vacations, Seattle Financial Group, Spacelabs Medical, Independent Colleges of Washington, Molbak’s, Seastar Restaurant and Raw Bar and SPORT Restaurant & Bar.

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## FAQ

### What does it mean?

#### Met-ro-nat-u-ral™

adj. 1: Having the characteristics of a world-class metropolis within wild, beautiful natural surroundings. 2: A blending of clear skies and expansive water with a fast-paced city life.

n. 1: One who respects the environment and lives a balanced lifestyle of urban and natural experiences 2: Seattle

### Who created the brand position?

SCVB led Seattle's brand development initiative over the course of more than year, drawing critical input and support from a broad-based steering committee comprised of representatives from the City of Seattle, Port of Seattle, local hotels, airlines, attractions, restaurants, the arts, SCVB members and many other travel industry stakeholders. Seattle-based branding and advertising firm EXCLAIM served as the creative partner and introduced the metronatural logo and brand concept.

### How will the brand position be used?

Metronatural will help build a competitive advantage for Seattle in the highly competitive tourism industry. The new brand position debuts at a critical time in the city's tourism development. A record 9.1 million visitors were recorded in the city last year. Seattle continues to cultivate the lucrative meeting and convention market, its cruise port is burgeoning, its position on the editorial calendars of travel and features media is growing and Seattle stands to benefit from the exposure of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

### To whom will the brand be targeted?

SCVB markets to several important segments of the tourism industry, including:

- Leisure travelers from the U.S. and abroad
- Meeting planners
- Tour operators
- Travel and features media
- Travel agents

### What were the biggest challenges in developing the new Seattle brand?

The concept was clear but communicating it was challenging. Visitors told us that Seattle is truly special because of the combination of its metropolitan lifestyle and natural, breathtaking beauty. Metronatural works by combining the two words that best defines the essence of Seattle.

### Where will the brand be visible in Seattle?

The brand will be visible in advertising, the SCVB website and publications. The brand is also affixed to SCVB member businesses such as hotels, tours, museums, restaurants and on banners around town.

### Is Seattle no longer the Emerald City?

No. Seattle will always be The Emerald City, just as it will always be the Jet City - a tagline and logo which were created by Seattle's Convention & Visitors Bureau in 1981 and used extensively over 20 years to market the Seattle destination. The new brand will expand and add dimension to how visitors perceive Seattle, and lend a marketing advantage to Seattle in the very competitive tourism business.

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## Definition of Metronatural™

### Met·ro·nat·u·ral™

**adj. 1:** Having the characteristics of a world-class metropolis within wild, beautiful natural surroundings. **2:** A blending of clear skies and expansive water with a fast-paced city life. n. **3:** One who respects the environment and lives a balanced lifestyle of urban and natural experiences. **4:** Seattle

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## Metronatural™ Fact Sheet

### Overview

Metronatural is the Seattle destination/tourism brand, which defines and promotes Seattle's unique visitor experience. Definition adj. 1: Having the characteristics of a world-class metropolis within wild, beautiful natural surroundings. 2: A blending of clear skies and expansive water with a fast-paced city life. n. 1: One who respects the environment and lives a balanced lifestyle of urban and natural experiences. 2: Seattle.

### Applications

The metronatural brand serves as a marketing framework for Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau (SCVB), including all sales and marketing initiatives, advertising, public relations, communications, web content and graphics. Beginning in November 2006, a \$300,000 metronatural advertising campaign focusing on convention trade media will expose the new brand to a readership of approximately 76,000 meeting planners. SCVB member businesses and promotional partners are encouraged to cooperatively or independently use the brand.

### Target Markets

Leisure and business travelers, Meeting planners and association executives, Domestic and international tour operators, and travel, features and trade journalists

### Administered by

Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau, which owns the metronatural trademark and oversees brand style and usage policy and guidelines.

### Creative Partner

EXCLAIM, a Seattle-based branding and advertising firm, created the metronatural brand for Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau.

### Development Process

Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau led a grassroots development process that included a steering committee of more than 60 representatives from Seattle government, hotels, restaurants, attractions, business and non-profit organizations. Thorough research and testing in tourism target markets was also conducted, including:

- Interviews with key clients and customers - meeting planners, tour operators and leisure travelers
- Survey of travelers (2,500 respondents)
- Focus groups of key tourism clients
- Feedback from overseas tourism marketing firms

### Timeframe

Developed between August 2005 and September 2006; launched Oct. 20, 2006.

### Cost

\$200,000 for brand development (including all photography) and \$300,000 for initial advertising campaign.

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### Media Contacts:

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## **Mai Li Lee – Managing Partner**

Mai Li directs the strategic business vision and leadership of the firm. She uses excellent technical and organizational skills to ensure a high-quality successful product from beginning to end. She has extensive management experience, a thorough understanding of corporate communications and a passion for the success of our clients. Mai Li joined the team as a partner in 1998, bringing a new level of organization and project management to the workflow at EXCLAIM. She has contributed more than 12 years of exceptional project management to area advertising agencies and technology companies. With a strong background in international marketing and advertising, not only can she understand the project at hand, but she can also help the client visualize the potential of their product or service. She established streamlined creative processes helping the client avoid costly updates to their program down the road. Mai Li manages multiple projects effortlessly and maintains an accurate and timely schedule for all work moving through EXCLAIM, giving customers an added level of confidence. Mai Li gained her professional experience at Fluke Corporation, Weber Marketing Group and Stanton Robison Group. She holds a B.A. in Communications from the University of Washington.

## **John Schuler - Creative Director**

John is the founding principal of EXCLAIM, with a vision for a company based on sound values of integrity and resolve for creating excellence in design and communication. John has grown with the industry in the Northwest for the past 18 years. Creating in a variety of mediums from print, advertising, outdoor and packaging to exhibit and web design, John's experience provides EXCLAIM with the knowledge base to extend creative in many ways. John leads the creative team in developing powerful messaging and dynamic design solutions. He consistently meets client's needs through focused and strategic design and provides direction that empowers clients with the tools necessary to reach their goals. His professional experience includes graphic design and art director positions at REI, Weber Marketing Group, Imagio and Color & Design Exhibits. He holds an Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences in Advertising Design from Seattle Central Community College and has completed curriculum in graphic design, painting and illustration at Seattle Art Institute. John has demonstrated expertise in computer generated graphics and hand illustration.

## **Ken Grant – Brand Strategist**

Ken is EXCLAIM's big picture guy and lives in the world of brand, strategic planning and advertising. He brings meaning to the development of strategy, positioning, structure and campaign development. Ken is adept at uncovering the essence of what our customer's stand for and converting that to a vision for their future. Ken is a writer and guest speaker on the subject of brand and positioning. Ken gained his professional experience at Big Noize Media, Hometownfan.com, The Retail Group, and Corus Brands where he developed Cascade Ridge and Alice White wines. Ken attended The Conservatorium of the Arts in Perth. He sits on the board of directors for the Northwest Cancer Partners and the American Heart Association.

## Don Welsh

### Biography

Don Welsh is President & CEO of Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau where he oversees all aspects of the organization's operation, including sales, marketing, public relations and communications, brand development and management, finance, business development, membership and administration. Welsh oversees more than 40 employees in the organization's main Seattle office and two satellite sales offices in Washington, D.C. and Chicago.

Prior to assuming the SCVB presidency in April 2005, Welsh served as the organization's Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing where he was responsible for marketing Seattle as a premier convention and leisure travel destination and oversaw the bureau's convention sales and services, marketing, domestic and overseas tourism development and public relations.

During more than 20 years in the tourism industry, Welsh has built an impressive background of hotel, airline and related travel industry experience. Welsh began his career with United Airlines, which originally brought him to Seattle more than 20 years ago. Subsequently, Welsh was fortunate to serve as a founding member of the Seattle-based start-up Horizon Air, working collaboratively to draft the airline's first marketing plan and serving on the airline's marketing team until it's sale to Alaska Airlines.

From 1992 through 1998, he served as Vice President, Sales and Marketing, North America for Westin Hotels and Resorts, then based in Seattle. Prior to that, Welsh also served in several senior sales and marketing positions at Westin corporate headquarters and at various Westin properties. He also has related senior marketing experience with The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, among others.

Prior to joining SCVB in March, 2003, Welsh served as Executive Vice President, Business Development for HelmsBriscoe, one of the nation's top meeting planning firms which provides services to more than 7,000 corporations and associations throughout North America. Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau is a non-profit economic development agency responsible for competitively marketing Seattle as a destination for meeting and convention groups and leisure travelers. Visitors spend \$4.3 billion in Seattle and King County annually, contributing \$342 million in state and local tax revenues. Direct visitor spending benefits hotels, retailers, restaurants, attractions, transportation services and other businesses, and supports jobs for nearly 60,000 people in the Seattle region.

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