

BUDGET *STRETCHING* TRAVEL IDEAS

Guide For The Last Minute Traveler

(NAPSA)—Planning ahead for summer travel isn't always easy for busy families. Thanks to the Internet, it's never "too late" to book a trip, and procrastinators with flexibility and a spirit of adventure may actually save money. Con Hitchcock, a long-time advocate for air travelers, offers these tips for booking last-minute travel:

- **Use the Internet.** Airlines offer their lowest fares via special "Webfares" that are only available on the Internet. Orbitz, the travel site backed by the leading airlines, offers Webfares from over 35 airlines for last-minute travel and travel weeks in advance.

- **Engage the whole family in the planning process.** Online travel sites are easy to use and can offer searches according to individual needs and specific amenities. With a click of a mouse, families traveling with children, for example, can search for a hotel within their budget that offers amenities like a pool and water sports.

- **Travel during off-peak hours and days.** Many families are taking shorter trips, and are taking advantage of last-minute weekend getaways more frequently. When you look at travel sites like Orbitz, keep in mind that fares may be lower if you avoid the early morning or late afternoon "rush hour" at the airport. The best deals for last-minute weekend travel are often a Saturday morning departure with a return on Monday or Tuesday.

- **Think smaller airports.** Expand your search to include



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smaller airports, such as Chicago Midway or Oakland, if you are traveling to or from a major city that's served by more than one airport. There may be bargains that are unavailable at the principal airport.

- **Save time with customer service benefits.** Look for a travel site that offers Travel Alerts and Flight Updates via the customer's device of choice: mobile phone, pager, PDA, or e-mail. Some allow customers to receive updates using a toll-free phone number and personal identification number (PIN).

"The Internet, in just a short time, has become one of the most valuable resources for the savvy traveler," said Mr. Hitchcock. "It's easy to use, and innovative new sites like Orbitz, offering the most low fares, the largest collection of Web-only fares and great deals on hotel rooms and car rentals, make it simple to book an affordable family getaway in the upcoming summer months."