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# Tour-Mate Newsletter

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## Audio tour makes Grand Canyon trip unique

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[http://www.azdailysun.com/articles/2008/06/15/news/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/20080615\\_loca1\\_news\\_23.txt](http://www.azdailysun.com/articles/2008/06/15/news/arts_and_entertainment/20080615_loca1_news_23.txt)

By LAURA CLYMER  
City Editor  
Sunday, June 15, 2008

In the crush of the summer tourist season that's compounded by record high gas prices, how do you give visiting relatives a big bang for the buck at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon?

Ranger talks are usually jam-packed, as are the most popular overlooks. But what if you could have your own guided tour along the Rim?

Audio Ranger, the brainchild outgoing Grand Canyon Association President Brad Wallis, could be the answer.

For \$5.95, you can download a 117-minute MP3 file to your iPod or other digital player, and listen and learn about the Canyon's formation and human history, its flora and fauna as you and your guests walk along the Rim Trail, from the Yavapai Observation Station to the Bright Angel Trailhead. Or, you can buy the audio tour preloaded on an MP3 flash-drive player that comes with a battery, instructions, a set of earbuds and a pocket-sized map of the Rim Trail laid out for you for \$29.95.

"A first person audio tour of the historic district of Grand Canyon National Park is long overdue," Wallis said.

Audio tours have been used successfully at other national parks and monuments, such as Alcatraz Island and Pearl Harbor. But the Audio Ranger being sold at Grand Canyon Association bookstores comes in more useful platforms, including new generation phones.

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"We've also loaded it on a little flash player," he said.

### TOP TALENT FEATURED

The Audio Ranger took more than two years, hundreds of hours of research and production time and \$50,000 to develop the tour.

It was produced by Tour-Mate Systems, a Canadian company, and features well-researched descriptions, professional voice talent, natural sounds from the Canyon, and the voices of the Canyon's top interpretative rangers. Park Service rangers who contributed include David Smith, Stu Fritz and Pat Brown.

Only about one in a 1,000 visitors has a chance to interact with an interpretative ranger at the Canyon. Audio Ranger guarantees that at least that its listeners hear about the Canyon from the people who know it best.

GCA went so far as to put the MP3 player in an eco-friendly mesh bag, instead of heavy plastic packaging that's nearly impossible to remove and the discarded immediately.

The project was supported through a grant of \$365,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities and a \$200,000 investment from GCA. The Arizona State University history department contributed to research for the tour as well. ASU and GCA are working together on additional public educational materials as well.

### EXPANSION IN THE WORKS

Plans to offer the audio tour in several foreign languages are in the works, prompted not only by the number of international visitors to the Canyon but also by an experience Wallis had within the last few years.

"My wife and I went to the Czech Republic. It was really beautiful and the buildings were beautiful, and you could tell each was important. But I couldn't read the language," Wallis said.

This year so far, Wallis estimates that as much as 40

percent of Canyon visitors are international tourists.

"If you look at it, in essence, we're on sale because of the devalued dollar," he said.

GCA already publishes the official Park Service guide in six languages.

The mission of GCA is to promote the history, preservation and understanding of the Grand Canyon, and the Audio Ranger fits neatly into fulfilling that mission.

"If people are learning about Grand Canyon, then we've met our mission," Wallis said.

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### On the Web:

To purchase and download the Audio Ranger for \$5.95, go the Grand Canyon Association's Web site at: <http://www.grandcanyon.org/>

The player loaded with the audio tour is available at all GCA bookstores at the South Rim for \$29.95. They are: Canyon View Information Plaza Books 'n' More, Desert View, Kolb Studio, Tusayan Museum & Bookstore and Yavapai Observation Station.

## Idaho Human Rights Education Center, Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial Educational Park

The Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial is a world-class educational park inspired by Anne Frank's faith in humanity. It was built to promote respect for human dignity and diversity.

The Center recently purchased the eco-friendly EB100, Tour-Mate's power-smart, self-contained tour guide system. The EB100 was a good fit for the Park's environmental concerns. The EB100's power is provided by the user who turns a hand crank located on the front of the unit. It is designed to withstand weather extremes.

The Human Rights Memorial Educational Park was designed and constructed to engage visitors' highest ethical and spiritual values, and we are pleased that our system will be featured as a part of the Park's interpretative experience.



### TM MOBILE Featured Product of CC Builders



Tour-Mate Mobile is now a featured sales product of Classic Custom Builders at the Murano Highlands Meadows Golf Course, a new luxury lifestyle community in Colorado. Prospective homebuyers now have the option to listen to a mobile tour and can access key sales and community details at will.

For more information,  
<http://www.muranoathighlandmeadows.com/>

## Around the Office – James Cusack

James Cusack is a Tour-Mate Project Director. As a Project Director, James is the first point of contact for many of our clients. James's territories include the West Coast & Mid-Atlantic states.

James Cusack joined Tour-Mate in the fall of 2006. A graduate of the University of Toronto, he has extensive experience in project research. Before Tour-Mate, James was a project manager for a major print company, charged with bringing new projects from their beginning to their successful implementation.

Based in Toronto, James is involved in business development and project direction. Mr. Cusack is



an integral player in the project management team, coordinating the activities of both Tour-Mate's producers and its support services staff. James can be reached at: [jcusack@tourmate.com](mailto:jcusack@tourmate.com)

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## About Tour-Mate

Headquartered in Toronto, Tour-Mate develops and markets self-guided audio tour systems for the interpretive market. We have installed systems in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Puerto Rico, Australia, China and Macao. Millions of visitors have experienced Tour-Mate audio tours in museums, art galleries, historic sites, zoos, aquariums, and botanical gardens. Our high quality, easy to use hardware and creative approach to content creation ensures that each visitor has a significantly enhanced visit experience. Tour-Mate has over 16 years of experience, including the provision of audio tours to museums such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Montreal Museum of Fine Art, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Corning Museum of Glass. Our commitment to customer service is second to none. For more information please visit: [www.tourmate.com](http://www.tourmate.com)