



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AMBASSADOR TOURS — CELEBRATING 50 YEARS WITH A WIN-WIN  
WITH RUF STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS**

OLATHE, Kan. – Since 1955, Ambassador Tours has been helping people make their dreams of exploring the world come true. Much like Ruf Strategic Solutions, as a family business, the Pollard’s have focused on providing superior value and service to their customers. Gary Pollard, the son of the founder and now president of Ambassador Tours, first came to Ruf in response to a direct mail piece he received. Now, as one of Ruf’s most treasured advocates, he tells his story on how he utilizes Ruf’s TRAVELYTICS<sup>sm</sup> services...

Like most executives of a company that has been around for 50 years, Gary Pollard is always looking for better ways to market his business — Ambassador Tours, the leader in vacation travel. Ambassador Tours had not been doing much of anything in the way of database marketing until Gary learned about the target marketing services offered by Ruf.

“We had accumulated some 180,000 customer records over the course of about 20 years,” Gary explains. “Under Ruf’s guidance and using their expertise, we cleansed, profiled and modeled these records. Ultimately, we appended Ruf’s household clusters to 85,000 of these records, and segmented them by the number of bookings and types of products. With this intelligence, we have been able to target mailings to existing customers and prospect for new customers. What I like about their clustering system is that it eliminates most of the intuitive guesswork out and allows us to target market much easier. It’s like using a laser pointer rather than a floodlight.”

Over the last year, Ambassador Tours has purchased 7 prospect lists using Ruf’s household-level clusters and has created 23 different direct mail pieces. One of these recent mailings was to promote Ambassador Tours’ 50th Anniversary Cruise. The company mailed to about 5,000 of their existing customers, selected based on the top performing clusters from the customer profiling Ruf performed for them. The mailing generated an amazing 150 bookings for a 15-day luxury cruise of the Hawaiian Islands. According to Gary, “This 3% response is tremendous for this type of mailing!”

Gary is working with cruise lines and other agencies to help Ambassador Tours and these suppliers better market their offers and tours. “By obtaining a cluster profile on their customer files, we can match the

demographic, behavior and lifestyle propensities, as well as the geographic preferences, of their best customers to the clusters appended to my customer file,” says Gary.

“The benefit is that our suppliers will identify the top performing household clusters in their files and I can identify the "look-a-likes" in my file, enabling us to market their tours to the best customers in both of our files - a win-win situation!

“As time goes on and I continue to better understand my customers and grow my business, I'm looking forward to developing markets in areas not so well known by traditional travel marketers.

“Working with Ruf has been a pure delight. It's a family company, just like mine, which brings a sense of loyalty and honesty that you just don't find everywhere. I feel as though I've been brought into their fold. I think we both recognize the growth opportunities the other presents. It is truly a win-win situation.”

For more information on Ambassador Tours, visit [www.ambassadortours.com](http://www.ambassadortours.com) on the Web or contact Gary Pollard at 800-989-9000 or at [gmpollard@ambassadortours.com](mailto:gmpollard@ambassadortours.com).

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Ruf Strategic Solutions delivers a full suite of tourism-industry intelligence solutions to help organizations acquire new travel customers, retain existing travel customers, and develop one-to-one relationships to maximize profitability. Founded in 1976, Ruf Strategic Solutions has been helping organizations maximize the return on their marketing investment through superior travel intelligence. Ruf's unique ability to integrate vast arrays of data, technology tools, and 30 years of expertise empowers organizations with truly actionable and measurable intelligence. Ruf currently services many market leaders in the tourism industry, including countries, state tourism departments, CVB's, timeshares, cruise lines, international destinations, resorts, and airlines. Ruf Strategic Solutions is independently owned and operated. For more information, visit [www.ruf.com](http://www.ruf.com) on the Web or contact Terry Berggren at 800-829-8544 or at [terry@ruf.com](mailto:terry@ruf.com).

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