BILL GEIST

Consultant, author and marketing expert Bill Geist watches consumer trends like some people watch reality shows (which is, of course, no longer a trend but an expectation).

Starting his post collegiate career as a radio rock jock and program director (to the shame of his loving parents that had been counting on medicine or law), Bill learned the principles of marketing cause and effect first hand. When he spun love songs at night, girls would come to his in-store appearances. When he played AC/DC, the guys would show up.

After breaking all the rules (and the ratings), Bill migrated to the marketing of destinations, eventually being named the President of the **Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau**. During his tenure, he was the lead spokesperson and co-strategist for the successful public referendum fight to build the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed **Monona Terrace Convention Center** . He also succeeded in doubling the Bureau's sales and marketing budget and oversaw the launch of one of the **Top 25 Marathons** in the nation.

Bill Geist is the President of Zeitgeist Consulting, a firm specializing in strategic planning, governance, convention center development and legislative issues for convention and visitor bureaus, tourism-focused chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and communities. Bill is the author of the recently released book, ***Destination Leadership for Boards***. He also hosts the innovative teleseminar series **DMOU**, designed for destination marketing and management professionals.

He has provided consulting services to over 80 Destination Marketing Organizations since 1995 and is a popular speaker on customer service, trends and marketing across North America. He has also served as a guest lecturer on Internet Marketing at the **University of Wisconsin's Small Business Development Center**.

Bill has served as the President of the **Wisconsin Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus** and the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the **Wisconsin Tourism Federation**. Past associations have included stints as Vice-Chair of the **Wisconsin Governor's Council on Tourism** and the past Chair of the **Wisconsin Professional Speakers Association**.

Bill holds an Executive MBA from the **University of Wisconsin** and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from **Kenyon College**.