



2020 Strategic Marketing & Communications Plan

Strategic Considerations:

- Successful campaigns will have to adapt to meet the wants and needs of our new traveling audience and technologies.
- Selecting tactics that allow for precise geographic targeting allows us to emphasize efforts in areas that are most likely to visit, as well as take advantage of existing events and traveling seasons. (Note that additional targeting parameters include online behavior, selected interests, etc.).
- Events that people historically come to Baton Rouge for (i.e., football, shopping, family) offer unique opportunities to convert day-trippers into overnight visitors.
- Projected rise in second-city travel (exploration of lesser known destinations) offers unique opportunities for Baton Rouge as it lies at the crossroads between New Orleans and Lafayette
- Micro-moments continue to trend as we move into 2020

Audience Insights (brief overview):

- According to Longwoods, 33% of overnight visitors come from within the state of Louisiana, and 42% say the main purpose of an overnight trip is to visit friends and family
- 76% of millennials said friends' recommendations were a main factor in decision-making.
- 95% of travelers visit travel-related sites after booking
- As event planners transition to experience designers, destination selection will be an asset to delivering better meetings/events in 2020 (Skift)
- 94% of leisure travelers switch between devices as they plan or book a trip
- Millennial travelers most likely to take shorter vacations

Target Audience:

- Leisure travelers
- Meeting and Convention Planners
- Group Travel Planners

Top Geo Location:

- In-state (Louisiana) & neighboring parishes
- 6-hour drive market (Dallas, Houston, Pensacola, Mississippi, Alabama)

Seasonality:

- By concentrating efforts into specific periods of time/seasons that Visit Baton Rouge already observes and participates in (festival season, summertime, hunting and fishing season, hurricane season, football season, etc.) we're able to relate to our audience, reach an already captivated crowd and create a more authentic, seamless presence within these communities.

Primary BR Travel Leisure Activities:

- 1.) shopping 2.) bars/night clubs 3.) casinos and 4.) landmarks/historical sites

Objective 1: VISITATION

Increase overall visitation for new and returning visitors

Objective 2: ECONOMIC IMPACT

Facilitate economic growth throughout Baton Rouge through leisure and meetings-driven tourism

Objective 3: LOYALTY

Increase leads and bookings for new and returning meetings and conventions / large scale events

Strategy A:

Position Baton Rouge as a unique destination for both leisure and business travel.

Tactic 1: Develop a new multi-platform campaign on both the local (statewide) and national/international level that embraces the uniqueness of Baton Rouge and continues to seed Baton Rouge as an authentic Louisiana experience

Tactic 2: Integrate content marketing strategy across multiple platforms—website, social media, e-marketing, paid media—to maximize native communication and ultimately draw travelers into the travel consideration process

Tactic 3: Implement efforts to garner user generated content (UGC) to gain access to content and experiences that showcase the city in an authentic manner that resonates with VBR's primary audiences.

Tactic 4: Explore opportunities for experiential advertising within the city and cities within target market to generate buzz about Baton Rouge as a destination.

Tactic 5: Continue the use of consistent branding across all marketing, media and public relations efforts to further position the city as a destination.

Strategy B:

Establish and leverage partnerships to maximize promotion and marketing efforts.

Tactic 1: Continue to develop program for cross-promotion and marketing support of partner organization events or initiatives that align with Visit Baton Rouge's mission (Event Marketing Partnerships).

Tactic 2: Work with local restaurants, hotels and attractions to develop sponsorships, partnerships or promotions (such as a coupon book or travel packages) to help drive visitor traffic to partner establishments.

Tactic 3: Seek out opportunities that allow Visit Baton Rouge to create a presence in markets where it otherwise wouldn't be prevalent (i.e., Land of Eau Campaign, Via Airline presence).

Tactic 4: Develop annual calendar to identify specified partner meetings to discuss how Visit Baton Rouge can work with local organizations/partners to amplify their current marketing efforts from a tourism perspective.

Tactic 5: Continue cooperative marketing opportunities with other DMOs, LOT, LTA, Brand USA, Creative Capital of the South, Travel South, and Southeast Louisiana Gumbo to further Baton Rouge's visibility as a destination.

Strategy C:

Leverage touchpoints to highlight key Baton Rouge offerings and enhance both visitors' and locals' experiences.

Tactic 1: Utilize earned media to publish information about what Visit Baton Rouge is doing for the city by identifying opportunities for positive coverage, announcing new accomplishments, pitching interesting story angles, etc.

Tactic 2: Create a more interactive presence at relevant conferences and trade shows (through VR, video, digital screens, etc.). Update the sales video and relevant collateral to be utilized.

Tactic 3: Distribute Baton Rouge-branded promotional items at large events as well as at individual venues year-round, i.e., low-cost take-away mementos to strengthen and prolong positive sentiment toward Baton Rouge.

Tactic 4: Continue to optimize the experience for Riverboat visitors docking in Baton Rouge by offering Infeaux on the Geaux, Visit Baton Rouge's mobile welcome center, to encourage them to explore the city while in town and incentivize them to want to come back.

Tactic 5: Continue to explore out-of-home creative implementations that enhance visitors' and locals' experiences (i.e. murals, public art, etc.).

Strategy D:

Focus on key decision-making factors to encourage new and returning visitors/events.

Tactic 1: Leverage paid and earned media to educate audiences about Baton Rouge's offerings in regard to key decision-making factors, such as pricing, safety, family-friendly opportunities, leisure activities, etc.

Tactic 2: Utilize social media, web content and other digital efforts to address key decision-making factors in audiences' travel plans with short videos and/or graphics. Incorporate bleisure audience (leveraging leisure content) in addition to meeting planners.

Tactic 3: Develop marketing templates (via a marketing toolkit) that showcase the city as a destination and can be utilized to help meeting planners promote and encourage registration/attendance.

Tactic 4: Leverage and update collateral, such as the profile sheet, to give operators and planners the full picture of what Baton Rouge has to persuasively promote the city as an ideal meeting and conference destination.

Tactic 5: Empower a team of brand ambassadors for Visit Baton Rouge and/or influencer marketing to help spread positive sentiment about the city and what it has to offer while appealing to key decision-making factors.