



Augusta
CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

2020

Business Plan

Our Mission

- Tell Our Story: Internal + External
- Destination Marketing
- Create Tourism Products
- Tourism Economy
- Attract Visitors to Augusta's River Region



Working with Purpose in 2020



Bennish Brown | President / CEO
Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau

Complementing the Evolving Business and Social Landscape of Augusta's River Region

This Business Plan jump starts year one of our three-year Strategic Plan (2020-2022) and we are energized to get going!

By establishing our strategic priorities, major goals, and short-term and long-term objectives, we have set the stage for mobilizing this talented and capable team -- along with our partners -- to move forward with a purpose.

We will tackle some ambitious and impactful projects, including: a destination rebranding campaign, targeting meetings and conventions that capitalize on non-stop flights to Augusta International Airport, increasing our profile in the film industry to recruit genres from episodic series to big studio productions, leveraging partnerships with stakeholders that support mutually beneficial efforts to tell Augusta's story, and helping develop assets in our destination while creating group experiences that enhance our existing attractions.

At the end of the day, we feel that our three-year time frame fits well with the rapidly evolving business and social landscape of Augusta's River Region. We are honored and proud to be working for the benefit of our families, our friends, our neighbors, and our community.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennish D. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive.

This is who we are. This is what we stand for. This is what we're all about.

Accountable

We are accountable to each other, our goals and our community. We are good stewards of our resources.

Collaborative

We are in this together. We create positive relationships and work together to make our outcomes better.

Creative

We are dreamers, wanting and expecting a better idea, and brave enough to give new thoughts a try and find new ideas that work.

Hospitable

We are caring and trusting, investing in each other and our partners, and creating a reason for visitors to return.

Professional

We are qualified, skilled and committed. We set goals. We exceed expectations.

Respectful

We are inclusive and courteous individuals with diverse backgrounds and talents. We listen to understand, and we know our decisions impact others.

Transparent

We believe information is empowering and cherish making the appropriate information accessible to everyone.

...and we have FUN!

Augusta CVB Strategic Priorities

- **Increase Augusta’s market share of convention, film, and leisure business**
- **Build and leverage trackable relationships with community partners who will share Augusta’s Story and help promote Augusta’s growth and development**
- **Promote implementation of Destination Blueprint and remain fluid to emerging opportunities that will increase Augusta’s Market Share**



Increase Augusta's Market Share of Convention, Film, and Leisure Business

Develop and execute integrated marketing campaigns targeting technology, military and meeting/event planners in key markets to drive an increase in room nights

- Meetings Campaign Development
- Evaluate results YOY
- Launch Campaign in Q3 2020
- Plan strategy for 2021

Develop and execute integrated marketing campaign targeting independent filmmakers, episodic series, and big studio productions to film in Augusta

- Seek to increase city's investment in film budget to allow for a contract representative in Los Angeles
- Manage registration process and servicing for filmmakers

Execute integrated leisure campaigns in near-drive markets to increase overall conversion rates

- Leisure Campaign Development
- Evaluate results YOY
- Launch Campaign in Q3 2020
- Plan strategy for 2021

Prospect and recruit 5 meetings, with a focus on the tech industry, to Augusta from D.C. and/or Dallas area

- Tech Meetings: Define prospects + Make Contact

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

SALES

- Meet or exceed room night goals for new business
- Prospect to book new events for local venues
- Explore target market contacts in non-stop destinations for Augusta Regional Airport
- Attend six trade shows to generate more qualified contacts than the previous year

FILM

- Host four FILM Augusta FAM Tours
- Market Augusta at two film festivals
- Host one industry event
- Manage website + social media

MARKETING

- Develop new Augusta branding and advertising campaign creative
- Release the 2020 Augusta Experience Guide
- Develop new marketing strategy that supports the organizations goals
- Host six travel media and influencers for destination discovery visits
- Develop 2021 media plan based on 2020 marketing results
- Execute Phase 1 of the VisitAugusta.com redesign
- Enhance social media and website engagement
- Develop new e-marketing strategy and campaign to increase engagement
- Utilize public relations campaign to garner regional and national media coverage for Augusta

Build and Leverage Trackable Relationships with Community Partners Who Will Share Augusta's Story and Help Promote Augusta's Growth and Development

Community engagement via partnerships with stakeholders that support mutually beneficial efforts to tell Augusta's story

- Identify multicultural groups to establish partnerships and secure their help in sharing Augusta's story
- Conduct research analysis and develop strategy into South Augusta to leverage potential prospects
- Collaborate with the Chamber, EDA, City of Augusta, and Fort Gordon Alliance to develop a unified marketing strategy

Execute a local campaign to build awareness and utilization of Augusta's tourism assets among residents. Increase Augusta & Co. local visitation and social media engagement by 10%

- Implement Veneto experiences in Augusta & Co. plus partners in vignette (info pop ups)
- A strategic community pride campaign that will build local visits to Augusta & Co.

Develop partnership benefit packages (both unpaid + paid)

- Standard benefits package for tourism partners (i.e., website presence, social media opportunities, etc.)
- Price structure for a la carte options for partners who want enhanced exposure
- Update relevant information in the CRM, and appropriately tag partners for the benefits they will receive
- Process for auditing partner benefits

Utilize partnerships in Augusta & Co. to tell Augusta's Story

- Utilize partnerships in Augusta & Co. to tell Augusta's Story
- Host pop-up shops and community takeover events
- Use local vendors for products
- Involve industry partners to curate the vignette experiences
- Partner with Augusta-based artists to convey arts vitality

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CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

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DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT VIA AUGUSTA & CO.

- Retail sales totaling at least \$90,000
- Host 60 pop-up shops/tastings, 10 community takeovers, and four qualified partners per vignettes
- Conduct six industry training sessions
- Develop 3,000 Instagram followers and reach engagement average on 60,000 persons on Facebook

PARTNER DEVELOPMENT

- Make progress in being a resource for Fort Gordon

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Create network of support and influence with restaurants, small business owners, and major community stakeholders
- Conduct five to six destination discovery tours to train community partners that interact with visitors to Augusta's River Region
- Execute the 2020 Experience Augusta tourism event (Attendance goal:200)
- Award the Masters of Hospitality recipients and coordinate their recognition ceremony

MARKETING

- Host meetings with economic development partners and creative agency to develop a unified marketing strategy

Promote Implementation of Destination Blueprint and Remain Fluid to Emerging Opportunities That Will Increase Augusta's Market Share

Increase golf car usage in downtown

- Create golf car awareness initiative
- Continue to explore tours on golf cars and opportunities with private sector companies

Use Tourism Product Development (TPD) Grant to help owner organizations implement public art, festivals & events, outdoor activities that are included in the Destination Blueprint

- Manage first TPD award applicants; distribute grants to applicants with projects most aligned with Destination Blueprint and proven projects

Create group experiences enhancing existing attractions and creating new partnerships

- Complete destination audit
- Leverage All In Augusta funds to implement projects identified in Destination Blueprint and All In Campaign

Identify and foster the implementation of products capitalizing on the asset of James Brown

- Implement vinyl album covers on sidewalks in select areas; promote James Brown public art

Lead a successful International Soul Festival

- Solidify International Soul Festival Committee, hire contract promoter, planning/ 2020—Develop a 5-year growth plan

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- Determine messaging/delivery methods for golf cart awareness campaign
- Benchmark products produced with Tourism Product Development Grant Funds to measure impact of grant funds
- Secure at least seven partners to help facilitate the Destination Assessment
- Complete phase one of James Brown sidewalk vinyl tour
- Complete the initial planning stage of the International Soul Festival and identify a professional management company or event producer

2020 Staff and Board Directory

Augusta CVB Staff

Bennish Brown

President/CEO
bennish@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6611

Aisha Ashley

Marketing & Sales
Coordinator
aisha@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6605

Brenda Atkins

Office Operations Manager
brenda@visitaugusta.com
706.849.3245

Michelle Bovian

Senior Sales Manager
michelle@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6616

Jennifer Bowen

Vice President of Destination
Development & Community
Engagement
jennifer@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6613

Sarah Childers

Community Engagement
Manager
sarah@visitaugusta.com
706.849.3246

Taylor Crocker

Augusta & Co. Manager
taylor@visitaugusta.com
706.724.4067

Lindsay Fruchtl

Vice President of Marketing
lindsay@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6606

Iman Johnson

Sales Manager
iman@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6615

Eleanor Prater

Digital Marketing Manager
eleanor@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6607

Toni Seals-Johnson

Partner Development Liaison
toni@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6602

Trent Snyder

Vice President of Finance &
Administration
trent@visitaugusta.com
706.823.6610

Augusta Experts

706.724.4067

Marjorie Chambers

Brooke Griffin

Naomie Jules

Carolyn Lewis

Keallie McCarley

Mary Sahn

Daniel White

Board of Directors

The Augusta CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross section of business and hospitality industry partners. Board meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

Phil Wahl, Chair

Security Federal Bank

James Heffner

First Community Bank
of South Carolina

Brandon Haddock, Vice Chair

Textron Specialized Vehicles

Joel Hortenstine

Singh Investment Group

Krista Wight, Treasurer

Frog Hollow Hospitality Group

Sue Parr

Augusta Metro
Chamber of Commerce

Randall Blumberg

Secretary
Hyatt Place

Dayton Sherrouse

Augusta Canal National
Heritage Area

Mary Davis

Augusta Commission

Dennis Williams

Augusta Commission

Nancy Glaser

Augusta Museum of History

Shelly Blackburn, Ex-Officio

Columbia County Convention
& Visitors Bureau

Brian Graham, Ex-Officio

Greater Augusta Sports Council