



GREATER BOSTON
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



BOSTON

BY THE NUMBERS

7,423,000

Hotel Rooms Sold in
Boston & Cambridge

82.7%

Hotel Occupancy Rate

\$215.17

RevPar

21.7 M

Visitors to Greater Boston

\$1,931,316,000

Hotel Rooms Generated

\$260.18

Average Daily Rate

40.9M

Total Boston/Logan Passengers

1.7 M

Overseas Visitors to
Greater Boston

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3-4

**SALES &
DESTINATION SERVICES**

5-6

**COMMUNICATIONS &
DIGITAL MARKETING**

7

PUBLICATIONS

8

LEISURE DESTINATION SERVICES

9-10

**SIGNATURE EVENTS +
LEISURE MARKETING**

11-12

**MEMBERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**



SALES & DESTINATION SERVICES

The Bureau's sales team, working with our hotel partners and members, leads the destination sales effort for Boston and Cambridge. In 2018 the team coordinated sales activities at 18 major trade shows and sales events across the U.S. as well as in London, Barcelona and Frankfurt.



81

Partner Visits

96

Site Inspections

35

Trade Shows

34

FAMS

Including group FIT & Trade

2018 Production Sales

Year	Goals	Actual	% Increase
Definite Room Nights	209,000	211,346	101.1%
Transactions	--	789	--
Lead Room Nights	767,000	912,857	119%
Transactions	--	1,814	--

2018 Production Destination Services

Year	Goals	Actual	% Increase
Definites	550	756	137.4%
Service Request	800	953	119%
MINT	71	71	--
EIC	45	45	--

EXPEDIA

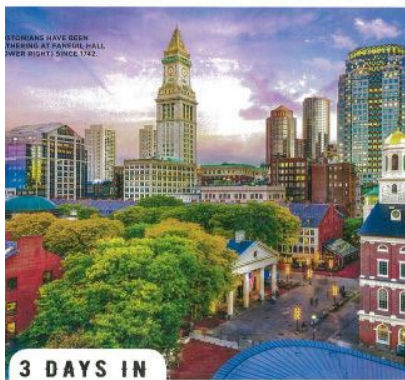
Driving hotel stays and visitors to Boston and Cambridge during the winter is one of our key priorities. Our sales team, working with Expedia and 26 of our hotel partners, launched an expanded winter campaign in 2017/18 that produced record results. The Bureau's two campaigns with Expedia ran from November 2017 through February 2018 and from November 2018 through February 4, 2019. The winter campaign that began in November of 2018 involved 58 participating hotels. The campaigns collectively generated more than \$19.5M in hotel revenue, more than 90,000 room nights sold, and more than \$2.8M in hotel tax revenue for Boston and Massachusetts.

Year	11/1/2017 2/28/2018	11/1/2018 2/4/2019
# of Participating Hotels	26	58
Number of Room Nights	49,422	42,517
Hotel Gross Booking Revenue	\$11,110,255	\$8,539,240
Average Daily Rate	\$225	\$201
Length of Stay	2.0	2.0



COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL MARKETING

2018 witnessed great results as the Bureau continued to host a diverse lineup of media FAMs, partnering with our member companies and other DMOs – including MOTT, DNE and Brand USA – to showcase Boston, Massachusetts and the region as a compelling destination for leisure travelers. The Bureau also placed industry advertorials and destination content in important meetings publications such as *Convene*, *Smart Meetings*, *Meetings Today*, *Business Traveller*, *UK Business Destination* and *USAE*.



3 DAYS IN BOSTON

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I'M SAYSDROPPING on two women in Colonial garb as they fervently discuss the impending Revolutionary War. One is convinced the Colonies can no longer tolerate the unfair taxes being imposed by England. Her friend believes that remaining under British rule is far safer than going to war. Their conversation draws me in like no history class ever did. Both arguments, as well as their palpable fears, are compelling. Just as I'm wondering what I would have done in their situation... poof! They disappear before my eyes. They're holograms! At The Boston Tea Party Ship & Museum, cutting-edge technology transforms the there-and-then into a stirring here-and-now. Similarly, all over Boston, the city's exciting present is reinventing its legendary past, and its ability to marry the historic and the hip is one of the most beguiling aspects of this nearly four-century-old city.

by | January/February 2019

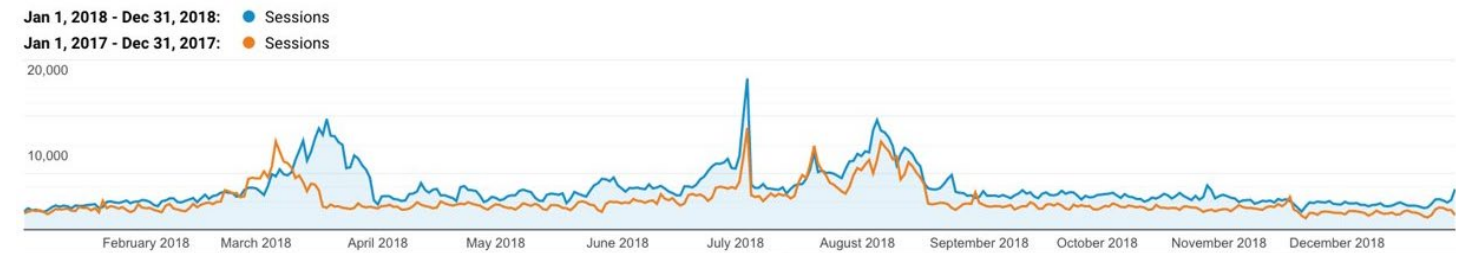
Partnership

The Greater Boston CVB disseminated messaging and brand exposure via collaboration, starting with our member companies and involving vital partnerships with MOTT, Massport, MCCA, MLA, MRA, the City of Boston, the Cambridge Office for Tourism, and a variety of other entities across the tourism and hospitality sector including cultural tourism, neighborhood advocates, museum and attraction organizations, and the Greater Boston Concierge Association.

- The Bureau worked with Cruiseport and MOTT in 2018 to devise more effective shore excursions and pre and post itineraries for Boston and Massachusetts.
- The Bureau partnered with the Museum of African American History to bolster the museum's social media and digital marketing efforts.
- The Bureau collaborated with Revolution 250, Conventures, Suffolk University and the Massachusetts Historical Society to organize a large-scale reenactment of the 250th anniversary of when British troops landed in Boston in 1768.
- The Bureau has continued to work with regional partners and the National Parks Service around the upcoming MA400 commemoration and plans to welcome the *Mayflower II* to Boston in the spring of 2020, and engage with relevant media outlets to promote the anniversary.
- The Bureau hosted several media FAMs and events in collaboration with airline partners to promote the destination and route development, including JetBlue, Delta, Norwegian, LATAM, TAP, and Air Canada.
- The Bureau worked with local breweries and bloggers to create the Greater Boston Craft Beer Trail and Brews News blogging page.

Media Coverage

In 2018 the Bureau organized 54 media FAMs and hosted 147 travel writers, bloggers and digital influencers to Boston. Media highlights included Boston articles appearing in *Urban List*, *The New Zealand Herald*, *Flight Centre*, *The Scotsman*, *The Sun*, *AAA Western Journey*, *London Sunday Times* and *American Journal*.



Web

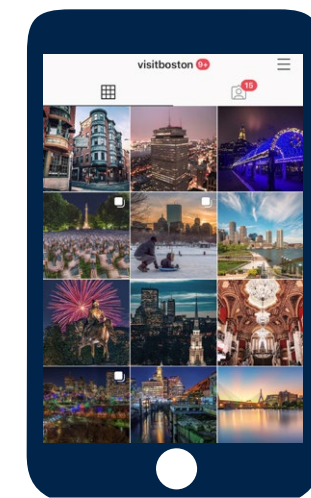
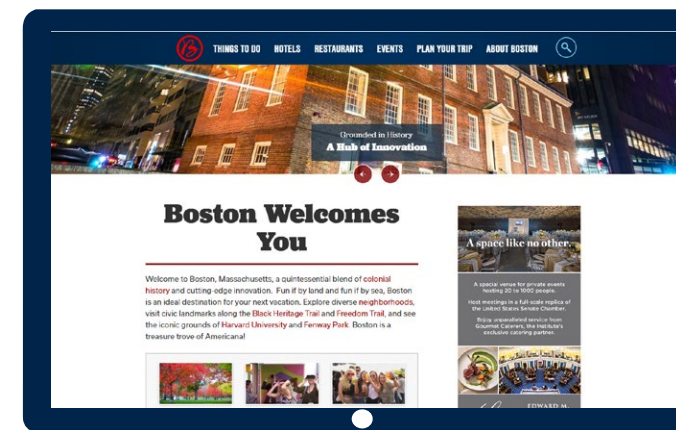
Traffic to BostonUSA.com increased by 40% YOY, fueled by promotion to seasonal landing/campaign pages which served as mini guides inspiring overnight stays and day trips in the Greater Boston area.

Digital Campaigns

Digital strategies to drive traffic to BostonUSA.com included a combination of search engine marketing strategies and paid placements. Pay-per-click advertising campaigns on Facebook and Instagram greatly contributed to the integrated mix.

Social Media

We further expanded our social media strategy with a calendar of posts to align with seasonal landing pages on BostonUSA.com. Our post calendar focused on Boston's many attributes such as annual traditions and cross cultural offerings.



@BostonUSA

@VisitBoston

@VisitBoston

@VisitBoston

Web Stats

1.8M

BostonUSA.com User Sessions

40%

Traffic Increase YOY

Social Media Stats

76.2K

Facebook Followers

39.3K

Instagram Followers

24.4K

Twitter Followers

10.2K

WeChat Followers

PUBLICATIONS

Convention & Meetings Market

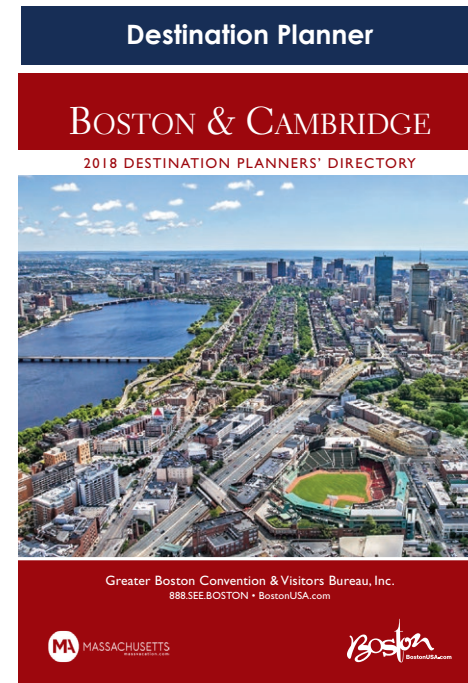
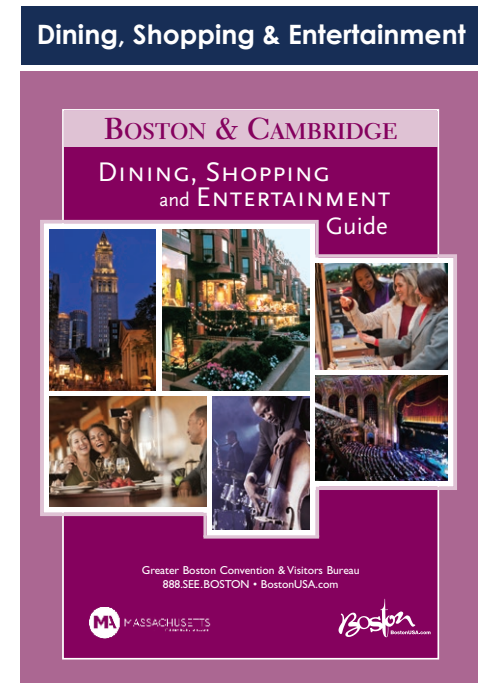
The **Destination Planners' Directory** is direct-mailed to meeting and travel professionals. The GBCVB sales team also uses the Directory in their outreach to meeting planners and when attending key meeting market trade shows. New this year is a web key postcard produced along with the printed DPD. When plugged into a computer with Internet access, the web key opens to the meeting professionals page on BostonUSA.com, which includes an online version of the Directory as well as other destination resources. These postcards will be used at trade shows and will also be mailed directly to meeting and travel professionals.

Leisure Marketing

Leisure publications including the **Official Visitors Guide** and **Boston and Cambridge Map** are distributed at numerous locations including Boston Common Visitor Information Center, Copley Place Visitor Information Desk, Logan Airport (Information Booths in all terminals) and Massachusetts Visitor Information Centers. They are also distributed to groups at the Hynes Convention Center and BCEC.

Dining, Shopping & Entertainment

The new **Dining, Shopping & Entertainment Guide** will be distributed free at numerous locations including: Logan Airport (Information Booths in all terminals), on-site Concierge Service Desk at the Hynes and BCEC, Boston Common Visitor Center, Copley Place Visitor Information Desk, Massachusetts Visitor Information Centers and to groups at the Hynes Convention Center and BCEC.



LEISURE DESTINATION SERVICES

The Bureau provides a wide range of services to assist visitors who are planning a trip to Boston as well as providing a quality visitor experience when they arrive. Our Visitor Information Centers and Concierge Service Desks assisted a record number of visitors in 2018. Our services range from making restaurant reservations, selling tours, and answering questions about Boston and the region.

Leisure Marketing

- Boston Common
- Copley Place

Visitor Services

- Visitor Information Fulfillment Requests
- Phone Center
- Online Store

Convention Concierge Service Desk

- Hynes Convention Center
- Boston Convention & Exhibition Center
- Concierge Cruise Ship Desk at Black Falcon Cruiseport

DESTINATION SERVICES STATS

1,084,051
Visitor Center Visitation

\$20,638
Online Store

5,710
Visitor Information Requests

454,981
Convention & group attendees were assisted at our 2 Convention Center Desks

8,099
Visitor Fulfillment Requests

SIGNATURE EVENTS & LEISURE MARKETING

Brand USA / Canada

As Canada is our top five international market, in 2018 the GBCVB participated in a co-op with MOTT and Brand USA in a Canada East Multi-Channel program. This initiative, which includes print, Google Display Network, Facebook and Expedia, launched in the spring and ran for 6 weeks targeting the Eastern Canadian market for summer and fall travel to Boston.

Destination Cruise Training

The Bureau is working with Cruiseport on destination trainings for operators and travel agents that book cruise itineraries. Boston's cruise season is expanding further into the shoulder seasons and in 2018 Cruiseport welcomed nearly 400,000 passengers to Boston. The Bureau participated in seminars with CLIA agents and is also working with MOTT and Cruiseport on new shore excursion and pre- and post-cruise itineraries.

Chinese Marketing & Sales Program

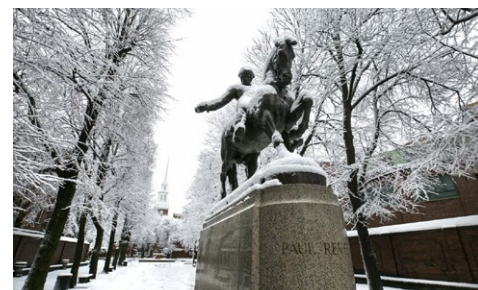
In 2018 Chinese visitors set new records for inbound volume as nearly 300,000 visitors from China came to Boston. The GBCVB has continued to grow its WeChat following in 2018 to over 10,000 followers. The Bureau is planning to host our third annual China-Friendly Marketing workshop in early 2019 and our Chinese Marketing Manager participated in a Brand USA China sales mission this year and once again attended IPW and Active America China. The Bureau continues to spearhead China marketing initiatives through the work of its China-Friendly Marketing Committee.

Revolution 250

The GBCVB worked with Revolution 250, a consortium of cultural tourism, public history and non-profit organizations, the City of Boston and Conventures to draw visitors to Boston in October of 2018 for the 250th anniversary reenactment of the British occupation of Boston.

Golf

The Bureau's 24th Annual Golf Tournament was held on August 2, 2018 at Pinehills Golf Club in Plymouth. The day included sold out foursomes followed by the annual awards ceremony, reception and dinner.



Multicultural Meet and Greet

In February of 2018 the GBCVB Multicultural Committee held a "Meet & Greet" at the African Meeting House in Beacon Hill. This was an opportunity for the hospitality and visitor industry to understand more about the vital role this committee plays in promoting Boston to a diverse cross-section of meeting planners and clients.

American Express Partnership

Our Strategic Partnership with AMEX affords the GBCVB an opportunity to collaborate from the bi-annual Dine Out Boston program (formerly Restaurant Week Boston), the annual Small Business Saturday (the Saturday after Thanksgiving), Hospitality Exchanges, and China Ready Workshops, among other initiatives. The partnership was renewed in 2018 for another 3 years.

Dine Out Boston®

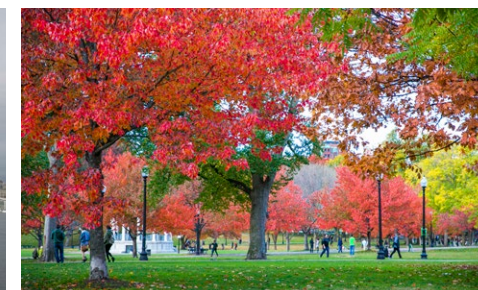
The ever popular Dine Out Boston, formerly known as Restaurant Week Boston, took place on March 18 to 30 and again August 5 to 17. Dine Out Boston provides locals and visitors an opportunity to sample area restaurants at special prices. Two photo contests, one in English and one in Chinese, fostered social media engagement. Dine Out Boston also features an online auction with proceeds benefiting a charitable partner; The Boston Park Rangers was chosen as the charitable partner in March and King Boston was chosen in August. Web traffic to DineOutBoston.com increased 18% YOY, and OpenTable reservations were up by 17% in March and 3% in August.

BostonUSA Passport to Savings

In 2018 we launched the BostonUSA Passport to Savings program in an effort to integrate and streamline the BostonUSA Value Pass and Show Your Badge programs. The re-branded program offers visitors and locals discounts to member restaurants, shops, museums, and attractions. Offers are redeemed by printing a voucher from BostonUSA.com or displaying the voucher via mobile phone. Passport to Savings is promoted via digital channels as well as collateral available at the Visitor Centers.

Culinary & Craft: What's Brewing in Boston

What's Brewing in Boston shares information on craft beer events, festivals, breweries and trails. Greater Boston hosts a multitude of experiential beer events that celebrate the proliferation of craft beer locally and across the globe. In 2018 the Bureau built a craft beer map and landing page and initiated a blogging element called "Brews News" to push out noteworthy developments.





MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The core of the Bureau's success in 2018 is its diverse and dynamic Membership base. Our programs that support membership development have yielded one of the highest retention rates among major CVBs.

1,280

Members

89

New Members in 2018

11

Open House Networking Events hosted in partnership with our Members

94.7%

Member Retention for 2018 making us one of the top CVBs in the US for retention rate

45

Member Presentations hosted in our office

2,978

Member Contacts who received our Monthly e-newsletter

