



**ECCVB** ELKHART COUNTY CONVENTION  
AND VISITORS BUREAU INC.

**TOURISM BUILDING COMMUNITY**

BRISTOL ELKHART GOSHEN MIDDLEBURY NAPPANEE WAKARUSA







# ECCVB, Inc. 2013 Place-Based Strategic Tourism Initiatives and Business Plan



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# ECCVB Organization Overview



## > Organization Structure

The Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau (ECCVB, a private, nonprofit corporation), is the official tourism advertising / marketing and public /community relations organization for the Elkhart County hospitality industry. The ECCVB represents the interests and needs of potential and actual visitors to Elkhart County and provides its visitor services free of charge. Funding for the ECCVB comes from a lodging tax collected from visitors at the local level by way of Elkhart County lodging facilities with over 30 rooms.

As the champion for the local tourism industry, the ECCVB takes an active role representing sustainable tourism development through affiliations with government, economic development organizations, developers, tourism related businesses and other organizations that align with our mission. The ECCVB develops diverse strategic partnerships to maximize the effectiveness of its research-based marketing programs to bring visitors to Elkhart County.

- A seven member Visitors Commission, appointed by the Elkhart County, IN Executives under the direction of Indiana Law IC 6-9-19, has oversight responsibility for the appropriation of the room tax fund
- A seven member Board of Directors provides fiscal and policy stewardship for the Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau Corporation
- The ECCVB's governance and management is aligned in vision, purpose, values, strategic partnerships and program implementation and assigns the needed resources to accomplish successful outcomes
- For every dollar of room tax invested, there is more than a \$25 return on investment

## > Stakeholder Accountability

Accountability is an integral part of the corporate lexicon. The ECCVB must show how it effectively uses its resources to generate the greatest return on investment for the destination. It is the keeper of data on the industry-wide impact of tourism and through its own efforts significantly contributes to the industry's positive impact.



## > Mission and Key Focus

The ECCVB is Elkhart County's champion for the local tourism industry through its affiliations with government, economic development organizations, developers, tourism-related businesses and organizations. The ECCVB forms strategic partnerships to maximize the effectiveness of its research-based branded marketing programs that bring visitors into the county. It represents potential and actual visitors to Elkhart County and surveys them to determine their interests, needs and wants, that may include matters of safety, infrastructure, amenities and services. The ECCVB generates incremental visitor demand based on communicating enticing county-wide destination experiences.

## > Organization Philosophy

The ECCVB maintains the vision, purpose, value, strategic partnerships and program implementation critical to achieving success in today's world.

Its governance and management is aligned in these important organization efforts and assigns the needed resources to accomplish successful outcomes.



## > Values and Guiding Principles

The ECCVB focused mission that leads the organization to execute its key activities is built on a foundation of strong values and guiding principles that are:

- *ethical*
- *innovative*
- *collaborative*
- *entrepreneurial*
- *professional*
- *accountable*

These norms are the foundation to perform successfully.





## > Destination Vision and Brand Promise

Presently, Elkhart County through its associated destination brand identity of Amish Country Northern Indiana, delivers its visitor promise as a regional collection of unique and progressive cities and towns immersed in rural heritage traditions.

Rich in entrepreneurial drive, it is the epitome of a relaxed pastoral setting devoted to authentic rural cultural experiences and events.



## > Amish Country Brand Strategy

- Customer Focused
- Partnership Based
- A demonstrated commitment by the ECCVB and its stakeholders to promoting the brand promise to our visitors
- Communicating the brand using: website, advertising, collateral materials, trade shows, media relations, partnering with stakeholders, events, sponsorships, and all communication channels
- On-going research (SMART) tracking visitor image of the destination, expectations, and their measure of satisfaction
- Encourage stakeholders to include the Amish Country brand in their communications, and to demonstrate support of the brand promise by being entrepreneurial and authentic in their product offerings



# ECCVB Performance Results



- Total number of ECCVB partnerships: 600
- Total partner dollars invested in co-op programs: \$828,263
- Public Relations Advertising equivalency: \$250,000
- \$220,500 invested in Marketing and Advertising will generate \$24 million in visitor spending
- Travel Trade activities will generate \$3 million in group visitor spending
- Heritage Trail Audio Driving Tour distribution will generate \$3 million in visitor spending

Room Tax: \$1.2 million

**Total Return on Investment: \$30,250,000**

For every dollar of room tax invested, there is more than a \$25 Return on Investment which is clearly and significantly generated through the Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau partnership, sales and marketing efforts.

## TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

2003 - 2011



(\$ in millions)  
Source: Certec, Inc

A 10 year trend demonstrates an increase in both Economic Impact and Visitor Spending.

# ECCVB & Destination Key Strategic Initiatives



## > Place-based Tourism

Place-based Tourism begins with the idea that tourism can help communities enhance and preserve their quality of life.

Successful partnerships between tourism and place-based groups - organizations and movements that preserve the cultural, natural, and built environments (museums, parks, historic preservation agencies, government) - work when the players operate with a shared vision and mutually beneficial goals.

As communities, we need to continue to invest in marketing to visitors and also focus on product development – the visitor

experience. That investment has to be both conceptual (product need and design) and supportive (product expertise and financial). Talk of place as an economic stimulator is all around, particularly from the creative economy sector. Place-based tourism simply extends these discussions to hospitality and travel. The goal is to integrate place-based tourism approaches, add a strong dose of the public's voice, and use tourism as a tool to build healthier communities.

## > Place-based Tourism Key Strategies

It is crucial to build a tourism strategy that enhances the industry's economic development role; integrates a place-based tourism approach; and protects vital aesthetics through expanded partnerships, increased public education and awareness, and new tools promoting the expansion of businesses, facilities, and events that both attract visitors and improve the quality of life and place for local residents.

These strategies incorporate the following objectives:

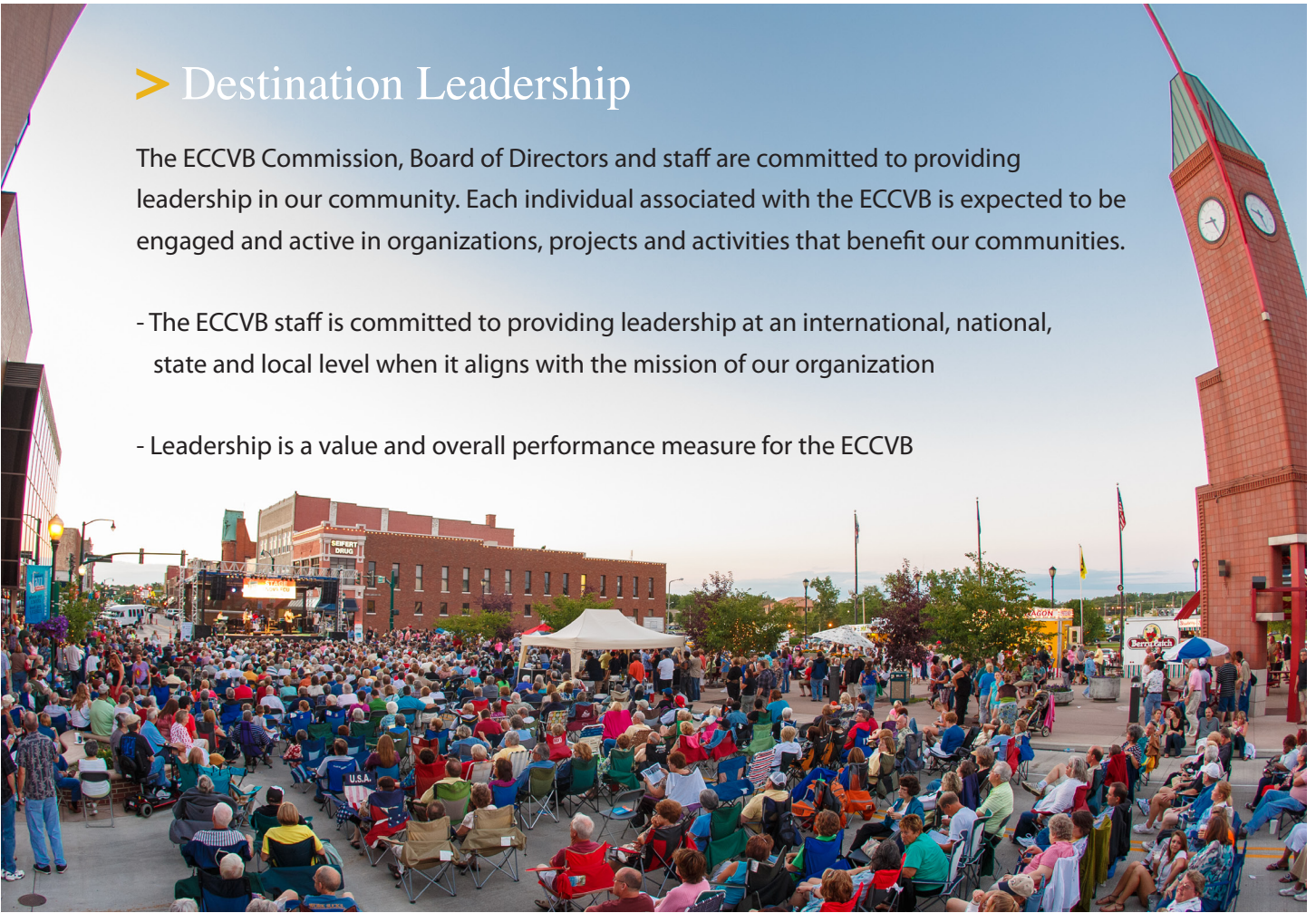
- Create a single interlocking brand to effectively market Elkhart County to targeted visitor segments so as to drive overnight stays and new spending
- Link existing assets and integrate into packaged experiences along the Heritage Trail route to spread out the impact of visitor spending, provide structure yet allow for exploration
- Promote the expansion of existing and creation of new facilities and events including the continued development of downtowns for arts, culture, entertainment and entrepreneurship
- Enhance existing assets by displaying and presenting stories / themes in new compelling ways that are attractive to different interest groups, allowing for increased business participation and a role for non-traditional partners
- Educate the community, through advocacy initiatives, on the positive community impact of tourism activity
- Foster partnerships with local government, non-profit organizations, small businesses and residents



## > Destination Leadership

The ECCVB Commission, Board of Directors and staff are committed to providing leadership in our community. Each individual associated with the ECCVB is expected to be engaged and active in organizations, projects and activities that benefit our communities.

- The ECCVB staff is committed to providing leadership at an international, national, state and local level when it aligns with the mission of our organization
- Leadership is a value and overall performance measure for the ECCVB



## > Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission

The ECCVB is an active member of the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission (NITDC), an alliance of seven CVBs in the northern sector of the state.

With an agreed upon destination brand positioning and strategy, NITDC members collaborate on issues of mutual importance, participate in cooperative marketing programming, realize partnership leveraging with increased market buying influence, conduct credible research-based activities, actively participate on the Indiana Toll Road Advisory Committee, have a long term toll road marketing agreement and are engaged in an integrated regional website platform aligned to CVB sites and databases.







## > Destination Research

Research is the foundation for all programs presented in the Elkhart County, IN CVB Business Plan. The ECCVB collects data in support of its activities and assesses the impact of its programs on business partners.

Evaluating and designing systems to communicate these findings to stakeholders in an easy-to-understand format is key.

Measurement is crucial to translating business strategies into results. Performance measures are integrated with activity measures.

The integration of activity and performance measures is an effective agent for the ECCVB to monitor performance and improve strategic decision making.

## > Community Arts and Entertainment

The ECCVB recognizes the value dynamic arts and entertainment offerings contribute to the vitality of Elkhart County's communities, the quality of life for residents and to creating a compelling destination for visitors.

Our organization is committed to supporting Elkhart County's existing and emerging arts and entertainment offerings through sponsorships and promotions.

The ECCVB staff is actively engaged in committees, projects and activities to build on current successes and inspire new opportunities.







## > Strategic Investment Gains

Tourism is vital to Elkhart County's economy. Visitor spending annually contributes \$273 million in direct impact and \$401 million in total impact to the local economy.

New tourism development opportunities must be managed with a focused approach to quality, authentic visitor experiences that drive visitor and resident spending.

## > Tourism Development Council

The ECCVB is taking proactive steps to direct new tourism oriented product initiatives. In order to move to the next level, the ECCVB has formed a Tourism Development Council (TDC). This leadership team of representatives from a broad range of traditional and non-traditional tourism industry sectors will take a leadership role in evaluating and stimulating new tourism development opportunities for Elkhart County.

### Strategic Plan:

Working with the TDC, the focus for 2012 was to lay the foundation for future proactive efforts by: developing a strategic framework that would identify new tourism development opportunity areas and criteria used to prioritize new initiatives; identifying new targeted products and associated steps that could be used to attract them; and evaluating existing tourism assets to determine if they are being maximized to their fullest potential.

## > Building Better Communities ... along the Heritage Trail

Partnership is defined as a relationship between individuals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility for the achievement of a specified goal. The ECCVB is actively engaged in sound partnerships to address key issues defined in its strategic plan.

The Heritage Trail, a nationally recognized self-guided audio driving route featured in *LIFE*® and *USA Today* publications, increases visitor volume, diversity, spending and economic impact for the entire destination. The route travels through Elkhart County and into the area's downtowns, introducing visitors to the area's history, heritage, distinctive attractions, attributes and residents.

It is a strong example of how integrating experiences and interpretation via CDs or downloadable MP3 audio tours enhance the attraction potential of existing destination assets.

The Heritage Trail serves as the foundation for the following county-wide, community based and regional partnership based programs.



### QUILT GARDENS ALONG THE HERITAGE TRAIL

Target Audience:	Leisure, Group, Residents
Partners:	Local businesses, attractions and organizations, municipalities, Master Gardeners, volunteers, Soup of Success program, Vera Bradley Foundation, local artists

The Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail, a county-wide, award-winning, signature attraction featuring quilt patterned gardens and quilt art murals, promote the area as a premier visitor destination, garner interest from a wide range of audiences (including media and niche markets) and drive increased visitation and visitor spending in Elkhart County.

Elkhart County sites include:

Bristol:	1 garden	1 mural	Middlebury:	5 gardens	7 murals
Elkhart:	4 gardens	4 murals	Nappanee:	2 gardens	4 murals
Goshen:	3 gardens	3 murals	Wakarusa:	1 garden	1 mural

*Special Quilt Gardens centered activities include:*

- *Hope along the Heritage Trail: A partnership with the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer, Church Community Services Soup of Success, local fiber artist Diana Bennett, and local Vera Bradley retailers to raise funds through raffle tickets for an original quilt created by Diana Bennett.*
- *Quilt Mural Exhibition: Mural artist Jeff Stillson works with local art students to refresh the quilt murals. Murals are on exhibit at Nappanee's Coppes Commons through April and included in several on-site activities during that time period.*
- *Diana Bennett's Quilts to Flower Gardens/Murals Exhibit: Fort Wayne, IN*



## > Building Better Communities ... along the Heritage Trail (cont.)

### SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Target Audience: Elkhart County non-profit organizations and attractions

Partners: Elkhart County non-profit organizations

The ECCVB invests in sponsorships that are mutually beneficial and foster advocacy for the ECCVB and tourism development. Sponsorships are limited to Elkhart County not-for-profits with missions compatible to ECCVB.

Sponsorship program recipients include:

Bike Elkhart & Habitat for Humanity  
Downtown Elkhart, Inc.  
Downtown Goshen, Inc.  
Elkhart County Historical Society  
Friends of the Elkhart County Parks  
Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail  
Midwest Museum of American Art  
Nappanee Chamber of Commerce  
Wakarusa Chamber of Commerce

Bloom & Zoom - Countywide  
ArtWalk; Elkhart Jazz Festival - Elkhart  
First Fridays - Goshen  
Gathering at 5 Medals - Countywide  
Bonneyville Celebration - Bristol  
Pumpkinvine Bike Ride - Countywide  
Elkhart Juried Regional - Elkhart  
Apple Festival - Nappanee  
Maple Syrup Festival - Wakarusa





## > Community Development

The ECCVB recognizes that good planning and development are vital to attracting visitors to a destination. Therefore, the ECCVB is engaged in representing the visitor and the visitor industry in these initiatives:

### **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

Target Audience: Leisure, Group, Residents  
Partners: Main Street organizations and chambers of commerce; local municipalities and parks departments; downtown businesses; historical, cultural and entertainment attractions and organizations

The downtowns of communities along the Heritage Trail provide an ideal complement to the rural experience. Hometown personalities, signature foods, casual or sophisticated dining, museums, parks, cultural and visual arts, special events and historical neighborhoods add to meet or exceed visitor expectations and extend their stay.

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### **RIVERWALK CULTURE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT**

Target Audience: Leisure, Group, Residents  
Partners: Downtown Elkhart historical, cultural and botanical attractions; The Lerner; Elkhart City government and Parks Department

The RiverWalk Culture Trail - a set-your-own pace walking tour - connects three distinctly different downtown Elkhart neighborhoods: Garden District north of the St. Joseph River with gardens, house museums and historic neighborhood; RiverWalk District, a winding path along the Elkhart River lined with public art and welcoming green spaces; and the A&E District with The Lerner, railroad and art museums along Main Street's southern corridor.

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### **FALL FLOWER CARPETS DEVELOPMENT**

Target Audience: Leisure, Group, Residents  
Partners: Municipalities of Elkhart and Nappanee; local growers; downtown businesses; downtown development and chamber organizations; cultural and not-for-profit organizations; and volunteers

The Fall Flower Carpets feature nearly 15,000 pots of locally grown potted mums placed in intricate patterns filling city blocks in downtown Elkhart and Nappanee. It's a grand finale to the Quilt Garden season and lead-in to the activities of the autumn season extending visitor stays and spending, facilitating complementing activities and fostering community involvement and cause related volunteerism.

(cont.)



## > Community Development (cont.)

### **MIDDLEBURY BRANDING**

Target Audience: Residents, Partners

Partners: Town of Middlebury; Middlebury Chamber of Commerce; Middlebury Economic Development Committee

As a partner in the development of the Middlebury Comprehensive Plan, the ECCVB is continuing to provide technical assistance in the implementation of the plan - specifically the definition of the “Middlebury experience” and the development of a new brand for the Middlebury community partners.

## > District and Area Redevelopment

The ECCVB also recognizes that redevelopment is vital to attracting visitors to a destination. Therefore, the ECCVB is engaged in representing in these initiatives:

### **SOMA – A DOWNTOWN ELKHART DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

Target Audience: Residents, Partners

Partners: City of Elkhart, Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, The Lerner, Downtown Elkhart, Inc., downtown business and attraction stakeholders

The SoMa plan will focus on organizing an Arts & Entertainment District Management Plan for the purpose of implementing a successful events management and downtown marketing and development effort.

The plan will define downtown as the place to “live, work and play”. It will also detail the efforts needed to attract new business and residential development along with requirements to create and sustain arts development within the Elkhart downtown TIF district.

### **ELKHART NORTH GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT**

Target Audience: Residents, Leisure, Partners

Partners: City of Elkhart; Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, hospitality business stakeholders

The ECCVB has taken a leadership role in developing a plan for the redevelopment of Elkhart’s North Gateway and the State Road 19 Corridor, which has resulted in over \$2million of streetscape enhancements along North Pointe Blvd. The ECCVB will again partner with the city’s Redevelopment Commission to plan and implement continued gateway infrastructure enhancements, including a comprehensive sign initiative that projects a positive image to visitors to Elkhart and links the North Gateway effectively to Downtown Elkhart. In addition, the ECCVB will again lead in the continued redevelopment study for the underutilized shopping plaza, assessing the feasibility of sports and recreational uses to build new tax increment and support the existing hospitality business base.





## > Community Entrepreneurial Initiative

The ECCVB understands the power of entrepreneurship in defining the unique personality of a community. Entrepreneurship fuels vitality and excitement in a destination. Dynamic small businesses create an environment residents and visitors find interesting and attractive.

### HORIZON 3.0 / LAUNCH PAD

Target Audience: Residents, Partners

Partners: Horizon 3.0; Goshen Chamber of Commerce, Coppes Commons

Entrepreneurship is a core value of the Elkhart County community - it's in the air, in the water, and in our culture. Horizon 3.0 will promote, cultivate, and integrate a culture of entrepreneurialism with a focus on the development of downtowns as centers of entrepreneurial activity. Horizon 3.0 will also look to enhance the number of mentors, investors, and advisors that entrepreneurs have access to thus increasing the connectivity of the ecosystem. Launch Pad will provide a downtown site, workspace and social environment for young entrepreneurs to start-up and be engaged with like-minded individuals.

## > Regional Development

The ECCVB recognizes that partnerships and collaboration with nearby destination marketing organizations such as the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission and neighboring CVBs is critical to providing excellent visitor experiences and services. Regional development also serves to benefit the strong visiting friends and relatives segment of the local tourism marketing effort. For that reason the ECCVB is engaged in the following regional development initiatives:



### ART & EARTH TRAIL

Target Audience: Leisure, Residents

Partners: Members of Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission, retail businesses, artists

The Art & Earth Trail showcases more than 150 studios, galleries, farmers markets, quaint lodging and specialty shops across northern Indiana in seven driving loops - one for each county - with the goal of increased visitor and resident awareness, extended stays and spending.

### SOUTH BEND / MISHAWAKA / ELKHART TRAIL PROJECT

Target Audience: Leisure, Residents

Partners: Elkhart County CVB, South Bend/Mishawaka CVB, Historic, religious and cultural organizations from all three cities, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Northern Indiana Center for History

The South Bend / Mishawaka / Elkhart Trail Project will define and develop an easy to follow, dynamic, entertaining, educational, and visually appealing route that connects St. Joseph County and Elkhart County. This route will provide educational and historic information to the user through fun, interactive technologies such as podcasts, digital maps, mobile app and website. Project development - 2013. Project roll out - 2014.

# ECCVB Tourism & Community Leadership Involvement

## **Diana Lawson, Executive Director**

- SoMa Chair
- SoMa Public Relations/Marketing Committee Chair
- Indiana Toll Road Community Advisory Board
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Board of Directors Past President
- Elkhart County / Cities
- Horizon 3.0
- Lerner Governing Board, Vice President
- Lerner Strategic Plan Committee
- Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Chair
- WNIT Community Advisory Board
- Wellfield Board of Directors
- Wellfield Nomination Committee
- Wellfield Organizational Development Chair
- Wellfield Spring Marketplace Event Committee
- Wellfield Marketing Committee Chair
- Wellfield Strategic Planning Committee
- Downtown Goshen, Inc. Board Member

## **Denise Kolb Hernandez, Director of Marketing and Advertising Sales**

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Marketing Committee Member
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Visitor Services Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Goshen Chamber's Tourism Committee Member
- Middlebury Chamber's Retail and Tourism Committee Member
- Elkhart Jazz Festival Committee Member
- Elkhart County Historical Society Board Member
- Wellfield Spring Marketplace Event Committee
- Elkhart County Museum Association Tourism Liason

## **Mike Huber, Destination Development Manager**

- Elkhart County Chamber Coalition Member
- Economic Development Coalition Member
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Research Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Elkhart Downtown, Inc. President
- Middlebury Economic Development Committee Member
- Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission President
- Elkhart Chamber Beautification Council Member
- Elkhart North Gateway Village Steering Committee Member
- Northwest Gateway Steering Committee Chair
- United Way Education Panel Member
- Middlebury Branding Taskforce

## **Jackie Hughes, Public Relations Manager**

- Elkhart Board of Parks and Recreation
- Elkhart City Plan Commission
- Midwest Travel Writers Association Associate Member
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Public Relations Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Wellfield Spring Marketplace Event Committee

## **Jessica Miller-Barnhart, Technology Marketing Manager**

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Technology Ad-hoc Taskforce
- SoMa Public Relations/Marketing Committee
- Wellfield Spring Marketplace Event Committee
- Downtown Goshen, Inc. Social Media Committee

## **Sonya Nash, Travel Trade Marketing Manager**

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Group Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Northern Indiana Partnership for the Arts Commission Grant Review Panel Chair
- Nappanee Leadership Academy Advisory Board Member
- Elkhart Sister City Association Board Member
- Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Project Manager
- Michiana Master Gardener
- Coppes Commons Marketing Committee

## **Amanda Eckelbarger, Publications | Graphic Design**

- SoMa Public Relations/Marketing Committee
- Downtown Goshen, Inc. Marketing Committee



# ECCVB, Inc. Commission

**Beth Ronzone, President**

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# ECCVB, Inc. Staff

**Diana Lawson, FCDME, Executive Director****diana@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Works directly with the Commission and Board on policymaking and business strategy for the organization
- Oversees all operations of the corporation including finance and personnel
- Serves as the primary spokesperson and CEO for the ECCVB

**Amanda Eckelbarger, Publications | Graphic Design****amanda@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Serves as in-house graphic designer, obtains vendor quotes, and assists with photography and Web initiatives

**Denise Kolb Hernandez, Director of Marketing & Advertising Sales****denise@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Manages sales for organization's print publications, direct marketing initiatives and co-op advertising programs
- Plans and coordinates design/execution of all print publications and collateral materials
- Handles advertising placement and analysis of marketing activities

**Mike Huber, Destination Development Manager****mike@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Coordinates the ECCVB's destination planning and economic development strategies and activities
- Oversees sports/outdoor related tourism activities
- Identifies market strengths and develops strategies to increase tourism

**Jackie Hughes, Public Relations Manager****jackie@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Manages internal and external communications and public relations
- Manages the ECCVB's sponsorship programs and special assigned projects

**Jessica Miller-Barnhart, Technology Marketing Manager****jessica@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Manages all aspects of the organization's technology system
- Manages e-commerce activities and analysis of eMarketing activities

**Sonya Nash, Travel Trade Marketing Manager****sonya@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Manages sales, marketing and advertising for group tours, meetings, event planning and performs related services
- Identifies and develops market strategies for attracting group overnight business
- Manages group product development initiatives

**Cindy Ostrom, Office Manager****cindy@amishcountry.org****Responsibilities:**

- Manages all office administrative, accounting and facilities functions
- Administers human resources





## ECCVB Priority Activities





## > Finance and Administration

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by maintaining best practices in revenue and human resources management.

**Finance Objective** To have a thorough understanding of and the ability to interpret financial data, by developing accurate and concise financial reports, tracking hospitality trends, and managing income and expenses.

### **Finance Activity Measures**

- Develop a sound 2013 line item budget (January)
- Establish financial ratios and projections (January - December)
- Develop monthly financial reports and statements for the corporation (January - December)
- Perform all accounts receivable and payable for the corporation (January - December)
- Perform as the Commission's designated collections administrator for delinquencies (January - December)
- Develop monthly reports on collections activities and hotel occupancy trends (January - December)
- Complete all county, state and federal employee withholding obligations (January - December)
- Complete all grant financial requirements (January - December)
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of lodging tax receipts (January - December)
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of Amish Country Travel Guide contracts (January - December)

**Human Resources Objective** To manage day-to-day human resource functions and obligations of the corporation by maintaining personnel records and human resource information systems such as health insurance, retirement contributions, supplementary benefits and accrued personal time off for employees.

### **Human Resources Activity Measures**

- Keep current all personnel records for each employee (January - December)
- Update the employee policies and procedures manual (January - December)
- Research benefit plans that best meet employees needs and budgetary requirements of the corporation (April - June)
- Work with all employees to assist with interpretation of benefit plans and filing procedures (January - December)
- Manage the corporate / employee IRA contribution plans (April, July, October, December)
- Track and report all employee personal time off (January - December)
- Distribute Employee Job Satisfaction survey (December)

**Building Operations Objective** To manage all building operations and personnel associated with the Visitors Center managing contract agreements and personnel

### **Building Operations Activity Measures**

- Oversee all maintenance agreements for building and equipment (January - December)
- Initiate all necessary building / equipment service and repairs (January - December)
- Supervise Visitor Center attendants (January - December)
- Develop Visitor Center attendant schedules and assign appropriate duties (January - December)
- Installation / removal quilt murals on Visitor Center building (May, October)





## > Visitor Services

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by being the official resource providing travel information and visitor services both in-person and online.



### Visitor Services Activity Measures

- Provide friendly personal service to an average of **20,000** visitors to the center (January - December)\*
- Provide friendly personal service to an average of **3,000** people calling to request Amish Country Travel Guides and general destination questions (January - December)\*
- Provide up to date information by distributing over **300,000** local business brochures, maps, regional travel guides, etc. (January - December)\*

### Driving Tours Activity Measures

- Distribute more than 3,800 Heritage Trail Audio Driving Tours via CD and MP3 download (January - December)
- Maintain Trip Tips program weekly to enhance visitor experience (January - December)

**VFR / Community Relations Objective** To position the Visitor Center and its staff as a resource for local residents and the community at large by providing friendly personal service.

### VFR/Community Relations Activity Measures

- Provide the Visitors Center's meeting room as a resource to 150 community group meetings (January - December)
- Develop / distribute 26 issues of *Front Desk Update* to local lodging facilities, attractions, Chambers of Commerce and media (January - December)

### **Overall Visitor Services Performance Measures**

- Convert Heritage Trail rentals to \$3 million in increased visitor spending (including CDs and downloads) (January - December)

\*\* Heritage Trail Performance Metrics is the amount in visitor spending generated by the distribution of the Heritage Trail Visitor Spending = (3.3 people in travel party) X (2.8 days average length of stay) X (\$92 per person per day) = Visitor Spending per Heritage Trail CD. *Includes CDs and MP3 downloads.*

Research Resource:

**2011 Economic Impact Report** by Certec Inc.





## > Advertising Communications

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by placing advertising that creates brand awareness and persuasive offers to consumers; securing local business co-op investment for advertising.

**Regional Advertising Objective** To communicate the brand image for Elkhart County and Northern Indiana, increase visitation and leverage advertising dollars through partnerships with the 7-county Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission (NITDC) partners.

### Chicago Tribune Activity Measures

- Total circulation: 780,601
- Total frequency: 14 Sundays (May - September)
- Gross Impressions: 24.5 million
- CVB Investment: \$37,750; Co-op dollars: \$216,600; Total value of investment: \$254,350
- 128 co-op partnerships
- Receive 6,660 Unique Visitors to the website during the week following the publication (May - September)
- By leveraging \$37,750 to a partner investment of \$216,600, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country /Northern Indiana brand through 25.3 million impressions (May - September)

### Midwest Living Activity Measures

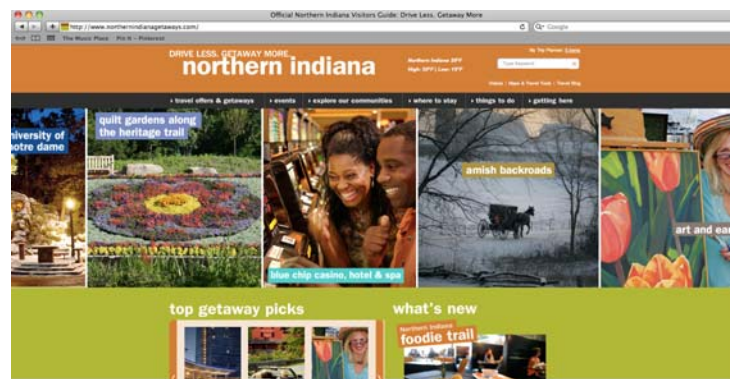
- Total circulation - 357,700
- Total frequency - 4X
- Gross impressions: 3.7 million
- Full page ads (March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October) Rate card; \$55,580 per / NITDC 1/2
- CVB Investment: \$14,285; Total Co-op Dollars: \$85,715; Total Value of Investment: \$100,000
- 7 co-op partnerships
- Receive 4,537 Travel Planner requests from regional advertising (January - December)
- By leveraging \$14,285 to a partner investment of \$85,715, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country /Northern Indiana brand through 12.2 million impressions

### NITDC E-Marketing Activity Measures

- Partner in monthly eblasts with Midwest Living branding component to 25,000 opt-ins
- Total frequency: 12X (January - December)
- 7 co-op partnerships
- By leveraging \$7,500 to a partner investment of \$45,000, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country/Northern Indiana brand through 2.1 million impressions (January - December)
- Value: \$3,500 X 12 (\$42,000-rate card)

### NITDC Website Activity Measures

- 70,000 unique users (January - December)
- 400,000 webpage view counts (January - December)
- 60,000 search engine referrals (January - December)
- 7 co-op partnerships (January - December)



**Advertising Communications** *(cont.)***Indiana Travel Guide\***

Brochure ad: \$2,100; Listing (Quilt Gardens): \$310

- Total circulation: 500,000
- Total Frequency: 1X (January - December)
- CVB Investment: \$2,410
- 137 partnerships
- By leveraging \$2,410 to a partner investment of \$141, 195 in the Indiana Travel Guide, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country/Northern Indiana brand through 48 million impressions (January - December)

**Indiana Travel Guide | VisitIndiana.com Activity Measures\***

- Receive 2,000 Travel Guide requests (January - December)

**Indiana Toll Road / Exit 92 Advertising Objective** To communicate the destination brand image and density of lodging/ dining options to the 68,000,000 million vehicles traveling the Indiana Toll Road annually.

**I-80/90 Travel Directory**

- Page, listing & map locator (April)
- Total circulation: 200,000
- Total frequency: 1X (April)
- CVB investment: \$7,222; Total Co-op dollars: \$284,753; Total value of investment: \$291,975
- 146 co-op partnerships
- By leveraging \$7,222 to a partner investment of \$284,753, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country /Northern Indiana brand through 36.7 million impressions

**I-80/90 Tourist Assistance Portal (TAP) Kiosks**

- Dynamic message boards with mobile device integration / 6 Travel Plazas (January - December)
- First year program / co-op partnership development in process
- CVB Investment: \$7,500; anticipated partner investment \$55,000 for a total investment of \$62,500

**I-80/90 Billboards:**

- Burkhardt (I-80 Eastbound / LaPorte County) April 1 - September 15
- CVB investment: \$5,400
- Burkhardt (I-80 Westbound / Steuben County) April 1 - September 15
- CVB investment: \$4,100
- TBI (I-80 / Ohio Westgate Toll Booths (12) January - December
- CVB investment: \$7,180
- Total investment of outdoor along the Indiana/Ohio I-80 corridor will promote the Exit 92 brand through 16,352,000 impressions (January - December) the I-80/90 corridor annually

**Indiana Toll Road Activity Measures**

- Generate 50 links/contacts to partner websites (January - December)

**VacationFun.com | Madden Media Campaign Activity Measures**

- Themed E-blasts (Women 35+/HHI \$50K+; Chicago, Indy & Detroit metros + Northern Indiana / Michigan Lakefront)
- Total reach - 72,000
- Total frequency - 4X (April, May, June & August)
- CVB investment - \$11,500
- Receive 250 Referral Visits from Vacationfun.com to the website during the term of the run (April - August)  
Receive an average of 225 Travel Guide requests (April - August)
- Receive an average of 2,400 Leisure blast opt-ins iBrochure fulfillment campaign (April - August)

**Advertising Communications** *(cont.)***Love of Quilting / Quilters Club of America / QNNtv.com E-Mail Broadcast Activity Measures**

- Fons & Porter Love of Quilting opt-ins (38,382; 1X - May)
- Quilters Club of America opt-ins (6,226 ; 1X - May)
- QNNtv.com opt-ins (2,837; 1X - May)
- CVB Investment: \$2,500
- Receive a 20% open rate; 4% click-through rate (Fons & Porter) (May - June)
- Receive a 20% open rate; 4% click-through rate (Quilters Club of America)
- Receive a 20% open rate; 4% click-through rate (QNNtv) (May - June)

**Specialty Publication Activity Measures**

- Garden Glories - IL Garden Club members (9,200; 1X - June / July)  
CVB investment: \$400
- American Quilters Society Quilt Show Program / Paducah (37,000; 1X - April)  
CVB investment: \$200
- American Quilters Society Quilt Show / Grand Rapids  
CVB investment: \$200
- International Quilt Show / Chicago  
CVB investment: \$1,000
- The Beacher (4,000; 4X - May)  
CVB investment: \$325
- Indiana/IL/MI Garden Tour programs  
CVB investment: \$500

**Advertising Coordination Activity Measures**

- Research media buys, co-operative ad opportunities and market trends (January - December)
- Manage advertising content, creative and placement (January - December)
- Write copy / select images for 45 insertions (January - December)



## Advertising Communications (cont.)

**Travel Trade Partnership Advertising Objective**

Develop in partnership with local businesses a strategic advertising campaign for the travel trade market which generates qualified leads and positions Amish Country as a premier destination.

**Trade Publications Cooperative Advertising Activity Measures**

- Develop 39 co-op partnerships (January)
- Advertise in 3 publications *Going on Faith*, *The Group Travel Leader* and *Bank Travel Management* (January - December)
- Coordinate 13 insertions (February, March, April, May, June, July (2), August, September (2), October (2), December)
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$22,500 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 144,200 impressions (January - December)

**Groups Today**

- Total reach: 20,500 per issue
- Total frequency: 3-2/3 page ads (Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/Jun), 3 Web Banners (Feb, Mar, April), 3 weekly e-News (Jan, Mar, May), Web Listing, What's New editorial (March), Online Itinerary Posting
- CVB Investment: \$0
- Co-op media dollars: \$8,139
- Total Value of Investment: \$8,139

**The Road Explorer**

- Total reach: 2,800 per issue
- Total frequency: 3 full page ads, 1 listing (Mar, Jun, Aug, Oct)
- CVB Investment: \$0
- Co-op media dollars: \$7,180
- Total Value of Investment: \$7,180

**Group Travel Connect**

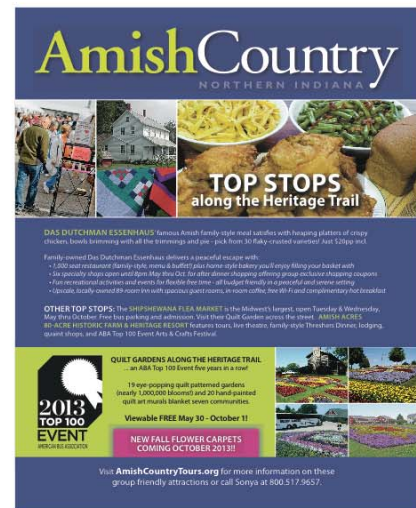
- Total reach: 8,800 monthly visits
- Total frequency: 1 LeaderBoard Ad (Daily Jan 1 - Dec 31)
- CVB Investment: \$0
- Co-op media dollars: \$5,000
- Total Value of Investment: \$5,000

**Religious Travel Network**

- Total reach: 7,000 monthly visits (5,000 unique) and 5,000 monthly e-newsletter subscribers
- Total frequency: 1 Web listing (Daily Jan 1 - Dec 31), 1 e-newsletter (Feb)
- CVB Investment: \$0
- Co-op media dollars: \$395
- Total Value of Investment: \$395

**Leisure Group Travel/Group Travel Directory**

- Total reach: 10,000 monthly visitors (7,000 unique) and 12,000 monthly e-newsletter subscribers
- Total frequency: 1 Web listings (Daily Jan 1 - Dec 31), 1 e-newsletter (Feb), 5 online Itineraries (Daily Jan 1 - Dec 31)
- CVB Investment: \$0
- Co-op media dollars: \$1,390
- Total Value of Investment: \$1,390



## > Marketing Communications

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by communicating the brand and maximizing awareness through print and social media communications.

### Heritage Trail Marketing Objective

To promote the nationally recognized Heritage Trail, its links to countywide attractions and experiences and its value as a branding / marketing tool for communities, business and residents throughout the destination.

### Heritage Trail Activity Measures

- Produce and distribute 45,000 trail maps (December)
- Distribute front lines personnel training materials and informational updates (January - December)
- Replace way finding signage as needed (March - August)
- Update 2013 audio tour CD packaging (August)

### Themed Experiences along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures

To extend the “Along the Heritage Trail” brand via themed/seasonal events and activities that will increase visitor volume and diversity and to create new promotional channels for destination partners.

### Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures

- Integrate Quilt Gardens (QG)/Heritage Trail messaging into all print & social media campaigns (January - December)
- Produce QG along HT rack card (December)
- Produce Hope along the HT rack card
- Update partner brand management guide & marketing guidelines (December)
- Design retail postcards (April)
- Produce Master Gardeners Guidebook (April)
- Coordinate on-site signage design, production & placement / 28 locations (April - May)
- Coordinate host community signage (May)
- Develop Review Workgroup weekly PowerPoint presentations (June - September)
- Produce & distribute tour video (October)

### Fall Flower Carpets (Elkhart & Nappanee)

- Develop communications timeline & components with Downtown Elkhart Inc. (DEI) / City stakeholders (June)
- Design promotional materials (July - August)
- Produce on-site/promotional signage

### RiverWalk Cultural Trail/ Elkhart

*(The 3-mile route links downtown’s cultural/historic/outdoor assets, promotes grouping of activities and extends stay length and spending.)*

- Test name and logo concepts (March - April)
- Finalize map/brochure (May)
- Develop universal messaging (web content, POPs) for Trail partners (May)



**Exit 92 Branding & Promotion Activity Measures**

- Develop & track 8 - 12 destination messages for Tourist Assistance Portal Kiosks (Six I-80 Travel Plazas)
- Produce Exit 92 rack card / establish distribution channels (January - December)
- Address signage / way finding issues (Visitor Center)

**Promotional Materials Objective**

To develop and distribute targeted, persuasive collateral that strengthens destination brands, communicates key experiences and communicates effectively with core audiences

**Travel Guide Activity Measures**

- Manage sales, content, design & production of 68-page Amish Country Travel Guide (July - December)
- Complete 150 contracts resulting in in \$190,000 in total sales and realize \$100,000 in net profit (July - November)
- Oversee distribution of 200,000 printed copies (February - December)
- Expand number of electronic distribution channels by 5% (March - October)

**Production Management Activity Measures**

- Develop content and creative for 50 print ads targeting leisure/group/resident/VFR markets (January - December)
- Manage copy, photography and videography for 30 collateral pieces (January - December)
- Secure 2 partnerships with regional media outlets for blog/Social Media content (January - December)
- Collaborate on 3 segments in partnership with WNIT / Community Foundation video production project
- Schedule 4 photo shoots (January - December)

**E-Newsletter Activity Measures**

- Assess design / frequency for *Travel to Go*, *Front Desk Update*, *Leisure & Travel Trade eblasts* (December)
- Develop comprehensive content grid integrating eblasts with paid / social schedules (December)
- Develop 3 blasts with specialized offers/incentives targeting quilters (Fons & Porter, QNN, QCA) (April)

**Group Marketing Activity Measures**

- Manage production of Amish Country /Quilt Gardens Profile Sheets, Group Planning Guide, FAM Flyer and Trade Show Presentation Book (January)

**Sponsorship Activation Activity Measures**

- Confirm key messages , performance measures & activation methods (March - October)

**Public Relations Activity Measures**

- Update creative aspect and design Amish Country Along the Heritage Trail press materials (January - December)
- Develop creative aspect for Quilt Gardens Along the Heritage Trail press materials (January - December)
- Create CDs and PDFs of press materials (January - December)

**RV Brand Activity Measures**

- Update RV Information Kit Materials (April)
- RV Rally Planning Guide (April)
- Update Service / Parts Resources and Dealer Tours Listing (January - December)

**Commission and Board of Directors Orientation Manual Activity Measures**

- Evaluate and update orientation manual inserts (January)

**Comprehensive Business Plan Activity Measures**

- Manage / Update design / content for comprehensive Business Plan (December)
- Update monthly board report templates (December)



## Marketing Communications *(cont.)*

**Social Media Marketing Objective** To enhance and promote the AmishCountry.org comprehensive database driven website, which will include a persuasive recommendation system, the capacity to conduct research and provide benchmarking indicators.

### Website Maintenance Activity Measures AmishCountry.org

- Make needed 2013 updates to all websites, including all advertiser updates and new content pages, 2013 Electronic Travel Guide and any as-needed updates as the year progresses. (January - December)

### Amish Country Social Media Activity Measures (Website, Emails, Blog, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter)

- Create 2013 Social Media schedule (January)
- Update all Amish Country Social Media presence design and content were applicable, maintain daily status, photo, event, etc. updates according to schedule, feature businesses and communities. (January - December)
- Increase social media community interaction from 2,300 by 3% by tracking the number of click-throughs to “more info” (Facebook and Twitter) using the .bitly tracker (January - December)
- Increase referrals to Amish Country Website from Facebook from 320 by 2% (January - December)
- Generate 10,000 video views (January - December)

### Quilt Gardens Social Media Activity Measures (Blog, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter)

- Create 2013 Social Media schedule (January)
- Update all Quilt Gardens Social Media presence design and content were applicable, maintain daily status, photo, event, etc. updates according to schedule, feature businesses and communities. (January - December)
- Generate 3,327 Quilt Gardens video views (January - December)



**Amish Country | Elkhart County E-Marketing Objective** To increase destination awareness and generate economic impact by communicating the images and offerings of the area.

### E-Marketing Activity Measures

- Produce, distribute and track 11 *Amish Country* email blasts to Leisure audience (February - December)
- Produce, distribute and track 10 *Group Travel Trade* email blasts to Travel Trade audience (January - December)
- Produce, distribute and track 11 *Travel To Go* email blasts to key influencers, partners and stakeholders bi-monthly (February - December)
- Generate a 4% *Leisure* email click-through rate\* (February - December)
- Generate a 3% *Quilt Gardens Insider* email click-through rate\* (January - December)
- Generate a 2% *Travel Trade* email click-through rate\* (January - December)
- Generate a 2% *Travel To Go* email click-through rate\* (January - December)

**Overall Leisure Advertising/Marketing Communication Performance Measures**

Invest \$200,000 in advertising / marketing which will convert to \$24,586,558 million in Total Visitor Spending\* reflecting both Travel Guide Requests (printed & electronic and Unique Website Visits (January - December)

- Total co-op advertising investment / Leisure - \$828,263
- Total co-op advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$44,604
- Total CVB advertising investment / Leisure - \$109,647
- Total CVB advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$0

**\*Visitor Spending Performance Metrics**

**Advertising Performance** is the amount in visitor spending generated by the ECCVB efforts Visitor Spending = (Total Travel Guide Requests X Conversion Rate 53%) X (3.3 people in travel party) X (2.8 days average length of stay) X (\$92 per person per day)

**Website Performance** is the amount of visitor spending generated by the ECCVB's website efforts Visitor Spending = (Total Unique Visits X Conversion Rate of 10%) X (3.3 people in travel party) X (2.8 days average length of stay) X (\$92 per person per day)

Research Resource:

2011 Economic Impact Report by Certec Inc.

## > Destination Development

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by implementing strategies that support redevelopment of targeted areas and support business development through marketing and training activities.

**ECCVB PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE** To facilitate completion of the assessment of the Elkhart County tourism product and assets and develop strategies that will result in improved relevance and performance of ECCVB activities initiated in 2012.

### **ECCVB Product Development Assessment Activity Measures**

- Facilitate 2-3 meetings of the Tourism Product Development Council (January - March)
- Finalize ECCVB strategic plan (February)
- Identify near term (2013/2014) tools and incentives to support new product development opportunities (March - June)
- Prioritize longer term resources and identify key constituencies, developing plan to engage and motivate (June - December)

**ECCVB RESEARCH OBJECTIVE** To continue collection of data in support of ECCVB activities including an assessment of the impact of CVB programs on business partners.

### **ECCVB RESEARCH ACTIVITY MEASURES**

- Work with Nichols Tourism Group and Temple University staff to implement new survey to identify key travel indicators and assess the impact of ECCVB programs a (May, September, December)
- Work with Nichols Tourism & NITDC to develop full report (November)
- Assist ECCVB staff with appropriate distribution of all ECCVB research through quarterly reports and online dashboard (April, July, October, December)



**DOWNTOWN ELKHART REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE** To continue a leadership role in Downtown Elkhart, Inc. (DEI) and assist in the implementation of the key SoMa live, work, & play activities

### **DOWNTOWN ELKHART REDEVELOPMENT**

- Maintain a leadership position in the Downtown Elkhart, Inc. organization through April 2014 , which includes diversifying the base of funding support for the organization beyond Elkhart Jazz Festival (EJF) revenues - 2013 goal of \$50,000 of non-EJF funding (January - December)
- Facilitate implementation of SoMa live strategies - DEI rental housing properties, Loft Tour events, promotion of City housing incentive programs (January - December)
- Facilitate implementation of SoMa work. strategies - business recruitment and retention programs, pop-up shop program (January - December)
- Facilitate implementation of SoMa play strategies - implementation of A&E Management plan, ArtWalk events, Elkhart Jazz Festival (January - December)
- Continued development of Culture Trail creation of printed materials, explore funding strategies/collaborations for trail signage (January - December)



## Destination Development *(cont.)*

**ECCVB COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OBJECTIVE** To create and implement a community development program that will convene key stakeholders and facilitate dialogue on the importance of quality of place in Elkhart County. In addition, the ECCVB will develop a process to bring resources in partnership with communities to help complete identified community development projects that are aligned with ECCVB product development priorities.

### **ECCVB COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ACTIVITY MEASURES**

#### *Tourism/Community Development Forum:*

- Facilitate a public conversation on quality of place and entrepreneurial ecosystems centered around downtowns in Elkhart County (March)
- Support the development of an on-line tool to be used as a vehicle to facilitate on-going dialogue and idea-sharing, and position Visitor Industry as leader in Community Development (June)

#### *Project Advocacy:*

- Position Tourism Development Commission (TDC) as an advocate for community development initiatives, using criteria developed in 2012 as foundation (Facilitate three TDC meetings)

#### *Technical Assistance:*

- Engage key community stakeholders during completion of product assessment and development of ECCVB strategic plan (January - February)
- Implement top three technical assistance projects based on resources needed and available, including research, strategic direction, recommendations on resources, etc. (March)

**EXIT 92 REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE** To coordinate activities that support the North Pointe redevelopment strategies, including activities to enhance the amenities and aesthetics of the North Pointe neighborhood and SR 19 corridor. This includes participating in a leadership role in researching the feasibility of sports and recreation as a future redevelopment strategy for the neighborhood.

### **EXIT 92 REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY MEASURES**

- Represent ECCVB and neighborhood stakeholders as part of Gateway Working Committee in support of redevelopment planning activities - specifically in the completion of a feasibility study related to indoor and outdoor sports facility development (January - December)
- Work with City Redevelopment staff and consulting team to develop materials that would support redevelopment of key North Pointe properties (January - December)
- Facilitate individual meetings with key property holders to identify relocation/acquisition opportunities (January - December)

**NITDC ART & EARTH TRAIL OBJECTIVE** To develop the Northern Indiana Art & Earth Trail in conjunction with NITDC partners. This trail is NITDC's significant new product development initiative and ECCVB staff will be directly involved with the NITDC staff in implementing the program in 2013.

### **NITDC ART & EARTH ACTIVITY MEASURES**

- Facilitate Marketing training event for A&E Trail participants (March)
- Finalize web and print trail marketing programs (January - March)
- Facilitate trail kick-off event to promote (May)
- Implement communications activities with trail participants to obtain feedback on trail activities (June, September)
- Identify five new 2013 trail participating businesses (September - October)
- Develop and map logical driving routes and verify 2013 participating sites (October - November)
- Develop and confirm 2013 partnership agreements (October - November)
- Design and write review (December)



**Destination Development** *(cont.)*

**SOUTH BEND/MISHAWAKA/ELKHART TRAIL RESEARCH OBJECTIVE** To define and develop an easy to follow, dynamic, entertaining, educational, and visually appealing route that connects St. Joseph County and Elkhart County. This route will provide educational and historic information to the user using fun, interactive technologies like podcasts, digital maps, mobile app and website. Program roll out - 2014. Partners include: Elkhart County CVB, South Bend/Mishawaka CVB, Historic, religious and cultural organizations from all three cities, Northern Indiana Center for History, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi.

**SOUTH BEND//MISHAWAKA/ELKHART TRAIL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY MEASURES**

- Develop & approve timeline (November, 2012)
- Identify audience, concept, partners (January)
- Develop route, identify stops (create map draft) (March)
- Confirm Route / Talk with local city development officials on any potential safety concerns with route (June)
- Research technology that will be used to communicate trail elements (August)
- Work with identified partners to confirm stops and research historic information on stops (June - October)
- Media Alerts for initial project information (i.e. formed partnerships)
- Media Alerts for completed project / official launch information
- Official Launch (May, 2014)
- Create supplemental materials for on-line download (digital downloads, PDF's, etc.) (January, 2014)

**SPECIAL EVENT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE** To continually develop the annual Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail event and the Fall Flower Carpet by fostering partnerships with local businesses, working with stakeholders, and identifying local charitable organizations to create new concepts, refresh and update existing product, providing caring and consideration to our communities and their organizations, and to generate repeat and new visitor interest.

**SPECIAL EVENT ACTIVITY MEASURES**

- Implement the annual Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail by overseeing 19 garden and 20 mural installations (May)
- Produce 2 Fall Flower Carpets in 2 communities (September - October)

**Overall Destination Development Performance Measures**

- Foster the generation of \$15,000 to local charitable cause organizations thru the sale of mums, donate 6,000 mums to other communities and non-profit organizations, and welcome 10 motorcoach groups to the Fall Flower Carpets (January - October)
- North Pointe Sports Complex feasibility study will be completed leveraging \$40,000 City investment
- Phase 3 implementation activities outlined in the North Pointe redevelopment plan (signage activities) will be initiated with an investment of \$200,000 of TIF funds (December)
- The ECCVB will receive \$10,000 in grant funds to leverage technical assistance program activities (January - December)
- DEI will leverage an investment of \$50,000 in resources for non-Jazz Festival and event programming
- Realize a 35% conversion rate of Quilt Fabric Retail Store questionnaires to opt-in to the Quilt Garden blog (January - March)





## > Public Relations

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by communicating the brand through given media, community relations, sponsorship and event participation.

**Community Relations Objective** To attain broader community support and awareness among targeted stakeholders for the ECCVB and its role in community development and sustainable tourism development to positively impact Elkhart County's economy.

### **Board Advocacy Activity Measures**

- Execute 2013 Advocacy Action Strategies (January - December)
- Facilitate 7 Advocacy Task Group Meetings (January - November)
- Plan / conduct Advocacy Task Group meeting with state legislators (January - March)
- Realize 70% participation of members involved in Advocacy initiatives (January - December)

### **Tourism Business and Community Communications Activity Measures**

- Facilitate quarterly meetings with ECCVB staff to develop subjects for communications content (January, April, July, October)
- Develop / distribute 2 information communiqués to local elected officials (January - November)
- Develop content for 9 issues of industry news brief distributed to community leaders and business partners (March - November)

### **Festival and Events Activity Measures**

- Develop / distribute laminated 2013 local event listings to 150 local tourism businesses (January)
- Distribute monthly PR tips to 12 constituents (January - December)

### **Sponsorship Program Activity Measures**

- Review / update sponsorship policy, guidelines, expectations, and reporting methods (February)
- Develop unique activation plans for awarded sponsorships (January - August)
- Provide sponsorship education to minimum 5 partners through IEG webinars (January - November)
- Manage sponsorship information dissemination, communication, eligibility of properties, proposal and contract filing and activation for minimum of 7 properties (January - October)
- Monitor all sponsorships to ensure guidelines and deliverables are met and reported (March - December)

### **Travel Guide Grant Program Activity Measures**

- Distribute Travel Guide Assistance Fund grant application announcements/guidelines to all eligible partners (June - August)
- Process \$17,358 in grant awards (January - April)
- Provide 18 not-for-profit organizations the ability to participate in the Travel Guide at an affordable rate (August - November)
- Provide more comprehensive information to the visitor through the Travel Guide (January - December)

**Public Relations** *(cont.)*

**PR Objective** To represent the ECCVB in a variety of strategic partnership activities for the purpose of enhancing the awareness of the ECCVB and its role in sustainable tourism development, further its mission and increase knowledge of the destination to drive visitation.

**Media Communications Objective** To secure editorial coverage and heighten media awareness for Elkhart County as a valued tourism destination; and facilitate strategies that communicate key ECCVB messages to a variety of audiences, cultivate community relationships, promote tourism development initiatives and generate media interest.

**Internal Community Relations, Grant, Festivals /Events, Activity Measures**

- Develop and locally distribute 2 grant focused releases (June - November)
- Develop and locally distribute 4 community or event focused releases/story idea pitches/posts (February - November)
- Develop and distribute 12 local event pitches/listings to media for event calendars and other opportunities (February - November)
- Secure 20 local media interviews (January - December)

**Internal Exit 92 Activity Measures**

- Develop, pitch, distribute 2 locally focused story ideas/releases on “Exit 92” value to destination (May-October)

**Internal Quilt Gardens Along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Develop 9 *Quilt Gardens Update* for 250 community contacts (February-October)
- Develop and pitch 2 locally focused story ideas/releases for Quilt Murals “Spring into art” activities (March-April)
- Develop and implement Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail opening media/communications strategy targeting all local media outlets and elected officials (May)
- Develop Quilt Gardens media materials for October celebration and announcements (September)

**Downtowns, Cultural Trail, SoMa**

- Work with downtown development programs and cultural organizations to develop 6 local story ideas/pitches on Arts & Entertainment District activities, Cultural Trail, signage other downtown developments (March - November)
- Develop and locally distribute 3 releases/media alerts on Cultural Trail and SoMa activities (March - November)

**Fall Flower Carpets**

- Develop and pitch 4 locally focused story ideas/releases for Fall Flower Carpets (August - September)
- Develop and implement Flower Carpets opening media/communications strategy targeting all local media outlets (September)

**Public Relations** *(cont.)***External Elkhart County...Along The Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Identify 300 qualified leisure, niche, group and social media (bloggers) contacts using Vocus and Google (January - March)
- Update, develop new content, for Along the Heritage Trail media kit and profile sheet including: Quilt Gardens, Amish Country. Artisans, Downtowns, Cultural Trail, Food, Flower Carpets and themed experiences (January - April)
- Develop 20 unique Along The Heritage Trail specific story ideas and pitch to 300 qualified media contacts (February - December)
- Follow and post to sites of 40 qualified niche specific (food, culture, travel, gardening, quilting) bloggers
- Develop/distribute 9 travel/trade specific releases to group related publications (February - October)
- Participate in 1 media marketplace (March - September)
- Plan and facilitate 1 niche specific FAM tours for bloggers (July - September)
- Develop and post 15 releases for Really Simple Syndication (RSS) distribution (January - December)
- Generate media pitches and/or releases to 3,000 qualified contacts (January - December)
- Generate 3 PR Web Releases (January - April)
- Generate 2,000 visits to media site (January - December)
- Generate 150 qualified media inquiries (January - December)

**Overall Public Relations Performance Measures**

- Generate 600 media placements (print, broadcast, on-line), yielding 81,000,000 impressions resulting in \$250,000 in advertising equivalency (January - December)





## > Travel Trade

**GOAL** To convert a buyer's interest and extend overnight stays in the destination by developing partnerships with local businesses and working with stakeholders to create new product and refresh and update existing product to create new buyer interest.

### **Marketing Development Objective**

To generate qualified tour operator leads and increase sales for local businesses by positioning Amish Country and the RV Capital of the World as premier destinations for the group market thru attendance at tradeshow, giving sales presentations and conducting direct mail campaigns, sales missions, e-mail campaigns, group website, social media strategies, trade publication co-op advertising campaigns and destination preview tours.

### **Marketing Development Activity Measures**

- Attend 3 tradeshow: ABA, Heartland and OMCA (January, February and October)
- Conduct 1 Sales Mission: Midwest (June)
- Generate 8 e-mail campaigns (January - November)
- Conduct 4 personalized destination previews and 1 destination wide preview tour (January - December)
- Conduct 3 direct mail postcard campaigns (January - October)
- Advertise in 3 publications *Going on Faith*, *The Group Travel Leader* and *Bank Travel Management* (January - December)
- Coordinate 13 insertions (February, March, April, May, June, July (2), August, September (2), October (2), December)
- Coordinate monthly group website updates and social media strategies (January - December)
- Generate 100 qualified leads and appointments (January - December)
- Generate 300 visits to the Travel Trade Group Planner Resources page on AmishCountryTours.org (January - December)
- Generate 13,000 Unique Page Views to the Travel Trade website (January - December)
- Generate a 2% Travel Trade email click-through rate\* (January - December)
- Generate 500 Sample Itinerary Downloads from the Travel Trade Website (January - December)

### **Services Development Objective**

To retain and expand group visits by developing services and providing information to group planners in partnership with area stakeholders thru the distribution of Group Tour Planners, Travel Guides, Profile Sheets, DVD's, digital photography, and suggested itineraries.

### **Services Development Activity Measures**

- Provide service and assistance to 150 clients (January - December)

### **Partnership Development Objective**

To retain and develop a group marketing team with area stakeholders engaged and involved in working together to generate leads and increase sales thru networking sessions, partnership opportunities, and educational programming.

### **Partnership Development Activity Measures**

- Develop 10 co-op partnerships from marketing development activities (January - October)
- Conduct 10 networking sessions and educational programs for partners (January - December)
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$22,500 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 144,200 impressions (January - December)
- Generate \$2,000 in co-op partnership revenues (March - October)

### **Overall Travel Trade Performance Measures**

- Create 75 customized itineraries, averaging in 2 days of length, generating \$1 million in group visitor spending (January - December)
- Generate 75 daytrips and 100 overnight trips resulting in \$2 million in group visitor spending (January - December)
- Maintain average length of group stays to 2 days (January - December)
- Realize \$30,000 in group visitor spending from direct mail promotion (February - December)





## > Technology

**GOAL** To generate spending and economic impact throughout the destination by providing staff with the software, hardware and technical support needed to manage daily responsibilities in an efficient, accountable manner.

**Technology Objective** To maintain the Bureau's computers, software, database and reporting systems.

**Financial** - The ECCVB will continue to use Peachtree Accounting software to manage all sales transactions, accounts payable and receivable. The 2013 Peachtree Tax Update will be purchased.

**Contact Database** - The ECCVB will continue to use SimpleView to use as its primary contact database and will purchase the annual fee for 2013.

**Marketing** - The ECCVB will continue to update all bureau websites, blogs and message boards and social media applications as needed. Updates will be made in-house. Any updates that cannot be made in house will be outsourced to the existing vendor, VERB. The bureau will continue to utilize WhatCounts Email software as its primary email software program and purchase the annual fee for 2013.

**Equipment** - The ECCVB will continue to monitor existing hardware and software needs for the staff. All computer needs will be upgraded per the Capital Equipment Replacement Plan.

**Professional Development** - Each staff member is encouraged to obtain training in areas of new software specific to their area of responsibility if needed. Minimum technology use requirements for all staff include the ability to use all Microsoft Office 2007 programs, Simpleview Database, printers and fax machines.

### **Technology Activity Measures**

- IT problem solving as needed (January - December)
- New general software and hardware researched and purchased per Capital Equipment Replacement Plan (January - December)
- Produce, print and distribute 12 reports and 1 business plan to staff and Board and Commission monthly (January - December)
- Provide at least 8 Internet / Web 2.0 training sessions to our partners (March - October)

### **Database Management Activity Measures**

- Accurately enter 19,000 contacts (Travel Guide Requests) into the database (January - December)
- Complete and send 1 bulk mailing to the fulfillment house weekly (January - December)
- Assure the accuracy of contact database by doing one duplicate scan, one publication code check annually and one overall Member/Partner updated (and as needed) (March)



## ECCVB 2013 Capital Replacement





## > 2013 Capital Replacement Plan

The Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitor Bureau, Inc has made it a goal to maintain and continually upgrade the current viable equipment.

The focus of the Capital Equipment Replacement Plan is to:

- Maintain current infrastructure (example: Server Maintenance, Application Upgrades)
- Provide necessary tools and technologies to CVB employees (example: PC & Server Replacement, New Software, etc.)
- Maintain office equipment, furniture and vehicle needs

The Capital Plan below outlines the strategic direction for each focus area mentioned above.

Maintaining Existing Infrastructure:

- PC Replacement Plan: Replace three employee PC desktops every 5 years, Mac every 4 years and laptops every 4 years
- Server Replacement: Replace server every 4-5 years to achieve 100% network uptime to ensure critical systems remain operational
- Telephone Equipment: Telephone Network: replaced as needed, Cell phones/mobile devices: replaced every 2-3 years
- Network Printer, Scanners, Projectors, Cameras: Replace annually as needed
- Software: Replace server every 4-5 years to achieve 100% network uptime to ensure critical systems remain operational
- Miscellaneous Software, Hardware (external hard drives, keyboards, mice, monitors, battery backup, replacement backup batteries, etc.): Replace annually as needed
- Vehicles: (1) vehicle maintains a 3 year lease, (1) vehicle purchased, replaced as needed (approximately 10years)
- Furniture: Replace as needed, currently all staff offices are equipped to ensure 100% productivity

Request for Exceptions to Replacement:

In some situations, there may be a need to run special software, upgrade an OS or perform unique tasks where a desktop computer, network equipment or server system would require more memory, a faster processor, or a larger hard disk drive than the one currently in use. This situation will be evaluated by the Technology Marketing Manager (TMM) to determine an appropriate upgrade path. The TMM may recommend additional memory, a larger hard disk drive or storage unit, a newer workstation computer, network equipment or server system. While the majority of requests are expected to come at the end of year, requests will be reviewed throughout the year to handle unforeseen changes.



## Terms & Definitions





## > Terms and Definitions

### **General**

**Activity** - A physical action taken by the CVB functional area that ultimately supports its mission, e.g., attending a tradeshow, conducting a familiarization tour, writing and distributing a press release.

**DEI** - Downtown Elkhart Inc.

**ECCVB** - Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.

**EDC** - Economic Development Commission

**EDCEC** - Economic Development Corporation Elkhart County

**Goal** - An overall summary of what the ECCVB wants to accomplish in each departmental area

**Innkeeper's Tax** - Collected as an additional percent on the room rate in Elkhart County.

**Horizon Project** - Elkhart County's comprehensive strategic plan.

**NITDC** - Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission

**Objective** - A specific, measureable condition that must be attained in order to accomplish a particular program goal.

**Performance Measure** - A measure that helps to define and quantify the results of the CVB activity. Implementation of this system of measures will yield actionable tools that the CVB staff can use for short and long term enhancement of its efforts.

**RV** - Recreational Vehicle

**RVIC** - Recreation Vehicle Indiana Council

**SBI** - Small Business Initiative

**SoMa** - South Main Street, Elkhart, IN initiative

**SMART** - Strategic Market Area Research in Tourism

**TDC** - Tourism Product Development Council

**VFR** - Visiting friends and relatives

**Visitor** - One who travels away from home for a distance of at least 50 miles (one way) to stay overnight for business, pleasure, personal affairs, or any other purpose except to commute to work.

### **Advertising**

**Frequency** - Average number of times households or persons viewed a given program, station or advertisement during a specific time period. This number is derived by dividing the Gross Ratings Points (GRPs) by the Reach.

**Gross Rating Point (GRP)** - A unit of measurement of audience size. It is used to measure the exposure to one or more programs or commercials, without regard to multiple exposures of the same advertising to individuals. *One GRP = 1% TV households.*

**Gross Impressions** - Sum of audiences, in terms of people or households viewing, where there is exposure to the same commercial or program on multiple occasions. Two gross impressions could mean the same person was in the audience on two occasions or that two different people had been exposed only once.

**Reach** - Unduplicated number of individuals or households exposed to an advertising medium at least once during the average week for a reported time period (also known as *Cumulative Audience*).

**ROI** - Return on Investment

### **Public Relations**

**Advertising Equivalency** - A means of converting editorial space in the media into advertising costs, by measuring the amount of editorial coverage and then calculating what it would have cost to buy that space, if it had been advertising.

**Circulation** - Refers to the number of copies sold of a given publication, at a given time or as averaged over a period of time.

**Impressions** - The number of those who might have had the opportunity to be exposed to a story that appeared in the media. Sometimes referred to as "opportunity to see." An "impression" usually refers to the total audited circulation of a publication or the audience reach of a broadcast.

**PR Web** - Online Press Release distribution company

**PR Web Media Deliveries** - This report provides you with information on which media outlets received your news release via e-mail or news feed

**PR Web Online Pickup** - Customized searches in PR Web, Google, and Yahoo! that show some of the Web sites that have picked-up the PR Web release.

## Terms and Definitions *(cont.)*

### Internet / Website

**Ad Views (Impressions)** - Number of times an ad banner is (presumably) seen by visitors.

**Click-through** - Percentage of ad views that resulted in an ad click. Also known as 'ad click rate.'

**Hit** - A viewing of a webpage/an element on the webpage. If a webpage containing two graphics is viewed by a user, three hits will be recorded - one for the webpage itself and one for each graphic.

**'Hot' Link** - An electronic connection between two websites.

**Page Views** - Number of times a user requests a webpage that may contain a particular advertisement.

**Unique Visit** - Number of different individuals who visit a website within a specific time period.

**Visit** - A sequence of requests made by one user at one website. If a visitors does not request any new information for a period of time, known as the "time-out" period, then the next request by the visitor is considered a new visit.

### Travel Industry

**Packaged Travel** - A package in combination of two or more types of tour components into a product which is produced, assembled, promoted and sold as a package by a tour operator an all-inclusive price.

**Tour Series/Tour Programs** - Multiple departures to the same destination throughout the year.

**Group Tour** - A travel package for an assembly of travelers that has a common itinerary, travel date, and transportation. Group tours are usually prearranged, prepaid, and include transportation, lodging, dining, and attraction admissions.

**Independent Travel (IT)** - A custom-designed, prepaid travel package with many individualized arrangements. ITs are unescorted and usually have no formal itinerary. Sometimes referred to as FIT.

**Travel Trade** - Any individual or company that creates and/or markets tours and/or IT packages. Travel trade includes but is not limited to tour operators, travel agents, individual travel planners, online travel companies.

**Tour Catalog** - A publication by tour wholesalers listing their tour offerings. Catalogs are distributed to retail agents who make them available to their customers.

**Economic Impact** - Visitor spending generates secondary spending (*indirect and induced*) on the destination's local economy over and above the original visitor spending. These secondary impacts, when combined with the original direct spending, result in the ***economic impact***. ***Indirect spending*** is spending by the destination's travel industry businesses on goods and services from local suppliers.

***Induced spending*** occurs when employees in the destination's travel industry and its suppliers spend their wages in the local economy. This chain of buying and selling among businesses and employees continues until the original direct spending "leaks out" of the local economy. The ***economic multiplier*** is calculated as total economic impact divided by direct spending.

**FAM (Familiarization) Tour** - A free or reduced-rate trip offered to travel professionals to acquaint them with what a destination, attraction, or supplier has to offer. FAMs should be considered a sales effort, more than just an educational trip for the travel trade.

**Itinerary (Suggested)** - A recommended schedule of visitor-oriented activities, usually including entertainment and recreation venues, retail stores and often highlighting unique, one-of-a-kind offerings. Itineraries are often themed: family, romantic, first-time visitor, etc.

**Visitor Spending** - (number of visitors) X (spending pr person per day) X (length of stay).

**Hotel Lead** - When a group tour or independent tour program inquiry from the travel trade that includes a request for hotel rooms over a specific set/range of dates is forwarded by the CVB sales staff only to those hotels that meet the travel trade's criteria.

**Non-hotel Lead** - When an inquiry for a group tour or independent tour program not requiring hotel rooms from the travel trade over a specific set/range of dates is forwarded by the CVB sales staff only to those non-hotel tourism industry businesses that meet the travel trade's criteria.

**Booking from a Hotel Lead** - A booking confirmed in writing from an authorized agent (hotel, travel trade) or by documenting the tour/programs presence in the travel trade's distribution. Channels such as a brochure, website or special sales/marketing program. The booking must be the result of a CVB-generated lead. CVBs should include information on room nights, total visitors and associated visitor spending.

**Booking from a Non-hotel lead** - Booking confirmed in writing from an authorized agent (hotel, travel trade) or by documenting the tour/programs presence in the travel trade's distribution. Channels such as a brochure, website or special sales/marketing program. The booking must be the result of a CVB-generated lead. CVBs should include information on room nights, total visitors and associated visitor spending.

ECCVB 2013 Budget





# > 2013 ECCVB Budget

Elkhart County CVB Proposed 2013 Budget				
	Expenses			
A/C#	Line Item	2013		
501	Payroll	475,000		
510	Employee Payroll Taxes	40,000		
568	Employee Insurance	1,300		
	<i>Personnel</i>		516,300	31%
503	Wellness Benefit	4,000		
506	IRA Match Contribution (3%)	13,500		
504	Health Insurance	44,000		
	<i>Benefit/ Retirement</i>		61,500	4%
147	Furniture & Fixtures	500		
208	Note Payable - Vehicle Lease	4,000		
552	Meetings - Local	4,000		
600	Office Supplies	10,000		
610	Equipment Rent/Repair/Maint	3,500		
612	Vehicle Repair/Maint	1,200		
615	Fuel	4,500		
	<i>Administrative</i>		27,700	2%
515-1	Ad - Placement (Leisure)	188,000		
515-2	Ad - Placement (Group)	32,500		
515-3	Sponsorships	72,000		
515-4	Promotional Materials	1,000		
518	Ad - Production	10,500		
520	Vacation Planner Expenses	95,000		
522	Printing	12,300		
525	Postage	23,000		
528-1	Quilt Garden Tour (Development)	62,000		
528-2	Quilt Garden Tour (Marketing)	12,500		
528-3	Artisans Along the Heritage Trail (Development)	500		
528-4	Riverwalk Cultural Trail (Development)	6,000		
528-5	SOMA (Development)	1,000		
528-6	Flower Carpet (Development)	80,000		
530	Special Promotion/Event	4,000		
531	Special Fam/Tour/Meeting	4,500		
535	Travel Guide Assistance Grant Fund	17,700		
538	Grant Fund Expenses (Sister City Arts & Culture)	-		
540	Research/Professional Fees	190,000		
541-1	Technology - Hardware	18,500		
541-2	Technology - Licensing	14,000		
541-3	Technology - Software	2,500		
541-4	Technology - Professional Assistance	20,500		
545	Tradeshows/Sem/Marketplace	14,000		
548	Dues/Fees	21,000		
550	Travel - Tradeshows/Seminar	20,000		
555	Rent	75,000		
558	Electricity	5,000		
560	Water/Sewer	1,200		
562	Gas	2,000		
565	Telephone	20,000		
570	Building/Liability Insurance	7,500		
575	Building Maintenance/Repairs	15,000		
580	Real Estate Taxes	16,500		
	<i>Marketing</i>		1,065,200	63%
			<b>1,670,700</b>	
	<b>Income</b>			
A/C#	Line Item			
305	Room Tax Revenue	1,200,000		
307	Vacation Planner Income	194,000		
308	Group Marketing Co-op Partnerships	25,500		
312	Grant Fund (Community Foundation/Sister Cities)	-		
710	Interest Income	600		
711	Interest Income - Other Sources	600		
		<b>1,420,700</b>	1,420,700	
			250,000	**
			<b>1,670,700</b>	
**	Appropriation of \$250,000			