



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

**TOURISM BUILDING COMMUNITY**

BRISTOL ELKHART GOSHEN MIDDLEBURY NAPPANEE WAKARUSA



## 2016 Place-Based Key Initiatives and Business Plan





# ECCVB, Inc. 2016 Place-Based Key Initiatives and Business Plan



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# WHO WE ARE

## > Organization Structure

The Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau (ECCVB) is a private, nonprofit corporation. It serves as 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 more than 30 rooms.

As the champion for the local hospitality industry, the ECCVB takes an active role representing sustainable visitor development through affiliations with tourism-related businesses, economic development organizations, developers, and other government organizations that align with its 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 *Innkeepers Tax Commission*, appointed by the Elkhart County government 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, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau Corporation.
- The ECCVB employs a 10-person staff which manages its various programs and operations and provides support to the area's hospitality industry.
- 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.



The ECCVB is a member of the **Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission**, an alliance of seven CVBs in northern Indiana. With an agreed-upon destination brand positioning and strategy, NITDC members:

- Collaborate on issues of mutual importance;
- Participate in cooperative marketing programming;
- Conduct credible research-based activities;
- Play a role on the Indiana Toll Road Advisory Committee and contribute to an integrated regional website that draws information from member websites and databases.



## > Accountability

Accountability is an integral part of the corporate culture. The ECCVB must show how it effectively uses its resources to generate the greatest return on investment for the destination. It monitors and analyzes many sources of data on the industry-wide impact of tourism in the Elkhart County area and reports how it contributes positively to the hospitality industry.

The Innkeepers Tax Commission and Board of Directors meet bi-monthly with ECCVB staff. At these meetings, the two bodies receive reports on performance metrics and discuss and act on policy initiatives and priorities.



## > Values and Guiding Principles

The ECCVB is guided in its daily activities by a foundation built on strong values and guiding principles that are:

- Ethical
- Innovative
- Collaborative
- Entrepreneurial
- Professional
- Accountable

These norms are the foundation to perform successfully.

# 2016 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

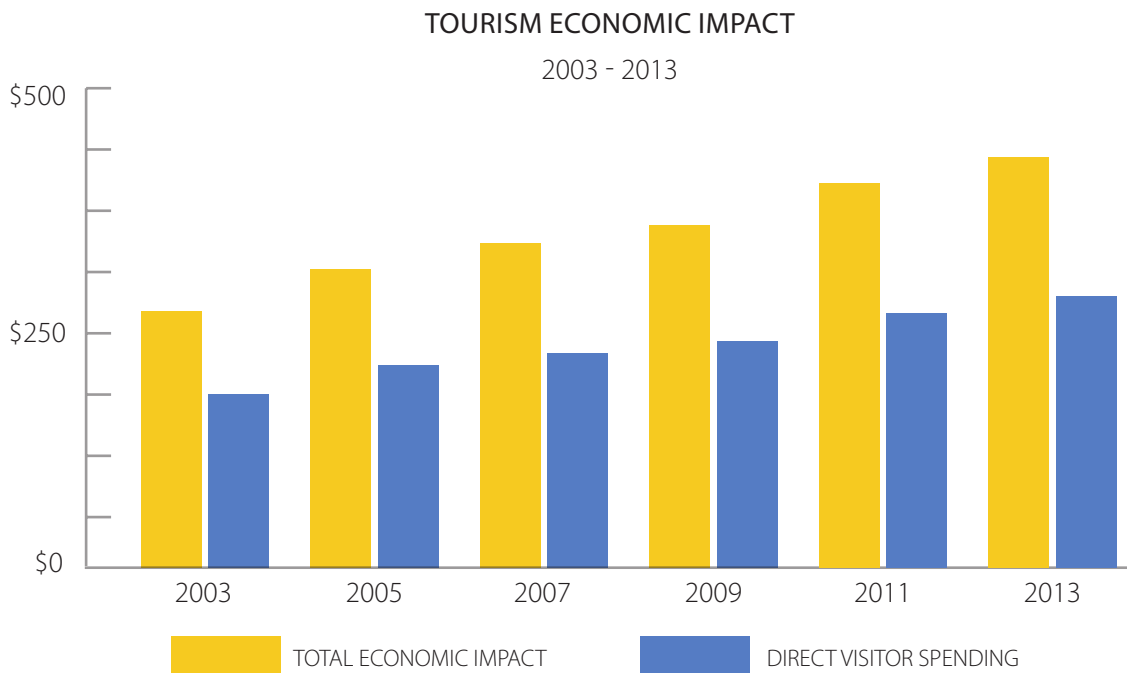


- Total number of ECCVB partnerships: 713
- Total partner dollars invested in co-op programs: \$635,227
- Public Relations Advertising equivalency: \$215,289
- \$229,286 invested in Marketing and Advertising will generate \$32 million in visitor spending
- Travel Trade activities will generate \$3.8 million in group visitor spending
- Heritage Trail Audio Driving Tour distribution will generate \$3.6 million in visitor spending

Room Tax: \$1.7 million

Total Return on Investment: \$39.4 million

For every dollar of room tax invested, there is more than a \$23 return on investment which is clearly and significantly generated through the Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau partnership, sales and marketing efforts.



(\$ in millions)  
Source: Certec, Inc

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



# MISSION AND KEY STRATEGIES

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 countywide destination experiences.

The ECCVB develops, executes and manages a broad range of programs that connect visitors with its hospitality partners while adhering to an overall vision of continuous development of all Elkhart County communities.

To achieve its annual strategic goals, the ECCVB targets particular programs for emphasis through sponsorship and marketing activities, collaboration with partners and community organizations, and investment in development and planning initiatives.



For 2016, the focus will be in four key initiatives that are interrelated but also stand on their own as pillars of ECCVB's strategy:

**Destination Marketing** (page 7): Under the Heritage Trail flagship, the Amish Country and Quilt Gardens brands will focus efforts on the qualities that distinguish the Elkhart County visitor experience from other destinations.

**Connectivity** (page 9): The Heritage Trail is a key identifier as a brand as well as the framework on which to build our marketing efforts.

**Destination Development** (page 10): New programs and research will reinforce critical areas of the Elkhart County destination and build upon its strengths.

**Quality of Place** (page 11): Working with community partners, significant resources will be committed to helping communities plan and realize enhancements to downtowns, parks and other amenities.

# KEY INITIATIVES

## > Destination Marketing



### Amish Country

Thousands of visitors come to Elkhart County annually to experience the tranquility and comfort of Amish Country. The Heritage Trail helps connect those communities, enhancing the visitor experience by allowing them to plan every aspect of their trip, from lodging to dining to shopping. The Amish Country brand also acts as an entry point for the diverse activities available close by, further deepening the connection visitors feel for our destinations.

### Quilt Gardens

Elkhart County's Quilt Gardens and self-guided tour is a singular event that has earned acclaim for its quality and a loyal following of annual visitors. The event gives the area a distinctive opportunity to welcome visitors and extend their stay. The beauty of the Quilt Gardens is how it is an all-inclusive experience that brings together visitors with diverse interests such as gardening, quilting and history.

History has always been an important aspect of the Quilt Gardens, as many host locations from Elkhart and Nappanee to Goshen, Wakarusa, Bristol and Middlebury possess compelling stories.



### Indiana Bicentennial

*As an Official Legacy project, the Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail will gain a higher profile in the state's celebration of its 200th birthday. To honor Indiana's history, each of the 19 Quilt Gardens in 2016 will feature patterns of historic significance.*





## > Destination Marketing (cont.)

### I-80/90 Exit 92

Lodging and dining options at the exit off the Indiana Toll Road on Elkhart's north side will continue to be a primary focus of marketing and advertising efforts. The message that the exit possesses an attractive array of options for travelers will be delivered via outdoor advertising, placements in travel plazas and toll booths and digital advertising on popular travel-oriented websites and smartphone apps.



### Outdoor Recreation

The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, St. Joseph and Elkhart rivers, and Elkhart County's system of parks provide numerous possible activities for avid bicyclists, canoers and kayakers, and other active people. These experiences usually span multiple stops on the Heritage Trail, such as the Pumpkinvine, which connects Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana, and also interfaces with other trails leading to Elkhart and multiple points in Goshen.





## > Connectivity

### Heritage Trail

The Heritage Trail has been one of the ECCVB's most successful brands - one that Elkhart County "owns" on the digital marketing world. It has also evolved from its original purpose as the flag for the CVB's successful driving tour to serve as the foundation for all of Elkhart County's destinations.

For 2016, the Heritage Trail brand will take a leading role in projecting the message of Elkhart County as an excellent place to visit, live and play. From the annual area guide to marketing and promotional messages over all our channels, the Heritage Trail displays the vibrant diversity of the county while connecting our destinations from the Amish Country of Nappanee, Middlebury and Shipshewana, to the inviting small towns of Wakarusa and Bristol to the bustling downtowns of Elkhart and Goshen.



### History

The Heritage Trail brand serves many important purposes, and it begins with showcasing the history of Elkhart County in a way that engages visitors and delights local residents. The more-than-90-mile audio driving tour is an entertaining vehicle for the rich history of the area, from colorful tales of Elkhart County communities' origins to the development of the vital RV industry and other commerce to stories of Amish settlements. The driving tour takes the listener to every corner of the county, from the urbane settings of the downtowns to the network of parks and recreation trails.

**Via its Sponsorship Program, the ECCVB supports non-profit organizations which conduct events and festivals that build stronger community relationships, encourage visits from around the region and reinforce the area's position as attractive communities. Events supported in 2015 include:**

Elkhart County - Pumpkinvine Bike Ride; Bloom & Zoom; Gathering at Five Medals

Elkhart - Elkhart Jazz Festival; Elkhart ArtWalk; Midwest Museum of American Art Juried Regional Art Show; Beardsley House Opening; Wellfield Botanic Garden Taste of the Gardens; Arts on Main; Summer Saturdays

Goshen - Goshen First Fridays

Nappanee - Nappanee Apple Festival

Bristol - Bonneyville Heritage Days

Wakarusa - Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival; Wakarusa Bluegrass Festival

**In 2016, the ECCVB is committing more than \$110,000 to events throughout Elkhart County. A more detailed accounting of ECCVB sponsorships is available by request.**



## > Destination Development

### I-80/90 Exit 92

Of the four exits from the Indiana Toll Road to Elkhart County - more than any other county in northern Indiana - the one in Elkhart's north side represents the greatest opportunity to capture transient travelers, or those passing through an area with no specific plan for an overnight stay. The ECCVB has encouraged improvements that make the area more appealing to visitors and hotel operators, such as the addition of sidewalks and attractive street lighting. The area continues to grow and further improvements are planned in the coming year.



### Feasibility Study

While Exit 92 is presently a powerful draw for travelers, there are opportunities to strengthen this position and build further features that will attract more travelers. A feasibility study will examine potential uses for the area, focusing on amenities that could be developed that would reinforce a competitive advantage for Exit 92 destinations.

### Outdoor Recreation

The Pumpkintown Nature Trail, St. Joseph and Elkhart rivers, and Elkhart County's system of parks provide numerous activities for avid bicyclists, canoers and kayakers, and other active people. Two major events - the Pumpkintown and Bloom & Zoom bike rides - draw hundreds of bicyclists annually. More emphasis will be given to promoting outdoors assets.

### Digital Initiatives

A new smartphone app will be launched in 2016 and marketed heavily to visitors. The app will use location-based technology to heighten awareness with travelers on the lodging and dining options anywhere in Elkhart County. With access to the ECCVB's full database of destinations and events, the app will serve as a "mobile concierge" for travelers and provide timely and relevant event information. The ECCVB's website will deploy technology that will detect a visitor's preferences and present a primary message based on the Internet history of the user. This will direct visitors to see immediate results.



## > Quality of Place



### Vibrant Communities Action Agenda

Supporting the Vibrant Communities Action Agenda is intended to bring forth the best ideas for public amenities. The process will feature a series of public events intended to inspire dreams for the future. Residents from each Elkhart County community will engage in brainstorming sessions to identify unique projects and planning priorities. From this process will come the blueprint that will build off the excellent amenities that already exist and make Elkhart, Goshen, Nappanee, Bristol, Middlebury and Wakarusa even better places to live, work and play.

### LIVE. WORK. PLAY.

To support development of Elkhart County's downtowns, the ECCVB and Community Foundation of Elkhart County are combining resources to create a grant program aimed at partnering with cities and towns, chambers of commerce and merchants.

The objective of the grant program is to boost efforts at a sufficient scale to make a difference in a downtown's ability to support residential growth, foster business development and enhance cultural and entertainment possibilities.

### Brand Development

The ECCVB is committed to helping each of Elkhart County's communities enhance its neighborhoods for residents, businesses and visitors.

In 2016, we will continue efforts that started with visual enhancements to downtown Elkhart that included a brand marketing campaign, wayfinding signage and public art.

While the approaches may vary by the needs of individual communities, the ECCVB strives to work with Chambers of Commerce, business leaders and residents to select the most effective projects.



# ECCVB, Inc. Tourism & Community Leadership Involvement

## **Diana Lawson, FCDME, Executive Director**

- SoMa Chair
- SoMa Public Relations/Marketing Committee Chair
- Indiana Toll Road Community Advisory Board
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Board of Directors Treasurer
- Elkhart County / Cities
- Vibrant Communities Steering Committee
- Lerner Governing Board, Vice President
- Friends of the Lerner Board Vice President
- Lerner Strategic Plan Committee
- Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Chair
- WNIT Community Advisory Board
- Downtown Goshen, Inc. Board Member
- Goshen Theatre Fundraising Committee
- Regional Cities Initiative
- MACOG Active Transportation Steering Committee
- MACOG Transportation for America National Committee

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

- Economic Development Coalition Member
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Research Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Downtown Elkhart, Inc.
- Middlebury Economic Development Committee
- Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission President
- Elkhart North Gateway Village Steering Committee
- Northwest Gateway Steering Committee Chair

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

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Technology Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Elkhart County 2016 Bicentennial Committee
- Wellfield Spring Marketplace Committee

## **Janis Logsdon Marketing and Advertising Sales**

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Marketing Committee
- Elkhart Jazz Festival Committee
- Elkhart County Historical Society Board Member
- Elkhart County Museum Association Tourism Liason

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

- DMAI 30 Under 30 Member
- Elkhart County 2016 Bicentennial Committee
- Indiana Tourism Association Professional Development Committee
- 2017 Indiana Tourism Association Conference Awards Committee Co-Chair

## **Terry Mark, Director of Communications**

- Vibrant Communities Organizing Team Chair
- Vibrant Communities Communications Team Chair
- Volunteer staff member, MidWest Leadership School of the Unitarian Universalist Association

## **Sonya Nash, Director of Destination Experiences**

- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Group Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Northern Indiana Partnership for the Arts Commission Grant Review Panel Chair
- Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Project Manager
- Michiana Master Gardener
- Elkhart County 2016 Bicentennial County Co-Coordinator
- Indiana Department of Tourism ABA Planning Committee
- Gateway Mile AutoFest Planning Committee

# Elkhart County Innkeepers Tax Commission

**Beth Ronzone, President**

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**Dan Shoup, Vice President**

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# ECCVB, Inc. Board of Directors

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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

## **Terry Mark, Director of Communications**

terry@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, Director of Destination Experiences**

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





## > 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 2016 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 Heritage Trail Adventures Area 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)
- Research benefit plans that best meet employee's 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 Visitor 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 Visitor Center (January - December)
- Provide friendly personal service to an average of 3,000 people calling to request Heritage Trail Adventures Area 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 Visitor 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 \$3.6 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 = (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 per person per day) = Visitor Spending per Heritage Trail CD. Includes CDs and MP3 downloads.*

*Research Resource:*

*2013 Economic Impact Report by Certec Inc.*





## > ADVERTISING

**GOAL** To increase destination awareness and economic impact using paid, earned and owned media channels that generate brand awareness, promote destination assets and optimally engage defined market segments.

**Advertising Objective** By investing in co-operative media buys (in partnership with the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission and the Indiana Office of Tourism Development) and Elkhart County specific placements, the ECCVB will promote destination campaigns and maximize media value.

### REGIONAL CO-OPS:

#### Indiana Travel Guide Activity Measures

- Brochure lead generation ad: \$2,200
- Circulation: 500,000 | Frequency: 1X | Partnerships: 113
- CVB investment: \$2,200; Total Co-op dollars: \$67,600; Total value of investment: \$71,960
- By leveraging \$2,200 to a partner investment of \$67,600 the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 62.5 million impressions (January - December)

#### NITDC Digital Marketing Activity Measures

- 10 themed, regional e-blasts to 20,500 opt-ins (January - December)
- 7 Co-op partnerships
- CVB investment: \$7,500; Total Co-op dollars: \$45,000; Total value of investment: \$52,500
- By leveraging \$7,500 to a partner investment of \$45,000, the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 2.1 million impressions (January - December)

#### NITDC Website Activity Measures

- 131,000 unique users (January - December)
- 435,000 page views (January - December)
- 7 Co-op partnerships

#### Indiana Travel Guide | VisitIndiana.com Activity Measures

- Receive 5,000 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide requests (January - December)

#### Indiana Festival Guide

- Circulation: 500,000; 64 Co-op partnerships
- CVB investment: \$3,600; Total Co-op dollars: \$33,800; Total value of investment: \$37,400
- By leveraging \$3,600 to a partner investment of \$33,800 the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 51 million impressions (January - December)



**I-80/90 Exit Guide**

- Total circulation: 200,000; 135 Co-op partnerships (January - December)
- CVB investment: \$5,000; Total Co-op dollars: \$365,485; Total value of investment: \$370,485
- By leveraging \$5,000 to a partner investment of \$365,485 the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County/ Northern Indiana brand through 27 million impressions (January - December)

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

- 6 locations TBD (January - December)
- 44 Co-op partnerships
- CVB investment: \$4,500; Total Co-op dollars: \$94,990 ; Total value of investment: \$99,490
- By leveraging \$4,500 to a partner investment of \$94,990 the program will generate 30,000 click-thru's to partner / ECCVB websites (January - December)

**I-80/90 Billboards / Exit 92**

- Burkhart [I-80 Eastbound: LaPorte County] (April - October)
- Outfront [I-80 Westbound: Steuben County] (May - April)
- Total CVB investment: \$10,010
- Total investment of billboards along the Indiana / Ohio I-80 corridor will promote the Exit 92 brand through 16.4 million impressions (January - December)

**I-80/90 Barrier Plaza Posters / Exit 92**

- (10) Posters - Westpoint / Eastbound from Chicago Skyway (January - December)
- Gross impressions: 18.3 million annually
- CVB investment: \$30,000

**Midwest Living**

- (1) 2/3 page ad (May / June)
- Digital banner campaign across Meredith brands (TBD)
- CVB investment: \$11,800

**Facebook**

- Sponsored / boosted posts (January - December)
- Obtain a 5% engagement rate (likes, comments, click-thru's)
- CVB investment: \$5,000

**Trip Advisor**

- Banner ad campaign (January - December)
- Obtain 500 referrals to AmishCountry.org / QuiltGardens.com
- CVB investment: \$5,000

**YELP**

- Targeted digital ads and / or Enhanced profile (March - October)
- Receive 100 visits, video views, and call to action click-thrus from Yelp business page (January - December)
- CVB investment: \$1,500

**WAZE**

- Targeted digital "billboard" displays to drivers based upon location
- Receive 100 clicks (January - December)
- CVB Investment: \$1,500

## Specialty Publication Activity Measures

### National Garden Clubs convention program

- Grand Rapids (1X: May)
- CVB investment: \$500

### Garden Glories

- Illinois Garden Club members (9,200; 1X: June / July)
- CVB investment: \$400

### American Quilters Society Quilt Show

- Paducah (37,000; 1X: April)
- CVB investment: \$200

### American Quilters Society Quilt Show

- Grand Rapids (20,000; 1X: August)
- CVB investment: \$200

### The Beacher

- Weekly newspaper (4,000; 1X: May)
- CVB investment: \$415

### Indiana / Illinois / Michigan Garden Tours

- Show program (6X: June - July)
- CVB investment: \$5,410

### Amish Acres Round Barn Theatre

- Performance Programs (7X: April - December)
- CVB investment: \$800

### Premier Arts

- Performance programs (5X: February - December)
- CVB investment: \$1,200

### Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival

- Festival program (1X: August)
- CVB investment: \$2,000

### Shipshewana Quilt Festival

- Festival program (1X: June)
- CVB investment: \$100

## Local Media Channels Activity Measures

### ElkhartTruth.com

- Sponsored content (2 weeks) + digital banner ad campaign (April - October)
- 350 webpage view counts (April - October)
- CVB investment: \$1,500



**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 Group Tour Northeastern and Bus Tours Magazine (January - November)
- Coordinate (13) insertions including YouTube video links, itinerary features and online digital ads (January (6), February, March (2), May (2), November (2))
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$23,250 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 118,494 impressions (January - December)

#### **Bus Tours Magazine**

- Total reach: 8,872 per issue
- Total frequency: (3) 2/3 page ads (November / December, January / February, March / April); (1) Web Banners (January); (1) Web Itinerary (January); (1) Web Listing (January); (1) Embedded Video (January); (1) Facebook posting and photo gallery (March)
- CVB Investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$6,360; Total value of investment: \$6,360

#### **Going on Faith**

- Total reach: 6,500 per issue
- Total frequency: (6) Full page ads featuring Northern Indiana with Amish Country highlighted in one issue
- CVB investment: \$5,000; Co-op media dollars: \$20,000; Total value of investment: \$25,000

#### **Courier**

- Total reach: 6,000 per issue
- Total frequency: (1) Full page ad (December)
- CVB investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$4,100; Total value of investment: \$4,100

#### **Group Tour Northeastern**

- Total reach: 15,626 per issue
- Total frequency: (3) 2/3 page ads (February, May, November), (1) Itinerary feature (May), (1) full page ad (January), (1) YouTube video link with e-magazine feature (March)
- CVB investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$12,154; Total value of investment: \$12,119

## > COMMUNICATIONS – MARKETING

**GOAL** To create campaigns that generate destination awareness and increased spending on a platform of paid, earned and given media channels, interest-specific messaging and ongoing community engagement.

### 2016 Campaign Channel Summaries

**Vibrant Communities ... along the Heritage Trail Campaign Channel** To speak to group and leisure travelers, residents and local stakeholders seeking place-based activity in cities and towns and their connections to the Heritage Trail / Quilt Gardens experience.

Communications will build awareness / engagement and increased spending through geo / behavioral targeting, social channels, email marketing and integration with stakeholder-managed communications and ECCVB-sponsored events.

**Exit 92 Marketing Campaign Channel** To promote Exit 92 as the best option for transient traveler stops, communicate the density and proximity of familiar brands, and maximize opportunities created by travel plaza closures. The campaign will target the 65 million vehicles travelling the Indiana Toll Road annually.

The campaign will communicate easy access and density of lodging choices and include a new dining / fuel strategy in response to travel plaza closures / upgrades (May 2016 - February 2017). Promotions include new digital channels, indoor travel plaza placements (Indiana and Ohio) and redefining outdoor signage placement and messaging. Placements include coupons, travel app advertising, Twitter and logo-specific billboards.

**Weekend Stays Campaign Channel** To increase the demand for Thursday - Saturday overnights year-round. The campaign will target niche-specific visitor segments such as outdoor enthusiasts, collegiate/sports, Notre Dame/repeat visitors and VFR.

The campaign will highlight weekend-specific options and detailed itineraries. Internally, the ECCVB will work with existing sports organizers to increase capacity and expand events through new and expanded sponsorships. Marketing will include print, digital and social channels and geographic and behavioral targeting. Media placements will consist of direct mail, niche publications and personalized website experiences based on user behavior.

**Outdoor Activities Campaign Channel** To extend destination appeal to outdoor enthusiasts by continuing development and boosting promotion of Elkhart County's extensive system of trails and waterways.

The campaign will market current outdoor assets and complementing experiences and work in partnership with stakeholders to continue to develop and enhance the tools and products that facilitate a positive visitor experience (Maps, signage, amenities and online resources). Marketing will include blogs, social channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and personalized web content based on user interest, location and demographics.

**Visitor Center Campaign Channel** To increase Visitor Center traffic and boost awareness of the Elkhart County Visitors Center as the most comprehensive destination-wide resource for visitors, residents, group planners and local businesses.

The campaign will feature a new resident-focused strategy aimed at community-based niche groups (realtors, educators, and event planners) and promote the many features and services of the Elkhart County Visitor Center. Marketing and outreach will include print and digital placements in local media and the provision of tips, recommendations and suggested activities.

**Vibrant Communities ... along the Heritage Trail Marketing Objective** To speak to group and leisure travelers, residents and local stakeholders seeking place-based activity in cities and towns and their connections to the Heritage Trail / Quilt Gardens experience.

**Vibrant Communities: Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Develop creative concept and marketing strategy for leisure market motor coach tours (January)
- Distribute 3,800 Heritage Trail audio driving tours via CD and MP3 download (January - December)
- Produce and distribute 5,000 Heritage Trail maps (February - December)
- Produce a destination-wide mobile app to act as a destination concierge (March)
- Boost event promotion to residents via GetSmart website content personalization (March - December)
- Develop and distribute mobile app usage survey (March - December)
- Receive 2,000 downloads of the destination mobile app (March - December)
- Incorporate and track banner advertising in local channels (May - October)
- Update creative concept for print and digital media (Ongoing)
- Manage partner and frontlines communications (Ongoing)

**Vibrant Communities: Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Update creative concept for print and digital media (January)
- Produce rack card (January)
- Update partner brand management guide and marketing guidelines (January)
- Produce Master Gardeners Guidebook and Quilters Chronicles Guidebook (April)
- Coordinate on-site signage design, production and placement for 30 Quilt Garden and Quilt Mural locations (April)
- Refresh creative concept (print, digital, logo, press materials) in preparation for 2017 10th Anniversary (September)

**Vibrant Communities: Good of Goshen Activity Measures**

- Allocate resources to campaigns promoting overnight stays with an outdoor / cultural focus (April - December)

**Vibrant Communities: Gateway Mile Activity Measures**

- Invest in media placements promoting regional awareness of events and arts / dining / retail assets (April - December)

**Vibrant Communities: Indiana Bicentennial Activity Measures**

- Confirm relay motorcade promotional options (April)
- Produce torch facts rack card (June)
- Update Elkhart County 2016 Bicentennial website content (January - October)

**Exit 92 Marketing Objective** To promote I-80/90 Exit 92 as the best option for transient traveler stops, communicate the density and proximity of familiar brands and maximize opportunities created by travel plaza closures.

**Exit 92 Activity Measures**

- Inventory existing product within redefined geographic boundaries (January)
- Define the team of Exit 92 partners (January)
- Establish metrics for print, digital (Waze, Yelp, Trip Advisor, Twitter) and outdoor signage along I-80/90 (January)
- Define channels and develop a comprehensive creative concept for year-long print, digital (Waze, Yelp, Trip Advisor, Twitter, mobile app) and outdoor signage along I-80/90 (January - April)
- Confirm ad placements and establish timelines (January - April)
- Utilize destination-wide mobile app to communicate Exit 92 assets to transient travelers (March - December)
- Obtain 300 downloads of locally owned restaurant offers (March - December)



**Weekend Stays Marketing Objective** To increase the demand for Thursday - Saturday overnights year-round. The campaign will target niche-specific visitor segments such as outdoor enthusiasts, collegiate / sports, Notre Dame / repeat visitors and VFR.

#### **Weekend Stays Activity Measures**

- Assess existing product and attraction inventory (January)
- Based on product and attraction inventory and lodging availability, define desired niche audiences (January)
- Develop weekend itineraries by interest (January - March)
- Define communications channels and develop metrics (January - March)
- Confirm media placements and establish timelines (January - March)
- Connect with existing / potential Notre Dame audiences, communicate proximity and flexibility of overnight options (January - December)
- Create and execute a partner communication strategy (January - December)
- Create advertising content for year-long print and digital [Notre Dame / South Bend channels, cycling event guides] (January - December)
- Obtain 1,200 downloads of weekend itineraries from CVB website (January - December)
- Achieve a 5% increase in Thursday - Saturday overnights, confirmed by STR data (June - December)

**Outdoor Recreation Marketing Objective** To extend destination appeal to outdoor enthusiasts by continuing development and boosting promotion of Elkhart County's extensive system of trails and waterways.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Activity Measures**

- Work with outdoor stakeholders and event coordinators to incorporate CVB messaging into existing maps and other promotional outlets (January - December)
- Create outdoor-specific itineraries based on preference, duration and complementing experiences (March)
- Obtain 300 views of the outdoor section of the mobile app (January - December)
- Obtain 2,000 unique visits of the outdoor section of the CVB website and 1,000 downloads of outdoor itineraries (January - December)
- Promote existing experiences via GoPro segments (3), blogs (6) and given media content (April - October)

**Visitor Center Marketing Objective** To increase traffic and boost awareness of the Elkhart County Visitors Center as the most comprehensive destination-wide resource for visitors, residents, group planners and local businesses.

#### **Visitor Center Activity Measures**

- Inventory resources for niche groups - teachers, realtors, event venues and sports organizations (January)
- Establish communications channels for resources to niche groups (January)
- Utilize destination-wide mobile app to communicate Visitor Center services and destination assets (March - December)
- Research sponsorship and messaging opportunities for 2017 Elkhart County 4-H Fair (June)
- Extend reach to local chamber visitor centers via standing communications, project updates and the provision of informational materials (January - December)
- Enhance the visitor center experience by providing locally produced coffees (January - December)
- Expand knowledge of visitors coming into Center by collecting visitor data via guestbook (January - December)

**Promotional Materials Objective** To develop and distribute targeted, persuasive collateral that strengthens destination brands, communicates key experiences and encourages ongoing engagement.

#### **Travel Guide Activity Measures**

- Manage sales, content and production of 68-page 2017 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide (July - December)
- Complete 150 contracts resulting in \$185,000 in total sales; realize \$90,000 in net profit (July - December)
- Oversee distribution of 200,000 printed copies of 2016 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide edition (January - December)

#### **Production / Content Management Activity Measures**

- Develop comprehensive content grid integrating paid, digital and social schedules (January)
- Manage content, frequency and metrics for Front Desk Update, Leisure and Travel Trade e-blasts (January - December)
- Develop content and creative for 125 print ads targeting leisure / group / resident / VFR markets (January - December)
- Manage copy, photography and videography for 250 pieces of marketing / sales collateral (January - December)
- Secure partner-generated blog content for 10 posts (March - October)
- Obtain and/or produce 3 video segments using GoPro camera (May - October)
- Schedule 4 photo shoots highlighting Heritage Trail assets / activities (January - December)
- Produce 10 videos highlighting ECCVB staff recommendations - Heritage Trail assets / activities (January - December)
- Develop content for GetSmart website personalization (January - December)

#### **Group Marketing Activity Measures**

- Manage production of Amish Country / Quilt Gardens Profile Sheets, Group Itinerary and Experience Guide, Co-op ads, itineraries, templates, FAM fliers and trade show presentation (January - December)

#### **RV Brand Activity Measures**

- Produce RV Rally Planning Guide (January)
- Update map RV-specific points of interest (April)
- Implement welcoming messages [outdoor and lodging] for RV Open House (September)

#### **Sponsorship Activation Activity Measures**

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

**Social Media Objective** To increase brand awareness, enhance engagement, generate qualified contacts, create a fun environment with a casual tone, and support both leisure and group advertisers / partners by sharing their content and helping them facilitate and engage their customer / visitor. The initiative will also boost SEO and provide more solid measurement capabilities to show the process from engagement to conversion.

#### **Website Maintenance Activity Measures**

- Make needed updates to all websites, including all advertiser updates and new content pages, 2016 Electronic Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide and any as-needed updates as the year progresses. (January - December)

**Get Smart Platform Objective** To communicate more effectively with new and existing audiences by providing personalized web content based on user preferences like location and previous search history

#### **Get Smart Platform Activity Measures**

- Track key campaign measurements (January - December)

**Mobile App Objective** To provide a digital concierge service, connecting users to timely, relevant information, visitor center services, Exit 92 assets, and offers based on their location and search choices.

**Mobile App Activity Measures**

- Receive 2,000 downloads of the destination mobile app (March - December)
- Receive 50 downloads, check-ins and offer redemption from Waze travel app (January - December)

**Facebook Objective** To increase brand awareness, engagement, and partner support; build relationship between visitors and the CVB Staff and partners.

**Facebook Activity Measures**

- Share 2 organic posts per day sharing stories, events and quality photos, engaging fans with polls, opinions, and recommendations, sharing partner posts, press mentions and staff highlights (January - December)

**Twitter Objective** To promote on-site travel concierge, increase engagement (favorites, retweets, direct questions / answers).

**Twitter Activity Measures**

- Create and use hashtags, monitor and engage with event attendees, direct question follow ups, listen and respond to relevant conversations, promote hashtags / call to action in all print marketing [i.e. ask your question @amishcountry] (January - December)
- Increase engagement from 63% to 65% (January - December)

**Blog Objective** To serve as a content holder (temporary event “web pages”, email copy, contests) third level brand support and to increase SEO.

**Blog Activity Measures**

- Post expanded content for emails, contests, and website content (January - December)
- Generate 200 click-thru's from email blasts (January - December)

**Pinterest Objective** To serve as an idea and planning tool for advance planners, dreamers; platform to share partner content.

**Pinterest Activity Measures**

- Post from AmishCountry.org to our boards in applicable categories, brand awareness and engagement, share a mix of relevant imagery - both brand-related and fun, and follow our local advertisers / partners (January - December)
- Track impressions: impressions / re-pins / visits to website (January - December)



**Instagram Objective** To inspire potential visitors, gather non-professional images of the destination for present and future use, SEO, brand awareness and engagement, hashtags, non-professional video sharing.

**Instagram Activity Measures**

- Post engaging destination using relevant/popular hashtags, follow and like local advertisers / partners (January - December)
- Track impressions: Impressions/re-pins/visits to website (January - December)

**YouTube Objective** To increase brand awareness and engagement, viral sharing, video content holder.

**YouTube Activity Measures**

- Post current and future pre-produced and non-professional destination videos (January - December)
- Increase engagement from 13,000 Views by 3%, 13 Likes by 3%, and 26 Shares by 3% (January - December)

**Amish Country | Elkhart County E-Marketing Objective** To generate awareness, highlight key visitation drivers, provide travel recommendations, and drive web traffic.

**E-Marketing Activity Measures**

- Receive 22% click to open rate from 12 Amish Country email blasts (March - December)
- Receive 28% open rate from 12 Quilt Gardens Insider email blasts (January - December)
- Receive 11% click to open rate from 11 Travel Trade email blasts (January - November)
- Receive 11% click to open rate from 24 Front Desk Update email blasts to lodging facility front desk personnel and advertiser / partners audience (January - December)

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

- Invest \$284,969 in advertising and marketing which will convert to \$32 million in Total Visitor Spending\* reflecting both Area Guide Requests [printed and electronic] and Unique Website Visits (January - December)
- Total CVB advertising investment / Leisure - \$287,000
- Total CVB advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$5,000 in sponsorship
- Total Co-op advertising investment / Leisure - \$635,227
- Total Co-op advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$47,250

*\* 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 56%) X (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 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 (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 per person per day)

*Research Resource:*

**2013 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.

**Vibrant Communities Objective** To facilitate completion of the Vibrant Communities Action Agenda. In collaboration with the Community Foundation of Elkhart County, the Vibrant Community process will include a community led assessment quality of place assets, and will develop strategies that will result in an action agenda for investment in Community of Place projects throughout Elkhart County.

### **Vibrant Communities Activity Measures**

- Facilitate meetings of the Quality of Place Steering Committee (January - June)
- In partnership with Community Foundation, facilitate project community wide Kick-off and Wrap-up Meetings (January, June)
- In partnership with local Chamber staff, facilitate community based planning meetings (January - June)
- Identify priority community based Quality of Place projects and activities (June)
- Identify funding resources to implement Quality of Place Activities (June - December)

### **Downtown and Gateway District Redevelopment**

The ECCVB recognizes that good planning and development are vital to attracting visitors to a destination. The downtowns of communities along the Heritage Trail provide an ideal complement to the rural experience. Therefore, the ECCVB is engaged in representing the visitor and the visitor industry in these initiatives.

**Community Based Downtown Redevelopment Objective** As one of the 4 Tourism Development Pillars, this objective relates to working with each community in Elkhart County to achieve success with Downtown Development Objectives through active participation and technical assistance

### **Community Based Downtown Redevelopment Activity Measures**

- Through Vibrant Communities, work on the implementation of the Market District Redevelopment Plan (January - December)
- Continue participation on the Goshen Theatre Board working toward the opening and operation of the facility as the organization raises funds for renovation in 2016 (January - December)
- Work with Nappanee Chamber of Commerce and City officials on the development of a Comprehensive Plan (January - December)
- Work with County Redevelopment Commission and Middlebury Town officials on gateway corridor aesthetic enhancements (January - December)
- Continue Implementation of Downtown wayfinding signage and kiosk program (January - December)

**Downtown Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants Objective** The ECCVB has committed to increasing the success of the downtown initiatives by building the capacity of stakeholder organizations to implement Live/Work/Play strategies. The ECCVB will create a new technical assistance grant program, providing administrative resources allowing existing stakeholder organizations to expand their ability to provide new services. The ECCVB will actively engage stakeholder organizations to identify the gaps in existing services, and create an approach to most effectively fill the service gaps.

### **Downtown Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants Activity Measures**

- Complete Community Foundation of Elkhart County Grant Request for \$270,000 matching funds (January)
- Finalize program application and reporting requirements (February)
- Facilitate and evaluate proposals from participating communities for eligible Capacity Grant Projects (March)
- Award Matching Grants to successful applicants (April)
- Collect and review progress reports for compliance with grant terms (April - December)

**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 positioning Exit 92 to be the premier Toll Road exit through visitor enhancements 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, including the SR 19 Corridor Multi-use Path (January - December)
- On behalf of the Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, facilitate the completion of a visitor focused gateway enhancement study (January - December)
- Continue to facilitate individual meetings with key property holders to identify relocation / acquisition opportunities (January - December)

**Outdoor Recreation Objective** To coordinate activities that support the strategies identified in the Tourism Development Plan to link, enhance and create outdoor recreation opportunities in Elkhart County. This includes participating in a leadership role in research and technical assistance, along with supporting existing stakeholder groups.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Activity Measures**

- Work with existing bicycle stakeholder groups to identify opportunities for enhancing bicycle infrastructure in Elkhart County. Items could include new path development opportunities, signage, marketing, etc. (January - September)
- Identify infrastructure gaps and opportunities that will support Downtown Elkhart's strengths as an outdoor recreation destination (January - December)
- Work with Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission and RV/MH Hall of Fame to explore feasibility of expanded RV Event Facility at Exit 96 (January - 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**

- In partnership with NITDC, work with Nichols Tourism to implement a complimentary survey to identify and assess website reach, use and conversion (January - April)
- In partnership with NITDC, facilitate research summit for regional partners (March)
- Work with CERTEC to implement Economic Impact Study (January - December)
- Assist ECCVB staff with appropriate distribution of all ECCVB research (January - December)

#### **Destination Experience Development**

In 2016, the ECCVB will continue activating new product development initiatives through a comprehensive experiential development strategy. This strategy is based on collaboration with existing partners to link and enhance signature offerings as well as engineer new, engaging and immersive experiences.



**Signature Experience Development Objective** As a partner with the St. Joseph County CVB, the ECCVB will engage Opportunities Unlimited to facilitate their unique Experiential Development methodology to design, craft, script and stage UFEs (Unforgettable Experiences) for selected tourism attractions

**Signature Experience Development Activity Measures**

- Conduct Experiential Assessment to uncover strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities for new development (January - March)
- Presentation to Travel Partners "Engineering Experiences - from Concept to Competitive Advantage" (March)
- Identification and selection of Supplier Partners (March)
- Monthly onsite work with travel partners to design, craft, script and stage experiences (March - September)
- One-on-one Experiential Consulting and design work with Opportunities Unlimited experts (September - December)
- Implementation of a tracking program to measure R.O.I. (September - December)
- Monthly notes on Next Steps and Action Items to ensure accountability (September - December)
- Assistance with website development and navigation to market and promote new experiences (September)

**Public Guided Tour Development Objective** To research and develop high quality, enlightening and entertaining public tour experiences led by locals in order to demonstrate that Elkhart County is an exceptional place to live, work, play and visit utilizing existing Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens. To use interactive experiences and innovative resources to help newcomers and locals alike get more connected to the people, places and projects in Elkhart County downtowns.

**Public Guided Tour Development Activity Measures**

- Work with Buggy Line Tours to train and develop 2 regularly scheduled public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (January - April)
- Realize 15 departures on a weekly basis (each with a minimum of 2 people) on public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (May - October)
- Develop and execute communications strategy and marketing messaging to promote public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (January - October)

**Overall Destination Development Performance Measures**

- Downtown Elkhart Market District Redevelopment Activities will set the table for new housing and community center investments totaling \$50,000,000 (January - December)
- North Pointe redevelopment plan activities will resolve issues to facilitate \$5,000,000 of new private hospitality investment (January - December)
- Downtown Signage Program will leverage \$50,000 in local community funding (January - December)
- Collaboration with ECCF on Vibrant Communities and Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants will leverage \$300,000 in ECCF funding and \$150,000 in community funding (January - December)



## > PUBLIC RELATIONS

**GOAL** To generate advocacy for the ECCVB among stakeholders and community partners and influence increased visitor spending by communicating Elkhart County's quality of place initiatives and cultivating interest in the destination through given media, social media, and sponsorship.

**Community Relations Objective** To attain broader community support and awareness of the ECCVB among targeted stakeholders and community partners for its role in community and economic development that integrates place-based tourism key strategies that both attract visitors and improve the quality of place for local residents.

### **Board Advocacy Activity Measures**

- Execute 2016 Advocacy Action Strategies (January - December)
- Develop 1 overview of ECCVB key place-based tourism initiatives for Advocacy (January - March)
- Facilitate 8 Advocacy Task Group Meetings (January - October)
- Plan and conduct 1 Advocacy meeting with state legislators (January - March)
- Realize 70% participation of members involved in Advocacy initiatives (January - December)

### **Tourism Business and Community Quality of Place Communications Activity Measures**

- Facilitate quarterly meetings with ECCVB staff to develop quality of place subjects for communications content (January, April, July, October)
- Develop and distribute (2) quality of place information communiqués to local / state elected officials (January - November)
- Recognize community partners' accomplishments and send personalized letters of congratulations (January - December)

### **2016 Indiana Bicentennial Legacy Project, Torch Relay and Mobile Visitors Center Activity Measures**

- Assist in facilitating and executing a 52+ mile Torch Relay thru Elkhart County including working with representatives from the Indiana Department of Tourism, Elkhart County government, emergency management agencies, Indiana State Police, and officials of Elkhart, Goshen, Nappanee, Middlebury and Wakarusa (January - October)
- Establish guidelines, determine roles, and coordinate activities related to the nomination, designation and announcement of official Torch Bearers for the Elkhart County leg of the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay (January - October)
- Assist in coordinating the Elkhart County Torch Relay Kickoff Celebration event with representatives from the Northern Indiana Dairy Trail, Elkhart County Government, Indiana State Police, emergency management agencies and the Indiana Department of Tourism (January - October)
- Develop and execute a communications plan to inform, educate, and generate attendance at the Indiana Bicentennial Mobile Visitors Center, the Elkhart County Torch Relay Kickoff Celebration event, and the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay through Elkhart County (January - October)
- Assist in execution of activities and programs involving the Indiana Bicentennial Mobile Visitors Center [Elkhart County leg] with Indiana Department of Tourism, Elkhart County government and host site locations (January - October)

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

- Develop and distribute laminated 2016 local event listings to 150 local tourism businesses (January)
- Distribute monthly PR tips to 12 constituents (January - December)

### **Area Guide Grant Program Activity Measures**

- Distribute Travel Guide Assistance Fund grant application announcements/guidelines to all eligible partners (July - August)
- Process \$17,577 in grant awards (January - July)
- Provide 17 not-for-profit organizations the ability to participate in the Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide at an affordable rate (August - November)
- Provide more comprehensive information to the visitor through the Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide (January - December)



## Community Relations Objective (Cont)

**Sponsorship Program Activity Measures**

- Develop and execute 2016 Bicentennial Legacy Project sponsorship program including establishing guidelines and expectations and disseminating guidelines and applications to all eligible partners (January - September)
- Develop and execute comprehensive activation plan that communicates ECCVB's role in the community and its quality of place initiatives (January - February)
- Review and update sponsorship, guidelines, expectations, and reporting methods (January / February)
- Provide sponsorship education to minimum 4 partners through IEG webinars (January - November)
- Manage sponsorship information dissemination, communication, eligibility, proposal and contract filing and activation for 12 properties (January - December)
- Monitor all sponsorships to ensure guidelines and deliverables are met and reported (March - December)

**PR Objective** To represent the ECCVB in a variety of strategic partnership activities for the purpose of furthering its mission and enhancing the awareness of the ECCVB by promoting its role in sustainable, place-based tourism development, quality of place key initiatives and to increase knowledge of the destination that drives visitation.

**Media Communications Objective** To secure editorial coverage and heighten media interest for Elkhart County as a valued tourism destination and place to live; facilitate communicating key ECCVB messages and initiatives to a variety of audiences including leisure/group travelers and resident/local stakeholders; cultivate community relationships; promote tourism development and quality of place initiatives.

**Internal Community Relations, Area Guide Fund, Festivals / Events, Activity Measures**

- Develop and locally distribute 2 Travel Guide Fund releases (July - November)
- Develop and locally distribute minimum 6 community or event focused releases / story idea pitches / posts (February - November)
- Develop and distribute 12 local event listings to media for event calendars and other opportunities (February - November)

**Internal Quality of Place Activity Measures**

- Develop and pitch 6 local story ideas on downtown quality of place specific happenings (March - November)
- Secure 10 local quality of place media interviews (January - December)

**Internal Exit 92 Activity Measures**

- Develop and distribute 2 locally focused story ideas and/or releases - one focusing on value of NITDC regional alliance and one on "Exit 92" value to destination (May - October)

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

- Develop 9 Quilt Gardens Updates for 250 community contacts (January - December)
- Develop and pitch 3 locally focused story ideas / releases for 2016 Quilt Gardens (April - May)
- Develop and implement Quilt Gardens opening communications strategy targeting all local elected officials (May)
- Develop and distribute local media alert regarding Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail opening activities (May)
- Develop Quilt Gardens media materials for October celebration and announcements (September)
- Secure 5 Quilt Gardens interviews (May - September)

#### **External Elkhart County ... along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Identify 250 qualified leisure, niche, group and social media contacts (January - March)
- Update and develop new content for Along the Heritage Trail media materials and profile sheet including: Quilt Gardens, Amish Country, Downtowns/Communities, Outdoor and themed experiences (January - May)
- Develop minimum 20 unique Along The Heritage Trail specific story ideas and pitch to qualified media contacts (January - December)
- Follow 30 qualified niche specific (food, culture, travel, family, gardening, quilting, outdoor) bloggers (February - December)
- Develop/distribute minimum 5 travel/trade specific releases to group related publications (February - October)
- Participate in 1 media marketplace (March - September)
- Host 5 travel or niche specific journalists and/bloggers for journalist press trips (February - November)
- Develop story ideas, pitches and/or releases generating 1,000 contacts (January - December)
- Generate 2 PR Web Releases (January - June)
- Generate 2,500 visits to media site (January - December)
- Generate 150 qualified media inquiries (January - December)

#### **Overall Public Relations Performance Measures**

- Generate 250 media placements [print, broadcast, on-line, blog], yielding 80,000,000 impressions resulting in \$400,000 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 5 tradeshow: ABA, Heartland, Midwest Marketplace, TAP Dance, and OMCA (January - November)
- Conduct 1 Sales Mission: Midwest (October)
- Generate 11 e-mail campaigns (January - November)
- Conduct 4 personalized destination previews and 2 destination wide preview tours (January - December)
- Conduct 3 direct mail postcard campaigns and 1 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide direct mail campaign (March - August)
- Advertise in 4 publications *Group Tour Northeastern*, *Leisure Group Travel*, *The Group Travel Leader* and *Select Traveler* (January - December)
- Coordinate 169 insertions including YouTube video links, banner ads, editorial features, e-newsletters, online itinerary pages, photo galleries, and print ads (January (14), February (14), March (13), April (13), May (15), June (14), July (15), August (14), September (14), October (14), November (16), December (14))
- Coordinate monthly group website updates and social media strategies (January - December)
- Generate 150 qualified leads and appointments (January - December)
- Generate 300 visits to the Travel Trade Group Planner Resources page on AmishCountryTours.org (January - December)
- Generate 15,000 Unique Page Views on Group site and 300 Sample Itinerary PDF Downloads (January - December)
- Generate a 10% Travel Trade email click- to-open rate (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 200 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)
- Participate in a Co-op partnership with the Indiana Office of Tourism for the ABA 2016 and ABA 2017 Marketplaces (January - December)
- Develop the Northern Indiana Motorcoach partnership with the LaGrange County, Marshall County, Kosciusko County and South Bend CVB's to be promoted at the ABA 2016 Marketplace Indiana Office of Tourism Booth (January)
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$23,250 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 118,494 impressions (January - December)
- Generate \$5,102 in additional Co-op partnership revenues (February - October)

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

- Create 75 customized itineraries, averaging in 2.5 days of length, generating \$1.1 million in group visitor spending (January - December)
- Generate 125 daytrips and 125 overnight trips resulting in \$2.75 million in group visitor spending (January - December)
- Maintain average length of group stays to 2 days (January - December)
- Realize \$100,000 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 2016 Peachtree Tax Update will be purchased.

**Contact Database** - The ECCVB will continue to use SimpleView as its primary contact database and will purchase the annual fee for 2016.

**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 / Publicaster Email software as its primary email software program and purchase the annual fee for 2016.

**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, Board of Directors and Tax Commission monthly (January - December)
- Provide at least 8 Internet / Social Media training sessions to our partners (March - October)

### **Database Management Activity Measures**

- Accurately enter 19,000 contacts for Heritage Trail Adventures Area 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)



## > 2016 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 and 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 and 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 10 years)
- 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 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 ECCVB 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** - Supporting Our Main Assets, Downtown Elkhart 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.

### **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.

**Social Media** - Website, Emails, Blog, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter

**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 visitor 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 at 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 per 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 ECCVB 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, Inc. 2016 Place-Based Key Initiatives and Business Plan



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*\* For pages 1-15, please reference  
2016 Place-Based Key Initiatives and Business Plan.*



## > 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 2016 line item budget (January) - **Complete**
- Establish financial ratios and projections (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Develop monthly financial reports and statements for the corporation (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Perform all accounts receivable and payable for the corporation (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Perform as the Commission's designated collections administrator for delinquencies (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Develop monthly reports on collections activities and hotel occupancy trends (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Complete all county, state and federal employee withholding obligations (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Complete all grant financial requirements (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of lodging tax receipts (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide contracts (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**

**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) - **(YTD 10)**
- Research benefit plans that best meet employee's needs and budgetary requirements of the corporation (April - June)
  - **Complete**
- Work with all employees to assist with interpretation of benefit plans and filing procedures (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Manage the corporate / employee IRA contribution plans (April, July, October, December) - **(YTD 3)**
- Track and report all employee personal time off (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Distribute Employee Job Satisfaction survey (December) - **(YTD 0)**

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

### Building Operations Activity Measures

- Oversee all maintenance agreements for building and equipment (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Initiate all necessary building / equipment service and repairs (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Supervise Visitor Center attendants (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Develop Visitor Center attendant schedules and assign appropriate duties (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Installation / removal quilt murals on Visitor Center building (May, October) - **Complete**



## > 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 Visitor Center (January - December) - **(YTD 13,021)**
- Provide friendly personal service to an average of 3,000 people calling to request Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guides and general destination questions (January - December) - **(YTD 1,305)**
- Provide up to date information by distributing over 30,000 local business brochures, maps, regional travel guides, etc. (January - December) - **(YTD 23,692)**

### Driving Tours Activity Measures

- Distribute more than 3,800 Heritage Trail Audio Driving Tours via CD and MP3 download (January - December) - **(YTD 2,908)**
- Maintain Trip Tips program weekly to enhance visitor experience (January - December) - **(YTD 43)**

**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 Visitor Center's meeting room as a resource to 150 community group meetings (January - December) - **(YTD 103)**
- Develop / distribute 26 issues of Front Desk Update to local lodging facilities, attractions, Chambers of Commerce and media (January - December) - **(YTD 21)**

### Overall Visitor Services Performance Measures

- Convert Heritage Trail rentals to \$3.6 million\* in increased visitor spending [including CDs and downloads] (January - December) - **Complete (YTD \$2,769,346)**

*\* Heritage Trail Performance Metrics is the amount in visitor spending generated by the distribution of the Heritage Trail Visitor Spending = (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 per person per day) = Visitor Spending per Heritage Trail CD. Includes CDs and MP3 downloads.*

*Research Resource:*

*2013 Economic Impact Report by Certec Inc.*





## > ADVERTISING

**GOAL** To increase destination awareness and economic impact using paid, earned and owned media channels that generate brand awareness, promote destination assets and optimally engage defined market segments.

**Advertising Objective** By investing in co-operative media buys (in partnership with the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission and the Indiana Office of Tourism Development) and Elkhart County specific placements, the ECCVB will promote destination campaigns and maximize media value.

### REGIONAL CO-OPS:

#### Indiana Travel Guide Activity Measures

- Brochure lead generation ad & listings: \$4,480 - **Complete**
- Circulation: 500,000 | Frequency: 1X | Partnerships: 113
- CVB investment: \$4,480; Total Co-op dollars: \$67,600; Total value of investment: \$72,080
- By leveraging \$4,480 to a partner investment of \$72,080 the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 62.5 million impressions (January - December)

#### NITDC Digital Marketing Activity Measures

- 10 themed, regional e-blasts to 20,500 opt-ins (April - December) - **(Began in June, YTD 7)**
- 7 Co-op partnerships
- CVB investment: \$7,500; Total Co-op dollars: \$45,000; Total value of investment: \$52,500
- By leveraging \$7,500 to a partner investment of \$45,000, the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 2.1 million impressions (January - December)

#### NITDC Website Activity Measures

- 131,000 unique users (January - December) - **(YTD 95,125)**
- 435,000 page views (January - December) - **(YTD 352,859)**
- 7 Co-op partnerships

#### Indiana Travel Guide | VisitIndiana.com Activity Measures

- Receive 5,000 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide requests (January - December) - **(YTD 4,526)**

#### Indiana Festival Guide

- Page ad - **Complete**
- Circulation: 500,000; 64 Co-op partnerships
- CVB investment: \$3,600; Total Co-op dollars: \$33,800; Total value of investment: \$37,400
- By leveraging \$3,600 to a partner investment of \$33,800 the ECCVB will communicate the Elkhart County / Northern Indiana assets through 51 million impressions (January - December)

## REGIONAL/PRINT/DIGITAL/OUTDOOR

**I-80/90 Billboards / Exit 92**

- Burkhart, LaMar, Connor - I-80 Eastbound (7) Lake, LaPorte, St. Joseph & Elkhart Counties (April - December) - **Complete**
- Outfront - I-80 Westbound (2) Elkhart & Steuben Counties (April - December) - **Complete**
- Total CVB investment: \$60,072
- Total investment of billboards along the Indiana / Ohio I-80 corridor will promote the Exit 92 brand through 20.5 million impressions (April - December)

**I-80/90 Barrier Plaza Posters / Exit 92**

- (10) Posters - Westpoint / Eastbound from Chicago Skyway (January - December) - **Complete**
- Gross impressions: 18.3 million annually
- CVB investment: \$25,000
- (10) Posters - Eastpoint / Westbound from Ohio Turnpike (April - December) - **Complete**
- Gross impressions: 9 million annually
- CVB investment: \$16,500

**Midwest Living**

- (1) 1/2 page ad (May / June) - **Complete**
- (1) 1/3 page ad (July / August)
- Featured Destination (June) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$14,550

**Facebook**

- Sponsored / boosted posts (July - December) - **(YTD 6)**
- Obtain a 5% engagement rate (likes, comments, click-thru's) - **(YTD 1.3%)**
- CVB investment: \$5,000

**YELP**

- Targeted digital ads and / or Enhanced profile (March - October) - **(In Progress)**
- Track views, leads (calls, call to action, click-thrus), video views from Yelp business page (January - December) - **(YTD 901/83)**
- CVB investment: \$1,500

**WAZE**

- Targeted digital "billboard" displays to drivers based upon location
- Receive 2,000 clicks (January - December) - **Complete (2,852)**
- CVB Investment: \$1,500

## Specialty Publication Activity Measures

### National Garden Clubs convention program

- Grand Rapids (1X: May) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$500

### Garden Glories

- Illinois Garden Club members (9,200; 1X: June / July) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$400

### American Quilters Society Quilt Show

- Paducah (37,000; 1X: April) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$474

### American Quilters Society Quilt Show

- Grand Rapids (20,000; 1X: August) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$450

### The Beacher

- Weekly newspaper (4,000; 1X: May) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$415

### Indiana / Illinois / Michigan Garden Tours - **Eliminated from budget**

- Show program (6X: June - July)
- CVB investment: \$5,410

### Amish Acres Round Barn Theatre

- Performance Programs (7X: April - December) - **(YTD 6)**
- CVB investment: \$800

### Premier Arts

- Performance programs (5X: February - December) - **(YTD 4)**
- CVB investment: \$1,200

### Amish Acres Arts & Crafts Festival

- Festival program (1X: August) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$2,000

### Shipshewana Quilt Festival

- Festival program (1X: June) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$100

## Local Media Channels Activity Measures

### ElkhartTruth.com

- Goshen Dining Days (Feb 21 - March 13) - **Complete**
- 1,400 Unique Visits - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$1,500
- Digital banner ad campaign (June - October) - **Eliminated due to sale and changes at The Truth**
- 350 webpage view counts (June - October)
- CVB investment: \$1,500

## Local Media Channels Activity Measures (cont.)

### ElkhartTruth.com

- Quilt Gardens Kickoff Sticky Note Front Page (30,000 / May) - **Complete**
- CVB investment: \$900

**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) - **Complete**
- Advertise in (3) publications Group Tour Northeastern and Bus Tours Magazine (January - November) - **(Ongoing)**
- Coordinate (13) insertions including YouTube video links, itinerary features and online digital ads (January (6), February, March (2), May (2), November (2)) - **(YTD 11)**
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$23,250 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 118,494 impressions (January - December) - **Complete**

### Bus Tours Magazine

- Total reach: 8,872 per issue
- Total frequency: (3) 2/3 page ads (November / December, January / February, March / April); (1) Web Banners (January); (1) Web Itinerary (January); (1) Web Listing (January); (1) Embedded Video (January); (1) Facebook posting and photo gallery (March)
- CVB Investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$6,360; Total value of investment: \$6,360

### Going on Faith

- Total reach: 6,500 per issue
- Total frequency: (6) Full page ads featuring Northern Indiana with Amish Country highlighted in one issue
- CVB investment: \$5,000; Co-op media dollars: \$20,000; Total value of investment: \$25,000

### Courier

- Total reach: 6,000 per issue
- Total frequency: (1) Full page ad (December)
- CVB investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$4,100; Total value of investment: \$4,100

### Group Tour Northeastern

- Total reach: 15,626 per issue
- Total frequency: (3) 2/3 page ads (February, May, November), (1) Itinerary feature (May), (1) full page ad (January), (1) YouTube video link with e-magazine feature (March)
- CVB investment: \$0; Co-op media dollars: \$12,154; Total value of investment: \$12,119

## > COMMUNICATIONS - MARKETING

**GOAL** To create campaigns that generate destination awareness and increased spending on a platform of paid, earned and given media channels, interest-specific messaging and (Ongoing) community engagement.

### 2016 Campaign Summaries

**Vibrant Communities ... along the Heritage Trail Campaign Channel** To speak to group and leisure travelers, residents and local stakeholders seeking place-based activity in cities and towns and their connections to the Heritage Trail / Quilt Gardens experience.

Communications will build awareness / engagement and increased spending through geo / behavioral targeting, social channels, email marketing and integration with stakeholder-managed communications and ECCVB-sponsored events.

**Exit 92 Marketing Campaign Channel** To promote Exit 92 as the best option for transient traveler stops, communicate the density and proximity of familiar brands, and maximize opportunities created by travel plaza closures. The campaign will target the 65 million vehicles travelling the Indiana Toll Road annually.

The campaign will communicate easy access and density of lodging choices and include a new dining / fuel strategy in response to travel plaza closures / upgrades (May 2016 - February 2017). Promotions include new digital channels, indoor travel plaza placements (Indiana and Ohio) and redefining outdoor signage placement and messaging. Placements include coupons, travel app advertising, Twitter and logo-specific billboards.

**Weekend Stays Campaign Channel** To increase the demand for Thursday - Saturday overnights year-round. The campaign will target niche-specific visitor segments such as outdoor enthusiasts, collegiate/sports, Notre Dame/repeat visitors and VFR.

The campaign will highlight weekend-specific options and detailed itineraries. Internally, the ECCVB will work with existing sports organizers to increase capacity and expand events through new and expanded sponsorships. Marketing will include print, digital and social channels and geographic and behavioral targeting. Media placements will consist of direct mail, niche publications and personalized website experiences based on user behavior.

**Outdoor Activities Campaign Channel** To extend destination appeal to outdoor enthusiasts by continuing development and boosting promotion of Elkhart County's extensive system of trails and waterways.

The campaign will market current outdoor assets and complementing experiences and work in partnership with stakeholders to continue to develop and enhance the tools and products that facilitate a positive visitor experience (Maps, signage, amenities and online resources). Marketing will include blogs, social channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and personalized web content based on user interest, location and demographics.

**Visitor Center Campaign Channel** To increase Visitor Center traffic and boost awareness of the Elkhart County Visitors Center as the most comprehensive destination-wide resource for visitors, residents, group planners and local businesses.

The campaign will feature a new resident-focused strategy aimed at community-based niche groups (realtors, educators, and event planners) and promote the many features and services of the Elkhart County Visitor Center. Marketing and outreach will include print and digital placements in local media and the provision of tips, recommendations and suggested activities.



**Vibrant Communities ... along the Heritage Trail Marketing Objective** To speak to group and leisure travelers, residents and local stakeholders seeking place-based activity in cities and towns and their connections to the Heritage Trail / Quilt Gardens experience.

Vibrant Communities: Heritage Trail Activity Measures

- Develop creative concept and marketing strategy for leisure market motor coach tours (January - March) - **Complete**
- Distribute 3,800 Heritage Trail audio driving tours via CD and MP3 download (January - December) - **(YTD 2,908)**
- Produce and distribute 50,000 Heritage Trail maps (February - December) - **(YTD 31,070)**
- Produce a destination-wide mobile app to act as a destination concierge (March) - **Complete**
- Boost event promotion to residents via GetSmart website content personalization (March - December) - **(YTD 4)**
- Develop and distribute mobile app usage survey (April - December) - **(YTD 5, Changed from a survey to a weekly interactive question to app users)**
- Receive 2,000 downloads of the destination mobile app (April - December) - **(YTD Users 702)**
- Incorporate and track banner advertising in local channels (eTruth.com) (May - October) - **(Eliminated due to ownership change)**
- Update creative concept for print and digital media - **(Ongoing)**
- Manage partner and frontlines communications - **(Ongoing)**

Vibrant Communities: Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures

- Update creative concept for print and digital media (January) - **Complete**
- Produce rack card (January) - **Complete**
- Update partner brand management guide and marketing guidelines (January) - **Complete**
- Produce Master Gardeners Guidebook and Quilters Chronicles Guidebook (May) - **Complete**
- Coordinate on-site signage design, production and placement for 30 Quilt Garden and Quilt Mural locations (April) - **Complete**
- Refresh creative concept (print, digital, logo, press materials) in preparation for 2017 10th Anniversary (September) - **Not Complete**

Vibrant Communities: Good of Goshen Activity Measures

- Allocate resources to campaigns promoting overnight stays with an outdoor / cultural focus (April - December) - **(Ongoing, meeting held May 17 to identify goals and objectives, follow-up meeting scheduled for June 22 moved to July 14, strategic planning session scheduled for August 11, moved to August 31. Goals identified, plan in progress)**

Vibrant Communities: Gateway Mile Activity Measures

- Invest in media placements promoting regional awareness of events and arts / dining / retail assets (April - December) - **(Ongoing)**

Vibrant Communities: Indiana Bicentennial Activity Measures

- Confirm relay motorcade promotional options (May - October) - **Complete**
- Produce torch facts rack card (June) - **Complete**
- Update Elkhart County 2016 Bicentennial website content (January - October) - **Complete**

**Exit 92 Marketing Objective** To promote I-80/90 Exit 92 as the best option for transient traveler stops, communicate the density and proximity of familiar brands and maximize opportunities created by travel plaza closures.

Exit 92 Activity Measures

- Inventory existing product within redefined geographic boundaries (January) - **Complete**
- Define the team of Exit 92 partners (January) - **Complete**
- Establish metrics for print, digital (Waze, Yelp, Trip Advisor, Twitter) and outdoor signage along I-80/90 - **Complete**
- Define channels and develop a comprehensive creative concept for year-long print, digital (Waze, Yelp, Trip Advisor, Twitter, mobile app) and outdoor signage along I-80/90 (January - April) - **Complete**
- Confirm ad placements and establish timelines (January - April) - **Complete**
- Utilize destination-wide mobile app to communicate Exit 92 assets to transient travelers (April - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Obtain 300 downloads of locally owned restaurant offers (April - December) - **(Stats not available)**

**Weekend Stays Marketing Objective** To increase the demand for Thursday - Saturday overnights year-round. The campaign will target niche-specific visitor segments such as outdoor enthusiasts, collegiate / sports, Notre Dame / repeat visitors and VFR.

#### Weekend Stays Activity Measures

- Assess existing product and attraction inventory (January) - **Complete**
- Based on product and attraction inventory and lodging availability, define desired niche audiences (January) - **Complete**
- Develop weekend itineraries by interest (January - March) - **Complete (4)**
- Create and execute a partner communication strategy (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Obtain 1,200 downloads of weekend itineraries from CVB website (April - December) - **Complete (4,670)**
- Achieve a 5% increase in Thursday - Saturday overnights, confirmed by STR data (June - December) - **(Information available for WD (Sun - Thurs) compared to WE (Fri - Sat) (YTD 16% increase, confirmed by STR; 2 high profile home ND games in Oct.)**

**Outdoor Recreation Marketing Objective** To extend destination appeal to outdoor enthusiasts by continuing development and boosting promotion of Elkhart County's extensive system of trails and waterways.

#### Outdoor Recreation Activity Measures

- Work with outdoor stakeholders and event coordinators to incorporate CVB messaging into existing maps and other promotional outlets (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Create outdoor-specific itineraries based on preference, duration and complementing experiences (April) - **Not Complete (YTD 1, still in development)**
- Obtain 300 views of the outdoor section of the mobile app (April - December) - **(YTD Specific page stats not available)**
- Obtain 2,000 unique visits of the outdoor section of the CVB website and 1,000 downloads of outdoor itineraries (January - December) - **(YTD Outdoor 3,394 / Itineraries 832)**
- Promote existing experiences via GoPro segments (3), blogs (6) and given media content (April - October) - **Complete, blogs only**

**Visitor Center Marketing Objective** To increase traffic and boost awareness of the Elkhart County Visitors Center as the most comprehensive destination-wide resource for visitors, residents, group planners and local businesses.

#### Visitor Center Activity Measures

- Inventory resources for niche groups - teachers, realtors, event venues and sports organizations - **Complete**
- Establish communications channels for resources to niche groups - **Complete**
- Utilize destination-wide mobile app to communicate Visitor Center services and destination assets (April - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Extend reach to local chamber visitor centers via standing communications, project updates and the provision of informational materials (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Enhance the visitor center experience by providing locally produced coffees (April - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Expand knowledge of visitors coming into Center by collecting visitor data via guestbook (April - December) - **(Ongoing)**

**Promotional Materials Objective** To develop and distribute targeted, persuasive collateral that strengthens destination brands, communicates key experiences and encourages (Ongoing) engagement.

#### Travel Guide Activity Measures

- Manage sales, content and production of 68-page 2017 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide (July - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Complete 150 contracts resulting in \$185,000 in total sales; realize \$90,000 in net profit (July - December)  
- **(YTD 131 contracts, \$159,450 sales)**
- Oversee distribution of 200,000 printed copies of 2016 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide edition (February - December)  
- **(YTD 189,122)**

#### Production / Content Management Activity Measures

- Develop comprehensive content grid integrating paid, digital and social schedules (January) - **Complete**
- Manage content, frequency and metrics for Front Desk Update, Leisure and Travel Trade e-blasts (January - December)  
- **(Ongoing)**
- Develop content & creative for 125 print ads targeting leisure / group / resident / VFR markets (January - December) - **(YTD 92)**
- Manage copy, photography and videography for 250 pieces of marketing / sales collateral (January - December) - **(YTD 306)**
- Secure partner-generated blog content for 10 posts (March - October) - **Not Complete, (YTD 8)**
- Obtain and/or produce 3 video segments using GoPro camera (May - October) - **Not Complete**
- Schedule 4 photo shoots highlighting Heritage Trail assets / activities (January - December) - **(YTD 4)**
- Produce 10 videos highlighting ECCVB staff recommendations - Heritage Trail assets / activities (January - December) - **(YTD 0)**
- Develop content for GetSmart website personalization (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**

#### Group Marketing Activity Measures

- Manage production of Amish Country / Quilt Gardens Profile Sheets, Group Itinerary and Experience Guide, Co-op ads, itineraries, templates, FAM fliers and trade show presentation (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**

#### RV Brand Activity Measures

- Produce RV Rally Planning Guide (February) - **Complete**
- Update map RV-specific points of interest (April) - **Complete**
- Implement welcoming messages [outdoor and lodging] for RV Open House (September) - **Not Complete**

#### Sponsorship Activation Activity Measures

- Confirm key messages, performance measures and activation methods (March - October) - **(Ongoing)**

**Social Media Objective** To increase brand awareness, enhance engagement, generate qualified contacts, create a fun environment with a casual tone, and support both leisure and group advertisers / partners by sharing their content and helping them facilitate and engage their customer / visitor. The initiative will also boost SEO and provide more solid measurement capabilities to show the process from engagement to conversion.

#### Website Maintenance Activity Measures

- Make needed updates to all websites, including all advertiser updates and new content pages, 2016 Electronic Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide and any as-needed updates as the year progresses. (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**

**Get Smart Platform Objective** To communicate more effectively with new and existing audiences by providing personalized web content based on user preferences like location and previous search history

#### Get Smart Platform Activity Measures

- Track key campaign measurements (January - December) - **(YTD Site Clicks 1,516/ Impressions 914,791 / Site Click-Thru Rate .281% .281% of visitors who received served content vs. .23% of visitors who did not received served content, clicked through from the customized homepage banner)**

**Mobile App Objective** To provide a digital concierge service, connecting users to timely, relevant information, visitor center services, Exit 92 assets, and offers based on their location and search choices.

Mobile App Activity Measures

- Receive 2,000 downloads of the destination mobile app (April - December) - **(YTD 702)**
- Receive 2,000 Actions and offer redemption from Waze travel app (clicks, info clicks, navigation, website visits, phone calls (January - December) - **(YTD 3,018)**

**Facebook Objective** To increase brand awareness, engagement, and partner support; build relationship between visitors and the CVB Staff and partners.

Facebook Activity Measures

- Share 2 organic posts per day sharing stories, events and quality photos, engaging fans with polls, opinions, and recommendations, sharing partner posts, press mentions and staff highlights (January - December) - **(Ongoing increase to 5 per day May - August)**

**Twitter Objective** To promote on-site travel concierge, increase engagement (favorites, retweets, direct questions / answers).

Twitter Activity Measures

- Create and use hashtags, monitor and engage with event attendees, direct question follow ups, listen and respond to relevant conversations, promote hashtags / call to action in all print marketing [i.e. ask your question @amishcountry] (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Increase engagement: - **(YTD Replies: 465/Retweets: 1,304 Retweets with Comments: 90 Likes: 2,808)**

**Blog Objective** To serve as a content holder (temporary event “web pages”, email copy, contests) third level brand support and to increase SEO.

Blog Activity Measures

- Post expanded content for emails, contests, and website content (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Generate 200 click-thru's to the blog from email blasts (January - December) - **(YTD 15)**

**Pinterest Objective** To serve as an idea and planning tool for advance planners, dreamers; platform to share partner content.

Pinterest Activity Measures

- Post from AmishCountry.org to our boards in applicable categories, brand awareness and engagement, share a mix of relevant imagery - both brand-related and fun, and follow our local advertisers / partners (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Track impressions: impressions / re-pins / visits to website (January - December) - **(YTD Averages: daily impressions: 60, daily re-pins 0, Visits to website 133, Average monthly Engagement 40, Average monthly viewers 2,097)**

**Instagram Objective** To inspire potential visitors, gather non-professional images of the destination for present and future use, SEO, brand awareness and engagement, hashtags, non-professional video sharing.

Instagram Activity Measures

- Post engaging destination using relevant/popular hashtags, follow and like local advertisers / partners (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Track engagement: Followers, New Followers, Likes, Comments (January - December)
- **(YTD Followers 345/New Followers 207(+ 150%)/Likes 477/Comments 7)**

**YouTube Objective** To increase brand awareness and engagement, viral sharing, video content holder.

YouTube Activity Measures

- Post current and future pre-produced and non-professional destination videos (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Generate 14,576 Views, 14 Likes, and 27 Shares (January - December)
- **(YTD Views: 7,879 | Likes: Complete 19 | Shares: Complete 87)**

**Amish Country | Elkhart County E-Marketing Objective** To generate awareness, highlight key visitation drivers, provide travel recommendations, and drive web traffic.

E-Marketing Activity Measures

- Receive 22% click to open rate from 12 Amish Country email blasts (March - December) - **(YTD 22.1%)**
- Receive 28% open rate from 10 Quilt Gardens Insider email blasts (January - December) - **(YTD 24.17%)**
- Receive 11% click to open rate from 11 Travel Trade email blasts (January - November) - **(YTD 10.73%)**
- Receive 11% click to open rate from 24 Front Desk Update email blasts to lodging facility front desk personnel and advertiser / partners audience (January - December) - **(YTD 6.19%)**

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

- Invest \$284,969 in advertising and marketing which will convert to \$32 million in Total Visitor Spending\* reflecting both Area Guide Requests [printed and electronic] and Unique Website Visits (January - December) - **(YTD \$29,653,929)**
- Total CVB advertising investment / Leisure - \$287,000 - **(YTD \$279,800)**
- Total CVB advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$1,500 - **Complete**
- Total Co-op advertising investment / Leisure - \$635,227, revised to \$588,480 due to elimination of Chicago Tribune - **Complete**
- Total Co-op advertising investment / Travel Trade - \$25,000 - **Complete**

*\* 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 56%) X (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 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 (3.1 people in travel party) X (3.2 days average length of stay) X (\$96 per person per day)

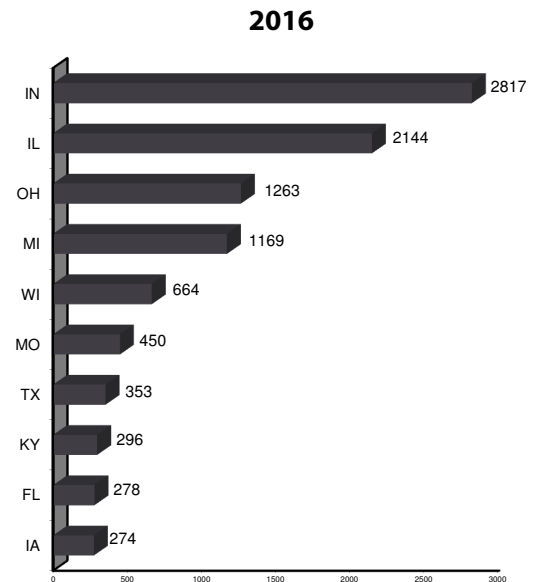
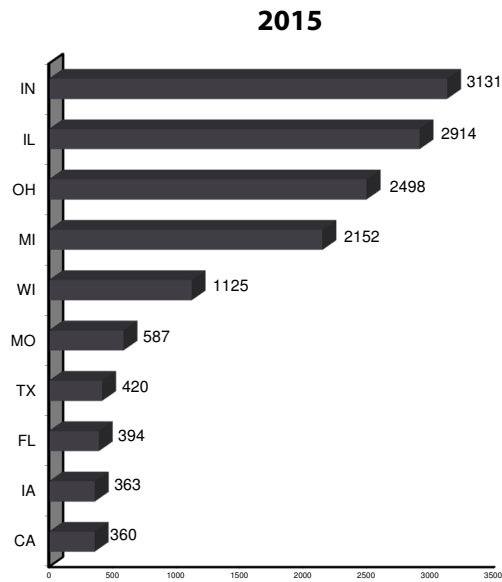
*Research Resource:*

**2013 Economic Impact Report by Certec Inc.**

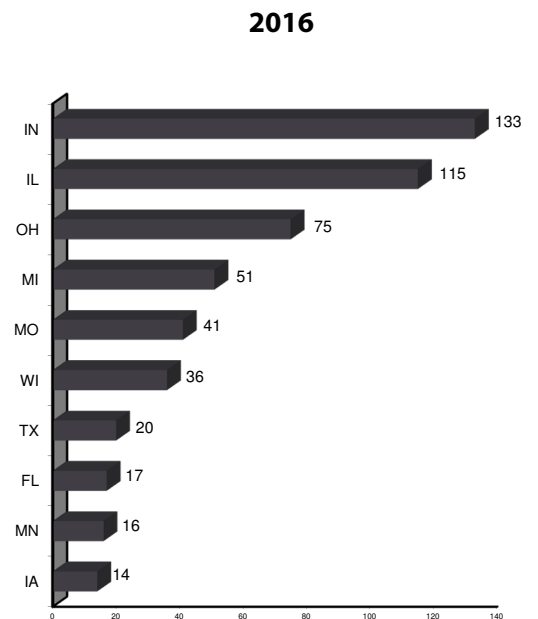
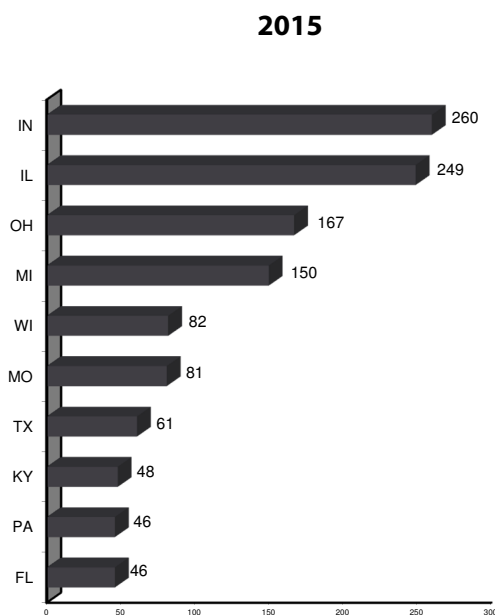


## Marketing Communications (cont.)

## Top 10 States YTD



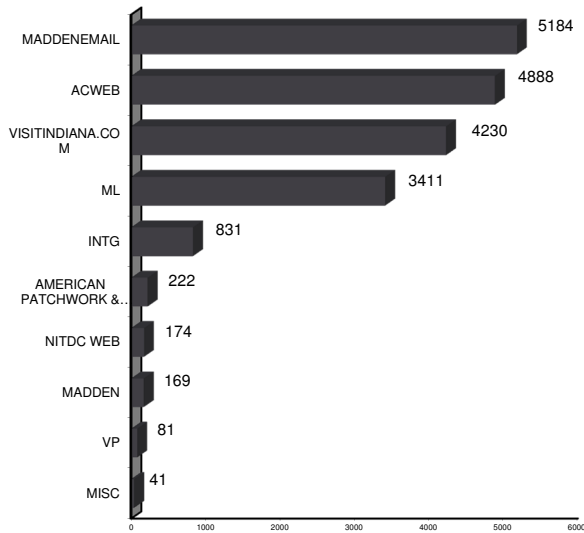
## Top 10 States October



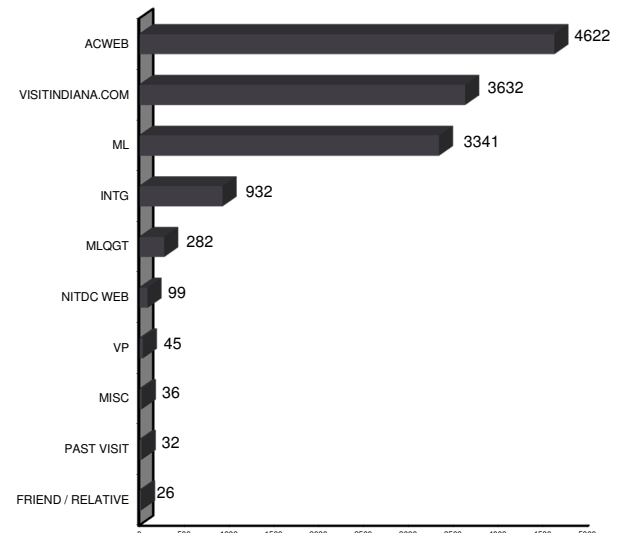
Marketing Communications (cont.)

Top 10 Sources YTD

2015

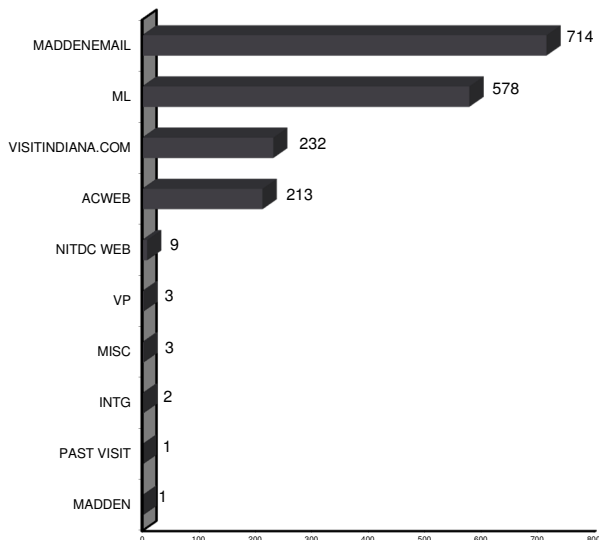


2016

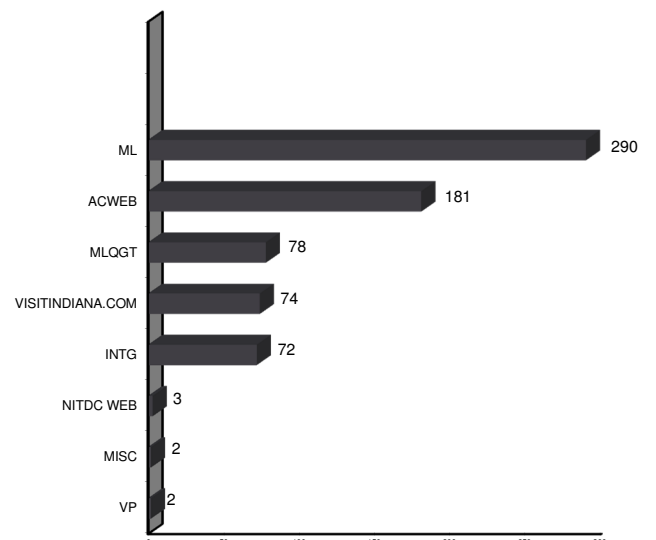


Top 10 Sources October

2015



2016



Marketing Communications *(cont.)*

ELKHART COUNTY CVB INQUIRY & COLLATERAL DISTRIBUTION REPORT 2015-2016 COMPARISON				
	Oct-15	Oct-16	YTD-15	YTD-16
<b>Total Visitor Information Requests</b>	<b>17,722</b>	<b>23,096</b>	<b>201,377</b>	<b>231,393</b>
<b>Total Collateral Sent</b>	<b>18,316</b>	<b>21,818</b>	<b>182,186</b>	<b>231,198</b>
<b>Visitors To Center</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,381</b>	<b>12,960</b>	<b>13,021</b>
<b>Total Visitor Center Distribution</b>	<b>2,862</b>	<b>2,762</b>	<b>26,902</b>	<b>26,390</b>
<b>Total Bulk Distribution</b>	<b>10,232</b>	<b>4,670</b>	<b>271,865</b>	<b>252,895</b>
<b>Total Collateral Distributed</b>	<b>49,132</b>	<b>52,346</b>	<b>682,330</b>	<b>741,876</b>

Amish Country Website Statistics					
	Oct-15	Oct-16	YTD 2015	YTD 2016	Difference
<b>Traffic Analysis</b>					
Total Visits/Sessions	21,158	27,279	245,733	276,745	12.62%
Unique Visitors	17,421	22,842	199,410	227,823	14.25%
New Visitors	16,561	21,564	190,242	216,858	13.99%
Average Visit Duration	3:26	2:58	2:50	2:43	2:46
Average Time on Page	1:25	1:35	1:02	1:15	1:08
Search Engine Referral	14,204	19,314	162,210	185,978	14.65%
Click Thrus to Partner Websites	7,702	9,136	68,862	106,631	54.85%
Electronic Travel Guide Views	154	103	2,738	2,004	-26.81%
<i>*Electronic Travel Guide Stats lower due to glitch in reporting 1st Qtr.</i>					



## > 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.

**Vibrant Communities Objective** To facilitate completion of the Vibrant Communities Action Agenda. In collaboration with the Community Foundation of Elkhart County, the Vibrant Community process will include a community led assessment quality of place assets, and will develop strategies that will result in an action agenda for investment in Community of Place projects throughout Elkhart County.

### Vibrant Communities Activity Measures

- Facilitate meetings of the Quality of Place Steering Committee (January - June) - **(YTD 4)**
- In partnership with Community Foundation, facilitate project community wide Kick-off and Wrap-up Meetings (January, June)  
- **(Kick-off Meeting held 1/26 w/Peter Kageyama - 600+ attended, Summit on the Future held - 500+ attended)**
- In partnership with local Chamber staff, facilitate community based planning meetings (January - June)  
- **(YTD 7 Community Conversation facilitated - 500+ participated)**
- Identify priority community based Quality of Place projects and activities (June) - **(11 Focus groups facilitated in April/May, process complete & draft plan presented)** Identify funding resources to implement Quality of Place Activities (June - December) - **(ECCVB and Community Foundation committed to funding on-going workshops and Vibrant Bucks mini-grant program for 2017)**

### **Downtown and Gateway District Redevelopment**

The ECCVB recognizes that good planning and development are vital to attracting visitors to a destination. The downtowns of communities along the Heritage Trail provide an ideal complement to the rural experience. Therefore, the ECCVB is engaged in representing the visitor and the visitor industry in these initiatives.

**Community Based Downtown Redevelopment Objective** As one of the 4 Tourism Development Pillars, this objective relates to working with each community in Elkhart County to achieve success with Downtown Development Objectives through active participation and technical assistance

### Community Based Downtown Redevelopment Activity Measures

- Through Vibrant Communities, work on the implementation of the Market District Redevelopment Plan (January - December)  
**(Assisted in review of Master Plan RFQ's and selection of Master Plan consulting team, YTD 4 meetings, market assessment complete, presentation of plan scheduled for November)**
- Continue participation on the Goshen Theatre Board working toward the opening and operation of the facility as the organization raises funds for renovation in 2016 (January - December) - **(YTD 10 - fundraising feasibility preliminary report complete, fundraising in progress)**
- Work with Nappanee Chamber of Commerce and City officials on the development of a Comprehensive Plan (January - December) - **(YTD 3)**
- Work with County Redevelopment Commission and Middlebury Town officials on gateway corridor aesthetic enhancements (January - December) - **(YTD Signs designed and placements identified, Warren St streetscape funded by Redevelopment Commission - \$350,000, implementation delayed due to Town Manager staff transition)**
- Continue Implementation of Downtown wayfinding signage and kiosk program (January - December)  
- **(YTD Finalizing agreements with Middlebury for design and installation, sign design in progress, implementation delayed due to Town Manager staff transition, scheduled for November)**

**Downtown Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants Objective** The ECCVB has committed to increasing the success of the downtown initiatives by building the capacity of stakeholder organizations to implement Live/Work/Play strategies. The ECCVB will create a new technical assistance grant program, providing administrative resources allowing existing stakeholder organizations to expand their ability to provide new services. The ECCVB will actively engage stakeholder organizations to identify the gaps in existing services, and create an approach to most effectively fill the service gaps.

### Downtown Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants Activity Measures

- Complete Community Foundation of Elkhart County Grant Request for \$270,000 matching funds (January) - **(Application Complete, application successful)**
- Finalize program application and reporting requirements (February) - **Complete (community proposals received and evaluated, agreements signed for Elkhart, Goshen, & Middlebury)**
- Facilitate and evaluate proposals from participating communities for eligible Capacity Grant Projects (March) - **(Review meeting facilitated with Elkhart Chamber, Middlebury & Goshen.)**
- Award Matching Grants to successful applicants (April) - **(Agreements signed with Middlebury, Goshen & Elkhart. Goshen Theater Fundraising initiated. Elkhart Chamber hiring process complete. Middlebury Chamber hiring process complete. Nappanee application received, contract to be signed in November)**
- Collect and review progress reports for compliance with grant terms (April - December) - **(YTD 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> quarter reports collected from Elkhart, Goshen and Middlebury)**

**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 positioning Exit 92 to be the premier Toll Road exit through visitor enhancements 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, including the SR 19 Corridor Multi-use Path (January - December) - **(YTD 4)**
- On behalf of the Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, facilitate the completion of a visitor focused gateway enhancement study (January - December) - **(YTD 3 hosted Hunden site visit, received very preliminary findings and provided feedback, Draft report received - provided feedback to Hunden, site visit for final presentation scheduled for September 13 Redevelopment Commission Meeting. Plan presented to Elkhart Redevelopment Commission. Commission contracted with ECCVB to conduct additional work on outlet mall and water park hotel concepts)**
- Continue to facilitate individual meetings with key property holders to identify relocation / acquisition opportunities (January - December) - **(YTD 8)**

**Outdoor Recreation Objective** To coordinate activities that support the strategies identified in the Tourism Development Plan to link, enhance and create outdoor recreation opportunities in Elkhart County. This includes participating in a leadership role in research and technical assistance, along with supporting existing stakeholder groups.

### Outdoor Recreation Activity Measures

- Work with existing bicycle stakeholder groups to identify opportunities for enhancing bicycle infrastructure in Elkhart County. Items could include new path development opportunities, signage, marketing, etc. (January - September) - **(YTD 6 meetings with Dave Foutz and Elkhart Redevelopment Commission for development of Quaker Trace and bicycle beltway, received proposals from Dovetail on planning and promotional activities. Contract signed with Dovetail for creating map and promotional materials.)**
- Identify infrastructure gaps and opportunities that will support Downtown Elkhart's strengths as an outdoor recreation destination (January - December) - **(YTD 3, proposals received for route mapping assistance. Contract signed with Dovetail. Initial stakeholder meeting held for route consensus.)**
- Work with Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission and RV/MH Hall of Fame to explore feasibility of expanded RV Event Facility at Exit 96 (January - December) - **(YTD 8 Redevelopment Commission authorized \$50,000 appropriation for market study, RFP to be distributed, proposal review scheduled for September. Consultant selected, kick-off meeting held in October)**



**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

- In partnership with NITDC, work with Nichols Tourism to implement a complimentary survey to identify and assess website reach, use and conversion (January - April) - **(YTD Survey has been implemented on website, collection underway, preliminary results received.)**
- In partnership with NITDC, facilitate research summit for regional partners (March) - **(YTD 2 Summit held April 12-13 at University of Florida, impacts of SMART destinations discussed, new research projects centered around user generated content discussed)**
- Work with CERTEC to implement Economic Impact Study (January - December) - **(Contract signed, surveying underway)**
- Assist ECCVB staff with appropriate distribution of all ECCVB research (January - December) - **(YTD 1 facilitated discussion on STR Weekend/Weekday reporting and collection strategy)**

#### **Destination Experience Development**

In 2016, the ECCVB will continue activating new product development initiatives through a comprehensive experiential development strategy. This strategy is based on collaboration with existing partners to link and enhance signature offerings as well as engineer new, engaging and immersive experiences.

**Public Guided Tour Development Objective** To research and develop high quality, enlightening and entertaining public tour experiences led by locals in order to demonstrate that Elkhart County is an exceptional place to live, work, play and visit utilizing existing Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens. To use interactive experiences and innovative resources to help newcomers and locals alike get more connected to the people, places and projects in Elkhart County downtowns.

#### Public Guided Tour Development Activity Measures

- Work with Buggy Line Tours to train and develop 2 regularly scheduled public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (January - April) - **Complete**
- Conduct Experiential Assessment to uncover strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities for new downtown Elkhart walking tour development (January - September) - **(Ongoing - 3 potential tour products in development)**
- Identification and selection of Downtown Walking Tour Supplier Partners (March) - **Complete (Attractions and business identified based on theme tours)**
- Assistance with website development and navigation to market and promote new downtown Elkhart tour experiences (September-November)
- Realize 15 departures on a weekly basis (each with a minimum of 2 people) on public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (May - October) - **Not Complete (9 departure, 34 people)**
- Develop and execute communications strategy and marketing messaging to promote public guided van tours of the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail (January - October) - **(Ongoing)**

#### **Overall Destination Development Performance Measures**

- Downtown Elkhart Market District Redevelopment Activities will set the table for new housing and community center investments totaling \$50,000,000 (January - December) - **(YTD Regional Cities commitments made totaling \$14 million)**
- North Pointe redevelopment plan activities will resolve issues to facilitate \$5,000,000 of new private hospitality investment (January - December) - **(YTD \$8 million Holiday Inn Express construction scheduled to start fall 2016)**
- Downtown Signage Program will leverage \$50,000 in local community funding (January - December) - **(YTD \$350,000 from Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission for Middlebury signage and streetscape activities. Goshen started \$50,000 signage design and placement study for implementation in 2017)**
- Collaboration with ECCF on Vibrant Communities and Live. Work. Play. Capacity Grants will leverage \$300,000 in ECCF funding and \$150,000 in community funding (January - December) - **(YTD \$90,000 from City of Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, \$270,000 from Community Foundation of Elkhart County, \$22,000 leveraged from Elkhart Chamber, \$25,000 leveraged from Goshen Theater, Inc, \$12,000 leveraged from Middlebury Chamber of Commerce)**



## > PUBLIC RELATIONS

**GOAL** To generate advocacy for the ECCVB among stakeholders and community partners and influence increased visitor spending by communicating Elkhart County's quality of place initiatives and cultivating interest in the destination through given media, social media, and sponsorship.

**Community Relations Objective** To attain broader community support and awareness of the ECCVB among targeted stakeholders and community partners for its role in community and economic development that integrates place-based tourism key strategies that both attract visitors and improve the quality of place for local residents.

### Board Advocacy Activity Measures

- Execute 2016 Advocacy Action Strategies (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Develop 1 overview of ECCVB key place-based tourism initiatives for Advocacy (January - March) - **(YTD 0)**
- Facilitate 8 Advocacy Task Group Meetings (January - October) - **(YTD 10)**
- Plan and conduct 1 Advocacy meeting with state legislators (January - March) - **Complete**
- Realize 70% participation of members involved in Advocacy initiatives (January - December) - **(YTD 54 of 130)**

### Tourism Business and Community Quality of Place Communications Activity Measures

- Facilitate quarterly meetings with ECCVB staff to develop quality of place subjects for communications content (January, April, July, October) - **(YTD 4)**
- Develop and distribute (2) quality of place information communiqués to local / state elected officials (January - November) - **(YTD 1)**
- Recognize community partners' accomplishments and send personalized letters of congratulations (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**

### 2016 Indiana Bicentennial Legacy Project, Torch Relay and Mobile Visitors Center Activity Measures

- Assist in facilitating and executing a 52+ mile Torch Relay thru Elkhart County including working with representatives from the Indiana Department of Tourism, Elkhart County government, emergency management agencies, Indiana State Police, and officials of Elkhart, Goshen, Nappanee, Middlebury and Wakarusa (January - October) - **Complete**
- Establish guidelines, determine roles, and coordinate activities related to the nomination, designation and announcement of official Torch Bearers for the Elkhart County leg of the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay (January - October) - **Complete**
- Assist in coordinating the Elkhart County Torch Relay Kickoff Celebration event with representatives from the Northern Indiana Dairy Trail, Elkhart County Government, Indiana State Police, emergency management agencies and the Indiana Department of Tourism (January - October) - **Complete**
- Develop and execute a communications plan to inform, educate, and generate attendance at the Indiana Bicentennial Mobile Visitors Center, the Elkhart County Torch Relay Kickoff Celebration event, and the Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay through Elkhart County (January - October) - **Complete**
- Assist in execution of activities and programs involving the Indiana Bicentennial Mobile Visitors Center [Elkhart County leg] with Indiana Department of Tourism, Elkhart County government and host site locations (January - October) - **Complete**

### Festival and Events Activity Measures

- Develop and distribute laminated 2016 local event listings to 150 local tourism businesses (January) - **Complete**
- Distribute monthly PR tips to 12 constituents (January - December) - **(YTD 12)**

### Area Guide Grant Program Activity Measures

- Distribute Travel Guide Assistance Fund grant application announcements/guidelines to all eligible partners (July - August) - **Complete**
- Process \$17,577 in grant awards (January - July) - **Complete**
- Provide 17 not-for-profit organizations the ability to participate in the Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide at an affordable rate (August - November) - **Ongoing**
- Provide more comprehensive information to the visitor through the Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**

## Community Relations Objective (Cont)

**Sponsorship Program Activity Measures**

- Develop and execute 2016 Bicentennial Legacy Project sponsorship program including establishing guidelines and expectations and disseminating guidelines and applications to all eligible partners (January - September) - **(Complete)**
- Develop and execute comprehensive activation plan that communicates ECCVB's role in the community and its quality of place initiatives (January - February) - **Complete**
- Review and update sponsorship, guidelines, expectations, and reporting methods (January / February) - **Complete**
- Provide sponsorship education to minimum 4 partners through IEG webinars (January - November) - **(YTD 2)**
- Manage sponsorship information dissemination, communication, eligibility, proposal and contract filing and activation for 12 properties (January - December) - **(YTD 13)**
- Monitor all sponsorships to ensure guidelines and deliverables are met and reported (March - December) - **(Ongoing)**

**PR Objective** To represent the ECCVB in a variety of strategic partnership activities for the purpose of furthering its mission and enhancing the awareness of the ECCVB by promoting its role in sustainable, place-based tourism development, quality of place key initiatives and to increase knowledge of the destination that drives visitation.

**Media Communications Objective** To secure editorial coverage and heighten media interest for Elkhart County as a valued tourism destination and place to live; facilitate communicating key ECCVB messages and initiatives to a variety of audiences including leisure/group travelers and resident/local stakeholders; cultivate community relationships; promote tourism development and quality of place initiatives.

**Internal Community Relations, Area Guide Fund, Festivals / Events, Activity Measures**

- Develop and locally distribute 2 Travel Guide Fund releases (July - November) - **(YTD 1)**
- Develop and locally distribute minimum 6 community or event focused releases / story idea pitches / posts (February - November) - **(YTD 20)**
- Develop and distribute 12 local event listings to media for event calendars and other opportunities (February - November) - **(YTD 8)**

**Internal Quality of Place Activity Measures**

- Develop and pitch 6 local story ideas on downtown quality of place specific happenings (March - November) - **(YTD 5)**
- Secure 10 local quality of place media interviews (January - December) - **(YTD 28)**

**Internal Exit 92 Activity Measures**

- Develop and distribute 2 locally focused story ideas and/or releases - one focusing on value of NITDC regional alliance and one on "Exit 92" value to destination (May - October) - **(YTD 2)**

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

- Develop 10 Quilt Gardens Updates for 250 community contacts (January - December) - **(YTD 10)**
- Develop and pitch 3 locally focused story ideas / releases for 2016 Quilt Gardens (April - May) **(YTD 4)**
- Develop and implement Quilt Gardens opening communications strategy targeting all local elected officials (May) - **Complete**
- Develop and distribute local media alert regarding Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail opening activities (May) - **Complete**
- Develop Quilt Gardens media materials for October celebration and announcements (September)
- Secure 5 Quilt Gardens interviews (May - September) - **(YTD 4)**

#### **External Elkhart County ... along the Heritage Trail Activity Measures**

- Identify 250 qualified leisure, niche, group and social media contacts (January - March) - **(YTD 446)**
- Update and develop new content for Along the Heritage Trail media materials and profile sheet including: Quilt Gardens, Amish Country, Downtowns/Communities, Outdoor and themed experiences (January - May) - **Complete**
- Develop minimum 20 unique Along The Heritage Trail specific story ideas and pitch to qualified media contacts (January - December) - **(YTD 22)**
- Follow 30 qualified niche specific (food, culture, travel, family, gardening, quilting, outdoor) bloggers (February - December) - **(YTD 48)**
- Develop/distribute minimum 5 travel/trade specific releases to group related publications (February - October) - **(YTD 4)**
- Participate in 1 media marketplace (March - September) - **Complete**
- Host 5 travel or niche specific journalists and/bloggers for journalist press trips (February - November) - **(YTD 8)**
- Develop story ideas, pitches and/or releases generating 1,000 contacts (January - December) - **(YTD 411)**
- Generate 2 PR Web Releases (January - June) - **(YTD 1)**
- Generate 3,000 visits to media site (January - December) - **(YTD 4,335)**
- Generate 150 qualified media inquiries (January - December) - **(YTD 155)**

#### **Overall Public Relations Performance Measures**

- Generate 250 media placements [print, broadcast, on-line, blog], yielding 400,000,000 impressions resulting in \$2 million in advertising equivalency (January - December) - **(YTD Placements: 916; Impressions: 769,600,837; Value: \$3,867,774.70)**





## > 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 6 tradeshow: ABA, Heartland, Midwest Marketplace, TAP Dance, Great Day Tours, AAA East Central(January - November)  
- **Complete**
- Conduct 1 Sales Mission: Midwest (October) – **Cancelled due to lack of partner interest**
- Generate 11 e-mail campaigns (January - November) - **(YTD 10)**
- Conduct 4 personalized destination previews and 2 destination wide preview tours (January - December)  
- **(YTD 5 personalized, 1 destination wide)**
- Conduct 3 direct mail postcard campaigns and 1 Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide direct mail campaign (March - August)  
- **(YTD 2 postcards, 1 Travel Guide)**
- Advertise in 4 publications *Group Tour Northeastern, Leisure Group Travel, The Group Travel Leader and Select Traveler* (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- Coordinate 169 insertions including YouTube video links, banner ads, editorial features, e-newsletters, online itinerary pages, photo galleries, and print ads (January (14), February (14), March (13), April (13), May (15), June (14), July (15), August (14), September (14), October (14), November (16), December (14) - **(YTD 139)**
- Coordinate monthly group website updates and social media strategies (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- Generate 150 qualified leads and appointments (January - December) - **(YTD 191)**
- Generate 300 visits to the Travel Trade Group Planner Resources page on AmishCountryTours.org (January - December)  
- **(YTD 115)**
- Generate 15,000 Unique Page Views on Group site and 300 Sample Itinerary PDF Downloads (January - December)  
- **(YTD 16,529/554)**
- Generate a 10% Travel Trade email click- to-open rate (January - December) - **(YTD 10.73%)**

**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 200 clients (January - December) - **(YTD 195)**

**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) - **(YTD 8)**
- Participate in a Co-op partnership with the Indiana Office of Tourism for the ABA 2016 and ABA 2017 Marketplaces (January - December) - **(Ongoing)**
- Develop the Northern Indiana Motorcoach partnership with the LaGrange County, Marshall County, Kosciusko County and South Bend CVB's to be promoted at the ABA 2016 Marketplace Indiana Office of Tourism Booth (January) - **Complete**
- By leveraging a partner investment of \$23,250 in Travel Trade Publications, the ECCVB will communicate the Amish Country brand through 118,494 impressions (January - December) - **Complete**
- Generate \$5,102 in additional Co-op partnership revenues (February - October) - **(YTD \$4,324)**

#### Overall Travel Trade Performance Measures

- Create 75 customized itineraries, averaging in 2.5 days of length, generating \$1.1 million in group visitor spending (January - December) - **(YTD 60 itineraries, 2.85 days, \$1,125,655)**
- Generate 125 daytrips and 125 overnight trips resulting in \$2.75 million in group visitor spending (January - December) - **(YTD 85 daytrips, 88 overnights, \$2,058,041)**
- Maintain average length of group stays to 2 days (January - December) - **(YTD 1.94)**
- Realize \$100,000 in group visitor spending from direct mail promotion (April- December) - **(YTD \$98,265)**

## > 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 2016 Peachtree Tax Update will be purchased.

Contact Database - The ECCVB will continue to use SimpleView as its primary contact database and will purchase the annual fee for 2016.

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 / Publicaster Email software as its primary email software program and purchase the annual fee for 2016.

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) - **Ongoing**
- New general software and hardware researched and purchased per Capital Equipment Replacement Plan (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- Produce, print and distribute 12 reports and 1 business plan to staff, Board of Directors and Tax Commission monthly (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- Provide at least 8 Internet / Social Media training sessions to our partners (March - October)

### Database Management Activity Measures

- Accurately enter 19,000 contacts for Heritage Trail Adventures Area Guide requests into the database (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- Complete and send 1 bulk mailing to the fulfillment house weekly (January - December) - **Ongoing**
- 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)



## > 2016 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 and 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 and 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 10 years)
- 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 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 ECCVB 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** - Supporting Our Main Assets, Downtown Elkhart 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.

### **Internet / Website**

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

**Click-through or CTR** - 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.

**Social Media** - Website, Emails, Blog, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter

**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 visitor 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 at 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 per 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 ECCVB 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.