



Fairfax County, Virginia
Connect with America



Sales, Marketing, and Business Development Plan 2022 / 2023

Our Mission:

TO PROMOTE, MARKET, AND SELL FAIRFAX COUNTY AS A YEAR-ROUND, PREFERRED DESTINATION FOR VISITORS FROM ALL MARKET SEGMENTS INCLUDING ALL BUSINESS TRAVEL SEGMENTS, LEISURE, AND SPORTS TRAVEL. WE USE ALL MARKETING DISCIPLINES TO DEVELOP INCREMENTAL VISITATION BY PROMOTING OUR DESTINATION PRODUCTS, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES THAT DISTINGUISH FAIRFAX COUNTY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE OVERALL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GROWTH OF OUR CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES.

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EXECUTIVE

summary

It is indeed my great pleasure to share our 2022 – 2023 Sales, Marketing, and Business Development Plan on behalf of the Fairfax County travel and tourism industry. Fairfax County has so much to offer our visitors and residents alike. We are privileged to call this beautiful place home and are honored to have the opportunity to contribute to both the economy as well as the overall quality of life for our citizens simply by sharing our love of this destination with visitors to the region.

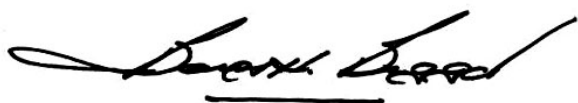
Every year we begin the process of planning for our next fiscal year in December and January. This year was no different. Our plan for the Fiscal 2022 – 2023 Year reflects a new normal and what we will need to do as our world opens up again.

Considering the various facets that make up the travel and tourism industry, our plan was developed with three distinct audiences in mind: Business – relating largely to meetings and events, Leisure – meaning both group tour and individual consumer, and Sports – ranging from state tournaments to broad-reaching international mega-events. Each audience segment plays an important role in the success of the Fairfax County tourism industry. For each segment of our audience, we address the strategic and tactical actions that will be used to market Fairfax County as a preferred destination. Within each segment we have indicated the primary, secondary, and tertiary markets where our attention will be focused as well as some examples of what our efforts will be and where they will be focused. Our plans, as you will notice, have taken everything we have heard and learned through research and forecasts that will affect our industry as a result of Covid-19 and other outside variables.

Throughout the year, Visit Fairfax represents the county in a wide variety of different marketplaces and through many types of marketing, advertising, and communication methods. We have provided a master activities calendar to identify each of these major programs and activities. We invite you to use this calendar to leverage our plans to enhance your own sales and marketing efforts for the year.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the Visit Fairfax team as we are always more than happy to assist in any way that we can. And thank you for making the industry of travel and tourism a major part of the economic fabric of this great county.

Yours in Tourism & Hospitality,



Barry Biggar, CDME
President & CEO
Visit Fairfax



ENVIRONMENTAL *analysis*



Strengths

With our proximity to the many attractions available to visitors to the region, a central location continues to be a key Fairfax County strength. With world-class hotels, restaurants, and attractions, Fairfax County offers visitors an enviable array of experiences. Combining big-city amenities with wide open spaces, the County boasts highly eclectic choices for visitors – surrounding them with experiences ranging from the natural beauty of Great Falls and historic treasures such as Mount Vernon to the amenities typical of an urban destination such as amazing dining and shopping options. Additionally, our diverse population translates to diverse and authentic visitor experiences that are highly desirable to many. Finally, Fairfax County offers visitors the ultimate convenience of accessibility from air, rail, and highway; easy access to many of the area’s best-loved activities and some of the country’s top businesses; and a manageable and affordable environment that offers a wide range of quality accommodations.



Opportunities

Key market opportunities exist for the business, leisure, and sports segments, especially during weekends and other distressed periods. The Connect with America brand leverages the County’s strengths with a highly personal message. The anticipated expansion of Metro to Dulles Airport provides new opportunity for both individual travelers and group event planners. Four recently added attractions represent opportunity within all segments. Capital One Hall represents a major addition to our Arts portfolio. The National Museum of the United States Army along with the Lucy Burns Museum and the Turning Point Suffragists Memorial are very attractive to niche groups and individual travelers, and a new sense of community spirit in a post-pandemic world may provide new opportunity to engage with local residents. Additionally, the planned expansion of Tysons as a pedestrian-friendly area also holds great opportunity. Finally, additional funding would increase opportunities for greater outreach in all markets.



Weaknesses

The most significant weaknesses faced by Fairfax County are infrastructural in nature. The sheer size of the County can make navigating among attractions a challenge. This issue is further aggravated by limited “tourism-friendly” signage throughout the County. Consumer perception is also impacted by the lack of a “downtown area,” limited brand awareness, and extensive traffic – all of which leave tourists with the feeling that Fairfax County may not be a tourist-friendly destination. Lack of extensive public transportation was mitigated with the expansion of Metro to Tysons; however, visitors still require affordable, convenient alternatives. Additionally, consumers may be confused as the various towns and communities tend to market individually instead of as a cohesive group. While city destinations like Washington, DC and New York City are quite well known among travelers, counties are often difficult to market as they are not as established from a branding standpoint.



Threats

For the past two years, the global pandemic has threatened not only Fairfax County but the entire travel industry. Our industry was drastically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, and the timing for full travel recovery remains to be seen. Competition for visitor attention remains fierce in the region. In this environment, Fairfax County faces the challenge that many destination marketing organizations contend with – drawing eyes to our message when numerous choices abound. Record inflation and growing gas prices have also put more strain on potential consumers’ available recreational spending. Additionally, the potential mid and long-term impact of US travel policies on international travel is still impacting that segment. Finally, nearby competitor Washington, DC has invested millions of dollars toward international markets such as China and India, giving them a competitive advantage in these lucrative marketplaces.

SALES, MARKETING, & DEVELOPMENT

business plan

The spring has brought with it a new day and renewed hope for a return to normalcy. The travel restrictions that began in 2020 and reemerged cyclically throughout the pandemic seem finally to be behind us, creating a pent-up demand for travel that has been two years in the making. The timing of a full recovery remains to be seen; however, we are seeing bounce back in most markets.

While the message to consumers in the early days of the pandemic emphasized that “we’re ready when you’re ready,” the current travel environment is vastly different than it was even a year ago. Vaccines and now therapeutics are readily available to all who want or need them.

Recognizing this new paradigm, Visit Fairfax will tap into the pent-up desire to travel that so many are feeling. Without doubt, travel is resuming; however, the manner in which visitors choose to travel and the core drivers that motivate them will play important roles in their decision process.

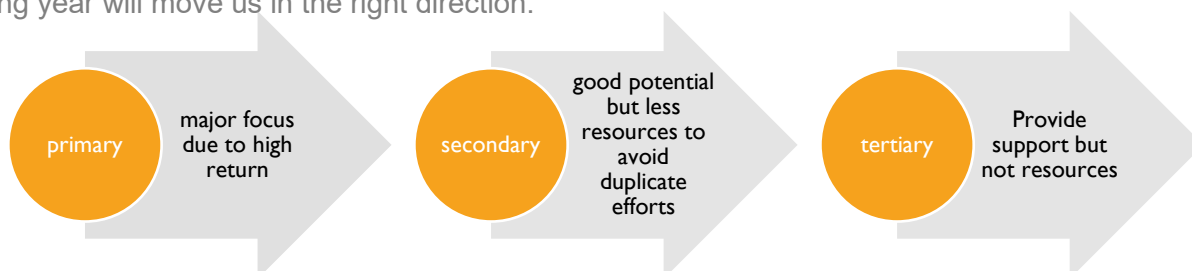
The most significant opportunity for quick-start impact is leisure consumers, and therefore, we will accelerate our focus on leisure to drive traffic and travel. Given Northern Virginia’s central location that is easily accessible by car, Fairfax County is an attractive destination given the changes in consumer priorities. Additionally, our visitor experiences are highly eclectic, ranging from national historic treasures to wide-open green spaces for those who still prefer less crowded environments. Finally, for those who still remember the economic insecurity caused by major shutdowns, Northern Virginia represents an incredible value within the National Capital Region, with many of the benefits of an urban destination surrounded by nature and our incredible parks. Using innovative technologies, Visit Fairfax will continue its programs intended to send highly creative and targeted messages to very defined niche audiences with a new focus on those “precious moments” with friends and family that many see as a top priority as they reconnect.

All markets have suffered, but the group markets were impacted severely. Perhaps the most encouraging sign of recovery is the recent uptick in group events. That said, the competition for group events is incredibly fierce, and identifying innovative ways to reach group decision makers is especially important as the echoes of the pandemic linger. In a highly competitive environment, we need to arm our group sales managers with the best possible tools to be effective in their jobs. In doing so, we will leverage the power of human connection that comes only from face-to-face interaction in business while instilling confidence in event planners by concentrating on safe meetings.

The overall sales and marketing strategy will remain focused on the three key markets that we have prioritized from the beginning: Business, Leisure, and Sports – each with resources dedicated based upon their Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary audiences. We will also continue to reach out to our own local residents who, now more than ever, influence inbound friends & family, support the tourism infrastructure, and ultimately ensure our success through the shared voice of all of our proud citizens and political leaders. We remain positive that the future is indeed bright and that the strategies planned for the coming year will move us in the right direction.

“If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will take you there.”

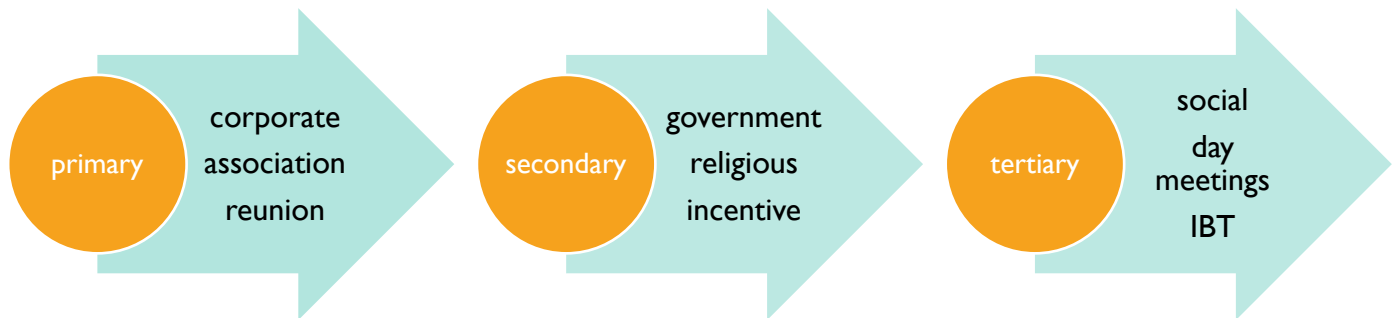
— The Cheshire Cat to Alice,
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,
Lewis Carroll



BUSINESS

meetings

MEETINGS AND EVENTS ↗



After two years of disruption brought on by the worldwide pandemic, we are tasked with finding new ways of doing business to help our stakeholders fill their properties and venues going forward. As a result of this evolving business climate, the types of group business available for us has also changed. For example, average group size is now smaller than it was pre-pandemic, the booking cycle is somewhat shorter, and planners are more cautious about cancellation and attrition terms. More meetings are being structured as “drive-in” vs. “fly-in” programs, with attendees travelling distances under 300 miles to attend. Some future meetings may now include a “virtual” component, allowing participation from one’s home or office, a dynamic that could negatively impact both attendance and overnight stays.

The ongoing hostilities in Ukraine, which have pushed up the price of crude oil worldwide, will impact us, at least for the short term, as gasoline prices and airline ticket prices both increase, forcing potential meeting attendees to “think twice” prior to committing to attending an event.

Our overall approach will continue to require a great deal of flexibility, as new parameters for booking meeting and events emerge, and new requirements for organizing meetings (increased social distancing in meeting rooms, changes to food service, etc.) evolve.

Looking ahead, we have added to our existing schedule of “one-on-one” appointment trade shows with Small & Boutique Meetings in Greenville, SC in July. We will continue to look for opportunities to play host to such programs, knowing that exposing planners to our hotels and attractions first-hand is far more effective than any brochure, e-mail, or sales presentation can possibly be.

We will continue to develop opportunities to book additional business attracted by the National Museum of the United States Army (NMUSA) and by Capital One Hall, both of which opened in 2021 and are still largely “new” to the public, as well as the extension of Metrorail Silver line service to Dulles Airport, now scheduled to begin in the second half of 2022.

Identification and prospecting of Army reunion groups and other Army-connected programs that would be interested in visiting or holding events at the NMUSA will continue. We will also continue to run display advertising in online issues of *Reunions* Magazine and will attend the TMRN (The Military Reunion Network) Educational Summit in 2023.

We will also continue to promote the 1,550-seat main auditorium at Capital One Hall in our sales efforts to association, corporate, and religious groups that require larger “General Session” capabilities than any of our existing hotels are able to provide.

The Archer Tysons

This unique hotel joined the County’s hotel ranks in 2022. Fairfax County boasts over 100 hotels that welcome a variety of groups, both large and small.



The extension of the Metrorail Silver line will provide us with a “once in a generation” opportunity to drive additional business to our hotels in the Herndon and Chantilly areas of the county. As we did in 2013 and 2104 for the opening of the Silver line’s first phase, we will promote the enhanced access that the Dulles extension will afford groups through trade show collateral, mailings, eMail blasts, and meeting planner luncheons, continuing through the line’s scheduled opening in the second half of 2022.

STRATEGIES

1. Market, sell and promote Fairfax County as a premier business meeting destination within the group business segments we target: national and state associations, corporate and government.
2. Profile and build on our database of group meetings and events that meet during specified need periods, specifically military and family reunions, religious groups, and special interest / hobbyist groups.
3. Maximize the opportunities presented by the three new facilities opening in 2021 / 2022: the National Museum of the United States Army, Capital One Hall, and the Metrorail Silver line extension to Dulles Airport.

4. Continue to build upon the service reputation of Visit Fairfax by providing the highest levels of personalized service, attention, and support for meeting planners and event organizers.

TACTICS

1. Market, sell and promote Fairfax County as a premier business meeting destination within the group business segments that we target: national and state associations, corporate, and government.
 - a. Ensure visibility for Fairfax County and our meeting hotels at association and corporate trade shows including Connect (Detroit, MI, Washington, DC, and Peoria, IL), *Convention South* Rendezvous South, Northstar Travel Media Small & Boutique Meetings, Destination East, and IPEC (Independent Planner Education Conference), *Meetings Today* Meetings Today Live!, and MPI ReConEx.
 - b. Bid to host Connect DC in November of 2023.
 - c. Utilize “virtual reality” tours of our meeting hotels and attractions to market to / close business with planners who may be unwilling or unable to travel to Fairfax County to conduct traditional site inspections.
 - d. Continue to expand our relationships with state association meeting planners through our participation in the Virginia Society of Association Executives (VSAE) and attendance at the group’s various events throughout the year.
 - e. Exhibit at the VSAE Fall Conference in October, partnering with our Fairfax County meeting hotel partners. Provide our hotels with access to Virginia state association planners through a semi-annual Visit Fairfax sales blitz in November and April.
 - f. Exhibit at the Reston-Herndon Meeting Planners (RHMP) “Summer Camp” program in August.
 - g. Develop a “Break through the Clutter” box of intriguing materials to be mailed to select prospective planners / groups to increase their level of interest in finding out more about Fairfax County; boxes to be mailed two per week throughout the year with follow-up phone calls.
 - h. Ensure visibility among corporate, government, and association planners through advertising in *Meetings & Conventions*, *Meetings Today*, *Convention South*, *Virginia Business*, and SGMP.org.

Business Meetings

WHAT ↗

Tradeshows

Print & Online Advertising

Direct Sales

Membership & Sponsorship

Group FAMs & Client Events

WHERE 📍

Washington, DC

Northern Virginia

Richmond

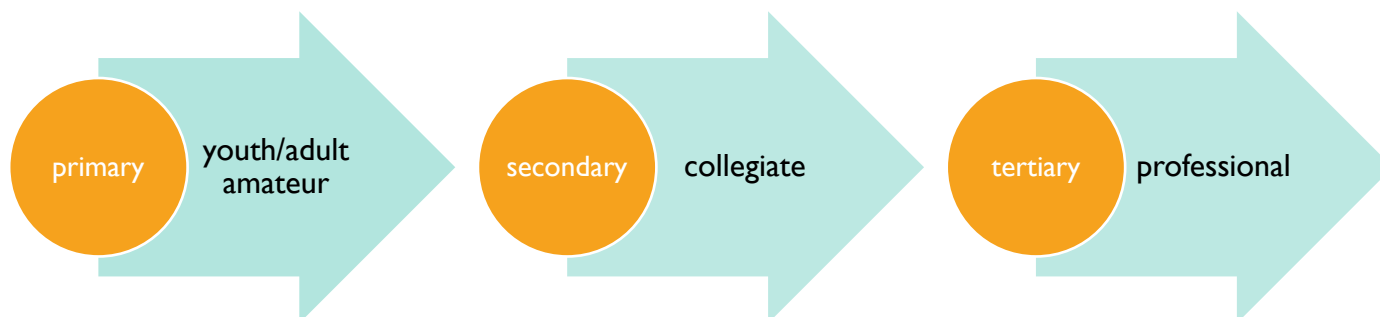
National Shows

- i. Utilize the bi-monthly group planner eNewsletter to deliver information on new developments, special offers, and items of interest to groups.
- j. Continue to develop relationships with the Society of Government Meeting Professionals (SGMP), Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPs), and Meeting Professionals International (MPI) planners through chapter events and conferences.
- k. Enhance our Cvent listing to compete more effectively against other destinations and generate additional business opportunities in all target markets.

2. Profile and build on our database of group meetings and events that meet during specified need periods, specifically military and family reunions, religious groups, and special interest / hobbyist groups.
 - a. Continue to participate in a virtual Family Reunion Workshop in partnership with the National Family Reunion Institute, showcasing Fairfax County to family reunion planners across the country.
 - b. Ensure visibility among family and military reunion planners through advertising in *Reunions* magazine online.
 - c. Attend The Military Reunion Network (TMRN) Educational Summit in June, 2023 to reach military reunion planners and convince them to meet in Fairfax County.
 - d. Reach special interest and hobbyist event planners through Connect marketplace and Rendezvous South.
3. Maximize the opportunities presented by the three new facilities opening in 2021 / 2022: the National Museum of the United States Army (NMUSA), Capital One Hall, and the Metrorail Silver line extension to Dulles Airport.
 - a. Attend the Overseas Brats Gathering event here in Fairfax County in August of 2022 and encourage member planners to bring their individual reunion groups to Fairfax County to visit the NMUSA.
 - b. Continue ongoing direct mail / e-mail / telephone prospecting campaigns to generate military reunion leads, especially Army reunion leads.
 - c. Promote the scheduled 2022 arrival of Metrorail service to Dulles Airport via trade show signage and custom collateral.
 - d. Host a “Countdown to Metro” luncheon (November) for locally based meeting planners to highlight the Silver line extension to Dulles Airport and showcase the capabilities of our meeting hotels in the Dulles Airport area.
4. Continue to build upon the service reputation of Visit Fairfax by providing the highest levels of personalized service, attention, and support for meeting planners and event organizers.
 - a. Offer the use of “Fairfaxopoly” and other experiential activities to planners as unique enhancements to their programs.
 - b. Assist planners in arranging locally based guest speakers, sightseeing tours, and entertainment for their programs to enhance the “Wow!” factor of their meetings.

TOURNAMENT *sports*

TOURNAMENTS, MEETINGS, AND EVENTS ↗



Even before the pandemic hit the United States in 2020, the sports market was one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry. A year-round phenomenon with business spread evenly throughout the year, sports tourism has been a leading driver of group travel over the past two decades, generating significant economic impact for destinations and providing a sense of civic pride to residents in communities throughout the country. In the past two years, COVID-19 has truly highlighted the importance of sports to the tourism and hospitality economies.

To combat the pandemic, tournament planners pivoted quickly to adapt their businesses and programs, complying with a variety of federal, state, and local restrictions, mandates, and protocols. Signs went up at public and private facilities reminding people to wear masks, socially distance, and wash hands. Various checks and tests were done both on- and off-site to avoid postponing or shutting down competitions. Complemented by the critical development of vaccines and other medicines, these measures taken by sports rightsholders kept “heads in beds” while other tourism industry segments languished. Indeed, the resiliency of the sports market helped minimize the economic carnage wrought on hoteliers and other tourism stakeholders by the pandemic.

In the March 2021 “Trends Report” of *SportsEvents* magazine, survey respondents estimated it would take up to five years to fully recover from the pandemic. However, in this year’s survey, responders report that they are seeing recovery happening now before their eyes. Visit Fairfax can attest to this accelerated rebound given the increase in event RFPs in circulation and a spike in the volume of leads sent to county stakeholders. The pent-up demand for events, heightened consumer confidence due to high vaccination rates, and lower levels of COVID infection have brought a flurry of event opportunities. Barring virus outbreaks that result in shut-downs or the reinstatement of severe venue capacity restrictions, we will continue to see a return to pre-pandemic event participation levels.

As we rebuild our sales pipeline, Visit Fairfax staff will continue to employ time-tested sales strategies and tactics that have proven successful in the past. Tradeshows, event databases, and direct sales efforts remain our best tools to produce leads for county stakeholders. To generate awareness and interest in our destination and its sports tourism assets, we’ve developed targeted advertising and PR programs to support these activities. And to close business opportunities, we plan to hold client events and conduct both in-person and virtual site inspections of the select sports facilities and world-class tourism assets, giving event organizers an excellent sense of what makes Fairfax an ideal location to host sports competitions and meetings.

Another important component to positioning Visit Fairfax for success is our sports marketing partnerships with our counterparts at other DMOs throughout the Commonwealth, with event organizers throughout the country, and with representatives of select sports facilities in the county.



Patriot Park North

This 6-field turf baseball/softball complex, opening in Spring of 2023, represents many new tournament opportunities for Fairfax County.

Through the Sports Virginia coalition, we are able to leverage our resources with other sports-minded DMOs in Virginia to lower the cost of client events and to generate significantly more leads than if we exhibited at tradeshows on our own. And as a result of our newly formed alliance with Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford counties – SportsNOVA – we’ll continue to build awareness of Northern Virginia’s sports tourism assets through cost-effective marketing communications, client events, and site inspections, which will improve our region’s ability to host multi- and large single-sport events.

Among our most important partnerships are the ones with our clients, the event rightsholders who bring thousands of athletes, young and old, to our destination in the name of friendly competition. Visit Fairfax will provide a variety of support services to several tournaments to grow event attendance, to enhance the experience of visiting guests, and to save our clients time and money.

While Visit Fairfax is allocating resources to grow market share of existing events, the Virginia Tourism Corporation is offering American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to be used by Virginia DMOs and other select stakeholders for event incentives and marketing promotions to attract new sports tournaments and competitions to spur economic activity and travel across the Commonwealth. Visit Fairfax will take full advantage of this program for as many events as possible.

The importance of tournament-quality sports venues to attracting new sports business cannot be overstated. Examples of forthcoming partnerships with such venues include the following:

- **Patriot Park North** – Tremendous opportunities exist to host baseball and softball tournaments at Patriot Park North, Fairfax County Park Authority’s new six-field, turf complex (four 90’ diamonds, two 60’ diamonds) currently under construction in Fairfax and scheduled to open in Spring 2023. In its partnership with the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), Visit Fairfax will provide marketing support, coordinate event organizer site inspections, and handle hotel selection assistance and other tourism-related support services.

- **Hashtag Gaming Arena** – Located at the Franklin Farm Village Center in Chantilly, the new Hashtag Gaming Arena features a dedicated esports event and play space where management will produce, host, and broadcast competitive video game events like Beltway Battles and the Hashtag Cup. Visit Fairfax partnership with this facility will include hotel selection assistance and other event support.
- **George Mason University** – Host of the 2023 NCAA Men’s Volleyball Championships, George Mason University is a Division I school with multiple indoor and outdoor athletic facilities. Along with implementing marketing initiatives to enhance the experience of visiting volleyball athletes and officials of the Championships, Visit Fairfax will assist with ancillary events and work with university officials to book youth sports events during periods when facilities are available.
- **Capital One Hall** – Opened in Fall 2021, Capital One Hall is a breathtaking performing arts center featuring a 1,600-seat main theater, 300-seat black box theater, and 250-seat roof sky park capable of hosting cheer/dance and other sports competitions requiring a large stage. Visit Fairfax has already conducted multiple site inspections of this facility with event planners.
- **The St. James** - In terms of existing private facilities, there is no venue in the county with greater potential to attract travel tournaments than The St. James. This indoor, 450,000-square-foot mega sportsplex located in Springfield features a FIFA turf field with 70-foot height clearance, two NHL sheets of ice; four NBA basketball courts (convertible to nine volleyball courts); a 50-meter, 10-lane Olympic pool; and eight international squash courts. Visit Fairfax is working closely with The St. James to grow existing events (e.g., MLK Classic, Girls AAU Grand Prix, Girls Shamrock Showdown, She Got Game Classic) and attract new ones in 2022 and beyond.

As competition for a larger slice of the sports tourism pie becomes increasingly fierce, destinations have been entering into a sports facilities “arms race” to offer more tournament-capable venues. Compared with other U.S. destinations pursuing this market – including some of our neighboring counties – Fairfax County has not kept pace in this race to build large clusters of outdoor fields or indoor courts. Now that the sports facility study conducted by consulting firm Conventions, Sports, and Leisure (CSL) has been completed, the Fairfax County Sports Tourism Task Force and county officials must seek out viable public-private partnerships to construct sportsplexes that will best serve the local sports community while maximizing opportunities to generate visitor spending and economic impact through travel sports events.

By working with local sports organizations in an advocacy role to further develop the county’s sports infrastructure, building awareness of and interest in Fairfax County’s sport tourism assets, and providing event organizers with sponsorship support and customized event services to attract and grow competitions, Visit Fairfax will seek to foster economic development for tourism stakeholders and enhance the quality of life for area residents. As we navigate the evolving sports market, we will continue to keep abreast of COVID-19 public health issues and implement the following marketing plan strategies and tactics designed to bolster Visit Fairfax’s sales pipeline while promoting the county as a safe, first-rate destination to host travel tournaments and competitions.

STRATEGIES

1. Attract state, regional, national, and international sports events that match up well with the area’s existing facilities infrastructure and grow existing competitions that have the potential of drawing additional out-of-town visitors.
2. Continue to build awareness of and support for Visit Fairfax’s sports marketing initiatives among various stakeholders (event planners, sports leaders, facility owners, government officials, etc.) and work cooperatively with these stakeholders to enhance event hosting opportunities and improve the county’s sports tourism infrastructure.

3. Provide sports stakeholders with marketing and event support services to increase tournament attendance, assist with event planning/execution, and maximize visitor spending.

TACTICS

1. Attract state, regional, national, and international sports events that match up well with the area's existing facilities infrastructure and grow existing competitions that have the potential of drawing additional out-of-town visitors.
 - a. Promote Fairfax County as an ideal destination to host state, regional, national, and international sports events at industry trade shows and conferences:
 - (1) 2022 Connect Sports
 - (2) 2022 TEAMS Conference & Expo
 - (3) 2023 Sports ETA Symposium
 - b. Participate actively in the Sports Events and Tourism Association (Sports ETA) as well as Sports Virginia, the coalition of DMOs and sports commissions which seeks to attract new events to the state.
 - c. Communicate regularly with local sports leaders, event organizers, and facility owners/managers to discuss ways to attract new events and grow existing ones.
 - d. Mine various sports event databases and sales systems for tournament hosting opportunities, including the Sports Tourism Index/Scout.
 - e. Continue building prospect list of sports planners and conduct sales solicitation calls with planners whose events match up well with Fairfax County's sports tourism assets.
 - f. Conduct in-person site inspections as well as virtual tours using newly developed tools to promote Fairfax County to targeted sports decision-makers and influencers.
 - g. Provide sponsorship support to select events to grow existing business and attract new opportunities.

SPORTS

WHAT ↗

Tradeshows & Conferences

Direct Sales

Virtual Presentations

Print & Digital Advertising

Public Relations

Client Events & Site
Inspections

Strategic Partnerships

Sports Tourism Task Force

SportsNOVA & Sports Virginia

Sports Tourism Index & Scout

WHERE 📍

Connect Sports Marketplace

TEAMS Conf & Expo

Sports ETA Symposium

Fairfax County Parks & Public
Schools

NOVA Parks

Patriot Park North

George Mason University

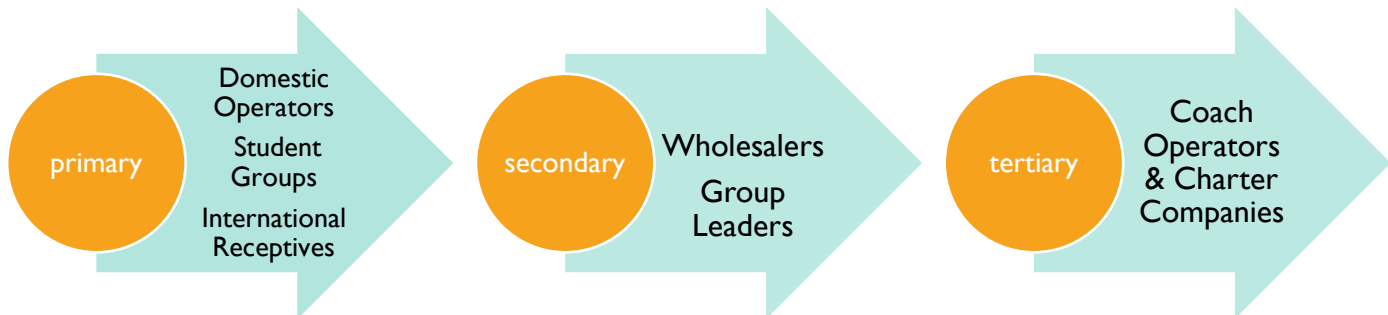
Private Sports Facilities

- h. Draw outdoor, adventure, and other leisure groups to Fairfax County by promoting select public and private venues in the area that target these groups (e.g., golf courses, parks, The St. James, etc.)

2. Continue to build awareness of and support for Visit Fairfax's sports marketing initiatives among various stakeholders (event planners, sports leaders, facility owners, government officials, etc.) and work cooperatively with these stakeholders to enhance event hosting opportunities and improve the County's sports tourism infrastructure.
 - c. Educate tournament directors, facility managers/owners, sports leaders, and other tourism stakeholder groups about Visit Fairfax's sports initiatives through networking events, presentations, advertising, and e-marketing vehicles.
 - d. Play a leading role in the Sports Tourism Task Force's efforts to improve the County's facilities infrastructure and tournament-related policies; work closely with members of the Task Force to ensure the achievement of desired tourism objectives.
 - e. Partner with the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) to market and book baseball/softball tournaments at Patriot Park North, FCPA's new turf diamond complex; sponsor rightsholder site inspections and assist with the development of marketing materials.
 - f. Maximize opportunities to host events at The St. James and other new private facilities, including Hashtag Gaming Arena and Capital One Hall.
 - g. Support George Mason University in its efforts to bid on and land NCAA Championship events, and work with the school's athletic department to book more youth tournaments using indoor and outdoor facilities.
 - h. Update database of Fairfax County and area facilities capable of hosting various sports events and competitions.
 - i. Continue to generate awareness of SportsNOVA (the newly formed sports tourism alliance between Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford counties), which targets multi-sport and large single-sport competitions; promote Fairfax County and Northern Virginia's sports tourism assets through public relations, advertising, sponsorships, client functions, and site inspections.
3. Provide sports stakeholders with marketing and event support services to increase tournament attendance, assist with event planning/execution, and maximize visitor spending.
 - a. Offer support services to tournament directors and visiting sports teams/participants through a Visitor Services support program.
 - b. Assist FCPA to increase revenue by developing golf packages that incorporate hotel, attraction, and other stakeholder benefits.
 - c. Create customized "Welcome to Fairfax County" web landing pages for select tournaments to provide useful destination information to participating teams/individuals and encourage additional event registrations.
 - d. Promote "Extend Your Stay" web page that encourages sports groups to add leisure time to tournaments by "multi-tasking" their trip; promote increased spending through hotel, attraction, and restaurant offers to group travelers; market the program and offers via Destination Services as part of pre-arrival servicing packets.

DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL *group leisure*

GROUP TOURS AND FIT TRAVELERS ↗



While business travelers may be slow to rebound, leisure travelers have been the first to put pandemic fears aside in search of their annual vacation. And much like individual leisure consumers, the domestic group leisure segment is well on its way toward pre-pandemic activity. With schools now fully reopened, student groups are also making up for lost time as they flock to the National Capital Region, and group tour operators are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Additionally, the recent easing of coronavirus restrictions has also sent a much-welcome signal to inbound travelers that we are open for business.

On the international front, the situation is a little more complicated. Currently, international travelers are hesitant to travel to the United States due to the testing mandates that remain in place. Because so many other countries do not require COVID testing for entry, the reality that visitors could potentially find out that they are not able to enter the country with only 24 hours of notice makes other destinations far more attractive. That said, Capital Region USA (CRUSA) reports that tour operators are optimistic about travel resuming and many are very positive about a strong year ahead for the return of international leisure. In testament to this confidence, CRUSA has continued their sales missions in the UK, France, Germany, and China. We will maintain sales efforts in these lucrative markets in addition to the mature and easily accessible Canadian market. These markets, which have consistently yielded strong arrival numbers and enjoy extensive air service, continue to drive our international strategy.

As travel is cautiously resuming, sales efforts are focused on engaging with travel trade to jump start this important segment and deepen relationships with existing clients while forging alliances with operators who are new to us. We will continue to support operators with product development and continue to craft highly customized itineraries to match their clients' niche interests. These efforts highlight new and diversified product in Fairfax County such as the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial, the National Museum of the United States Army, the Lucy Burns Museum, and River-Sea Chocolate Factory, among others.

China has long been a top international source market for the Capital Region and one of the top focus countries for our international sales efforts. Outbound travel from China, however, will be contingent on when air service and visa approvals resume. We are positioning to welcome this important market back as soon as they are traveling again.

All indicators point to a healthy appetite for future travel from the mature Western European markets, and industry updates from CRUSA indicate higher demand as COVID wanes. Considering that the UK and Germany are our second and fourth largest overseas source markets respectively, we plan to continue

engaging via participation in tradeshows oriented towards the European market, such as IPW and RTO East, as well as sales missions to both countries.



George Washington's Mount Vernon

As the nation's most visited historic estate, the first President's home gives domestic and international visitors a glimpse into 18th century life.

As tourism increasingly gravitates to novel, experience-based offerings, it is imperative to focus on product development with stakeholders to craft and promote tourism experiences that elevate Fairfax County's competitive advantage in the domestic and international marketplace. With so many unique attractions in our inventory that appeal to varied niche market interests such as African American heritage, women's history and STEAM-focused student tours, operators can easily enhance their tour products by adding these unique activities to their itineraries.

Sales efforts will also continue to focus on student groups, for which the learning component of the itinerary is particularly important. Visit Fairfax is uniquely positioned to appeal to this market given the wide array of available educational programs, after-hour activities and group dining options at student-friendly price points. Senior groups, while requiring more customized itineraries, remain an important market for Fairfax County given their propensity for post-retirement travel, high disposable income and appetite for new and niche products.

Finally, sales efforts will be further supplemented by targeted advertising in qualified trade publications that reach active tour operators and group planners. Cooperative efforts will be leveraged through CRUSA and the Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership (NVTP) including cooperative advertising and familiarization tours.

STRATEGIES

1. Build strategic tourism product lines—based upon current market conditions and trends—that will attract and grow the domestic markets, which are key to short and mid-term recovery.
2. Capitalize on the appetite for travel to rebuild business volume by presenting Fairfax County as the “smart choice” within the region for international travelers.

3. Leverage partnerships with organizations such as Capital Region USA (CRUSA) and Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership (NVTP) to raise Fairfax County's domestic and international profiles and connect within the region through advertising, international tour co-ops, and sales mission opportunities.
4. Show buyers firsthand why they should be selling Fairfax County, Virginia through familiarization tours.

TACTICS

1. Build strategic tourism product lines—based upon current market conditions and trends—that will attract and grow the domestic markets, which are key to short and mid-term recovery.
 - a. Further develop niche product lines with a collection of supporting collateral, collaborating with nearby destinations to create well rounded experiences.
 - b. Attend the American Bus Association's Marketplace in Detroit targeting motor coach operators to underscore the convenience of Fairfax County hotels and major roadways.
 - c. Attend the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange to meet with domestic as well as international tour operators that are currently coming to Fairfax County and those that are not yet utilizing the county's products.
 - d. Be a preferred partner of the Travel Alliance Partnership and attend their annual tradeshow to maintain close connections with key domestic and receptive tour operators throughout the United States, which will help promote Fairfax County to others in the industry.
 - e. Attend Mid Atlantic Receptive Services' (MARS) tradeshow Spotlight on the East to directly promote our destination to MARS client base and group leaders planning trips to the Capital Region.
 - f. Attend Student & Youth Travel Association's annual conference to create new connections with decision makers in the student and youth travel market and leverage non-traditional student options within the Capital Region.

Tour Groups

WHAT ↗

Sales Missions

Tradeshows

CRUSA

NVTP

FAMs

Advertising

Cooperative Advertising

WHERE 📍

Domestic

China

India

Canada

United Kingdom

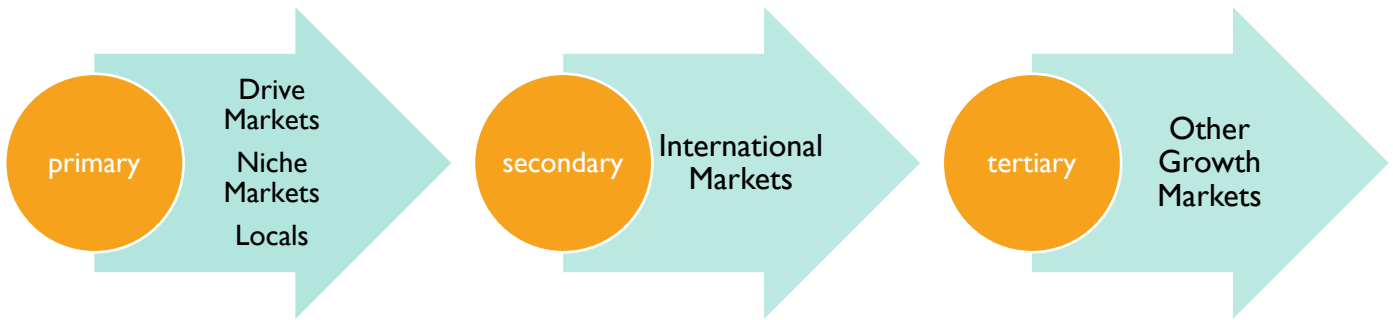
Germany

- g. Attend Southeast Tourism Society's Domestic Showcase to increase market share and regional awareness with operators selling Southeast tours.
- 2.** Capitalize on the appetite for travel to rebuild business volume by presenting Fairfax County as the "smart choice" within the region for international travelers.
- a. Attend U.S. Travel Association's IPW in our own Visit Fairfax booth, showing that Fairfax County remains a top destination within Virginia and the Capital Region.
 - b. Attend Active America China for one-on-one appointments with Chinese tour operators and Chinese inbound receptive operators looking for new American tour product.
 - c. Attend the International Inbound Travel Association's Annual Summit to update key receptive operators on the hotel, dining, and attraction offerings that Fairfax County has to offer.
 - d. Attend Receptive Tour Operator (RTO) Summit East to have one-on-one appointments with receptive tour operators based in the New York/New Jersey region, an epicenter for inbound European and Asian visitors.
 - e. Attend Receptive Tour Operator Summit South to meet with receptive operators who service European, Asian and Latin American markets
- 3.** Leverage partnerships with organizations such as Capital Region USA (CRUSA) and Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership (NVTP) to raise Fairfax County's domestic and international profiles and connect within the region through advertising, international tour co-ops, and sales mission opportunities.
- a. Increase Fairfax County's web presence through touroperatorland.com to reach tour operators looking for new and unique product ideas.
 - b. Participate in Capital Region USA's China sales missions to continue educating these growing markets about Fairfax County and to meet face-to-face with key decision makers.
 - c. Participate in Capital Region USA's Germany sales mission to participate in sales calls and training opportunities in this important market.
 - d. Participate in Capital Region USA's France sales missions to participate in training opportunities, sales calls, and private client events in this key mature market.
 - e. Participate in Capital Region USA's UK sales missions to participate in training opportunities, sales calls, and private client events in this key mature market.
 - f. Partner with international tour operators in co-operative targeted advertising and marketing campaigns through CRUSA.
 - g. Partner with NVTP to develop key international and domestic markets to the region through new itineraries, familiarization tours, and receptive sales missions.
 - h. Maintain active membership with the Virginia Motorcoach Association to interact with member motor coach operators within the immediate domestic market.
 - i. Advertise in Group Tour Magazine's November 2022 issue focusing on outdoor adventures and Virginia's music to highlight Fairfax County's parks and music venues to adult and senior group tour planners.
 - j. Advertise in Leisure Group Travel Magazine's April 2023 edition featuring a Virginia Group Tour Guide to highlight niche tour options to adult and senior group tour planners.

- k. Utilize direct e-Mail marketing via Group Tour Media's Youth Travel Planner Itinerary Builder to provide educators and youth travel planners with relevant and compelling content during their key planning time.
4. Show buyers firsthand why they should be selling Fairfax County, Virginia through familiarization tours.
- a. Host several familiarization tours through Capital Region USA with their in-country representatives pre-qualifying each participating tour operator.
 - b. Capitalize on tradeshow being held in proximity to Fairfax County to host attending operators for pre- or post-show FAMS.
 - c. Create familiarization tour itineraries that fit the specific market that is being hosted; include stakeholders who want/fit the market that is being hosted for the best ROI.

LEISURE *consumers*

INDIVIDUAL LEISURE TRAVELERS & VISTOR PARTIES ↗



Of all of the market segments, individual leisure consumer is clearly the front runner with regard to travel rebound. After more than two years of pandemic shutdowns followed by travel hesitancy, the pent-up demand for vacations is enormous, as is the opportunity for Fairfax County’s hospitality industry. For individual leisure travelers who seek a drivable destination that offers great visitor experiences and outdoor environments, Northern Virginia fits the bill. Fairfax County is somewhat unique in that the destination is not only very urban but also somewhat rural. Visit Fairfax will leverage that duality to attract visitors who crave wide-open spaces but also enjoy big-city amenities. With travel restrictions loosening more every day, we can leverage our urban amenities that are surrounded by so many wonderful outdoor experiences.

Even as the pandemic raged, we saw considerable growth in website traffic and consumer interest via highly targeted messaging directed at highly defined audiences, chosen in alignment with our tourism assets. This strategy resulted in hundreds of thousands of consumer engagements and over a million visitors to fxva.com. In the new year, we will continue these targeted campaigns that leverage our strengths, but with careful consideration of the potential changes to our national psyche, specifically in terms of what we value, and therefore what we

Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

Visitors from around the world travel to Fairfax County to see world-famous sites like Space Shuttle *Discovery*, the grande dame of the orbiter fleet, at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center.



seek in terms of travel experiences.

We will execute four niche campaigns anchored by our assets: the Lucy Burns Museum and the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial (women's history), the National Museum of the United States Army (military history), our breweries (craft beer), and our amazing parks (birding). Additionally, we will execute more general campaigns targeting visitors who want to reconnect with family and friends or simply to visit the region. Finally, we will employ our owned distribution channels with the greatest ability and agility for audience targeting, message type, engagement, and accountability. In addition to our website, these channels include a robust social media following as well a 100,000+ permission-based eMail subscriber list.

As always, one of the great benefits of online marketing is the ability to evaluate return-on-investment using analytics that track actual visitor party spending. And so, we will have the opportunity to adjust the plan as we receive real-time data on what is working and what is not – allowing us to calibrate the plan even as it is being executed.

STRATEGIES

1. With close attention paid to current consumer sentiment, maximize engaging content on FXVA.com that helps consumers to personally connect with Fairfax County.
2. Develop and execute a marketing and communications strategy for local residents and constituents.
3. Utilize direct e-Mail marketing to build consumer relationships in those markets that result in the highest yield in converted visitor parties.
4. Execute a comprehensive Search Engine Marketing program while continuing the migration from paid search to organic optimization with content that evolves to meet consumer mentality and needs.
5. Reinforce stakeholders use of the Fairfax County brand message to multiple audiences and build alliances within the County's tourism community.
6. Ensure maximum attention within the growing audience of mobile users through mobile-friendly platforms and outbound messaging.

Individual Consumer

WHAT ↗

Search Engine Marketing & Optimization

eMail Marketing

Niche Audiences

Digital Advertising

Social Media

Consumer Publications

Visitors Guide

WHERE 📍

Search Engines

Drive Markets

Niche Audiences

Virginia, Maryland, & District of Columbia

7. Execute six integrated marketing campaigns that target highly motivated consumers by engaging those visitors through targeted messaging and relevant content.
8. Leverage high-demand local events by “drafting” off of existing consumer interest and inserting our Visit Fairfax message.
9. Track and report online conversion through 3rd party conversion study.

TACTICS

1. With close attention paid to current consumer sentiment, maximize engaging content on FXVA.com that helps consumers to personally connect with Fairfax County.
 - a. Fully leverage the recent redesign of FXVA.com to include updated imagery and content, accessibility information, and streamlined functionality.
 - b. Integrate imagery throughout FXVA.com that showcases the dual nature of the County’s visitor experience, offering urban amenities alongside green outdoor spaces.
 - c. Engage consumers through the extensive virtual reality technology content that was developed and curated during the pandemic to make it easy and appealing to preview a visit to Fairfax County online.
 - d. Ensure that all visitor experiences feature both group/social and other more individual/solitary options to appeal to the entire range of potential visitors.
 - e. Incorporate real-life imagery and user-generated content derived from a cross-section of social media platforms via Crowdriff technology.
 - f. Employ dynamic website technology to craft personalized webpage content based on previous consumer behavior or their geographic location.
 - g. Create hub pages for the primary group market audiences with an eye to event planner needs and priorities.
 - h. Based on the great success of the Visit Fairfax Blog content, shift the focus on FXVA.com to editorial content and articles.
 - i. Develop unique visitor experiences through Bandwango that offer specialized digital itineraries.
2. Develop and execute a marketing and communications strategy for local residents and constituents.
 - a. Elevate the Neighborhood section of FXVA.com to include an interactive map where local residents can find information on happenings near them.
 - b. Encourage local residents to invite their family and friends to “reconnect” through a visit.
 - c. Use website personalization to ensure messaging that will resonate with locals who visit FXVA.com.
 - d. Use owned and earned media to highlight tourism programs and amenities for local residents.
 - e. Continue to leverage the *Insider* newsletter to highlight what Visit Fairfax is doing to support the county’s hospitality industry.
 - f. Use the LoveShare section of FXVA.com to showcase hospitality businesses that give back to the community through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs.

- g. Execute a direct eMail marketing campaign directed to local residents and all that our industry offers them in their own backyard.

3. Utilize direct e-Mail marketing to build consumer relationships in those markets that result in the highest yield in converted visitor parties.
 - a. Continue the momentum established through the e-Dialogue program database of 100,000+ permission-based subscribers with 60 e-Mail deployments to 3 consumer segments (Sites & Attractions/Culinary, Military History, and Locals) in addition to group meeting planners and tourism stakeholders.
 - b. Maintain the e-Mail database with 40,000 new subscribers within the highest performing segments.
 - c. Attract more organic opt-in subscribers on fxva.com via attention-getting strategies designed to deliver more visitors to fxva.com.
4. Execute a comprehensive Search Engine Marketing program while continuing the migration from paid search to organic optimization with content that evolves to meet consumer mentality and needs.
 - a. Calibrate the Search Engine Marketing Program in alignment with current trends of online consumer behavior.
 - b. Prioritize the top 20 most successful PPC phrases and optimize those landing pages to ensure the best results with top consideration given to new consumer sensibilities.
 - c. Continue the emphasis on both paid clicks and organic rankings; however, ensure a continued presence on engines with a program delivering 165,000 new consumers to the fxva.com website using PPC, paid social, and native advertising.
 - d. Continue to broaden the organic optimization program with new key words and phrases resulting in top sort rankings. Integrate these key words through strong optimization of highly impactful and relevant landing pages with a target of 12,500 new organic visitors.
 - e. Utilize A/B testing on high-traffic pages and PPC landing pages to increase time on page and decrease bounce rates.
5. Reinforce stakeholders use of the Fairfax County brand message to multiple audiences and build alliances within the County's tourism community.
 - a. Host a Fairfax County celebration to bring the hospitality and tourism community together in recognition of National Travel & Tourism Week.
 - b. Help stakeholders make the most of Fairfax County resources by reinforcing use of the online stakeholder resource toolkit as well as the sales collateral system.
 - c. Support county stakeholders through social media, seeking ways to reinforce their brand message within the Visit Fairfax hospitality community.
 - d. Leverage the influence of the Marketing Advisory Committee as ambassadors of the brand through grass roots efforts within their own peer communities.
 - e. Offer opportunities to increase stakeholder exposure through packaged advertising in the visitor guide and on FXVA.com.
 - f. Publish a content editorial calendar to help guide stakeholders in both package/offer creation as well as potential drafting opportunities based on their own promotion and activations.\

6. Ensure maximum attention within the growing audience of mobile users through mobile-friendly platforms and outbound messaging.
 - a. Utilize Bandwango technology and mobile offerings to implement a variety of curated “experience paths” for consumers that include targeted itineraries, special discounts/passports, a County Brew Trail, and other benefits.
 - b. Execute an outbound text strategy to engage mobile users of the Bandwango trails.
 - c. Ensure mobile friendly web design and imagery through the website redesign.
7. Execute 6 integrated marketing campaigns that target highly motivated consumers by engaging those visitors through targeted messaging and relevant content.
 - a. Develop and execute a spring campaign delivering 3.5 million-impressions using Epsilon’s first-party data which affords us the best option for targeting at maximum cost effectiveness, as well as the most accurate tracking of actual visitor spending.
 - b. Execute a military history campaign that spotlights the rich military history available in Fairfax County and the Capital Region.
 - c. Continue the successful Women’s History campaign that not only spotlights the Suffragists story but also celebrates women who made history in Fairfax County and the Capital Region.
 - d. Continue the successful craft brew campaign to support our local breweries including a mobile Craft Brew Trail.
 - e. Work with Virginia Tourism Corporation’s TripAdvisor co-op to extend Visit Fairfax marketing dollars through the popular travel platform.
 - f. Leverage the County’s incredible parks through a campaign inviting bird enthusiasts to visit the Mid-Atlantic flyway in Fairfax County.
 - g. Using dynamic website technology, present compelling content and imagery that specifically appeals to these niche interests, including custom landing pages that “speak to” and pay off banner and print advertising with content based on the special interests of the targeted consumers.
8. Leverage high-demand local events by “drafting” off of existing consumer interest and inserting our Visit Fairfax message.
 - a. “Draft” traffic to fxva.com during high-interest events (e.g. National Cherry Blossom Festival) by carefully using specific key word content that drives Internet users to relevant programs offered by County attractions.
 - b. Deliver highly targeted messages to highly defined niche audiences via social media channels.
 - c. Look for “newsjacking” opportunities, as they present themselves, that give Fairfax County a chance to ride a wave of public interest when our travel products align.
 - d. Deliver website visitors to custom landing pages that fulfill the advertising message specific to the audience.
9. Track and report conversion through a 3rd party conversion study.
 - a. Work with our marketing partners and Texas A&M University to track conversion through a statistically valid and reliable research study.
 - b. Analyze results and compare return-on-investment to identify the most lucrative programs as well as those that need to be reviewed prior to future investment.

DESTINATION *services*

PERSONAL SERVICE FOR GROUPS AND VISITOR PARTIES

Supporting the Visit Fairfax sales and marketing teams, as well as the sales efforts of County stakeholders, is the mission of the Destination Services Department. Influencing the decision to travel is just half the battle. Repeat customers are always the least expensive to acquire, and word of mouth advertising has always held sway over potential travelers as friends and family returned from their travels exhilarated by their experience. Hence, the importance of great customer service cannot be overstated.

With travel beginning to rebound post-pandemic, it is more important than ever to ensure a positive experience for all visitors to Fairfax County. We will help planners successfully execute their event and maximize attendance for their group. Additionally, we will provide information and assistance to the leisure traveler to assure a meaningful experience. Finally, through training and tours, County stakeholders will be given the tools that they need to increase their sales and respond to the needs of their guests.



Burke Lake Park

With Fairfax County's vast amount of green spaces, local residents and visitors enjoy great experiences at National, State, Regional, and County parks.

STRATEGIES

1. Continue to grow the force of hospitality industry professionals in the county who can increase their organizations' bottom line by giving their customers the information they need to experience sites and create a desire for return visits through the Ambassador Program. Tailor the Program to the needs of hotels to reflect the staffing levels and availability.

2. Satisfy all requirements for groups traveling to the County to ensure expectations are met and exceeded before, during and after their stay.
3. Support the annual Cherry Blossom Festival as a means of attracting visitors to Fairfax by sponsoring Festival-related events.
4. Promote the Fairfax County, Connect with America brand throughout Fairfax County stakeholders and partners.
5. Collaborate with the marketing team and the Virginia Film Office to increase awareness of Fairfax County venues as possible locations for film sites.
6. Work with the sales and marketing teams to better service the weddings market.

TACTICS

1. Continue to grow the force of hospitality industry professionals in the county who can increase their organizations' bottom line by giving their customers the information they need to experience sites and create a desire for return visits through the Ambassador Program. Tailor the Program to the needs of hotels to reflect their staffing levels and availability.
 - a. Hold classes for hoteliers and taxi drivers to increase awareness and cross-selling efforts.
 - b. Hold classes geared to hotel sales professionals to provide destination information, as well as refresher tips on utilizing Visit Fairfax sales tools.
 - c. Hold tours of county attractions for Ambassadors to provide first-hand experience of the sites discussed in classroom settings.
2. Satisfy all requirements for groups traveling to the County to ensure expectations are met and exceeded before, during and after their stay.
 - a. Work with Bandwango to create customized experiences for groups that will attract incremental visitation into participating businesses.
 - b. When requested by the client, print "save the date" postcards to promote meeting attendance.

Destination Services

WHAT ↗

Ambassador Program

Event Planner Support

Visitor Guides

Local & Regional Events

Delivering Consumer Experiences

WHERE 📍

Local Hotels

Airports

Airport Taxis

Virginia Welcome Centers

Stakeholder Sites

- c. Actively promote and implement every aspect of the Event Planner toolkit to meeting planners serviced by Visit Fairfax. Continually update information and incorporate tools for stakeholders.
 - d. Welcome qualified groups to the County with a planner amenity and welcome letter.
- 3.** Support the annual Cherry Blossom Festival as a means of attracting visitors to Fairfax by sponsoring Festival-related events.
- a. Sponsor events at County attractions such as the Workhouse Arts Center, Green Spring Gardens, Frying Pan Farm Park and others. Promote these events through our website and social media.
 - b. Seek out potential partners as Festival sites to grow participation and awareness of Fairfax County and to continue the movement toward a regional festival.
 - c. Curate “Cherry Blossom” products and offerings among Fairfax County stakeholders. Work with Marketing to promote all stakeholders that create a festival offering.
- 4.** Promote the Fairfax County, Connect with America brand throughout Fairfax County stakeholders and partners.
- a. Provide timely fulfillment of visitor guides to individual consumers, groups, hotels, attractions and certified Virginia Welcome Centers.
 - b. Order and maintain a supply of branded promotional items for client and VIP gifts.
 - c. Call on organizations that interact with both local residents and visitors including the Fairfax County Police Academy, local real estate agents, local airport information desks, mall information desks, Fairfax County Supervisor offices, and other highly trafficked businesses to promote awareness and to educate new ambassadors of the Fairfax County brand.
 - d. Curate providers of guided tour and specialty visitor experiences as a bank of purchasable products and promote them on fxva.com.
- 5.** Collaborate with the marketing team and the Virginia Film Office to increase awareness of Fairfax County venues as possible locations for film sites.
- a. Create a film resource section on FXVA.com to facilitate interest among film makers and make planning easier.
 - b. Meet with the Virginia Film Office to showcase Fairfax County as a film destination and also to source them for additional ways to make our destination more desirable for filmmakers. Work with the film office to maximize exposure for Fairfax County assets related to history, nature, and other viable film locations.
 - c. Meet with the Fairfax County permit office to better understand how the film process works within the County and explore ways to better facilitate the process.
- 6.** Work with the sales and marketing teams to further service the weddings market.
- a. Support the sales team by fulfilling requested information for brides and grooms who are looking for venues in Fairfax County.
 - b. Work with the marketing team to enhance the weddings section of fxva.com.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL *communications*

MEDIA AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH ↗

As the world sees pandemic restrictions lift and vaccination rates increase, the demand for travel has been growing steadily. Travelers – and travel media – are ready to hit the road and friendly skies again. This new paradigm presents a fantastic opportunity to showcase the unique and uplifting stories of Fairfax County’s hospitality industry.



On Location in Springfield

Fox 5 DC brings their Zip Trip segment to Fairfax County at Springfield Town Center

Throughout the past couple of years, Visit Fairfax has made significant strides in generating local awareness and building brand equity with not only the Washington, DC media scene, but also area elected officials and industry partners. This push in messaging has helped solidify Visit Fairfax as a helpful – and necessary – travel resource.

In the coming year, Visit Fairfax will not only build upon the work already done in the local advocacy space and within its internal hospitality community, but also welcome national and international media back into the fold via customized pitches, press releases, inquiry responses, experiential familiarization tours, in-market deskside missions and press tradeshows with a goal of growing destination awareness and creating that demand in visitation to Fairfax County.

The stories that Fairfax County has available to share are immense – especially with the recent openings of several new major attractions, exhibits, entertainment offerings, chef-driven restaurants and breweries, and products from local makers. In addition to these new things to see and do, Fairfax County is rife with story angles that satisfy the demand sought by travelers – such as outdoor getaways, underserved stories like those highlighting women’s history and black history, and quirky, under-the-radar hidden gems. Visit Fairfax will continue at a rapid pace to creative innovative approaches to sharing these stories through communications, content marketing, and video production.

Regionally, Visit Fairfax will continue to work as one unit with its partners in Northern Virginia to give a comprehensive overview of this rich cultural region, helping solidify the area as a prime destination for a well-rounded getaway.

Internally, Visit Fairfax also must serve as a trusted resource and expert of the local tourism industry for our stakeholders and local community. Using tools available via social media, industry e-newsletters, video content production, and web-based promotions like the blog and event calendar, Visit Fairfax will continue to encourage engagement with the industry and align its marketing messages with that of its stakeholders.

The goals of this communications plan will be achieved through numerous strategies and tactics that include facilitating press coverage through pitches and networking, creating and distributing content via social media, web, eMail and video, and educating and supporting our local hospitality industry. Visit Fairfax will continuously measure, adjust, improve, and refresh all of these strategies and tactics throughout the year to deliver the most effective results.

STRATEGIES

1. Further develop public relations initiatives by proactively seeking out and placing media coverage in local, national, and international publications to build awareness about Visit Fairfax and Fairfax County.
2. Strengthen content marketing efforts through owned and shared media with integrated approach to storytelling.
3. Develop new communications strategies to support local stakeholders and hospitality partners to continue pandemic recovery efforts.
4. Seek out new relationships and strengthen current ones with local media, content creators, and micro-influencers to help build credibility for the Visit Fairfax brand within the community and with national/international media to help further our message.
5. Cultivate and fine-tune the brand's social media presence with consistent and targeted messaging and by utilizing user-generated content (UGC), stakeholder assets, and intimate knowledge of Fairfax County tourism product to help build Visit Fairfax's share of the online conversation.

Communication

WHAT ↗

Increase Share of Online Conversation

Positive Media Coverage

News for Stakeholders

Local Community Support

State & Regional Cooperative Outreach

User-generated Content

Content Creation

WHERE 📍

Social Media Outlets

Local Media

National Media

International Media

Blog

Tradeshows

6. Find new ways of using existing consumer assets (website/blog, visitor guide, etc.) to communicate the Fairfax County tourism message.
7. Strengthen partnership with the state and regional tourism entities to generate positive press and awareness for the County, region, and Commonwealth.
8. Strengthen partnerships with industry colleagues, public relations alliances, and stakeholders who can help spread the Fairfax County tourism message.
9. Develop partnerships and materials for consumers and stakeholders that will pique interest and encourage visitors to engage with our tourism products.
10. Leverage and draft off of trending national and local events to insert Fairfax County's message into the conversation.
11. Promote in-destination brand advocacy and encourage local pride by serving as a resource and voice for the local and regional tourism industry.

EXTERNAL PLAN TACTICS

1. Identify travel trends and media opportunities to proactively pitch story lines that will result in positive press coverage for Fairfax County and Visit Fairfax in the national/international markets.
2. Respond to media/journalist inquiries and requests for information, photos, interviews, and press visits to produce positive press for Fairfax County and Visit Fairfax.
3. Host a variety of press familiarization tours throughout the year, some targeted to specific niches, to gain valuable editorial coverage in local, national, and international publications.
4. Work with local television stations on morning show broadcasts from varying localities in Fairfax County, bringing in stakeholders and elected officials to represent the destination.
5. Distribute seasonal and campaign-focused press releases and content verticals covering Fairfax County tourism product to local, national, and international media through new TravMedia platform.
6. Leverage the new "editorial-forward" website design to push out compelling story angles about Fairfax County people, places, and events and build out an easily accessible asset library for media to utilize.
7. Develop new engaging and shareable content that can be utilized and distributed on the online blog module to help tell more niche, featurette, and local community stories about Fairfax County.
8. Work with "local experts" and influencers to create new content for the website and social media, bringing trusted third-party stories into the fold and forming relationships that will benefit Visit Fairfax for future endeavors.
9. Create brand equity, start conversations about tourism in Fairfax County, and curate new content for web, social, and other marketing channels by engaging social media users and influencers via Crowdriff and native social platforms.
10. Maintain fluid, daily editorial calendars to ensure messaging continuity on social media platforms, pushing out compelling, fact-based, shareable information.

11. Create additional short-form videos, building on the success of last year's content, to highlight compelling visitor experiences in an engaging, attention-getting way that also supports county stakeholders. Additionally, showcase the CSR programs of stakeholders through the LoveShare video series and web platform.
12. Build out a graphic-heavy content approach to sharing evergreen content on Pinterest, already a trusted platform for seeking travel and lifestyle inspiration.
13. Refresh the Official Fairfax County Visitors Guide with new and updated editorial content, imagery, and listing details to help guide visitors through the County.
14. Attend public relations tradeshows, networking events, and press missions to pitch story ideas, network with journalists, and take Fairfax County's message in-market to further Visit Fairfax's reach in our target markets.

INTERNAL PLAN TACTICS

1. Communicate regularly with stakeholders about viable opportunities and relevant updates via the Partner Extranet and Toolkit, e-Blasts and Insider Newsletter.
2. Gather information from stakeholders through quarterly outreach.
3. Foster new relationships with stakeholders by proactively seeking out and welcoming new members of the Fairfax County tourism community through in-person meetings, training calls, and social media communication.
4. Create content creation opportunities via the blog by partnering with stakeholders who are experts in their fields already and give them a platform on FXVA.com in which to share their knowledge.
5. Present opportunities to our stakeholders and incoming special event organizers to further their brand through the tools and resources offered by Visit Fairfax.
6. Host an annual stakeholder event in conjunction with National Travel & Tourism Week to allow the Fairfax County tourism community to gather, network, and promote all tourism efforts.
7. Serve as a sponsor for the Valor and Innovation Awards, as well as the annual tourism scholarship initiative through the state hospitality association.

resources

Performance
Measures

Board of Directors

Team Members

Activity Schedules

MEASURING *performance*

Market	Performance Measure
Business & Sports Groups	Number of Definite Groups
	Number of Definite Room Nights
	Number of Definite Attendees
	Number of Leads
	Number of Potential Room Nights
	Number of Potential Attendees

Market	Performance Measure
Leisure Groups	Number of Overnight Programs
	Number of Definite Room Nights
	Number of Visitors
	Number of Daytrips
	Number of Potential Room Nights
	Number of Potential Visitors

Market	Performance Measure
Consumer & Public Relations	Website Visitors
	Time on Website
	Website Engagement
	Social Media Engagement
	Positive Media Stories
	Digital Marketing Conversion

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

leadership



Officers

Sean Hunt, Chairman

Cherylyn LeBon, Vice Chairman

Don Anderson, Secretary

Matt Briney, Treasurer

Gary Cohen, Immediate Past Chairman

Ex Officio

Barry Biggar, CDME

Connie Royal

Bryan Hill

Directors

Jon Davenhall

Scott Hamilton

Jo LaBrecque-French

Bill Lecos

Lindsay Petak

Morgan Maravich

Marion Myers

Christopher Shand

Leon Scioscia

Dr. Sue Slocum

Sarah White

Holly Williamson

Patricia Wirth

Emeritus

James Wordsworth

Mark Carrier

VISIT FAIRFAX *team*

Barry H. Biggar, CDME
President & CEO

Dean Miller
National Sales Manager,
Association & Reunion

Jackie Franchi
Vice President Mktg & Sales

Eric Kulczycky
National Sales Manager,
Sports, Govt., & Corporate

Bert Cook
Director of Destination Services

Lori Scott
National & International
Sales Manager, Group Leisure

Patrick Lennon
Director of Marketing

Marissa Strang
Destination Marketing
Specialist

Katherine Moore, CPA
Accountant

Ali Morris
Destination Mktg Manager

Lily Dixon
Administrative Assistant

activity calendar – GROUP SALES

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Business	Small & Boutique Meetings Greenville, SC <u>7/17-19/2022</u>	Reston-Herndon Mtg Planners "Summer Camp" Herndon, VA <u>8/2022</u> Connect Mkt Detroit, MI <u>8/8-11/2022</u> Overseas Brats Herndon, VA <u>8/18-21/2022</u>		VSAE Fall Conf. Richmond, VA <u>10/6/2022</u> Destination East Albany, NY <u>10/19-21/2022</u>	VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u> Connect DC Washington, DC <u>11/28-30/2022</u>	Meetings Today Live! Savannah, GA <u>12/5-7/2022</u>	IPEC Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> Connect Midwest Peoria, IL <u>Date TBD</u>		Rendezvous South Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u>	MPI ReCon Ex DC Area <u>Date TBD</u> VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u> Family Reunion Seminar Fairfax County <u>Date TBD</u>	VSAE Annual Mtg Hampton, VA <u>5/7-9/2023</u> SGMP NEC Conf Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u>	TMRN Educ Summit Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u>
Leisure		SYTA Washington, DC <u>8/26-29/2022</u> CRUSA Int'l Mktg Summit <u>Date TBD</u> Active America China TBD <u>8/8-10/22</u>			Spotlight on the East Myrtle Beach, TBD	CRUSA UK Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> Active America China FAM <u>Date TBD</u>		CRUSA France Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> ABA Detroit, MI <u>2/4-7/23</u> NVTP Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u>	CRUSA Germany Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u>	FAM TBD	TAP Dance Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> IPW San Antonio, TX <u>5/20-24/2023</u>	CRUSA China Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> RTO Summit East Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u>
Sports		Connect Sports Detroit, MI <u>8/8-10/1/2022</u>	TEAMS Conf/Expo Oklahoma City, OK <u>10/24-27/2022</u>								Sports ETA Symposium Kansas City, MO <u>5/8-11/2023</u>	

activity calendar – MARKETING & ADVERTISING

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Business	<p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p>CVENT</p>	<p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>Meetings & Conventions Magazine</p>	<p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>MPI Potomac Chapter <u>Sponsorship</u></p> <p>Reunions Mag</p>	<p><u>Meetings Today</u></p> <p><u>Convention South</u></p> <p>Government <u>Connections</u></p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>	<p><u>VA Business Mag</u></p> <p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>	<p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p>Reunions Mag</p>	<p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p>CVENT</p>	<p>Advertising <u>Smart Meetings</u></p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP <u>Sponsorship</u></p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>	<p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>Reunions Magazine</p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>	<p><u>Meetings Today Magazine</u></p> <p>Meetings & Conventions Mag</p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>	<p>Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p> <p><u>Convention South</u></p> <p>CVENT</p>	<p>Reunions Magazine</p> <p>CVENT</p> <p>SGMP NATCAP & MPI Potomac <u>Digital Mktg</u></p>
Leisure	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>Youth Travel Planner Itinerary Builder</p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p><u>Beer Campaign</u></p> <p>Fall Travel <u>Campaign</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>Group Travel Magazine</p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>2022 Visitor Guide</p> <p>CRUSA Guide & <u>Website</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>VTC Leisure <u>Travel Guide</u></p> <p>Touropoperatorland Travel Site</p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>CRUSA <u>eNewsletter</u></p> <p>Digital Campaigns: Military History, Women's History, <u>Birding</u></p> <p><u>TravelSpike Adv</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>Digital Campaigns: Military History, Women's History, <u>Craft Beer, Birding</u></p> <p>Spring Travel <u>Campaign</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>TripAdvisor VTC <u>co-op</u></p> <p>Leisure Group Travel Magazine – VA Group Tour Guide</p> <p>Digital Campaigns: Military History, Women's History, <u>Birding</u></p>	<p><u>eMarketing Direct Mail Newsletters</u></p> <p><u>SEO/SEM programs</u></p> <p>Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u></p> <p>Digital Campaigns: Military History, Women's History, <u>Birding</u></p>
Sports	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p> <p>ABCA Print & Digital</p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p> <p>ABCA Print & Digital</p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p> <p>ABCA Print & Digital</p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p> <p>ABCA Print & Digital</p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p> <p>Sports Virginia <u>co-op Ad</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>	<p>SportsNOVA <u>co-op marketing</u></p>

activity calendar – COMMUNITY & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Outside Media	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>MATPRA Quarterly Meeting Pennsylvania 7/15/2022</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>FAM Tour</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>NVTP Canada Mission Toronto, CAN Dates TBD</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>Central PA 10/18-20/2022</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>FAM Tour</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>What's New Press Release</p> <p>MATPRA Qtrly Meeting Location TBD Date TBD</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>Spring Topic Press Releases</p> <p>FAM Tour VTC Visitor Center Seminar</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>MATPRA Qtrly Location TBD Date TBD</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>NTTW Press Release</p> <p>IPW San Antonio, TX 5/20-23/2023</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>Media Fam Tour</p> <p>FAM Tour NVVC Media Canada Dates TBD PRSA Location TBD 6/20-23/2023</p>	<p><u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u></p> <p>Summer Topic Press Releases</p> <p>FAM Tour NVVC Media Canada Dates TBD PRSA Location TBD 6/20-23/2023</p>
Internal Stakeholders	<p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p>	<p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p> <p>Taxi Amb. Class</p> <p>Hotel Amb. Class</p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Amb. Tour</u></p> <p>Mason <u>Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p> <p>Hotel <u>Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Ambassador Newsletter</u></p>	<p><u>Ambassador Newsletter</u></p> <p>Hotel <u>Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Ambassador Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Sales Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p> <p>Taxi <u>Amb. Class</u></p> <p>Mason <u>Amb. Class</u></p> <p><u>Hotel Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Ambassador Newsletter</u></p> <p>Hotel <u>Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder ICW Nat'l Tourism Wk</u></p> <p><u>Amb. Newsletter</u></p> <p>Hotel <u>Amb. Class</u></p>	<p><u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Ambassador Newsletter</u></p> <p><u>Amb. Tour</u></p>
Misc	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p>VA-1 Conf Norfolk, VA 11/13-15/2022</p> <p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p>Innovation Awards Sponsorship</p> <p>NCBF Culture Day at VC</p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p>VA Welcome Center Mktg "Takeover"</p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p>VA Welcome Center Mktg "Takeover"</p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>	<p><u>Social Media Outlets</u></p> <p>Celebrate Fairfax Booth</p> <p><u>SMS/Text Alerts</u></p>