



Fairfax County, Virginia
Connect with America

2019-2020

VISIT FAIRFAX

SALES, MARKETING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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SALES, MARKETING, & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



It is indeed my great pleasure to share our 2019 – 2020 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.

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.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Biggar".

Barry Biggar, CDME
President & CEO
Visit Fairfax

2019 – 2020 Environmental Analysis

Strengths

With our proximity to the many attractions and experiences available to visitors within Northern Virginia and the region as a whole, 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 things to do – once visitors are introduced to them. The County also boasts a highly eclectic number of choices for visitors – surrounding them with experiences ranging from the natural beauty of Great Falls and historic treasures such as Mount Vernon to numerous recreational activities such as golf and shopping. Finally, Fairfax County offers visitors ultimate convenience with 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 less expensive environment that offers a wide range of quality accommodations.

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 to a degree with the expansion of Metro to Tysons; however, visitors still require affordable, convenient alternatives. Additionally, consumers may be confused as the various cities, towns, and communities tend to market individually instead of as a cohesive group. Finally, Visit Fairfax funding continues to lag significantly behind other DMOs with similar hotel inventory. Compared to other high-profile destinations, Fairfax County does not invest nearly as much in tourism marketing dollars per hotel room, putting the County last in the Commonwealth and most other DMOs in the nation.

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. With the planned expansion of Metro to Dulles Airport now on the horizon, new opportunity exists for both individual travelers and group event planners. Two new museums opening soon present opportunity within all segments. Both the National Museum of the U.S. Army and the Lucy Burns Museum will be very attractive to niche groups as well as individual travelers. While the lack of a downtown area has been a challenge, the planned expansion of Tysons as a pedestrian-friendly area also holds great opportunity. Finally, additional funding would increase opportunities for greater outreach, especially in the international markets.

Threats

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. Through Visit Fairfax, the County's tourism community has embarked on a collaborative effort to move the needle for leisure, business and sports travelers. With new inventory being added to the marketplace, complicated by even more competition nationwide, the competitive environment remains challenging. The uncertainty in the federal government budgeting process also greatly affects the travel industry with the threat of shutdowns repeatedly rearing its head and the potential impact of US travel policies on international travel remains to be seen. Additionally, 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, & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

One of the greatest aspects of destination marketing is that it gives us the opportunity to use our best market intelligence and innovative technology to offer creative solutions – all geared toward helping people have fun. That’s the “how” in the equation. The “why” is clearly reflected in our Mission Statement as we endeavor to “contribute to the overall economic and social growth for our citizens and communities.” Tourism is an incredibly efficient means of economic development as visitors travel to enjoy our wonderful destination, contribute over \$3 billion to our local economy, and then simply return home, requiring little additional resources. In the new fiscal year, we plan to work hard to continue capturing consumer attention with engaging messages delivered to highly targeted audiences with the objective of incremental spending that benefits our stakeholders and our local citizens.

With website traffic still on the rise, Visit Fairfax intends to leverage the current appetite for authentic tourism experiences among consumers by grabbing and holding attention through innovative and personalized website content. Buyers in all markets have many choices available to them, and Visit Fairfax plans to stand out among those many choices through engaging content. Many consumers also seek the best price-value for their dollars, and Fairfax County remains an outstanding choice for those who prioritize value. Compared to many destinations, Fairfax County offers an incredible value, particularly on weekends, with many of the benefits of an urban destination and all of the conveniences of a suburban location. And, as the dollar continues to gain strength, international travelers may find Northern Virginia to be a highly attractive alternative to the high prices of D.C.

“The best marketing doesn’t feel like marketing.”

- Tom Fishburne

Using innovative technologies, we have planned programs intended to send highly creative and targeted messages to very defined niche audiences to enjoy fun times in Fairfax County. The overall sales and marketing strategy will remain focused on three key markets: 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 can 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.

Primary

- Major focus due to high return & good yield

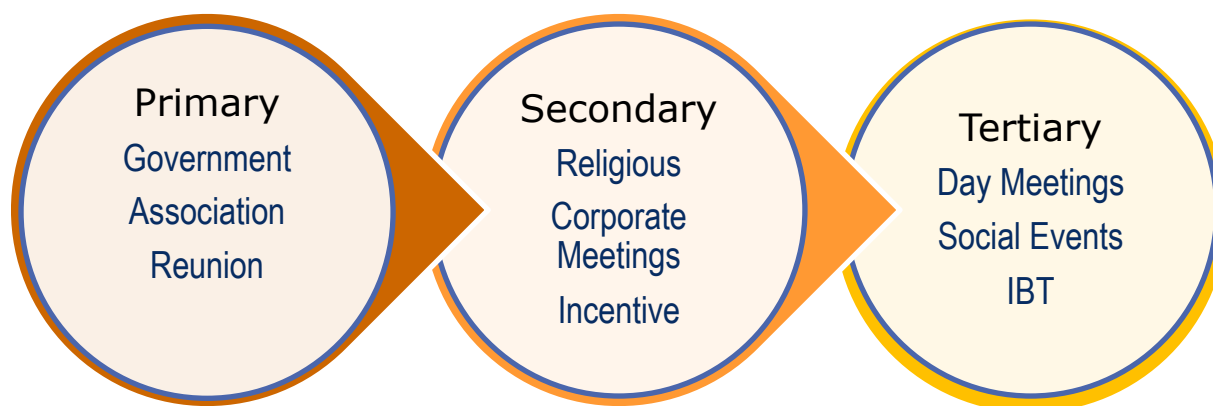
Secondary

- Has great potential if given additional work, but less resources to avoid duplicate efforts

Tertiary

- Provide support but not a major focus

BUSINESS



The continued strength of the national economy has proven to be a double-edged sword in our efforts to place additional group business into our meeting hotels. The economic upturn has increased demand for meeting space on the one hand, while simultaneously reducing the available supply of vacant space, most noticeably over prime dates. The association, reunion, and religious groups we target are competing against corporate and government groups for a finite supply of space, one that is not projected to grow at all in the coming three years.

Additionally, the increase in demand has pushed up room rates and allowed our hotels to offer fewer concessions in order to secure bookings, making us “pricier” than some of the other destinations we typically compete with (Baltimore, Philadelphia, Richmond, et.al.) In response, many planners are now booking farther into the future (three and even four years prior to arrival), rather than the two years which used to be typical, in order to find the rates / dates / space they need for their programs. We have made our meeting hotels aware of this ongoing trend and have encouraged them to expand their “booking windows” in order to avoid missing out on profitable opportunities.

For the coming year, we will continue to focus our efforts in those areas in which we have seen the greatest returns ... state associations, smaller and mid-sized national associations, reunion groups (both family reunions and military reunions) and religious groups, while maximizing the opportunities presented us by two new facilities currently under construction – the Metrorail Silver line extension to Washington Dulles International Airport, and the opening of the National Museum of the United States Army.



We added to our existing schedule of “one-on-one” appointment trade shows with the addition of Destination Southeast in Palm Beach Gardens, FL in September of this year. We’ll add one new event in the coming year, the Independent Planner Education Conference (IPEC) in St. Pete Beach, FL in January of 2020, while dropping both of the *Smart Meetings* programs we have traditionally done due to declining ROI. We’ll 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’ll continue to identify and prospect Army reunion groups who will be drawn to the National Capital area by the scheduled opening of the National Museum of the United States Army in early 2020. Prospecting utilizing the American Legion and Disabled American Veterans magazines will continue; although somewhat “low tech,” this has proven to be a surprisingly effective means of generating reunion leads. We will continue running display advertising in issues of *Military Officer* and the *TMRN* magazines, and continue our attendance at military reunion planner events hosted by TMRN (The Military Reunion Network) and YMRC (Your Military Reunion Connection).

We’ll host a “fam trip” event in September of 2019, tailored specifically to Army reunion groups, during which we’ll show 25 planners the advantages of holding their reunions here. We’ll follow this up with a “press fam”, specifically for editors and writers, to promote the museum, and a luncheon for locally-based meeting planners, to showcase the museum as a special events venue.

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 / 2104 for the opening of the Silver line’s first phase, we’ll begin promoting the enhanced access that the Dulles extension will afford groups with trade show collateral, mailings, e-mail blasts, and meeting planner breakfasts and luncheons, beginning in early 2020 and continuing through the line’s scheduled opening later in the year.



Group planners are increasingly seeking “experiential” components for their meetings, especially those that reflect the flavor or the unique characteristics of the local community. We have added “Fairfaxopoly” to our arsenal of special experiences available only in Fairfax County, and can now bring our life-sized version of the classic board game to the opening evening receptions of larger groups meeting in the county to provide a unique, fun, and memorable enhancement to their program ... at no charge!

One request from group planners that is always in season is the need for assistance in increasing attendance at their meetings and events, at minimal cost. To target this need, we will continue offering customized, full-color “Save the Date” postcards to groups, highlighting our Fairfax County attractions. We’ll provide the postcards on a complimentary basis, they’ll provide the postage to mail them to prospective attendees. This additional amenity will help Visit Fairfax stand out from the crowd of other destinations competing for their business.

Strategic Objectives

1. Market, sell, and promote Fairfax County as a premier business 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 reunions, religious groups, and special interest / hobbyist groups.
3. Maximize the opportunities presented by the two new facilities opening in 2020: the Metrorail Silver line extension to Dulles Airport, and the National Museum of the United States Army.
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 we target: national and state associations, corporate, and government.
 - a. Ensure visibility for Fairfax County and our meeting hotels at association tradeshow events including Connect (Louisville, Washington, DC and Chicago),

What

Tradeshows

Print and Online Advertising

Direct Sales

Membership and Sponsorship

Group Fams & Client Events

Where

Washington, DC

Northern Virginia

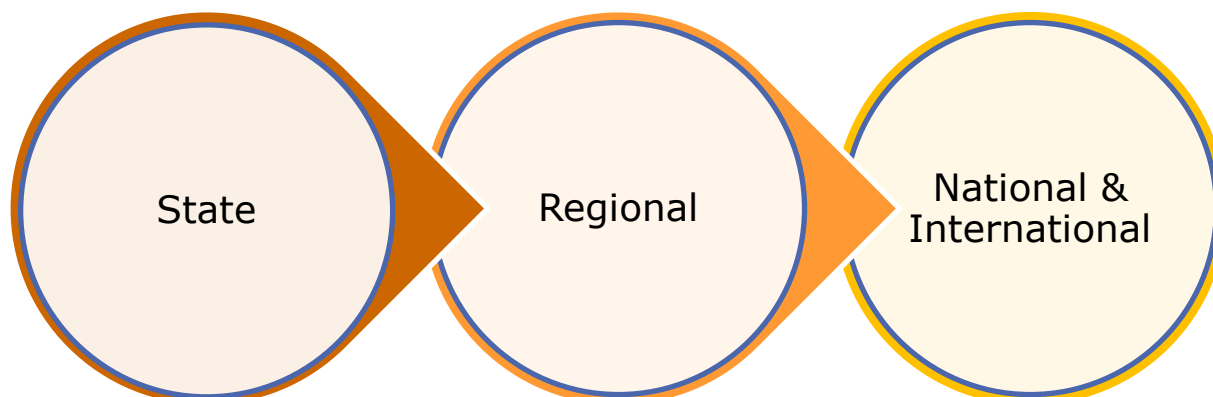
Richmond

National Shows Close to Home

- Convention South* Rendezvous South, and Northstar Travel Media Independent Planner Education Conference (IPEC).
- b. Continue to expand our relationships with state association meeting planners through the participation in VSAE and attendance at various VSAE meetings and events throughout the year.
 - c. Exhibit at the VSAE Fall Expo in October, partnering with our Fairfax County meeting hotel partners.
 - d. Provide our hotels with access to state association planners through a semi-annual Visit Fairfax sales blitz.
 - e. Co-host the Reston - Herndon Meeting Planners (RHMP) "Summer Camp" program in July of 2019; present updates on Fairfax County meetings to 200+ planners in attendance.
 - f. Entertain three well-qualified locally-based planners at Wolf Trap in August of 2019.
 - g. Ensure visibility among association and corporate planners through advertising in *Meetings Today* and *Convention South*.
 - h. Utilize the bi-monthly group planner eNewsletter to deliver information on new developments, special offers, and items of interest to groups.
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. Host our annual Family Reunion Workshop in February, 2020 to showcase Fairfax County to family reunion planners.
 - b. Attend the TMRN Educational Summit event and two YMRC events to reach military reunion planners and convince them to meet in Fairfax County.
 - c. Ensure visibility among military reunion planners through advertising in *Military Officer Magazine*, and TMRN Magazine.
 - d. Ensure visibility among family reunion planners through advertising in *Reunions Magazine* and periodic e-blasts to the magazine's planner database.
 - e. Reach special interest and hobbyist event planners through Connect Marketplace and *Rendezvous South*.
 3. Maximize the opportunities presented by the two new facilities opening in 2020: the Metrorail Silver line extension to Dulles Airport, and the National Museum of the United States Army.
 - a. Host a weekend fam trip in September of 2019, specifically for Army reunion planners to capitalize on the upcoming opening of the Army museum.
 - b. Host a press fam to promote the Army museum to writers and editors of specialty publications that reach our targeted audience (military reunion groups, planners looking for unique event spaces, et. al.)
 - c. Host a luncheon / "hard hat" tour for locally-based meeting planners in November of 2019, to promote the Army museum as a truly unique special event space
 - d. Attend the Overseas Brats Homecoming event in August of 2019. Give a formal presentation to the attendees, providing them with an update on the Army Museum. Secure this program for Fairfax County for August of 2022.
 - e. Continue ongoing direct mail / e-mail campaigns to generate military reunion leads, especially Army reunion leads.

- f. Promote the scheduled 2020 arrival of Metrorail service to Dulles Airport via trade show signage, custom collateral, and special events for local meeting planners.
 - g. Promote the scheduled 2020 arrival of Metrorail service to Dulles Airport to writers and editors of specialty publications that reach our targeted audience (corporate, association and government planners)
- 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. Promote customized Fairfax County “Save the Date” cards as a low-cost, high value-added service available to planners as an attendance building tool
 - b. Offer the use of “Fairfaxopoly” and other experiential activities to planners as unique enhancements to the programs

SPORTS



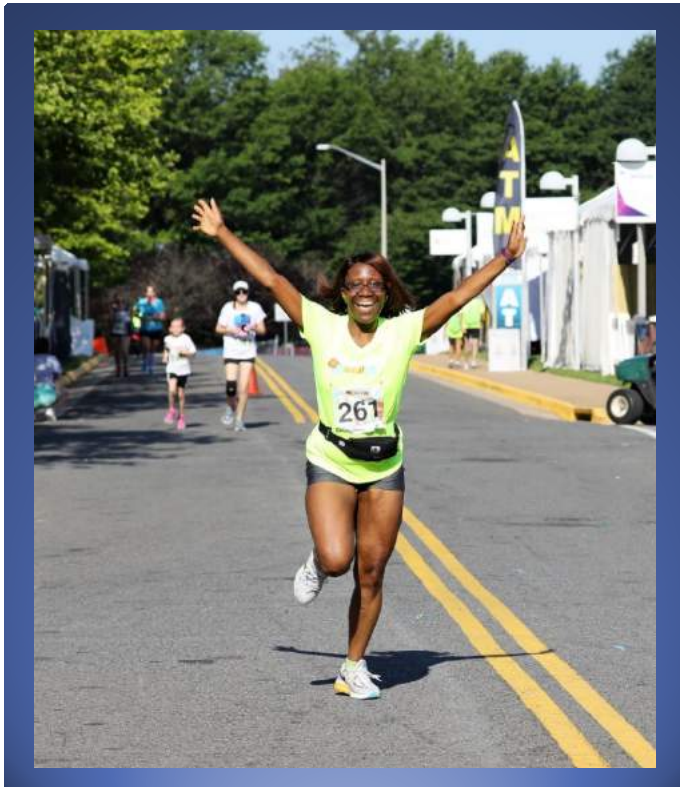
A leading driver of group travel with business spread evenly throughout the year, the sports market continues to maintain its status as one of the most resilient segments of the tourism industry. According to *SportsEvents* magazine, in 2018, this market grew to approximately \$12.2 billion in the U.S., a solid 6.9% increase over the previous year. Indeed, travel sports generates a significant level of economic impact for communities throughout the country while also providing a sense of civic pride to local residents through state, regional, national, and international competitions.

The sports market is not without its challenges, however. Tournament planners are competing for athletes like never before, destinations and their athletic venues are battling for the rights to host events, and families are challenged to find the time and money to support their kids playing travel sports. Also, as the competition for a larger slice of the sports tourism pie becomes increasingly fierce, destinations – often in cooperation with their local



governments – have been entering into a sports facilities “arms race” to offer larger, more tournament-capable venues. Compared with other U.S. destinations (including those in its backyard), Fairfax County has not kept pace in this race to build large clusters of outdoor fields, indoor courts, and other facility types. This in turn has adversely affected the county’s ability to fully capitalize on the booming youth sports market.

Under the leadership of Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield District), the Fairfax County Sports Task Force was created to review and assess the county's current sports infrastructure and the value of developing this market. In November 2018, the Task Force submitted its interim report to the Board of Supervisors outlining its recommendations, including hiring a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for a major sportsplex and evaluate possible improvements to existing facilities to make them more tournament-capable. Currently in the final stages of this hiring process, the county is on its way to determining what additional facilities could be built to maximize visitor spending while providing the local community with enhanced and/or supplemental athletic venues.



The Task Force's other facility-related recommendations included negotiating a public-private partnership to build an indoor skiing and snow venue at the Laurel Hill landfill, making capital improvements to Fountainhead Regional Park to position it as a destination site for mountain biking, exploring bandwidth and computer enhancements at public high schools to maximize their esports potential, and further developing the tournament capabilities at select county parks. For example, a new, turf baseball complex – Patriot Park North – will be constructed adjacent to Willow Springs Elementary School in western Fairfax on a 67-acre lot featuring four 90-foot diamonds in a wagon-wheel configuration (with central concessions) and two adjacent 60-foot diamond fields. This complex is expected to be completed by 2021.

In terms of existing facilities, there is no venue in the county with greater potential to attract travel tournaments than The St. James. With much fanfare, the St. James officially opened its doors to the public on September 15, 2018. The privately funded, indoor, 450,000-square-foot mega sportsplex located in Springfield features a FIFA-regulation turf field with 65-foot height clearance, two NHL-regulation sheets of ice; four basketball/nine volleyball courts; a 50-meter, 10-lane Olympic pool; and eight international-regulation squash courts.

While reluctant in the past to host tournaments for fear of disrupting regular sports programming and displacing dues/fee-paying members, representatives of The St. James have now indicated more of a willingness to host events if they meet certain financial and other criteria. The new Director of Advancement for the facility is eager to host large-scale events and attend sports travel conferences along with Visit Fairfax's sports sales manager.

Other challenges to the county's sports tourism objectives are the perennial obstacles for most bidders interested in hosting large events that attract thousands of attendees: rights fees and

funding for initial operating costs. Without the ability to make such investments requested by event rights-holders, destinations with insufficient resources are often shut out from competing for select competitions. Fortunately, Fairfax County government's new Economic Opportunity Reserve fund has made it much easier to overcome these financial obstacles.

Created to "stimulate economic growth" and to provide "strategic investment opportunities," this reserve – funded with an initial budget carryover of \$5 million – will provide investment dollars for capital development projects, property acquisition, and programming support (which would include potential funds to secure and operate sports events). The criteria for distributions will include financial modeling analysis (e.g. cost-benefit, etc.) to determine the fiscal impact to the county of the proposed investment opportunity and will require approval from the Board of Supervisors. After carefully assessing the potential return-on-investment of various sports events available for bid and targeting the best prospects, Visit Fairfax and its partners will take full advantage of this county program and apply for grants whenever appropriate.



Visit Fairfax's sports marketing plan includes a variety of strategies and tactics to promote the county as a first-rate destination to host competitive events. There are many opportunities to maximize growth of existing tournaments (e.g., The Virginian and WAGS tournaments) and to attract new competitions in numerous traditional and non-traditional sports (e.g., esports, drone racing, etc.) using many outdoor and indoor venues.

By continuing to pursue event opportunities that match up with Fairfax County's sports tourism assets, building further awareness of its sports services and programs among event rights-holders, and working in a support role to further develop the county's sports facility infrastructure, Visit Fairfax will continue to generate economic development for tourism stakeholders and enhance the quality of life of community residents.

Strategic Objectives

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:
 - CONNECT Sports Marketplace
 - NASC 4S Summit
 - TEAMS Conference & Expo
 - NASC Sports Event Symposium
 - Virginia Sports Summit
 - b. Participate actively in the National Association of Sports Commissions trade association as well as Sports Virginia, the coalition of CVBs and sports commissions which seeks to attract new events to the state.
 - c. Advertise through *SportsEvents* magazine and NASC marketing platforms.
 - d. Meet regularly with local sports leaders, event organizers, and facility owners/managers to discuss ways to attract new events and grow existing ones.
 - e. Mine various trade publication and association databases for event opportunities.

What

Conferences & Tradeshows

Direct Sales

**Public Relations
& Trade Publications**

Web Marketing

Relationship Building

**Fairfax County Sports Tourism
Task Force**

Local Organizing Committees

Where

CONNECT Sports Marketplace

NASC 4S Summit

TEAMS Conference & Expo

NASC Sports Event Symposium

Virginia Sports Summit

**Fairfax County Park Authority
& Public Schools**

**Northern Virginia Regional
Park Authority**

**George Mason University and
NOVA**

**The St. James and Other
Private Sports Facilities**

2. Continue to build prospect list of sports planners and conduct sales solicitation calls with those whose events match up well with Fairfax County's sports tourism assets.
 - a. Conduct site inspections and familiarization tours to promote Fairfax County to select sports decision-makers and influencers.
 - b. Provide sponsorship support to select events to grow existing business and attract new opportunities.
 - c. 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.)
 - d. 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.
 - e. Educate tournament directors, facility managers/owners, sports leaders, and other tourism stakeholder groups about Visit Fairfax's sports initiatives through networking events, presentations, and e-marketing tools.
 - f. Update database of Fairfax County and area facilities capable of hosting various sports events and competitions.
 - g. Develop partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions to enhance Fairfax County's ability to bid on and host large, multi-sport events.
 - h. 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 the consultant hired by the Task Force to recommend improvements to this infrastructure to ensure the achievement of desired tourism objectives.
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. 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.
 - c. Offer additional tournament amenities to assist with the sales process and encourage repeat bookings (e.g., Visit Fairfax tournament app extension).
 - 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 Visitor Services as part of pre-arrival servicing packets.

LEISURE GROUP



The Group Tour market often meets those critical short-term need periods by filling distressed inventory for stakeholders. The segment also affords the opportunity to establish long-range series business within growth markets. Many hotels, nearly every attraction, and dozens of restaurants eagerly seek lucrative adult and student group tours to drive business. Fairfax County is uniquely positioned in the region to drive the message of centrality to group tour operators who are in search of great products and locations along with superb price/value.

The largest potential growth markets of China and India along with the traditional, more mature markets of the UK, Germany, and Canada drive our international strategy. Fairfax County continues to focus on these five markets due to consistently robust arrival numbers and strong air service. Part of the sales effort will remain devoted to educating international tour operators and inbound receptive operators, who generate group and FIT business, about the favorable pricing available based upon weekend and seasonal time periods. With the increase in the value of the US dollar compared to many foreign currencies, Fairfax County may prove to be the smart alternative for some



international markets compared to other higher priced options nearby.

Inbound receptive operators are extremely strong partners as they maximize Visit Fairfax's reach with international markets. Receptive operators contract with overseas tour wholesalers, agents and other travel producers to provide tourist services throughout the US for incoming groups and FIT travelers. They already have relationships within their key markets which allows for a fast and cost-effective way to penetrate new markets and increase market share in developed markets by highlighting new products. Receptive operators also provide indirect free advertising overseas by showcasing product to these markets.

Advanced pricing, special group rates and packaging is increasingly becoming more in demand for these international and receptive tour operators with the Internet-induced rise of savvy and more cost-conscious travelers who demand better value for money when booking with these travel specialists. One suggestion is facilitating collaboration between accommodation wholesalers and hotels for contracted hotel rates. Hotels are therefore able to expand their market share and penetrate new markets by availing their inventory to tour operators, travel agents, and receptive



operators that they otherwise might not have reached without the wholesale platform. With the recent consolidation of Tourico, GTA, JBS under Hotelbeds Group (now one of the largest wholesalers globally) it is becoming increasingly important for attractions, hotels and other vendors to work with these and other wholesalers to avail product along the distribution channels.

For the third year in a row, China was the largest international inbound market to the Capital Region, despite ongoing Sino-American trade tensions. There were 365,000 visitors in 2017, accounting for \$1.48 billion in spending. In demonstration of the economic importance of this market, Cathay Pacific Airways plans to increase the frequency of its nonstop service between Washington Dulles International airport and Hong Kong. This route, just launched in September 2018, will increase service from four times weekly to five times weekly effective October 2019. Considering the large market share and consistent performance of inbound Chinese arrivals, it is extremely important to remain in front of all the shifting trends in visitation and nurture relationships with Chinese travel trade.



India continues to be a high-growth emerging market for the Capital Region with 173,000 visitors spending \$362 million in 2017. Arrivals to the US have been steadily increasing over the past years, bolstered by the US and India designating 2017 as the travel and tourism partnership year coupled with nonstop air service between New Delhi and Washington Dulles International airport. Given India's fast-growing economy with an increasingly

monied middle-class, Visit Fairfax seeks to capture a larger share of this new business.

While appetite still exists for the traditional tourism products in the region; the growing demand for niche products provides Fairfax County stakeholders with a marketing advantage given their proximity to attractions within and outside of the County. With so many unique attractions that lend to so many niche market subjects such African American heritage, civil war history and winery tours, operators can enhance their tour products by adding on these distinct activities to their itineraries. Considering most domestic tour planners create itineraries a year in advance, 2019 is ideal timing to highlight the 2020 opening of the National Museum of the United States Army.

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. The senior groups, while requiring more customized itineraries, remains an important market for Fairfax County given their propensity for post-retirement travel, disposable income and appetite for new and niche product.

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 NVTP including co-op advertising, tradeshow participation, familiarization tours, and sales missions.

Strategic Objectives

1. Leverage the increased value of the US dollar by presenting Fairfax County as the “smart choice” within the region for international travelers.
2. Build strategic tourism product lines based upon current market trends that will attract and grow the domestic markets.
3. Raise Fairfax County’s domestic and international profiles and connect within the region through advertising, international tour co-ops, and sales mission opportunities, partnering with other organizations such as Capital Region USA (CRUSA) and Northern Virginia’s Tourism Partners (NVTP).
4. Show buyers firsthand why they should be selling Fairfax County, Virginia—rather than only telling—through familiarization tours.

Tactics

1. Leverage the increased value of the US dollar by presenting Fairfax County as the “smart choice” within the region for the international traveler.
 - a. Attend U.S. Travel Association’s IPW within our own Visit Fairfax booth, showing that Fairfax County remains a top destination within Virginia and the Capital Region.
 - b. Attend Active America China and Active America China Receptive Edition Showcases for one-on-one appointments with Chinese tour operators and Chinese inbound receptive operators looking for new American tour product.
 - c. Attend Brand USA’s annual India Sales Mission to penetrate the India market by meeting with qualified tour operators and media in the key cities of Mumbai, New Delhi and Chennai.
 - d. 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.
 - e. Continue outreach into the Canadian market through Northern Virginia Tourism Partners.
 - f. Create more in-language content for international tour operators to have access to in order to help develop tour product.
 - g. 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.

What

Sales Missions

Tradeshows

CRUSA

NVTP

FAMs

Where

Domestic

China

India

Canada

United Kingdom

Germany

- h. Attend World Youth Student Education Travel Conference to meet with qualified international student tour operators and position Fairfax County at the heart of the global student and youth travel industry.



- i. Attend Capital Region USA's UK sales missions to participate in personal sales calls, private client events and training opportunities in this key mature market.
2. Build strategic tourism product lines based upon current market trends that will attract and grow the domestic markets.
 - 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 to reach out to motor coach tours and educate them on the convenience of Fairfax County hotels and major roadways.
 - c. Attend the National Tour Association's Travel Exchange, scheduling appointments with both tour operators that are currently coming to Fairfax County and those that are not yet utilizing the counties products.
 - d. Be a preferred partner of the Travel Alliance Partnership and attend their annual tradeshow to maintain close connections with key tour operators throughout the United States, which will help promote Fairfax County to others in the industry.
 - e. Attend Spotlight on the Mid-Atlantic conference hosted by Mid Atlantic Receptive Services (MARS) to reach out directly to MARS client base and group leaders planning trips to the Capital Region.
 - f. Attend Student & Youth Travel Association's annual conference in Baltimore to create new connections with decision makers in the student and youth travel market and leverage non-traditional student options within the Capital Region.
 - g. Advertise in Group Tour Magazine's September 2019 issue focusing on the Capital Region to highlight niche tour itinerary options to adult and senior group tour planners.
 - h. Advertise in the Student Group Tour Magazine's August 2019 issue to reach active & qualified student tour operators during their key planning time

3. Raise Fairfax County's domestic and international profiles and connect within the region through advertising, international tour co-ops, and sales mission opportunities, partnering with other organizations such as Capital Region USA (CRUSA) and Northern Virginia's Tourism Partners (NVTP)
 - 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. Partner with international tour operators co-operative targeted advertising and marketing campaigns through CRUSA
 - d. Partner with NVTP to develop key international markets to the region, whether this be through new itineraries, familiarization tours, or receptive sales missions
 - e. Maintain active membership with the Virginia Motorcoach Association to interact with member motorcoach and tour operators within the immediate domestic market
4. Show buyers firsthand why they should be selling Fairfax County, Virginia—rather than only telling—through familiarization tours
 - a. Host several familiarization tours through Capital Region USA with their in-country representatives pre-qualifying each participating tour operator
 - Build cohesive itineraries with surrounding destination partners as regional itineraries are essential for the international market
 - b. 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 CONSUMER



More than a decade ago, Visit Fairfax made the decision to transition the majority of our advertising from print to digital. That decision may have been slightly ahead of its time, but today, marketers recognize the impact of digital marketing, and consumers are now continuously inundated with marketing messages online. The resulting “banner blindness” creates an environment wherein a simple display ad now does little to grasp consumer attention. Over recent years, Visit Fairfax has successfully employed highly interactive rich media ad units to grab and hold interest. Digital advertising not only reaches consumers where they most often make travel choices, but it also affords the opportunity to highly define the target audience itself to further engage visitor interest through dynamic web content that is customized based on the consumer himself.



For years, we have seen considerable growth in website traffic and consumer interest. Additionally, we were able to successfully identify niche markets that align especially well with our tourism assets. This strategy resulted in hundreds of thousands of consumer engagements and tens of thousands of new visitors to fxva.com. In the new year, we plan to continue and expand these highly customized campaigns that leverage our strengths. Of considerable

note, two new museums are opening soon: the Lucy Burns Museum and the National Museum of the United States Army. Both of these museum experiences hold inherent appeal to niche audiences and present great opportunity for highly targeted advertising campaigns.

The type of technology consumers are using online continues to gravitate toward mobile with over 70% of visitors to fxva.com now accessing the website using a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet. Consequently, Visit Fairfax has also evolved how we communicate with consumers by ensuring that our outreach works as effectively on mobile platforms as it does on a computer monitor.

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

Strategic Objectives

1. Maximize engaging content on FXVA.com that helps consumers to personally connect with Fairfax County through a customized user experience.
2. Utilize direct e-Mail marketing to build consumer relationships in those markets that result in the highest yield in converted visitor parties.
3. Implement a comprehensive Search Engine Marketing program while continuing the migration from paid search to organic optimization.
4. Reinforce stakeholders' use of the Fairfax County brand message to multiple audiences and build alliances within the County's tourism community.
5. Ensure maximum attention within the growing audience of mobile users through mobile-friendly platforms and outbound messaging.
6. Execute integrated niche market campaigns that target highly motivated consumers by engaging those visitors through targeted messaging and relevant content.
7. Leverage inherent interest in high-demand local events by "drafting" the Visit Fairfax message off of existing consumer interest.
8. Tap into the County's current Business Traveler through an integrated digital campaign and by uniting the County's hotel community using enticing creative.
9. Track and report online conversion through 3rd party conversion study.

What

**Search Engine
Marketing &
Optimization**

Direct eMail Marketing

Niche Audiences

**Online Display Banner &
Native Advertising**

Social Media Outlets

Mobile Marketing

Consumer Publications

**Fairfax County Visitors
Guide**

Where

Search Engines

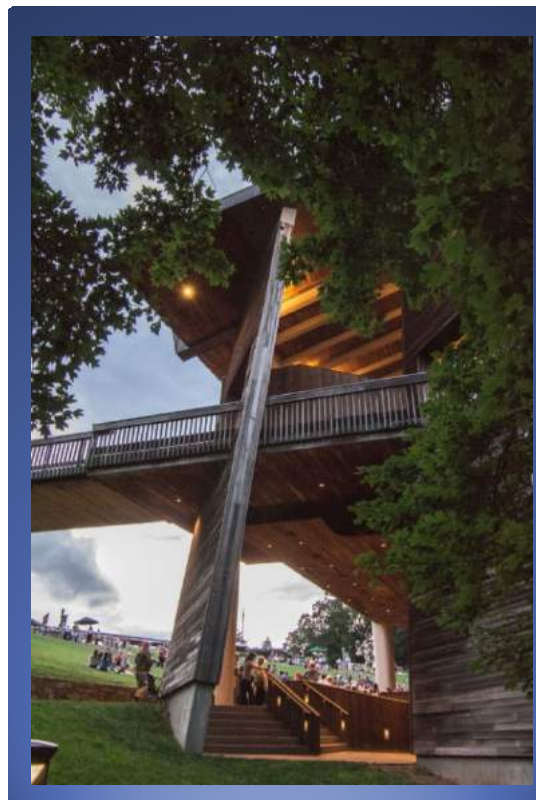
Drive Marketplaces

**Self-identified Niche
Audiences Online**

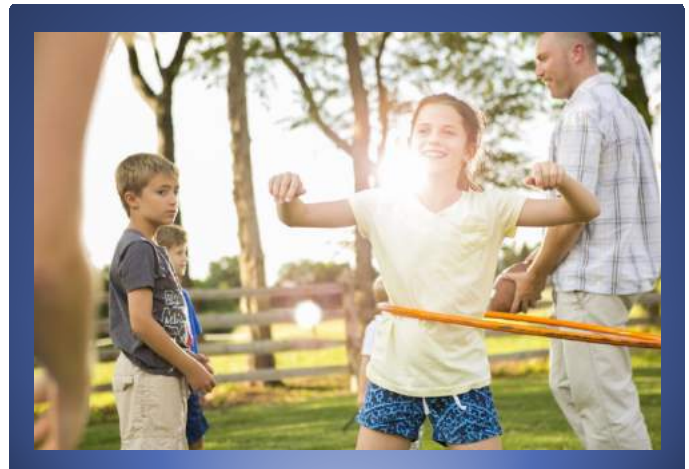
**Washington DC,
Maryland, and Virginia**

Tactics

1. Maximize engaging content on FXVA.com that helps consumers to personally connect with Fairfax County through a customized user experience.
 - a. Incorporate real-life imagery derived from a cross-section of social media platforms via Crowdriff technology.
 - b. Employ dynamic website technology to craft personalized webpage content depending on consumer interests based on previous behavior as well as geographic location.
 - c. Support new and existing content through social media channels with a focus on authentic visitor experiences.
 - d. Anticipate consumer interest and engage consumers by distributing our most compelling content throughout the site, such as the Virtual Tour eMap, Storyteller video series, and niche market imagery.
 - e. Publish the annual Fairfax County Visitor Guide online to be used as the primary fulfillment piece for all consumer inquiries.
 - f. Develop unique visitor experiences through Bandwango that offer specialized digital itineraries.
2. 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 with 5M total e-Mail deployments to 3 consumer segments (general sites & attractions, Epicurean/Culinary, and Civil War History) in addition to meeting planners and stakeholders.
 - b. Maximize exposure for eMail content by using cross-channel promotion via social media ads that lead to relevant eMails.
 - c. Maintain the e-Mail database with 30,000 new subscribers within the highest performing segment.
 - d. Attract organic opt-in subscribers through “pop-over” technology to maximize attention.
3. Implement a comprehensive Search Engine Marketing program while continuing the migration from paid search to organic optimization.
 - a. Continually 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.
 - c. Continue the emphasis on both paid clicks and organic rankings; however, ensure a continued presence on engines with a program delivering 170,000 new consumers to the fxva.com website using both PPC and Facebook look-a-like 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 7,500 new organic visitors.
4. 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. Promote use of the Visit Fairfax mobile app as a complimentary guest amenity for county businesses.
 - d. Connect and communicate with stakeholders through social media, finding new ways of reinforcing the brand message.
 - e. Leverage the influence of the Marketing Advisory Committee as ambassadors of the grass roots efforts within their own peer communities.
 - f. Offer opportunities to increase stakeholder exposure through packaged advertising in the visitor guide, on the website, and within the e-Dialogue program.
5. 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, and other benefits.
 - b. Maintain momentum for Visit Fairfax mobile technology via the Fairfax County smartphone APP.
 - c. Use geofencing technology to deliver messages that are relevant based on the location of the recipient (e.g. current business travelers will receive a BLeisure message).
 - d. Continuously improve and maintain content on the responsive website to ensure a good consumer experience.
 - e. Utilize A/B testing on high-traffic pages and PPC landing pages to increase time on page and decrease bounce rates.
6. Execute integrated niche market campaigns that target highly motivated consumers by engaging those visitors through targeted messaging and relevant content.
 - a. Continue the successful niche campaigns that have produced great results: Birding and Craft Beer.
 - b. Develop and execute a niche campaign that leverages the opening of the National Museum of the U.S. Army, specifically targeting active military and veterans along with First Responders.
 - c. Develop and execute a campaign that leverages the opening of the Lucy Burns Museum, with messaging relating to the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.



- d. Develop and execute a campaign with “multi-generational appeal” to three-generation families.
- e. Employ 3rd generation contextual digital campaigns using interactive rich media ad units

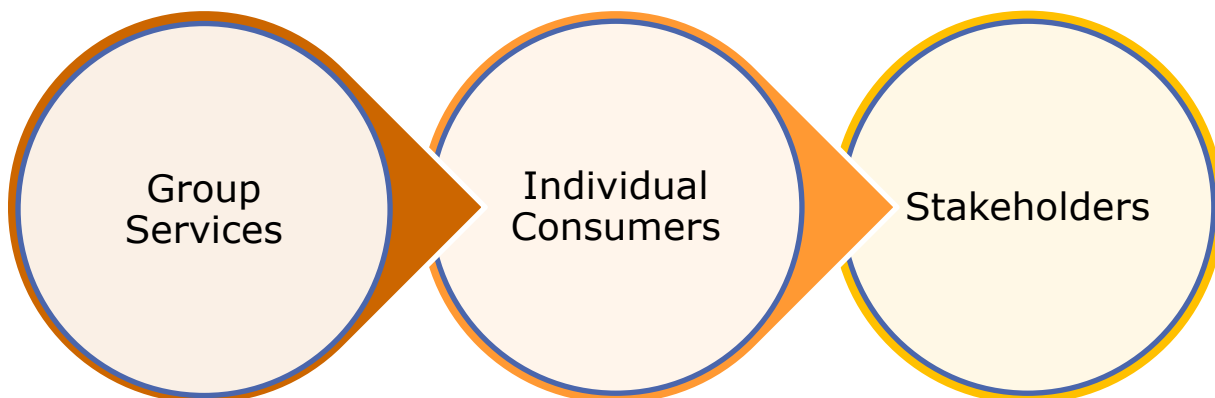


and cost-effective print ads in specialty publications focusing on these consumer groups.

- f. 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.

- 7. Leverage inherent interest in high-demand local events by “drafting” the Visit Fairfax message off of existing consumer interest.
 - a. “Draft” traffic to fxva.com during large-scale 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. Use social media channels and look-a-like targeting to identify audiences that will be especially receptive to our messages.
 - c. Design custom landing pages that fulfill the advertising message specific to the audience.
- 8. Tap into the County’s current Business Traveler through an integrated digital campaign and by uniting the County’s hotel community using enticing creative.
 - a. Execute a BLeisure initiative through the integration of a digital promotion across all appropriate channels that targets 4.8 million consumers.
 - b. Develop a Fairfax County BLeisure message that can be used by stakeholders to encourage hotel guests to take advantage of the area by extending their business trip for leisure activities.
 - c. Identify digital advertising channels that will allow us to plant the idea of mixing some fun into a planned business trip prior to booking flights.
 - d. Develop a BLeisure toolkit that our Visitor Services as well as our stakeholders can use with group event planners.
 - e. Implement website content with a compelling BLeisure message to be spread throughout fxva.com.
- 9. Track and report online conversion through 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.

VISITOR SERVICES



Supporting the Visit Fairfax sales force, as well as the sales efforts of County stakeholders, is the mission of the Visitor Services Department. Ensuring that prospective clients have all they need to successfully plan and promote their group meetings and conferences is a key function of the Department. In addition, the Visitor Services team provides information and assistance to the leisure traveler so that these visitors have an enjoyable stay in the County with plans to return. Finally, through training and tours, County stakeholders are given the tools they need to increase their sales.

The Visitor Services Department accomplishes these objectives through a three-pronged approach with Visitor Center Operations, Ambassador Program, and Group Servicing.

Strategic Objectives

1. Continue to ensure that the Visitor Center maintains its ability to service county visitors with the most current information and interesting, interactive technology; and that Visitor Counselors are not simply information providers, but sales professionals who suggestively sell new experiences to visitors and increase traffic to the Center.
2. Continue to increase the force of hospitality industry professionals and students 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.

3. Satisfy all requirements for groups traveling to the County to ensure expectations are met and exceeded before, during and after their stay and to encourage extended and repeat visits.
4. Continue to increase traffic to Fairfax County during the National Cherry Blossom Festival through sponsorship of events at County attractions, such as the Workhouse Arts Center, Green Spring Gardens, Meadowlark Botanical Garden, Children's Science Center and others; as well as online promotion of these events.

Tactics

1. Continue to ensure that the Visitor Center maintains its ability to service county visitors with the most current information; and that Visitor Counselors are not simply information providers, but sales professionals who suggestively sell new experiences to visitors and increase traffic to the Center.
 - a. Maintain a well-stocked and current supply of county and regional brochures and informational material.
 - b. Encourage visitor use of the new interactive kiosk to increase excitement about county attractions and encourage visitation.
 - c. Serve as primary fulfillment for the Visit Fairfax Craft Brew Passport program.
 - d. Leverage the 50th anniversary of "Virginia is for Lovers" and Fairfax County's LOVEworks tour.
 - e. Promote the Visit Fairfax smart phone app.
 - f. Participate in applicable Tysons Corner promotions, including the coupon book and promoting the Center to Tysons Corner retailers.
 - g. Promote the Center through the Visit Fairfax website with free gift offer.
 - h. Market the "Extend Your Stay" program and offers.
 - i. Promote county attractions at the Celebrate Fairfax event and hold an annual cultural event in the Visitor Center during the National Cherry Blossom Festival.
2. Continue to increase the force of hospitality industry professionals and students 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.
 - a. Hold regular classes for hoteliers, taxi drivers, and hospitality students in local colleges.
 - b. Hold classes geared to hotel sales professionals to provide destination information, as well as refresher tips on utilizing Visit Fairfax sales tools.

What

Consultative Selling

Ambassador Classes & Tours

Event Planner Toolkit

Visitor Guides and App Promotion Cards

Planner Welcome Gifts

Extend-a-Stay Program

Local and Regional Events

Where

Visitor Center

Local Hotels

Airport Taxis

College Campuses

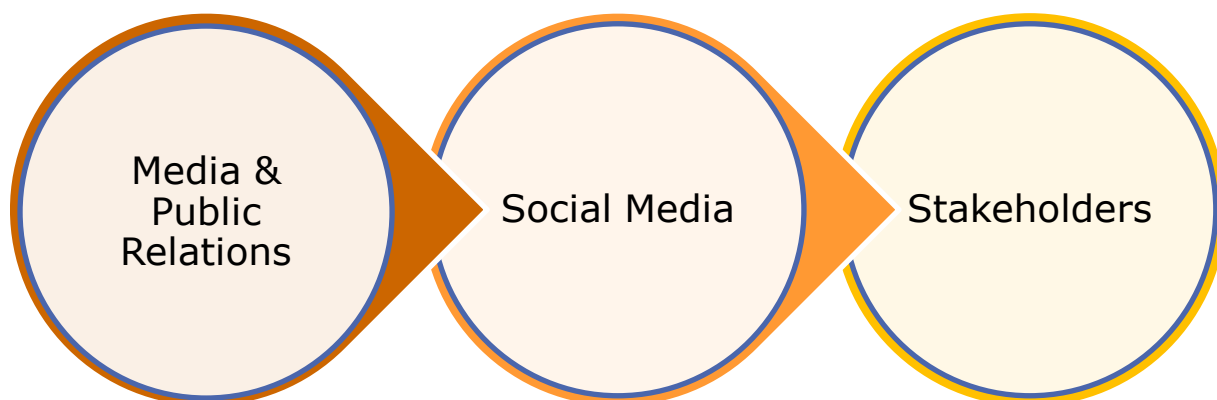
Stakeholder Sites

Festivals

- c. Hold tours of county attractions for Ambassadors to provide first-hand experience of the sites discussed in classroom settings.
- 3. Satisfy all requirements for groups traveling to the County to ensure expectations are met and exceeded before, during and after their stay and to encourage extended and repeat visits.
 - a. Promote the Stakeholder Toolkit to County stakeholders as a tool for their use in selling and servicing their meetings and provide advice on its use.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Welcome qualified groups to the County with a planner amenity and welcome letter.
 - d. Send a survey after a group visits to assess the quality of the services provided.
 - e. Promote “Extend Your Stay” web page, which encourages all groups to add leisure time to their County stay.
 - f. Provide storage and timely fulfillment of visitor guides to groups, hotels, attractions and Certified Virginia Visitor Centers.
 - g. Order and maintain the supply of appropriate promotional items so that office staff has a ready supply of branded items for client gifts.
- 4. Continue to increase traffic to Fairfax County during the National Cherry Blossom Festival through sponsorship of events at County attractions, such as the Workhouse Arts Center, Green Spring Gardens, Meadowlark Botanical Garden, Children’s Science Center and others; as well as online promotion of these events.
 - a. Continue to increase traffic to Fairfax County during the National Cherry Blossom Festival through sponsorship of events at County attractions, such as the Workhouse Arts Center, Green Spring Gardens, Meadowlark Botanical Garden, Children’s Science Center and others; as well as online promotion of these events.
 - b. Create an amenity for distribution at these events which promotes Visit Fairfax
 - c. Hold an event during the Festival at the Visitor Center, increasing attendance at the Center and promoting the Center as a venue offering County and Festival information.



COMMUNICATIONS



These days, when the speed of the news cycle is staggering, compounded by a certain level of mistrust and uncertainty, it becomes more imperative than ever to offer a consistent, trustworthy, and authentic approach to the story being told. Luckily, the history, culture, technology, location, and status of Fairfax County gives Visit Fairfax an innumerable quantity of positive stories to share.

Visit Fairfax has diligently worked to grow the distribution of these stories and increase the conversation about Fairfax County in the press. In recent years, we have seen strengthened relationships with local, national and international members of the media, an increased number of press placements (thanks in part to an increased number of hosted journalists and familiarization tours), an accelerated growth of followers and engagement on our social media platforms, and more demand than ever for partnership opportunities with influencers, stakeholders, and the local community.

While public and media relations has always been rooted in tradition, we are in a time that demands outside-the-box thinking and



innovative approaches to content marketing, communications, and storytelling. In the new fiscal

year, Visit Fairfax will continue to think differently when it comes to external and internal communications and take an integrated approach by utilizing new tools, new and existing content and assets and new partnerships to positively impact the conversation about Fairfax County.

Visit Fairfax will regularly connect with journalists and members of the media through customized pitches and inquiry responses, experiential (and targeted) familiarization tours, in-market deskside missions and press tradeshow, and seasonal, news-focused press releases, thus creating destination awareness and a demand for visitation.

Continued communication with the online community will ensure that our tourism message is told in a visual and digestible way, through highly-targeted and consistent social media posts and conversations, supportive sharing of user-generated content (UGC), niche social media advertising, and direct linkage to new featured content created for Visit Fairfax's exciting new blog.

Internally, Visit Fairfax also must serve as a trusted resource and expert of the local tourism industry for our stakeholders and local community. We will continue outreach to the hospitality industry through our Insider Newsletter and several other communication deliverables, as well as new initiatives designed to encourage engagement and collaboration with the industry.

The primary goals of this communications plan will be achieved through numerous strategies and tactics: facilitate press coverage, create and distribute engaging content, educate our local tourism industry and potential visitors, and advocate for our stakeholders and County. As always, Visit Fairfax will continuously measure, adjust, improve and refresh these strategies and tactics as needed throughout the year to deliver the most effective results.

What

Increase the County's Share of the Online Conversation

Positive media coverage

Updates and news for stakeholders

Community involvement and support

Partnership with state and regional tourism/PR organizations

Curate user-generated content

Content creation and distribution

Where

Online/Social Media Outlets

Local Media

National Media

International Media

Newsletters/eBlasts

Blog

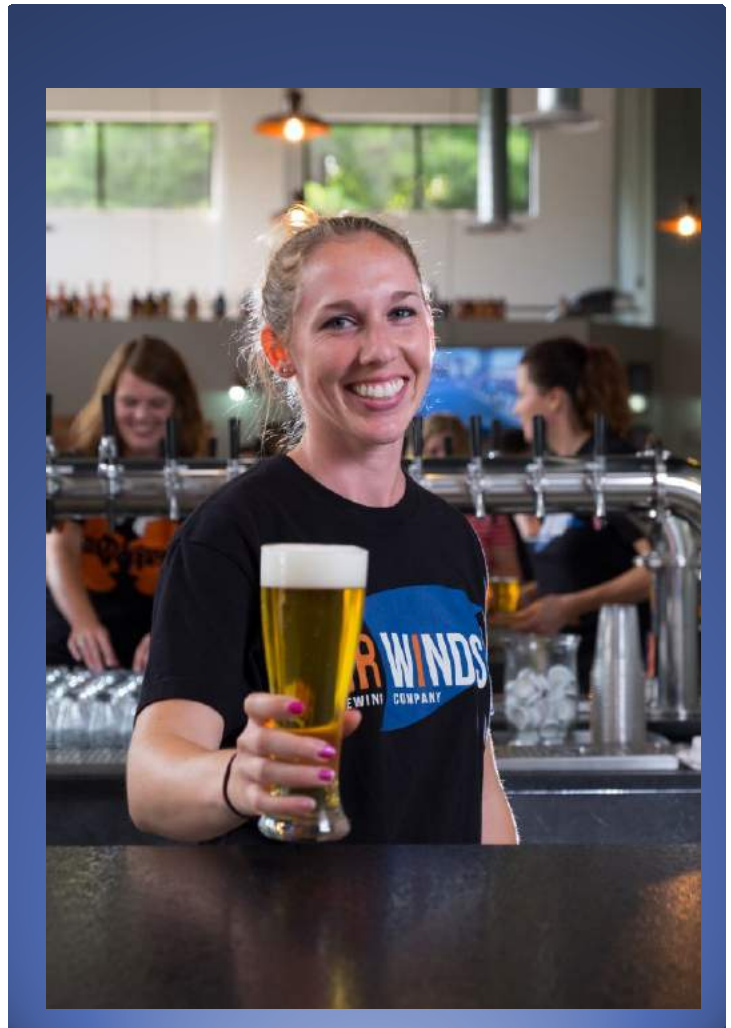
PR Tradeshow/Networking

Press releases

FAM Tours

Strategic Objectives

1. Further develop public relations initiatives by proactively seeking out and placing media coverage in national publications to build awareness about Visit Fairfax and Fairfax County.
2. Strengthen content marketing efforts through owned and shared media with new integrated approach to storytelling.
3. Seek out and develop strong relationships 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.
4. Cultivate and fine-tune 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.
5. Find new ways of using existing consumer assets (website, visitor guide, app, etc.) to communicate the Fairfax County tourism message.
6. Strengthen partnership with the state and regional tourism entities to generate positive press and awareness for the County, region, and Commonwealth.
7. Strengthen partnerships with industry colleagues, public relations alliances, and stakeholders who can help spread the Fairfax County tourism message.
8. Develop partnerships and materials for consumers and stakeholders that will pique interest and encourage visitors to engage with our tourism products.
9. Leverage and draft off trending national and local events to insert Fairfax County's message into the conversation.
10. Promote in-destination brand advocacy and encourage local pride by serving as a resource and voice for the local and regional tourism industry.



External Communications Plan

1. Identify current and up-and-coming 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 to gain valuable editorial coverage in local, national, and international publications, including one specifically targeting the opening of the new National Museum of the U.S. Army for niche publications.
4. Host photography-focused familiarization tour to increase share of conversation online, but also generate new assets for promoting Fairfax County in an integrated way.
5. Distribute seasonal and campaign-focused press releases covering Fairfax County tourism product to local, national, and international media.
6. Develop new engaging and shareable content that can be utilized and distributed on the online blog module to help tell more niche and featurette stories about Fairfax County.
7. Work with local experts to bring trusted third-party stories into the fold and form relationships that will benefit Visit Fairfax for future endeavors.
8. 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.
9. Maintain fluid, daily editorial calendars to ensure messaging continuity on social media platforms, pushing out compelling, fact-based, shareable information.
10. Use the Visit Fairfax smartphone app platform to send push notifications to hundreds of subscribers with special emphasis on stakeholder offers.
11. Refresh the Official Fairfax County Visitors Guide with new and updated editorial content, imagery, and listing details to help guide visitors through the County.
12. Attend public relations tradeshow, 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 Communications Plan

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 a quarterly planning form.
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 new 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.

ACRONYM DEFINITIONS

Abbrev.	Definition	Abbrev.	Definition
ABA	American Bus Association	PMPI	Meeting Professionals International Potomac Chapter
AMPS	Association of Meeting Professionals	PRSA	Public Relations Society of America
ASAE	American Society of Association Executives	RSAA	Receptive Services Association of America
CRUSA	Capital Region USA	RFN	Reunion Friendly Network
DMAI	Destination Marketing Association International	SEM	Search Engine Marketing
FAM Trip	Familiarization Trip	SEO	Search Engine Optimization
HARO	Help a Reporter Out (PR lead source)	SGMP	Society of Government Meeting Professionals
MATPRA	Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance	SYTA	Student & Youth Travel Association
MPI	Meeting Planners International	TAP	Travel Alliance Partners
MWAA	Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority	TEAMS	Travel, Events, & Management in Sports
NASC	National Association of Sports Commissions	USTA	U.S. Travel Association
NATCAP	Society of Government Meeting Professionals National Capital Chapter	VADMO	Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations
NTA	National Tour Association	VSAE	Virginia Society of Association Executives
PPC	pay-per-click advertising	VTC	Virginia Tourism Corporation

Appendices

Performance Measures

Staff

Activity Schedules

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Market Segment	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
Leisure Groups	Number of New Overnight Programs
	Number of Definite Room Nights
	Number of Visitors
	Number of New Daytrip Programs

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Market Segment

Performance Measure

Consumer

Website Unique Visitors

Advertising Reader Response

Online Marketing Conversion

Public Relations

Number of Media Stories

Social Engagement

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ACTIVITY CALENDAR — GROUP SALES

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Business	YMRC Event Warwick, RI 7/28-30/19	Connect Mkt Louisville, KY <u>8/26-28/2019</u> Client outing to Wolf Trap Fairfax, VA <u>8/30/19</u> Overseas Brats Gathering New Orleans, LA 8/15-18/19	Army Reunion Planner Fam Fairfax, VA <u>9/5-8/2019</u>	VSAE Fall Mkt Richmond, VA <u>10/3/2019</u>	VA-1 Conf Arlington, VA <u>11/10-12/2019</u> VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u> Army Museum Planner Event <u>11/21/19</u> Connect Mktpl Washington, DC <u>Date TBD</u>		IPEC St. Pete, FL 1/26-29/2020	Family Reunion Workshop Fairfax County, VA <u>2/15/2020</u> YMRC Event Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u>	Rendezvous South Winston-Salem, NC <u>3/2-4/2020</u> Connect Mkt Chicago, IL <u>Date TBD</u>	VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u>	VSAE Annual Mtg Williamsburg, VA <u>5/3-5/20</u> SGMP NEC Conf St. Louis, MO 5/19-21/2020	TMRN Educ Summit Colorado Springs, CO <u>Date TBD</u>
Leisure	CRUSA Int'l Mktg Summit <u>Date TBD</u>	SYTA Birmingham, AL <u>8/9-13/2019</u>	CRUSA FAM Tour Fairfax County <u>Date TBD</u> BrandUSA India Sales Mission <u>9/22-27/19</u> Active America China Receptive Los Angeles, CA 9/17-18/19	China Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> Spotlight on the Mid-Atlantic Montgomery, MD <u>10/31-11/2/2019</u>		NTA Forth Worth, TX 12/8-12/19	ABA Omaha, NE <u>1/10-14/2020</u>	IITA Summit St. Pete Clearwater <u>2/2-5/2020</u> NVVC Sales Mission Date TBD	CRUSA China Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> Active America China San Diego, CA <u>3/30-4/3/2020</u>	CRUSA FAM Tour Fairfax County <u>Date TBD</u>		IPW 2019 Las Vegas, NV <u>5/30-6/3/2020</u> TAP Dance Location TBD <u>Dates TBD</u>
Sports		Connect Sports Mktplace Louisville, KY <u>8/26-28/2019</u>		NASC 4S Summit Providence, RI <u>10/8-10/2019</u>	TEAMS Conf & Expo Anaheim, CA 11/11-14/2019			VA Sports Summit Norfolk, VA 2/4-5/2020		NASC Sports Event Symp. Kansas City, MO <u>4/20-23/2020</u>		

ACTIVITY CALENDAR — MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Business	Advertising TMRN Magazine Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> DMAI special section	Advertising <u>Meetings Today</u>	Advertising Reunions Magazine Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u>	Advertising <u>Meetings Today</u> Advertising <u>Convention South</u> Advertising <u>Military Officer Magazine</u> Advertising <u>Government Connections</u> Advertising TMRN Magazine	Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u>		Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> Advertising TMRN Magazine	Advertising <u>Smart Meetings</u>	Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> Advertising <u>Meetings Today</u> Advertising <u>Reunions Magazine</u> Advertising <u>Military Officer Magazine</u>	Advertising <u>Government Connections</u> Advertising TMRN Magazine	Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> Advertising <u>Convention South</u>	
Leisure	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u>	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> International <u>eNewsletters</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Q VA Magazine Student Grp Tour Magazine	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Group Tour Magazine	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> International <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> America's Best <u>Vacations</u>	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Q VA Magazine CRUSA Co-ops	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Int'l <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> 2019 Visitor Guide CRUSA Guide & <u>Website</u>	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean & Int'l <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> VTC Leisure <u>Travel Guide</u> Touoperatorland <u>Travel Site</u>	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> International <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u>	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean & Int'l <u>eNewsletters</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> CRUSA <u>eNewsletter</u> Birding Campaign Beer Campaign	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> International <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Spring Banner <u>Campaign</u> Amer Best Vaca	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean & Int'l <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Spring Banner <u>Campaign</u> BLeisure Campaign Q VA Magazine	General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Spring Banner <u>Campaign</u>
Sports			Advertising NASC <u>eNewsletter</u>		Advertising SportsEvents Mag e-vertorial			Advertising NASC <u>eNewsletter</u>	Advertising SportsEvents Mag e-vertorial			

ACTIVITY CALENDAR – COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Audience	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Outside Media	HARO/Direct Media Pitches MATPRA Quarterly Meeting Hagerstown, MD 7/19/19	HARO/Direct Media Pitches Press Release FAM Tour	HARO/Direct Media Pitches MATPRA Marketplace Greater Richmond, VA 9/24-26/2019	HARO/Direct Media Pitches MATPRA Qtr Mtg - Butler Co, PA 10/18/19 Army Museum Press Fam 10/9-11/19	HARO/Direct Media Pitches FAM Tour Press Release	HARO/Direct Media Pitches	HARO/Direct Media Pitches MATPRA Qtr Meeting Roanoke, VA 1/19/20	HARO/Direct Media Pitches	HARO/Direct Media Pitches Press Releases FAM Tour NVTP NYC Mission	HARO/Direct Media Pitches NVTP Canada Mission FAM Tour MATPRA Qtr Mtg Dewey Beach, DE 4/17/20	HARO/Direct Media Pitches FAM Tour Tourism Week Media Event	HARO/Direct Media Pitches Press Release FAM Tour IPW – Media Las Vegas, NV PRSA Conference
Internal Stakeholders	Amb. Newsletter	Stakeholder Newsletter Amb. Newsletter	Amb. Newsletter Taxi Amb. Class Hotel Amb. Class	Stakeholder Newsletter Amb. Newsletter Amb. Tour GMU & NOVA Amb. Class	Amb. Newsletter Hotel Amb. Class GMU Amb. Class	Stakeholder Newsletter Ambassador Newsletter	Ambassador Newsletter Hotel Amb. Class	Stakeholder Newsletter Ambassador Newsletter Sales Amb. Class	Amb. Newsletter Taxi Amb. Class NOVA Amb. Class Hotel Amb. Class	Stakeholder Newsletter Ambassador Newsletter	Stakeholder ICW Nat'l Tourism Wk Amb. Newsletter Hotel Amb. Class	Stakeholder Newsletter Ambassador Newsletter Taxi Amb. Class Amb. Tour
Misc	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Valor Awards Sponsorship Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Innovation Awards Sponsorship Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Blog Content	Social Media Outlets App Push Notifications Celebrate Fairfax Booth Blog Content