



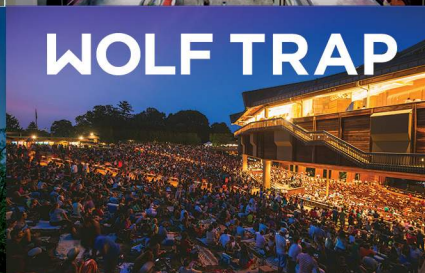
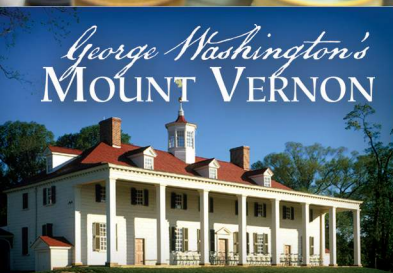
Fairfax County, Virginia
Connect with America

2018-2019

Sales, Marketing, & Business Development Plan



Our Mission: To Market, Sell, and Promote Fairfax County as a Preferred Destination for Visitors in the areas of Business, Leisure, and Sports Travel through Exciting Products, Programs and Activities that will Distinguish Fairfax County and Contribute to the Overall Economic and Social Growth for our Citizens and Communities.



SALES, MARKETING, & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| President's Letter | 2 |
| Environmental Analysis | 3 |
| Sales and Marketing Plan | 4 |
| Business Market..... | 5 |
| Sports Market..... | 10 |
| Leisure Group Market | 17 |
| Leisure Consumer Market..... | 22 |
| Visitor Services Plan..... | 28 |
| Communications Plan | 31 |
| Acronyms and Definitions..... | 35 |
| Appendices | 36 |
| Performance Measures..... | 37 |
| Staff..... | 39 |
| Activity Calendars | 40 |
| Group Sales | 40 |
| Marketing and Advertising | 41 |
| Communications | 42 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



It is indeed my great pleasure to share our 2018 – 2019 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". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Barry Biggar, CDME
President & CEO
Visit Fairfax

2018 – 2019 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 ample 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 as opposed to as a cohesive group.

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, new opportunity exists for both individual travelers and group event planners. The new St. James sports complex opening this year presents opportunity within the sports segment with additional facilities planned in the years ahead. 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. Additionally, with the opening of the National Museum of the United States Army now on the horizon, great opportunity exists for military reunions. Finally, additional funding mechanisms 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 uncertain budgeting process of the federal government 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.

SALES, MARKETING, & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

One of the greatest things about 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. 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 using 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.

*“Creativity is
intelligence
having fun.”*

- Albert Einstein

Using new technologies, we have planned new 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

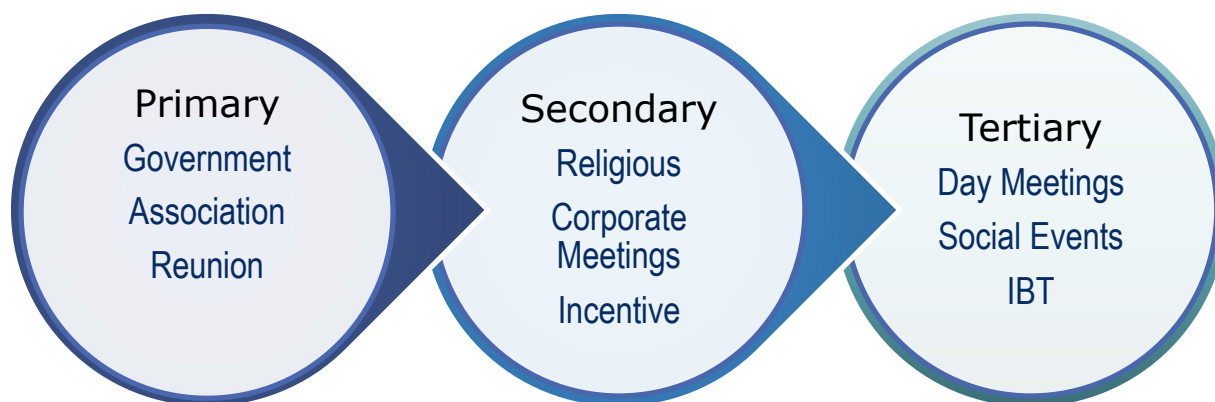
Secondary

- 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 two 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 Connect Marketplace Chicago in March of 2018, and we’ll add Destination Southeast in Palm Beach Gardens, FL in September of this year. 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 follow up our hosting of fifty reunion planners in June of this year (in conjunction with The Military Reunion Network) with a “fam trip” style event in the summer of 2019, tailored specifically to Army reunion groups, in conjunction with the upcoming opening of the National Museum of the United States Army in early 2020. Likewise, we have extended an offer to Smart Meetings magazine to co-host a meeting planner event with them in July of 2019, timed to showcase the opening of the Metrorail Silver line extension to Dulles Airport in mid-2020.

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 mid-2019 and continuing through the line’s scheduled opening in mid-2020.



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 also be running display advertising in issues of Military Officer magazine and continue our attendance at military reunion planner events hosted by The Military Reunion Network (TMRN) and Your Military

Reunion Connection (YMRC).

We will dramatically expand our prospecting efforts with the association, corporate, and Government meeting planner communities with a new, targeted electronic campaign in connection with Connect Magazine. The campaign will identify planners coming to the magazine’s Web site by their interest in Fairfax County, allowing us to compile a far richer database of targets for prospecting and follow-up.

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 begin offering customized, full-color “Save the Date” postcards to groups, highlighting our Fairfax County attractions. We’ll provide the postcards (at a minimal cost), 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.

The government meetings market has experienced significant improvements since a major spending scandal at a Las Vegas conference rocked the General Services Administration more than seven years ago. While the stigma of the scandal remains, most government planners agree that the industry is over a major hump. Despite the optimistic economic outlook currently reflected in the rising stock market, the transition to the new Trump administration has not been without its challenges. Shutdowns, threats of shutdowns, budget cuts, hiring freezes, and unfilled top- and mid-level positions in the administration have all contributed to a state of uncertainty in this market. Nonetheless, opportunities available to Fairfax County stakeholders have continued to present themselves, and Visit Fairfax continues to expand government business prospects through database research, trade association activities, and partnerships with federal and state organizations that help stakeholders do business with the government.

Strategic Objectives

1. Continue to develop relationships within the Association meeting planning community.
2. Continue to develop relationships within the reunion and hobbyist event planning community.
3. Continue to develop relationships within the federal, state, and local government meeting planning community.

What

Tradeshows

Print and Online Advertising

Direct Sales

Membership and Sponsorship

Group Fams & Client Events

Where

Washington, DC

Northern Virginia

Richmond

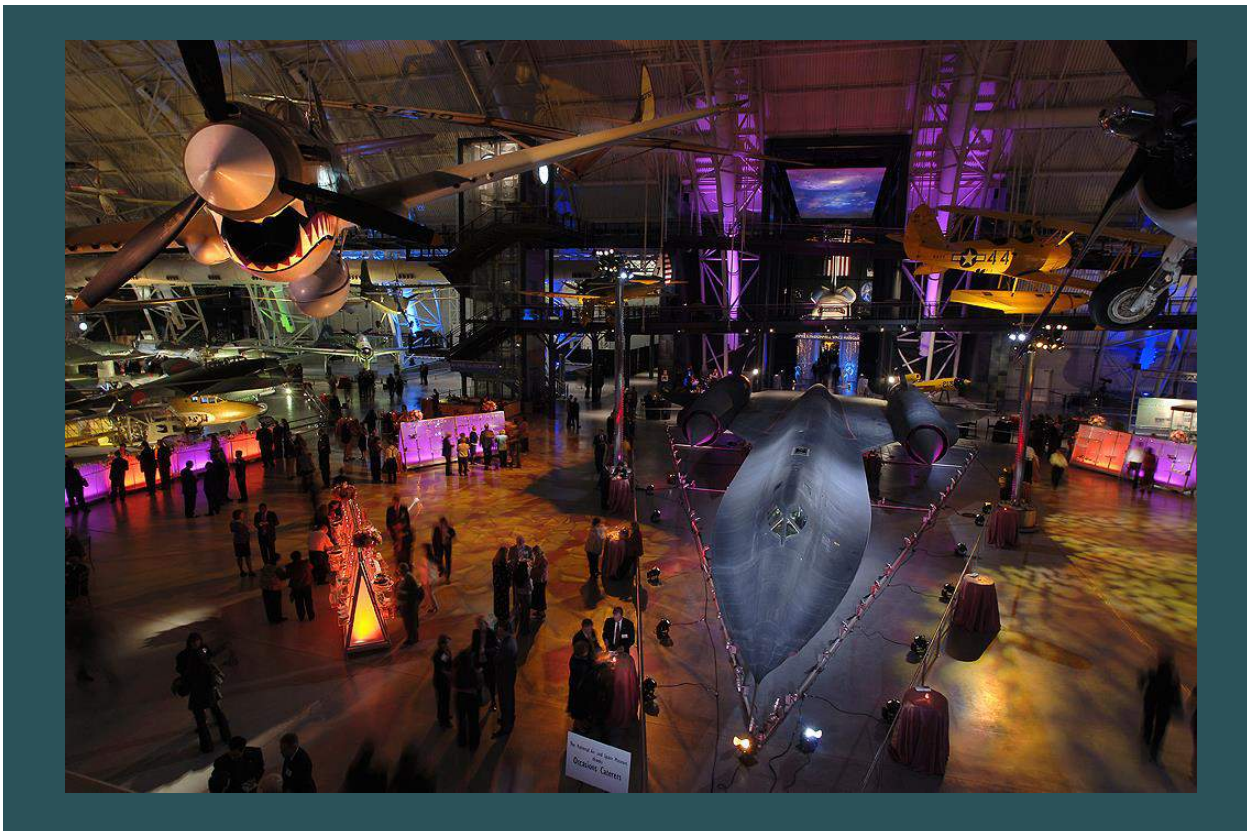
National Shows Close to Home

Tactics

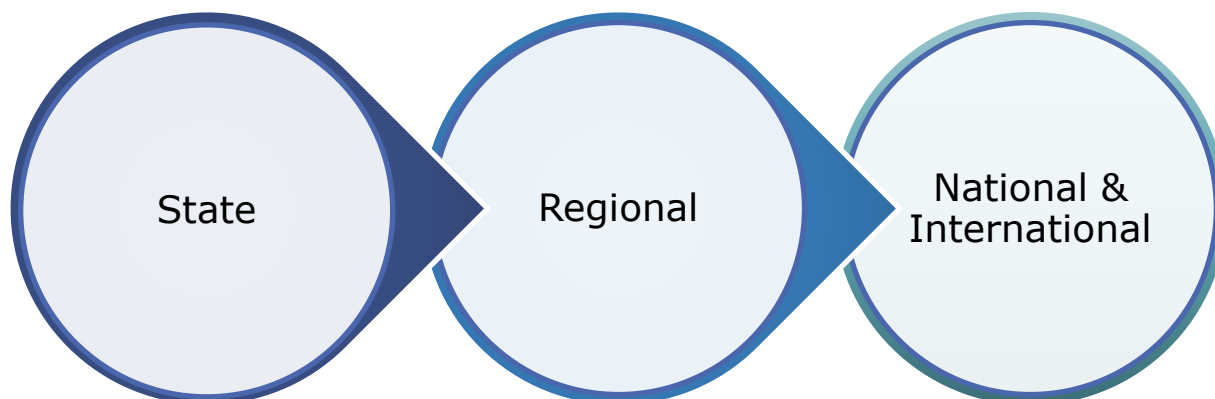
1. Continue to develop relationships within the Association meeting planning community.
 - a. Ensure visibility for Fairfax County hotels at association tradeshow including Connect (Salt Lake City, Washington, DC and Chicago), Smart Meetings events, Convention South Rendezvous South, and Northstar Travel Media Destination Southeast.
 - b. Expand relationships with state association meeting planners through the VSAE Fall Expo, along with County hotel partners.
 - c. Provide our hotels with access to state association planners through a semi-annual Visit Fairfax sales blitz.
 - d. Bid to host Smart Meetings for an event here in July of 2019.
 - e. Initiate a targeted marketing plan in conjunction with Connect Magazine to automatically identify planners visiting the magazine's Web site who have an "above average" level of interest in meeting in Fairfax County.
 - f. Utilize the bi-monthly group planner eNewsletter to deliver information on County special offers and articles of interest.
 - g. Promote the scheduled 2020 arrival of Metrorail service to Washington Dulles International Airport via trade show signage, collateral, and special events for local meeting planners.
 - h. Create and promote customized Fairfax County "Save the Date" cards as a low-cost, high-value-added service available to planners as an attendance building tool
2. Continue to develop relationships within the reunion and hobbyist event planning community.
 - a. Attend two TMRN ConFam events and two YMRC events to reach military reunion planners and convince them to meet in Fairfax County.
 - b. Continue ongoing direct mail / e-mail campaigns to generate military reunion leads, especially Army reunion leads.
 - c. Host our annual Family Reunion Workshop to showcase Fairfax County to family reunion planners.
 - d. Ensure visibility among reunion planners through advertising in Reunions magazine, and e-blasts to the magazine's planner database.
 - e. Reach special interest and hobbyist event planners through Connect Marketplace and Rendezvous South.
 - f. Utilize the bi-monthly group planner eNewsletter to deliver information on County special offers and articles of interest,
3. Continue to develop relationships within the federal, state, and local government meeting planning community.
 - a. Expand relationships with planners through Visit Fairfax's national membership in the Society of Government Meeting Professionals (SGMP), as well as through SGMP's local National Capital (NATCAP) chapter:
 - Network with planners at NATCAP monthly meetings.



- Partner with Fairfax County hotel to host a NATCAP meeting in the county.
 - Sponsor the NATCAP March Expo and Education event to enhance the visibility of county stakeholders.
 - Attend SGMP's National Education Conference to network with planners throughout the U.S.
 - Reach local, state, and national planners through advertisements in SGMP's Government Connections magazine.
 - Conduct sales calls with SGMP-member and other government planners in the Washington, DC metro area.
- b. Strengthen relationships with the Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Program (VA PTAP) and the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (VA SBSD) to educate county stakeholders about federal and state government procurement best practices and opportunities:
- Host a "Bidding on Government Meetings Boot Camp" in conjunction with VA PTAP and VA SBSD to maximize sales efforts of hoteliers targeting this market segment.
 - Promote VA PTAP and VA SBSD's counseling services (complimentary) and networking events to provide hoteliers with additional educational and sales opportunities.
 - Participate in VA PTAP's Bid Match Service program to supplement Visit Fairfax's main government lead sources (i.e., FedBizOpps.gov and eVA.virginia.gov).



SPORTS

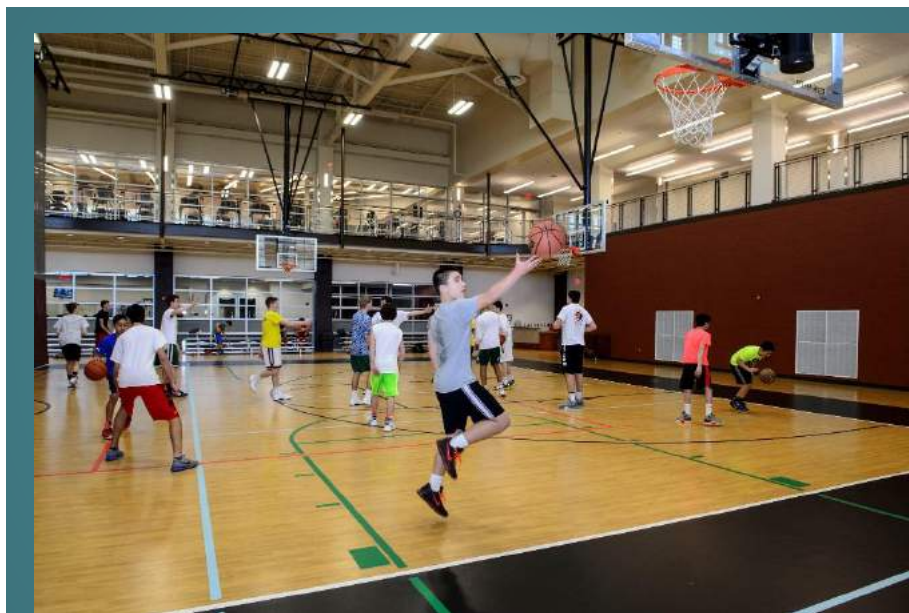


The sports events market is flourishing in the United States. The total economic impact of this market was \$11.4 billion in 2017, with an additional \$854 million in revenue generated over the previous year. This 8.1% growth was fueled by an ever-increasing number of tournaments as well as the rising costs associated with event participation. Since youth sports are viewed by many parents as a “necessity” rather than a luxury, and because travel tournaments have become a predictable and lucrative revenue stream for event organizers, the sports market continues to be one of the most reliable and dependable segments of the U.S. tourism industry.

With business spread throughout the year among multiple outdoor and indoor sports competitions, this market is a leading driver of group travel for Fairfax County, generating significant visitor spending

and providing a sense of civic pride among residents. But as the competition for a larger slice of the sports tourism pie has become increasingly fierce, destinations across the country – often in cooperation with their local governments – have been entering into a sort of sports facilities “arms race” to offer more tournament-capable venues with large clusters of outdoor fields, indoor courts, and other facility types. Unfortunately, Fairfax County has not kept pace in this race, which has adversely affected our ability to fully capitalize on the booming youth sports market.

You wouldn’t think this would be the case given our community’s significant investment in outdoor turf fields, for example, which were built to satisfy sports clubs’ space needs for practices, training,



and league games. Synthetic turf is often preferred over grass by event organizers since this material ensures a high-quality, even playing surface and also minimizes the chances of event cancellations due to inclement weather. Despite the total quantity of turf fields in the county (currently 91), there are only three sites with three to four turf fields. In today's marketplace, however, multi-field complexes with four or more turf fields (or high-quality grass fields) in one location are most appealing to sports event planners since such facilities provide a more festive tournament atmosphere, require less event staff, and provide convenience to college coaches who can evaluate potential recruits without the hassle of traveling to multiple locations.

The county's challenges caused by a lack of clustered field complexes are even further exacerbated by several other issues, including non-prioritization of tournaments during holiday and select weekends, one-year facility allocation cycles, potentially lengthy facility allocation response times, limited amenities/services at park and school sites, and relatively stringent inclement weather policies. For these reasons, many clients of our homegrown travel soccer tournaments (ones accounting for thousands of room nights annually) have recently relocated large segments of their tournaments – even their entire tournaments – to other local jurisdictions in Virginia (i.e., Loudoun, Stafford, Fredericksburg) or to nearby states (i.e., Delaware) offering desired field clusters and amenities/services. Until we address these challenges and issues faced by Fairfax County's bread-and-butter events, we will need to recalibrate our overall economic impact expectations for this market.



On a positive note, there is promising news regarding the potential for the sports market to generate additional business and social growth as a result of 1) a new economic development program recently established by county government; 2) several new facility developments on the horizon; and 3) the county's Sports Tourism Task Force, which was established last year to review potential tournament-capable facilities, identify sports tourism opportunities, recommend an economic impact model to evaluate these opportunities, and evaluate the need for a sports commission.

When Fairfax County hosted the 2015 World Police & Fire Games (which generated an estimated \$80+ million in economic impact, in addition to reaping tremendous financial and social benefits), we demonstrated to national and international sports governing bodies that our county is a world-class destination capable of hosting large-scale, multi-sport competitions. To capitalize on the success and momentum of the Games, we have continued to target other multi-sport

competitions that match up well with the area's tourism assets. But obtaining funding to pursue these opportunities has been a challenge.

Rights fees and funding for initial operating costs are perennial obstacles for most bidders interested in hosting large events that attract thousands of attendees. 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 and the goal to be fully funded at \$40 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.

As previously discussed, to further maximize potential in the sports market and to compete effectively on a larger scale with other destinations, adding tournament-quality athletic venues to the county's facility mix is vital. While a multi-rectangular field turf complex is more than six years away, a few exciting facility developments are in the works.

Construction on The St. James, a privately funded, 435,000-square-foot mega sportsplex, is expected to be completed by September 2018. Located in Springfield on the site of the former Washington Gas facility near Backlick Road, the Capital Beltway, and I-395, The St. James will feature a FIFA-regulation turf field with 65-foot height clearance (and special modular flooring to accommodate multiple sports); two NHL-regulation sheets of ice; four basketball/nine volleyball courts; a 50-meter, 10-lane Olympic pool; and eight international-regulation squash courts. A two-level restaurant; batting cages; golf simulators; an indoor water park with 6,000 square feet of slides, dumping buckets, and sprayers; and 20,000 square feet of obstacle courses, zip lines, climbing structures and walls, trampoline zones, an e-sports area, and party rooms will ensure that guests are nourished and entertained before and after competitions.

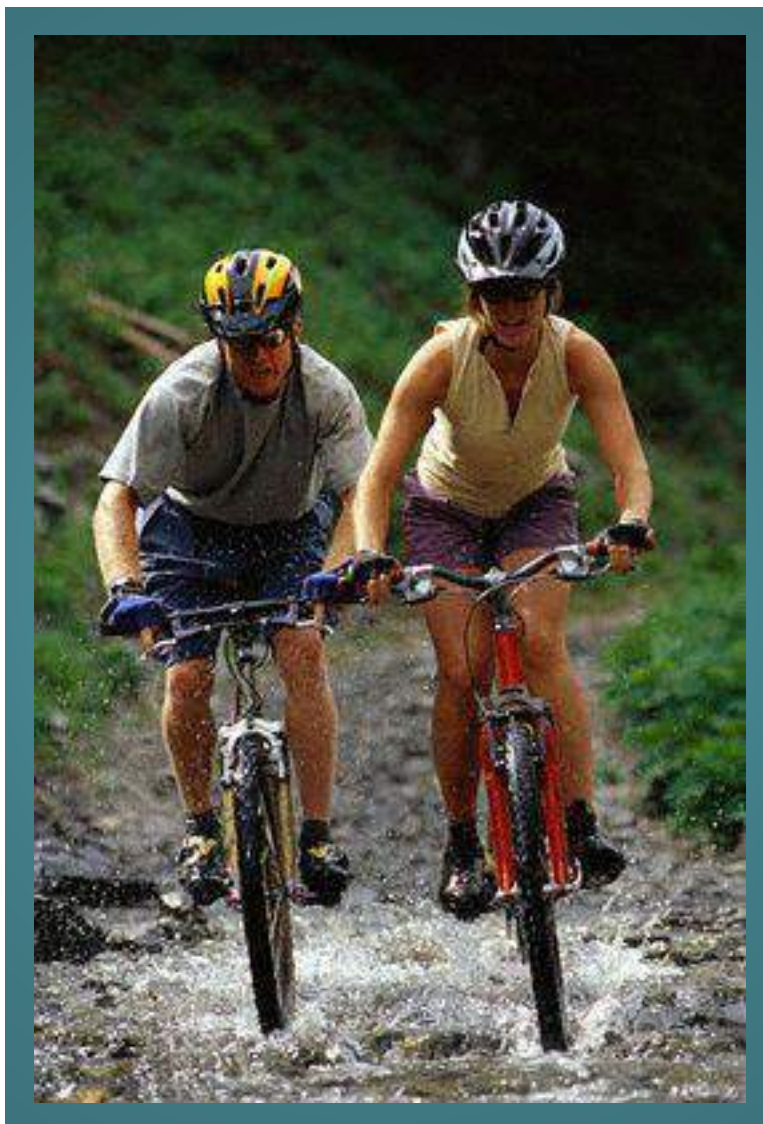


Representatives of The St. James have indicated an interest in hosting tournaments, but primarily ones that attract local residents who can potentially be converted to dues- or fee-paying members.

Because they feel that travel tournaments would disrupt regular sports programming and displace members, facility representatives will be very selective about which state, regional, national, and international competitions they will consider hosting. That said, Visit Fairfax has already facilitated a hockey tournament opportunity under serious consideration for October 2018, and there seems to be a willingness to be more open to events using squash courts and the pool since there will be less or no competition for these venues among multiple sports groups.

There is also positive movement regarding the potential development of athletic facilities at Fairfax County Park Authority locations. In November 2016, the Park Authority Board approved a \$100 million bond to upgrade parks and fields throughout the county over the next decade. As part of this bond, 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 June 2017 as a result of a motion made by Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield District) to the Board of Supervisors, the Fairfax County Sports Tourism Task Force was established to evaluate and improve sports tourism infrastructure and opportunities in the county. With membership consisting of representatives from county and state government, public schools (county, NOVA, GMU), local and regional parks, the athletic council, the hospitality community, and Visit Fairfax, the Task Force has met monthly since September 2017 to review and discuss a variety of topics: the county's current sports facilities; state, regional, and national athletic facilities of note; potential new and renovated facilities; administrative and fiscal models; issues affecting tournament directors; and event and business opportunities that could generate significant visitor spending in the county.



Noteworthy outcomes have been generated from the work of the Task Force. For example, after Visit Fairfax presented on challenges facing event organizers, facility allocation response times

improved according to directors of major soccer events. Also, through communication with the Athletic Council about Task Force matters, there is now a commitment to explore prioritizing field and court allocations for tournaments over select holiday weekends (i.e., Memorial Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day). Other positive developments include the recommendation to use the Destinations International economic impact calculator (used by Visit Fairfax) to measure the value of sports events, as well as the plan to hire a consultant to evaluate the feasibility of an indoor sportsplex and assess the value of a “sports commission” type of organization that could be created to advocate for facility investments and policy changes that would benefit the tourism community.

The ongoing efforts of Visit Fairfax to promote the county as a first-rate destination to host sports events continues to pay dividends. There are opportunities to maximize growth of existing soccer tournaments taking place over holiday weekends (e.g., The Virginian and WAGS tournaments), as well as attracting and growing tournaments in a variety of traditional and nontraditional sports using a multitude of 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.

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

**S.P.O.R.T.S. Relationships
Conference**

TEAMS Conference & Expo

NASC Sports Event Symposium

**Fairfax County Park Authority
& Public Schools**

**Northern Virginia Regional
Park Authority**

**George Mason University and
NOVA**

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

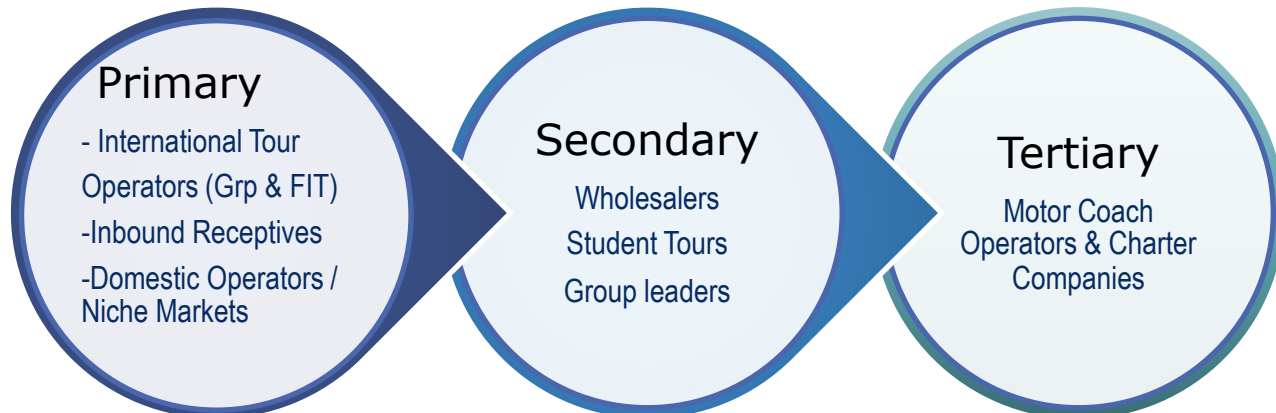
3. Provide sports stakeholders with marketing and event support services to increase tournament attendance, assist with event planning/execution, and maximize visitor spending:

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:
 - CONNECT Sports Marketplace
 - TEAMS Conference & Expo
 - S.P.O.R.T.S. Relationship Conference
 - NASC Sports Event Symposium
 - 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. Sponsor and advertise through Sports Travel Magazine and CONNECT Sports 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.
 - f. 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.
 - g. Conduct site inspections and familiarization tours to promote Fairfax County to select sports decision-makers and influencers.
 - 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.
 - a. 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.
 - b. Update database of Fairfax County and area facilities capable of hosting various sports events and competitions.

- c. Develop partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions to enhance Fairfax County's ability to bid on and host large, multi-sport events.
 - d. Lead Fairfax County Sports Committee; host meetings to network with members as well as identify, review, and bid on events capable of generating economic impact for county stakeholders.
 - e. Participate in Fairfax County Sports Tourism Task Force meetings/activities to support advocacy efforts to improve the county's sports tourism infrastructure and to develop event opportunities.
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 markets of the UK, Germany, and Canada drive our international strategy. Part of the sales effort will remain devoted to educating international tour operators and inbound receptive operators, which 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 chosen alternative for some international markets compared to other higher priced options nearby.



Inbound receptive operators are extremely strong partners to have as they contract with overseas tour wholesalers, agents and other travel producers to provide tourist services throughout the US for

their groups and FIT travelers. Receptive operators already have relationships within their key markets which allows for a fast and cost-effective way to gain access into new markets and make new suggestions to continue growth in markets that are more developed. These inbound receptive operators typically act as wholesalers, which once again allows Fairfax County to leverage the value of the dollar compared to other regional options, as these operators need to make money on top of their clients making money.

Creative suggestions for these international tour operators and receptives are becoming more in demand with the travelers use of the internet. One such suggestion is conducive itineraries for the growing Fly/Drive market. These travelers want to experience more than just the cities – which



perfectly suits Fairfax County, economical option of flying into Washington Dulles International Airport, picking up the traveler's rental car and staying at a Fairfax County hotel where the parking is either free or at a fraction of the cost of neighbor cities. This fly/drive itinerary is very common among European travelers, especially from Germany, as well as gaining in popularity among Chinese travelers.

For the second year in a row, the Capital Region saw the Chinese market as the largest international inbound market within approximately 349,000 visitors in 2016. This is driven by growth in air lift and continued marketing within the Capital Region, including a new non-stop flight on Cathay Pacific from Hong Kong to Washington Dulles International airport starting in September 2018. This statement supports how important it is to continue our outreach into the Chinese market, as there

are still many untapped segments. Within this rapidly growing market it is extremely important to remain in front of all of the shifting trends in visitation.

Following from the momentum of 2017 having been The U.S.-India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year this market is currently one of the fastest growing inbound markets. In 2016 India was the fourth largest overseas visitor market in the Capital Region with approximately 133,000 visitors. Growth continued in 2017 to the Capital Region in part thanks to the new direct Air India flight introduced half way through the year from New Delhi to Washington Dulles International Airport. The National Travel and Tourism Office has forecasted a 72 percent increase in arrivals from 2015 through 2021.

This continued international effort will also allow for Fairfax County to follow in the footsteps of Brand USA's message that the US is open for business and that we want to send "One Big Welcome" to our international visitors in this current political climate. Both the demand in the China and India markets have remained at an all-time high with regard to wanting to visit the United States while other traditional international markets dropped slightly in interest during 2017 due to the political climate, so welcoming international clients is more important now than ever before.

Demand still exists for the traditional tourism products in the region; however, the desire to explore additional niche markets 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 as the Civil War or gardens, operators can enhance their tour products by adding on these distinct activities to their itineraries. Most domestic tour planners now create itineraries a year in advance so throughout 2019 the opening of the National Museum of the United States Army can be a top-of-mind option for 2020 itineraries.

Sales efforts will also continue to focus on student groups, for which the educational component of the itinerary is particularly important, and senior groups requiring more customized itineraries.

Cooperative efforts will be leveraged through CRUSA and NVVC 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 Visitors Consortium (NVVC)
4. Show buyers 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 Travel South International Showcase scheduling appointments with established and new tour operators that are interested in bringing clients to the Capital region
 - c. Attend Active America China and Active America China Receptive Showcases for one-on-one appointments with Chinese tour operators and Chinese inbound receptive operators looking for new American tour product
 - d. Attend Brand USA’s annual India Sales Mission in an effort to break through in the India market to tour operators and media within the key cities of Mumbai, Bangalore, and New Delhi
 - e. Build on to the content for the Chinese market by increasing the number of itineraries in Mandarin and creating new itineraries based on specific tour interests
 - f. 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
 - g. Continue outreach into the Canadian market through Northern Virginia Visitors Consortium
 - h. Create more in-language content for international tour operators to have access to in order to help develop tour product

What

Sales Missions

Tradeshows

CRUSA

NVVC

Alliances/Partnerships

FAMs

Where

Domestic / U.S.A.

China

India

Canada

Germany

United Kingdom

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 in Baltimore, MD 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 Leisure Group Travel Magazine's Virginia Spotlight edition to highlight niche tour itinerary options
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 Visitors Consortium (NVVC)
 - 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. Build on to the momentum from Brand USA's India Sales Mission by participating in the India Discover USA Educational Seminars to help educate tour operators in other key cities, such as Lucknow, Chandigarh, and Jaipur
 - d. Partner with international tour operators co-operative targeted advertising and marketing campaigns through CRUSA
 - e. Partner with NVVC to develop key international markets to the region, whether this be through new itineraries, familiarization tours, or receptive sales missions
4. Show buyers 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 tour operator that attends
 - Build cohesive itineraries with surrounding destination partners as regional itineraries are key 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. With this stampede of advertisers on the web, a simple display ad does little to grasp consumer attention, and hence, Visit Fairfax has successfully employed highly interactive rich media ad units designed to grab and hold interest. But, digital advertising not only reaches consumers where they are most often making travel choices, but it also affords the opportunity to highly define the audience itself and 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.

Another significant change is the type of technology that is being used. While desktop computers were, and still are, an important means of accessing travel information on the Internet, nearly three-

quarters of visitors to fxva.com now access the website using a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet. Consequently, Visit Fairfax 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. In the new year, we plan to continue our evolution by serving dynamic content that “morphs” depending on the visitor’s location and interests.

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

Strategic Objectives

1. Continue to engage consumers with a web-centric message that helps them 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. Execute a comprehensive Search Engine Marketing program while continuing the migration from paid search to organic optimization.
4. Continue to reinforce stakeholders’ use of the Fairfax County brand message across multiple audiences.
5. Ensure maximum attention within the growing audience of mobile users through mobile-friendly platforms and outbound messaging.
6. Execute three integrated campaigns that target highly motivated niche market consumers by engaging those visitors through highly targeted messaging on highly 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 the creative and execution of an enticing BLeisure campaign.
9. Track and report online conversion through 3rd party conversion study.

What

**Advertising in
Consumer Publications**

**Fairfax County Visitors
Guide**

Niche Markets

**Area Residents &
Constituents**

Tracking Results

Where

Search Engines

**Competing
Marketplaces**

Visitor Centers

**Washington DC,
Maryland, and Virginia**

Tactics

1. Continue to engage consumers with a web-centric message that helps them 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 onto fxva.com 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 that reaches highly targeted special interests.
 - e. Publish the annual Fairfax County Visitor Guide online to be used as the primary fulfillment piece for all consumer inquiries.
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.
 - 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 25,000 new sites and attractions leads, the highest performing segment.
 - d. Attract organic opt-in subscribers through “pop-over” technology to maximize attention.
 - e. Deploy bi-monthly e-Mails to attract international travelers in addition to two opportunity e-Mails during heavier travel periods.
 - f. Entice epicurean travelers through eight e-Mails.
 - g. Maintain momentum through monthly e-Mails to General Sites & Attractions and Civil War.
 - h. Continue the bi-monthly Group Planner e-Mail program to promote the destination to meeting planners.
 - i. Promote Visit Fairfax resources and opportunities to stakeholders through the Visit Fairfax industry newsletter.

What

Authentic Tourism

Direct e-Mail

**Search Engine
Marketing &
Optimization**

**Online Display Banner &
Native Advertising**

Social Media Outlets

Mobile / Text Marketing

Where

**Northeastern Drive
Market**

**Mid-Atlantic Region &
East Coast**

**United Kingdom &
Canada**

Washington, DC

- j. Enhance e-Mail engagement by featuring links to relevant videos in prominent e-Mail header imagery.
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.
4. Continue to reinforce stakeholders' use of the Fairfax County brand message across multiple audiences.
 - 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. Reinforce continued use of the toolkit via a memorable leave-behind.
 - d. Promote use of the Visit Fairfax mobile app as a complimentary guest amenity for county businesses.
 - e. Connect and communicate with stakeholders through social media, finding new ways of reinforcing the brand message.
 - f. Seek the influence of the Marketing Advisory Committee as ambassadors of the grass roots efforts within their own peer communities.
 - g. 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. Maintain momentum for Visit Fairfax mobile technology via the Fairfax County and LoveShare smartphone APP.
 - b. Use the APP platform to send push notifications to hundreds of subscribers with special emphasis on stakeholder offers.



- c. Use geofencing technology to target consumers within a defined zip code or who are currently traveling away from home.
 - 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 three integrated campaigns that target highly motivated niche market consumers by engaging those visitors through highly targeted messaging on highly relevant content.
- a. Develop three fully integrated campaigns that utilize all of the Visit Fairfax distribution channels targeted toward two highly motivated consumer groups: Birding, Craft Beer, and Teacher Workdays.
 - b. Develop extremely focused messaging that will resonate with these passionate consumers based on their interests.
 - c. Employ 3rd generation contextual advertising campaigns using interactive rich media ad units to further reach more qualified consumers at a higher point in their decision-making process and to engage them within the ad unit itself via video and imagery.
 - d. Using dynamic website technology, present compelling content and imagery that specifically appeals to these niche interests.
 - e. Place cost-effective print ads in targeted specialty publications focusing on these consumer groups.
 - f. Employ dynamic web content to present a “Getaway on Teacher Workdays” message to all IP addresses coming from the Philadelphia area that is customized to their teacher workday weekends.
 - g. Leverage fxva.com through seasonal landing pages that highlight special events and seasonal activities.
 - h. Develop custom landing pages that “speak to” and pay off banner and print advertising with content based on the special interests of the targeted consumers.
 - i. Implement a “pick off” strategy to target other high-profile competitive destinations by using those other destinations’ key words to serve up a Fairfax County banner message.
7. Leverage inherent interest in high-demand local events by “drafting” the Visit Fairfax message off of existing consumer interest.

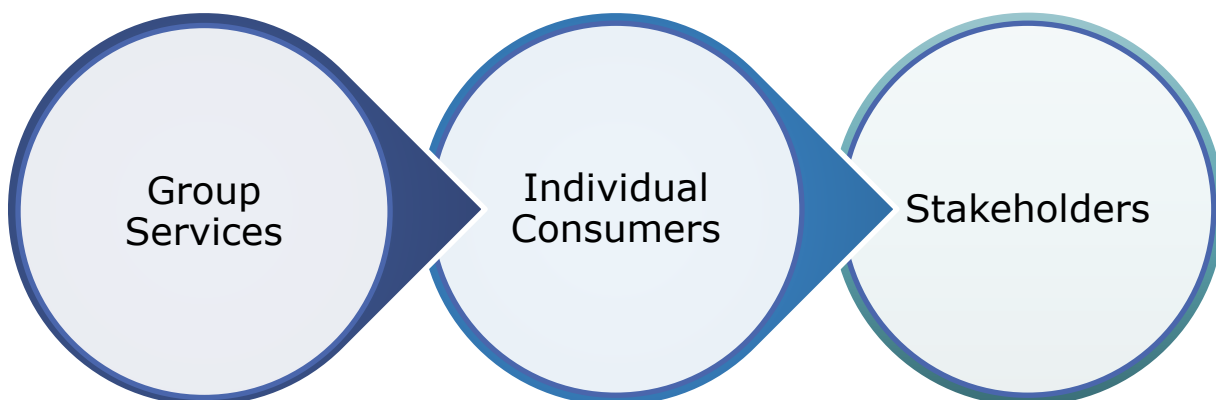


- a. “Draft” traffic to fxva.com during large-scale events (e.g. National Cherry Blossom Festival, Rolling Thunder) by carefully using specific key word content that drives Internet users to relevant programs offered by County attractions.
 - b. Use social media channels and look-a-like targeting to identify audiences that will be especially receptive to our messages.
 - c. Design custom landing pages that fulfill the advertising message specific to the audience.
 - d. Design and execute a mini-campaign targeting 30,000+ scouts attending the 24th World Scout Jamboree July 22 – August 2 in West Virginia to pull visitors from around the world to Fairfax County since the event has not been held in the US since 1967.
8. Tap into the County’s current Business Traveler through the creative and execution of an enticing BLEisure campaign.
- a. Develop a Fairfax County BLEisure campaign encouraging individual business travelers and group attendees to take advantage of the area by extending their business trip for leisure activities.



- b. 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.
 - c. Develop a BLEisure toolkit that our Visitor Services as well as our stakeholders can use with group event planners.
 - d. Create website content with a compelling BLEisure message to be spread throughout fxva.com.
 - e. Work with stakeholders to engage military travelers by curating special offers specifically for military and first responders.
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 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. Utilize group services to promote attendance in Fairfax County meetings and to ensure repeat business.
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. Promote the Visit Fairfax smart phone app.
 - c. Participate in applicable Tysons Corner promotions, including the coupon book and promoting the Center to Tysons Corner retailers.
 - d. Promote the Center through the Visit Fairfax website with free gift offer.
 - e. Market the "Extend Your Stay" program and offers.
 - f. Promote county attractions at the Celebrate Fairfax event and hold an annual cultural event in the Visitor Center during the National Cherry Blossom Festival.
 - g. Add new Fairfax County venues to Festival programs through sponsorship & support.
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, AAA staff members, 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.
 - c. Hold tours of county attractions for Ambassadors to provide first-hand experience of the sites discussed in classroom settings.

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

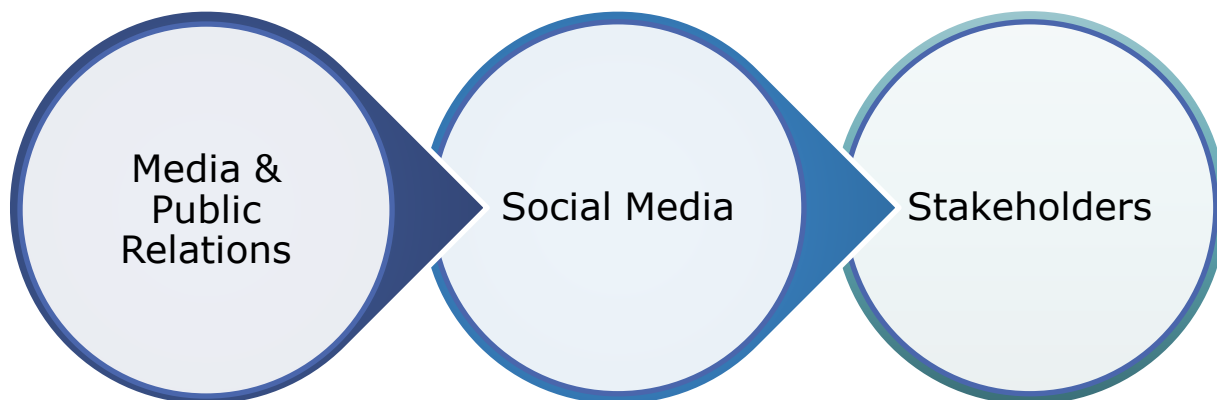
Festivals

Local Chambers & Rotary Clubs

- d. Continue to promote the Citizen Ambassador program through visits to local chamber and Rotary groups and a kit promoted on the website.
3. Utilize group services to promote attendance in Fairfax County meetings and to ensure repeat business.
 - 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



In a day and age (and political climate) where 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 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 advertising, and direct linkage to new featured content created for an advanced blog module on FXVA.com.

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 newly-designed Insider Newsletter and several other communication deliverables, as well as new initiatives designed to encourage engagement 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

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.
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 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. Reinvigorate 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. Present opportunities to our stakeholders and incoming special event organizers to further their brand through the tools and resources offered by Visit Fairfax.
5. 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.
6. 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 |

VISIT FAIRFAX STAFF

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| Barry H. Biggar, CDME President & CEO bbiggar@fxva.com 703-752-9501 | Jackie Franchi VP Marketing & Sales jfranchi@fxva.com 703-752-9506 | Sue Porter Director of Visitor Services sporter@fxva.com 703-752-9512 | Patrick Lennon Director of Marketing plennon@fxva.com 703-752-9504 | Bert Cook Office Manager bcook@fxva.com 703-752-9508 |
| Eric Kulczycky National Sales Manager, Sports, Government, & Corp. ekulczycky@fxva.com 703-752-9510 | Dean Miller National Sales Manager, Association & Reunion dmiller@fxva.com 703-752-9509 | Linda Horowitz National Sales Manager, Domestic/Int'l Group Tour lhowitz@fxva.com 703-752-9513 | Ali Morris Destination Marketing Manager amorris@fxva.com 703-752-9505 | |
| Margaret Tenenbaum Visitor Services Counselor fxva2@fxva.com 703-752-9500 | Birgit Klare Visitor Services Counselor Fxva2@fxva.com 703-752-9500 | Lori Knittel Visitor Services Counselor Fxva2@fxva.com 703-752-9500 | Jordan Sukhdeo Visitor Services Counselor Fxva2@fxva.com 703-752-9500 | |
| Katherine Moore, CPA Accountant Ross, Langan & McKendree klm@RLMCPA.com | J. Scott Hommer, III Attorney at Law Venable SHommer@Venable.com | | | |

ACTIVITY CALENDAR — GROUP SALES

| Audience | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|----------|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| Business | Smart Meetings Mid-Atlantic New York, NY <u>7/19/2018</u> VTC Sales Blitz Philadelphia, PA <u>Dates TBD</u> Client outing to Wolf Trap Fairfax, VA <u>Date TBD</u> | Connect Mkt Salt Lake City, UT <u>8/23-25/2018</u> | Destination SE Palm Beach, FL <u>9/5-8/2018</u> | VSAE Fall Mkt Richmond, VA <u>10/4/2018</u> YMRC Event Virginia Beach, VA <u>10/28-30/2018</u> | VA-1 Conf Richmond, VA <u>11/11-13/2018</u> VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u> | Connect Marketplace Washington, DC <u>Date TBD</u> | | Family Reunion Workshop Fairfax County, VA <u>2/16/2019</u> YMRC Event Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> | Rendezvous South Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> Connect Mkt Chicago, IL <u>Date TBD</u> | VA Assn Blitz Richmond, VA <u>Date TBD</u> TMRN ConFam Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> VTC Sales Blitz Location TBD <u>Date TBD</u> | VSAE Annual Mtg Hot Springs, VA <u>5/5-7/2019</u> | Smart Meetings Mid-Atlantic New York, NY <u>Date TBD</u> SGMP NEC Conf Location TBD Dates TBD |
| Leisure | CRUSA Int'l Mktg Summit <u>Date TBD</u> | SYTA Baltimore, MD <u>8/24-28/2018</u> | CRUSA FAM Tour Fairfax County <u>Date TBD</u> BrandUSA India Sales Mission <u>9/23-28/18</u> Active America China Receptive Los Angeles Date TBD | China Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> Spotlight on the Mid-Atlantic Dover, DE <u>10/10-12/2018</u> | Travel South Int'l Showcase Nashville, TN <u>11/26-29/2018</u> NTA Milwaukee, WI 11/4-11/18 | | ABA Louisville, KY <u>1/25-29/2019</u> | IITA Summit Savannah, GA <u>2/3-6/19</u> NVVC Sales Mission Date TBD | CRUSA China Sales Mission <u>Date TBD</u> Active America China Anchorage, AK <u>3/26-28/2019</u> | CRUSA FAM Tour Fairfax County <u>Date TBD</u> | | IPW 2019 Anaheim, CA <u>6/1-5/2019</u> TAP Dance <u>6/9-13/2019</u> |
| Sports | | Connect Sports Mktplace Salt Lake City <u>8/23-25/2018</u> | S.P.O.R.T.S Relationship Conf Winston-Salem 9/10-13/2018 | TEAMS Conf & Expo Louisville, KY <u>10/1-4/2018</u> | | | | | | NASC Sports Event Symp. Knoxville, TN <u>5/6-9/2019</u> | | |

ACTIVITY CALENDAR — MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

| Audience | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Business | Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> DMAI special section | Advertising <u>Smart Meetings</u> Advertising <u>Meetings Today</u> General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> | Advertising Reunions <u>Magazine</u> Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> SGMP NATCAP <u>eNewsletter</u> | Advertising <u>Meetings Today</u> Advertising <u>Convention South</u> Advertising Military <u>Officer Magazine</u> Advertising Government <u>Connections</u> | Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> | SGMP NATCAP <u>eNewsletter</u> | Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> | Advertising <u>Smart Meetings</u> | SGMP NATCAP <u>eNewsletter</u> Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> Advertising <u>Meetings Focus East</u> Advertising <u>Reunions Magazine</u> Advertising Military <u>Officer Magazine</u> | Advertising <u>Government Connections</u> | Group Planner <u>eNewsletter</u> Advertising SGMP <u>NEC Program</u> Advertising <u>ConventionSouth</u> | SGMP NATCAP <u>eNewsletter</u> |
| Leisure | General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Epicurean <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> | <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> International <u>eNewsletters</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> Q VA Magazine | 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> 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 | General & Civil War <u>eNewsletters</u> <u>SEO/SEM programs</u> Int'l <u>eNewsletter</u> Facebook <u>Targeted Ads</u> 2019 Visitor <u>Guide</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> CRUSA Visitor <u>Guide Book</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> <u>Birding Campaign</u> 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> CRUSA Int'l <u>Operator Co-op</u> <u>Amer Best Vaca</u> | 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> <u>BLEisure Campaign</u> 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 <u>SportsTravel Magazine Digital</u> | | | Advertising <u>SportsTravel Magazine Digital</u> | | | | | |

ACTIVITY CALENDAR – COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

| Audience | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| Outside Media | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> MATPRA Quarterly Meeting Hershey, PA 7/20/18 | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> Fall Activities <u>Press Release</u> FAM Tour | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> MATPRA Marketplace Laurel Highlands, PA 9/25-27/2018 Fall Press Release | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> MATPRA Qrtly Meeting Location TBD 10/19/18 | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> FAM Tour | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> What's New Press <u>Release</u> MATPRA Qtrly Meeting Location TBD 1/18/19 | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> Spring Topic <u>Press Releases</u> FAM Tour NYC Mission | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> NVVC Canada PR Mission Date TBD MATPRA Qtrly Location TBD 4/19/19 | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> Photography Fam Tour NTTW Press Release | <u>HARO/Direct Media Pitches</u> Summer Topic <u>Press Releases</u> FAM Tour NVVC Media Canada Dates TBD |
| Internal Stakeholders | <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> | <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> Taxi Amb. <u>Class</u> Hotel Amb. <u>Class</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> <u>Amb. Tour</u> GMU & NOVA <u>Amb. Class</u> | <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> Hotel <u>Amb. Class</u> GMU Amb. <u>Class</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> Ambassador <u>Newsletter</u> Taxi Amb. <u>Class</u> | <u>Ambassador Newsletter</u> Hotel Amb. <u>Class</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> Ambassador <u>Newsletter</u> Sales <u>Amb. Class</u> | <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> Taxi Amb. <u>Class</u> NOVA Amb. <u>Class</u> Hotel Amb. <u>Class</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> Ambassador <u>Newsletter</u> | <u>Stakeholder ICW Nat'l Tourism Wk</u> <u>Amb. Newsletter</u> Hotel Amb <u>Class</u> <u>Amb. Tour</u> | <u>Stakeholder Newsletter</u> Ambassador <u>Newsletter</u> Taxi Amb. <u>Class</u> |
| Misc | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> Valor Awards <u>Sponsorship</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> Innovation Awards <u>Sponsorship</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> | <u>Social Media Outlets</u> <u>App Push Notifications</u> Celebrate Fairfax <u>Booth</u> |