

Visit Lauderdale Strategies for FY25-FY26

The Visit Lauderdale Strategy Plan aims to boost global perception, tourism, and economic growth in Broward County through several key strategies.

First, it focuses on enhancing the destination's brand image and marketing efforts to attract visitors. This includes developing compelling content, building strong partnerships, and promoting inclusivity.

Second, the plan aims to expand the convention, meeting, sports, and special events market by upgrading the Broward County Convention Center, increasing sales efforts, and creating new tourism opportunities.

Third, it focuses on growing the international visitor market through data-driven strategies, leveraging major events, and strengthening relationships with travel industry partners.

Finally, the plan emphasizes building strong community relationships, developing a robust ambassador program, and utilizing data to inform decision-making.

Overall, the strategy aims to position Broward County as a premier travel destination through innovative marketing, strategic partnerships, and community engagement.

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Promote visitation to the county through "Everyone Under the Sun" marketing campaigns and promotions to sustain and drive economic growth through a series of new and innovative promotions

This section outlines strategies to boost visitation and economic growth through innovative marketing campaigns. By strengthening brand identity, creating compelling content, and forging strategic partnerships, the organization aims to position the destination as a premier travel choice. Additionally, the plan emphasizes inclusivity and thought leadership to enhance the overall visitor experience.

Keep the brand relevant and consistent

- a. Description: Complete a brand audit and refresh the visual identity every 2-3 years to ensure relevance and consistency.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Conduct research, assess the current perception of the brand, and identify areas for improvement or evolution.
- d. Tactic: Refine the campaign's visual identity, including tag line, logo, color palette, typography, and imagery to ensure consistency and relevance in-line with the evolving trends and audience preferences.
- e. Tactic: Develop campaign guidelines and style guides to maintain consistency across all brand touchpoints and communications.
- f. Tactic: Execute campaign across paid, owned, and earned media platforms.

Develop and deploy the brand story across various channels

- a. Description: Develop and publish at least one compelling brand story or narrative across various channels.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Craft compelling brand stories and narratives that resonate with target audiences, highlight the destination's unique attributes, values and experiences.
- d. Tactic: Utilize storytelling to evoke emotions, create connections and foster engagement with consumers across different demographics and cultural backgrounds.
- e. Tactic: Incorporate user-generated content and testimonials to add authenticity and credibility to the brand's narrative.

Produce and distribute high-quality content

- a. Description: Produce a minimum of three pieces of high-quality content per week, distributed across, owned, earned, and paid media channels.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Develop a content strategy that aligns with the brand's objectives and audience interests, creating diverse and engaging content formats such as web articles, videos, infographics, and interactive experiences.
- d. Tactic: Tailor content to specific audience segments and channels, optimizing different platforms and formats to maximize reach and impact.
- e. Tactic: Utilize owned, earned and paid media channels to distribute content effectively, leveraging social media, email marketing, influencer partnerships and PR outreach.

Host experiential activations in key markets

- a. Description: Host at least four experiential activations or events per year, targeting key markets and audience segments.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Create immersive brand experiences and activations that allow consumers to interact with the brand in memorable and meaningful ways. Example: Times Square activation; Sphere activation.
- d. Tactic: Host pop-up events, experiential installations, and interactive workshops that showcase the destination's culture, attractions, and hospitality. Example: Alexander Star concert series in key markets.

Establish partnerships that are mutually beneficial

- a. Description: Establish partnerships with at least three complementary brands or influencers annually, aligning with brand values and objectives.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications

- c. Tactic: Identify strategic brand partners, sponsors, and collaborators that share similar values and target demographics to amplify brand reach and credibility.
- d. Tactic: Form alliances with complementary brands, such as airlines, hotels, and travel agencies to create integrated marketing campaigns and cross promotional opportunities.
- e. Tactic: Collaborate with influencers, celebrities, and thought leaders within relevant industries to extend brand visibility and endorsement to their audiences.

Enhance the brand through innovation

- a. Description: Experiment with at least two emerging technologies and innovative platforms per year, piloting new ideas and concepts to enhance brand experiences.
- b. Owner: Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Embrace emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and immersive media to create unique and interactive brand experiences.
- d. Tactic: Leverage data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning algorithms to personalize content and messaging for individual consumers, enhancing relevance and engagement.
- e. Tactic: Explore innovative platforms and channels, such as live streaming, podcasts, and interactive chatbots to connect with audiences in new and creative ways.

Utilize high-profile events for brand awareness

- a. Description: Partner with prestigious sporting and special events to host their events in Broward; leverage branding opportunities, athlete endorsements, and exclusive hospitality experiences to reach a wider audience.
- b. Owner: Sports and Special Events Sales, Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: Utilize made-for-TV events like the Tournament of Roses Parade, The Catch (fishing tournament), etc. to increase brand awareness.
- d. Tactic: Seek high-profile televised (or events with name recognition) and host them in Broward County to generate exposure to a wide audience.
- e. Tactic: Research unique marketing / branding opportunities via global brands in the soccer, cricket, sailing, fishing, e-sports, auto racing, etc. markets.

Promote LGBT+ visitation and brand awareness through presence at LGBT+ event(s)

- a. Description: By identifying and engaging organizers of premier LGBT+ events, Greater Fort Lauderdale's has the opportunity to showcase our inclusivity to reach a wider audience.
- b. Owner: Inclusion and Accessibility
- c. Tactic: Create a very visible presence at LGBT+ events in Provincetown, MA; Palm Springs, CA and Tel Aviv in FY 24-26 through print and digital advertising and on -the -ground resources.

Promote the destination's accessibility

- a. Description: As a tourism stakeholder, Greater Fort Lauderdale has the opportunity to educate visitors about our destination's equal access for people with visible and invisible disabilities.
- b. Owner: Inclusion and Accessibility
- c. Tactic: Collaborate with several established, disability advocates such as Travelability, Wheel of the World, and AccessNow to create specific content featuring Greater Fort Lauderdale.
- d. Tactic: Promote the deployment of theHidden Disabilities Sunflower program, the dedicated sensory room, and the Autism Travel Professional certification at FLL andBCCC, and encourage major cruise lines with homeports/offices in Broward to become members.
- e. Tactic: Create an innovative accessibility experience at the Broward County Convention Center.
- f. Tactic: Engage our industry partners to expand their website descriptions, Visit Lauderdale partner listings and advertising to include and highlight their specific accessibility services and amenities.

Be recognized as a thought-leader

- a. Description: Further widen the number of staff recognized at industry events, in awards, and certifications to develop a reality where Visit Lauderdale is recognized as a leader in the destination marketing industry.
- b. Owner: All
- c. Tactic: Obtain staff certification in CDME, CMP, etc.
- d. Tactic: Have staff propose and present at DI, ESTO, etc.
- e. Tactic: Apply for and win awards for marketing, sales, and operations.

Expand conventions, meetings, sports, and special events share of overnight market

This section of the plan outlines expanding the share of overnight market for meetings, sports, and special events in Broward County. The plan includes strategies to enhance the Broward County Convention Center, boost demand during off-peak periods, and increase sales efforts. Additionally, it aims to develop new tourism opportunities and foster collaboration among departments.

Create a sense of place at and around the Broward County Convention Center

- a. Description: Meeting planners, show organizers, event attendees and exhibitors want to feel connected to the community they are visiting. Choreographing a vibrant district around the Convention Center creates a richer experience for visitors – including increasing the spend into the local economy. BCCC should be a connective tissue in the community that is a catalyst for economic development and community revitalization.
- b. Owner: Administration and Research
- c. Tactic: Deploy a strategic art plan (via the Cultural Commission) that features a centerpiece “Instagrammable” art piece and art treatments in locations that can cultivate excitement.
- d. Tactic: Create a branded Convention and Port district experience that enhances walkability, positive perceptions, and increases the area’s value proposition to meeting and sport planners, as well as general visitors.
- e. Tactic: Encourage investment in additional lodging properties along the 17th Street corridor to increase room package.
- f. Tactic: Name and establish a brand for the Center to create a strong positive association with groups.
- g. Tactic: Complete cosmetic and operational renovations within the West Convention Center building to create a sellable experience in the existing building.
- h. Tactic: Implement green programs at the Broward County Convention Center, including electric vehicle charging, electric utility vehicles, and maintaining LEED status.

Utilize the Broward County Convention Center and Headquarters Hotel to book new business

- a. Description: Utilizing the newly renovated and expanded Broward County Convention Center, increase number of large-scale events that drive affluent convention and sports business.
- b. Owner: Group Sales, Sports Sales
- c. Tactic: Work with area hotels to increase room block contribution to facilitate full-scale citywide convention bookings.
- d. Tactic: Aggressively sell to full-scale citywide conventions in the 2,001 to 5,000 rooms on peak market to establish annual (and more often) large events.
- e. Tactic: Aggressively sell to citywide conventions in 900-2,000 on peak markets to fill convention calendar around full-scale citywides.

Identify and drive demand during need months through research/data and discussions with partners

- a. Description: Further integrate research and information into decision-making processes to ensure appropriate markets are being targeted at appropriate times to generate the best results.
- b. Owner: Administration and Research
- c. Tactic: Build a comprehensive living travel profile of specific target groups. (ex. This is what luxury travelers do; this is what Brightline visitors do; etc.)
- d. Tactic: Build version two of the partner research resource center and deploy new, more relevant historic and future-focused data resources for partners.

Bid on sports and meeting planner tradeshow/events to expose planners to the destination

- a. Description: Bid on high-profile tradeshow that bring meeting and sports planners to the destination in bulk.
- b. Owner: Group Sales, Sports and Special Events Sales
- c. Tactic: Explore hosting and bid on larger sports planner conferences (Sports ETA 2029 [bidding 4/2025] and/or TEAMS 2030) and/or smaller sports tourism conferences (US Sports Congress, ACES, SPORTS Relationship Conference).
- d. Tactic: Explore hosting and bid on ASAE event(s): Fellows, Five Star Weekend, CEO Symposium, Exceptional Boards; PCMA Educon and Cvent Connect.

Invest in increased direct-sales efforts for meetings

- a. Description: Expose and educate more planners about our destination and the capabilities of the Broward County Convention Center's expanded campus.
- b. Owner: Group (MICE) Sales
- c. Tactic: Heavy focus on national association and citywide business, by staging a LED truck outside of targeted conventions being held in competitive cities. Advertisement would feature the expanded BCCC and its waterfront aspects and include special citywide group offer promo.
- d. Tactic: Target vertical markets: healthcare, financial, pharma, tech and insurance via lunch and learns and client dinners across the country.
- e. Tactic: Increase client events and sales calls to Association Management Companies (AMCs) in heavily association-based markets of Mid-Atlantic and Midwest and pursue multi-management tradeshow companies.
- f. Tactic: Produce signature showcase client events in targeted cities (NYC, Boston, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Minneapolis) recruiting the efforts and participation of our hotel GMs and DOSs.
- g. Tactic: Begin to develop international meetings and conventions market. Prospect and target groups and position our destination as a similar stress-free option with better value.
- h. Tactic: Utilize Cvent partnership to drive more leads to partner properties through new "you might also like" program that encourages meeting planners to add Broward hotels to their RFPs sent to competitive markets.

Introduce a new unique, creative tradeshow activation experience

- a. Description: Raise planner interest in destination and drive more traffic to tradeshow booths.
- b. Owner: Group Sales
- c. Tactic: Create an identity/name for the BCCC (such as the Vegas Sphere) and use this to build name recognition and messaging throughout the year.
- d. Tactic: Create dynamic videos / drone footage of Convention Center district and BCCC complex highlighting all differentiating features (Resort-environment - Hydro plaza / Water Taxi) and stimulating excitement for pre and post-offerings like cruises.
- e. Tactic: Invest in relevant promotional activation opportunities at tradeshows that align with the brand.
- f. Tactic: Look at larger shows and consider possibility of collaborating and booth sharing with WPB to drive more traffic and cross-selling opportunities.

Utilize IPW 2026 to create a long-term systemic sales approach for Group and Sports

- a. Description: Showcase the increased size and capabilities of the Broward County Convention Center to planners.
- b. Owner: Group Sales, Sports and Special Events Sales
- c. Tactic: Promote IPW at all client events, tradeshows to create buzz throughout industry.
- d. Tactic: Identify, create list, and invite key qualified planners to attend destination preview during IPW.
- e. Tactic: Engage U.S. Travel's Vice President of Group Travel to establish support to add convention and sports planner segments to IPW.
- f. Tactic: Work with partner hotels to recruit interest, assistance, and support.

Grow and re-align sales teams

- a. Description: Increase number of meeting planner interactions, sales activities ultimately more business opportunities.
- b. Owner: Group Sales, Sports and Special Events Sales
- c. Tactic: Create sales model whereby some sellers are exclusively focused on citywide convention center business while others focus on serving individual hotels.
- d. Tactic: Add more sellers to create double sales coverage (conventions and individual hotel sales) for each region.
- e. Tactic: Collaborate with Global Trade to add international sales efforts; consider adding international position.

Develop a new group sponsorship incentive program to better serve the hotel community.

- a. Description: Boost business in low demand periods and encourage better arrival patterns and stimulate future bookings.
- b. Owner: Group Sales
- c. Tactic: Create multiple hotel incentive programs; one that will promote Sunday arrival, need time, and future years to create base business.
- d. Tactic: Create a citywide group offer to encourage need time and multi-year bookings.
- e. Tactic: Sellers to promote and educate clients and hotels on new incentive packages.

Develop best practices and new ideas by cross-training staff to better understand promotional efforts

- a. Description: Ensure appropriate staff are attending promotional efforts of other departments to better understand shareable tactics and strategies.
- b. Owner: All
- c. Tactic: Assign department heads to attend Group Sales, Sports Sales, Global Trade, and Marketing promotional events.
- d. Tactic: Develop an onboarding course specific to Visit Lauderdale.
- e. Tactic: Identify key tradeshows and sales missions for each department and invite cross-department participation.

Develop existing and new tourism opportunities throughout the County

- a. Description: Expand or refresh tourism options for visitors to Broward County. (ex. the rainy day plan or the non-beach itinerary)
- b. Owner: Sports and Special Events Sales, Administration and Research
- c. Tactic: Market and utilize the 40 court pickleball facility being built at Synder Park in Fort Lauderdale to grow racquet sports in Broward County via professional events, amateur events, trainings and camps.
- d. Tactic: Gauge interest in launching the Place of Interest Program to develop new and expanded exhibits and attractions.
- e. Tactic: Host a larger presence at International Entertainment Buyers Association shows (IEBA) such as a reception for various promoters, while including some of our local entertainment venues for networking.
- f. Tactic: Inventory and communicate the new and upcoming attractions, restaurants, and hotels.
- g. Tactic: Meet with Broward cities to identify what festivals and special events used to take place that may have value in resurrection, what current events have growth potential, or what events we may want to collectively create or recruit.
- a. Tactic: Provide an annual training and outreach meeting at the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center to increase visibility of the Tourism Sponsorship Program across the county.
- b. Tactic: Work closely with existing events to ensure deliverables align with brand initiatives.
- c. Tactic: Continue to develop signature events like the Visit Lauderdale Food and Wine Festival to ensure Greater Fort Lauderdale's extraordinary food scene grows in visibility.

Expand international travel share of overnight market

This section outlines strategies to expand international travel to Broward County. Key tactics include data-driven market identification, leveraging major events like IPW and sporting events, strengthening relationships with travel intermediaries, and enhancing destination branding. A focus on converting cruise passengers into multi-night stays and increasing airlift is also included, along with targeted campaigns for specific demographics like the LGBT+ community.

Utilize data to better determine international markets and shares

- a. Description: Research and procure data on international travel including demographics, volume, value, and potential.
- b. Owner: Research
- c. Tactic: Develop scope and procure a source of data.
- d. Tactic: Utilize data to generate increasingly informed promotions and to set goals for international market share.

Utilize IPW 2026 to increase international renown of Broward County as a destination.

- a. Description: Expose 2,000 media and buyers to a positive experience in Greater Fort Lauderdale over the four-day event that leads to media coverage and additional travel.
- b. Owner: All
- c. Tactic: Creatively advertise/tease Greater Fort Lauderdale as the 2026 host destination during IPW 2025.
- d. Tactic: Develop a comprehensive plan for IPW 2026; involve the community including via Taskforce and other efforts.
- e. Tactic: Execute successful event.

Drive growth in the value of leisure tourism through travel intermediaries including tour operators, international inbound operators and travel advisors

- a. Develop and conduct bespoke missions in key international and domestic markets with partner opportunities.
- b. Develop and conduct trainings for reservation staff – airlines, inbound and tour operators, cruise and consortia.
- c. Host destination preview tours – key buyers.
- d. Leverage alliances with consortia – AAA, CAA, Signature, Virtuoso, Visit USA Committees.
- e. Engage cruise lines to develop pre-post itineraries and joint campaigns.
- f. Expand Lauderdale Loyalist program – additional languages and incentives.
- g. Work with local partners for new product development – packaging.
- h. Maximize market activity with in-country representation – Continental Europe, UK/Ireland, LATAM and Brazil (independent of LATAM).

Increase and maintain destination brand awareness in key international and domestic markets

- a. Develop tailored campaigns with relevant and timely messaging through alliances with travel consortia, associations and travel distribution companies (B2B) including Virtuoso, Signature, CLIA, and ASTA.
- b. Create language-specific brand assets to leverage with top-producing travel brands (tour operators/OTAs) for bespoke and impactful cooperative promotions in targeted international markets – UK/Ireland/Scandinavia, Germany/Austria/Switzerland, Canada, Brazil, Mexico & LATAM.
- c. Airline partnerships/cooperative programs.
- d. Leverage Brand USA, Visit USA and Discover America committees as cooperative partners for value-add opportunities.
- e. Create brand kits in collaboration with new advertising agency with manageable assets for promotional initiatives in-country.

Create unique and bold brand-building initiatives to take Greater Fort Lauderdale beyond traditional destination sales & marketing

- a. Create unique activations with VL Ambassadors at key international and domestic events to amplify “Everyone Under the Sun” messaging, raise brand awareness, create media coverage and offer collaboration between Broward County organizations and community goodwill.
- b. Cultivate local industry storytellers for missions, events, video content, press and social media opportunities.

Convert cruise travelers into multi-night visitors in GFL to drive incremental room nights and increase spend

- a. Develop working relationships with cruise lines for opportunities to network directly with their top-producing advisors.
- b. Develop promotional packages with hotels, attractions, and restaurants for distribution to key travel advisors.
- c. Educate cruise planners/travel advisors at key cruise trade shows.
- d. Develop familiarization tours tailored for cruise planners.
- e. Partner with Port Everglades for joint cooperative initiatives with Cruise Planners and Cruise One (both have headquarters in GFL).

Increase and maintain international air lift to FLL

- a. Create and execute air service development plan – cooperative marketing funds dedicated to support new international service.
- b. Support FLL route development team at relevant events locally (new launches) and globally (World Routes).
- c. Engage local airlines' representatives for promotional opportunities and trainings.
- d. Organized events/missions targeting new service from domestic markets.

Utilize major international sporting events to drive international brand recognition and travel

- a. Description: Sell and support large, high-profile events that create a brand-positive message about Greater Fort Lauderdale.
- b. Owner: Sports and Special Events Sales, Global Trade, Marketing and Communications
- c. Tactic: FIFA World Cup will be hosted in the US in the summer of 2026; Hard Rock Stadium will be a host site for FIFA matches, and Chase Stadium may be a Team Base Camp (training site) for a FIFA World Cup team. Leverage this to drive visitation through advertising and partnerships.
- d. Tactic: 2024 & 2028 are Olympic years, with 2028 being hosted in Los Angeles; utilize our key venues like the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center, Central Broward Regional Park, Chase Stadium, etc. to be used for Olympic Trial qualifiers, as well as pre-event trainings. Cricket will be included in the 2028 Olympics for the first time. This could provide major opportunities for countries to come train in Lauderhill prior to heading to LA.
- e. Tactic: Sponsor Premier League football to promote to international fans in targeted UK market.

Expand on community alignment opportunities to develop local champions and leverage partner resources

This section outlines strategies to deepen community engagement and expand partnerships. By increasing special events, developing a robust ambassador program, and strengthening partner relationships through outreach and data-driven insights, the organization aims to foster community pride, leverage local resources, and inform decision-making.

Design and execute a local ambassador/hospitality training program

- a. Description: Develop and execute a program that promotes and builds on community pride, loyalty, and customer service quality.
- b. Owner: Global Trade, Destination Services
- c. Tactic: Develop community training, whether using the existing platform or new, that builds pride in the community, knowledge of what makes the community unique and compelling, and encourages improvement in customer service levels.
- d. Tactic: Develop an outreach plan that will deploy the training program to thousands of people in the local hospitality, government, and leadership sectors including education and incentives to significantly grow the number of ambassadors trained.

Design and execute a comprehensive partner outreach program

- a. Description: Execute on a partner outreach program that involves local businesses effectively in the tourism business.
- b. Owner: All
- c. Tactic: Host quarterly meetings with hotel, convention center, and global trade parties.
- d. Tactic: Launch one on one calls / meetings with partners when possible.
- e. Tactic: Host an annual Tourism Partnership seminar that provokes hundreds of local hospitality business professionals to best utilize our resources and amplify our message.
- f. Tactic: Utilize relationships with chambers of commerce to increase reach to businesses throughout the county improving understanding of Visit Lauderdale's role and resources.
- g. Tactic: Participate in the relevant community initiative(s) managed by the Broward Workshop.
- h. Tactic: Identify the priorities for partner outreach; maintaining contacts in CRM, inventory of ways to get involved, communicating with partners, cities, and organizations.
- i. Tactic: Foster a sense of community and belonging among brand advocates and repeat visitors by engaging them in co-creation initiatives, feedback loops, and loyalty programs.
- j. Tactic: Support local causes, charities, and community initiatives through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and partnerships, demonstrating the brand's commitment to social impact and sustainability.
- k. Tactic: Empower brand advocates to share their experiences and stories with their network, amplifying the brand's reach and authentic word-of-mouth marketing.
- l. Tactic: Increase the number of sales tradeshow partnerships to encourage participation between Visit Lauderdale and local industry.

Develop a comprehensive research and data presentation plan

- a. Description: Create a research plan that positions Visit Lauderdale as the authoritative source of forecasting and data for hospitality industries in Broward County.
- b. Owner: Administration and Research
- c. Tactic: Survey partners quarterly to determine what research/data they are seeking and how we can assist.
- d. Tactic: Provide forecasting and context for budget seasons, including forecast adjustments as necessary throughout the year.
- e. Tactic: Develop key benchmarks for areas including international visitation, community alignment, customer satisfaction, and more. In addition, provide historical performance data with context.
- f. Tactic: Expand and improve existing partner data dashboard.