

The image shows the Pennsylvania State Capitol building in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, featuring its iconic green and gold dome. The building is framed by vibrant pink cherry blossoms in the foreground and yellow-green foliage. A blue banner in the top left corner contains the text "Visit HERSHEY & HARRISBURG".

Visit
HERSHEY &
HARRISBURG

Business Plan

FY 2019/2020

Mission & Vision

The mission of Visit Hershey & Harrisburg is to generate economic growth and stability through the marketing and promotion of travel to the Hershey Harrisburg Region and to coalesce, develop, and expand its hospitality industry, products, and workforce.

Visit Hershey & Harrisburg will adhere to the highest standards of conduct for a professional destination management agency while inspiring local leaders to invigorate a dynamic visitor-centered, year-round destination.



Visit
**HERSHEY &
HARRISBURG**

STRATEGIC VISION FOR

HERSHEY/HARRISBURG AS A DESTINATION

Visit Hershey & Harrisburg (VHH) is a destination marketing/management organization focused on the progressive growth of the travel industry in Dauphin County. A thriving travel industry improves the local economy for the benefit of all citizens. VHH is committed to facilitating a sustainable total destination experience for travelers in all segments (leisure, group, business, sports and events).

- Foster, facilitate, and encourage the growth, development, and sustainability of the destination.
- Maintain high visitor occupancy while not exceeding the destination's carrying capacity.
- Focus on the visitor and resident experiences as being one-in-the-same.
- Work with local and state governments and economic development entities to improve and ease the mobility of visitors and residents alike within Dauphin County.
- Expand and develop new visitor experiences.
- Drive increased destination appeal in the shoulder and off-seasons.

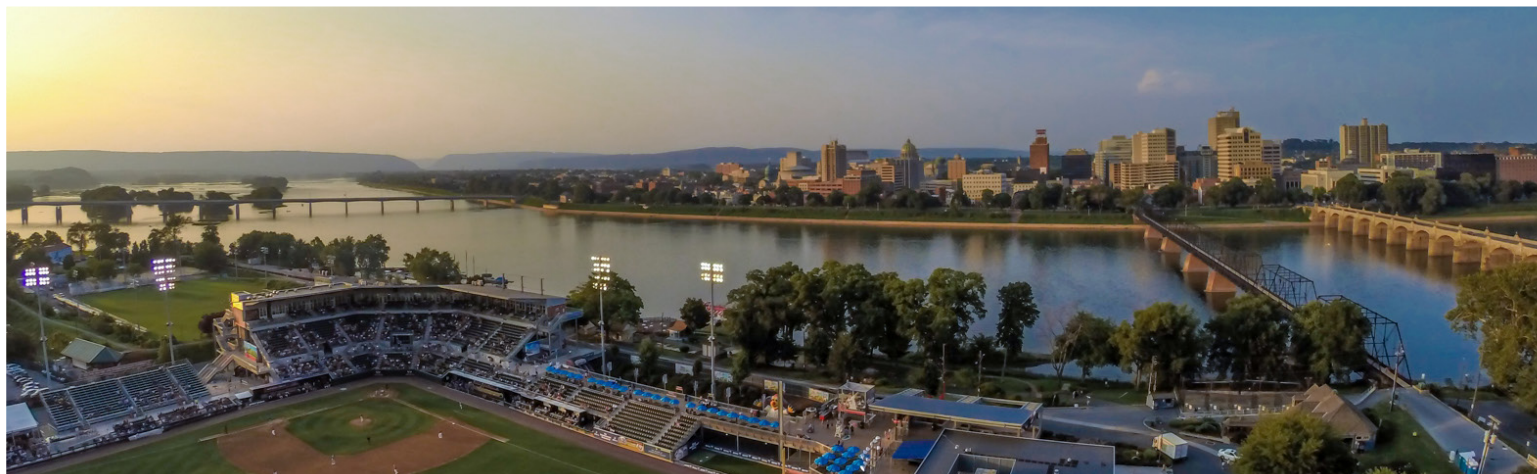


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SALES

The Sales department is responsible for promoting the Hershey Harrisburg Region to the travel trade as a destination to host their business. By promoting our many assets including location, affordability, meeting space, and things to do, we will position the region as an attractive destination for groups and meetings.

TARGET MARKETS:



Meetings &
Conventions



Military



Religious



Weddings



Domestic
Tour/Travel



International



MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Forecast: National forecast for the meetings industry is generally upbeat with moderate growth.

 The nation's booming economy is driving meetings growth in our region.

STATE OF THE MARKET



Average hotel prices are predicted to rise by 2.8% in 2019.



New hotel growth in Dauphin County will add over 1,000 new rooms to the region by the end of 2020.



The use of short-term rentals (i.e. Airbnb) as a housing option is up from 3% to 4.5%.

KEY TARGET MARKETS

- ASSOCIATION
- CORPORATE
- GOVERNMENT
- MEDICAL



MARKET INSIGHTS

- Face-to-face engagement is key.
- High-quality Wi-Fi is a top priority.
- Experiential events are a leading corporate meeting trend.

STRATEGIES

- Attend industry trade shows/conferences.
- Host client events.
- Conduct site inspections, sales missions, and FAM tours.
- Maximize partnerships with third party entities.
- Refresh the VHH sales website.
- Maintain membership in key associations.
- Educate local industry partners on meeting planners' needs/preferences.
- Assist local industry partners in creating unique and attractive experiences.

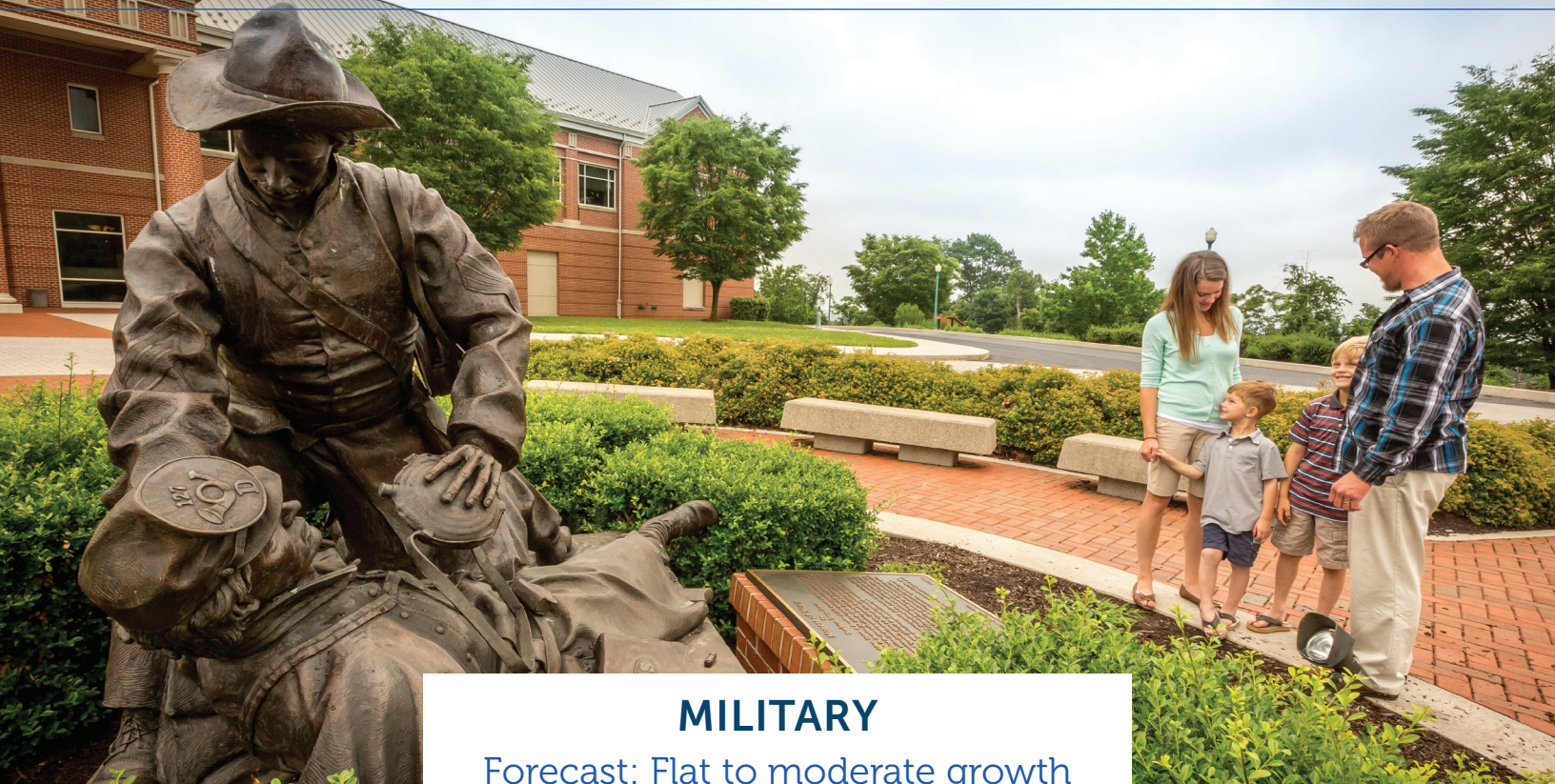
PROPOSED TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

- Cvent Connect
- Connect Corporate
- Connect NYC
- Connect DC
- PASAE Summer (Education)
- Connect Medical
- Connect Business
- PCMA
- RCMA Emerge
- PSMA
- PASAE Expo
- Conference Direct
- HelmsBriscoe
- ASAE
- MPI WEC
- MPI Summer and Fall Outings

GOAL

10%

INCREASE IN MEETING AND CONVENTION ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS



MILITARY

Forecast: Flat to moderate growth

 Military Reunions continue to be an important segment of our sales mix.

STATE OF THE MARKET

There are approximately

8,000
MILITARY
Reunion Groups



There is a veteran in every 1 out of 4 households in the U.S.

It is estimated that

14,000 - 17,000
MILITARY REUNIONS
are held across the U.S. each year.

MARKET INSIGHTS

- Military Reunions typically do not repeat a destination.
- Group size widely varies (20-500+), and they typically stay 4-5 days.
- Rate-sensitive market
- Peak travel times are April/May and September/October.
- Nearly 70% have a website and/or Facebook page dedicated to their reunion.

STRATEGIES:

- Research select trade shows designed to reach this market.
- Host streamlined site tours for pre-qualified military reunion planners.
- Highlight military-related opportunities in our region on website.

GOAL

5% INCREASE IN MILITARY REUNION ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS

RELIGIOUS

Forecast: Moderate growth on a national level, however great potential to build upon recent growth in the Hershey Harrisburg Region.

 Many families extend the stay and make it their vacation.

STATE OF THE MARKET

This market has seen steady growth and will meet regardless of the economy. Meetings are held year-round and typically last 4-5 days. Often meetings are planned in destinations where attendees can drive within one day travel time.

MARKET INSIGHTS

- Potential for repeat business if they've had a good experience (loyal)
- Most use AV, ground transportation, and tour services.
- Extremely price sensitive
- Planners are often volunteers with little or no meeting planning experience.
- Resort hotels are desirable for this market, however not a requirement.
- Desire to avoid convention centers to save on costs

STRATEGIES:

- Attend religious meeting planner trade shows.
- Attend market-specific education sessions.
- Conduct a client event for religious planners in a strategic geographic location.

PROPOSED TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

- Connect Specialty
- CMCA

GOAL

20% INCREASE IN RELIGIOUS ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS

WEDDINGS

State of the Market: This is a new initiative for VHH. The Hershey Harrisburg Region is attractive as a wedding destination with a variety of unique venues and service providers in an affordable and convenient location.

MARKET INSIGHTS

**The wedding weekend often runs from Thursday through Sunday.
Weddings offer the potential to drive group room nights.**

STRATEGIES

- Position VHH as a weddings resource.
- Create weddings and events website featuring Partner listings and RFP collection.
- Maximize online presence through both organic and paid advertising.

BASED ON RESEARCH FOR THE REGION WE HAVE DETERMINED THE TARGET BRIDE IS:

- 25-29 years old
- High school/Bachelor's degree
- Household income: \$25,000-\$75,000
- Office/admin/sales professional
- Resides in Dauphin County or within 25-mile radius

MEASUREMENT: MEASURE MONTHLY ENGAGEMENT TO ESTABLISH BENCHMARKS.

DOMESTIC TOUR/TRAVEL

Forecast: Moderate growth driven by baby boomers and millennials.

Emerging markets are fueling experiential and authentic travel growth.

STATE OF THE MARKET

STRATEGIES

- Host FAM tours and site visits.
- Position the destination as a hub and spoke for overnights.
- Conduct regional sales missions with Partners.
- Create an inventory of STEAM- (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) based learning options for student market.
- Promote new experiential products relevant to this market segment.

MARKET INSIGHTS

- Student travel leads this segment for growth potential.
- Girlfriend getaways: spa, wine tasting, shopping
- Culinary tours
- Multi-generational tours: grandparent/grandchild tours
- This market is responsive to value-added packaging.

PROPOSED TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

- SYTA
- NTA
- ABA
- PA Bus Association Marketplace
- Maryland Motorcoach Association Marketplace

GOAL

10%

INCREASE IN TOUR AND TRAVEL ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS



Photo courtesy of Hershey's Chocolate World Attraction

INTERNATIONAL

Forecast: Nationally, China remains the most notable growth market.

TARGET MARKETS

CHINA, CHINESE AMERICANS, INDIA, UNITED KINGDOM, EUROPE

STATE OF THE MARKET

The strong U.S. dollar continues to make the U.S. more expensive. Other countries are allocating more resources into tourism campaigns to compete for international travelers.

CLIENT PROFILE:

- International inbound receptive operators
- Chinese Americans
- International tour operators



U.K.



INDIA



CHINA

2018 TOP INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS/SPENDING IN THE HERSHEY HARRISBURG REGION

UNITED KINGDOM

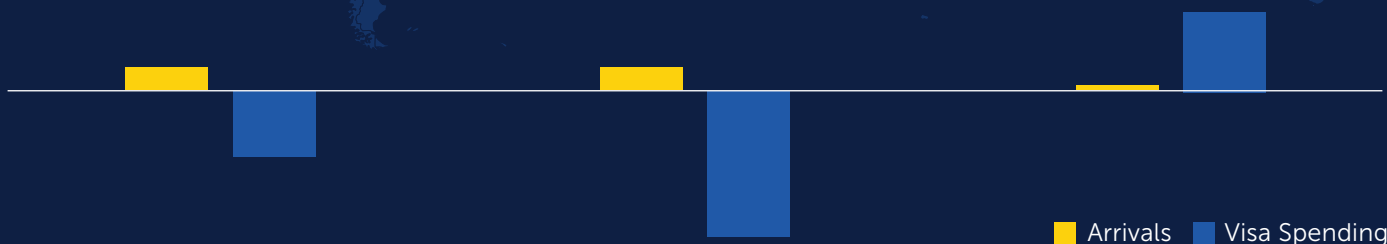
- U.S. arrivals up 3%
- Visa Spending down 6.7%

INDIA

- U.S. arrivals up 3%
- Visa Spending down 25%

CHINA

- U.S. arrivals 0% increase
- Visa Spending up 10.7%



STRATEGIES

- Support key receptive operator partners with co-op marketing.
- Continue to educate VHH Partners on the nuances of this valuable market.

MARKET INSIGHTS

- Shift from group tour to FIT
- Want to experience local flavor
- Rise in visitation to 2nd and 3rd tier cities

PROPOSED TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

- AA China Receptive Edition
- RTO Orlando
- RTO West
- Active America China
- RTO East
- IPW

GOAL

10% INCREASE IN ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS

PARTNERSHIP

The VHH Partnership department has two primary goals: Attracting new tourism Partners and retaining valuable existing Partners. VHH provides a variety of opportunities and services to help increase visibility and visitation to Partner businesses.

BENEFITS

- Invaluable exposure to potential visitors via multiple online and print channels
- Distribution of Partner marketing materials
- Sales, marketing, and public relations support
- Monthly networking and educational events
- Tourism advocacy and industry insights

GOALS

- Increase partnership revenue by 7%.
- Retain 90% of existing Partners.
- Increase the total number of investing Partners by 10%.
- Increase engagement/outreach to current and prospective Partners.

STRATEGY

- Prospect and recruit new business Partners.
- Engage and retain existing Partners.
- Host monthly Partner events and networking opportunities.
- Research and leverage external community resources.
- Develop and launch new Destination Partnerships.
- Implement new Partnership marketing opportunities.

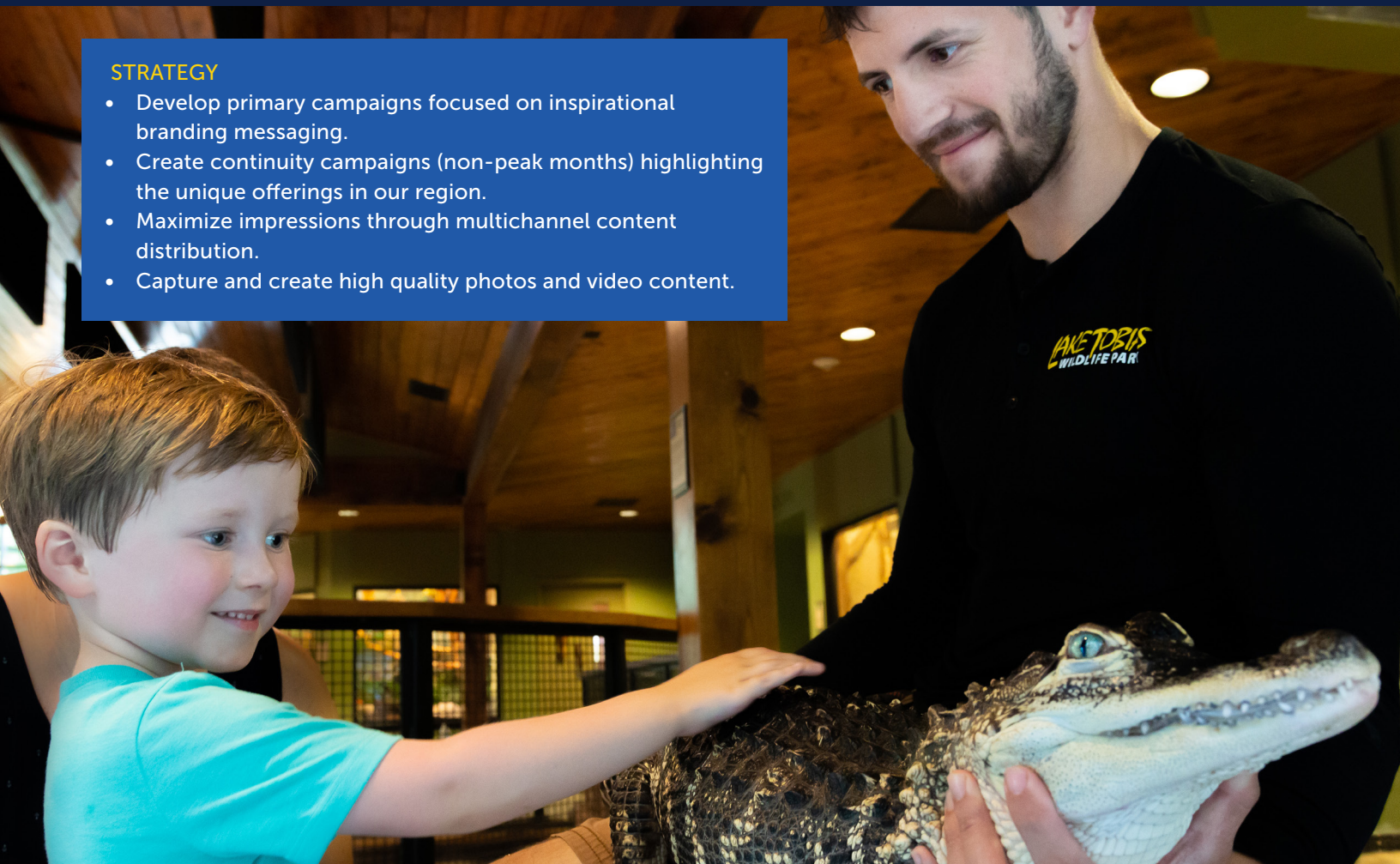


MARKETING

The primary consumer marketing goal is to drive leisure guests to visit and stay in the Hershey Harrisburg Region, inspiring travelers to consider visiting our destination through compelling ads, photos, video content, and a user-friendly website.

STRATEGY

- Develop primary campaigns focused on inspirational branding messaging.
- Create continuity campaigns (non-peak months) highlighting the unique offerings in our region.
- Maximize impressions through multichannel content distribution.
- Capture and create high quality photos and video content.



CAMPAIGN EXECUTION



Late Summer
July through
mid-September



Fall
Mid-September
through
mid-November



Holiday
Mid-November
through December



Winter
January through
March



Springtime &
Early Summer
April through June

SEGMENTATION

To ensure that our marketing and media efforts are effective and efficient, we segment our audiences three ways: Geographic (location), Demographic (age), and Psychographic (interest).

1

GEOGRAPHIC

PRIMARY OVERNIGHT MARKETS (DMAs)

- New York (includes northern New Jersey)
- Philadelphia (includes southern New Jersey)
- Washington D.C. (includes northern Virginia and part of Maryland)

SECONDARY & DAYTRIP MARKETS

- Pittsburgh
- Baltimore
- Wilkes-Barre/Scranton

2

DEMOGRAPHIC



Different layers and levels of segmentation will be applied depending on the medium and message.

3

PSYCHOGRAPHIC / INTEREST

Our three segments are primarily determined by the strengths and offerings of our destination.

- Family
- Adult getaways
- Outdoor



CHANNELS

Our integrated marketing approach leverages the strengths of each channel. Using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), all channels are continually evaluated and optimized for best performance.

WEBSITE

VisitHersheyHarrisburg.org

PRIMARY CONSUMER-FACING TRIP PLANNING RESOURCE



Strong focus on optimizing mobile user experience



Organic web traffic accounts for 57% of our overall sessions.



Events are one of the primary drivers of organic traffic.

Focused effort to increase organic sessions by 40,000 year over year through search engine optimization.

KPIs

- Sessions
- Users
- Time on site
- Pages per session





SOCIAL MEDIA

ORGANIC SOCIAL

Facebook is our largest audience.

f MORE THAN
47,000
FOLLOWERS



Instagram has seen the largest year over year growth and tends to have much higher engagement over Facebook.

KPIs

- Impressions
- Engagements
- Followers
- Reach

We utilize user-generated content (UGC) to augment our social content.

PAID SOCIAL

• Paid social media will be the primary vehicle to distribute content for continuity campaigns.

KPIs

- Impressions
- Clicks
- Cost Per Click
- Cost Per Thousand
- Reach
- Cost Per Completed View (video)
- Average % viewed (video)



EMAIL

Consumer emails are deployed on a monthly basis. We employ the best practice of cleaning unengaged subscribers to ensure optimal deliverability.

KPIs

- List Size
- Open Rate
- Clicks
- Click-Through Rate
- New Subscribers
- Unsubscribes



There are approximately

20,000
SUBSCRIBERS

Total
Open Rate
29.96%

Total Click
through Rate
28.68%

DIGITAL DISPLAY

Programmatic digital display is utilized for primary campaigns as a cost-effective way to extend reach.

KPIs

- Impressions
- Clicks
- Click-Through Rate
- Cost Per Thousand
- Cost Per Click

PRINT



The annual Travel Guide is VHH's exclusive print execution for the leisure market.

275,000
GUIDES PRINTED

New for 2020: Seasonal focus



Distributed at turnpike rest stops, welcome centers, local hotels, and attractions

PAID SEARCH

Paid search is an efficient and cost-effective traffic driver, used to supplement organic website traffic.

KPIs

- Clicks
- Click-Through Rate
- Cost Per Click

DIGITAL VIDEO

Preroll digital video is utilized in both primary and continuity marketing campaigns via programmatic buying. This year we will actively explore and test a variety of YouTube Ad executions.

KPIs

- Views
- Average % viewed
- Clicks
- Click-Through Rate
- Cost Per Thousand
- Cost Per Click
- Cost Per Completed View

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Destination Promotion
- Organizational Promotion
- Trade/B2B Promotion

INDUSTRY TRENDS

ONLINE AND TRAVEL BLOGS

Online media outlets and blogs are now the mainstream platforms for travel media, and therefore are the primary source for earned media efforts.

PITCHING MEDIA

Storytelling remains key to success. The abundance of blogs, email, and social media has made it easier to be seen but more difficult to be noticed.

TARGET AUDIENCE



MEDIA

- Traditional media outlets: print and broadcast
- Online media outlets: websites and blogs
- Individual journalists: travel writers, lifestyle reporters, bloggers, influencers, and freelancers.



NEW MARKET SEGMENTATION: GEOGRAPHIC

Earned media efforts will be more closely aligned with seven geographic market segments.





STRATEGIES

Media Visits

Focused effort on hosting media from targeted markets

MEDIA DAYS PROGRAM

This seasonal media program has proven successful and will return during designated seasons.

- Summer Media Days – Part II (July 2019)
- Fall Media Days (September 2019)
- Spring Media Days (June 2020)

GROUP MEDIA TOURS

Recruit and encourage self-selected media groups for FAM tours (i.e. Macaroni Kids).

INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL MEDIA

Accept and evaluate ROI on individual requests for media visits.

MEDIA MARKETPLACES/TRADE SHOWS

- Mid-Atlantic Travel PR Alliance (MATPRA)
- International Media Marketplace (IMM)

MEDIA RESOURCES/ONLINE MEDIA LOUNGE

- Seasonal story ideas
- Regional round-ups
- Featured articles
- Partner news
- High-resolution image gallery
- Themed media tour packages

Local Earned Media

Support local earned media opportunities positioning VHH as leading economic driver via tourism.

- Print placements - Actively pitch local print outlets with compelling content.
- Guest appearances/media interviews - appear as a guest for live or taped segments related to tourism with local broadcast.

Best Practices

Research current trends and practices to best reach and distribute content to travel media.

- Implement best practices for communicating to journalists.
- Develop and implement media communications and pitch strategy.

Partner Outreach

Actively engage in site visits/outreach with tourism partners

- Identify new media FAM opportunities.
- Develop new story pitches.
- Increase Partner engagement.



HERSHEY HARRISBURG

SPORTS & EVENTS AUTHORITY

The mission of the Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority (HHSE) is to promote sports tourism and events initiatives in the Hershey Harrisburg Region and to forge mutually beneficial partnerships with new and existing clients.

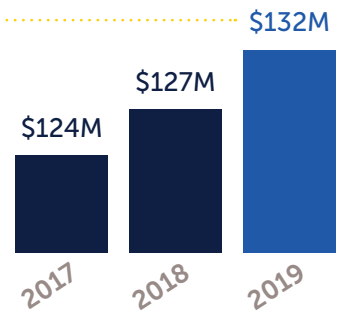
The Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority is proud to attract and support the biggest and best sports tournaments and special events to our community – for our community.

HHSE'S TOP 20 SPORTS & EVENTS IN 2019

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT
\$132.4 MILLION



JOBS SUPPORTED
26,208



PENNSYLVANIA vs MARYLAND

A 4-DAY HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL
TRYOUT-BASED ALL-STAR SERIES

- 2019 Big 26® Baseball Classic will take place July 25-28 at FNB Field on City Island.
- Planning for 2020 will begin in the fall.
- Goals: increase tryouts participation to more than 150 individuals, attract a title sponsor, and increase overall sponsorship.

HHSE OWNED EVENT : BIG 26® BASEBALL CLASSIC



DESTINATION STRENGTHS



LOCATION

40% of the U.S population is located within 500 miles of the Hershey Harrisburg Region.



VERSATILE VENUES

Event space for any competition, tournament, or expo



DEDICATED TEAM

Our experienced team can help develop, organize, and promote your event.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

DIGITAL

Marketing strategies for sports tourism organizations are more digitally inclined.

- Facebook is the social media platform of choice followed by Twitter, with Instagram ranking third.
- Continued monitoring of social channels (YouTube, Snapchat) as viable options

ADVERTISING

Print and digital buys will be placed in Sports Destination Magazine, Sports Events Magazine, and Sports Travel. Buys will be placed in issues that best highlight our region and provide maximum brand exposure.

Bid Book:

HHSE will create a new bid book template designed to highlight the region's strengths and amenities most desired by sports and events clients. Sections will include HIA, facilities, location, lodging, and marketing support.

TRADE SHOWS

A major vehicle for prospecting new business and developing relationships continues to be the trade show/conference schedule.

- CONNECT Sports
- S.P.O.R.T.S. The Relationship Conference
- NCAA Host Bid Cycle Symposium
- AAU National Convention/Leadership Conference
- NASC (Sports ETA) 4S
- TEAMS
- IAEE Expo Expo
- US Sports Congress
- Sports Express
- NCAA National Convention
- NASC (Sports ETA) Symposium
- NACS (National Association of Consumer Shows)

SALES

STRATEGIES

- Focus on growth of non-peak (November-February) and shoulder (September-October; March-May) tourism seasons.
- Work toward establishment of new annual events, (i.e. HUE Festival).
- Continue to develop community support for increased sports tourism.
- Attend monthly planning meetings with the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex & Expo Center.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Select an event to attend and complete a comparative analysis of hosting that event in our region.

Potential events to research:

- 2019 Forrest Wood Cup – Fishing League Worldwide
- 2019 USCAA National Convention – United States Collegiate Athletic Association
- 2019 T&T Stars & Stripes Championships – USA Gymnastics
- 2019 Tough Mudder Event
- 2020 NIRCA Track & Field Nationals
- 2019 USA Jump Rope Championship
- 2019 USA BMX National Event

GOALS

- INCREASE ROOM NIGHT BOOKINGS **by 10%.**
- INCREASE ECONOMIC IMPACT **of sports and events business growth by 10%.**
- CONDUCT SITE VISITS **by qualified events rights holders/national governing bodies.**



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