

Visit
LOUDOUN
DC's Wine Country®

2020-2021

MARKETING PLAN

Objectives • Strategies • Measures



Contents

A NOTE ON COVID-19

The extraordinary circumstances brought on by the pandemic have altered and will continue to affect FY2020/21 marketing plans and executions. This document outlines Visit Loudoun's strategy for navigating from crisis management to regular tourism operations, positioning Loudoun for a strong recovery. However, the situation is ever-changing and so the strategies and tactics outlined here are likely to shift in response.

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About Visit Loudoun

Visit Loudoun is the destination marketing organization (DMO) for Loudoun County and its incorporated towns. The organization is charged with developing and implementing a comprehensive destination marketing program designed to attract visitors to the region who in turn generate economic, employment taxes for the region. Visit Loudoun also works with the industry to implement a county-wide tourism destination development strategy.

Vision

To be a “must visit” destination supported by a community that recognizes the economics and quality of life benefits that come from sharing our home with visitors. Loudoun County will be the preferred east coast destination for lovers of artisanal, epicurean and culturally rich experiences.

Mission

To stimulate the sustainability and enhancement of Loudoun County's economy and quality of life by advocating for smart destination development and marketing an exceptional experience to travel consumers worldwide.



About Visit Loudoun

Stakeholders

VISITORS

As a marketing and sales organization, Visit Loudoun works to attract all types of visitors, increase the duration of their stay, maximize the economic impact from their spending, improve their overall experience and influence their intent to return.

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

As the industry leader, Visit Loudoun supports all tourism businesses from large hotels to small retail businesses and service providers with sales, marketing and service opportunities. It keeps the industry abreast of industry trends, market research, and local and regional issues and opportunities.

THE COMMUNITY

As a community steward, Visit Loudoun works to generate tax revenues and enhance the quality of life for the entire community. It attracts visitors who spend their time and money here but do not require schools and other public services.

POLICY MAKERS

As the industry advocate, Visit Loudoun offers policy makers tourism industry expertise and perspective, and communicates the industry's needs in terms of tourism development and sustainability.

Funding

Visit Loudoun is mostly funded by Restricted Transient Occupancy Tax, a dedicated room tax collected by county accommodations that is required by state code to be reinvested in tourism promotion. It also receives funding from membership dues, participation fees for such things as cooperative programs, and by the towns of Middleburg and Leesburg. Visit Loudoun also receives in-kind services from tourism businesses to host programs for the tourism industry and to host group travel decision makers as well as travel and lifestyle media. The public/private partnership for funding tourism promotion enables tourism to thrive in Loudoun County and its jurisdictions.



Internationally Accredited
Destination Marketing
Organization (DMO)

Visit Loudoun (DMO) is accredited by Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of the Destination Marketing Association International, 2505 M Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-296-7888

BRAND GUIDELINES

Refer to Visit Loudoun's Brand Guidelines document for comprehensive brand identity guidance.

Agencies & Vendors

AGENCY OF RECORD / DIGITAL STRATEGY: MILES PARTNERSHIP

Destination strategy development; creative conception and development; brand management; advertising and collateral design and delivery; media planning and buying; SEM strategy & execution; Google DMO Program training and management; content creation support; social media support; industry trends/research support; industry education

WEBSITE / CRM / SEO: SIMPLEVIEW

Website hosting and maintenance; CRM management; SEO strategy development and execution

WEBSITE AD SALES: DTN

Online ad network for managing advertising on VisitLoudoun.org

DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT: CROWDRIFT

Photo and video sourcing and distribution platform

HOTEL DATA: STR

Hotel industry data insights and trends

EVENTS & MEETINGS RESOURCES: CVENT & HELMSBRISCOE

Event management software and hospitality solutions; meetings procurement and site selection

PR: DCI

Public relations and public affairs

Loudoun County Visitor Profile

Basic Facts & Figures

- There were approx. 1.9M visitors to Loudoun county in 2016/17. These visitors spent \$1.84 billion in Loudoun County – up 4.6% from previous year.
- Average party size was 2.9 persons
- Average length of stay was 2.55 nights
- 80% of parties are adult only
- Visitors who stay in paid lodging spend an average of \$885 per trip
- Day trip visitors spend an average of \$163 per trip

Visitor Breakdown

- 82% of visitors are coming for leisure vacation.
- 12% of visitors come for business.
- 12% of visitors come for a Wedding or other special event.
- 4% of visitors come for Sports events and tournaments.
- Average age of Loudoun County visitors is 47.6 years old
- According to the 2020 Lodging Study, occupancy is strongest in late Spring and remains strong through October. The most popular overnight travel months to Loudoun County in the 2019 calendar year were May (78.6% occupancy) and June (78.3% occupancy), followed by October (73.7% occupancy), April (73% occupancy) and August (72.9% occupancy). The slowest months were November through February. (STR)

Geographic Breakdown

- 49% of Loudoun County visitors came from Virginia.
- The top 5 states are:
 - Virginia 49%
 - Maryland 23%
 - Pennsylvania 12%
 - Washington DC 11%
 - New York 6%

Visitor Activities & Motivators

- Activity participation of Loudoun County visitors who stayed in paid lodging (SMARI)
 - 43% Shopping
 - 42% Ate at a locally owned restaurant
 - 39% Sightseeing
 - 37% Rest and Relaxation
 - 36% Visited Wineries/Vineyards

Average Occupancy & Average Daily Rate History

The table is a summary of the average occupancy and average daily rates for 2019 and for the previous six years in Loudoun County.

| Year | Avg. Occupancy | Avg. Daily Rate |
|------|----------------|-----------------|
| 2013 | 59.5% | \$99.60 |
| 2014 | 63.4% | \$105 |
| 2015 | 66.5% | \$111 |
| 2016 | 70.6% | \$113 |
| 2017 | 69.9% | \$119 |
| 2018 | 68.8% | \$123 |
| 2019 | 67.0% | \$126 |

Strategic Pillars

These five strategic pillars guide Visit Loudoun's destination management programs and messaging.



Variety is Key

Loudoun County will celebrate and inspire visitors and residents alike to enjoy the benefits and variety of Loudoun County



Involve the Community

Loudoun County residents, business owners and government supports and advocates for tourism



Support Music and the Arts

Loudoun County will leverage music and the arts as a key driver and enabler for destination growth



Inform Infrastructure

Loudoun County will strive to be an integrated destination, participating in the development of frictionless travel for visitors



Think Themed Experiences

Loudoun County will offer curated experiences that will delight and inspire visitors and residents alike to continue to drive destination growth

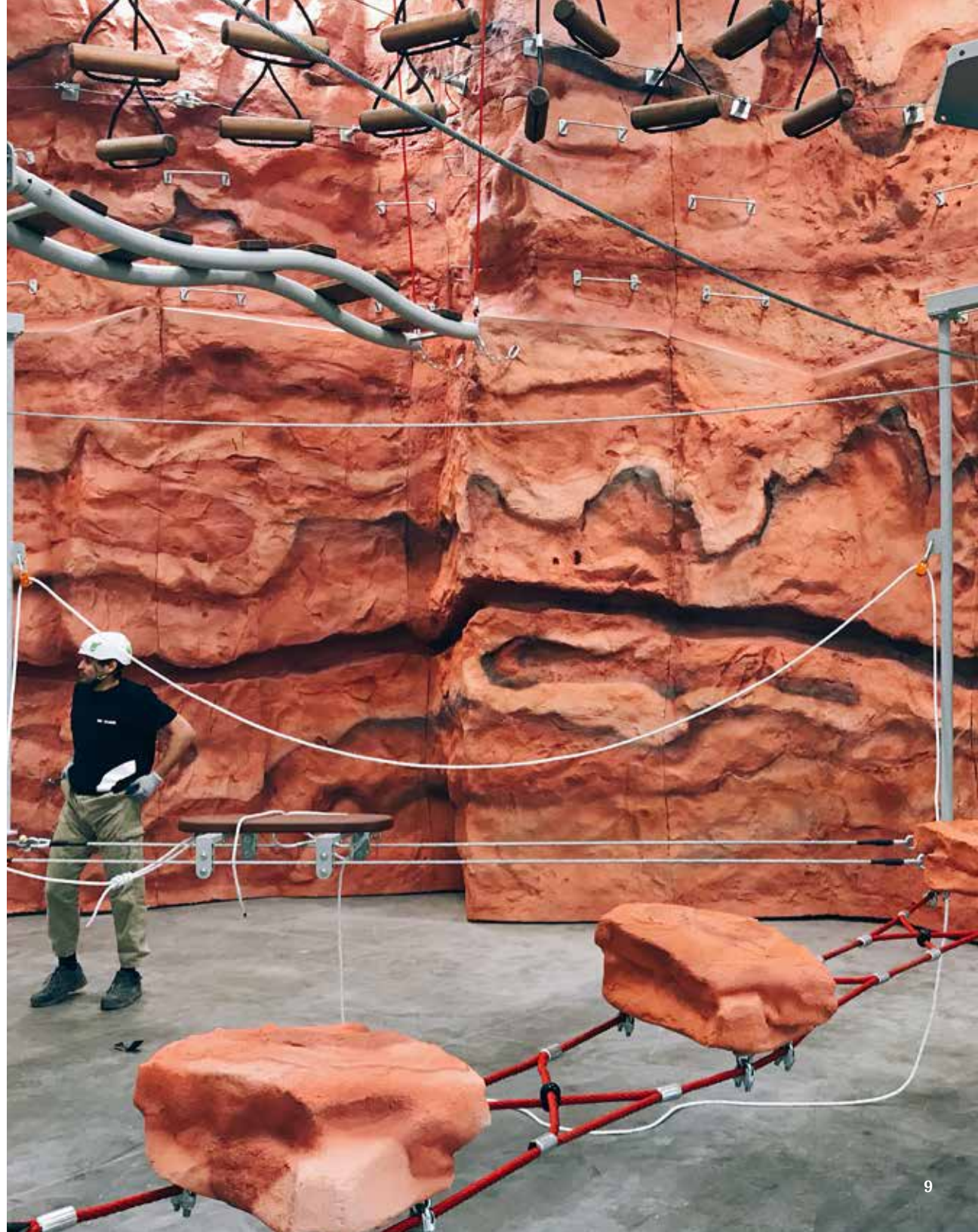
FY20-21 Marketing Plan

The marketing plan is a strategic road map that: (1) defines departmental goals and objectives, (2) outlines the content and partnerships that support a variety of initiatives, and (3) details a phased tactical plan that, in light of the pandemic, serves to bridge crisis management and the return to regular tourism operations. The media plan and a summary of campaign direction are also included within this document.



Marketing Goals & Objectives

The Marketing Department is responsible for the overall brand strategy and marketing to the Leisure travel segment, as well as within the meetings/conferences, sports/events, weddings as well as tour and travel verticals. The primary goal of the department is to develop and promote key products and programs that facilitate tourism growth (with a focus on generating hotel and sales tax revenue) and the growth of the local economy overall. These efforts include the creation of accurate and compelling advertising, promotions, digital, social media and partner programs.



Marketing Objectives: Overview

- Continue to evolve Visit Loudoun brands, positioning Loudoun as a destination of choice for leisure travel, meetings/conferences, sports events, weddings and domestic/international tour and travel.
- Ensure that all marketing efforts highlight the variety and diversity that Loudoun has to offer.
- Focus on creating demand for both eastern and western Loudoun County in a cohesive way.
- Inventory and update marketing assets to more closely resemble Loudoun's demographics and attract new audiences.
- Conduct a photo shoot to generate new digital assets to support the primary campaign and other marketing efforts. Ensure assets reflect diverse audiences.
- Encourage visitors to do and spend more by leveraging content marketing (including video), social media marketing, online packaging and the creation of print collateral for distribution in welcome centers and other areas with high visitor traffic.
- Convert more day-trips to overnights by promoting events and entertainment (as appropriate), hotel packaging and incentives.
- Identify opportunities to market directly to a diverse set of travelers.
- Manage and promote VisitLoudoun.org, maximizing activity and engagement via SEO, SEM, content development and other tactics. Explore opportunities for UGC integration, personalization and UX/usability enhancements to create more seamless user journeys.
- Create content focused on frictionless travel, including new technologies.
- Expand Visit Loudoun advertising impact and reach by offering comprehensive co-op opportunities to local partners for buy-in.
- Manage and participate in product development committees to encourage partner input in planning and promotions.
- Participate in organizations/associations representing local product in order to support and shape tourism opportunities within key segments. Support county product positioning events to drive visitation.
- Leverage industry partnerships with regional organizations including VTC, CRUSA, NVTP and Destination DC to further brand and reach.
- Conduct research to identify the highest potential revenue audiences and to ensure targeted marketing to the greatest reach.
- Leverage statewide funding programs to fund marketing initiatives.
- In cooperation with the Media Relations team, develop a strategy that will promote and build value for Visit Loudoun among local businesses and residents.

METRO EXPANSION & TRANSPORTATION

As Metro expands farther into Loudoun County, opportunities to leverage convenient rail transit and highlight accessibility should be incorporated into all products and initiatives, across both leisure and non-leisure markets, as appropriate. More generally, transportation options to help guide visitors and non-leisure travelers should be considered whenever possible.

Marketing Objectives by Vertical

MEETING SALES

- Ensure the sales team has all marketing tools needed to sell the destination.
- Manage the branding and production of sales collateral.
- Collaborate with the sales team to develop new designs and themes for tradeshow installations.
- Create and maintain meetings content for the website in collaboration with the sales team. New content opportunities include testimonials, videos, 360 tours and virtual team building.
- Provide social media support during key meetings.
- Partner and advertise with CVENT and HelmsBriscoe.
- Support the sales team in encouraging venue and attraction partners to maintain their content and assets on VisitLoudoun.org.
- Add a Concierge Client Experience to make meetings services more robust.

SPORTS SALES

- Manage the branding and production of sports venue and attraction collateral for use in selling the destination.
- Collaborate on sports content, including professional sports content, for digital marketing platform uses, including for the website.
- Support sports marketing with advertising, promotional brochures and enhanced website content, tools and assets.
- Support promotion of professional sports, teams and venues for future signature events.

CLIENT SERVICES & WEDDINGS

- Manage all branding and production of marketing collateral used for services.
- Distribute and promote the visitors guide as a valuable resource for meeting/conference delegates, sports/events attendees and wedding guests on site; increase distribution as budget allows.
- Collaborate with Client Services team to develop servicing tools for groups with special interests and needs.
- Collaborate with FNP Events on Wedding Showcase Promotion.
- Support the wedding market with advertising, promotional collateral and enhanced website content, tools and assets.

INTERNATIONAL & TRAVEL TRADE

- While domestic markets will be the primary focus in 2021, international marketing efforts continue to be captured here as they are important long-term.
- In partnership with NVTP and Capital Region USA, cross-promote the region's assets to domestic and international markets.
- Increase visibility for Loudoun in international markets by leveraging partnerships with Brand USA as well as sister county and sister airport partnerships for marketing and media opportunities.
- Support the development of itinerary content and marketing collateral promoting group tour product.
- Support the creation of targeted emails to group and FIT leisure planners.
- While IPW 2020 has been canceled, this event will be leveraged in the future to promote Loudoun and Virginia to international tour operators and media.

INDUSTRY

- Host webinars and educational forums to support and guide industry partners.
- Encourage partners to maintain their digital content and assets on VisitLoudoun.org, including calendar listing ownership.
- Manage the branding and production of collateral for industry marketing, including digital and print distribution.

VISITOR SERVICES

- Reimagine the Visitor Center experience of the future, and also consider the short-term impacts, needs and opportunities stemming from COVID-19.

PR & Media Relations Goals & Objectives

The Director of Communications is responsible for implementing Visit Loudoun's overall strategic public relations plan, which includes managing all external communication activities, ranging from media outreach to public awareness and crisis communications. DCI, the PR agency of record, works in concert with the Visit Loudoun team.

Local outreach will focus on ensuring the efforts of Visit Loudoun are illustrated and recognized as supportive and contributing to the economic development of the county. The Out-of-Market PR strategy will focus on regional, national and international media outlets in geo-targeted markets that specialize in travel and tourism coverage as well as outlets that target the meetings, weddings, sports and group tour markets.

We will continue to target print and digital outlets, freelancers and bloggers. We will expand on existing media relationships and develop new one-on-one relationships through press trips, virtual and in-market desk-side visits and media trade shows and will partner with organizations that will produce coverage on Loudoun.



Media Relations Objectives & Activities

OUT-OF-MARKET

- Generate positive media coverage positioning Loudoun as a premier domestic and international leisure destination, and a desired East Coast destination for meetings, sports events and weddings. Highlight curated experiences and art/music experiences where possible, and always emphasize the great variety of destination attractions and offerings.
- Pursue qualified media to participate in the Visiting Journalist Program, individually or on group press trips.
- Work with PR agency of record to develop media wish-list of 100 outlets and secure coverage in at least 10% of desired outlets.
- Work with PR agency of record to secure stories in national media outlets.
- Reach new publications that target the solo female traveler, African American travelers and LGBTQ market.
- Partner with regional tourism organizations to further reach and leverage media opportunities (see Partnerships on page 16).

LOCAL MARKET

- Increase brand and product awareness among residents, local consumers and media. Build relationships with local television, print, radio and online media to build credibility in the local and business communities.
- Enhance relationships with the staff and public relations

professionals who represent Loudoun municipalities and tourism attractions.

- Engage directly with the local business community to communicate Visit Loudoun's role and value and to help foster synergistic approaches to products and features.
- Work with local tourism industry partners to generate story ideas, news, events and unique publicity angles.

MEDIA RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

- Write, edit and distribute a variety of internal and external content, including story ideas, backgrounders, press releases, media alerts, newsletters, digital content and more.
- Maintain the digital media database, track/report on media success and manage the Visiting Journalist Program.
- Participate in media visits and events in key markets. Pitch story ideas via virtual and in-market desk-side visits and events geared toward writers covering leisure travel, lifestyle, meetings, weddings and sports markets.
- Develop regional media list to assist meeting and sports planners and industry partners with reaching media for their Loudoun news and events.
- Retain relevant memberships (including the Society of American Travel Writers, Public Relations Society of America and the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance) and attend meetings when possible.
- Maintain the Media section of VisitLoudoun.org and assist the marketing team with asset management in Crowdriff.

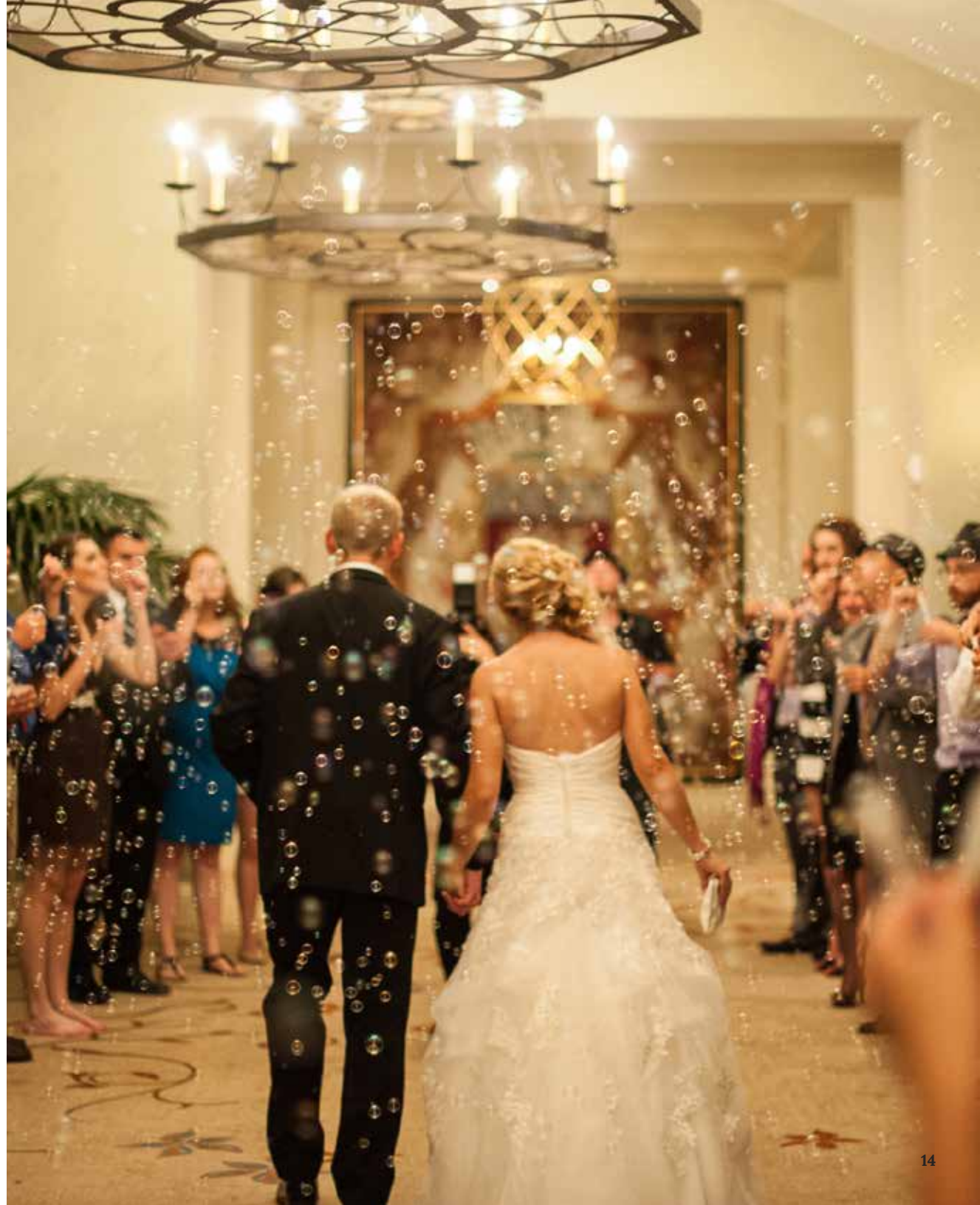
PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

While Visit Loudoun and its PR agency will actively be pitching year-round, due to the uncertainty of travel with COVID-19, other media activities will be done in a phased approach.

- PHASE 1 (Late Summer/Early Fall) – Virtual desk-side visits with writers in the D.C./Baltimore market
- PHASE 2 (Fall/Winter) – Begin hosting media in-market on an individual basis
- PHASE 3 (Spring) – Travel to New York for in-person visits with editors and writers
- PHASE 4 (Spring) – Host additional writers, with the potential of a group media FAM

Content & Partnerships

This section outlines objectives and initiatives related to marketing channels and platforms, content creation, key partnerships (domestic and international) and sales support.



Channels & Platforms

SOCIAL MEDIA & UGC

- Social Platforms – Continued account management and supplemental advertising to leverage current audience and reach and build new audience. Primary channels are Instagram, Facebook and Twitter; secondary channels are YouTube, Pinterest and LinkedIn. Content creation and key demographic and psychographic targeting. Continued leverage of User Generated Content (UGC) from influencers to feature new content.
- Social Media Strategy – Focus on increasing engagement and expanding audience reach. Also consider how to address and engage non-leisure markets through social (for example: themed days of the week such as Wedding Wednesdays).
- Social Campaigns – Launch #LoveLoudoun Like a Local campaign to highlight all Loudoun has to offer.
- CrowdRiff – Continued web platform software management to highlight UGC content on VisitLoudoun.org.

WEBSITE

- VisitLoudoun.org – Continue development of dynamic content, including video, to better target and serve audiences. Retain, create and build new content for all sections of the website and both the general calendar and the community calendar.
- Simpleview SEO – Continue to leverage Ad Words platform to drive qualified traffic to the website to increase visitation. Keyword ownership in the region and Virginia.
- DTN – Co-op partner digital advertising on the website. Featured placements and promoting click-through rates.

THIRD-PARTY PLATFORMS

- TripAdvisor – Continued advertising partnership to leverage the #1 travel website globally. Existing product content page, supplemental ads and mobile targeted delivery. Possible co-op opportunities.

PRINT PRODUCTS

- Loudoun Visitors Guide – This annual destination guide is geared toward leisure visitors but supports all markets as it is also used by a variety of planners, meeting attendees, event guests, sports event participants and other travelers. Updates should be explored annually to keep the design, content and overall concept fresh.
- Trail Guides – The LoCo Ale Trail Guide and Wine Trail Guide offer critical mapping and other trail information. Annual (or more frequent) updates should be made to keep the trails as current as possible.
- **NEW:** Food & Drink Guide – A new culinary-focused product has been recommended for development in Spring 2021. While it is envisioned as a separate, stand-alone product, it could potentially be scaled down and inserted into the Visitors Guide instead.
- **NEW:** Digital Guides – Interactive, mobile-friendly, responsive versions of all print products will be developed through BlueToad or a comparable digital publishing platform. This will expand product reach and ensure that consumers can access influential content instantly on any device.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

- Google DMO Program – The program enables destinations to enhance consumer-facing content across a range of Google products. The program provides tools and tactics to improve the completeness, quality and accuracy of destination content across business listings, Google Maps, Destination Travel Guides and more. As part of the program, Google provides access to free tools and solutions for DMOs through its Knowledge Base. Miles operates the program and has provided tactical training to Loudoun's tourism partners.
- Threshold 360 – This virtual tour platform allows businesses to easily produce 360° virtual tours for inclusion on websites. Attractions, restaurants, hotels and other businesses can all benefit from enhanced website experiences (and increased engagement) for both leisure and meetings audiences.

Content Creation & Development

- Content Calendar – This regularly updated document will guide content creation and promotion for both web and social.
- Film/Video/Display – Develop plan to acquire new video content and create opportunities for content promotion. Create new branded display materials for use at tradeshow and events, both in target markets and for local industry events.
- Images – Conduct a photo shoot to acquire new hero brand images and supporting photography for the primary leisure campaign and all marketing efforts.
- Collateral Creation – Continue to produce branded and product-focused marketing collateral for all departments and target markets, including Leisure, Meetings, Sports, Weddings and culinary travel audiences. Primary needs include (1) Visit Loudoun Deal Cards with welcome letters for all markets, including customization for each market, (2) Profile Sheets to support meetings and group travel marketing.
- Promotional Items – Continue to identify and produce branded marketing giveaways as tools to extend sales and marketing efforts.

Key Partnerships & Advertising

- Destination DC – Continued partnership to promote Loudoun as a unique asset to the DC region and complementary product to the DC experience. Advertising in printed guide bi-annually, digital ads on Washington.org and inclusion in direct mail lead generation.
- Virginia Tourism – Continued partnership to promote Loudoun as Virginia product through the VTC printed travel guide, digital ads on Virginia.org and social platforms.

International Partnerships

The evolving situation around COVID-19 has altered plans to market internationally, but we want to be sure Loudoun is well-positioned for international market growth long-term.

- Brand USA – Leverage content marketing partnership opportunities to drive traffic on the discoveramerica.com site to Loudoun's foreign language content videos.
- CRUSA – Continue partnership with Capital Region USA and Virginia Tourism to promote Loudoun to key international markets (UK/Germany/Brazil/France/China). Partnership includes advertising on the CRUSA website, ads in multi-language print guides, participation in IPW, sales missions and hosted Tour Operator and Press trips.
- NVTP - Partner with the Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership (NVTP) and Virginia Tourism to reach the Canadian market through a comprehensive marketing and PR campaign that includes digital advertising, in-market promotions, sales and media mission and website promotion.
- Sister City Partnerships – Leverage the county's Sister City partnerships for market development.

Sales Support

- Meetings/Corporate – Identify advertising and partnership opportunities to promote Loudoun in the Corporate, Association, Incentive and SMERFEE markets. Includes CVENT and in-market branded promotions for visiting meeting groups.
- Sports – Identify advertising and partnership opportunities to promote Loudoun in the Sports Travel market. Includes in-market branded promotions to visiting sports travel groups.
- Travel Trade – Identify advertising and partnership opportunities to promote Loudoun in the Domestic Group Tour and International markets. CRUSA and IPW marketing opportunities to be included.
- Weddings – Support campaigns through digital advertising, branded content and social promotion.

Tactical Plan & Timeline

In light of the pandemic and the likelihood of long-term effects and a gradual return to normalcy, we have created a phased plan that bridges crisis management and the return to regular destination marketing operations. The aim is to boost awareness, consideration and ultimately visitation for key audiences over the course of this plan.

This phased approach includes creating digital and virtual experiences, launching locally focused activations, developing key programs designed for a post-COVID-19 landscape and launching the primary campaign. Supporting local stakeholders and partners throughout this period will continue to be a focus.

The phased plan is comprised of the following components:

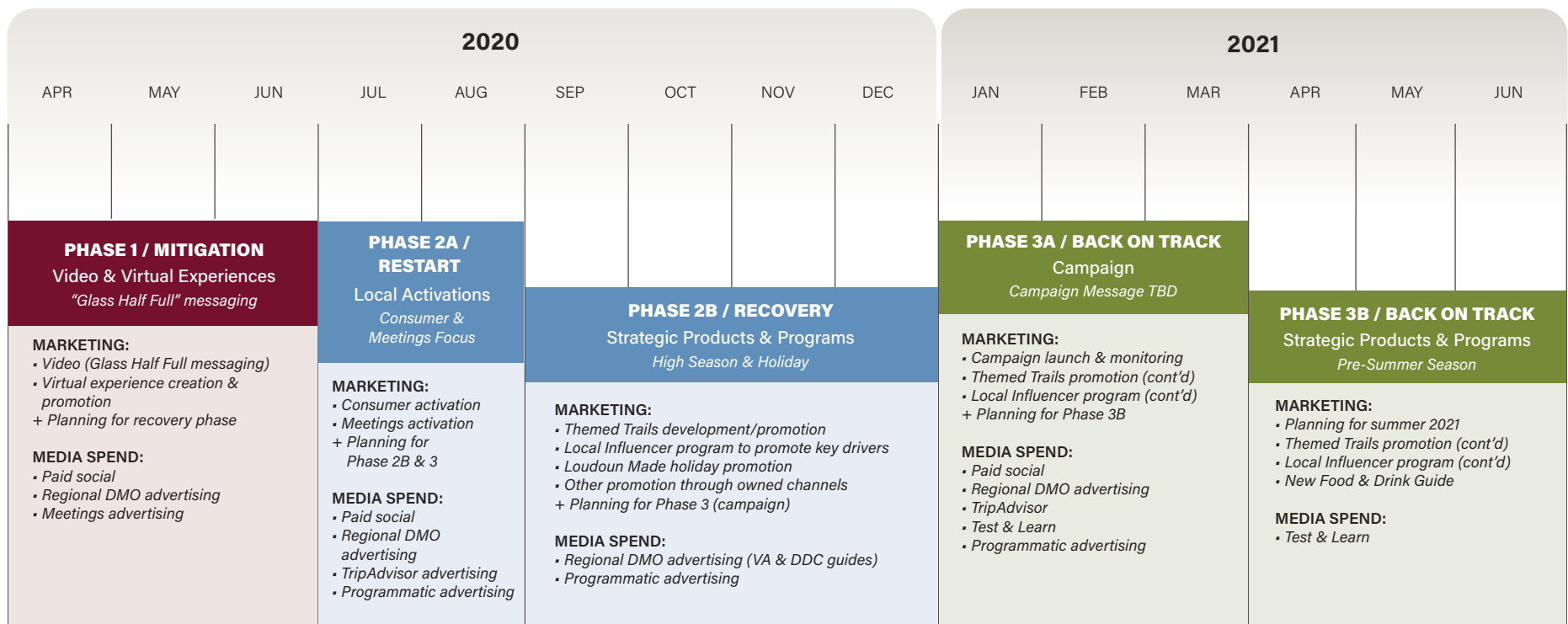
- **PHASE 1 / Mitigation** (April-June)
Virtual experiences & "Glass Half Full" messaging
- **PHASE 2A / Restart** (July-Aug)
Local activations (consumer & meetings)
- **PHASE 2B / Recovery** (Sept-Dec)
Products & Programs focus
- **PHASE 3A / Back on Track** (Jan-Mar)
Campaign launch & monitoring
- **PHASE 3B / Back on Track** (April-June)
Products & Programs focus

This plan will also outline initiatives for target audiences, including Leisure/Consumer, Meetings, Group Travel, Weddings and Sports.

The plan's timing and tactics are subject to change based on COVID-19, as noted on Page 2 of this document.



FY 2020/21 Marketing Timeline At-a-Glance



This chart represents an at-a-glance summary of the overall strategy. For more details, refer to the phased tactical plan and media plan.

NOTE: This timeline is based on the local economy reopening in June 2020. If that changes, this timeline will shift as well. A rebound in COVID-19 cases after reopening could also force a shift in the timeline.

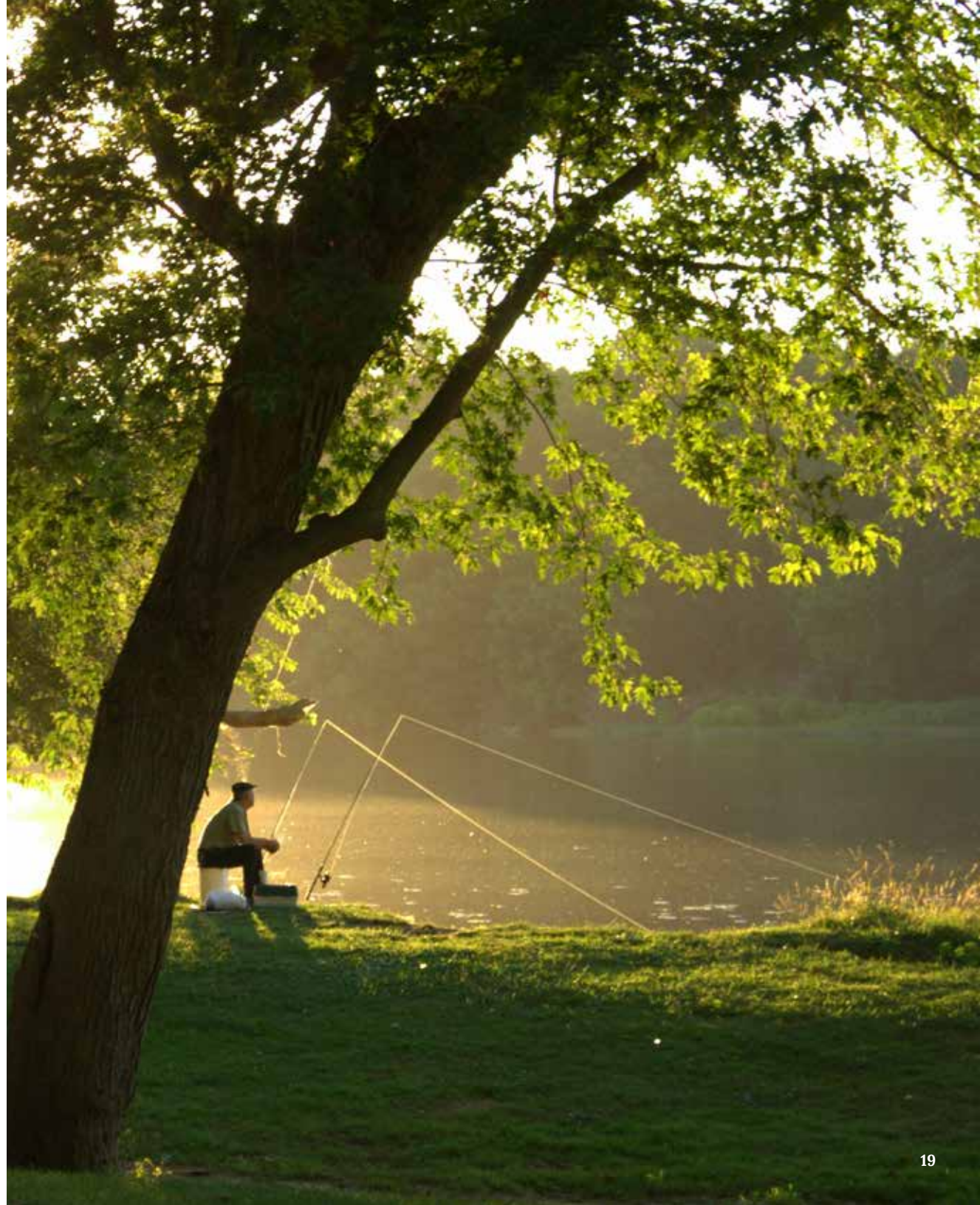
PHASE 1 / MITIGATION

Virtual Experiences

Phase 1 addresses the change in direction forced by the pandemic and the need to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). This phase of the plan provides guidance in a time of crisis, helping to mitigate hardship in the Loudoun community and maintain Loudoun's visibility in front of key audience segments in a positive, responsible way.

Phase 1 is focused on:

- Actively monitoring the situation, including local impacts and travel sentiment
- Adjusting messaging to key audiences across all channels
- Positioning the local industry for recovery through targeted tactics
- Creating and curating digital/virtual content, including the development of a destination video with "Glass Half Full" messaging
- Driving awareness to keep Loudoun experiences top of mind
- Supporting local stakeholders and partners in a variety of ways
- Leveraging the Google platform, Google My Business listings and strategies from the Google DMO Content Program to keep information accurate and up-to-date



PHASE 1

Virtual & Interactive Experiences

Interactive Experiences & Activities for Leisure Audience

Virtual Loudoun experiences are an ideal way to create awareness and positive brand connections while a majority of consumers are quarantined, isolating and social distancing. Since there are no health and safety risks or travel logistics to consider, these experiences can be promoted far and wide to all markets. The ideas below provide a way to experience Loudoun from afar, to keep the destination top of mind for future visitors, and to engage locals and anyone wanting to learn more about the destination.

Highlight local product wherever possible:

- **History** - Museum Tours, Historical Home Tours, History Trails
- **Music** - Jam Session, Live Music, Music Lessons & Recital for Kids
- **Food** - Chef Box, Dessert Making, Kids Can Cook
- **Drinks (21+)** - Wine/Beer/Whiskey/Cider Tasting, Craft Cocktail Making, Mixologist at Home, Trivia Night, Virtual Trails (LoCo)
- **Made In Loudoun** - Craft at Home, Craft Show
- **Just for Fun** - Loudoun Puzzle Challenge

TOOLS:

- Facebook Live
- Zoom Video Conferencing (100 Guests Max)
- Instagram Live
- Live Tweeting

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION:

- A push to the Visit Loudoun website for future planning, potentially at the end of the experience
- Providing YouTube link to video

TIMING: Mid-April through June

PROMOTION & DISTRIBUTION: Will vary based on the virtual experience created, but likely to involve the website, social channels and email. It is expected that much of this virtual content will have a long shelf-life as evergreen content featured on the website. Efforts to aggregate virtual content and promote virtual events on the website are currently underway.

Virtual Experiences for Meetings/Groups Audience

The Visit Loudoun sales team will work with select hotel properties and other local business partners to create webinars and virtual FAM tours geared to meeting planners. The content featured will include 360 photos and tours as well as virtual footage of leisure activities at wineries, retail establishments and more.

TOOLS:

- Threshold 360 virtual tour platform
- GoToWebinar

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION:

- Hotels must provide 360 photos and tours, including coverage of outdoor spaces where applicable. Other local businesses that serve groups must provide 360 photos and tours, video footage or photo assets.

TIMING: June and beyond

PROMOTION & DISTRIBUTION: This content will be distributed to planners through webinars and virtual FAM tours; it will also be housed in the Meetings section of VisitLoudoun.org. Meetings-focused advertising will drive to the website, where this content will be accessible. For more details on advertising, refer to the Media Plan.

PHASE 1

Digital Experiences Video

This new video will serve the needs of Visit Loudoun, the local community and consumers. The video will offer consumers a positive message that also promotes Loudoun's innovation, creativity and key attributes (food, wine and art among them). The video will acknowledge the current situation brought on by the coronavirus. It will look back at how Loudoun residents have been living life during the shelter-in-place period, and it will also look ahead to welcoming visitors again when the time is right.

MESSAGING & CONTENT

Positive, uplifting messaging and imagery will position Loudoun as a "glass half full" kind of place, highlighting the destination's natural beauty and friendly faces along the way. The objective is to instill a sense of hope while also showcasing the people and places of Loudoun.

In Loudoun County, we've been...

- **Crafting** – Brewing beer, crafting cocktails
- **Riding** – Riding horses, cycling
- **Growing** – Farm shots; grapes growing, etc.
- **Savoring** – Cooking, eating, drinking
- **Connecting** – With nature and each other; focus on virtual, innovative ways to connect

We'd love for you to join us when the time is right. Loudoun is a "glass half full" kind of place, and we look forward to sharing it with you. #LoveLoudoun (The end frame of the video will point viewers to the virtual experiences page on the website.)

PRODUCTION PLAN: The one-minute video will intersperse shots from Visit Loudoun's branded destination video with videos from partners (prepping boxes for takeout, filling wine tasting bottles, etc.) and videos taken by staff at home (making cocktails, toasting, visiting on video calls, etc.). Videos from partners and staff would most likely be cell phone videos, akin to home movies, with an authentic, unpolished feel. Appropriate logos and hashtags will be featured.

MUSIC: The "Coming Home" brand anthem – instrumental version

TIMING: April/May release

DISTRIBUTION: The video should live on the website (accessible through a YouTube player) and be promoted through social (organic and potentially paid) as well as through email.

PHASE 2 / RESTART & RECOVERY

Local Activations & Strategic Programs

The restart & recovery phase will bridge a period of mitigation with a period of getting back on track in terms of marketing efforts and visitation. During this phase, we can expect local and nearby markets to venture out and begin resuming normal activities, but in a cautious and careful manner.

During this time, consumer needs will focus around the following, and our plan will highlight and promote these destination attributes:

- **SPACE** – Travelers and planners will seek out destinations that offer compelling experiences in wide-open spaces.
- **SAFETY** – Travelers and planners will seek to avoid crowds and are likely to prefer car travel vs air travel; road trips are likely to be a popular form of travel.
- **OUTDOORS** – Outdoor and nature experiences will be viewed as more safe and secure.
- **AFFORDABILITY** – Emerging from a period of financial concern and hardship, deals and incentives will be important for enticing consumers, meeting planners and other audience segments.
- **CONNECTION** – This theme is foundational to Loudoun's brand and will be woven throughout all messaging; the recommended programs outlined in this plan are designed to connect places and the people who visit them.

This phase consists of two parts:

- **PHASE 2A/RESTART** (July-Aug)
Local activations (consumer & meetings)
- **PHASE 2B/RECOVERY** (Sept-Dec)
Products & Programs focus

The plan's timing and tactics are subject to change based on COVID-19, as noted on Page 2 of this document.



PHASE 2A: Local Activations

The primary purpose is to activate local and nearby markets to stimulate travel, overnight meetings, hospitality and restaurant spend to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 as soon as it's safe and responsible to do so. We will also continue building community engagement and rallying support for the tourism industry as established during the mitigation phase.

AUDIENCES

The two local activations will target:

1. Consumers (including local residents)
2. Meeting Planners

MESSAGING

Appropriate and engaging messaging will be crafted to welcome back locals, leisure visitors and groups. Locals will be invited to begin getting out and about, and nearby consumers will be invited to take a drive to Loudoun County. Planners will be encouraged to begin booking small group meetings.

TIMING

Targeting July and August, but the time frame is subject to change.

The timing for rollout will be determined based on the status and levels of COVID-19 spread in the local community, surrounding communities and key feeder markets. The plan will not be implemented until it is considered safe and acceptable to do so. Gauging the needs of consumers and their collective mindset will be key, as will following local and federal guidance and listening to the needs of local industry stakeholders and partners.

PHASE 2A

LOCAL ACTIVATION: Consumer

MESSAGING

Locals and leisure visitors will be invited to “Branch Out” by getting back out into their community or by taking a day trip or road trip to visit Loudoun County. “Branch Out” is versatile, brand-aligned messaging that encourages consumers to go exploring, get away and do something new or different. Loudoun will be positioned as a place to branch out safely and have a full and satisfying experience. Highlighting the outdoors, nature, open space and fresh air whenever possible will help position Loudoun as a place that’s safe and healthy. Accessibility/proximity messaging will also be included.

WEBSITE: DYNAMIC CONTENT FOR NEW LOCAL LEISURE LANDING PAGE

This new page will cater to locals and nearby markets, highlighting safety, accessibility and affordability whenever possible as tourism offerings come back online. Miles has submitted a proposed outline for the page content, drawing heavily from existing site content. It includes:

- Itineraries and trails to inspire road trips or day trips
- Outdoor recreation opportunities
- Agritourism
- Beer and wine trails
- Restaurants
- Shops and farm markets
- Self-guided tours
- Deals and incentives

SOCIAL STRATEGY

Social efforts will support messaging to local/nearby markets and will promote the timely content outlined here. Local residents will be invited to rediscover their community with the hashtag #BranchOutLoudoun. Consumers in nearby markets will be invited for a day trip or road trip using the hashtag #BranchOutInLoudoun.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Regular email newsletters will offer visitors updates as attractions, activities, restaurants, wineries, breweries and other businesses fully come back online. They should promote safety, accessibility and affordability whenever possible.

GOOGLE POSTS

Individual businesses should harness the power of Google to help ensure they’re in front of consumers who are actively searching for them. Visit Loudoun and Miles can assist in this effort.

ADVERTISING

Advertising placements will include local DMO websites (Washington.org and Virginia.org) as well as social channels and TripAdvisor. For more details, refer to the Media Plan.

LOCAL MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Partnership opportunities with local media (such as with Loudoun Now) will be explored.

PHASE 2A

LOCAL ACTIVATION: Meetings

MESSAGING

"Branch Out" messaging is a call to leave the virtual world behind and make valuable connections in-person in Loudoun County. The destination will be positioned as an ideal meeting location because of its accessibility, affordability/incentives and safety (connected to its abundant outdoor spaces, nature/outdoors offerings and fresh air).

WEBSITE: DYNAMIC CONTENT FOR MEETINGS SECTION LANDING PAGE

The main Meetings landing page will be updated and expanded to cater to planners in local and nearby markets, highlighting affordability, accessibility and safety whenever possible. Planners will be invited to begin booking small group meetings. The page should include or link to the following content:

- Deals and incentives
- Unique event spaces
- Group dining options
- 360° tours
- Team-building options with a focus on outdoor recreation
- Pre/post itineraries for attendees (to help drive attendance)

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Email newsletters will focus on promoting deals and incentives and will also highlight the content outlined above.

GOOGLE POSTS

Individual lodging properties should harness the power of Google to help ensure they're in front of planners who are actively searching for them. Visit Loudoun and Miles can assist in this effort.

ADVERTISING

Calls to action will encourage planners to book their meeting in Loudoun County. Advertising placements will include CVENT and LinkedIn. For more details, refer to the Media Plan.

PHASE 2B: Strategic Products & Programs

While Phase 2B has a lower volume of media spend, it is an active and important phase. During this time period, which includes high season and holidays, Visit Loudoun will focus on developing key tourism-driving products and programs, using valuable owned channels to reach and engage all target audiences.

Phase 2B is focused on:

- Themed Trails development and promotion
- Local Influencer program to promote key tourism drivers
- Take Loudoun Home holiday promotion
- Content creation (including video) to support products and programs
- Active promotion through owned channels
- Planning for Phase 3 (campaign creative development)

PHASE 2B

Products & Programs

Themed Trails & Itineraries: Development & Promotion

Trails and itineraries help visitors connect the dots and make exploring easy. They support Visit Loudoun's strategic pillars by highlighting a variety of points of interest, grouping top destination drivers into thoughtful themed experiences, and helping to disperse visitors across the county. Taking a road trip to follow one or more Loudoun trails or itineraries is a fun and frictionless form of travel ideal for the COVID-19 recovery period and beyond.

Key Definitions

TRAILS

All trails are pathways or routes that facilitate a journey. They can be traditional outdoor recreation trails or any variety of themed trails linking related points of interest. Consumers are generally familiar with both types of trails.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS offer an active journey outdoors. Often singular entities, many are “trails” in the traditional sense – outdoor pathways connecting distinct natural habitats, scenic vistas, picnic sites and more.

THEMED TRAILS offer a flexible travel journey unified by a theme or interest, such as beer or wine. They aggregate and link related points of interest in a comprehensive, complete way.

- Trails evoke a sense of fun, freedom and adventure. Trails present options for exploration; visitors choose what to do and when to do it.
- Passport Programs incentivize travelers to visit more trail locations; while this is ideal, it isn't required. A trail can serve its purpose without an incentive program.
- Trails are more developed than itineraries and typically include robust mapping. Some trails can be branded, such as the LoCo Ale Trail, but this is not required. Trails can evolve and be further developed over time.
- Themed trails are ideal for broad topics that are also major tourism drivers.

ITINERARIES

Itineraries offer a curated travel journey linking multiple attractions and experiences. Itineraries typically do not attempt to present all the options; they tend to be collections of hand-picked points of interest unified under a common theme or interest.

- While itineraries can be inspirational, they are most often thought of as helpful planning tools. They are more tactical in nature and offer guidance in terms of time frames and order of exploration.
- They tend to be more curated than comprehensive.
- Itineraries are ideal for more narrow topics or niche themes, but they can also cover broader topics.

PHASE 2B

Products & Programs

Themed Trails & Itineraries: Development & Promotion

THEMED TRAILS

- **LoCo Ale Trail** – Includes Passport Program
- **Loudoun Wine Trail** – Consider adding Passport Program component
- **NEW: Cider & Spirits Trail** – Highlights distilleries, cideries and related offerings
- **NEW: Farm Trail** – Connects farms, farm markets, farm breweries and all things agritourism
- **Loudoun County Artisan Trail** – Operated by the Artisans Center of Virginia
- **Virginia Civil War Trails** – Operated by Civil War Trails®

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

- **NEW: Adventure Trail** – Slated for relaunch; links a variety of recreational assets
- **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail** – Historic pathways and waterways
- **Washington & Old Dominion Trail** – Promote local trail connections
- **Virginia Birding & Wildlife Trail** – Promote Loudoun locations
- **Appalachian Trail** – Promote Loudoun as an ideal jumping-off point
- **C&O Canal Trail** – Biking to this famous trail

ITINERARIES

- **NEW: Horse & Hunt Country Itinerary** – Covering equestrian history and culture, horse-themed shops and restaurants and the National Sporting Library & Museum. FUTURE OPPORTUNITY: Potential development into a themed trail
- **NEW: Back Roads & Hidden Gems Itinerary** – Covering tucked-away treasures, from hidden history to intimate restaurants and bars; includes Rural Roads promotion
- **NEW: Loudoun Arts, Music & Culture Itinerary** – Spotlighting the arts/culture district, galleries, public art and live music venues/spaces
- **African American History Itinerary** – In development

PRODUCTION PLAN: For new trails and itineraries, points of interest will be identified, followed by the creation of editorial content, photography and trail maps (print and digital). For existing trails, updates or enhancements will be explored, including the creation of guided video tours to support key trails. Specific content considerations across all trails include:

TRANSPORTATION – This is a key component needed to facilitate each journey. Transportation options should be addressed across all trails and itineraries to help guide visitors, leveraging Metro and pointing to viable transport options whenever possible.

LOUDOUN MADE – Locally made products should be featured wherever contextually relevant.

DISTRIBUTION & PROMOTION: Trails and itineraries would be housed on Visit Loudoun's leisure website and promoted in the following ways:

VIDEO – Videos could be created to highlight and promote key trails and itineraries.

SOCIAL – Teasers for Instagram and Facebook stories would be created to promote the trails in an engaging, shareable way.

EMAIL – Email outreach would target consumers as well as partners; partners could display trail products in their places of business and promote them through their own channels to help spread the word.

PRINT – The variety of trails and itineraries could make up a prominent feature in the annual Visitors Guide, which would point readers to the website for more info and maps.

ADVERTISING – Paid placements would be considered, including SEM and digital banner advertising, especially to local and drive markets.

PR & MEDIA RELATIONS – Efforts would be made to secure coverage of various trails through press trips or desk-side visits.

DIGITAL TOOLKIT

A toolkit could be created and shared with partners to summarize the trail highlights and provide tips for messaging and promotion.

PHASE 2B

Products & Programs

Local Influencer Program

Passionate Loudoun residents will be solicited to volunteer their time and talents as local tourism influencers in the service of Visit Loudoun and the community at large. This supports the “Community Involvement” strategic pillar as well as the “Variety” pillar, since influencers would promote a wide range of experiences across the county. Local influencers would represent categories that align with major tourism drivers and opportunities for destination growth, such as Music & the Arts (also a strategic pillar). Influencers – one per category – would serve as a designated liaison between Visit Loudoun and key stakeholders in the category they represent.

KEY DUTIES

Local influencers are tasked with gathering fresh content ideas and assets that the Visit Loudoun team can review, develop, publish and promote. Influencers will not have direct access to Visit Loudoun’s public-facing channels such as the website or social media accounts; Visit Loudoun will maintain control over content development and publishing.

- **Photo sourcing and sharing** – Generating photo/video assets as well as gathering these assets from other partners
- **Content idea generation** – Seeking out new, innovative and worthwhile activities, experiences, events and initiatives and then communicating findings regularly (potentially monthly) to Visit Loudoun; this could evolve into content creation over time
- **Community outreach** – In pursuit of photos, news and content ideas
- **Event participation** – Attending events related to the influencer’s category; potentially assisting with event planning

CORE CATEGORIES REPRESENTED

The program will launch with three (3) categories; additional categories from the list below can be added over time. Categories undergoing significant change and/or growth will be prioritized.

- **Craft Beverage** – Wineries, breweries, distilleries, cideries and related events
- **Restaurants** – Restaurants, cafes, food trucks and food festivals
- **Music, Arts & Culture** – Live and virtual music, museums, galleries, murals/public art and festivals
- **Agritourism/Farms** – Farm experiences, markets, events and all things farm-fresh
- **Shopping** – Boutiques, antiques, mom-and-pop shops and retail chains
- **History** – Historic sites/attractions, museums and related events
- **Sports & Outdoors** – Biking, hiking, paddling, marathons, softball, hockey; includes spectator sports and active pursuits
- **Equestrian Experiences** – Horseback riding, equestrian sports and related events

ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES: Beyond the core tourism-driving categories listed above, there is an opportunity to add categories geared to specific audience segments, including non-leisure. These categories could include LGBTQ+ travel, weddings and meetings/groups. Local

influencers representing these categories would be tasked with gathering photo/video assets, news and content ideas from related Loudoun partners. In addition, they would be asked to gather testimonials from locals and non-locals who are regarded in their fields; these testimonials could then be woven into related content across Visit Loudoun’s channels.

GUIDELINES: Visit Loudoun will establish guidelines around influencer selection and operation. For instance, influencers must be adult residents of Loudoun County and agree to participate on a voluntary, non-paid basis. Influencer candidates should demonstrate a history of community involvement and/or express a desire to help promote and grow local businesses. Appointed influencers must submit content ideas and assets on a regular basis (as agreed upon with Visit Loudoun) and cannot extensively promote their own businesses.

OPTION TO INCORPORATE OUT-OF-MARKET

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS: In key categories where the destination product is more established, such as wineries, a (paid) social media influencer could be brought on board instead to generate more content and expand Loudoun’s reach into important audience segments. Influencers based in the target geo markets could further extend visibility. Visit Loudoun could sponsor their trip with a curated itinerary, out of which a significant amount of content and brand awareness could be generated.

PHASE 3 / BACK ON TRACK

Campaign

While the long-awaited campaign launch is the dominant feature of this phase, there are other important initiatives in the mix, from continuing to develop and promote themed trails to planning for summer season. The world may not be fully “back to normal,” but current data and projections suggest a sense of normalcy will resume by 2021. This would include the re-emergence of large group gatherings for sports and entertainment. It is at this point – when consumer sentiment is that we are collectively, solidly back on track – that we plan to unveil the new branded campaign.

The consumer needs outlined on Page 22 are still likely to be in play to some extent, so it will be important to highlight opportunities for space, safety, outdoor fun, affordability and connection as much as possible.

This phase consists of two parts:

- **PHASE 3A** (Jan-Mar)
Campaign
- **PHASE 3B** (Apr-June)
Products & Programs focus

The plan's timing and tactics are subject to change based on COVID-19, as noted on Page 2 of this document.



PHASE 3A: Primary Campaign

Originally scheduled to launch in summer 2020, the primary campaign has shifted to early 2021 as result of COVID-19. It may need to shift again.

The campaign will primarily be focused on driving leisure travel, but it will be adapted to engage other important audience segments, namely meetings, group travel, weddings and sports.

GOAL

The campaign will capture the essence of the brand and highlight a variety of destination drivers, raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County and ultimately inspiring the selection of Loudoun for vacations, meetings, group travel, weddings and sports events.

STRATEGY

The themes of closeness and connection position Loudoun well post-COVID. The central message is that DC's Wine Country inspires a sense of closeness – just an hour west of DC, it's a place to connect to the land and to each other. For all markets, the campaign creative will be informed by Visit Loudoun's strategic plan, key research and consumer sentiment and needs in response to COVID-19.

KEY MARKETS

- **LOUDOUN** – Local partnerships include Loudoun Economic Development and the Loudoun Chamber of Commerce; Campaign target (although not primary audience)
- **VIRGINIA** – Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) partnership advertising; Campaign target
- **WASHINGTON, DC** – Destination DC (DDC) partnership advertising; Campaign target
- **PHILADELPHIA & PITTSBURGH** – Campaign target
- **MID-ATLANTIC CITIES** – Campaign target

CONCEPT

Three concepts have been presented, a survey has been disseminated and the results have been interpreted and shared. Concepts will be revisited and reworked in light of ongoing changes stemming from COVID-19.

TIMING

The campaign is currently projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

PHASE 3A

CAMPAIGN: Leisure/Consumer

GOAL

The integrated leisure campaign will capture the essence of the brand, raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County and ultimately inspiring visitation to the destination.

OBJECTIVES

The campaign has several objectives:

- Convey the variety of Loudoun experiences using DC's Wine Country as the hook
- Differentiate Loudoun from the competition
- Ensure that messaging reinforces post-COVID-19 consumer needs: space, safety, affordability, outdoors and connection.

AUDIENCE

The campaign will heavily target drive market travelers within 5 hours away, especially from the following markets: Washington DC, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and mid-Atlantic cities (including Richmond). Historically, Loudoun's typical visitors are Gen X or Baby Boomers. Solo female travelers and Millennial families are growth markets. Building the LGBTQ+ audience segment is also a focus.

CONCEPT

The leisure campaign concept, which is currently TBD, will harness themes of closeness and connection.

TIMING

The leisure campaign is projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

MEDIA

For details on the media plan to support the leisure campaign, see Page 39.

PHASE 3A

CAMPAIGN: Meetings

KEY MARKETS

With uncertainty surrounding the pandemic – including potentially ongoing health, safety and financial concerns – meeting planners moving forward with scheduling in-person meetings may avoid selecting locations that require air travel. Visit Loudoun will target organizations where most attendees are with driving distance.

Local – Loudoun and Virginia-based organizations

Regional – Organizations from surrounding states and cities, including Washington, DC, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

GOAL

Raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County as a viable meetings destination and ultimately driving bookings for overnight meetings.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote accessibility, affordability, safety and the unique Loudoun experience
- Drive to the Loudoun website's Meetings section (potentially the new meetings landing page created as part of the Local Meetings Activation)

AUDIENCE

The campaign will target planners for local and regional organizations whose attendees can access Loudoun County by car.

CONCEPT

The leisure campaign (TBD) will be adapted to the meetings market. "Meet close to home" messaging will still be an undercurrent.

TIMING

The campaign is projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

MEDIA

Areas of focus will include local/nearby DMO websites (including Washington, DC and Philadelphia) as well as meetings-specific channels such as CVENT, HelmsBriscoe and Conference Direct. For details on the media plan to support the meetings campaign, see Page 39.

PHASE 3A

CAMPAIGN: Group Travel

KEY MARKETS

With uncertainty surrounding the pandemic – including potentially ongoing health, safety and financial concerns – tour operators may seek to avoid groups having to travel by air. Visit Loudoun will target markets within driving distance.

Local – Loudoun and statewide

Regional – Surrounding states and cities, including Washington, DC, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

GOAL

Raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County as an ideal destination for group travel and ultimately driving bookings.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote accessibility, affordability, safety, outdoors, wide-open spaces and the unique Loudoun experience
- Drive to the Loudoun website's Groups section

AUDIENCE

The campaign will target tour operators in local and regional markets.

CONCEPT

The leisure campaign (TBD) will be adapted to the group travel market. Proximity messaging will still be important

TIMING

The campaign is projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

MEDIA

For details on the media plan to support the group travel campaign, see Page 39.

PHASE 3A

CAMPAIGN: Weddings

KEY MARKETS

With uncertainty surrounding the pandemic – including potentially ongoing health, safety and financial concerns – wedding planners and couples moving forward with wedding plans may avoid selecting locations that require air travel. Visit Loudoun will target markets that are within driving distance.

Local – Loudoun and statewide

Regional – Surrounding states and cities, including Washington, DC, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

GOAL

Raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County as an ideal wedding destination and ultimately driving bookings.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote accessibility, affordability, safety, outdoor venues, wide-open spaces and the unique Loudoun experience
- Drive to the Loudoun website's Weddings section

AUDIENCE

The campaign will target wedding planners and couples in local and regional markets. Boosting the number of weddings for LGBTQ+ couples is also a focus.

CONCEPT

The leisure campaign (TBD) will be adapted to the weddings market. Proximity messaging will still be important.

TIMING

The campaign is projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

MEDIA

For details on the media plan to support the weddings campaign, see Page 39.

PHASE 3A

CAMPAIGN: Sports

KEY MARKETS

With uncertainty surrounding the pandemic – including potentially ongoing health, safety and financial concerns – sports event organizers moving forward with plans may avoid selecting locations that require air travel. Visit Loudoun will target markets that are within driving distance.

Local – Loudoun and statewide

Regional – Surrounding states and cities, including Washington, DC, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh

GOAL

Raising awareness and consideration of Loudoun County as an ideal destination for hosting a sports event and ultimately driving bookings.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote accessibility, affordability, safety, outdoor sports venues, wide-open spaces and Loudoun's unique advantages for sports teams
- Drive to the Loudoun website's Sports section

AUDIENCE

The campaign will target sports event organizers in local and regional markets.

CONCEPT

The leisure campaign (TBD) will be adapted to the sports market. Proximity messaging will still be important.

TIMING

The campaign is projected to be live from January through March 2021, but this time frame and other campaign parameters could shift based on the situation with COVID-19.

MEDIA

For details on the media plan to support the sports campaign, see Page 39.

PHASE 3B: Strategic Products & Programs

While Phase 3B has a lower volume of media spend, it is an active and important phase. During this time period, Visit Loudoun will focus on continuing to develop and promote key tourism-driving products and programs, using valuable owned channels to reach and engage all target audiences.

Phase 3B is focused on:

- Planning for summer 2021
- Production of new Food & Drink Guide
- Themed Trails development and promotion (cont'd)
- Local Influencer program (cont'd)
- Content creation (including video) to support products and programs
- Active promotion through owned channels

PHASE 3B

Products & Programs

New Print Product: Food & Drink Guide

This inspirational yet tactical mini-guide (available digitally and in print) would be a smaller, more focused supplement to the primary Visitors Guide. Created for foodies, by foodies, this guide would aggregate relevant “Trails” content (Ale Trail, Wine Trail, etc.) and spotlight a variety of notable restaurants. Seasonal offerings would also be featured to give readers a sense of what’s available during the year and help drive travel in every season.

This product would reflect Loudoun’s agriculture and epicurean nature and support the brand while also enticing visitation and influencing food and drink choices. Showcasing the great variety of food and drinks and highlighting unique experiences within this theme supports Loudoun’s strategic pillars.

Potential Content:

SIPPING TRAILS

- LoCo Ale Trail
- Loudoun Wine Trail
- **NEW:** Cider & Spirits Trail (see Page 28)

STANDOUT RESTAURANTS

- Must-visit restaurants in a variety of categories
- Restaurants could be organized by style/ambiance
- No listings included; guide points users to website to search all options
- Curated food & drink experiences would be highlighted

LOCAL & REGIONAL FAVORITES

- Favorite foods (from crab dishes to apple pie) and where to get them
- Could include restaurants, farm markets, producers, mom-and-pop shops and more

LOUDOUN FLAVORS BY SEASON

A fun infographic-style feature organized into the four seasons would capture seasonal foods, drinks and related events

- Seasonal brews and ciders
- Special edition spirits
- FeBREWary
- VA Craft Beer Month (August)
- VA Wine Month (October)
- VA Oyster Month (November)

CONSIDERATIONS: Creation of this new print product will be dependent on the production needs of the primary visitors guide, which takes precedence.

PRODUCTION PLAN: Format and design options will be explored, a page flow will be outlined, and a content plan created. The format would be smaller than the primary Visitors Guide to encourage portability; the page count would also be much lower. The product would be more robust than a brochure but smaller than a traditional guide. Much of the content could be aggregated from existing sources such as trail maps, the website and print guides; some new content would need to be created. Monetization options could be explored.

DISTRIBUTION & PROMOTION: The product would be available in print as well as digitally on the website. It could be promoted via social channels, email outreach (direct to consumers as well as to partners to help promote and disseminate). Paid placements could be considered, including SEM and digital banner advertising.

QUIZ OPTION TO COMPLEMENT THE GUIDE:

If budget allows, we could develop an interactive online quiz that could match people with their ideal Loudoun “flavor profiles.” The quiz could be promoted on social channels and/or through digital advertising.

FY20/21 Media Plan

As with the overall Marketing Plan, the 2020/21 Media Plan will take a phased approach in response to the changing travel landscape due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following pages outline the top-level media strategy and plan.

- **MEDIA PHASES** Maintenance, recovery and back on track
- **MEDIA STRATEGY** Audience targeting, tactics and media partners

For more details, refer to the full Media Plan document and accompanying Media Flowchart.

The Media Plan is subject to change based on COVID-19, as noted on Page 2 of this document.



Media Phases

Miles will monitor macro and micro data signals – from research to consumer sentiment – to assess when it is appropriate to move to the next phase of recovery messaging and tactics.

PHASE 1: MAINTENANCE

This phase is heavily local-focused. Virtual experiences will be promoted, and toward the later part of this phase, locals will be encouraged to begin going out to eat again, shopping again and patronizing local businesses. A video will be created and distributed to drive awareness of the destination with relevant content. We will also start messaging to meeting planners to get on their radar for future meetings.

- **Traveler Mindset:** Cautious optimism, assessing options, reduced social distancing
- **Message Tone:** Nurturing, inspirational, future-focused
- **Market Focus:** Local + drive markets
- **Audience Focus:** Locals, social followers, meeting planners
- **Media Focus:** Owned channels/organic social, local niche sites, paid social, meetings, video

PHASE 2: RECOVERY

As consumers become more comfortable with traveling again, there will be outreach to drive markets to generate lucrative overnight visitation. Air travel might not be recovered, so consumers will feel more comfortable driving – a big opportunity for Loudoun to capture these travelers.

- **Traveler Mindset:** Returning to normal routines, forward-thinking
- **Message Tone:** “Welcome back,” encouraging people to visit
- **Market Focus:** Local + drive markets
- **Audience Focus:** Locals, social followers, meeting planners and core/niche audiences
- **Media Focus:** Local niche sites, paid social, meetings, video, programmatic display, travel niche

PHASE 3: BACK ON TRACK

As things return to normal, we will reach all target markets with the full media mix. The new primary campaign will be deployed during this phase.

- **Traveler Mindset:** It’s safe to travel, wanderlust, need a vacation
- **Message Tone:** Open and back to business, new campaign messaging
- **Market Focus:** Local + drive markets
- **Audience Focus:** Locals, social followers, meeting planners and core/niche audiences
- **Media Focus:** Full media mix

Media Strategy

Audience Targeting

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Age 25+
- HHI 75K+
- Skews Female
- Family Travel - With/Without Children
- Including LGBTQ+, African Americans
- Meeting Planners

GEOGRAPHIC DMA'S

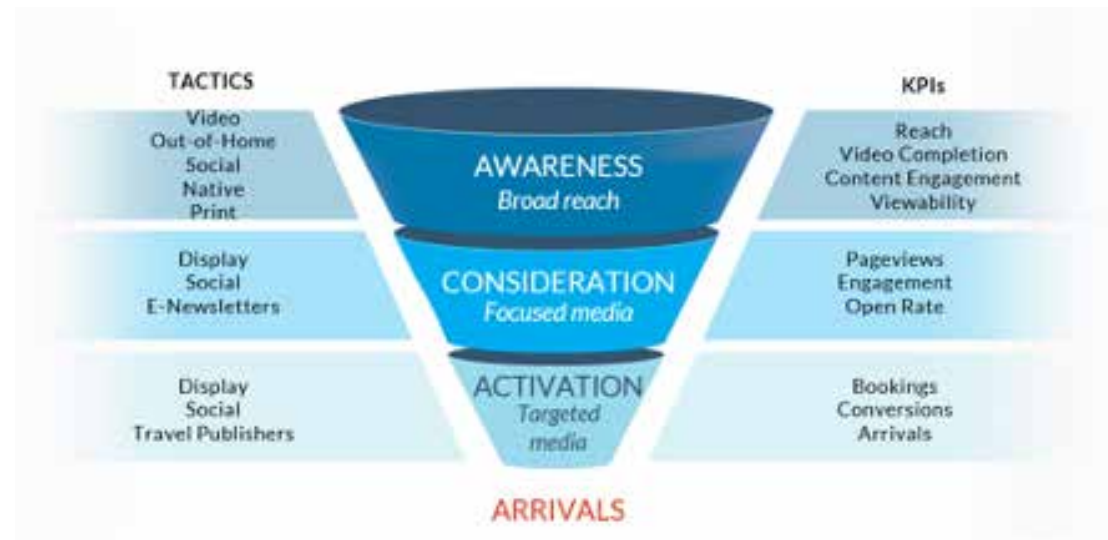
- DC
- Philly
- Pittsburgh
- Richmond
- Charlottesville
- Baltimore
- NYC
- Salisbury/Dover (test in fall/winter)

PRIMARY INTERESTS

- Wineries/Breweries/Craft Beverages
- Culinary
- Outdoor Adventure
- Music & Arts
- History
- Shopping

Overview of Tactics

This visualization shows media tactics and KPIs at each stage of the travel funnel.



Media Partners

OVERVIEW OF MEDIA OUTLETS

Below are key definitions of media outlets where advertising will be placed. For more details on each media outlet, refer to the full Media Plan document.

- **Facebook/Instagram** – Social platforms to engage with our audience and generate traffic to our site
- **YouTube** – Maximize brand exposure through video on the second-largest search engine in the world
- **Centro DSP** – Programmatic display/banner campaign to maximize reach and cost efficiency with precise targeting to our audience
- **Destination DC** – Travel niche website direct in our key market of DC in both print and digital placements
- **Virginia.org** – Travel niche website direct for those in-market to travel to VA in both print and digital placements
- **TripAdvisor** – Largest travel site in the world with opportunity to partner in VA co-op
- **LinkedIn** – Largest professional social network with advanced, precise targeting to reach meeting planners/decision makers
- **Epro** – Email database of meeting professionals working in the event and meeting planning industry, ensuring a high-quality and engaged audience
- **Digilant** – Digital out-of-home advertising to drive awareness; bold visual displays in high-traffic areas target visitors on the go

MEDIA PARTNER KPI'S

| Partner | Objective | KPI |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| FB/Instagram | Awareness/Consideration | Engagement |
| YouTube | Awareness | Video Completed View Rate |
| Centro | Consideration/Activation | Engagement |
| Destination DC Digital | Consideration/Activation | Arrivals/Engagement |
| Destination DC Print | Awareness | Reach |
| Virginia.org | Consideration/Activation | Arrivals/Engagement |
| Virginia Print | Awareness | Reach |
| Trip Advisor | Consideration/Activation | Arrivals/Engagement |
| LinkedIn | Awareness | Engagement/Lead Generation |
| Epro | Awareness | Open Rate |
| Digilant OOH | Awareness | Viewability |

Digilant is an incremental opportunity. For more details on media partners and the strategies for each, refer to the full Media Plan document.

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