



# 2017-2018 Business Plan

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**Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau**

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[www.visitRaleigh.com](http://www.visitRaleigh.com) ★ [#visitRaleigh](https://twitter.com/visitRaleigh)



# **About the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau**

## **MISSION**

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business.

## **INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED DESTINATION ORGANIZATION**

The destination organization is accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of Destinations International, 2025 M St., N.W., Ste. 500, Washington, D.C., 20036, U.S.A., Ph. 202.296.7888.

## **ORGANIZATION VISION**

To be the prime visitor advocate and regional leader of destination marketing and product development.

## **GRCVB PHILOSOPHY AND CUSTOMER COMMITMENT**

We perform effectively by adhering to values and guiding principles, and delivering on customer promises:

- Customer-centric
- Entrepreneurial
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Ethical

## **PARTNER PROMISE**

We pledge, as an accountable and supportive partner, to offering enhanced exposure to visitor market opportunities and to appropriate community leadership through increased promotion of destination experiences and extended professional advocacy commitment.

## **ADVISORY BOARDS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AT GRCVB**

- GRCVB Board of Directors
- The Conference Table
- Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance Advisory Board
- Community Engagement Committee
- Cultural Presenters Forum
- Customer Advisory Board for Meeting Planners
- Live Music Advisory Committee
- Passionate Minds Collective
- Wake County Beer Summit

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## Travel and Tourism Trends for 2017–2018

According to the March 2017 U.S. Travel Outlook prepared by the U.S. Travel Association (USTA): “[T]he economy is anxiously waiting for a result on the consequences of comprehensive healthcare reform, a corporate tax overhaul, travel restrictions twice overturned in appellate court, the border adjustment tax and increases in infrastructure investment... [and] all eyes are on the White House and Congress to keep the ball moving whatever the direction.” The politics of Washington are affecting our macroeconomics.

Likewise, on a state level, House Bill 142 (now Session Law 2017-4) repealed 2016’s HB2 law, perceived by many to be discriminatory, but its own introduction, debate of its new language, its passage and signing into law in one day also created consternation for some or concern about the present status of N.C.’s welcome to all. As of this writing, it is unclear whether all announced tourism boycotts and travel bans on N.C. will be lifted immediately. GRCVB and its economic development allies will continue to promote Raleigh, N.C., in 2017–2018 as a place where all travelers are welcome.

Nationally, the “Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Survey reached a 15-year high in February.... ‘Overall, consumers expect the economy to continue expanding in the months ahead,’ said Lynn Franco, director of economic indicators at the Conference Board” (as cited by USTA). Consumer spending finished 2016 on a very strong note, according to the U.S. Commerce Department, and consumer spending forecasts “suggest that customers are back in the shops again” (The Gallup Daily Spending Poll, as cited by USTA).

USTA’s own Travel Trends Index showed improvement in January 2017, but “[looking forward over the first half of 2017, both domestic leisure and international travel within the U.S. are expected to slow, while business travel is expected to grow at a faster rate than it has during the past six months” (as cited by USTA).

“According to a recent AAA survey, more than one-third of Americans (35 percent) are planning to take a vacation of 50 miles or more away from home involving two or more immediate family members this year. The overall volume of travelers remains unchanged from last year, indicating that Americans continue to prioritize traveling as a family.... [T]here is a significant increase this year in the number of Americans who say they are planning to take three or more vacations. The 28 percent of family travelers who will take three or more trips this year is 13 percentage points higher than in 2016” (as cited by USTA).

Based on USTA forecasts, domestic leisure travel will grow by 1.6 percent and domestic business travel will grow by 0.5 percent in 2017; combined, the total domestic person-trip volume is expected to grow 1.3 percent—a slower growth rate than that forecasted for 2016 nationwide. Total domestic travel spending in the U.S. will increase by 2.7 percent in 2017 (compared to 2.5 percent forecasted for 2016).

Other USTA forecasts for travel nationwide are:

- Total travel expenditures in the U.S.: up 2.8 percent in 2017
- Total international visitors to the U.S.: up 2.4 percent in 2017, up 4.1 percent in 2018
- Total domestic person-trips: up 1.4 percent in 2018
- Leisure domestic person-trips: up 1.6 percent in 2018
- Business domestic person-trips: up 0.8 percent in 2018

USTA has calculated that travel exports “accounted for 11.2 percent of total U.S. exports of goods and services” in 2016; “this was the highest share since 2000.” According to an “International Travel Trends Analysis” webinar conducted in March by USTA, while travel expenditures in the U.S. have been steadily increasing since 2009, there is a trifecta of international travel impediments currently affecting us: a weak global economy, the strong U.S. dollar and falling favorability (sentiment toward the U.S. is turning negative, and this is driving consumer behavior already). Across the country, two million fewer international visitors are expected by Tourism Economics in 2017 (as cited by USTA).

The Raleigh area’s own growth in person-stays volume outpaced average U.S. growth in each of calendar years 2010–2015 (2016 statistics soon to be available). Growth in direct spending volume for the Raleigh area has been weaker compared to the national averages across the same years; however, 2013, 2014 and 2015 expenditures grew significantly more than the U.S. averages did.

For the lodging industry, “January 2017 marked the industry’s 83rd consecutive month with a year-over-year increase in RevPAR” (STR, as cited by USTA). “Overall during 2016, the U.S. hotel industry reported positive year-

over-year results in the three key performance metrics, according to data from STR.... The absolute values in the three key performance metrics were each the highest STR has ever benchmarked” (as cited by USTA).

Hotel research data firms are coming to conflicting conclusions about U.S. hotel growth in 2017 (as cited by USTA), but more specific to our market region, PKF Hospitality Research notes that “looking towards 2017, Raleigh-Durham RevPAR is expected to grow 0.5 percent. Occupancy is forecast to drop 2.3 percent, while average room rates are projected to increase 2.9 percent. Revenue is expected to continue to climb in 2018.”

Specifically for calendar year 2017, PKF envisions for the Raleigh-Durham market:

- Occupancy: 66.2 percent, down 2.3 percent
- ADR: \$103.13, up 2.9 percent
- RevPAR: \$68.23, up 0.5 percent

A Dec. 2016 *M&C* magazine “article on the 2017 outlook predicted some changes in the new year for the meetings industry, such as North America becoming a buyer’s market, with hotel supply expected to outpace demand in 2017 for the first time in eight years” (as cited by USTA).

According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), North American airlines saw demand rise 2.6 percent in 2016. Some 11 million people traveled through RDU International Airport in 2016, passing this passenger mark for the first time in the airport’s history; arriving and departing passengers grew by 10.4 percent over 2015, and Dec. 2016 was the 34th consecutive month of passenger growth at RDU.

New airline routes for 2017 include Delta Air Lines’ nonstop flights from Austin and Seattle and Allegiant’s New Orleans nonstop service twice weekly. Both Delta and American Airlines will upgrade planes utilized for Paris and London service, respectively. GRCVB is responding to the potential for more international air arrivals here with staff resources devoted to global tourism strategy in 2017–2018.

April 2017

# Visitor Profile for Raleigh, N.C., and Wake County

## BASIC FACTS AND FIGURES

- There were 15.62 million domestic visitors in 2016—up 3.5 percent from 2015. Including international and domestic visitors, visitors directly spent \$2.434 billion on Wake County trips in 2016—up 4.2 percent from 2015.
- Average overnight party size was 1.69 in 2014–2016—compared to 1.63 in 2012–2014. Average day-trip party size was 1.63 in 2014–2016—compared to 1.67 in 2012–2014.
- Overnight travel totaled approximately 8.61 million visitors in 2016.
- Overnight daily spending by visitors was \$122 per person in 2014–2016—compared to \$131 nationwide. Day-trip daily spending by visitors was \$83 per person in 2014–2016—compared to \$98 nationwide.

## VISITOR BREAKDOWN

- Domestic leisure visitors – 11.69 million in 2016
- Domestic business travelers – 3.93 million in 2016
- Average overnight traveler to Raleigh/Wake County by lifestage (2014–2016):
  - Moderate to Affluent Mature – 21 percent;
  - Maturing/Free – 16 percent;
  - Moderate to Affluent Family – 20 percent;
  - Young Family – 9 percent;
  - Young & Free – 21 percent.
- Average age of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors is 46 years old (2014–2016). Distribution is:
  - 18–34 years: 30 percent
    - Young & Free – Without children/any household income: 21 percent;
    - Young Family – With children/any household income: 9 percent.
  - 35–54 years: 36 percent
    - Maturing & Free – Without children/any household income: 16 percent;
    - Moderate Family – With children/household income under \$75K: 6 percent;
    - Affluent Family – With children/household income above \$75K: 14 percent.
  - 55+ years: 34 percent
    - Moderate Mature – Without children/household income under \$60K: 1 percent;
    - Affluent Mature – Without children/household income above \$60K: 20 percent.
- Raleigh/Wake County's average party per overnight trip spending by age (2014–2016):
  - 18–34 years: \$506
  - 35–54 years: \$692
  - 55+ years: \$565
- The means of transportation for Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2014–2016) is: 84 percent drive – 15 percent fly – 2 percent other.
- The most popular overnight travel months to Raleigh/Wake County (2014–2016) were July (12 percent), followed by Nov. (11 percent) and Aug. (10 percent), making the summer season the most popular season for Raleigh's overnight visitation. Day-trip visitors predominantly came in the spring and summer seasons.
- Average household income of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2014–2016) is: 16 percent, \$50,000–\$74,900; 14 percent, \$75,000–\$99,999; 39 percent, \$100,000 or higher.
- Accommodation type for Raleigh/Wake County visitors (2014–2016): 63 percent of stays occur in paid accommodations (hotels/motels/other), while 37 percent occur in non-paid (including private homes).

## GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

- Some 39 percent of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2014–2016) came from North Carolina. The top 10 states are: 39.1 percent, North Carolina; 14.8 percent, Virginia; 6.2 percent, New York; 4.6 percent, Florida; 4.5 percent, South Carolina; 3.4 percent, Maryland; 3.0 percent, Pennsylvania; 2.1 percent, Tennessee; 2.0 percent, Texas; and 2.0 percent, Georgia.
- Some 91 percent of Raleigh/Wake County's day-trip visitors (2014–2016) came from North Carolina. The top states are: 90.7 percent, North Carolina; 1.9 percent, Virginia; 0.9 percent, Texas; 0.8 percent, Maryland; 0.7 percent, Georgia; 0.7 percent, New York; and 0.5 percent, Ohio.

## VISITOR ACTIVITIES AND MOTIVATORS

- Activity participation of Raleigh/Wake County overnight stays (2014–2016):
 

20 percent, culinary/dining	6 percent, other personal celebrations
19 percent, shopping	6 percent, concerts/theatre/dance
10 percent, business/work	5 percent, beach/waterfront
8 percent, museums/exhibitions	5 percent, parks
8 percent, nightlife	5 percent, historic sites
7 percent, holiday celebration	5 percent, festivals/fairs
7 percent, movies	4 percent, touring/sightseeing

## AVERAGE OCCUPANCY, AVERAGE DAILY RATE AND VISITOR-RELATED TAX REVENUE HISTORY

The following is a summary of the collections from Wake County's hotel occupancy and prepared food & beverage taxes as well as the average occupancy and average daily rates for 2016 and for the previous 10 years in Raleigh/Wake County paid accommodations:

	<u>AVERAGE OCCUPANCY</u>	<u>AVERAGE DAILY RATE</u>	<u>OCCUPANCY TAX REVENUE</u>	<u>F&amp;B TAX REVENUE</u>
2006	67.0%	\$74.75	\$12,938,961	\$15,287,475
2007	63.4%	\$83.76	\$14,382,332	\$16,176,924
2008	62.0%	\$87.51	\$14,510,239	\$17,537,562
2009	56.5%	\$80.92	\$12,863,589	\$17,326,526
2010	58.9%	\$79.67	\$13,853,293	\$17,642,600
2011	61.8%	\$82.66	\$15,586,539	\$18,703,047
2012	61.6%	\$85.34	\$16,707,165	\$20,261,838
2013	63.6%	\$86.53	\$17,948,940	\$21,126,371
2014	67.9%	\$91.31	\$20,261,653	\$23,015,254
2015	69.7%	\$95.87	\$22,401,795	\$25,262,981
2016	70.1%	\$100.85	\$24,273,522	\$26,910,616

## **New Developments for the 2017–2018 Fiscal Year**

By the end of this summer, downtown Raleigh will welcome a unique retail and dining attraction, the **Morgan Street Food Hall & Market** concept from Hibernian Hospitality Group. This is a 20,000-square-foot venue in downtown's Warehouse District to play home to more than 60 different food stalls, restaurants and market opportunities, each ranging from 30 to 550 square feet in size. Vendors will offer high-quality, chef-driven, specialty foods with a wide range of diversity and affordable pricing. Like longer-established markets in top-tier destinations, Raleigh's new market is expected to have a draw all its own for downtown leisure visitors or convention delegates.

At North Carolina State University, plans are still in motion to transform the prior chancellor's residence at 1903 Hillsborough St., West Raleigh, into the new **Gregg Museum of Art & Design**, a permanent home for the university's collecting art museum. The \$9.8 million project is renovating the 7,000-sq.-ft. historic residence and also constructing a 15,000-sq.-ft. contemporary addition. The construction project broke ground in April 2015, and completion is expected by Aug. 26, 2017. Once expanded, the Gregg Museum will become Raleigh's third visitor-friendly art museum, more easily accessible and marketable having relocated from former space in the Talley Student Center and temporary space on Brickhaven Dr.

A site directly across Glenwood Ave. from Crabtree Valley Mall will soon be home to another shopping area called **Crabtree North**. This 20-acre, mixed-use development will feature 125,000 sq. ft. of retailers and restaurants, as many as 708 residential units and a proposed hotel. A pedestrian bridge across Glenwood Ave. will connect Crabtree North to the existing Crabtree Valley Mall site. The new lifestyle center/development is slated to open in late Fall 2017.

In Early 2018, Raleigh's new transportation hub is expected to open, housing the relocated downtown Amtrak Station and ultimately the City's bus transfer facility relocated from Moore Square. The new **Union Station** in downtown's Warehouse District will accommodate longer trains and have larger platforms among other improvements. The project will cost approximately \$79.8 million and simplify rail and ground transportation connections for visitors arriving in downtown Raleigh.

Also in Early 2018, the **Fuquay-Varina Arts Center** will open, bringing a dash more arts to that southwestern Wake town. The town broke ground in March 2017 on the project that will renovate and expand an existing building at 123 E. Vance St. and add a 300-seat theatre in the two-story expansion, with capacity for a total of 400 there for conferences and speaking events; the new arts center additionally will feature specialized classrooms for painting, computer media and other types of art, a dance studio and an art gallery.

Five new hotel developments are scheduled for completion during the 2017–2018 fiscal year. In North Raleigh, the 88-room **Fairfield Inn & Suites Raleigh North/Triangle Town Center** will open in Summer 2017; the property is a development project of Daly Seven. **The StateView Hotel**, a 156-room Autograph Collection property with a conference center boasting 9,000 square feet of meeting space, is expected to open by Summer 2017 on North Carolina State University's Centennial Campus. Near RDU, the 130-room **Hyatt House RDU/Brier Creek**, being developed by CMC Hotels on Sellona St., Raleigh, is projected to open in Sept. 2017.

In Morrisville near Research Triangle Park, a **Home2 Suites**-brand property with 100 rooms is under construction at 1020 Lower Shiloh Way; its opening is slated for Oct. 2017. Finally, a **Homewood Suites** property is under development at Cary's Crossroads Plaza (555 Crossroads Blvd.), projected to open 108 new rooms there by Early 2018.

April 2017



## Goals for the 2017–2018 Fiscal Year

- Continue to strengthen the area's appreciation and support of the visitor economy, especially by elevating GRCVB's credibility with community stakeholders or opinion-leaders and by elevating Raleigh, N.C.'s believability as an international/world-class tourism destination in the eyes of residents as well. This is achieved through integrated marketing communications efforts aimed at locals and carried out by key GRCVB staff according to a new and formalized strategy.
- Demonstrate that GRCVB is fully and effectively measuring and tracking the performance of our destination and our area hospitality industries by building and publishing a destination data dashboard in 2017–2018.
- Prioritize a list of destination-enhancing developments that can accelerate the growth of Wake County's visitor economy specifically by deploying more recommended DestinationNEXT/best practices throughout the Bureau and by completing a first-ever tourism master planning process for Raleigh/Wake County.
- Continue to develop a service culture and an esprit-de-corps attitude throughout the destination, so that area hospitality partners can better bring the destination brand to life through the visitor experiences they offer. Engage all of our visitors' senses in interaction with the brand through increasingly well-thought-out, brand-compliant activations and communications from GRCVB/hospitality partners.
- Collaborate with Raleigh/Wake County elected officials, economic development allies and local place marketers to portray our destination as inarguably welcoming to all visitors, groups and events. Combine GRCVB's customer-centric, collaborative and ethical philosophies into a renewed emphasis on being inclusive with our destination marketing practices and All Are Welcome Here campaign tactics.
- Become more accountable as the primary curator for and champion of all things Raleigh to the outside world. Convene area place marketers in new ways and on various issues year-round in order to build future consensus toward an overarching place-brand strategy for Raleigh/Wake County (with tenets of community branding that all could agree upon and utilize).
- Develop and secure major group events/tradeshows and sporting events for the destination, despite recent barriers to attracting new business or bookings, by implementing creative sales and servicing strategies or tactics, such as strengthening efforts to reach local meeting connectors and in-state meeting/sports event planners.

## Talking Points for the 2017–2018 Fiscal Year

Talking points recommended for GRCVB staff, board members, economic development allies, stakeholders and area hospitality partners during the 2017–2018 fiscal year (as well as in future years) are three themelines that are core to the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand platform. Each of these major themelines encapsulates the strongest and most central attributes of the destination’s brand, based on 2014–2015 research. (See the Raleigh, N.C., Destination Brand Strategy Manual at [www.raleighncbrand.com](http://www.raleighncbrand.com) for more information on messaging.)

**SMART:** Continually fueled by one of the world’s most significant research and educational epicenters, Raleigh benefits from a stream of savvy students- and professionals-turned-residents who are collectively driving the city and area’s cultural renaissance forth, creating experiences for enrichment and learning.

**A MODERN ESTABLISHMENT:** Driven by the desire to innovate, a pursuit of prosperity and the need to live well, Raleigh’s community is embracing a modern vision for their historic capital city area. This has given life to business big and small, new music, arts and cultural experiences that join Raleigh’s existing cultural assets, expansive green spaces and institutions to create an appealing destination.

**UNDISCOVERED:** Raleigh’s unassuming stature as a destination has allowed it to develop organically and sustainably, evolving naturally for the greater good of those who live here and those who will visit. It is that genuine element that defines many of the destination’s handcrafted experiences and provides the visitor with an assurance that discovery in Raleigh will always be authentic and unique—qualities rarely found in today’s more established destinations.

## **Marketing and Communications Department**

The Marketing and Communications Department is responsible for the Bureau's integrated marketing communications efforts, through which various destination marketing tools work together to maximize their total impact on (mostly external) target consumers or stakeholders. Based on consumer market research and other GRCVB marketing data, these efforts comprise the advertising, brand communications, cooperative partner programming, publications and tourism strategies that lead to consideration of Raleigh, N.C., as a destination for the sports, convention and leisure tourism vertical markets. The primary goal of the department is to increase overall visitation to the destination and area hotel and restaurant revenues.

### **MARKETING OBJECTIVES**

- Continue to grow Raleigh/Wake County's destination brand equity overall, as recommended in the Raleigh, N.C., Marketing Blueprint (2015), and build upon the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance (GRSA) brand within the sports vertical market, according to GRSA's positioning statement.
- Increase hotel occupancy and revenue through compelling domestic or international marketing programs—advertising, online, packaging, promotions—targeted primarily at leisure tourists.
- Establish Raleigh, N.C., as the convention and sports destination of choice through compelling advertising, collateral and online marketing communications targeted to industry professionals (or local connections to outside industry professionals).
- Encourage visitors to do and spend more by creating accurate, compelling content showcasing what Raleigh, N.C., promises and delivers to its visitors and gain exposure for the official tourism content/promotions in visitor welcome centers, on mobile-friendly online and social media marketing platforms and in local areas with high visitor traffic (e.g., large-scale leisure tourism events, select local media opportunities).
- Increase visitor attendance at major events/festivals, special performances and venues, attract more day-trippers and convert day-trippers to overnight visitors (when possible), through online messaging and content marketing.
- Increase website traffic levels (visits) through a research-based, newly-redesigned [visitRaleigh.com/raleighsports.org](http://visitRaleigh.com/raleighsports.org) and via search engine optimization, search engine marketing, content marketing and other tactics.
- Expand GRCVB/GRSA advertising impact or reach by offering valuable co-op opportunities to local partners, such as area attractions, meeting hotels or the Raleigh Convention Center.
- Establish [www.visitRaleigh.com](http://www.visitRaleigh.com) as the single, official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction and event, meeting, sports, travel media and partner information.

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES, ALL VERTICALS**

- Steward the destination brand strategy for 2017–2018 and future years. Use the Raleigh, N.C., Destination Brand Strategy Manual and Marketing Blueprint to guide and reinforce well-aligned marketing, messaging/content and communication across all Bureau departments. Provide ongoing brand strategy education and more training resources for Bureau staff and other brand messengers. Continue to shape the Bureau's future as the “go-to” source or curator of a wide variety of tourism/destination content and for a wide variety of local and destination customer audiences.
- Collaborate with local economic development allies to build consistent messaging and synergy between their traditional economic development strategies and GRCVB's visitor-related economic development strategies, e.g., destination brand, joint public affairs tactics in the Raleigh area.
- Enact, alongside GRCVB's cooperative partners, a continuation or evolution of the “All Are Welcome Here” positive messaging campaign begun in 2016 after N.C.'s passage of the Public Facilities Privacy and

Security Act (Session Law 2016-3, also known as HB2). The evolved campaign of marketing communications would continue tactics that tell the story of Raleigh, N.C., as an inclusive destination (despite nationwide protests about HB2) but with hopeful add-ons about the repeal of HB2's perceived discriminatory language or new ways in which the area again is inarguably welcoming to all visitors, groups or events.

- Continue to enact a GRCVB/GRSA social media marketing strategy to take full advantage of social conversations, engagement and networking, brand ambassadorship and shareable imagery, and continue to position Raleigh competitively among its peer destinations in these areas.
- Continue to empower the area's visitor sector partners representing all industries/verticals to "help themselves" to GRCVB's marketing programs and co-op opportunities (self-service) through Bureau projects such as PIXL (Partner Information eXchange Login, to be upgraded in 2017-2018) or advertising on the official website.
- Continue to nurture new business relationships directly with select local producers or suppliers (entrepreneurs), providing GRCVB with brand-compliant promotional products for all verticals, while maintaining a business relationship with an outside promotional consultant who can facilitate all other product needs.

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES, CONVENTION SALES**

- Continue collaborating with IT to template all of the steps of the personal selling process, enabling convention sales and services staff to fully deploy lead-nurturing, deal-closing or relationship-building emails through the Distributed Marketing Platform (DMP).
- Arm sales staff with new designs, themes, collateral, promotional products and social media marketing strategy, in accordance with the destination brand, to supplement tradeshow booth installations, stunts or activations at all shows throughout the year.
- Continue to put Raleigh on the list for consideration with convention and meeting planners through compelling advertising, the Meetings Watch e-newsletter, official Meeting Planners Guides, professionally printed pieces as needed, video content, the visitRaleigh.com website section for Meetings & Conventions and visitRaleigh meetings insider blog.
- Contribute, alongside Public Relations Department staff, to a comprehensive communications/public relations plan, including media buy, pre-written editorial placement and television appearances, for a community awareness campaign (explaining the local economic impact of meetings, highlighting local meeting planners/existing ambassadors and encouraging connectors to new outside business to step forward and work with GRCVB).

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES, SERVICES**

- Work cooperatively with Services team to update GRCVB's current taxi training program format to include elements of the tuned-up destination brand for Raleigh, N.C., and also to encourage placement of Official Visitors Guides in taxicabs.
- Continue to enhance conversion to visitors at in-state points of sale (state welcome centers) and increase circulation among Raleigh visitors at local information desks by proactively distributing collateral at major sites. With Services staff, redefine the official Visitor Information Center as a pivotal, physical space for portraying the destination brand experience to visitors/customers.
- Continue to collaborate with the Services team to develop and implement regularly scheduled partner education sessions, not only to encourage partner buy-in for co-op marketing tactics (which is taking place in quarterly Marketing Update Meetings or regular advisory board/committee meetings) but also to encourage destination brand adoption, PIXL use and deeper understanding of GRCVB/GRSA in general—to include the traditional hospitality partners as well as new partner relations with shared-economy businesses or proprietors (e.g., area Airbnb hosts).

## **MARKETING STRATEGIES, DOMESTIC TOURISM**

- Promote the following to the Bureau's target audiences\*, inspiring overnight stays and day-trips for leisure purposes, the conversion of day-trips to overnight stays and brand ambassadorship:
  - Raleigh, N.C.'s destination brand;
  - entrepreneurial locals as well as the museums, arts, live music, craft culinary and beverage scene, handcrafted goods and historic experiences they are responsible for and have fostered here; and,
  - other compelling tourism product offerings (e.g., hotels, things to do, leisure tourism events, restaurants).

Focus on promoting Raleigh experiences that leave visitors feeling enriched and energized.

\*Backyard Boosters, Lifestyle Chameleons and Pulse Keepers (as defined in Marketing Blueprint)

- Constantly and strategically influence and inspire potential visitors at key touch-points through Internet platforms (e.g., blogs and social media, email activations, search engines), print ads, publications and event sponsorships in order to increase awareness of and preference for the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand and to inspire potential visitors to travel and/or stay overnight. Publish an inspirational, content- and photography-heavy Official Visitors Guide for 2017–2018 designed to send readers to visitRaleigh.com for detailed trip-planning/conversion.
- Use the 2017–2018 Editorial Calendar of brand themelines, tourism assets and campaigns, the Digital Content Marketing Strategy and the Social Media Marketing Strategy as guides to continually steer all tourism marketing tactics (Internet marketing activities, print advertising, point-of-sale initiatives) toward annual goals/objectives. Engage with area hospitality partners in order to create and curate inspirational content that supports themes, campaigns and promotions. Keep partners updated with co-op partner program opportunities as they arise under each theme, timeframe, campaign and promotion.
- Establish and/or strengthen relationships with Raleigh, N.C.'s smart and passionate residents (in some cases through local third-party introductions) who are shaping the growth of the historic city's emerging creative businesses, innovative festivals and food establishments, passionate music and sports scenes and modern cultural experiences—in order to generate content that will entice visitors to experience the destination, become brand ambassadors and make return visits.
- Strengthen area partner relationships in order to influence and guide creation of one-of-a-kind, signature experiences that will inspire memorable visits when marketed well; this includes building healthy, new relationships with area entrepreneurs, non-profits or small businesses that can associate with GRCVB/the visitor sector or with People-First Tourism, Inc., to begin serving visitors (tourists or groups) in uniquely brand-compliant ways.
- Strengthen relationships within standing committees (e.g., Cultural Presenters Forum, Live Music Advisory Committee, Wake County Beer Summit) and with area allies (e.g., Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Hillsborough Street Community Service Corporation, Midtown Raleigh Alliance) in order to collaborate in the best ways possible on promotions, content or campaigns to enhance the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand and attract or better serve visitors.
- Create and/or maintain strategic partnerships statewide and nationwide with Amtrak, Brand USA, CVNC, the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association, LGBTCVB, N.C. Craft Brewers Guild, OpenTable, Priceline, Visit North Carolina and others and augment GRCVB's destination marketing efforts (with referral-based funding when possible).

## **MARKETING STRATEGIES, GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS ALLIANCE**

- Continue to collaborate with IT to create toolkit content for DMP uses, such as lead-nurturing or deal-closing emails, with emphasis in 2017–2018 on re-conceptualizing the printed/online bid proposals used by GRSA staff with sports event planners.

- Continue to build upon the GRSA brand within the sports vertical through compelling advertising, collateral/Sports Watch e-news, promotional products, social media marketing tactics and upgrades to the raleighsports.org website.

## **MARKETING STRATEGIES, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM**

- Conduct a local-oriented visiting-friends-and-relatives (VFR) and brand ambassador campaign. Recruit “insiders” or individuals from all walks of life who can help create content, become destination brand ambassadors and provide local, authentic and unbiased advice on their Raleigh. Encourage families who have settled in the area from outside to drive visitation from VFR, who in turn will showcase the destination’s compelling story more on social media.
- Ensure the Bureau’s overall content and social media strategies promote the positive media coverage garnered for the area, encouraging consumer sharing.
- Ensure the Marketing and Communications Department and Public Relations Department editorial calendars are aligned in order to foster consistent messaging to the domestic tourism vertical and media.
- Collaborate to strategically select digital influencers to invite and host in the destination, in order to build presence, content and awareness across specific social media platforms and online communities.
- Develop, with Public Relations Department staff, collateral and electronic communication materials about Raleigh, N.C., and about special-interest travel promotions or specifically recommended travel packages, to aid in that department’s pursuit of international tourism sales during 2017–2018.

## **MARKETING STRATEGIES, MARKETING RESEARCH**

- Explore the scoping and commissioning of primary, qualitative research on the informational usefulness and overall effectiveness of the 2017–2018 Official Visitors Guide, in order to make improvements with future guides, increase visitor conversion with readership etc.
- Update visitor volume and spending estimates through calendar year 2017 with research from D.K. Shifflet & Associates and the U.S. Travel Association.
- Update and disseminate research on the overall annual economic impacts (direct, indirect and induced) of visitors to Wake County, as a Bureau performance indicator and as a communications tool for government relations and community engagement (Tourism Economics).
- Continue to join with local arts/culture partners to maintain actionable marketing data on past visitors to Raleigh and cooperatively target customers with the highest potential for repeat visits and arts participation (TRG Arts).
- Collaborate with all Bureau departments on dashboard, research and survey needs on customer conversion, impact and satisfaction, in order to better pursue internal process and training improvements and to underscore to locals the importance of Raleigh area visitors.

<b>MARKETING ACTION CALENDAR</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>
Annual Meeting	x	x										
Annual Progress Report and Annual Impact Report	x	x										
Beer Marketing and Tourism Conference									x			
Conversational Marketing, Internet Marketing, Social Networking and Video Production (ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cultural Presenters Forum (monthly)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Digital and Website Content (site-wide, ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec	x											
DMAI CMO Summit										x		
DMANC Tourism Leadership Conference, Charlotte			x									
Internet Summit, Raleigh					x							
Live Music Advisory Committee meetings (quarterly)			x			x			x			x
Local and National Partnership Building (ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Marketing and Communications Department Half-Day Retreat										x		
Marketing Update Meetings for partners (quarterly)					x			x			x	
Meetings Watch e-newsletter (bimonthly)		x		x		x		x		x		x
New Research Exploration (ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Official Meeting Planners Guide										x	x	x
Official Visitors Guide				x	x	x	x	x	x			
Passionate Minds Forums (quarterly)		x			x			x				x
Sports Watch e-newsletter (quarterly)	x			x			x			x		
Simpleview Summit, Phoenix, Ariz.										x		
Tradeshow Themes (ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
U.S. Travel Association's ESTO, Minneapolis, Minn.		x										
Visit North Carolina 365 Conference, Winston-Salem									x			
Visitor Volume and Spending Estimates												x
visitRaleigh the E-magazine (monthly)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Wake County Beer Summits (tri-annually)					x			x				x

## **Public Relations Department**

The Public Relations Department is responsible for managing all external communication activities, which include all media relations, public affairs, community awareness and advocacy as well as reputation management functions. Additionally the department is responsible for overseeing international leisure sales and marketing efforts for the Bureau.

Media relations efforts include local publicity to generate community awareness and out-of-town publicity in the meetings, leisure, group tour and sports markets to help generate visitor traffic. Public affairs efforts include advocating for the value of the visitor economy on Wake County and the role the Bureau plays in creating and fostering the visitor experience. International sales and marketing efforts include working with tour operators and media in key feeder markets abroad to increase brand awareness and drive individual leisure travel to the market.

The department's mission is to craft for the Bureau and Raleigh/Wake County a positive public image for potential visitors, the general populace and the news media while educating locals on the value of the visitor economy.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES**

- Local Objectives:
  - Elevate GRCVB brand awareness to local residents, media and partners in the Wake County hospitality community.
  - Engage in building strong relationships with local television, print, radio and online media to help build credibility in the local and business community.
  - Foster relationships with local media, updating them on GRCVB initiatives and the tourism industry in Wake County.
  - Work with Public Information Officers from all Wake County municipalities to develop communication objectives for promoting events, festivals and news of interest to leisure and meeting visitors.
  - Continue to work in collaboration with appropriate communications and public relations representatives in local organizations including: Wake County Economic Development, Raleigh Economic Development, North Carolina State University Centennial Campus, City of Raleigh and Research Triangle Regional Partnership to collaborate on story ideas and to ensure that we have consistent messaging on how we are branding and marketing the area and continue to develop quality-of-life themelines.
  - Develop a local connectors' network of travel writers to pitch "hometown" travel articles to state, regional and national publications.
- Out-of-market Objective:
  - Continue a proactive media outreach program to generate earned media with an emphasis on relationship-building and targeting to ensure the destination brand message is conveyed in editorial, broadcast and online placements outside of Wake County.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, CONVENTION SALES**

- Collaborate with appropriate Convention Sales team members to identify and plan a series of targeted sales/media events using brand-specific themes on a quarterly basis including Atlanta, Chicago, New York City and Washington, D.C.
- Work to develop a comprehensive communications/public relations plan, including media buy, pre-written editorial placement and television appearances, for a community awareness campaign to highlight local connectors, local businesses that are bringing major conventions to the area and the impact that "staying local" means to Wake County.
- Continue to work with Raleigh Convention Center and all Wake County meeting industry partners to promote successes of the Raleigh Convention Center and new initiatives and developments of local hotels, venues and meeting facilities through a series of targeted, timely pitches and/or press releases, media relationships and individual visits. Work with marketing to support the meetings blog editorial calendar with media relations efforts aligning with convention themelines.



- Provide easy access to standard tools through pre-written editorial pieces, destination descriptions and quotes that reflect the Raleigh, N.C., brand.
- Collaborate with the Convention Sales Department to identify relevant topics and trends in the meeting industry in which the Raleigh area has a relevant claim (e.g., smart) for major media push.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, CONVENTION SERVICES**

- Identify the major meetings and conventions within the key vertical markets to develop a comprehensive local and national public relations plan to maximize exposure.
- Update the “Do It Yourself” tools for meeting and convention planners to guide them in the process of garnering local media exposure through press releases, press conferences and media alerts.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- Continue to strategically work with the Marketing and Communications Department to promote tourism messaging to local, statewide and regional audiences and potential visitors—efforts to include up-to-date, dedicated press releases and backgrounders on “Rooted in Raleigh” ambassadors and putting the area’s passionate people in the spotlight.
- Develop Raleigh editorial that reflects that experiential and people-centric destination brand that can be used for web content, blog posts and any additional editorial needs.
- Update content and redesign of the Media section on visitRaleigh.com to reflect the tuned-up Raleigh, N.C., brand and tell the story of the entrepreneurial Raleigh residents who enhance the area’s visitor appeal.
- Work with senior marketing manager and PR & international tourism manager to develop a social media strategy for working with digital influencers. This includes both a proactive and reactive strategy to develop relationships with digital influencers including paid content partnerships.
- Develop a social media marketing strategy to promote positive media coverage garnered for the area—encouraging sharing.
- Continue to identify packages, programs or innovative ideas for creating buzz through integrated marketing efforts utilizing the Marketing and Communications Department’s 2017–2018 Editorial Calendar of brand themelines, tourism assets and campaigns.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS ALLIANCE**

- Build local sports media list and relationships by providing timely story ideas, facts and figures such as participant numbers, room-nights and economic impact figures on a timely basis.
- Build sports business and industry trade media lists to use in promoting Wake County as a sports destination and GRSA as an industry leader in sports destination marketing. Also utilize this list in an advocacy campaign to ensure the region’s reputation is upheld in light of perceptions of the HB2 law.
- Craft press releases on key sports events taking place in the area, as well as continue to position the Raleigh area as a key market for amateur sports.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, ADMINISTRATION**

- Position GRCVB as the singular voice for tourism in Wake County and position executive staff as travel industry experts for journalists to use as top-of-mind sources for stories on local and national tourism.

- In conjunction with the Marketing and Communications Department, develop and implement a comprehensive community awareness campaign to advocate for the value that tourism and hospitality brings to Wake County and educate the public on the impact of the visitor economy.
- Develop a comprehensive public relations campaign around the Tourism Master Plan process.
- Write a series of pitches and/or press releases highlighting Bureau initiatives and awards, to be distributed to local print, television, radio and online media.
- Develop an open media list hosted on the Bureau's CRM for continuity with other departments in keeping one central database.
- Create talking points for internal use relating to travel and tourism issues. These reference documents will aid in Administration, Public Relations and other staff members being on the same page in regards to issues facing Wake County tourism.
- Create a series of canned quotes in regards to meetings and conventions, tourism initiatives and local policies that affect the tourism industry in Wake County.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, MEDIA RELATIONS**

- Promote positive impact of tourism through public awareness initiatives and a series of pitches and/or press releases detailing travel figures specific to Wake County.
- Create customized pitches aimed at journalists, bloggers, cable network producers and online editors. Identify and respond to pitch opportunities generated through partner organizations and tourism public relations firms representing local hotels, restaurants and attractions.
- Cultivate new and existing media relationships through one-on-one connections including media tours, targeted pitches, networking events and site visit facilitation.
- Encourage journalists on assignment to expand and infuse stories with destination brand messages and callouts where appropriate to the area's passionate-minded people as well as seasonal and niche story ideas. Promote inclusion of call-to-action, conversion-oriented elements including online resources, campaign-specific URLs, travel packages and events.
- Broaden use of social media as an integrated tool for media outreach, relationship development and targeted pitching.
- Integrate targeted keywords into traditional and online PR efforts to align with SEO efforts.
- Continue to integrate advanced earned media analytics through media measurement software and the DMO Metric Report develop with Cision to guide earned media strategies and KPIs moving forward. Remove advertising equivalency as a measure of earned media and replace it with advanced analytics developed with Cision.
- Develop a quarterly report of all earned media.
- Work with Visit North Carolina's Media Department to participate in media missions in key markets like New York City, Atlanta and Washington, D.C., as well as in-state.
- Develop template in the CRM/DMP for easy distribution to hospitality partners when destination coverage is secured. This template will allow for a standard format of attaching the article, partners mentioned and (if available) and circulation.
- Pursue qualified travel media to visit the destination on individual visits or during a planned group press trip.

- Continually create customized pitches for editors, freelance writers, bloggers etc. and continue to respond to inquiries that come directly to the Public Relations Department.
- Work with IT Department to redesign the Media section of the new website and update the press room to align with current best practices and desired content by travel media.
- Regularly keep the online press room updated with press releases, backgrounders, media alerts and industry facts and figures to communicate news and information for easy access to media.
- Host group press tour surrounding Wide Open Bluegrass. Work in conjunction with partner public relations agencies to host two joint media tours.
- Travel to New York City to hold desk-side visits with key media writing for leisure, lifestyle and meeting and convention publications.
- Attend Society of American Travel Writers Conference and Marketplace, both national and chapter meetings.
- Attend Public Relations Society of America's Travel and Tourism Section Conference.
- Collaborate with the Marketing and Communications Department to align public relations strategies with major marketing campaigns surrounding live music, craft breweries, arts and culture.
- Develop a public relations campaign around blockbuster exhibitions at area attraction partners and the opening of destination restaurants.
- Develop online and print collateral piece to assist meeting and sports planners with writing media alerts, press releases and tips on pitching the local media.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SALES STRATEGIES, INTERNATIONAL TOURISM**

- Research international market and create destination-specific strategies based on travel drivers of the international market.
- Develop and arrange distribution of collateral materials, develop special-interest travel promotions and compile a database of international customers.
- Work closely with Visit North Carolina to coordinate site visits/familiarization trips to the area.
- Attend joint tradeshow, sales and media missions targeted towards the international market with an emphasis on supporting our international flight to Canada, the U.K. and France.
- Create recommended travel packages for international visitors and work with the Marketing and Communications Department to produce necessary collateral and electronic communication material.
- Work with Wake County hotels, attractions and restaurants to educate them on the importance of the international business, how to work with that market and help generate business for our partners.
- Develop and maintain effective networking relationships within the international leisure travel industry with both trade and media.
- Conduct solicitation to international organizations to encourage tourist activities in Wake County; develop and give tradeshow presentations; respond to inquiries from potential international clients and visitors.
- Generate tour operator and receptive operator leads for hotels, attractions and other partners.
- Work with airlines that serve RDU with international service in marketing the area.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTION CALENDAR**

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec	x											
Fall Press Tour			x									
Family-Themed Press Tour											x	
IBMA Press Tour				x								
Individual Media Visits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
International Pow Wow							x					
International Sales Mission	x									x		
Public Relations Society of America Conference												x
Sales/Media Events (N.Y.C., Chicago, D.C., Atlanta)	x			x			x			x		
Simpleview Summit, Phoenix, Ariz.										x		
Society of American Travel Writers Conference				x								
Spring Press Tour											x	
Travel South						x						
U.S. Travel Association's ESTO		x										
Visit North Carolina Media Events (Canada, U.K. and France)												
Visit North Carolina Media Events (state, regional and N.Y.C.)		x							x		x	

## **Convention Sales Department**

The primary goal of the Convention Sales Department is to promote Raleigh/Wake County as a convention and meetings destination and establish a strong regional, national and international presence in the meetings industry, thus initiating direct economic impact by increasing room-night production for our area hotel partners.

### **CONVENTION SALES OBJECTIVES**

- Generate leads and produce room-night business for Wake County hotels, Raleigh Convention Center, PNC Arena and other county venues.
- Develop and execute e-campaign that promotes all countywide meeting hotel areas.
- Identify key meeting planners and decision-makers who have potential to bring conventions and meetings to Wake County, to increase awareness of Raleigh in key feeder markets (Southeast, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast).
- Increase focus on Association Management Companies and multivolume, third-party accounts in all regions to increase the sales prospecting funnel.
- Educate business leaders, area residents and meeting professionals on the role of GRCVB. Community awareness will spark ideas of conventions that should meet in Raleigh and identify meetings and events that should occur in Raleigh/Wake County.
- Strategically engage decision-makers at companies either headquartered in the region or that have a regional presence and ask for their assistance in promoting Raleigh as a destination for conventions (both for existing RFPs and non-advertised opportunities).
- Leverage the destination brand and continue to curate passionate locals and signature experiences into client engagements at tradeshow, client events, site inspections and sales missions to showcase the diversity of events and the destinations in Wake County to differentiate Raleigh/Wake County as a meeting destination.
- Ensure that GRCVB Convention Sales team members are seen as leaders in their profession and key partners locally.

### **CONVENTION SALES TARGET MARKETS**

- State, regional and national corporate business\*
- State, regional and national association business\*
- Raleigh and Wake County headquarter companies and associations
- Emphasis on key industry clusters, life sciences and biotechnology, CleanTech and technology
- Third-party and Association Management Companies

\*Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast regions

### **CONVENTION SALES STRATEGIES**

- Participate in industry-related tradeshow and events to build relationships that result in direct sales. Sales managers will attend and participate in industry tradeshow and events for the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast regions. All partners will be invited to participate. This focus will be monitored and redesigned, if need be, based on changing economy, altered product availability or newly realized market potential.
- Work with the Marketing and Communications Department to keep meeting ad placement focused primarily on outlets with distribution consistent with our target sales markets in the Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

- Coordinate with area hotels and convention center plan to attract qualified meetings during peak times and need dates by launching a focused email campaign and offering incentives from partners encouraging bookings over need dates.
- Leverage expertise of our D.C. regional office to make sales presentations and host quarterly events in the D.C. market focused on multivolume accounts and individual appointments with hot prospects. Invite our local hospitality partners to participate.
- Conduct bimonthly or quarterly (depending upon the market) sales calls while attending various chapter meetings in key feeder markets, concentrating on local, Southeast regional and Northeast regional markets. We will sponsor chapter events throughout the year including MPI, GAMPI, PCMA and AENC.
- Execute a holiday mail campaign for existing and potential clients to create a high-touch customer engagement that complements the face-to-face meetings above and keeps Raleigh top of mind for the clients when they are planning events (e.g., New Year's, Valentine's Day and Halloween).
- Continue to contract with R&G Business Development Solutions, lead generator and prospecting company, to increase the volume of qualified leads in the sales prospecting funnel that will result in new business.
- Utilize local university students from business, marketing & finance and parks & recreation departments as interns for an ongoing marketing research program, freeing up Sales team members from the front-end research necessary for consistent prospecting.
- Host local planners who are not currently working with us for "Lunch and Learn" or "Coffee Connection" to increase community awareness and how working with a CVB can help their bottom lines.
- In all markets, utilize third-party channels to increase the sales prospecting funnel, generate more business in key industry segments and need times and attract more multivolume accounts. Activities would include conducting regional third-party events and educational opportunities in all markets (e.g., onsite presentations or interaction at tradeshow). Efforts would concentrate on building relationships with HelmsBriscoe, ConferenceDirect, Experient, Association Management Company Institute and American Express Interaction.
- With support from the Public Relations team, develop quarterly news releases and briefs targeting meetings industry publications like *Successful Meetings*, *M&C*, *Meetings Today*, *Meeting Mentor*, *Convene* and *The Meeting Professional* (MPI).
- Collaborate with the Administration, Marketing and Communications and Public Relations teams to plan and execute a multilevel GRCVB awareness campaign that speaks to a broad audience of local and out-of-market business leaders, residents and meeting professionals. The campaign will utilize local, state and national media.
  - The focus is to educate the audience on the GRCVB's efforts to create economic impact in Raleigh/Wake County through conventions and meetings. Elements of the campaign would include:
    - Describing who we are, what we do and how we can be of service to each audience.
    - Developing quarterly story pitches to local newspapers and broadcast media to educate the local audience (businesses and residents) on the GRCVB's sales efforts and its mission of increasing sustainable economic impact from meetings and conventions.
    - Creating PSAs to run on RTN (a local informational station) and submitting monthly "accolades from clients" in the "Events" section of *The News & Observer*.
- Evaluate strengthening of relationships with local hospitality partners by implementing (in partnership with the Marketing and Communications Department) five targeted, convention-area-specific email activations throughout the year for the Raleigh North, Midtown Raleigh, Downtown, Cary and Airport meetings districts.
- Contribute relevant content of interest to meeting professionals and other members of the larger GRCVB community for use in the "Meeting Planner Spotlight" or other elements of the Meetings Watch, GRCVB blogs and social media accounts. Such spotlights would give concrete examples of how individuals have assisted in bringing business to our community through leads, letters of support etc.

- Further cultivate the connector program through work with the Raleigh Convention Center to engage with local business and community leaders who are members, board members or officers of organizations and groups that may consider Raleigh for their meeting destination. Host local destination awareness event to educate the community on how to host a meeting in their own backyard.
- Continue to develop relationships with the leadership and faculty from area universities and museums and identify individuals who are members of or hold leadership positions in organizations with noteworthy conferences that should meet in our local facilities. Activities will include hosting onsite events, individual meetings and invitations to visit the convention campus and meeting hotels to experience Raleigh's meeting/conference amenities.
- Work closely with the region's economic development and start-up communities to gain insights on and connections with high-growth industry clusters and their representatives (e.g., ag-bio, defense, life sciences, medical devices, non-woven textiles and data analytics) and recruit associated conferences to Raleigh. Activities include hosted events on the convention campus and onsite events to connect with broader audiences to raise awareness of the impact of meetings and conventions on the local economy and to describe GRCVB convention recruitment and support services.
- Ensure messaging and sales collateral is in sync with the destination brand strategy, in both local and regional convention and meeting markets.
- Work with the Marketing and Communications Department to create a promotional campaign and collateral that showcases all major meeting facilities (North Raleigh, Midtown/Crabtree, Downtown, Cary, Brier Creek).
- Work with the Marketing and Communications Department to enhance the "Sales Destination" and "Meeting Professionals" presentations and collateral to include new and/or renovated properties, recent accolades and updated flight information. Additionally, create a fact sheet that showcases all meeting facilities, a revised "Downtown Proximity" (which should include all hotels in walking distance to the convention center) and the R-LINE route.
- Host themed familiarization tours and networking opportunities for potential clients in our feeder markets in the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions around signature events, concerts, festivals and sporting events in conjunction with our hospitality community to showcase Raleigh's entertainment, culinary and cultural scene.
- Design out-of-market client events in the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast in partnership with our local brand ambassadors around themes that reflect the destination brand such as culinary, breweries, music or arts and culture.
- Host a targeted Raleigh Convention Center Event Campus FAM for qualified meeting planners.
- In collaboration with Marketing and IT, create a destination "on-boarding" package to provide destination partners (e.g., hotel sales managers) information and resources to better work with the GRCVB, extend the destination brand strategy and elevate customer service within the hospitality community.
- Continue to serve on and seek out leadership, board of directors and committee positions with national and regional industry organizations (e.g., MPI, AENC, SGMP and NCBMP).
- Work closely with IT to ensure that the integration and communication between third-party online destination sales and marketing channels like empowerMINT.com and Cvent are seamless and maintain a cohesive presence that represents our destination.
- Develop an 18-month partner opportunity marketing plan and share with hotel and convention center partners in September to optimize engagement in and budgeting for joint projects in the 2018 calendar year.
- In partnership with the Services Department, continue to work with David Kliman, CMP, CMM, to coordinate and facilitate two meetings of the established Customer Advisory Board for Meeting Planners to

review our marketing materials and give feedback on our sales, marketing and services initiatives and to discuss hot topics impacting our destination sales efforts.

<b>CONVENTION SALES ACTION CALENDAR</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec	x											
ASAE, Toronto, Ontario		x										
Connect Association, Corporate and Specialty (and Expo), New Orleans, La.		x										
IAEE D.C. Chapter, Alexandria, Va.			x									
Meet National, Washington, D.C.			x									
Professional Fraternity Association, Birmingham, Ala.			x									
MPI Business Exchange, Raleigh, N.C.			x									
IMEX America, Las Vegas, Nev.				x								
Connect Faith, Cincinnati, Ohio				x								
Connect Texas, Horseshoe Bay, Texas					x							
CMP Conclave, Md.					x							
Nurses Organizational Alliance, Birmingham, Ala.					x							
IAEE EXPO EXPO, San Antonio, Texas					x							
National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners, Saint Louis, Mo.					x							
American Express Interaction/IMEX, TBD						x						
Holiday Showcase, Chicago, Ill.						x						
AENC Tradeshow, Raleigh or Durham, N.C.						x						
PCMA Annual Meeting, Nashville, Tenn.							x					
RCMA-Emerge, Omaha, Neb.							x					
CITE (Convention Industry Tradeshow of Education), Durham, N.C.								x				
AMCI, Vancouver, B.C.								x				
Connect Diversity, Las Vegas, Nev.									x			
Destination Showcase, Washington, D.C.									x			
Diversity Summit, Las Vegas, Nev.									x			
Experient Envision, Cincinnati, Ohio									x			
Independent Planner Education conference -Colorado Springs, Colo.									x			
NCSGMP, TBD									x			
XDP-Xperience Design, National Harbor, Md.									x			
Helms Briscoe ABC Conference, Chicago, Ill.										x		
Connect NYC, New York City, N.Y.											x	
Direct Selling Association, Orlando, Fla.												x
Fraternity Executives Association, Tampa, Fla.												x
MPI WEC, Las Vegas, Nev.												x



## Services Department

The Services team is responsible for making visitors feel welcome and helping to pave the way for a distinct and pleasant visitor experience while they are here! We accomplish this by working with our partners to help deliver the Raleigh, N.C., brand strategy to visitors. Our department focuses in two areas: convention services (services provided to meetings, conventions and other groups) and visitor services (operation of the Visitor Information Center). We believe that by building strong relationships and providing extraordinary experiences, we build a “services to sales” approach that will affect repeat and referral business. We focus on impacting experience delivery.

### SERVICES OBJECTIVES

- **Customer Service:** We will continue to work to maintain a high commitment to customer service excellence internally (to our partners and peers) and externally (to our clients and visitors).
- **Convention/Group Services:** We will use the convention servicing and planning process to grow client relationships, one convention and meeting at a time. By providing “one stop shop” services, we will integrate a cooperative spirit between our planners and Raleigh, N.C., hospitality partners. We will expand these services to include group tour services.
- **Visitor Services/Visitor Information Center:** We will strengthen the role of the Visitor Information Center (VIC) so that it plays a key role in enhancing Raleigh, N.C., visitor experiences. By providing visitor information, counseling and destination awareness, we will strive to increase visitor volume one visitor at a time, thus encouraging positive experiences (with longer stays and increased visitor spending) and ultimately repeat visits.

### SERVICES STRATEGIES

#### Customer Service

- Continue our training programs which help us to impact experience delivery:
  - Offer the Guest Service Gold® program for customer service certification on a quarterly basis. The program, developed by the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI), is a partnership with the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA) which allows our partners to participate at a cost savings.
  - Partner with Wake Technical Community College for the Customer Care for the Hospitality Industry program, as a resource for partners interested in offering a customized, onsite customer service training program.
  - Supporting the overall strategy of GRCVB to better immerse our partners in the brand attributes of our destination, we will offer “See For Yourself” tours on a quarterly basis. Tour themes will reflect the year’s marketing editorial calendar and are valued, popular training tools serving to acquaint our partners with area visitor attractions. We will partner with Sales to invite clients to attend as well, to grow brand champions within our local community of planners. Work cooperatively with GRCVB’s Marketing team on the implementation of a new online tool for destination awareness training related to destination brand. A key element of customer service is having a community of business partners who understand and support the brand strategy while delivering the promise enthusiastically to our visitors.
  - Participate in monthly educational webinars and share this with our partners by hosting monthly “Lunch and Learns” for networking and training. Active involvement in the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) provides us with great event service training opportunities.
- Be actively involved again in the Local Organizing Committee as well as our typical role of supporting the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) World of Bluegrass week overall. Hosting IBMA provides us with a marquee opportunity to exemplify our servicing role with an extraordinarily high level of customer service care. Key areas of engagement include hospitality and welcome services, volunteer recruitment and training and partner engagement, as well as expanding accessibility awareness for special needs audiences.

- Work proactively to grow awareness of GRCVB's hospitality excellence awards programs and encourage nominations for the Annual Meeting awards recognition, with the goal of increasing awareness of the awards program year-round to increase the number of and quality of nominations.
- Continue our taxi driver training program including a cooperative program with Raleigh Police Department and RDU taxi services at RDU International Airport. Taxi drivers present a great opportunity to make excellent first impressions of the destination, which makes brand awareness and customer service training for these partners vitally important. Work cooperatively with GRCVB's Marketing and Communications team to keep presentation current and encourage placement of GRCVB's Official Visitors Guides in the taxis. Do this relative to changing trends in use of taxis versus other shared ride services.
- Work with our Marketing and Communications Department to grow opportunities for product delivery of the brand attributes by our partners in unique ways (packaging, development of unique Raleigh opportunities, intentional experiences that reinforce the community's best assets). Target initiatives here will include: focusing on partners who have the greatest impact for servicing convention, meeting and event groups; leveraging relationships with organizations like Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Hillsborough Street Community Service Corporation, Midtown Raleigh Alliance and Shop Local Raleigh to engage the right partners; working to ensure cohesive training and implementation of GRCVB's PIXL extranet; and working cooperatively to use partner meetings to extend training on how to better work with and service large groups. A key tactic will be hosting the partner meetings with both Marketing and Sales.
- Foster GRCVB's relationship with North Carolina State University's Cooperative Extension Service and People-First Tourism, Inc., which remain important to us to develop unique, leisure visitor package experiences.
- Continue to fine-tune our post-event reporting systems (both the use of post-event surveys and MINT reporting adherence) to better understand our successes and how to correct any potential customer service or product delivery weaknesses.
- Work cooperatively with Sales in hosting the Customer Advisory Board for Meeting Planners, through which we will solicit feedback of our planners to help us fine-tune our services for the future.
- Continue to offer our proactive Visitors Guide delivery service, maximizing on the role that hotels and key attractions have in providing accurate visitor information to arriving visitors. This valued program has a GRCVB representative regularly onsite with these key partners to provide hard-copy materials (as well as an important side benefit has been to develop a face-to-face relationship with front-line staff and management to communicate key initiatives and training opportunities).
- Continue to explore the impacts of shared economy service providers (like Uber, Lyft and Airbnb) and work with Marketing and Communications to develop methods to raise awareness of the Raleigh, N.C., brand, the value of great customer service and Official Visitors Guides. One key tactic will be to host town-hall meetings for shared economy transportation providers and one for Airbnb partners.
- Assess where we are with important areas of service needs for the year ahead, and provide opportunities for partners to train as needed with each:
  - Embrace tour guide service and tour company development.
  - Raise awareness for accessibility services and accommodations for special needs visitors for both leisure travelers and group attendees; reach out to key partners locally (like City of Raleigh) for implementing this.
  - Overall event security.
  - Green and sustainable planning needs.
  - Develop and implement revitalized services in response to the focus of weddings and family reunions when GRCVB launches the new website.

### **Convention Planning and Assistance/Convention Services**

- Stay abreast of impacts due to the HB2 law, and provide services where needed to help offset impacts.

- Say more clearly what our services role is and what services we provide. Work with Marketing and Communications to continue to fine-tune our messaging for services introductions. Continue to focus on efficiency in the servicing of our groups by working with IT to fine-tune our primary areas of the website (Event Services Directory listing—ESL, Unique Meeting Sites—UMS tools and our Services subsection).
- Differentiate services provided to convention/meeting groups between those offered to high-profile festivals and events.
- Work cooperatively with our Marketing and Communications and IT Departments to ensure that our groups receive servicing that incorporates high technology, social media and online access to tools that allow for optimum efficiency and effectiveness; use of a social media toolkit that enables us to assist our planners with social media for their Raleigh events, assessing and using Stackla where it's appropriate for social media impacts on site; templates that can sell the destination experience while boosting the groups' attendance promotion needs will be very important.
- Rejuvenate the relationship with Activate Good for servicing the needs of our groups. "Voluntourism" or corporate social responsibility remains a high priority to our arriving groups. Activate Good maintains the relationships with volunteer and philanthropic needs and the backend of the portal for connecting our groups to volunteer opportunities.
- Use our participation in the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) to provide shared learning opportunities and participate in ESPA's 8th National Annual Celebrate Services Event for more awareness of and appreciation for the convention services manager (CSM)/event manager (EM) roles. Our department will continue its role of raising the level of awareness for the importance of the planning and hosting roles, and how these roles impact the visitor/attendee experience, provided by the destination's CSMs and EMs.
- Continue to work with PR to guide event planners on "Do It Yourself" tools for garnering local media exposure through press releases, press conferences and media alerts. Media resources are very important to our arriving groups. Work with PR to maximize visibility of key arriving groups.
- Ensure that we maximize the use of our MeetingMax housing tool.
- Continue to use our Tourism Ambassador program to maximize the hospitality of the destination for our groups. Improvements in recruiting, training and support tools will be made as the year progresses, and we will continue our annual We Love Our Tourism Ambassadors event.
- Freshen our Red Carpet Welcome program as needed to make it relevant to our destination brand implementation.
- Continue to work with Marketing and Communications to use the Convention/Group Alert program to create awareness for our arriving groups, to better prepare our partners for provide a high level of hospitality for the attendees.
- Refresh the SmartCard program (special deals for arriving groups) to increase the numbers of partner businesses particularly by leveraging relationships with Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Shop Local Raleigh and key shopping areas (Cameron Village, Crabtree and North Hills areas etc.).

### **Visitor Information Center (VIC)/Visitor Services**

- Build on the growth experienced in the previous year of the VIC, expanding the efforts to provide unique experiences through the VIC space, staffing and services.
- Work with Marketing and Communications to ensure that the destination brand stays fresh. It is our goal that the VIC be a pivotal space for selling the brand attributes. This involves décor, alignment on materials/brochures offered and concentration on the right messages (in person, on the phone and via online communications) offered by staff working there.

- Strive to grow VIC visitation in these ways:
  - Develop partnerships for unique programming (ideas include First Friday programs, “popup” style features of key local attractions or businesses and more).
  - Use our GRCVB website presence and convert web interest to visits and/or inquiries.
  - For minimizing visitor frustrations in finding the VIC:
    - Work with our Administration team to highlight the need for updated wayfinding and external signage to better direct visitors to the VIC.
    - Work with our Administration team and the RCC staff to place VIC signage in the parking garages and RCC connector space.
    - Catalog visitor feedback and complaints, working internally and externally to ensure that responses are provided and local partners are aware to allow for future improvement.
  - Brochure distribution remains vital to our success. Quarterly we will review the number, type and quality of visitor-related businesses that are represented in the VIC to ensure that we are meeting visitors’ needs.
  - Work with Marketing and Communications to incorporate social media strategy into our VIC services.
  - Maintain and grow awareness through other visitor centers to include state welcome centers, Capital Area Visitor Services etc., by actively engaging the personnel in these centers.
  - Ensure that the VIC Manager trains continually to stay abreast of visitor center trends by attending DMAI’s Visitor Services Summit.
- Make a priority of working with RCC, Marriott and Raleigh Police Department to ensure that our VIC space is secure and protected from vandalism and is a hospitable and thriving visitor space. To that end we continue to work on a unified security plan for the space including cooperative efforts at after-hours security staffing during special events, as well as making improvements that limit security issues.
- Conduct periodic visitor intercepts to assess perceptions on the VIC’s appearance, performance and suitability for our visitors overall.
- Continue to develop inquiry fulfillment processes and work with the Marketing and Communications Department on any special promotions (like grand openings of new exhibits, new attractions etc.).

<b>SERVICES ACTION CALENDAR</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>
Annual Tourism Ambassador Event									x			
Celebrate Services Day with ESPA												
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec	x											
DMAI Convention Services Summit			x									
DMAI Visitor Services Summit			x									
ESPA Annual Meeting							x					
Guest Service Gold® Programs		x			x			x			x	
Lunch and Learns/ESPA Webinars	x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x
RDU Taxi Program (date TBD)							x					
See For Yourself Tours	x			x			x				x	
Simpleview Summit, Phoenix, Ariz.										x		
Taxi Driver Training Programs		x		x		x		x		x		x
Partner Training Meetings (dates TBD)												
Shared Economy Town-Hall Meetings (dates TBD)												
Other Partner Meetings (tour guide services, security needs and accessibility services) (dates TBD)												

## **Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance**

The Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance—a department of the Greater Raleigh CVB—markets and promotes Raleigh, Cary, Wake County and the area’s sports venues in order to create economic development for the region in the form of sports events, tournaments and championships. The GRSA works closely with local partner organizations to successfully host and service existing events for the purpose of enhancing the product and developing repeat business. Both the sales/marketing and hosting components are designed to effectively position and brand Greater Raleigh as one of the nation’s leading sports event destinations. The GRSA has a 23-member Advisory Board, made up of sports, government, tourism and hospitality officials who play key roles in the sports event industry in Greater Raleigh.

### **GRSA OBJECTIVES**

- Create economic impact by filling hotels and restaurants with sports-related business.
- Position, or brand, Greater Raleigh as one of the nation’s premier locations for sporting events and a “championship destination.”
- Provide excellent leadership and/or support in the area of event hosting and servicing.
- Generate positive media exposure and visibility for Greater Raleigh and its venues.
- Increase local awareness of the sports event industry as a key generator of economic development in Wake County.
- Continue to develop and strengthen relationships with local host partners and sports organizations.
- Continue to strengthen the GRSA’s reputation (and that of its Advisory Board) as the foremost authority on the sports event industry in Wake County.
- Advocate for new and improved sports facilities and venues in Wake County. Consult, advise and provide data upon request to public and/or private entities and community constituents on proposed product development. Encourage sports facility development that will ultimately generate increased visitor business and economic impact for Wake County.

### **TARGET AUDIENCES**

- Collegiate sports (NCAA championships, ACC & other conference championships)
- Amateur sports (youth and adult)
- High school sports (NCHSAA)
- Core sports: Soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, tennis, volleyball, cross country.
- Emerging sports: Lacrosse, disc golf, extreme sports (BMX, Ultimate, etc.) and convention center sports
- Focus organizations: NCAA, ACC, NCHSAA, NHL, USOC National Governing Bodies, plus numerous youth and amateur organizations and associations
- Geographic scope: National, regional, statewide (& occasionally international)

### **PRIORITIES, PRIMARY THEMES, NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2017–2018**

The GRSA will spend significant time and energy in 2017–2018 in one of two ways: (1) Marketing and selling Greater Raleigh in spite of the HB2 law; or (2) Recovering and re-building our brand following HB2, if the law is repealed and no longer a detriment to our sales efforts. Either way we are faced with a sizeable challenge.

Working Around HB2: If HB2 is still on the books, we will work to recruit around it and identify new events, new markets, new owners and planners who are willing and enthusiastic about bringing their events to North Carolina regardless of the law. That will be challenging to say the least. We will place a greater emphasis on pursuing more in-state events and opportunities. These events are not as lucrative in terms of hotel room-nights and visitor spending, but they do represent a chance to secure new business in a way that is not negatively impacted by HB2. In addition, we will take a closer look at international events, which may offer less resistance to HB2.

Or Rebuilding Post-HB2: If HB2 is no longer in effect, we will work to repair the damage to North Carolina's brand and its position in the ultra-competitive sports marketplace and to re-establish ourselves with rights-holders and event owners following HB2 repeal. One way or another, HB2 will significantly impact our marketing efforts in the year ahead, and we will remain focused and determined to overcome it and move forward.

Rebuilding/Strengthening NCAA & ACC Relationships: One of the GRSA's most important client relationships is with the NCAA. The NCAA not only has owned and managed multiple events that led to millions of dollars in direct visitor spending annually in Wake County, but the organization is also an industry leader and trend-setter in the world of youth, amateur and collegiate sports. North Carolina's direct connection with the NCAA has been significantly weakened due to the presence of HB2. We are facing a potential six-year drought of NCAA business through spring 2022. It will be important that the GRSA maintains and rebuilds its relationship with the NCAA in the years ahead, as the next bid cycle will begin in approximately 2020, and hopefully the HB2 controversy will be behind us at that point. Also, in theory, Greater Raleigh could pick up potential events that the NCAA needs to relocate from other areas for one reason or another (if our own HB2 issue has been resolved). To that end, the GRSA will attend the NCAA Convention for the first time. And our relationship with the ACC and other collegiate conferences will also need to be strengthened and re-established, as the ACC is closely linked with the NCAA in terms of its stance on the HB2 law.

New Events: A handful of new events will highlight the Greater Raleigh Sports Calendar in 2017–2018, and the GRSA will make it a priority to help ensure the success of each. They include: the AAU Karate National Championships (concluding July 1), the USA-Cuba (baseball) Friendship Series, the Coastal Plain League (baseball) All-Star Game, an NCAA Women's Gymnastics Regional, an NCAA Men's Golf Regional and the Carolina League All-Star Game. The GRSA will work closely with the event rights-holders and our host partners, with a clear focus on the success this year's competition and with an eye toward the future and securing repeat business.

Major Events: Every year is a big sports year in Greater Raleigh, and FY 2017–2018 should be no exception. As a result, the GRSA staff will once again place a heavy emphasis on working with and supporting our local partners to successfully host major events. A sampling of those events include the NCAA Baseball Division II World Series, ACC Men's & Women's Tennis Championships, Rock 'n' Roll Raleigh Marathon & ½ Marathon, Ironman 70.3 Raleigh, City of Oaks Volleyball Challenge, MAPL Volleyball, the Deep South Classic, Coastal Plain League All-Star Game, Great American Cross Country Festival, the AAU Karate National Championships, National Club Baseball World Series, Senior Softball USA Eastern Nationals, National Black Heritage Championship Swim Meet, 12 NCHSAA state championships, USA Baseball events and the CASL visitRaleigh.com National Soccer Series.

Mobile-Friendly & Social Media-Savvy: The GRSA will continue to focus on internal upgrades in FY 2017–2018 in the areas of mobile technology and social media platforms. The No. 1 priority is to make the GRSA website more mobile—by creating a mobile-friendly or “responsive” website. This is designed to target sports event planners who are on the go with their mobile devices. That process began in FY 2016–2017 and should conclude in FY 2017–2018. In addition, we will strengthen our efforts to upgrade website design, content, photo galleries and functionality. In terms of social media this year, the GRSA will continue to excel with Twitter, grow Instagram and blogs and establish a GRSA YouTube channel.

Meetings with Local Municipalities: The GRSA will coordinate a plan to set-up individual meetings or a countywide gathering with Wake County parks & recreation directors and staff to discuss facility inventory and current/future sporting event opportunities, along with examining future needs. Better outreach to the local municipalities will help to ensure open communication between all of the key stakeholders and will help to ensure that the sports tourism industry continues to be a focus of municipalities throughout Wake County.

And More: The GRSA will continue to work with Marketing and Communications to upgrade and enhance various marketing materials, including bid book materials/presentations, e-marketing collateral, post-event e-messages, etc. Also, the GRSA plans to explore the feasibility of creating, maintaining and utilizing a volunteer database. This is a “need area” in our sports market, and the GRSA will attempt to address that need in FY 2017–2018.

### **What's New for Fiscal Year 2017–2018**

1. Marketing/Selling in an HB2 Era, or Rebuilding/Re-establishing Post-HB2
2. AAU Karate National Championships
3. USA-Cuba (baseball) Friendship Series
4. Two Baseball All-Star Games – Coastal Plain League (July) and Carolina League (June)

5. Attend NCAA Annual Convention
6. GRSA sports destination image video distribution
7. GRSA volunteer database
8. GRSA redesigned and mobile-friendly/responsive website
9. GRSA branded bid book marketing materials
10. Increased emphasis on social media platforms
11. GRSA YouTube Channel
12. Attend Women in Sports Events national leadership meeting
13. Meeting with Wake County municipality parks & recreation directors
14. Increase scheduled meetings with locally-based sports clubs & organizations

## **GRSA STRATEGIES, SALES**

- Attend national tradeshow to meet one-on-one with event owners and rights-holders and to promote Raleigh and Wake County as a premier sports event destination. (See sports marketing action calendar for a complete list of tradeshow and events.)
- Focus on the following sales priorities: (1) collegiate, high school and amateur sports; (2) core sports of soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, tennis, cross country, volleyball and cheerleading; (3) emerging sports (lacrosse, BMX, Ultimate, etc.); and (4) state, regional, national and, in some cases, international markets.
- Prospect strategically for new business, primarily through existing contacts and client relationships and by attending tradeshow, but also via “events available” databases, the internet, sports directories, industry publications and industry contacts.
- Research and evaluate potential events (in coordination with our host partners) to determine which ones are the “right fit” for Greater Raleigh.
- Develop and generate qualified sports leads on a consistent basis for Wake County hotels.
- Produce high-quality bid proposals and presentations for select sporting events as needed. Work closely with hotels, venues and local host organizations and partners.
- Create GRSA-branded marketing materials for bid proposals. (Marketing and Communications)
- Create GRSA sports destination overview video for branding/marketing/sales efforts. (Marketing and Communications)
- Travel as needed to make sales calls and presentations, in order to recruit and secure new sports business.
- Organize and host site inspections and client events for rights-holders and event planners to showcase the area’s sports venues, accommodations and attractions.
- Contact local sports organizations, clubs and associations to learn which events they compete in at the statewide, regional or national levels, and determine which of those events might be a reasonable and desirable fit for Wake County. At the same time, determine which of those organizations would be interested in helping to recruit, manage and host the event once it has been booked.
- Continue to update and develop a more accurate and comprehensive database of sports event owners and rights-holders at the state, regional and national levels, and categorize each entry by sport for e-marketing purposes. Expand the database by researching and entering new and potential client organizations.
- Produce and distribute periodic e-marketing newsletters (Shout-Out) that target event owners and rights-holders by sport with sport-specific themes and information.

- Manage the Sports Event Investment Program (SEIP) and work closely with GRCVB Board of Directors to generate new sports business opportunities and economic impact for Greater Raleigh and to help market and promote existing events in order to increase visitation numbers.
- Manage GRSA event-hosting line item in order to secure priority events by assisting on an as-needed basis with bid fees, rights fees, sanctioning fees, facility rental assistance, sponsorship commitments and “value added” programming (examples include marketing, hospitality, receptions, banquets, welcome gifts etc.).
- Support the efforts of local organizations to bring sporting events to the area. This includes but is not limited to: NC State University, Gale Force, City of Raleigh, Town of Cary, CASL, USA Baseball and many more.

## **GRSA STRATEGIES, MARKETING**

- Continue to build brand awareness and establish the value of the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance within the national and regional sports event industry, as well as within the local market. The GRSA brand will continue to grow through professionalism, hospitality, reliability and a commitment to excellence—plus various marketing, advertising and media platforms.
- Produce quarterly sports e-newsletter (Sports Watch) that is distributed to event owners and rights-holders as well as local partners, host organizations and media. (Marketing and Communications)
- Improve and upgrade the design, functionality and technology of the GRSA website, with an emphasis on tailoring the site to rights-holders and event planners, while keeping the content “fresh,” timely and pertinent. (Marketing and Communications, IT)
- Identify additional resources, such a contracted freelance writer, to focus on the updating and development of new, fresh content on the GRSA website and social media platforms. (GRSA)
- Improve photo gallery search technology and incorporate into the sports website, searchable by sport, venue or date. (IT)
- Complete the process of developing a mobile-friendly or “responsive” GRSA website, to ensure that the GRSA site is as mobile-accessible as possible. (IT)
- Establish the GRSA sports website as a primary sales and marketing tool and as the No. 1 information resource for the sports event industry in Wake County.
- Schedule advertising placement in any or all of the primary sports event trade publications (*Sports Business Journal, SportsTravel, SportsEvents, Sports Destination Management*). -- (Marketing and Communications)
- Continue to expand and develop sports marketing creative for print and online placements. Creative should promote the GRSA brand while also positioning Greater Raleigh as one of the nation’s premier sports event destinations. (Marketing and Communications)
- Increase emphasis on social media, with the following plan in place for FY 2015–2016: Continue to excel with Twitter, grow Instagram and blogs and establish a GRSA YouTube Channel. Determine if new platforms (e.g., Snapchat) are useful. (Marketing and Communications)
- Promote the GRSA sports website to event owners and rights-holders through e-mails, advertisements and collateral materials. (Marketing and Communications)
- Update and manage a database of Wake County major venues and facilities.
- Update and manage master calendar of Wake County sporting events that are affiliated in some capacity with GRSA.
- Expand, maintain and improve the GRSA’s sports photo library for promotional and media purposes.



- Develop proactive local media relations plan designed to increase awareness of the sports event industry as a vital generator of economic development in Wake County. (PR)
- Develop proactive national media relations plan designed to position Greater Raleigh as a premier destination for sporting events. (PR)
- Maintain active membership in the National Association of Sports Commissions and the North Carolina Sports Association.

## **GRSA STRATEGIES, HOSTING & SERVICING**

- Place our traditional strong emphasis on hosting and servicing a series of signature sporting events in fiscal year 2017–2018. Work with event planners and local partners to plan and successfully host these events. A sampling of the major events include: the NCAA Baseball Division II World Series, ACC Men’s & Women’s Tennis Championships, Rock ‘n’ Roll Raleigh Marathon & ½ Marathon, Ironman 70.3 Raleigh, City of Oaks Volleyball Challenge, MAPL Volleyball, the Deep South Classic, Coastal Plain League All-Star Game, Great American Cross Country Festival, the AAU Karate National Championships, National Club Baseball World Series, Senior Softball USA Eastern Nationals, National Black Heritage Championship Swim Meet, 12 NCHSAA state championships, USA Baseball events and the CASL visitRaleigh.com National Soccer Series.
- Take a leadership role in housing issues while staying current with changes within the industry—continuing to lead, coordinate, provide and improve hotel and housing services and options for events rights-holders and planners.
- Create, maintain and utilize the GRSA’s first volunteer database.
- Emphasize continued excellence in traditional visitor services for sporting events—as requested, as needed and at a service level commensurate with the impact of the event on the local hospitality industry. This includes maps, directions, information desks, hotel decorations, venue signage, team gift baskets, VIP gifts and much more.
- Serve on Local Organizing Committees, as needed.
- Provide volunteer ambassadors on site at select sporting events.
- Support existing priority events by collaborating with rights-holders and local partners to strengthen the event or enhance the “event experience” through such avenues as visitor services, marketing and sponsorship support, hospitality programs, ancillary programming and VIP gifts... for the purpose of leveraging strong community support to help retain desirable events (repeat business).
- Continue hotel room-night tracking and pick-up following all key sporting events, with an emphasis on being as thorough and accurate as possible.
- Continuation of post-event report program following all key sporting events.
- Continuation of post-event evaluations by surveying event owners and rights-holders. (Expand this program to include coaches, participants and visiting family in order to more fully determine the perception & evaluation of Raleigh as a sports destination.)
- Create and host sports event microsites (landing pages) for major events, when applicable. (Marketing and Communications, IT)
- Attend ESPA national convention to stay up-to-date on industry trends.
- Attend MeetingMax to stay up-to-date with our housing/accommodations partner.

**GRSA ACTION CALENDAR**

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Connect Sports Market Place, New Orleans, La.		x										
USOC Sportslink, New Orleans, La.		x										
U.S. Aquatics Sports, Dallas, Texas			x									
S.P.O.R.T.S. Conference, Cedar Rapids, Iowa			x									
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting			x									
USA Softball Annual Meeting, Greensboro, N.C.					x							
TEAMS, Orlando, Fla.				x								
U.S. Specialty Sports Association, Daytona, Fla.					x							
USA Track & Field Convention, Columbus, Ohio						x						
National Fastpitch Coaches Association, TBD						x						
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting						x						
American Baseball Coaches Assoc., Indianapolis, Ind.							x					
Event Service Professionals Association, Nashville, Tenn.							x					
U.S. Lacrosse National Convention, Baltimore, Md.							x					
National Soccer Coaches / USYSA, Philadelphia, Pa.							x					
NCAA Annual Convention							x					
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting								x				
Nat'l Assoc. of Sports Commissions, Minneapolis, Minn.										x		
MeetingMax										x		
Simpleview Summit, Phoenix, Ariz.										x		
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting											x	
Women in Sports Events, New York City, N.Y.												x

## **Information Technology Department**

The Information Technology Department is responsible for all of the Bureau's cloud-based software solutions, infrastructure, web development, social media and internet marketing technologies. The primary goal of the department is to support the organizational strategic plan and individual department business objectives through the effective use of information technology and cloud-based services—providing the resources to support the destination marketing that attracts more visitors.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVES**

- Train and support staff on all organization-related technology in an effective manner to promote productivity.
- Identify, manage and solve all organizational technology-related concerns.
- Automate the organization's use of internal information to ensure that data are organized and shared in a manner that adds value, enhances productivity, protects against loss and promotes customer retention.
- Work closely day-to-day with the Marketing and Communications Department to implement Internet marketing strategies that ultimately attract more visitors and visitor spending.
- Maintain, support and upgrade infrastructure for GRCVB administrative offices and official Visitor Information Center.
- Continue to maintain alternative methods of communication during crises or emergency situations in the destination or during unscheduled server downtimes.
- Increase website traffic levels (visits) via search engine optimization and search engine marketing.
- Establish [www.visitRaleigh.com](http://www.visitRaleigh.com) as the single, official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction and event, meeting, sports, travel media and partner information through the effective application of new web technology.
- Maintain and support social media aggregation tools for user-generated content and a digital asset management system.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES**

- Work closely Sales and Services to ensure that the integration and communication between third-party online destination sales and marketing channels like [empowerMINT.com](http://empowerMINT.com) and [Cvent](http://Cvent.com) are seamless and maintain a cohesive presence that represents our destination.
- Support a centralized dashboard thus giving each Bureau department access to track metrics and allowing for multiple charts and graphs of CRM metrics, key performance indicators and strategic partner metrics.
- Maintain cybersecurity needs by accessing current enterprise system security to identify areas that are lacking controls.
- Work closely with PR Department to ensure that the integration and communication between Cision, Google Analytics, CRM and destination dashboards are seamless and maintain data integrity that represents our destination's PR reach.
- Evaluate and deploy a Marketing and Communications automation platform to integrate with current platforms allowing the ability to reach consumers and clients with approved, personalized messaging and electronic collateral from all integrated marketing communication channels.
- Manage all aspects related to [visitRaleigh.com](http://visitRaleigh.com), [raleighsports.org](http://raleighsports.org) and [themostnc.com](http://themostnc.com) including the updated Content Management System (CMS) and Priceline booking engine as well as Yelp, OpenTable,

Google Maps, external data feeds and CVNC.org events API integrations. Continue to build out content on responsive design website and functionality via integrated CMS for visitRaleigh.com, raleighsports.org and themostnc.com. Support content delivery for each Bureau department, access to mobile marketing platforms and responsive design allowing for multiple presentations of existing or newly developed official site content. In addition, research leisure travelers' and meeting and sports planners' usability behavior and provide feedback on the latest responsive design and functionality of the new website. Also, continue to manage opportunities to serve partners' advertising on the official website and explore adding other opportunities like GRSA, sales and services sections.

- Manage and evolve the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for destination marketing that provides the tools to promote organization and productivity and to power sales, services and other processes Bureau-wide. Also support all third-party integrations from Distribion, Authorize.net, CVNC.org, Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) and Arena. Deploy new integration allowing for Cvent meeting data to seamlessly flow into CRM lead process and workflow.
- Support and train on Distributed Marketing Platform (DMP), providing staff the ability to reach consumers and clients with approved, personalized messaging and electronic collateral from all marketing communication channels. Deploy and train on new upgrades, reporting and user interface changes to the DMP; continue to explore email templates that deliver custom messaging to our customers based on contact or profile fields from our CRM.
- Continue to support the CRM's integrated partner login with staff, with local hotels/meeting facilities and with local hospitality partners whose information is housed in the CRM. Evaluate customizations to the Partner Information eXchange Login (PIXL) system based on feedback; also deploy a new PIXL platform with a new user interface.
- Maintain a standalone mobile app for key arriving groups (like International Bluegrass Music Association), in conjunction with the Administration and Services Departments, populating then deploying the apps on mobile storefronts prior to annual group arrival.
- Manage and support MeetingMax housing platform with local hotels and meeting planners. Evaluate customizations to housing system based on feedback; also deploy integration to pull hotel data from the CRM.
- Maintain and deploy user-generated content for social walls and website widgets for the Visitor Information Center and convention groups.
- Deploy, support and train staff on social media applications, social posting strategies and management tools. Monitor Google Analytics and manage Search Engine Marketing (SEM)/Pay-Per-Click (PPC)/YouTube to evaluate, troubleshoot and improve visibility in search engine results.
- Manage the Digital Asset Management system allowing for visual content to be accessed not only internally by employees but externally by media, partners, agencies, clients and even the public. Deploy and train on new upgrades, reporting and user interface changes to this system.
- Provide third-party support and hosting to these two regional initiatives: Triangle Regional Film Commission (TRFC) and Arts in the Triangle, in which the Bureau has taken leadership roles. Maintain and support themostnc.com in support of the area's visitor-friendly live music scene.
- Continue to support devices that will enable staff to interact more effectively with sports event organizers, meeting planners and partners.
- Continue to use the CRM/CMS/website as a tool to facilitate critical data during a crisis to communicate with partners and travelers.
- Continue to support security surveillance and existing technology tools for improved delivery of services at the Raleigh, N.C., Visitor Information Center.

**IT ACTION CALENDAR**

	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec	x											
DMAI Finance Operations and Technology Summit				x								
Internet Summit, Raleigh					x							
DMAI CMO Summit										x		
Simpleview Summit, Phoenix, Ariz.											x	

## Administration Department

The primary goal of the Administration Department is to provide managerial guidance to all GRCVB departments related to staffing, management, operational efficiencies, organizational strategic planning, education and community-based initiatives that position the GRCVB to be the leader in hospitality and tourism-based economic development for Wake County, N.C.

### ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIVES

- Maintain the proactive reporting, measurements and formats of monthly and yearly tourism data through the acquisition of third-party research and economic metrics to better communicate tourism economic impact to media, industry and policymakers.
- Maintain a comparative reporting and benchmarking system for group sales, group booking pace and interactive analytics for visitRaleigh.com; continue to refine a Raleigh Convention Center booking pace report. These measurements will be used for both internal and external analysis.
- Continue to manage the Wake County and City of Raleigh Business Development Fund for the purpose of increasing citywide convention and tradeshow business within the Raleigh Convention Center.
- Increase and enhance our collaborative efforts with local economic development allies focusing on industry clusters. Outreach to consist of hosted receptions, presentations, collaborative marketing, comprehensive communication plan and the identification of business connectors.
- Continue development of alternative funding sources for the GRCVB by creating partnerships with local and national vendors specific to tourism economic development and visitation that assist in creating shared revenue channels beyond tax collections.
- Continue to reach out to the elected officials, the business community and local residents to educate them on the economic value of tourism and the value of GRCVB efforts.
- Improve outreach and education to our local media outlets about the importance of tourism and current trends in the Wake County market.
- Encourage GRCVB staff to take leadership roles with local, state and national organizations to raise the level of credibility of the GRCVB.
- Continue work with economic development allies and city and county officials to ensure that the GRCVB has input on the strategies and plans for visitation and tourism-related projects in the City of Raleigh or Wake County. The GRCVB will undertake the development of a Tourism Master Plan working with a consultative firm to guide our community partners through a comprehensive plan over the next 12 months. This will be our destinations roadmap for the development of facilities, marketing strategies and comprehensive planning for next 10 years.
- Provide assistance and input with the City of Raleigh and Wake County during the inter-local review process to ensure funds are being allocated to infrastructure that will deliver the highest ROI by growing overnight visitation and improving the overall experience for our visitors.
- Work with Wake County municipalities to continue to identify and create the experiences that are authentic to our area to ensure we offer diverse, quality and appealing attractions, entertainment, shopping, arts/culture and culinary options.
- Continue to work at all visitor touchpoints to ensure they provide quality customer service and have a good understanding of our destination brand strategy and attributes countywide.
- Continue to support and have input on transportation issues that impact visitation, from expanding air service to improving modes of ground transportation throughout Wake County.

- Work with county municipalities to identify new and existing, quality events that have high economic value, generate trackable overnight visitation and enhance the destination brand and generate regional and national media exposure.
- Continue to be the official source of visitor information for all hotel developers, feasibility representatives and financial analysts in the tourism sector.
- Continue to facilitate committees or taskforce groups to address our various destination travel “drivers” to ensure we have a collaborative marketing message throughout Wake County. Continue our advocacy role within these committees on behalf of the partners, specific to community engagement and initiatives with our public stakeholders.
- GRCVB will implement strategies focused on destination opportunities and community support & engagement, as a follow-up to DMAI’s DestinationNEXT study results. The short-term tactical strategies will be developed by members of the marketing, communications, public relations and administrative staff.

## **ADMINISTRATION STRATEGIES**

- Host quarterly partner meetings with hotels, attractions, restaurants and other interested partners specific to GRCVB designated projects, programs and initiatives noted in the fiscal year 2017–2018 Business Plan.
- Continue to hold quarterly Conference Table meetings and maintain the current membership to ensure we have countywide community leaders advocating on our behalf.
- Continue to conduct monthly speaking engagements with area civic groups, business roundtables and other volunteer organizations to promote tourism economic development and the GRCVB’s mission.
- Conduct community presentations three times a year to Wake County-based town councils, chambers and business leaders. Throughout the year, assign staff to cover various community events and to act as liaisons between the GRCVB and the 12 Wake County municipal partners. Maintain attendance at quarterly Chamber leadership meetings.
- Organize and execute with our City of Raleigh and Wake County administrative contacts, annual work sessions with City Council, County Commissioners and management staff to discuss and strategize on tourism economic development initiatives.
- Maintain engagement with a third-party provider to aggregate the data from our CRM system and website and provide a comparative reporting and benchmarking dashboard for group sales transactions, group booking pace and interactive analytics from visitRaleigh.com. This data will be shared with our hotel and facility partners for forecasting, budgeting and ROI measurement.
- Organize quarterly breakfast meetings with local media to update them on the latest GRCVB initiatives, tourism strategies and visitor impact results for Wake County and the City of Raleigh.
- Work in conjunction with community and regional organizations to promote programs, information, planner resources and events that gain our partners recognition for their tourism economic development efforts and programs. This information will be aggregated and listed in a dynamic microsite on visitRaleigh.com or through linking to regional sites. Topics and partners will include the Raleigh area arts via the Cultural Presenters Forum, themostnc.com via the Live Music Advisory Committee and the Raleigh Beer Trail via the Wake County Beer Summit.
- Serve in a proactive advise-and-consent role with local economic development allies such as the City of Raleigh Economic Development (ED), Wake County Economic Development (WCED), Raleigh and Wake County Parks and Recreation departments and the RDU Airport Authority specific to the following projects:
  - RDU Airport Authority and Regional Transportation Alliance Air Service Advancement Program
  - City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Dix Master Plan
  - Town/Municipal Sports and Leisure Tourism Master Plans

- Comprehensive Economic Development Communication Plan to include aligned messaging and branding with City of Raleigh and Wake County.
- Continue to execute a strategy with other GRCVB departments to identify alternative revenue channels and cooperative cost savings to include partnerships and program revenues from travel, entertainment, media, retail and advertising agreements. The fiscal year 2017–2018 Business Plan will include an obtainable, non-tax revenue goal and focus on programming related to the following:
  - visitRaleigh.com via Destination Travel Network
  - Automated housing services for meetings, conventions and events
  - Destination brand and experience management
  - Tourism data analytics and data intelligence curation.
- Work in conjunction with accounting, HR, office administration and IT departments to find the best software programs for technology environments that deliver the highest ROI and efficiencies.
- Continue working with our elected city and county officials, along with associated parties, to ensure that the inter-local review, measurement process and forthcoming expenditures are made on programs or infrastructure that will deliver the best ROI and address facilities that we don't currently have in our countywide inventory. Start the Tourism Master Planning process that, when completed, will give direction to various community stakeholders on the future need for visitation facilities over the next 10 years.
- Involve GRCVB staff with Regional Transportation Alliance, Visit North Carolina, the N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition, N.C. Travel Industry Association, Destination Marketing Association International, Destination Marketing Association of N.C., N.C. Restaurant & Lodging Association and the American Society of Association Executives, to ensure that we have a voice on local, state and national issues impacting Wake County tourism.
- Execute a multichannel strategy to address the need for more community support & engagement as outlined in DestinationNEXT. The GRCVB will undertake tactics in training, town-hall meetings, task force and committee development, online resources and social media to the following areas:
  - Backyard Boosters (Residents and Stakeholders): A “Shared Economy” Summit to include short-term rental hosts and alternative transportation providers, biannual Community Engagement Committee (Public Information Officer) breakfasts and a variety of public stakeholder presentations to align our destination brand messaging resources.
  - Connectors Program (Meetings and Conventions): Continue to implement a local connectors program through partnership with the RCC, City of Raleigh ED, WCED and the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. We will utilize local individual influencers, the Portfolio of Innovative Conferences and connector-driven advertorial content to increase meeting and event opportunities from our region's corporate, academic and non-profit community.
  - Tourism Awareness (Industry Partners): The GRCVB will work in conjunction with the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association on training sessions that provide valuable resources for our industry partners in health, safety and work force development.



**ADMINISTRATION ACTION CALENDAR**

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
GRCVB Board Meeting	x											
MPI-WEC Meeting	x											
DMANC Meeting	x											
Cary Chamber Annual Meeting	x											
DMAI Annual Convention, Montréal, Quebec		x										
ASAE Annual Meeting		x										
Wake Municipality Meeting		x										
GRCVB Board Meeting		x										
GRCVB Annual Meeting/Quarterly Hotel & Attraction Meeting		x										
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition		x										
Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce Planning Conference		x										
DMANC Annual Meeting			x									
Professional Accounting Seminar				x								
The Conference Table Meeting				x								
GRCVB Board Meeting				x								
Quarterly Marketing Update Meeting					x							
DMANC Meeting					x							
DMAI Sales Academy					x							
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting					x							
GRCVB Board Meeting					x							
Holiday Showcase						x						
DMAI Sales & Marketing Committee Meeting						x						
PCMA Annual Meeting							x					
DMANC Meeting							x					
Wake Municipality Meeting							x					
The Conference Table Meeting							x					
GRCVB Board Meeting							x					
GRCVB Board Meeting								x				
Quarterly Marketing Update Meeting								x				
Destination Showcase, Washington, D.C.								x				
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting								x				
Visit North Carolina 365 Conference, Winston-Salem									x			
GRCVB Board Meeting									x			
DMANC Meeting										x		
The Conference Table Meeting										x		
DMAI CEO Summit										x		
Municipality Meeting										x		
Raleigh Chamber Intercity Visit										x		
Simpleview Advisory Board Meeting and Summit										x		
ASAE Springtime in the Park										x		
GRCVB Board Meeting										x		
The Conference Table Meeting											x	
Quarterly Marketing Update Meeting											x	
GRCVB Board Meeting											x	
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting											x	
GRCVB Board Meeting												x

## Summary of GRCVB Measureable Performance Objectives

MEASURE	2016 GOAL	2016 ACTUAL	2017 GOAL	VARIANCE
1. Wake County Occupancy	69.7%	70.1%	70.1%	0.6%
2. Wake County ADR	\$99.69	\$100.85	\$103.37	3.7%
3. Wake County Lodging Tax	\$23,073,849	\$24,273,522	\$25,487,198	10%
4. Wake County PFB Tax	\$26,526,130	\$28,525,252	\$26,910,616	1.4%

MEASURE	16-17 GOAL	16-17 ACTUAL	17-18 GOAL	VARIANCE
5. Group Definite Bookings	274	327	274	0%
6. Group Definite Room-Nights	231,950	251,572	231,950	0%
7. Definite Economic Impact	\$98 million	\$140.2 million	\$98 million	0%
8. Group Leads	649	784	662	2%
9. Group Tentative Room-Nights	493,000	833,580	502,860	2%
10. Tentative Economic Impact	\$281 million	\$411.1 million	\$286.6 million	2%
11. Website Sessions	1,860,000	2,364,940	2,440,000	31%
12. Value of PR Efforts	\$4.1 million	\$514,000	\$7.2 million	76%
13. Net Reach/Impressions From Earned Media	---	331.2 million	103 million	---
14. PR Recall of Earned Media	---	45%	46.3%	---
15. In-Kind Partnerships/Savings	\$529,401	\$532,000	\$534,695	1%
16. Speakers Bureau Presentations	32	32	33	3.1%
17. Sports Events Management Asst.	22	18	22	0%
18. Groups Serviced	576	571	560	-2.8%
19. Service Survey Results	37%	45.9%	37%	0%
20. Average Survey Score	4.5	4.6	4.5	0%
21. Visitors at VIC	12,000	12,080	11,000	-8.3%
22. Visitor Requests Fulfilled	4,500	9,840*	8,000*	78%*
23. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Guides/Maps Delivered	50,000	51,286	47,500	-5%
24. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Partners Serviced	480	528	485	1%

\* Numbers of requests are up significantly due to the Travel Guides Free inquiry service. Projected numbers are on the basis that we will contract this service again for 2017-2018.

## **Industry Leadership Positions Held by GRCVB Staff**

### **DEREK ALLMAN, CHIA**

- Chair, Marketing Committee, Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina

### **JULIE BRAKENBURY, CGSP®**

- Co-Chair, Education Committee, Event Service Professionals Association
- Board of Directors, ESPA
- Grants Panel, City of Raleigh Arts Commission
- Member, City of Raleigh Special Events Task Force
- Advisory Board, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, North Carolina State University

### **TORI COLLINS**

- Awards Committee, National Association of Sports Commissions
- Nominating Committee, NASC
- Tradeshow Committee, North Carolina Sports Association

### **SCOTT DUPREE**

- Steering Committee, Greater Raleigh Sports Council
- Nominating Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Board of Directors, WISE Greater Raleigh

### **DENNIS EDWARDS**

- Finance Committee, Destination Marketing Association International
- Treasurer, North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition
- Board of Directors, Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina
- Lodging Issues Council, North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association
- Raleigh-Durham Skål Chapter
- Board of Directors, Wake County Economic Development
- Board of Directors, City Club of Raleigh
- Co-Chair, Advisory Board, College of Hospitality Management, East Carolina University
- Liaison, The Centennial Authority

### **LOREN GOLD**

- Board of Directors, Destination Marketing Association International
- Sales & Marketing Committee, DMAI
- Chair, Triangle Regional Film Commission
- Tri-Chair, 2017 IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee
- Advisory Board, Hospitality START, Wake Technical Community College
- Advisory Board, Simpleview, Inc. (Technology Provider to GRCVB)
- Liaison, Raleigh Convention Center Commission
- Advisory Board, Hospitality Academy, Broughton High School

### **MALINDA HARRELL, CMP, CASE**

- Advocacy Committee, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter
- Board of Directors, FEMCITY
- Chair, Scholarship and Awards Committee, Association Executives of North Carolina

### **STEPHEN JACKSON, CMP**

- Board of Directors, Convention Sales Professionals International
- Education Committee, New England Chapter, Meeting Professionals International
- Membership Committee, Philadelphia Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Education Committee, New York Chapter, PCMA

### **TAMMY JEFFRIES, CGSP®**

- Annual Social Committee, Event Service Professionals Association

**ASHLEE KIRK**

- Tradeshow Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Marketing Committee, NCSA

**JASON PHILBECK, CSEE**

- Chairman, Executive Committee, North Carolina Sports Association

**SCOTT PEACOCK**

- Chairman, Executive Committee, Public Relations Society of America's Travel and Tourism Section

**JAMIE RICE, CMP**

- National Membership Committee, Capital Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Professional Development Committee, Capital Chapter, PCMA
- Emerging Leaders Mentor, Capital Chapter, PCMA
- New Member Welcome Committee, Potomac Chapter, Meeting Professionals International
- Director, Ladies Hospitality Golf League, Time Fore Nine

**NICOLE ROBINSON**

- Board of Directors, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter
- Co-Chair, Exhibits and Tradeshow Committee, N.C. Society of Government Meeting Professionals

**VIMAL VYAS**

- Technology Committee, Destination Marketing Association International
- CRM User Group, Simpleview, Inc.

**LORETTA YINGLING, CMP**

- Membership Committee, Greater Mid-West Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association