



2018–2019 Business Plan

Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau

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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
- 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 2018–2019

According to the March 2018 U.S. Travel Outlook prepared by the U.S. Travel Association (USTA): “Strong personal income and employment growth, surging consumer and business confidence, moderate inflationary pressures, an ongoing export recovery and growing shipments of capital goods all set the stage for continued solid economic growth during the first half of 2018.”

In its January 2018 U.S. Travel Outlook, USTA also had opined that, “for the travel industry, domestic travel, both business and leisure, [is] in a good position for continued solid growth in 2018.” In its Spring 2018 Travel Forecast, USTA notes that “international inbound travel will likely strengthen.”

“The travel industry has created 17,500 jobs in the first two months of 2018 alone—50 percent more than the job growth charted in the first two months of 2017.... The recent upturn in job growth is likely due in part to the recently passed tax reform legislation, which U.S. Travel expects will provide a healthy boost to business travel this year and next” (USTA). Locally, GRCVB, Capital Area Workforce Development, the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association and Raleigh Convention Center hosted the first Wake County Restaurant and Hotel Job Fair on March 28, 2018; some 80 hospitality industry employers aimed to fill more than 3,500 full- and part-time positions that day. The hospitality sector employs more than 63,000 people in Wake County—or roughly 10 percent of the total workforce, and the four area partners already have committed to hosting a 2nd annual job fair in 2019.

In Feb., U.S. “consumer confidence improved to its highest level since 2000 after a modest increase in January,” said Lynn Franco, director of economic indicators at The Conference Board (as cited by USTA). “In a preliminary reading, U.S. consumer sentiment rose more than anticipated in March to its highest level since January 2004, according to the University of Michigan Index, while the assessment of current economic conditions rose to an all-time high” (as cited by USTA); these consumer confidence measures are indicators for Americans’ propensity to travel/to spend while traveling.

USTA’s latest forecast projects that business travel is poised to grow at the fastest pace in two decades. It will even outpace leisure travel for each of the next two years, something that has not happened any time this century, according to USTA’s March 2018 U.S. Travel Outlook. Adam Sacks, president of Tourism Economics, noted a foundation for continued domestic travel growth going forward, thanks to “solid economic fundamentals at home, including a 0.4-percentage boost to GDP growth from tax cuts” (as cited by USTA).

Based on USTA forecasts, domestic leisure travel will grow by 1.8 percent and domestic business travel will grow by 2.0 percent in 2018; combined, the total domestic person-trip volume is expected to grow 1.9 percent—the same total growth rate as had been forecasted for 2017 nationwide. Total travel expenditures in the U.S. will increase by 5.0 percent in 2018 (compared to 4.5 percent forecasted for 2017).

Other USTA forecasts for travel nationwide are:

- Total travel expenditures in the U.S.: up 4.5 percent in 2019
- Total domestic person-trips: up 1.8 percent in 2019
- Leisure domestic person-trips: up 1.8 percent in 2019
- Business domestic person-trips: up 1.9 percent in 2019

The Raleigh area’s own growth in person-stays volume outpaced average U.S. growth in each of calendar years 2010–2016. Growth in direct spending volume for the Raleigh area also has outpaced the national averages for each year from 2013–2016, e.g., growth in Raleigh/Wake County’s visitor direct spending volume was up 3.3 percent, contrasted to a U.S. average annual growth of 0.8 percent according to DK Shifflet, in 2016 over 2015.

With regard to overnight visitation trends and the Research Triangle Region’s lodging industry, CBRE Hotels summarizes as follows in its March–May 2018 Hotel Horizons: “In 2017, Raleigh-Durham [market] hotels finished the year with a RevPAR gain of 0.3 percent. This was the result of a decline in occupancy of 1.4 percent and a 1.6-percent gain in average daily room rates (ADR). The 0.3-percent advance in Raleigh-Durham RevPAR was worse than the national average of 3.0 percent.

“[The market’s] upper-priced properties finished 2017 ahead of its lower-priced properties in terms of RevPAR

change. The properties in this category attained a 1.1-percent gain in ADR but suffered a 1.0-percent decrease in occupancy. Lower-priced hotels experienced an ADR growth rate of 0.7 percent, along with a 1.8-percent loss in occupancy.

“Looking towards 2018, Raleigh-Durham [market] RevPAR is expected to grow 3.1 percent. Occupancy is forecast to rise 0.4 percent, while average room rates are projected to increase 2.6 percent. Revenue is expected to continue to climb in 2019.” (For 2020, CBRE Hotels currently forecasts slight declines in occupancy and RevPAR.)

Specifically for calendar year 2019, CBRE Hotels envisions for the Raleigh-Durham market:

- Occupancy: 67.5 percent, up 0.5 percent
- ADR: \$106.56, up 1.8 percent
- RevPAR: \$71.89, up 2.3 percent

According to USTA’s Spring 2018 Travel Forecast, “after appreciating strongly in 2015 and 2016, the value of the dollar edged down 0.3 percent in 2017.... The modest decline in the value of the dollar in 2017 meant that the U.S. still remained an expensive place to visit, dampening international inbound travel. However, a stronger global economy could bode well for future growth in inbound travel to the U.S.” At RDU International Airport, with planes having been upgraded for both Paris and London service, international air traveler counts grew by 28.9 percent in 2017 over 2016.

“U.S. airlines will carry an all-time high number of passengers this spring. Airlines for America (A4A) said it expects carriers to fly 150.7 million passengers, between March 1 and April 30, a four-percent increase from a year ago” (as cited by USTA). At RDU, more passengers than ever before traveled through the international airport in 2017, breaking the prior year’s record by a half-million people. RDU counted 11.6 million total passengers in 2017, a 5.6-percent increase over 2016. In 2017, RDU’s air carriers also added nine new routes, including nonstop service from San Francisco on Virgin America; new cities paired with RDU included Austin, Texas, and New Orleans.

Largely the “result of an aging Baby Boomer generation and an increasing immigrant population, the Millennials are on the cusp of surpassing Baby Boomers as the nation’s largest living adult generation. The latest population projections from the U.S. Census Bureau project that Millennials will overtake the Boomers in population by 2019 as their numbers swell to 73 million and the Boomers decline to 72 million; GenX are expected to surpass Boomers by 2028” (as cited by USTA). This has ramifications in target marketing for almost all domestic tourism/visitor market verticals.

According to the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), artificial intelligence (AI) “is expected by all to affect the industry in a big way in 2018, with the GBTA referring to an IBM report stating that more than a third of travel industry majors will have four or more cognitive projects underway. The report refers to ‘one global airline’ that is investing in Siri-like communication with travelers to build a personalized travel plan. Qantas is already using tech to cut check-in times by 90 percent; Amadeus is building custom offers based on travelers’ social media profiles, and Hipmunk has an app you can talk to like a real person” (as cited by EyeforTravel, Jan. 8, 2018). GRCVB’s Information Technology Department is also assessing opportunities with AI.

As the time of this writing, virtually all research elements are complete as consultant Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc. (JLL) prepares a 10-year Destination Strategic Plan for Wake County, as commissioned by GRCVB. Bureau leadership anticipates receiving JLL’s final report and action plan presentations in Summer 2018, with a public report-out at the GRCVB Annual Meeting, Aug. 16, 2018, at which time Bureau staff and other countywide partners can begin absorbing the comprehensive research and the report’s final recommendations, integrating them into annual business plans for 2019 and subsequent years and executing the action plans for year one of the strategy.

April 2018

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

BASIC FACTS AND FIGURES

- There were 16.45 million domestic visitors in 2017—up 5.3 percent from 2016. Including international and domestic visitors, visitors directly spent \$2.53 billion on Wake County trips in 2017—up 4.0 percent from 2016.
- 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 8.2 million visitors in 2017.
- 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 – 12.5 million in 2017
- Domestic business travelers – 3.94 million in 2017
- 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 2017 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&B TAX REVENUE</u>
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
2017	69.1%	\$102.90	\$25,144.387	\$28,326,065

New Developments for the 2018–2019 Fiscal Year

The 2017–2018 fiscal year was full of many new developments filling out the experience of visitors to Raleigh/Wake County. Projects such as **Crabtree North**, Cary's **Downtown Park** (Town Square), the **Fuquay-Varina Arts Center**, new **Gregg Museum of Art & Design** and downtown Raleigh's **Union Station** were completed (or still slated to be complete) by fiscal year-end. Significant renovations to attractions, such as **Cary Tennis Park** and the **Wake Forest Renaissance Centre for the Arts**, and to area hotels also were completed.

By the end of this summer, downtown Raleigh will welcome two unique retail and dining attractions in the form of food halls. The **Morgan Street Food Hall & Market** concept from Hibernian Hospitality Group is a 20,000-square-foot venue in downtown's Warehouse District with more than 60 different stalls, restaurants and market options, each ranging from 30 to 550 square feet in size. Announced tenants include: **Carroll's Kitchen**, **Cousins Maine Lobster**, **Hook & Cleaver Market**, **Makus Empanadas**, **Oak City Fish and Chips**, **Raleigh Raw** and **Sassool**.

In Raleigh's Olde East neighborhood adjoining downtown (also known as the East Raleigh/Prince Hall/South Park district), **Transfer Co. Olde East** will be a food hall and market housed in a 42,800-square-foot renovated coach garage and shop, with its divisible spaces ranging from 50 to 5,048 square feet in size and a 7,030-square-foot community courtyard with direct connection to a nearby greenway. Announced tenants include **Boulted Bread**, **Centro/Gallo Pelón Mezcaleria**, **Jubala Coffee**, **Locals Seafood** and **Videri Chocolate Factory**.

Raleigh's **Moore Square Park** is currently closed for construction and is anticipated to reopen in Early 2019 as a completely reimagined yet still historic, signature destination park. The \$12.5 million renovation will include landscaping, construction of a small cafe, a concert area and more, refocusing the overall experience of visitors headed to downtown's Moore Square district, which already features the GoRaleigh Transit Station, such popular attractions as Marbles Kids Museum and City Market plus renowned restaurants such as Brewery Bhavana.

In southeast Raleigh, **Walnut Creek Athletic Complex** has been undergoing a \$5 million renovation since Jan. 2017 and will reopen in Sept. 2018. The complex is on a 105-acre site, with the project providing nine renovated fields, a renovated maintenance building area and improved ADA access to all fields and public facilities. This venue, first opened in 1992, recently has been host to 36–40 weekend tournaments annually as well as the City of Raleigh's parks and rec programming. Its renovation will complement the efforts of GRSA.

At the **USA Baseball National Training Complex** (NTC) in Cary, construction on a new clubhouse and more is slated to start this summer and to be complete in Winter 2020. The first phase will include an office building near the main entrance and a covered, pitching/batting training facility on the first-base side of Coleman Field. These new structures will include staff offices, restrooms, umpire locker rooms and a large multipurpose space that can be subdivided to support team locker rooms, interviews/press conferences, media workspace and/or special events. The \$6 million project will further enhance the NTC's status as a world-class baseball venue.

Four new hotel developments are underway and scheduled for completion in the 2018–2019 fiscal year. In downtown Raleigh's East Raleigh/Prince Hall/South Park district, **Guest House Raleigh** (the Gorham house once located in the 100 block of E. Lenoir St., now located at 420 S. Bloodworth St.) will open as an eight-room boutique hotel in Aug. 2018. In the RDU/Brier Creek area, a four-story, 112-room **Holiday Inn Express & Suites** is under construction at 10450 Little Brier Creek Ln. and scheduled for completion in Oct. 2018.

In western Cary at Parkside Town Commons, the **Courtyard Raleigh Northwest**, with 105 rooms and 4,500 square feet of meeting space, will open in Winter 2018; this is a project of Winwood Hospitality Group, Inc. Finally, **Origin Raleigh**, a 126-room boutique hotel, also including a wine/tapas restaurant, juice counter, bike-sharing program, gym and meeting space, is expected to open in Spring 2019 at 2 Glenwood Ave. in downtown's Glenwood South.

April 2018

Goals for the 2018–2019 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.
- 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.
- 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).

Talking Points for the 2018–2019 Fiscal Year

Talking points recommended for GRCVB staff, board members, economic development allies, stakeholders and area hospitality partners during the 2018–2019 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 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 strategy.
- Increase website traffic levels (sessions) through a research-based, user-optimized visitRaleigh.com/raleighsports.org and via search engine optimization, search engine marketing, content marketing and other tactics.
- Establish www.visitRaleigh.com as the single, official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction and event, meeting, sports, travel media and partner/local resident information.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, ALL VERTICALS

- Steward the destination brand strategy for 2018–2019 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 in the Raleigh area. 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.
- 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) 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 the steps of the personal selling process, enabling convention sales and services staff to fully deploy new prospecting, lead-nurturing, deal-closing, attendance-promoting or relationship-building emails or other tactics in accordance with the Bureau’s annually-updated Digital Content Marketing Strategy.
- Arm sales staff with new designs, prepackaged 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, enhanced bid books, 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 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, signature experiences, 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., articles and social media, email activations, search engines), print ads and publications 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 2019–2020 designed to send readers to visitRaleigh.com for detailed trip-planning/conversion.
- Use the 2018–2019 Editorial Calendar of brand themelines, tourism assets and editorial emphases, 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 and promotions. Keep partners updated with co-op partner program opportunities as they arise under each theme, timeframe and editorial emphasis.
- 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—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. (P1t), 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 for content or tourism product 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, P1t, 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

- Collaborate with IT to template all steps of the sports marketing process, enabling GRSA staff to fully deploy new prospecting, lead-nurturing, deal-closing, attendance-promoting or relationship-building emails or other tactics in accordance with the Bureau's annually-updated Digital Content Marketing Strategy. Re-conceptualize 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, new video content and content development on 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. In alignment with these calendars, produce and offer downloadable b-roll video footage in 2018–2019 for the PR Department's fulfillments with media inquirers.
- In collaboration with the Public Relations Department, continue to work with digital influencers 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/presentation materials about Raleigh, N.C., and about special-interest travel promotions or specifically recommended travel experiences, to aid in that department's pursuit of international tourism sales during 2018–2019. Support the PR Department's special culinary promotion in Paris, France.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, MARKETING RESEARCH

- Explore the scoping and commissioning of primary, qualitative research on the informational usefulness and overall effectiveness of the 2018–2019 Official Visitors Guide, to make improvements with future guides, increase visitor conversion with readership etc.
- Update visitor profile, visitor volume and spending estimates through calendar year 2018 with research from DK Shifflet 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).

MARKETING ACTION CALENDAR

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Annual Meeting	x	x										
Annual Progress Report and Annual Impact Report	x	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 (quarterly)	x			x			x			x		
Digital and Website Content (site-wide, ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Destinations International CDME Summit, Seattle, Wash.					x							
DI CMO Summit, TBD									x			
N.C. Tourism Leadership Conference, Winston-Salem				x								
Internet Summit, Raleigh					x							
LGBTQ Tourism Forum, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.						x						
Live Music Advisory Committee meetings (biannually)			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 Support (ongoing)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Visit North Carolina 365 Conference, Wilmington									x			
Visitor Impact, Volume and Spending Estimates											x	x
visitRaleigh the E-magazine (biweekly)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Wake County Beer Summits (tri-annually)					x			x			x	

Public Relations and International Tourism 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 as well as media in key feeder markets (Canada, U.K. and France) abroad to increase brand awareness and drive individual leisure travel to the market (F.I.T.).

The department's mission is to craft for the Bureau a positive public image with the general populace and the news media, while educating locals on the value of the visitor economy, and to craft for Raleigh/Wake County a positive public image internationally with potential visitors and the media, while working with travel agents and receptive tour operators to market and sell product into the county.

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 biannual basis in two of the following markets: Chicago, New York City, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.
- Work to develop a comprehensive communications/public relations plan, including 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 ambassadors and putting the area’s passionate people in the spotlight.
- Continue to develop integrated marketing campaigns and editorial that utilizing the Marketing and Communications Department’s 2017–2018 Editorial Calendar of brand themelines, tourism assets and campaigns.
- Work with Marketing and Communications Department to develop a digital b-roll library of stock video footage available on-demand to media outlets.
- Continue to update content 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 content marketing 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 with senior marketing manager and content marketing manager to promote positive media coverage garnered for the area—encouraging sharing.

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 Destination Strategic 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.
- 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 regard to issues facing Wake County tourism.
- Maintain a series of canned quotes in regard 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 developed with Cision to guide earned media strategies, advanced analytics and KPIs moving forward.
- Develop a monthly and quarterly report through Cision of all earned media to be shared with the Administration team and Board of Directors.
- 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.
- Pursue qualified travel media to visit the destination on individual visits or during any planned group press trips.
- Continually create customized pitches for editors, freelance writers, bloggers etc. and continue to respond to inquiries that come directly to the Public Relations Department.
- 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.

- Work in conjunction with partner public relations agencies to host several music, travel and lifestyle journalists on individual press tours surrounding Wide Open Bluegrass.
- Attend TravMedia’s International Media Marketplace in New York City to hold desk-side visits with key media writing for travel, leisure and lifestyle outlets.
- 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.

PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
DI Annual Convention, Anaheim, Calif.	x											
GRCVB Joint Sales/Media Event, New York City			x									
IBMA Press Tour				x								
Individual Media Visits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PRSA Travel & Tourism Section Annual Conference, New Orleans												x
TravMedia’s IMM, New York City				x								
U.S. Travel Association’s ESTO, Phoenix, Ariz.		x										
Visit North Carolina Media Events (state, regional and N.Y.C.)		x			x					x		

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM OBJECTIVES

- Local Objectives:
 - Elevate awareness of the value of the international visitor market within Raleigh/Wake County.
 - Work with local hoteliers to sign contracts with and get product into travel agents’ and receptive tour operators’ portfolios in key markets (Canada, U.K. and France).
 - Work with local partners, businesses to create single- and multi-day itineraries for travel agents and receptive tour operators to sell.
 - Work with regional economic development groups such as RDU International Airport, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit N.C., Travel South U.S.A., Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Wake County Economic Development, N.C. State University and others to develop a China-Ready strategy and aid the broader regional economic development effort to bring a flight from China to RDU.
- Out-of-market Objectives:
 - 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 in key international feeder markets.
 - Continue a proactive sales training program with travel agents and receptive tour operators to generate more bookings of F.I.T. in Wake County.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGIES

- 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.
- Generate tour operator and receptive operator leads for hotels, attractions and other partners.
- Develop and maintain effective networking relationships within the international leisure travel industry including travel agents, receptive tour operators and media.

- Compile and maintain a database of international travel agents and receptive tour operators within the CRM.
- Attend 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.
- Work closely with Visit North Carolina to coordinate site visits/familiarization trips to the area.
- Create recommended itineraries for international visitors and work with the Marketing and Communications Department to produce necessary collateral and electronic communication material.
- Develop and execute marketing and sales promotions in key markets working with Marketing and Communications Department on any creative, collateral or electronic communication materials needed.
- Develop and distribute quarterly press releases to leisure, lifestyle, culinary and trade media in key markets using IMM media database and distribution software.
- 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.
- Continue to research emerging international markets and create destination-specific strategies based on travel drivers of each.
- Work jointly with regional economic development groups such as RDU International Airport, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit N.C., Travel South U.S.A., Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Wake County Economic Development, N.C. State University and others to determine drivers for visitation from Chinese visitors and gauge interest in the market.
- Begin to build the framework of a China-Ready strategy for the region by assessing barriers to travel in-market for Chinese visitors and ability of our local hospitality community to address the specific needs of Chinese visitors.
- Work with airlines that serve RDU with international service in marketing the area.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Individual Media Visits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
IPW Tradeshow, Denver, Colo.											x	
Travel South International Showcase, Nashville, Tenn.					x							
TravMedia's IMM North America, New York City				x								
Visit North Carolina Media Events (Canada, U.K. and France)	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.
- Identify and engage with key meeting planners and decision-makers who have the potential to bring conventions and meetings to Wake County and increase awareness of Raleigh as a meeting destination in key feeder markets (Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest and Northeast).
- Influence corporate business headquartered in the region or with a strong regional presence to host meetings and events at the Raleigh Convention Center and meeting hotels.
- Work closely with the region's economic development and start-up communities to gain insights 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).
- Educate business leaders, area residents and meeting professionals on the role of GRCVB.
- Enhance relationships with the local multicultural and diversity community to increase awareness of the meeting capacity in the county and the benefits and economic impact of hosting events in their hometown.
- Increase engagement with Association Management Companies and multivolume, third-party accounts in all regions to increase the sales prospecting funnel.
- Leverage the destination brand of passionate minds to showcase the diversity of events and the destination assets 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 are key partners locally and from a global perspective.
- Continue to engage with GRCVB Customer Advisory Board to advise on industry trends, business priorities and strategic direction.

CONVENTION SALES STRATEGIES

- Continue to evolve in our role as a business strategist and consultant for clients, taking the sales-to-services approach, by evaluating current processes and embracing best practices on how we can add value-driven results to meetings and convention organizers. Key initiatives from Destinations International's attendance promotion task force guidelines will be incorporated into the sales process.
- Continue momentum with Raleigh Convention Center/GRCVB Business Development Manager in working with local business and community leaders who are members, board members, officers of groups that may consider Raleigh for their meeting destination or are faculty of higher-education institutions in the region. Specific focus to include but not limited to N.C. State University, Shaw University, Saint Augustine's University, N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences and the Nature Research Center. This work will complement the Raleigh Convention Center "connectors" efforts.
- Initiate the "Keeping it Home" agenda. Identify and engage at least four corporate businesses headquartered in the region or that have a strong regional presence to host meetings and events at the Raleigh Convention Center and meeting hotels in the area, rather than taking the event out of market.

- 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 will 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.
 - Collaboration with the Marketing and Communications team to create a multifaceted prospect campaign based on our key industry clusters to attract meetings from all markets (Cleantech/Smart Grid, Advanced Manufacturing, IT/Technology and Life Sciences). The campaign will include electronic and social collateral with identifiable leaders in the perspective industries.
- Organize and activate a local Multicultural/Diversity Task Force comprised of local multicultural corporations and stakeholders that would meet once a quarter. This group would engage by assisting in identifying meetings/conferences that would fit our current infrastructure, producing letters of support and assist the GRCVB in marketing to these groups.
- Increase engagement with Association Management Companies (AMCs) and multivolume, third-party accounts in all regions to increase the sales prospecting funnel:
 - Schedule presentations with AMCs in the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast.
 - Expand reach to multivolume accounts by attending AMC tradeshows and annual meetings to include but not limited to: CVENT Connect, Helms Briscoe Annual Conference, ConferenceDirect, HPN Partner meeting.
- Client Events/Tradeshows: Leverage the destination brand and continue to curate passionate locals and signature experiences into client engagements at tradeshows, client events, site inspections and sales missions to showcase the diversity of events and the destination assets in Wake County to differentiate Raleigh/Wake County as a meeting destination. Invite our local hospitality partners to participate:
 - 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.
 - Design out-of-market client events in the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, 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 themed familiarization tours and networking opportunities for potential clients from our markets in the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest 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.
 - Participate in select industry-related tradeshows and events to build relationships that result in direct sales.
- Execute an annual holiday e-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).
- Implement five, targeted, convention-area-specific email activations, promotions and collateral throughout the year for the Raleigh North, Midtown Raleigh, Downtown, Cary and Airport meetings districts. This will include partner-specific incentives to encourage planners to book meetings during value dates.
- Launch 18-month partner opportunity marketing plan in the upgraded PIXL interface, which will allow hotel and convention center partners to optimize engagement in and budgeting for joint projects that fall within their calendar year.
- Design a user-friendly bid book presentation, in digital, and option for print format.
- Create a CVB 101 collateral, digital, one-sheet to provide to hotel and other partners an at-a-glance view on working with the Convention Sales and Services teams.

- Develop “Sales Destination” and “Meeting Professionals” presentations (PowerPoints and webinar) and collateral to include new and/or renovated properties, recent accolades and updated flight information.
- 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.
- 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.
- Pitch news release ideas quarterly to the PR Department for meeting and conventions.
- 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).
- Identify and recruit local university students from business, marketing & finance and parks & recreation departments as interns. The interns will receive valuable experience and assist the sales team with market research, database knowledge, partner and client engagement.
- Continue to serve on and seek out leadership, board of directors and committee positions with national and regional industry organizations (e.g., MPI, PCMA, AENC, SGMP and NCBMP),
- In partnership with the Services Department, continue to work with our 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. Communications will be hosted by web meetings and electronic surveys.

CONVENTION SALES ACTION CALENDAR

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Smart Meetings, New York City	x											
Destinations International Annual Convention, Anaheim, Calif.	x											
CVENT Connect, Las Vegas, Nev.	x											
ASAE, Chicago		x										
Connect (Association and Expo), Salt Lake City		x										
Plan Your Meetings, Dallas, Texas			x									
IAEE D.C. Chapter, Alexandria, Va.			x									
Professional Fraternity Association, Wichita, Kansas			x									
MPI Business Exchange, Charlotte			x									
IMEX America, Las Vegas, Nev.				x								
Connect Faith, Ontario, Calif.				x								
CMP Conclave, Birmingham, Ala.					x							
IAEE EXPO EXPO, New Orleans						x						
National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners, Oakland, Calif.					x							
Holiday Showcase, Chicago						x						
AENC Tradeshow, Raleigh						x						
PCMA Convening Leaders, Nashville, Tenn.							x					
RCMA-Emerge, Greensboro							x					
AMCI, Vancouver, B.C.								x				
Connect Diversity, Louisville, Ky.									x			
Destination Showcase, Washington, D.C.									x			
Experient Envision, Cincinnati, Ohio									x			
Independent Planner Education Conference, National Harbor, Md.									x			
NCSGMP, TBD									x			
XDP-Xperience Design, National Harbor, Md.									x			
Helms Briscoe ABC Conference, Orlando, Fla.										x		
PCMA Annual Meeting, Cleveland, Ohio												x
Direct Selling Association, San Diego, Calif.												x
Fraternity Executives Association, San Diego, Calif.												x
MPI WEC, Indianapolis, Indiana												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. Our department focuses in two areas: convention services (services provided to meetings, conventions and events) and visitor services (operation of the Visitor Information Center). We accomplish this by working with our partners to help deliver the Raleigh, N.C., brand strategy to visitors. We build a “services to sales” approach that will affect repeat and referral business for leisure visitors as well as meeting and convention planners and attendees. Our focus is on impacting experience delivery to provide greater value to visitors/attendees, event planners/organizers and our partners.

SERVICES OBJECTIVES

- **Convention/Group Services:** Use the convention servicing and planning process to grow Raleigh, N.C.’s brand as a great event destination. We will build client relationships, one convention and meeting at a time. By providing “one stop shop” event planning services, we will create and facilitate a cooperative spirit between our planners and Raleigh, N.C., hospitality partners.
- **Visitor Services/Visitor Information Center:** Continue to strengthen the role of the Visitor Information Center (VIC) to ensure its 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.
- **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). Our goal is to establish great customer service as a hallmark of great hospitality for Raleigh, N.C.

SERVICES STRATEGIES, CONVENTION PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE/CONVENTION SERVICES

- Revise our communications to say more clearly what our services role is and what services we provide. Work with Marketing and Communications to create new messaging for services introductions to clearly articulate what we provide and how we do it.
- Ensure that the convention services we provide secure Raleigh, N.C.’s place as a leader in the competitive convention and meetings marketplace. We plan to use the findings of Destinations International’s “CVB Attendance Promotion Practices” as a guideline for revitalizing our services for working with event organizers. This includes redevelopment of our planning tools, Red Carpet Welcome Program and communications like our Convention and Sports Group Alert. Our goal is to position GRCVB so that our services practices and tools are not only current but progressive and competitive with other CVBs.
- Evaluate and rewrite our services protocols to ensure that we are consistent and effective in our event servicing.
- Clarify the role of social media for group services within GRCVB’s overall social media strategy and implement as a part of key services offered.
- Work with GRCVB’s marketing and sales teams to enhance the services provided to weddings, reunions and group tours to maximize on the higher profile of these markets on our new website.
- Recognizing that festivals and events are a strong part of the Raleigh, N.C. brand, we will work to differentiate services provided to those groups compared to services provided to convention/meeting groups.
- Maximize our relationship with Activate Good for servicing the needs of our groups to provide “voluntourism” or corporate social responsibility “plug and play” options. By doing this we offer a streamlined tool for accomplishing good and help our Activate Good partner to optimize its impact in our community. (Activate Good maintains the relationships with volunteer and philanthropic needs and maintains the backend of the portal for connecting our groups to volunteer opportunities.)

- Lead the destination in understanding the value of providing stellar event servicing. Use our participation in the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) to provide shared learning opportunities and participate in ESPA's 9th National Annual Celebrate Services Event for more awareness of and appreciation for the convention services manager (CSM)/event manager (EM) roles.
- Continue to work with PR to guide event planners on use of "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 and provide significant value to our event organizers. Work with PR to maximize visibility of key arriving groups.
- Provide housing using our MeetingMax housing tool, optimizing its benefits for the appropriate groups.
- Use our Tourism Ambassador program to maximize the hospitality of the destination and provide enhanced services for our groups.
- Leverage participation in local host organizing committees as a key value to local host partners/local connectors who bring conventions and meetings home to Raleigh.
- Supporting our need to better connect qualified partners to meetings and convention organizers, we will develop and implement a partners' program/town hall-style event focusing on key supplier services for meetings and conventions (AV, transportation, décor and similar types of businesses).

SERVICES STRATEGIES, VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER (VIC)/VISITOR SERVICES

- Secure GRCVB's Visitor Information Center as a key welcome location and concierge for destination visitor information and experiences.
- Work with Marketing and Communications to ensure that the destination brand stays fresh in our VIC. 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 and effectiveness in these ways:
 - Develop partnerships for unique programming and visibility.
 - Provide value to our partners by developing a tracking method for visitor referrals and needs that are fulfilled by our VIC.
 - Grow our impact for visitor fulfillment:
 - Use our GRCVB website presence and convert web interest to visits and/or inquiries.
 - Work with Marketing to align on new leads resources like AAA, Travel Guides Free and others.
 - 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, including placement of VIC signage in the parking garages and Raleigh Convention Center connector space.
- Catalog visitor feedback and complaints, working internally and externally to ensure that responses are communicated to the right local partners, to impact future improvement.
- Maintain optimum levels of brochure inventory to ensure distribution that represents Raleigh, N.C., well. 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.
- Grow relationships with representatives of all municipalities in Wake County to increase brochure representation in the VIC and enhance value for them. Work on development to this by having VIC manager to accompany visitor information distribution specialist on deliveries to chambers of commerce and key venues for the municipalities.
- Clarify with Marketing and Communications the social media strategy into our VIC services. Leverage awareness of the VIC through TripAdvisor ratings.

- 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 for ongoing partnerships.
- Ensure that the VIC Manager trains continually to stay abreast of visitor center trends by attending Destinations International's Visitor Services Summit.
- Continue ongoing efforts to develop relationships with Raleigh Convention Center and Marriott security teams, as well as Raleigh Police Department to ensure safety of visitors in or near our VIC location.
- Raise the level of awareness for the VIC by conducting periodic visitor intercepts to assess perceptions on the VIC's appearance, performance and suitability for our visitors overall.
- Continue to develop inquiry fulfillment opportunities, and work with the Marketing and Communications Department on any special promotions (like grand openings of new exhibits, new attractions etc.).

SERVICES STRATEGIES, CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Use customer service as a key strategy for excellent hospitality delivery.
- Improve our training programs which help us to impact experience delivery:
 - Promote the Guest Service Gold® program for customer service certification. 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. Offer the resource as an onsite training opportunity as well as options for online study.
 - 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.
 - Create a one-time customer service summit event to maximize promotion and value of great customer service for the destination, either standalone or in cooperation with other departments as a special event for partners.
 - 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. These tours are valued, popular training tools serving to acquaint our partners with area visitor attractions.
 - Promote the use of the online destination awareness training/introduction for new hospitality employees tool on our website. The result is having a community of business partners who understand and support the brand strategy and deliver the brand promise more enthusiastically to our visitors.
- Maintain leadership for engaging community partners to be involved in our largest event, International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA). Continue to be actively involved in the Local Organizing Committee as well as our typical role of supporting the 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.
- Leverage taxi drivers to make great first impressions on visitors. Continue our taxi driver training program including a cooperative program with Raleigh Police Department and taxi services at RDU International Airport. Focus on brand awareness and customer service training for these partners. Work cooperatively with GRCVB's Marketing and Communications team to keep the 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.
- 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.

- Strengthen key partner relationships by continuing 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. This proven to yield an important side benefit of developing face-to-face relationships with frontline staff and management, allowing us to communicate key initiatives and training opportunities.
- Maximize 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.
- 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.
 - Continue to raise awareness for accessibility services and accommodations for special needs visitors for both leisure travelers and group attendees. Reach out to key partners locally for implementing this and keep in mind accessibility relating to physical needs as well as unique demographics.
 - Overall event security.
 - Green and sustainable planning needs.

SERVICES ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Annual Tourism Ambassador Event									x			
Celebrate Services Day with ESPA												
Destinations International Annual Convention, Anaheim, Calif.	x											
DI Convention Services Summit, TBD						x						
DI Visitor Services Summit, TBD			x									
ESPA Annual Meeting, TBD							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 Meetings (frequency TBD)												

Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance

The Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance—a department of the Greater Raleigh CVB—markets and promotes Raleigh, all of Wake County and the area’s sports venues in order to create economic development for the region in the form of sports events, tournaments, championships and meetings. 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 that will spur economic development from visitor spending.

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, tennis, volleyball, lacrosse, cheerleading, swimming, cross country
- Emerging sports: disc golf, ultimate frisbee, extreme sports (BMX, etc.), table tennis
- 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 2018–2019

The Next Big Thing: Over the last 20 years, Greater Raleigh has hosted major signature events like the Special Olympics World Summer Games, the NHL Entry Draft, NCAA Basketball (four times), the Stanley Cup Finals and the NHL All-Star Weekend. Currently we are in a window with only one “major” national, spectator-based event on the calendar, an event that rallies and captivates the entire region. That’s the 2021 NCAA Men’s Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds. To that end, the GRSA Advisory Board and staff in FY 2018–2019 will try to answer the question of “what’s next” for Greater Raleigh? This will be a priority in the year ahead, as the GRSA evaluates and considers what “the next big thing” might be for this market. The GRSA will target at least three long-range potential events that fit into this category.

Evaluating, Entering the World of Esports: A primary initiative for the GRSA in the year ahead will be to gain a better understanding of esports. This is a fast-emerging and rapidly changing industry within the sports event marketplace, and it's been likened to "the wild west" of sports tourism opportunities. Venues, cities and sports commissions across the country are trying to get a handle on this industry and determine how, or if, to enter the space. It is important to discern whether or not esports can or will drive room-nights and visitor spending. The GRSA needs to continue to educate itself on this new market, evaluate the myriad of opportunities and possibly enter the world of esports, one small step at a time.

A Charitable Partnership: The GRSA is going to evaluate, for the first time, the possibility of a charitable partnership. This will enable the GRSA to engage in an initiative designed to help others and make our community a better place... rather than just the often-times black-and-white, bottom-line world of sports tourism and economic development. The GRSA will be looking for an affiliation that allows for year-round promotion and support of the charity to build general awareness. In addition, we will plan to partner with a couple of major youth events during the year in a manner designed to benefit the selected charity.

New Events: A handful of new events will highlight the Greater Raleigh Sports Calendar in 2018–2019, and the GRSA will make it a priority to help ensure the success of each. They include the USA Archery National Junior Target Championships (July), the USSSA Baseball Atlantic Coast World Series (July), the USA Swimming Futures Championships (August), the Senior Softball USA Southern Championships (August), and the NCAA Women's College Cup (November). The GRSA will work closely with the event rights holders and our host partners, with a clear focus on the success of these debut events, 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 2018–2019 will 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 includes the Great American Cross Country Festival, visitRaleigh.com Showcase Series (soccer), ACC Men's & Women's Soccer Championships, City of Oaks Challenge (volleyball), Deep South Classic (girls basketball), MAPL Volleyball, ACC Tennis Championships, NCAA Baseball Division II World Series, National Black Heritage Championship Swim Meet, 12 NCHSAA state championships and multiple USA Baseball events, including the National High School Invitational.

Video, Social Emphasis: With a new website and a new promotional video checked off the "to-do" list, the GRSA, in coordination with the Marketing and IT Departments, will next turn its attention to improving and growing its social media presence in FY 2018–2019 (beyond Twitter) either by the addition of a new staffer or by outsourcing social media. Top priorities will be testing new platforms, developing new content and placing a new emphasis on video. This includes such platforms as Facebook, Facebook Live, Instagram, blogs and the development of a GRSA YouTube channel. Any new initiatives will have an emphasis on being as mobile and nimble as possible. Meanwhile, the GRSA and Marketing will continue to improve and enhance the new sports website, particularly in the areas of photo galleries, video (with GoPro video) and fresh content.

20th Anniversary: This year (2018) marks the 20th anniversary of the Greater Raleigh CVB's initial venture into sports tourism and events. That effort, which originated in 1998 with a staff of one, has grown into a department of five, been rebranded as the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance and earned national accolades as the Sports Tourism Organization of the Year in 2015. GRSA will mark the 20th anniversary with social media, digital content and possibly advertising creative.

New Venues & Facilities: The GRSA will place a greater emphasis on serving as a resource and advocate for new venue development and facility improvement projects that would enhance Greater Raleigh as a sports event destination while generating visitor spending and economic development.

Meetings with Local Municipalities: During the past year, the GRSA reached out to each of the 12 parks and recreation department directors for individual meetings. Those meetings were designed to discuss long-range facility and event plans in each community. In the year ahead, the GRSA will either meet with all 12 directors again, or schedule at least one countywide meeting of all 12 parks and recreation departments. In addition to improving communications and information-sharing between the departments, the meeting will focus on ways the 12 municipalities can work together by focusing on the big picture of venue development and event opportunities in Wake County.

Volunteers: 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 2018–2019.

What's New for Fiscal Year 2018–2019

1. Identifying and targeting “the next big thing” for major sporting events in Wake County
2. Esports... evaluating, educating and possibly entering the space
3. GRSA/charity partnership
4. NCAA Convention
5. USA Archery National Junior Target Championships
6. USSSA Baseball Atlantic Coast World Series
7. USA Swimming Futures Championships
8. Senior Softball USA Southern Championships
9. 20th anniversary of GRCVB sports marketing efforts
10. Serve as a resource/advocate for new sports venues and facility improvements
11. Explore, evaluate volunteer database
12. Increased emphasis on expansion of social media platforms
13. Emphasis on video: new content, GRSA YouTube Channel & Facebook Live
14. Countywide meeting with Wake County municipality parks & recreation directors
15. Increase scheduled meetings with locally-based sports clubs & organizations

GRSA STRATEGIES, SALES

- Attend national tradeshows 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 travel schedule for a complete list of tradeshows and events.)
- Focus on the following sales priorities: (1) collegiate, high school and amateur sports; (2) core sports of soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, volleyball, lacrosse, swimming, tennis, cross country and cheerleading; (3) emerging sports (BMX, Ultimate, disc golf, table tennis); 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 tradeshows, 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)
- 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 newsletter (Shout-Out) that targets event owners and rights-holders by sport with sport-specific themes and information. (Marketing and Communications)
- 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.
- Manage GRSA event-hosting line item in order to secure priority events through negotiations and supporting bid efforts 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.).
- Continue to support North Carolina FC in its efforts to bring an MLS franchise to Wake County.
- Support the efforts of local organizations to bring sporting events to the area. This includes but is not limited to: N.C. State University, PNC Arena, City of Raleigh, Town of Cary, NCFC Youth, 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)
- Continue to improve and enhance the new GRSA website, with an emphasis on tailoring the site to rights-holders and event planners, while keeping the content “fresh,” timely and pertinent. (Marketing, IT)
- Identify additional resources, such a contracted freelance writer, to focus on the development of new, fresh content for the GRSA website and social media platforms.
- Improve photo gallery search technology and incorporate into the sports website, searchable by sport, venue or date. (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 2018–2019: Continue to excel with Twitter, grow Instagram and blogs and establish a GRSA YouTube Channel. Determine if new platforms (Facebook Live, for example) 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. (Public Relations)
- Develop proactive national media relations plan designed to position Greater Raleigh as a premier destination for sporting events. (Public Relations)
- 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 2018–2019. Work with event planners and local partners to plan and successfully host these events. A sampling of the major events include: the Great American Cross Country Festival, visitRaleigh.com Showcase Series (soccer), ACC Men's & Women's Soccer Championships, City of Oaks Challenge (volleyball), Deep South Classic (girls basketball), MAPL Volleyball, ACC Tennis Championships, NCAA Baseball Division II World Series, National Black Heritage Championship Swim Meet, 12 NCHSAA state championships and multiple USA Baseball events, including the National High School Invitational.
- 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.
- Take a leadership role in the GRSA's efforts to evaluate and possibly implement a 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 area maps, information desks, hotel decorations, airport digital welcomes, 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.
- Continue gathering post-event report information 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 & IT)
- Attend ESPA national convention to stay up-to-date on industry trends.

GRSA ACTION CALENDAR

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Connect Sports Market Place, Salt Lake City, Utah		x										
U.S. Aquatics Sports, Jacksonville, Fla.			x									
S.P.O.R.T.S. Conference, Winston-Salem, N.C.			x									
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting, Raleigh			x									
NC Sports Association Quarterly Meeting, TBD			x									
Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Cleveland, Ohio				x								
USA Softball, Oklahoma City, Okla.				x								
TEAMS, Louisville, Ky.				x								
USOC Sportslink, Louisville, Ky.				x								
NASC 4S Conference, TBD				x								
NASC CEO Summit, Houston, Texas					x							
U.S. Specialty Sports Association, Temecula, Calif.					x							
USA Track & Field Convention, Columbus, Ohio					x							
E-Sports Summit (SBJ Oct. or XLive Dec.), Las Vegas, Nev.						x						
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting, Raleigh						x						
NC Sports Association Quarterly Meeting, TBD						x						
American Baseball Coaches Assoc., Dallas, Texas							x					
Event Service Professionals Assoc., Nashville, Tenn.							x					
U.S. Lacrosse National Convention, Philadelphia, Pa.							x					
National Soccer Coaches/USYSA, Chicago, Ill.							x					
NCAA Convention, Atlanta, Ga.							x					
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting, Raleigh								x				

Information Technology Department

The Information Technology Department is responsible for all of the Bureau's cloud-based software solutions, infrastructure, web development, business intelligence, social media, content 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 deployments in an effective manner to promote productivity and empower staff with continuous learning opportunities via existing webinars and knowledge-base access.
- 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 and content 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 (sessions) via search engine optimization and search engine marketing.
- Establish 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

- Evaluate new communication channels that would engage partners and leisure travelers directly via SMS, mobile app notification, flash briefing via voice-activated technology via Google, Apple and Amazon. Voice-activated users are looking for information on deals, promotions and upcoming events and activities, and business information like store location and hours, which will be pulled from our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) via an Application Programming Interface (API).
- Work closely Sales and Services to ensure that the integration, upgrades and communication between third-party online destination sales and marketing channels like empowerMINT.com and Cvent are seamless via the CRM and maintain a cohesive presence that represents our destination.
- Continue to support a centralized business intelligence platform providing each Bureau department access to track key metrics and allowing for multiple charts and graphs of CRM metrics, key performance indicators and strategic partner metrics. Align with Bureau departments to add dashboards for each municipality, the convention center, pace performance reporting to help with forecasting, feasibility, developer and municipal inquiries. Work closely with platform provider to align with augmented analytics, providing another layer of what-if scenarios as staff examine data to understand trends and derive insights.

- Continue to maintain cybersecurity needs by accessing current enterprise system security to identify areas that are lacking controls and empowering staff with web-based continuous learning to be more aware of potential cyber threats.
- 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 a Bureau-wide 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. Also assess opportunities with artificial intelligence (AI) that can help automate content curation to personalization via intelligent email content and social content curation and chatbots.
- Manage all aspects related to visitRaleigh.com, raleighsports.org and themostnc.com including updates and improvements to 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 support and build out content on responsive design website and functionality via integrated CMS for visitRaleigh.com, raleighsports.org and themostnc.com. Evaluate possible website integration with CurEat, wakegov.com open data and Tranloc for real-time transit access. Also, assess potential private-labeled booking engines to determine best fit for visitRaleigh.com.
- Manage opportunities to serve partners' advertising on the official website and explore adding other opportunities like GRSA and Meetings & Conventions sections.
- Manage and evolve the 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, Destinations International and Arena. Beta-test and deploy a CRM marketplace tool, streamlining the data collection process for a partner. This will allow a partner to signup via PIXL for services like: tradeshow, coop/web advertising, Visitors Guide opportunities. Also look to partner with wakegov.com open data to pull data directly into our CRM.
- 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.
- Evaluate and deploy an integrated CRM-enabled mobile app solution with partner-facing extranet (PIXL) access 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. Also deploy a mobile app that automates the Raleigh Beer Trail content and passport process.
- 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 support user-generated content feeds via Instagram, Twitter, Facebook for tradeshow, 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 also 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	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Destinations International Annual Convention, Anaheim, Calif.	x											
DI Finance Operations and Technology Summit, TBD				x								
Internet Summit, Raleigh					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.
- Evolve the data dashboards reporting and benchmarking system for group sales, group booking pace and interactive analytics for visitRaleigh.com; launch the 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.
- Implement a Community Engagement Strategy targeting municipal partners, local media, community corporations and residents. Move beyond broadcast measurement to engagement and positioning the GRCVB's value proposition to articulate the benefits of tourism strategy and tourism economic development.
- 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 partners and city and county officials to ensure that the GRCVB has input on the strategies and plans for tourism economic development and tourism-related infrastructure in the City of Raleigh or Wake County. The forthcoming Destination Strategic Plan (DSP) will provide a 10-year comprehensive plan for partners and public officials.
- 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.
- Continue to engage and build tourism strategies with the municipal, chamber leaders and staff of each town and city within Wake County. Assist in the identification and creation of events that are authentic to our area, offer diverse, quality and appealing attractions, entertainment, shopping, arts/culture and culinary experiences that deliver high economic value, generate overnight visitation, enhance the destination brand and generate media exposure.
- 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.

- 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.
- After realignment of interdepartmental processes between Sales, Sports, Services, IT and Marketing with a consultative engagement in FY 2018, we will create a more efficient process to manage project workflow related to the marketing strategies of Group and Sports Sales and Services. Measurement and management support will come from the Administration Department along with the addition of a marketing position mid-FY 2019.
- Upon completion of the JLL DSP in August 2018, the Administration Department will comprehensively evaluate, develop and roll-out a full staff implementation plan for the DSP.

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 work sessions annually to all Wake County-based town councils, chambers and business leaders. Produce annual municipal tourism report cards built from pre-defined data fields from our CRM, participate in strategic events with all 11 towns and chambers of commerce to reinforce engagement, collaboration and the value of tourism economic development.
- 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 reporting and benchmarking dashboard for group sales transactions, with countywide hotels and the Raleigh Convention Center via a group booking pace and interactive analytics from visitRaleigh.com. This data will be shared with our hotel and facility partners for forecasting, budgeting, feasibility studies and ROI measurement.
- Continue work 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. Explore the development of a Restaurant Committee to assist in the advocacy and positioning of Raleigh and Wake County as a vibrant culinary destination.
- Serve in a proactive advice-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 activations to include aligned messaging and branding with City of Raleigh and Wake County at events like SXSW.
- Upon completion of the DSP, form an Advisory Committee to continue the advocacy and implementation of the 10-year comprehensive plan.
- 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 2018–2019 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 Hospitality Tax Small Capital Projects Grant Funds are made on visitation infrastructure that will deliver the best ROI and address facilities that we don't currently have in our countywide inventory. The DSP 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, Destinations International, 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.
- As part of the interdepartmental realignment of project workflow, the department teams will develop robust meeting and event attendance promotion tools, create rich content to include photos, videos, social media and tradeshow/customer event activations. These will be delivered to our valued event planners and rights-holders via staff from the Sales, Sports, Services, IT and Marketing Departments.
- Upon completion of the JLL DSP, an internal analysis of the GRCVB staff skillsets, core job responsibilities, resource allocations and the potential realignment of the GRCVB organizational chart will be implemented. Realizing this is a 10-year master plan, we will look to prioritize rollout, break the overall plan into a series of fiscal-year segments and address in each future GRCVB Business Plan from FY 2019–FY 2028.
- The GRCVB will undertake tactics in training, town-hall meetings, task force and committee development, online resources and social media. A review of our partners' educational, advocacy and desired resources will be established through a partner survey and then a tri-annual series of Tourism Summits will be developed to deliver value, education and networking opportunities through a half-day conference held three times a year.
- The GRCVB will work in conjunction with the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association, Capital Area Workforce Development and Raleigh Convention Center on a 2nd Annual Hospitality Job Fair.

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											
Destinations International Annual Convention, Anaheim, Calif.		x										
ASAE Annual Meeting		x										
Wake Municipality Meeting		x										
GRCVB Board Meeting		x										
GRCVB Annual 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								
Tourism Talk Live					x							
DMANC Meeting					x							
DI Sales Academy					x							
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting					x							
GRCVB Board Meeting					x							
Holiday Showcase						x						
DI 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				
Tourism Talk Live								x				
Destination Showcase, Washington, D.C.								x				
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting								x				
Visit North Carolina 365 Conference, Wilmington									x			
GRCVB Board Meeting									x			
DMANC Meeting										x		
The Conference Table Meeting										x		
DI 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	
Tourism Talk Live											x	
GRCVB Board Meeting											x	
N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition Meeting											x	
GRCVB Board Meeting												x

GRCVB Community Engagement and Community Relations

Beyond annual Bureau-wide goals, objectives and strategies to increase visitor and convention business for Raleigh/Wake County directly through bookings and arrivals, GRCVB also joins the interests of the travel suppliers, city/town/county governments, trade and civic associations and other local stakeholders in achieving overall tourism-related economic development.

By engaging the community this way (industry insiders and outsiders), GRCVB staff in various departments build awareness, relationships, support and resources for the Bureau and for Raleigh/Wake County's continued success as a tourism destination. Interrelated departmental strategies combine to achieve the Bureau's overall community relations objectives.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OBJECTIVES

- Implement a Community Engagement Strategy targeting municipal leaders, chamber of commerce leaders, local media, community corporations and residents. Move beyond broadcast measurement to engagement and positioning the GRCVB's own brand and value proposition to articulate the benefits of tourism strategy and tourism economic development.
- Continue to strengthen the area's appreciation and support of the visitor economy, especially by elevating GRCVB's credibility and staff expertise 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. Encourage GRCVB staff to take leadership roles with local, state and national organizations to raise the level of credibility of the GRCVB.
- Collaborate with local economic development allies to build consistent messaging and synergy between their traditional economic development strategies and GRCVB's tourism-related economic development strategies, e.g., destination brand, new developments, joint public affairs tactics in the Raleigh area.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAMS BY AUDIENCE

Overall Local Communities

- Attend networking events held by other local organizations and economic development groups.
- Attend media previews, grand openings and other special events to network with and show support of local partners.
- Disseminate the overall annual economic impacts of visitors to Wake County.
- Produce and program the Bureau's Annual Meeting with local stakeholders.
- Produce the monthly Tourism Economic Development Report and charts, designed especially to articulate the benefits of tourism strategy and tourism economic development.
- Produce and disseminate the weekly Tourism Talk blog, designed especially for community relations.
- Produce Sports Watch e-newsletter that targets local partners across government, sports, tourism and hospitality sectors.
- In conjunction with Association Executives of North Carolina Annual Trade Show, activate support and charitable giving to local organizations every Dec.
- Speak to local civic and community groups, clubs and schools about the mission of GRCVB and its staff/resources.

Area Residents

- Assist non-industry stakeholders and area residents with downloadable/shareable images of the destination.
- Disseminate the Bureau's biweekly E-magazine for consumers to locals/residents as well—to increase tourism awareness and support.
- Place advertising with local media outlets to increase awareness of GRCVB and of utilizing Bureau resources/tools to encourage more visiting friends and relatives.
- Engage locals (as well as primarily targeted, potential visitor audiences) on visitRaleigh-brand or GRSA-brand social media platforms. Produce social media content (staff accounts) for thousands of other followers who include local partners, municipalities and media.
- Engage with local LGBTQ communities in support of LGBTQ tourism to Raleigh.

City/Town/County Elected Officials

- Continuously interact with various elected officials throughout the county on the economic impacts of tourism and issues impacting visitation.
- Produce and disseminate monthly pace reporting for local stakeholders including officials as well as monthly summary reports for the Raleigh Convention Center Commission.
- Produce quarterly meetings between GRCVB and local municipal leaders as well as a formal Report of Recent Tourism-Related Promotion and Activities for an area town each quarter.
- Offer a presentation to an area municipality each quarter during one of that town council's work sessions, covering recent tourism-related development topics for the elected officials.

Chamber and Other Leaders of Area Towns

- Attend numerous Chamber of Commerce events throughout the county.
- Speak as a subject-matter expert as requested at annual retreats held by area towns/chambers.
- Attend Cary Sports Alliance quarterly meetings.
- Conduct outreach to PIOs within local municipalities in Wake County.
- Coordinate meetings (either individual or countywide) with parks and recreation directors of Wake County's 12 municipalities.
- Create GRSA sponsorships that positively impact local municipalities. Examples: SAS Golf (Cary), Carolina League All-Star Game (Zebulon), Club Baseball Championship and Coastal Plain League All-Star Game (Holly Springs) and City of Oaks Marathon (Raleigh).
- Work closely with municipal parks and recreation departments on a variety of event bidding, planning and hosting initiatives, and venue development, primarily with Raleigh, Cary, Apex and Holly Springs.
- Participate in a monthly leadership roundtable hosted by the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce.
- Produce quarterly meetings between GRCVB and local business leaders.
- Assist municipal leaders in measuring their leisure tourism events and festivals' impacts from visitors.
- Serve on committees or otherwise providing strategic advice to local municipalities undertaking community brand strategy research.
- Serve on Local Organizing Committees for community-based events, e.g., sports-related.

Area Colleges and Universities

- Host seasonal interns who carry GRCVB messaging back to their respective schools and classmates.
- Speak to Marketing or Parks, Recreation and Tourism classes at East Carolina University and North Carolina State University, reaching students who often turn into residents/workers.

Media

- Pitch and secure local media coverage of GRCVB, including news releases and announcements that highlight the importance of tourism or sports tourism to the local economy.
- Collaborate with other economic development groups such as Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Wake County Economic Development on pitches and hosting journalists.

Workforce (Industry and Non-Industry)

- Conduct an annual call for and presentations of hospitality community awards, e.g., Horizon Award, John B. Ross Jr. Leadership Award, drawing attention and recognition to the highest achievers in tourism-related economic development.
- Host Wake County Restaurant & Hotel Job Fair annually in March, with Capital Area Workforce Development, N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association and Raleigh Convention Center.
- Provide Guest Service Gold® customer service training and See For Yourself Tours for destination awareness.
- Engage with visitor information staffs at key attractions, welcome centers, universities etc.
- Engage with partners in education sessions to ensure Raleigh continues to extend an inclusive welcome to all visitors, groups or events (i.e., All Are Welcome Here).

Industry Leaders on Advisory/Standing Committees

- Direct overall movements of Bureau advisory boards toward cooperative Bureau/industry goals. (See p. 1 for list of Advisory Boards, Boards and Committees at GRCVB.)
- Provide GRCVB staff service on many industry boards, committees, groups and panels. (See section on Industry Leadership Positions Held by GRCVB Staff.)
- Provide leadership to Raleigh M.A.I.N. Events cooperative marketing activities each Sept.

Summary of GRCVB Measurable Performance Objectives

MEASURE	2017 GOAL	2017 ACTUAL	2018 GOAL	VARIANCE OVER ACTUAL
1. Wake County Occupancy	70.1%	69.1%	69.4%	0.4%
2. Wake County ADR	\$103.37	\$102.90	\$105.50	2.5%
3. Wake County Lodging Tax	\$25,487,198	\$25,144,387	\$26,150,162	4%
4. Wake County PFB Tax	\$26,910,616	\$28,326,065	\$29,742,368	5%

MEASURE	17-18 GOAL	17-18 ACTUAL	18-19 GOAL	VARIANCE OVER GOAL
5. Group Definite Bookings	274	362	283	3.3%
6. Group Definite Room-Nights	231,950	241,563	235,452	1.5%
7. Definite Economic Impact*	\$98 million	\$188 million	\$152 million	55%
8. Group Leads	662	819	675	2%
9. Group Tentative Room-Nights	502,860	768,403	512,917	2%
10. Tentative Economic Impact*	\$286.6 million	\$496.2 million	\$370.3 million	29%
11. Website Sessions	2,440,000	2,484,646	2,488,800	2%
12. Net Reach/Impressions from Earned Media	103 million	171 million	350.7 million	240%
13. PR Recall of Earned Media	46.3%	41%	46.39%	0.2%
14. In-Kind Partnerships/Savings	\$534,695	\$540,042	\$545,389	2%
15. Speakers Bureau Presentations	33	35	36	9%
16. Sports Events Management Asst.	22	23	23	4.5%
17. Groups Serviced	560	623	571	2%
18. Service Survey Results	37%	55%	39%	5.4%
19. Average Survey Score	4.5	4.53	4.75	5.6%
20. Visitors at VIC	11,000	11,661	11,220	2%
21. Visitor Requests Fulfilled	8,000	11,523	8,484	6%
22. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Guides/Maps Delivered	47,500	59,372	49,875	5%
23. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Partners Serviced	485	529	495	2%

* Effective at the start of the 2017-2018 fiscal year, GRSA shifted its economic impact calculations to a new, industry-standard Event Impact Calculator from Destinations International, resulting in these 2017-2018 forecasts trending much higher than the 2017-2018 goals for the Convention Sales Department and GRSA combined; the 2018-2019 combined goals have been adjusted now in light of both GRSA and the Convention Sales Department using the same Event Impact Calculator for a second, consecutive year.

Industry Leadership Positions Held by GRCVB Staff

DEREK ALLMAN, CHIA

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

JULIE BRAKENBURY, CGSP®

- Treasurer, Board of Directors, Event Service Professionals Association
- 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

- Membership Committee, National Association of Sports Commissions
- Tradeshow Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Board of Directors, WISE Greater Raleigh
- Sponsorship Committee, WISE Greater Raleigh

SCOTT DUPREE

- Nominating Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Board of Directors, North Carolina Baseball Museum

DENNIS EDWARDS

- 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
- Vice Chair, RDU Air Service Committee, Regional Transportation Alliance
- Board of Directors, RTA
- 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, Destinations International
- Sales & Marketing Committee, DI
- Chair, Triangle Regional Film Commission
- Co-Chair, 2018 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
- Scholarship and Awards Committee, Association Executives of North Carolina

STEPHEN JACKSON, CMP

- 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
- Education Committee, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter

NICOLE KESHLER

- Board of Directors, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter
- Treasurer, N.C. Society of Government Meeting Professionals

ASHLEE KIRK

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

JASON PHILBECK, CSEE

- Chairman, Executive Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Women’s College Cup

SCOTT PEACOCK

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

JAMIE RICE, CMP

- Membership Committee, Association Management Companies Institute
- Professional Development Committee, Capital Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Director, Ladies Hospitality Golf League, Time Fore Nine

THERESA TYLER, CGSP®

- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Women’s College Cup

VIMAL VYAS

- Performance Reporting Task Force, Destinations International
- CRM User Group, Simpleview, Inc.

LORETTA YINGLING, CMP

- Membership Committee, Greater Mid-West Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Student Task Force, PCMA