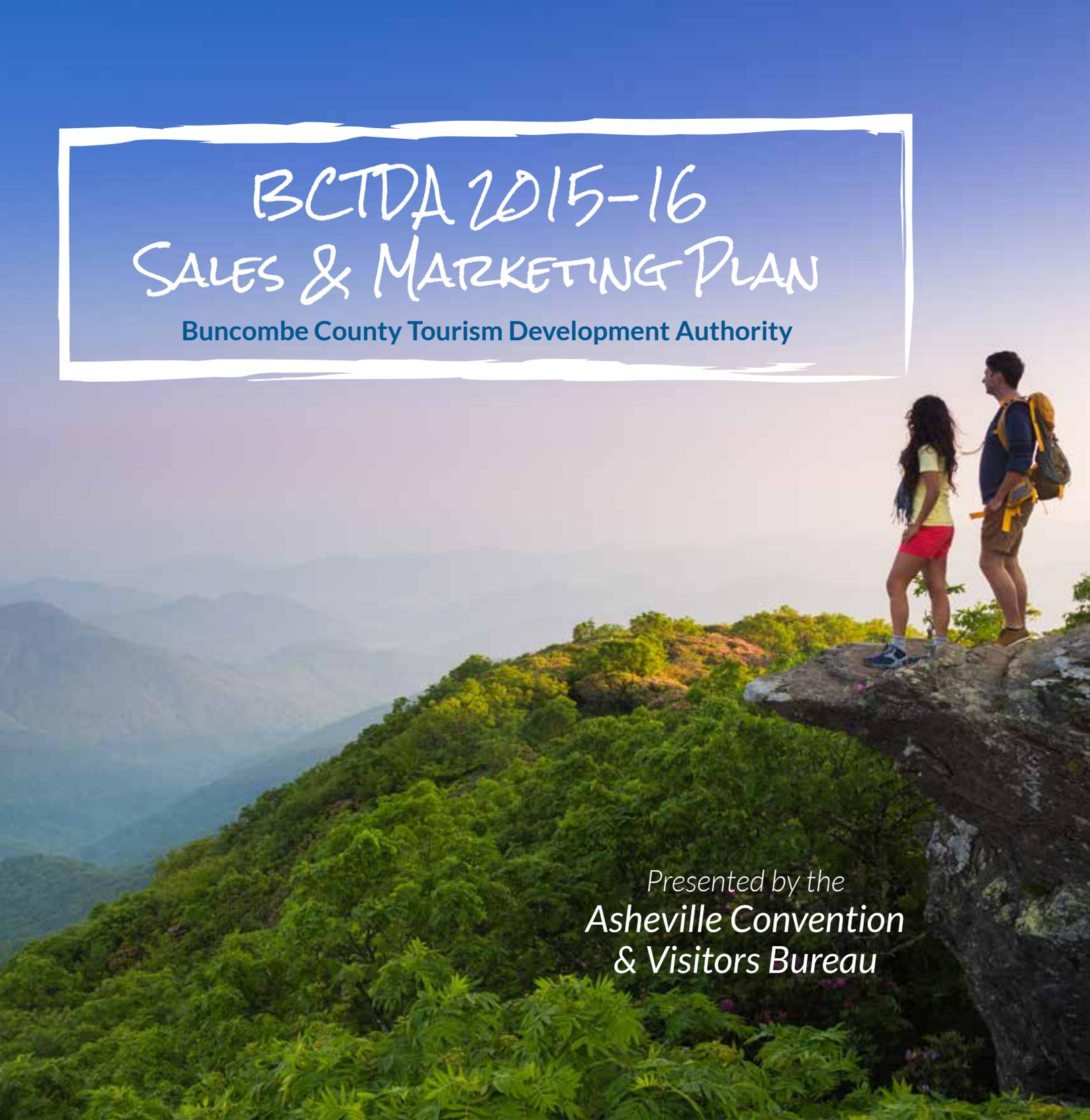


BCTDA 2015-16 SALES & MARKETING PLAN

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority



*Presented by the
Asheville Convention
& Visitors Bureau*

ASHEVILLE
Discovery, inside and out

Buncombe
County
TDA

Connect with the Asheville CVB

- ✓ **Partner Forums**
Attend monthly meetings. Know what we're doing, provide feedback and network with each other.
- ✓ **Partner Connect**
Sign up for the Asheville CVB e-newsletter to receive monthly updates in your inbox. Learn about upcoming events, industry news and tourism partner opportunities.
- ✓ **Asheville CVB on Facebook**
For immediate news and information on meetings, FAMs, trade shows, staff updates and event photos, like our page: [Facebook.com/AshevilleCVB](https://www.facebook.com/AshevilleCVB)

Find us online:
BCTDA.org
AshevilleCVB.com
[Facebook.com/AshevilleCVB](https://www.facebook.com/AshevilleCVB)

Date	Event
July 29, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
July 30, 2015	*Asheville Destination Campaign Launch
August 17, 2015	*BCTDA Annual Meeting
August 26, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
September 24, 2015	Partner Forum
September 30, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
October 22, 2015	Partner Forum
October 28, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
November 18, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
November 19, 2015	Partner Forum
December 2, 2015	*ACVB Holiday Party
December 16, 2015	BCTDA Board Meeting
January 21, 2016	Partner Forum
January 27, 2016	BCTDA Board Meeting
January 2016 - TBD	*Annual Investors Meeting
February 24, 2016	BCTDA Board Meeting
February 25, 2016	Partner Forum
March 17-18, 2016	BCTDA Annual Planning Retreat
March 24, 2016	Partner Forum
April 21, 2016	Partner Forum
April 27, 2016	BCTDA Board Meeting
May 19, 2016	Partner Forum
May 25, 2016	BCTDA Board Meeting
June 23, 2016	Partner Forum
June 29, 2016	BCTDA Board Meeting
* Headliner Events	

The Asheville CVB offers our tourism partners promotional, sales and networking opportunities throughout the year. Plan to attend Partner Forums and events each month to learn about new initiatives and stay in touch with tourism colleagues. Visit AshevilleCVB.com to sign up.

BCTDA board meetings are held at 9 a.m. in the Chamber Boardroom unless noted otherwise.

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Message to Our Tourism Industry Partners

The BCTDA and the staff of the Asheville CVB are honored to represent our tourism industry partners as we attract visitors to experience the beauty, vibrancy and special spirit of the Asheville area.

Tourism promotion has been a successful strategy for building the local economy. The establishment of the occupancy tax in 1983 created a source of marketing funds that has attracted visitors to Asheville and customers for our local businesses. Although the funds are collected by hotels and other paid lodging, every tourism-related business is represented by the BCTDA's marketing efforts free-of-charge. This collective source of promotion has helped create and sustain independent businesses by expanding the Asheville customer base and providing free marketing to connect visitors to local shops, restaurants, cultural experiences, events, attractions and accommodations.

Visitor spending in 2014 topped \$1.7 billion, generating more than \$2.6 billion in economic impact for our community and supporting 25,000 jobs in Buncombe County. During 2015, the ACVB will implement new sales and marketing strategies to expand our reach and develop high priority markets. The release of our new television commercial, an inspirational long-form video and an updated ExploreAsheville.com will showcase our many diverse assets and better tell our story – the collective story of tourism industry partners who deliver enriching experiences every day.

This spring, the board adopted "Strategy 2020" – a plan that will guide the development of the Asheville area destination. Key priorities for the upcoming year include the creation of an Air Service Development Task Force and the implementation of new tools for the Tourism Product Development Fund that will foster significant projects through collaborative partnerships.

It is our great pleasure to be part of the Asheville tourism industry – working with you, serving our visitors and helping our community to thrive.



Paula Wilber, Chair
Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority
The Biltmore Company



Stephanie Pace Brown, Executive Director
Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau

WHAT IS THE BCTDA?

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is a quasi-governmental entity created by the room tax legislation first passed in 1983. The BCTDA oversees tourism marketing, sales and product development efforts and the expenditure of the county's occupancy tax revenues.

MARKETING ASHEVILLE

In 1983, hoteliers in this community created a plan to tax themselves and earmark the proceeds for tourism marketing. The enacted legislation authorized a two percent room occupancy tax (and an additional one percent increase implemented in 1985) on lodging properties with five or more units. (In 2013, a legislative clarification stipulates that all properties collect occupancy tax, regardless of size.) It created a Tourism Development Authority as the entity responsible for administering proceeds of the tax to "further the development of travel, tourism and conventions in the county through state, national and international advertising and promotion." The legislation also allows the BCTDA to "contract with any person, firm or agency to advise and assist it in the promotion of travel, tourism and conventions."

To implement the marketing plan, the BCTDA contracted with the Convention & Visitors Bureau of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, which was already promoting tourism in the Asheville area. During the 30 years since the creation of the BCTDA, the economic impact of visitor spending has increased ten-fold, from less than \$200 million in 1983 to more than \$2.6 billion today.

More than 3.3 million visitors stay overnight in our community, attracted by the enriching experiences they find here.

BUNCOMBE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Paula Wilber, Chair
The Biltmore Company
Chamber Appointment – Tourism Related

Jim Muth, Vice Chair
Beaufort House Inn
City Appointment – Lodging, 100 Rooms or Less

Chip Craig
Greybeard Rentals
County Appointment – Lodging, 101 Rooms or More

John Ellis
Diana Wortham Theatre
City Appointment – Tourism Related

Stephen Frabitore
Tupelo Honey Café
County Appointment – Tourism Related

John McKibbon
McKibbon Hotel Management
County Appointment – Lodging, 100 Rooms or Less

Bob Patel, Past Chairman
Bhuna Corporation/Quality Inn & Suites
City Appointment – Lodging, 101 Rooms or More

**Buncombe County Commissioner
Joe Belcher**
Buncombe County Commission Ex-Officio Member

**Asheville City Councilman
Jan Davis**
Asheville City Council Ex-Officio Member

Board members may serve up to two consecutive three-year terms.



BCTDA Board Members (L-R): Jim Muth (Vice Chair), Asheville City Councilman Jan Davis, John Ellis, Chip Craig, Bob Patel, Paula Wilber (Chair), John McKibbon, Steve Frabitore, and Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher.

The Chamber & BCTDA Relationship at a Glance

The BCTDA contracts with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau, a department of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, to implement its marketing and sales strategies and tactics.

CVB staff members serve as agents for the BCTDA which authorizes, directs, oversees and funds its program of work. The BCTDA also contracts with other vendors including its advertising agencies, fulfillment services and a Web developer.

The Chamber funds, staffs and operates the Asheville Visitor Center.

THE ASHEVILLE CVB TEAM

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GROUP SALES & SERVICES

Group Sales Highlight Metrics

Sales Leads Issued
 FY 14-15: 727
 FY 13-14: 608
 FY 12-13: 482

Definite Rooms Booked
 FY 14-15: 60,906
 FY 13-14: 57,138
 FY 12-13: 55,128

Estimated Revenue Generated
 FY 14-15: \$11,828,241
 FY 13-14: \$9,684,241
 FY 12-13: \$8,433,143

Familiarization Tour Participation
 FY 14-15: 66
 FY 13-14: 129

Independent Site Visits
 FY 14-15: 65
 FY 13-14: 50
 FY 12-13: 40

The sales and services team will continue its focus on delivering the business our hotel partners want—the right groups at the right times at the right rates. The team will target groups able to meet Sunday through Thursday who have the ability to pay a higher room rate and whose space requirements fit what the area currently offers and expects to add in the next 24-36 months. To achieve this goal, the team will grow its efforts to increase the awareness of Asheville as a meeting destination in the regional and national marketplaces. Particular emphasis will be placed on finding corporate planners in those markets. This will be accomplished through well-placed regional and national sponsorship opportunities with organizations whose membership includes the desired groups. The end goal is to place Asheville in a new and wider consideration set.

With the continued support of industry partners, the department will execute a series of three 48-Hour Experiences, with one specifically targeting the third/independent party segment. We will also host client events in North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Georgia; and target tradeshows and marketplaces attracting the participants we want to meet.

Client communications will continue to be vital. With a communication strategy in place, we plan to be in touch with

planners throughout the year with e-newsletters, pre- and post-tradeshow and marketplace communications, creative RFP contests and incentives, seasonal correspondence, targeted niche mailings and more. National level print advertising will continue and will include additional placements.

Major projects slated for completion in the next 12 months include the launch of a redesigned group section of ExploreAsheville.com, new photography assets shareable with our partners, an expanded online Meeting Planners Guide and additional fact sheets targeting the luxury/incentive markets.

STRATEGIES

- Focus on the cities and regions that offer the most meeting and convention opportunity for Asheville. These include: Chicago/DC, home to the largest number of national associations; Atlanta, home of important regional associations and corporate planners; and Tennessee/Florida, home of important association and corporate planners.
- Stay focused on the sports market.
- Assign resources to research/target the pharmaceutical and incentive markets, as well as corporate planners based in the northeast.

INCREASE TARGET MARKET SALES VISITS AND CLIENT EVENTS

- Host client events in Charlotte (November), Columbia (January), Atlanta (February), and Dallas (May) targeting current and potential buyers.
- Execute sales visits to core and new markets.
- Hold “Lunch and Learns” for third-party and independent planners in conjunction with sales calls.
- Bookend trade show/marketplace visits with sales calls in the immediate area whenever possible.

Client Events	
November 2015	Charlotte, NC
January 2016	Columbia, SC
February 2016	Atlanta, GA
May 2016	Dallas, TX

HOST BUYERS TO EXPERIENCE THE ASHEVILLE PRODUCT

- With community support, host three 48-Hour Meeting Planner Experience events – Sept. 8-11; Nov. 10-13 (targets third party/independent planners) and spring 2016.
- Continue to develop video testimonials from planners who have attended a 48-Hour Experience and post on the group web pages.
- Promote individual site visits, knowing the conversion rate increases once a planner actually visits.
- Execute the Travel South domestic motorcoach FAM targeting 20 operators in March 2016.
- Participate in and support independent FAMS and site visits hosted by industry partners.
- Participate in international FAMS as hosted by Visit North Carolina, including Travel South Showcase International FAM (November 2015) and the planned Brand USA Mega FAM (spring 2016).

“48-Hour Meeting Planner Experience”	
September 8-10, 2015	Direct meeting planners
November 10-12, 2015	Third party/independent planners
Spring 2016	Direct meeting planners

Group Sales & Services
 2015-2016 Objectives

Book 61,000 definite
 room nights

Issue 650
 sales leads

STRONGLY SUPPORT THE SALES PROCESS

- Identify sponsorship opportunities for the current and next fiscal years with organizations having a national-level impact.
- Use external lead-generating vendors to generate new prospects for the area with a specific focus on pharmaceutical and incentive buyers.
- Maintain an expanded destination presence on Cvent and respond aggressively to leads received through this channel.
- Offer meeting planners that match specific criteria (350+ room nights, sourced through the ACVB, needs period, etc.) incentives for booking business in Asheville.
- Expand content in the *Asheville Online Meeting Planner Guide*.
- Complete new fact sheets catering to the luxury/incentive and motorcycle/motorcar niche planners.
- Build on existing base of group images and video assets.

DEVELOP TEAM ASHEVILLE AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Maximize our presence at trade and client events by inviting area hotels and meeting partners to join with us.
- Partner with Visit North Carolina and regional tourism bureaus on international and group tour marketing initiatives.
- Post available partnership opportunities on AshevilleCVB.com and publicize in monthly Partner Connect e-newsletter.
- Host quarterly directors of sales/directors of marketing meetings and twice-annual Citywide Task Force meetings to exchange information and update partners on future sales initiatives.

RAISE AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA AMONG SOUTHEAST AAA BRANCH OFFICES

- Continue quarterly web-based destination orientation and training programs focusing on niche and seasonal marketing promotions.
- Attend AAA Superbowl of Knowledge, the annual training event for AAA Carolinas.
- Participate in the annual Blue Ridge Parkway AAA FAM in April 2016.
- Continue to host in-market FAMs for select AAA clubs.

OTHER

- Research other tradeshow opportunities catering to the pharmaceutical and incentive markets for possible future attendance.
- Evaluate show metrics annually to determine feasibility of continued attendance.



Tina Porter (left), SoCon Commissioner John Iamarino, and Stephanie Brown at SoCon's 2015 contract extension press conference.



Beth McKinney promoting the Asheville area at a wedding festival.

ATTEND 19 KEY INDUSTRY TRADESHOWS, MARKETPLACES, AND MISSIONS TO PROMOTE ASHEVILLE AS A GROUP DESTINATION

Tradeshow	Dates	Location
Spotlight on the Southeast †	July 2015	Covington, LA
ASAE Annual Meeting & Expo*	August 2015	Detroit, MI
Smart Meetings	July 2015	Uncasville, CT
Connect Marketplace (sports) * †	August 2015	New Orleans, LA
NC Domestic Marketing Sales Mission*	September 2015	MI, IL, WI
IMEX Americas * †	October 2015	Las Vegas, NV
Tennessee Society of Association Executives Tradeshow*	October 2015	Murphreesboro, TN
Luxury Meetings Summit †	November 2015	Charlotte, NC
Holiday Showcase*	December 2015	Chicago, IL
Association Executives of North Carolina Tradeshow*	December 2015	Raleigh, NC
Travel South International*	December 2015	Charlotte, NC
American Bus Association*	January 2016	Louisville, KY
SC Society of Association Executives Tradeshow*	January 2016	Columbia, SC
National Tour Association Travel Exchange	January 2016	Atlanta, GA
Travel South Domestic Showcase*	March 2016	Winston-Salem, NC
Meetings & Conventions Interact SE	April 2016	TBD
National Association Sports Commission Symposium	April 2016	Milwaukee, WI
ASAE Springtime in the Park*	April 2016	Washington, DC
Smart Meetings	June 2016	New York, NY
North American Journeys East Coast Summit	June 2016	New York, NY

* Partner Opportunities

† New Events

ASHEVILLE
NOT JUST MEETING. EXCEEDING.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVENTION SERVICING

Client communication is a key part of the sales department's strategy. With a robust communication plan in place, the ACVB will be in touch with planners throughout the year with e-newsletters, pre- and post-tradeshows and marketplace communications, creative RFP contests and incentives, seasonal correspondence, targeted niche mailings and more. A major initiative will be updating the group pages on ExploreAsheville.com. Additional content will be added to the *Online Meeting Planners Guide*, making it the "go to" document when considering planning a meeting in Asheville.

The convention services manager will continue to strive to support the CVB sales managers' efforts and enhance the meeting planner and attendee experience through exceptional customer service, knowledge of local resources and by providing creative services. Focus will continue on marketing assistance to help planners build the meeting's attendance through materials that raise awareness of Asheville's attributes to potential meeting attendees.



The banner displayed at the PCMA 2015 Convening Leaders Conference. Approximately 1,000 people visited the HeadShotLOUNGE sponsored, in part, by the Asheville CVB.

CONVENTION SERVICES STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Enhance marketing toolkit for meeting planners, continue to offer assistance to as many meetings as possible and leverage the connection to the client to help generate future leads and content for sales communications.

- Provide services to 400 groups hosting events in Asheville.
- Promote and distribute the CVB's attendance building video.
- Collect testimonials and meeting details from meeting planner clients for media leads.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Increase frequency of group messaging to impact planners throughout the year and to generate more awareness of the area as a group destination.

- Expand placement of the print advertisement used to promote Asheville as a group destination.
- Send two system wide direct mail promotions offering incentives for sending RFP's.
- Create awareness about new video and website assets.
- Work with the PR team to pitch publications for stories about Asheville as a group destination.
- Continue the e-marketing program that includes quarterly e-newsletter with RFP promotions, custom e-blasts pre and post all tradeshows, 48-Hour Experience invitation e-blasts, template client event invitations and motorcoach FAM invitations and special niche messaging.
- Explore sponsorship opportunities with major national and regional organizations for the current and next fiscal year.
- Expand the photography assets available for use by our industry partners involved in group sales.



Marketing & PR Highlight Metrics

Web Visits
 FY 14-15: 4,303,875
 FY 13-14: 3,806,025
 FY 12-13: 3,093,829

YouTube Views
 FY 14-15: 265,236
 FY 13-14: 197,124
 FY 12-13: 266,654

Total Earned Media Placements
 FY 14-15: 2,877
 FY 13-14: 2,430
 FY 12-13: 1,476

Total Publicity Value
 FY 14-15: \$5,181,668
 FY 13-14: \$3,843,856
 FY 12-13: \$3,877,574

The marketing team and its agency-of-record develop strategies to increase awareness and understanding of the Asheville area destination brand and drive demand for overnight accommodations. Using data-driven insights, the team shapes messaging and determines the most effective distribution channels for paid media, while complementing that with integrated proactive media relations efforts, content development strategies, niche promotions and a social outreach program to further amplify destination buzz.

ASHEVILLE'S BRAND PROMISE

We guarantee you a life enriching experience each and every time you visit Asheville. It's personal, personal to you. And it is also personal to us. We live that same genuine experience and want to share it with you. We empower you to discover a collection of experiences that is as unique and varied as each individual who visits us, and allow you to do so in a warm, embracing and creative environment.

BRAND POSITION:

The unique and eclectic array of experiences in Asheville opens wide your sense of discovery and enriches your life.

CORE VALUES:

Welcoming ~ Natural ~ Vibrant

PAID MEDIA

Target Audience
Adults 25-54
Median HHI: \$75K
Slightly skewing female

PRIMARY AUDIENCE:

Experiential Travelers: Eclectic doers who relish discovery and collection of experiences; enjoy trying different types of food; want to explore and learn about new things; continue to learn throughout life; find excitement in stimulating experiences; frequently choose active vacations with lots to do; are open-minded, intend to travel in the next year and traveled 3+ round trips in past 12 months. Targeted niche subcategories include: foodies, art and music lovers and outdoor enthusiasts.

SECONDARY AUDIENCE:

- Engaged Couples – Individuals interested in a destination wedding and/or honeymoon.
- Meeting Planners – Coordinators of overnight group functions and events.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:

Primarily east of the Mississippi with special focus, particularly in broadcast, on core and opportunity markets.

- Core DMAs: Atlanta, Charlotte, Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point, Raleigh-Durham, Knoxville, Columbia, Charleston.
- Opportunity DMAs: Nashville and Cincinnati.
- Expand to national audience as opportunities are identified.

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Increase destination awareness by expanding paid advertising reach and extend familiarity beyond the Southeast.

- Continue advertising in core DMA markets of Atlanta, Charlotte, Greensboro-Winston-Salem and Raleigh-Durham, Charleston, Columbia and Knoxville.
- Continue broadcast presence in opportunity DMA markets of Nashville and Cincinnati.
- Utilize regional editions of high-profile print publications to reach core DMAs and additional markets throughout the Southeast/Southcentral regions.
- Use available research and market demand insights to refine a comprehensive plan to optimize further market expansion and build in national opportunities for print, digital and broadcast.

Deploy new creative and brand messaging through paid media channels and create opportunities for use in earned media that lead to full message integration across channels.

- Lead with video assets as often as possible due to its increased storytelling potential.
- Use vibrant, engaging photography in print and digital that works to tell a story.
- Align timing and messaging of paid media, search engine marketing and social activities.
- Direct call-to-action to custom landing pages on ExploreAsheville.com.

Marketing 2015-2016 Objectives

Key Objective:

Expand the presence of Destination Asheville in the national conversation and increase aspirational desire along with demand.

Drive 4.85 million
or more visits to
ExploreAsheville.com

Exceed 3 billion earned
media impressions

Generate 500,000
video views of Asheville
CVB videos

Leverage new video assets that deliver inspirational imagery and storytelling to create emotional connections and increase aspirational desire among travelers through the channels best suited for reaching the target.

- Use market penetration data intelligence to determine efficiencies for effective video delivery via traditional broadcast, Hulu, TrueView and other opportunities.
- Implement a strategy using paid, earned and social media to deploy the long-form Asheville destination video.
- Identify media aligned with audience subcategories that could serve as a platform for the niche 15-second spots.
- Integrate video assets into rich media ads, where feasible, to maximize views and increase click-throughs to ExploreAsheville.com.
- Tease video assets in native advertising.

Continue to use and test performance of retail/urgency messaging to better impact identified demand periods and encourage more immediate booking.

- Use digital advertising and explore additional marketing channels to deliver specific messaging that drives visitation in the moment and complements destination brand awareness creative.
- Use a mix of time-sensitive events, value-added packages and pricing to generate incremental and mid-week business during need periods.
- Tailor call-to-action according to the market.

Schedule advertising to create year-round presence with focus on opportunity seasons that have the best potential for turning day trips into overnight visits.

- Continue paid advertising into the holiday season in an effort to convert day trips to Asheville area holiday events to overnight visits.
- Use digital retargeting to create year-round continuity of messaging in the marketplace.

Use niche interests to create more laser-focused messaging that will appeal to specific subsets of the experiential traveler.

- Use existing assets and messaging that align with digital promotions aimed at specific segmented audiences with interests in culinary, arts, outdoors, meetings & conventions and weddings.
- Create compelling native advertising that appeals to niche audiences and has potential for viral share.

Entice potential visitors actively searching for information about vacation activities or destination attributes that align with the Asheville area experiences and offerings to put the Asheville area in the consideration set and drive them to book.

- Use pay-per-click (PPC) program to target specific keyword sets.
- Use A/B testing of messaging to optimize and maximize response to specific keyword campaigns.
- Layer in display banners that are hyper-targeted to travel intenders, identified based on recent and current travel content consumption and search behaviors.

Consistently apply data intelligence and market research to optimize messaging and delivery and understand consumer behavior as it pertains to destination travel.

- Use travel intelligence to shift messaging, delivery vehicles and market, as needed, to maximize efficiencies in reaching target audience.
- Use research to test creative messages, as needed.
- Monitor and tweak performance of advertising, social campaigns and digital promotions with the help of online analytic tools.



CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Develop and curate world class content: Continue to embrace the idea of storytelling and build a dynamic, diverse and deep content library to generate affinity for the destination, highlight distinctive brand attributes and evoke an emotional connection with the consumer.

- Develop and mobilize an insiders' contributor network with a cadre of freelance writers/photographers who have destination authority for bylined features, itineraries, pictorials and additional content as assigned for use on the web site and repurposed for other uses.
- Implement a strategy to procure, create and integrate more high-quality visual content (video, cinemagraphs, infographics, quizzes) that have shareability, engagement and viral implications across CVB web and social mediums.
- Employ search optimization tactics and findings from Google Analytics and AdWords into development of new content pages and in seasonal updates.

DESTINATION ATTRIBUTE/ NICHE MARKETING

Continue to showcase the vibrancy, variety and depth of Asheville's cultural and natural attributes (specifically in the areas of arts, music, culinary and outdoors) through expanded content and microsites, destination storytelling and integrated marketing efforts aimed at growing awareness and illuminating/ facilitating the visitor experience.

- Further grow credibility and awareness for the Asheville area food scene by leveraging new and existing content (including assets from the Foodtopia Partner Program and culinary e-book) in expanded web platforms and ongoing marketing and media relations efforts.
- Continue to partner with the Asheville Area Arts Council to maintain and grow the AshevilleArtsAlive Arts Portal, an in-depth online resource for users interested in exploration of arts and culture-related offerings, attractions, events and resources.
- In collaboration with local music partners, launch the expanded music section of ExploreAsheville.com that includes new functionality to showcase live music events throughout the county, live streaming of selected performances and a jukebox for music sampling.
- With the understanding that mountains continue to be a travel motivator, continue to generate dynamic outdoor content (i.e. hiking trails, highest peaks, national parks, Blue Ridge Parkway and other signature natural adventures) that shows potential visitors and committed Asheville travelers the connection and accessibility points of the area's distinctive natural offerings.

Develop content that meets consumer expectations upon click-through with the aim of increasing time-on-site and more effectively funneling behavior flow to improve conversion goals.

- Engage and retain web users with content that balances detailed, practical destination insight/resources with more aspirational destination context, incorporating dynamic functionality and high-impact visuals to inspire and improve online consumer planning as well as grow CVB understanding of key areas of travel interest.
- Develop custom landing pages as a fulfillment mechanism for digital campaigns to increase time-on-site and encourage specific actions that lead to booking and other conversion goals.
- Use booking engine to drive consumers deeper into the planning funnel with the aim of closing the sale.



Leverage the redesigned, newly responsive ExploreAsheville.com to serve as main point of fulfillment and motivate actual and aspirational visitation, promote saving and sharing content, and encourage additional exploration and vacation bookings.

- Drive advertising and social communications to ExploreAsheville.com content and landing pages and measure specific click-through actions.
- Create content based on SEO to encourage growth of organic visitation.
- Drive online bookings and downstream traffic to partners, including those signed on to Simpleview's Destination Travel Network (DTN), a turn-key solution for implementation of an attractive advertising program.

Capitalize on Asheville's awe-inspiring scenic assets, cultural connectivity and philosophy of self-expression to provide more expansive and deeper awareness of destination assets, while creating emotional connections with potential and repeat visitors, destination fans and enthusiasts.

- Utilize the recently produced world-class inspirational video to showcase the destination and create additional video assets for a variety of marketing uses.
- Continue to contract locally for production of complementary video shorts that build our multimedia library, expand our YouTube Channel, and provides assets for digital and native advertising.
- Create and procure still photography that can be used across marketing channels, promotions and media outreach.

Provide additional information to consumers who have responded to advertising or requested additional information about the Asheville area.

- Work with Journal Communications to produce the *Official Asheville Travel Guide* that can be used by potential visitors and travelers on the ground to learn about the destination and plan their visit.
- Ensure flexibility and device compatibility by providing online and iPad versions of the Travel Guide.



MEDIA RELATIONS & ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIES & TACTICS

Continue a proactive media relations program with an emphasis on relationship building and on-brand, news-ready outreach to generate earned media in strategically targeted outlets and ensure key messages are conveyed in editorial, broadcast and online placements.

- Create customized pitches aimed at journalists, bloggers, television producers and online editors. Identify and respond to pitch opportunities generated through outside sources.
- Cultivate new and existing media relationships through meaningful one-on-one connections including media tours, targeted pitches, networking events, story support and site visit facilitation.
- Encourage journalists on assignment to expand and infuse stories with brand messages, as well as seasonal and niche story ideas. Promote inclusion of call-to-action conversion-oriented elements including ExploreAsheville.com resources, multimedia assets, travel packages, events and online booking.
- Continue to leverage, optimize and integrate press releases as multimedia editorial tools to inspire coverage, strategically boost SEO/keyword share and directly connect consumers with key destination brand messages.
- Leverage social media as an integrated tool for media relations, targeted pitching, news distribution and media reciprocity, by sharing stories and tagging journalists through CVB media channels.

MEDIA RELATIONS & ONLINE ENGAGEMENT (CONT'D)

Use media missions and site visits to have face-to-face contact with media to increase dialogue on Asheville stories and secure on-the-spot coverage through broadcast.

Conduct media trips and continue targeting broadcast media as part of trip efforts:

- Raleigh/Durham/Greensboro (Fall)
- SATW MarketPlace (Fall)
- NYC Media Mission (Winter)
- Quick Trips – Tri-Cities (Winter)
- Cincinnati, Dayton, Lexington, Louisville (Spring)
- NC Regional Media Mission in DC (Spring)

Maximize perennial media and consumer interest in season-specific travel through well-timed, integrated media and social marketing campaigns.

- Leverage the popular fall foliage season to maximize national and drive market exposure through an integrated marketing effort of strategically placed/secured fall predictions, destination news, call-to-travel elements and aspirational multimedia elements (e.g. time lapse video, dynamic web content and photography).
- During typically slower winter months, hone-in on broadcast and news opportunities in key drive markets to boost awareness in seasonal destination offerings, specifically those tied to culinary, romance, performing arts and time-sensitive event news (e.g. Asheville Restaurant Week, SoCon, travel packages).
- Identify and help facilitate development of newsworthy, seasonal travel packages to feed integrated marketing efforts with fresh, season-specific news and on-brand curated experiences.

Target emerging and existing niche markets, especially culinary, music, arts and outdoor, while maintaining emphasis on primary travel motivators.

- Develop and implement a strategy that builds music niche assets to generate media interest, including a media strategy and outreach plan to connect with journalists/influencers to increase awareness of this destination attribute.
- Continue to leverage expanded culinary, arts and music content with niche media and in social channels (i.e. distribution and integration of the Foodtopia e-book and new/dynamic character-focused culinary/arts/music/hiking content).
- Update and develop media materials and pitch ideas for specific content areas to generate media placements.

Use key social media channels to drive awareness and create engagement with traveling consumers.

- Use a combination of social media channels and tools to complement specific promotions, increase organic traffic, perpetuate destination awareness and expand the reach of marketing messages.
- Utilize Facebook to keep Asheville top-of-mind for online fans; extending reach with buzzworthy content, shareable multimedia assets, timely news items, strategic post promotion/advertising and special giveaways to engage fans and drive traffic to ExploreAsheville.com.
- Continue to leverage YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook and Instagram as video distribution platforms for the CVB's extensive video content program, including 8 new videos or short-form vignettes for FY 2015-16.
- Evaluate other emerging social tools and technologies to further expand the Asheville brand.



PR Specialist Landis Taylor (right) with WFMY-TV news anchor Tracey McCain during the CVB's Winter 2015 Media Tour.



Alan Muskat of No Taste Like Home (left) is interviewed by Jon Wilson for WCCB-TV's "Wilson World" programming.

THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN THE CLIMB.



Make CVB social channels work harder and smarter through content optimization and audience targeting.

- Craft attention-getting social messaging and dynamic multimedia assets with the aim of maximizing viral potential using a balance of wow-factor destination attributes, aspirational visuals and breaking news.
- Strategically integrate, promote and evaluate new content and share-worthy visual assets on CVB social mediums, documenting best practices and learnings for increased engagement and web traffic.
- Incorporate keyword strategy in all messaging to assist in driving traffic to website.
- Target brand enthusiasts and affinity groups with actionable, shareable content aimed to increase repeat visitation and boost length of stay.
- Further amplify the reach of social content through mobilization of industry partners, business stakeholders and proud community ambassadors (i.e. Movoto) willing to link to ExploreAsheville.com or share CVB social and multimedia messages/assets through their channels.

Build relationships with influential bloggers that result in publicity for Asheville.

- As co-hosts for Beer Bloggers Conference 2015, infuse event with the broader destination brand illuminating the Asheville story beyond craft beer culture and incorporating a range of culinary and signature destination attributes.
- Fully leverage the inherent promotional opportunity and social buzz of the Beer Bloggers Conference through destination brand integration, proactive social/media relations and an incentive program to maximize post-conference coverage and partner features.
- Build brand ambassadors by interacting with bloggers visiting Asheville either on assignment or for blogger conferences and events.
- Use resource tools such as Alexa, Klout, QuantCast and Technorati to determine blogger influence, estimate reach and prioritize resources.
- Cultivate a base of local and regional bloggers to help promote Asheville's messaging out of market.
- Continue blogger relationship development (i.e. luncheons, meetings) as part of media tours.

Continue an online outreach program that leverages e-mail newsletters and viral marketing opportunities, utilizing a more customer-focused approach.

- Continue to explore opportunities aimed at building the e-newsletter subscriber database/open and growing click-through and open rates.
- Create a fresh look and feel for the Asheville Traveler e-newsletter to match the newly redesigned website.
- Develop and execute a re-engagement strategy for the new Asheville Traveler e-newsletter, evaluating and recommending opportunities including segmented outreach to self-identified niche interest groups (arts, outdoors, culture and food) and new/prospective travelers, as well as a plan for content, asset and social integration.

Use insights and measurement tools to gauge effectiveness of specific media relations and social campaigns and make adjustments as needed.

- Continue to track effectiveness and ROI of media relations efforts by employing news/clips services, tracking media touchpoints and site visits, logging proactive pitches, monitoring release performance and assessment of online, print and broadcast placements.
- Use Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, SproutSocial, Hootsuite Pro, YouTube Analytics and other tools to measure traffic and engagement on media placements, online stories, CVB content assets and social activity as recorded in the monthly marketing matrix.
- Use insights to further refine campaigns, establish best practices or create new actionable items to help advance the business objective.
- Measure viral impact of shared content to help drive strategy for future efforts.

2015-2016 MEDIA SCHEDULE

Media & Market	Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2		
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Spot TV + Online Video												
Atlanta												
Raleigh												
Greensboro												
Charlotte												
Charleston												
Columbia												
Nashville												
Knoxville												
Cincinnati												
YouTube (Geo-targeted to core markets)												
Leisure Print												
Garden & Gun		Food Issue								Best of the South		Great Southern Towns
Nat Geo Traveler		Regional Edition								Family Travel		
Saveur				Good Taste Awards					Travel			
Our State			General Editorial	Mountain Issue						TBD		
Town & Country					Most Influential				TBD			
Elle Décor					Luxury Issue				TBD			
Real Simple					Entertaining				TBD			
Food & Wine					Thanksgiving				TBD			
Travel + Leisure					T+L Family				TBD			
Bon Appetit			Best New Restaurants						Travel & Culture			
Conde Nast Traveler					Reader's Choice						Hot List	
New York Times Magazine			Voyages (Sept. 27)						Voyages (Exact Date TBD)			
NC Travel Guide												
Blue Ridge Parkway Directory												
Weddings												
Bridal Guide (Print)					Southern Charm Regional Edition (Bonus)			General Editorial		General Editorial		Southern Charm Regional Edition (Bonus)
The Knot (Digital)	Annual Digital Commitment											
Black Mountain												
Atlanta Magazine			General Editorial	Atlanta: Southbound Issue						General Editorial	Atlanta: Southbound Issue	
Charlotte Magazine			Fall Travel							Great Getaways	TBD	
Our State										Healing Retreats		
Blue Ridge Mountain Host Co-Op			Creative Lofting: & N&O									
Digital												
Retargeting												
Prospecting (TripAdvisor Destination Sponsorship)												
Prospecting Native												
Online Pre-Roll Video/Streaming Video												
Keyword Search (Simpleview)												
Google Display (Simpleview)												
Facebook Advertising (CVB)												
Out of Home												
Placeholder - OOH in Select Market(s)												
M&C/Motorcoach Media												
Print Media												

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2015-2016 BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

Increase Hotel Sales
in Buncombe County

10%

BCTDA Mission Statement

To be a leader in the economic development of Buncombe County by attracting and servicing visitors, generating income, jobs and tax revenues which make the community a better place to live and visit.

BCTDA Vision Statement

Asheville/Buncombe County will retain its unique, authentic and environmental charm while welcoming global visitors searching for personal enrichment and memorable experiences.

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau

Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center

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