

November 22, 2016

To: BCTDA
From: Stephanie Pace Brown, Executive Director
Subject: Recap of October 2016 Staff Activities

OCTOBER CVB METRICS: BY THE NUMBERS

- During October, the sales team posted 1,082 personal contacts (up 25%). October sales activities generated 73 sales leads (up 18%) and 31 convention bookings (down 9%), representing 6,239 rooms (down 3%). Four months into the new fiscal year, year-to-date bookings are up 1 percent and room nights represented are up 11 percent.
- CVB leads generated 53 group events in October (down 9%), with revenue of \$467,353 (down 56%). The services team assisted 46 groups (down 8%).
- The Asheville Visitor Center welcomed 29,085 visitors (up 11%), and the Pack Square Park Visitor Pavilion welcomed 1,068 visitors (up 32%).
- The PR team landed 54 significant placements in October (up 8%), with 123 media touchpoints (up 22%). The publicity value of print and broadcast placements totaled \$198,162 with reach of over 7.5 million. Online placements added \$45,747 in value and reach of over 91.6 million.
- ExploreAsheville.com attracted 374,894 visits (up 22%), including 234,065 to the mobile site (up 42%). Our Facebook fan base grew by 8,482 (up 86%) and video views totaled 979,787 (up 1,857%).
- Online hotel reservations totaled 63 room nights (down 54%) with total room revenue of \$10,346 (down 46%).

HOTEL & AIRPORT RESULTS

- Buncombe County Finance reported lodging sales totaling \$31,446,967 in September, up 20.8 percent. Three months into the fiscal year, YTD 2016-17 sales are up 16.2 percent.
- Smith Travel Research reported hotel occupancy of 75.3 percent during September (down 0.2%). The average daily room rate was \$150.96 (up 5.9%), and RevPAR (revenue per available room) was \$113.63 (up 5.6%). Room demand increased 6.8 percent with 163,401 rooms sold.
- Passengers at the Asheville Regional Airport increased 16.1 percent to total 77,428 in September.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Advertising:

The team began working on strategies to increase demand in the first quarter while also overseeing the execution of the holiday ad campaign and winding down the last of the harvest and fall campaigns. The holiday campaign launched on October 25 and will run through December 31 (retargeting only December 16-31). Thus far, digital media was responsible for more than 20,000 user sessions on the holiday landing page, most (86%) were new sessions.

Creative is in development for the Union Station takeover, an element of the capital region spring campaign. The Union Station takeover will also correspond with other media in the market, as well as the Bike Share advertising, which began during the harvest campaign.

Brooke, Marla and Stephanie will be meeting with the Peter Mayer agency team in December as part of the advertising strategy process for the next fiscal year, as well as to discuss the spring campaign.

The National Geographic Traveler integrated 2016-17 partnership continues. On the social side, Instagram images and stories garnered more than 2 million views, Facebook Live commanded 133,000 views and 1,800 shares, while two other Facebook posts combined generated 2,100 likes and Twitter efforts resulted in 300 engagements through likes or retweets. Story content posted to NationalGeographic.com/Travel, with a unique audience of 147,000, resulted in the following: Story 1, "The Art of Asheville," received 3,401 unique views, or 2.3 percent of total unique audience, and story 2, "Asheville Music Scene," received 1,653 unique views, or 1.1 percent of total unique audience and 3:52 time spent. Additional elements of the NGT partnership include: custom editorial, photography display and an event held in DC.

Paid search efforts: Paid search traffic drove 63,183 visits to ExploreAsheville.com in October, the highest number in the running 12 months and up three percent year over year. The Google AdWords click through rate has increased to 5.3 percent from 2.31 percent, primarily due to the addition of expanded text ads. Ad position for AdWords search has improved by 47 percent year over year (1.3 vs. 2.5).

General Media Relations:

October is high-season for Asheville media relations as shown through a swell in meaningful media touchpoints—totaling 123—as well as the team's pitch efforts, which numbered 196 proactive reach-outs including: 1) a push to secure placement of fall b-roll; 2) a push to pitch Asheville as a destination for live coverage of fall foliage; 3) a targeted pitch and press release highlighting Asheville's music culture; 4) eight hosted media site visits; and 5) more than 31 face-to-face, top-tier travel media connections and dedicated pitch appointments at the Society of America Travel Writers Media Marketplace (SATW).

Notable Touchpoints include:

- **SATW:** Dodie was the only North Carolina delegate at this year's SATW Marketplace. In addition to a full schedule of dedicated pitch appointments for Asheville, the heavy slate of networking opportunities led to meaningful connections to media outlets including USA Today, New York Times, L.A. Times, Travel & Leisure China, Washington Post, Conde Nast Traveler, Outside, FOX News, BBC Travel, AFAR, Hemispheres and National Geographic.

- **US News & World Report:** Sarah and Dodie pitched and placed The Village Hotel on Biltmore Estate on US News & World Report's "Top Family-Friendly Resorts for Fall Foliage Trips Across the Country."
- **Lonely Planet Feature & Site Visits** – Team hosted the LP video team in advance of a major upcoming destination feature.
- **Delicious Destinations** – Dodie and Landis helped inspire and curate editorial for the upcoming Asheville episode through production researcher Joni Brezina. This is Andrew Zimmern's new Travel Channel show.
- **Time Warner Cable News** – Landis assisted and was interviewed for this late fall piece on Asheville and the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- **AJC.com** – The team provided longtime ACVB contact T. Wayne Waters with information on what's new for an upcoming Asheville travel piece on the Atlanta Journal Constitution's online platform.
- **Sherman's Travel & USA Today:** Dodie, Sarah and the team worked on destination insight and site visit support for Anne Roderique-Jones' early December visit. Anne is a connection via PRSA.
- **MSN Travel & USNews.com:** Sarah provided info for writer Erin Gifford's articles on active girlfriend getaways.
- **Upcoming Coverage | Photo Requests & Fact Checking:** Sarah fielded about 13 photo requests in October, including: *AJC.com*, *Mid-South Magazine*, *Encore Atlanta*, *Raleigh Magazine* and *405 Magazine*.

TPDF Media Relations

A press release and images for each awardee were distributed to 11 media contacts, resulting in positive coverage of the 2016 TPDF grants. Each recipient also issued a release.

Lonely Planet

Lonely Planet's Asheville campaign launches in December. The Asheville CVB's PR and content teams have worked with them to develop a significant plan to leverage this coverage across our audience and theirs. Landis kept the significant details behind this effort moving this month including artwork, coordinating giveaway prizes with local partners, working with Dodie to review the details of the partnership agreement, working with Cat to input Asheville's planned social and online shares, making sure any opportunities for ExploreAsheville.com exposure were looked into and infused with on-brand language. Landis worked with a Lonely Planet-affiliated video crew shooting video content for this effort, connecting them to 19 local partners for their site visit and coverage.

SIGNIFICANT PLACEMENTS IN OCTOBER

- *NY Times* - "36 Hours in Asheville NC"
- *National Geographic* - "Tune into Asheville's Eclectic Music Scene"
- *USA Today* - "Tasting Asheville: From Beer Town to Culinary Capital"
- *USA Today* – "Urban Autumn: Beautiful Fall Foliage in Cities Around the USA"

- *US News & World Report* - "10 Family-Friendly Resorts for Fall Foliage Trips Across America"
- *Wall Street Journal* - "In Asheville, Home to Craft Beer, a Wine Scene Rises"
- *National Geographic Traveler* - "The Art of Asheville"
- *Southern Living* - "Blue Ridge Pkwy"
- *Bon Appetit* - "Owls Cake"

Music Initiative:

The team pushed out a music press release and content piece, "16 Toe-Tapping Reasons Asheville is the Next Music City," on October 25. The release was distributed via PR Newswire and picked up 223 times with a total potential audience of 12.3 million. It was also distributed via Publicaster email to 523 subscribers and Landis individually pitched the release to 66 journalists representing state, regional and national outlets.

Work continues with ACME to develop the Explore Asheville Radio player which currently includes 22 individual artists and the Asheville Symphony Sessions album, three curated playlists and some custom radio "bumpers" with participating artists introducing themselves and the station.

In late October, the Content and PR teams worked together to launch a press release, content page and giveaway called "Backstage Asheville." The content details 16 reasons why Asheville is poised to be the next major music city, and links readers to deeper information about artists, venues, experiences, events and the radio player. The landing page also includes an entry form for a musical vacation getaway. This content was deployed via PR Newswire and a custom page on ExploreAsheville.com. It was also featured in a special e-newsletter that was sent to a segment of subscribers interested in the arts and continues to be promoted through social media channels. Elizabeth assisted with the Backstage Asheville campaign by updating the radio player to allow switching between playlists. This includes several curated playlists, such as Fall Road Trip, Asheville Instrumentals and Symphony sessions, as well as playlists for each of the 22 licensed artists on Explore Asheville Radio.

Fall Foliage Efforts:

A fall color b-roll shoot and editorial push went to 21 television stations in five Allegiant markets and to six national TV outlets. In drive markets, 36 contacts requested the footage that went out to a total of 51 TV outlets and meteorologist contacts. On the Visit Asheville Facebook channel, the footage received more than 400K views, 7,662 shares and 11K likes and loves. Broadcast clips confirmed one TV news segment featuring the ACVB coverage and message, however, the team expects that overall news coverage dwindled this year due to a hard news focus on Hurricane Matthew aftermath happening around the same time. As a direct-to-consumer editorial piece via Explore Asheville, the color reel was extremely effective. Site visit invitation were sent to chief meteorologists at 21 television stations in Baltimore, Washington DC, New York, Fort Myers/Naples and Orlando/Daytona Beach. These markets all have direct Allegiant flights to and from Asheville.

The Content Team continued to develop and deploy content related to the fall foliage season. Jason Tarr created weekly fall color reports, which were emailed to a segment of about 9,500 email subscribers. Following two opt-in opportunities, that subscriber list grew about 20 percent from the previous year, and the emails saw a unique open rate well above industry standards,

about 30 percent each week. Jason also coordinated weekly Facebook Live broadcasts to share the color report messaging, with each interview broadcast from a destination spot popular in the fall, including Biltmore, Hickory Nut Gap Farm, Navitat, Chimney Rock State Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Total views of the live color reports totals 97K. During the month of October, there were 115K total page views of fall content on ExploreAsheville.com, up 18 percent from the previous year.

Content Development Projects:

In October, Cat and Alex worked together to conduct an audit of the Meet the Foodtopians program and concluded a need for follow-up with participating partners to ensure all elements of the program agreement are in place. Cat also worked with a major Pinterest influencer who lives in Asheville on a holiday recipe effort. Brooke wrapped up a four-location video shoot specific to the arts segment video for the spring campaign. Shoots completed included a couple shopping and woman enjoying a pottery workshop at Village Potters, couples and individuals shopping at Blue Spiral Gallery, groups of people attending an opening at Black Mountain College Museum and friends engaging and shopping with artist Daniel McClendon at Lift Studios in the River Arts District.

ExploreAsheville.com Editorial Content:

- During the month of October, five new stories and one new blog post was added to ExploreAsheville.com. Four of the stories were fall color reports; a fall color photo tour and overview piece on Asheville's drum circle were also added.
- The most popular story content on the site this month was "Top 10 Ways to Experience Fall in Asheville," which received 15,382 page views in the month of October. The second most popular story was "50 Things to Do in Asheville," which received 15,205 page views for the month.

Social Media Stats:

Facebook - *Visit Asheville* page:

- October saw 8,482 daily new likes to Facebook, for a total of 231,597.
- There were 71 new Facebook posts added to the Visit Asheville page in the month of October.
- The most popular unpaid Facebook post during the month was a link to the New York Times "36 Hours in Asheville" article. It has reached 71,891 million people organically, generating 1,051 total reactions, 80 comments and 540 shares.
- The most popular paid post this month was video showcasing the fall foliage. It reached 1,105,574 users in total (1,009,574 of those organically), generating 51,631 total reactions, 6,317 comments and 7,737 shares.
- The most engaging post this month was a photo post featuring fall color along a country road. It engaged 9 percent of the 33,474 users reached.

Facebook - *Foodtopia* page

- October saw 640 daily new likes to the Foodtopia page, for a total of 22,860 likes.
- There were 10 new Facebook posts added to the Foodtopia page in the month of October.
- The most popular post—a link to AM New York's food guide from the perspective of Katie Button—reached 13,627 people organically, generating 311 reactions and 31 comments.

Video:

- There were 22,078 new organic YouTube views in October. The most popular video by organic views this month was the Fall Time Lapse, which received 10,715 non-paid views. The “Spirit of Asheville” video came in second with 1,707 new views.
- Across all of our video platforms, there were 979,787 views, most from Facebook.
- Asheville video content has received 2.5 million views since July 1, 2016 (fiscal YTD).

Pinterest:

- The combined fan total for our two accounts now totals 4,289. Foodtopia accounts for 1,353 of those; Visit Asheville – 2,936.

Instagram:

- Our VisitAsheville account has 21,675 followers.
- There were 60 new posts in October. The most popular—a scenic shot of mountains with empty rocking chairs in the foreground—received 1,488 engagements (likes and comments).

Twitter:

- Across all of our accounts we have a total of 33,075 followers. The most popular account continues to be Foodtopia, which has 13,514 followers. We continue to provide a mix of proactive response to travel inquiries and pushes of website and Instagram content.

Asheville Traveler E-newsletter:

- Subscribers: We have 116,532 active subscribers.
- Opens/Click-throughs:
 - In October, we sent out our monthly e-newsletter to 116,978 subscribers. We had a unique open rate of 14.1 percent and a click-through rate of 2.6 percent.
 - The October 13 Fall Color Report was sent to 9,461 subscribers, with an open rate of 33 percent and a click-through rate of 13.7 percent.
 - The October 20 Fall Color Report was sent to 9,452 subscribers, with an open rate of 32.7 percent and a click-through rate of 11.7 percent.
 - The October 27 Fall Color Report was sent to 9,432 subscribers, with an open rate of 29.2 percent and a click-through rate of 7.3 percent

Online Reservations:

There were 34 orders for 63 room nights in October with a total of \$10,346 in booking revenue and \$421 in commission. The team has worked with Ares to resolve the decline in bookings on ExploreAsheville.com. Several fixes have been identified and are being implemented.

October 2016	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Booking Rev	\$10,346	\$19,239	-46%	\$47,402	\$81,660	-42%
Commission	\$421	\$815	-48%	\$1,942	\$3,251	-40%
Orders	34	58	-41%	144	282	-49%
Room Nights	63	136	-54%	282	564	-50%

Official Asheville Travel Guide:

The 2017 Travel Guide will be printed on December 12. Details are being finalized for the 2018 Asheville Travel Guide, which will likely result in a new partnership that will help the CVB develop an out-of-market and in-market strategy, allowing for efficiencies in developing and distributing the Travel Guide.

There were 1,538 requests for the Official Asheville Travel Guide in October, a two percent decrease from last October. Year-to-date, there are 9,356 travel guide requests, a nine percent decrease from last year. The top 5 DMAs requesting guides for the month and year are:

Top 5 DMAs for October 2016	# of Guides Requested	FY 2016-2017 Top 5 DMAs	# of Guides Requested
Raleigh, Durham	79	Tampa, St. Pete	399
Charlotte	70	New York	372
New York	67	Atlanta	361
Tampa, St. Pete	67	Raleigh, Durham	344
Atlanta	61	Charlotte	318

Online Travel Guide Downloads: There were 167 unique browsers for the online travel guide, a 14 percent increase from last October. There were a total of 3,812 page views, an eight percent increase from last October. The average time spent viewing was 2.91 minutes, a 7 percent increase from last October. There were 34 clicks on links, a 44 percent decrease from last October.

October 2016	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual (Jan-Dec)	YTD Last Year (2015)	Variance YTD
Unique Browsers	167	147	13.6%	2,368	9,204	-74.3%
Opens/Visits	193	161	19.9%	2,611	9,920	-73.7%
Page Views	3,812	3,526	8.1%	52,004	132,897	-60.9%
Avg. Time Spent (Minutes)	2.91	2.73	6.6%	2.84	25	-88.6%
Avg. Page Views (Per Open)	19.75	21.9	-9.8%	19.98	164	-87.8%
Clicks on Links	34	61	-44.3%	395	2,870	-86.2%

ExploreAsheville.com:

In October, Elizabeth White and Cat continued to work on the SEO punch list, including technical and content optimizations. Elizabeth continued to monitor 404 errors, and worked with Simpleview to fix issues related to duplicate page titles. ExploreAsheville.com had 22 percent more user sessions in October 2016 as compared with October 2015. Organic search improved 30 percent during that time period. We are seeing an expected upward trend in organic search

now that we have surpassed a year past launch date, however, we still have to make-up for a deficit in the first three months of this fiscal year in order to reach the targeted goal of 5 million user sessions this year. We will continue to work on search engine optimizations, as well as marketing campaigns such as a Pinterest holiday recipe campaign, and Facebook Top 10 list contest to drive user sessions.

Elizabeth also made good progress on a joint effort brokered by Marla with the Urban Trail on development of art content that will be hosted on ExploreAsheville.com. Jay Fields, a local creative and art director, is developing the content and supplying the images for the microsite pro bono. Launch date for Wandering Asheville will be in December, and will include at least 3 of the 4 segments. Mural Art segment launch is dependent on mural artists signing off on a release form that the CVB has provided. Jay Fields is working with mural artist Ian Wilkinson to secure artist permission for use in this project.

Elizabeth tweaked the design of the booking widget to give it more presence on the site. She also updated the logo across the site to incorporate the registered trademark. Final edits were made to the holiday landing pages before they went live in mid-October. Elizabeth also assisted the group sales staff with several updates and edits, including the addition of new wedding imagery with captions, updates to the SoCon microsite, and changes to the 48-hour meeting planner email template. She also assisted Brit with modifications to the Extranet 4.0 prior to launch. Additionally, Elizabeth was involved in updates to the AshevilleCVB.com site.

GROUP SALES & SERVICES

Group sales reported 31 definite group bookings in October, a nine percent decrease over the prior year. Of these group bookings, 20 were for meetings and conventions, one was group tour and 10 were weddings. The combined total of definite room nights was 6,239, a three percent decrease over the prior October. Seventy-three sales leads (61 for meetings and conventions, 10 for weddings and 2 for motorcoach), representing 23,938 room nights, were distributed to Buncombe County accommodations in October. Leads distributed were up 18 percent while rooms represented were up 37 percent over the prior year.

Estimated revenue for leads issued was \$1,470,235, a 31 percent increase over the prior year. Actualized revenue was \$467,353, a 56 percent decrease over the prior year. There were four very large groups which account for the drop this year. Last year, one group had revenue of over \$310,000, one group had revenue over \$260,000, and two groups had revenue over \$83,000 each. This year, there were only two large groups. One group had actualized revenue of \$129,950 and the other group had revenue of \$51,846. The year-to-date actualized revenue total is up 35 percent from last year at \$4,999,466. Person-to-person outreach totaled 1,082 contacts, a 25 percent increase from the previous year. Indirect outreach totaled 1,987 contacts, a 25 percent decrease over the prior year. The decrease is primarily due to a large e-blast sent last year.

Sales Calls/Missions:

- IMEX America 2016 – The ACVB and three industry partners (Accents on Asheville, Omni Grove Park Inn and Renaissance Asheville Hotel) participated in IMEX America, the premier annual trade event for corporate, association or incentive planners. Extensive preparation for this event helped result in a total of 100 prospective clients coming by the booth and meeting about future meetings. We anticipate approximately 8-10 RFPs, representing 3,000+ rooms, to be received now through March 2017 as a result of our presence.

- Smart Monday Hosted Buyer Breakfast - The ACVB partnered with Meeting Professionals International to sponsor the invitation-only event held immediately preceding the start of IMEX America. Approximately 80 attendees came, learned about Asheville as a meeting destination and heard from Asheville author and motivational speaker Meridith Elliott Powell. Promotional coverage included IMEX program inclusion, MPI signage, four promotional e-blasts sent to registered MPI members and on-site video presence. Sixty percent of pre-registrants indicated they were not familiar with Asheville and 75 percent of pre-registrants indicated they wanted to learn more about Asheville as a meeting destination.
- The CVB collaborated with Myrtle Beach (at their invitation), Savannah and Charleston to create a Southern Pearls Silk Road Tour itinerary that was presented to eight top Chinese receptive tour operators in Los Angeles. A dinner for 36 attendees was also hosted.

Staffing:

Molly Nelson, senior sales manager, joined the team on October 3. Molly's hospitality experience spans more than 16 years and includes hotel operations and sales. Molly has worked in Columbia, Hilton Head, New Orleans and Spartanburg. She has worked in boutique, resort, and downtown meeting hotels.

Site Visits/Bookings/Leads: The team hosted/coordinated five area site visits this month:

- 2017 American Meteorological Society – 420 room nights
- 2019 National Business Aviation Society – 450 room nights
- 2021 SERM American Chemical Society – 700 room nights
- 2017 Brewing & Distilling Network – 70 room nights
- 2017 Rolex Girls Junior Golf Championship – 212 room nights

Significant bookings this month include:

- 2019 International Association of Defense Council – 1930 room nights
- 2017 MaxPlay Turf Cup Girls and Boys – 650 room nights
- 2017 Gala Gymnastics (January) 270 room nights, among others

Twenty-two wedding guide requests were fulfilled this month. This is down from the 39 requests received last October.

Convention Servicing:

Forty-six groups that met in October were assisted or contacted by the convention service manager during planning. Services included working with UNC-Asheville to provide welcome services for the Big South Cross Country Championships. CVB staff set up a welcome table at the team host hotels and provided gifts for the coaches/staff. Staff prepared travel guides and maps for pick-up for eight meetings/weddings.

Specific assistance for future meetings included promotional assistance for the Embroiderer's Guild of America and the Southern Forest Service Retiree Association, finalizing the microsite for the 2017 MDI Expo and a planning meeting with organizers of the 2017 University of Michigan - ZBT Fraternity reunion. Microsites were also created for the 2017 Max Play Boys and Girls tournaments and the 2017 Asheville Yoga Festival.

To help the Southern Conference promote Basketball Championship attendance, a *Top 10 Things to Do in Asheville* mailer was created and provided to conference schools to use in their marketing efforts. The CVB also collected 7 special attraction offers for SoCon fans. A landing page on ExploreAsheville.com for the Championships was created listing the attraction deals and visitor information. The page will be promoted by the Conference and member schools starting November 1.

Group Sales Communications:

- Asheville CVB won an Annual Convention South Reader's Choice Award. Of the thousands of meeting destinations in the South, over 700 were nominated this year, and only 250 were chosen winners after over 4,000 readers and fans voted.
- Design of a 1/3-page ad, which complements the new full-page meetings ad, was completed.

Mass Communications:

- An e-blast introducing Molly Nelson, senior sales manager, to clients was sent to 1,823 contacts. Open rate: 20 percent; Unique clicks: 31
- An invitation to the 48-Hour Third Party Meeting Planner Experience was sent to 108 third party planners. Open rate: 36 percent; Unique clicks: 11
- An e-blast in advance of TNSAE annual tradeshow was sent to 53 registered attendees. Open rate: 49 percent; Unique clicks: 1

Departmental Activities:

Staff assisted the Asheville Art Museum in hosting a focus group of industry partners involved in event planning to review and make recommendations about new event/meeting spaces. Staff attended the SoCon Tip-Off at New Belgium Brewery, CVB Partner Forum, toured the new AC Hotel and hosted meetings with industry partners about upcoming tradeshows.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INITIATIVES

Workforce Development for the Hospitality Sector:

The Workforce Development Steering Committee met on October 13 with former Asheville Mayor Terry Bellamy, now with the Asheville Housing Authority and Erika Germer, Coordinator for the City of Asheville Youth Learning Academy (CAYLA). The committee is working with CAYLA to better engage those students.

Email & Records Retention/Disposition:

On October 14, Glenn met with Brent Rhodarmer and Haig Rudd with Buncombe County Government to see how they manage the County's email and document retention and disposition policy. One clear takeaway, their focus is on retention, not disposition. They strongly suggest we look at a Microsoft platform, beginning with Office 365.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

Tourism Product Development Efforts:

At the October 26 board meeting, the TPDF Committee recommended to the BCTDA that five projects be awarded \$3,930,000 in TPDF funding. The BCTDA voted to support the following projects as recommended:

Organization	Project	Amount Requested	Recommended Funding
Asheville Community Theatre	Theatre Expansion & Renovation Project	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
City of Asheville/U.S. Cellular Center	ExploreAsheville.com Theatre Creation & Meeting Room Conversion	\$1,509,400	\$1,500,000
Montreat College	Pulliam Stadium-Phase II	\$350,000	\$350,000
NC Dept. of Ag. & Consumer Services - WNC Farmers Market	WNC Farmers Market Retail Revitalization Project	\$500,000	\$380,000
Pack Place Performing Arts - dba Diana Wortham Theatre	The Wortham Center	\$700,000	\$700,000
	TOTAL		\$3,930,000

Partner Engagement:

October Partner Forum – October 20

At the October Partner Forum, 39 partners had an opportunity to learn about the new Extranet 4.0 and get information on the impact of advertising on ExporeAsheville.com. Brit Martin shared a preview of the new extranet schedule to launch November 3; and Lia Wik of Destination Travel Network (DTN) provided an update on ExploreAsheville.com advertising opportunities as well as year-to-date results. Lia Wik and another DTN representative were in town for the week prior to the Partner Forum and met with 44 partners.

Partner Forum – November 16

Planning is underway for the next Partner Forum, a special presentation of the MMGY Global “Portrait of American Travelers” presented by Steve Cohen, popular keynote speaker at national conferences. Mr. Cohen will provide an overview of the emerging travel habits, preferences and intentions of Americans, with a specific focus on how they apply to leisure travelers interested in visiting the Asheville area. The event will be held at The Collider on Wednesday, November 16.

Holiday Party – December 6

Planning is in the early stages for the annual ACVB Holiday Party, to be held on Tuesday, December 6, in the Renaissance Asheville Hotel’s Top of the Plaza.

Community Outreach

Stephanie presented “Tourism in Buncombe County” to the Arden and Biltmore Forest rotary chapters. A monthly newsletter for elected officials was distributed to county commissioners, city council members, and state-level elected officials.

Projects:

The Extranet 4.0 Rollout project is underway, and expected to launch on November 3. Partners will have the opportunity to attend a training session to receive one-on-one assistance on November 4 and 10. Brit Martin is managing the process with Simpleview, coordinating details and creating instructional documentation to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

Nine new partner accounts were created in October, with five of them being music artist accounts. Brit and Pat continue to reach out to qualified partners to submit information for a listing as well as service the partners who request listings.

VISITOR SERVICES UPDATE

The Asheville Visitor Center welcomed 29,085 guests during the month of October 2016. The Pack Square Park Pavilion welcomed 1068.

The Volunteers attended a performance of “Sweeny Todd” at Asheville Community Theatre and “Sleepy Hollow” at NC Stage. They also attended a tasting at Addison Farms Winery and toured the Hilton Garden Inn. Future events include NC Stage, Asheville Community Theatre, Magnetic Theatre, Attic Salt Theatre, and UGO Tours.

Training for the Volunteers continued with email updates along with “on the job” daily briefings from staff members.