

# Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority



## 2003-2004 Marketing & Communications Plan



# Message to the Industry

The booklet you are holding contains the marketing and communications plan for the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. It recaps productivity from the previous fiscal year (July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003) in an annual report format, describes in detail our plan for the upcoming year, provides an overview of the Asheville CVB and includes a helpful addendum featuring insightful travel industry trends.

More than printed words on pages, this document is the result of months of industry input, strategic retreats, ad agency analysis and thoughtful decisions aimed at generating the greatest return on your investment. This is your plan made possible because the tourism industry of Western North Carolina understands that teamwork is not a luxury, but a necessity if we are to attract more overnight visitors.

As we look back on the past year, words such as “uncertainty, unpredictable, cautious and last-minute” accurately describe the travel trends that affected everyone’s bottom line. Although key measurements such as hotel sales, RevPar and ADR are slightly up over FY 02-03, we know it’s been a challenge for everyone during a year that witnessed war, recession and world-wide disease. Yes, it’s been a tough year.

Collectively, however, there is a sense that we are beginning to see a light at the end of the tourism tunnel. Convention bookings, group tour numbers and significant media placements are up, indicating that our customers still desire the Asheville product. The stock market continues to recover while industry experts are predicting a rebound in travel beginning this summer. Although it may be years before we return to record-setting years like 2000-2001, we feel cautiously optimistic that this fiscal year will indeed experience the recovery so often discussed.

To that end, this year’s marketing and communications plan maintains a healthy advertising budget accented by aggressive sales and marketing tactics aimed to generate more visitors and overnight stays. It may be tougher to do business, but we are not reducing our determination, desire or advertising spend.

We encourage you to read the plan and continue providing the CVB staff with ideas for improvement whenever possible. Travel will never become extinct. It is only those who don’t reinvent themselves that perish. Have a successful FY 03-04!

Your CVB Team





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## 2003-2004 Marketing and Communications Plan

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## Convention & Visitors Bureau Overview

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# Annual Report

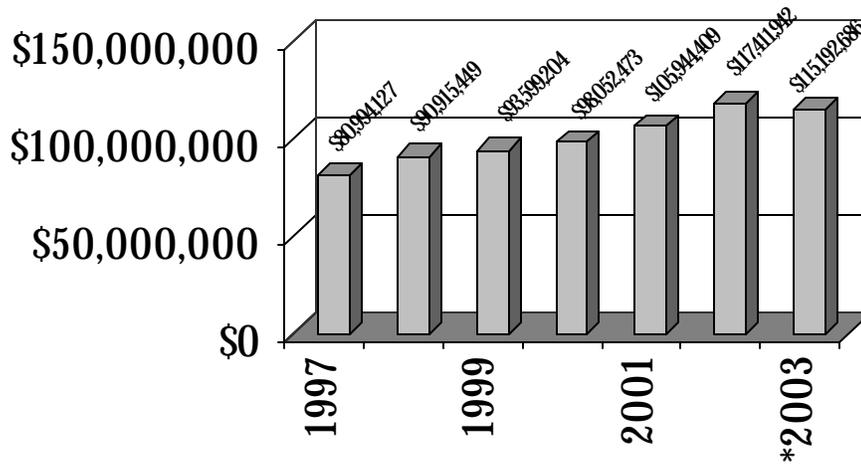
## A Review of 2002-2003





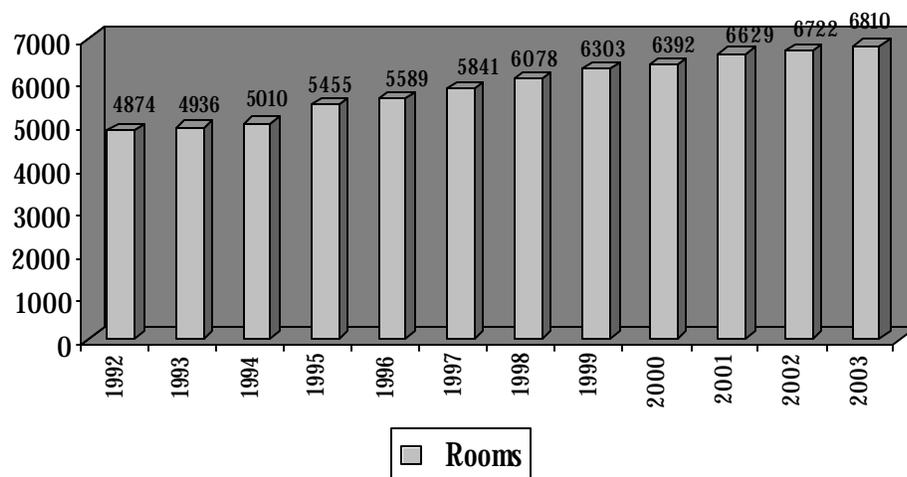
# General Tourism

## Hotel Sales



Projected

## Hotel Room Growth

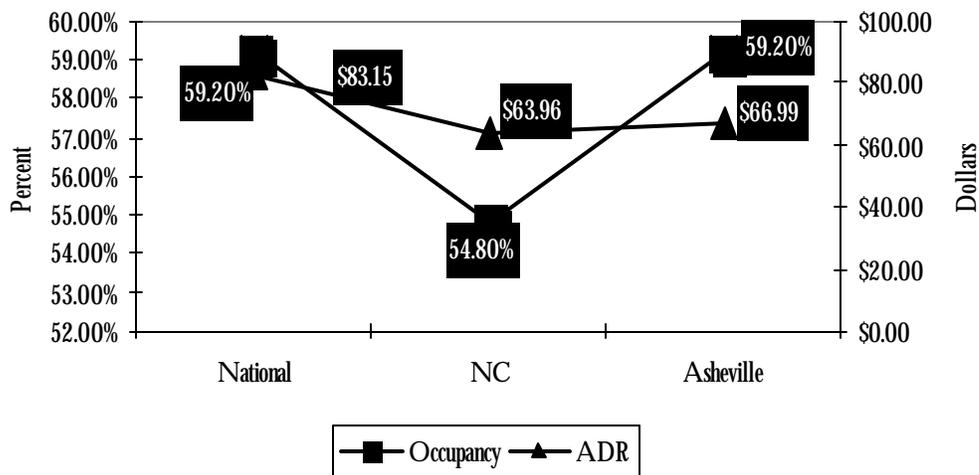


# General Tourism



## 2002 Occupancy & Average Daily Rate

|                | 2001      |         | 2002      |         |
|----------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
|                | Occupancy | ADR     | Occupancy | ADR     |
| National       | 60.10%    | \$84.85 | 63.70%    | \$85.92 |
| North Carolina | 54%       | \$64.16 | 58%       | \$63.99 |
| Asheville      | 57%       | \$63.78 | 57.80%    | \$63.11 |





# Marketing & Public Relations

## Public Relations Placements

| 2001-2002                               |                | 2002-2003**                             |                 | Variance |
|---|----------------|---|-----------------|----------|
| Advertising Value<br>(through May)      | \$4,757,597.45 | Advertising Value<br>(through May)      | \$ 3,809,180.43 | (20.1 %) |
| Column Inches<br>(through May)          | 26,745         | Column Inches<br>(through May)          | 16,224          | (39.3 %) |
| Circulation<br>(through May)            | 202,321,047    | Circulation<br>(through May)            | 223,314,605     | 10.4 %   |
| Significant Placements<br>(through May) | 413            | Significant Placements<br>(through May) | 459             | 11.1 %   |
| Journalists Assisted<br>(through June)  | 278            | Journalists Assisted<br>**projected     | 283             | 8.3 %    |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

## Visitor Inquiries

|              | 2001-2002      | 2002-2003        |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| July         | 10,247         | 12,018           |
| August       | 21,698         | 11,066           |
| September    | 10,825         | 14,209           |
| October      | 7,775          | 11,372           |
| November     | 7,199          | 4,002            |
| December     | 3,600          | 4,131            |
| January      | 5,554          | 3,782            |
| February     | 4,888          | 5,324            |
| March        | 11,103         | 9,843            |
| April        | 14,416         | 15,070           |
| May          | 15,052         | 10,330           |
| June         | 9,779          | 10,000           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>122,136</b> | <b>111,147**</b> |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time. Also note that figures for 2001-2002 included 15,000 inquiries from the Blue Ridge Parkway guide that were not provided in 2002-2003.

## Online Visitor Guide Requests

|              | 2001-2002     | 2002-2003       |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| July         | 2,771         | 3,635           |
| August       | 3,054         | 3,456           |
| September    | 2,123         | 3,537           |
| October      | 2,321         | 3,179           |
| November     | 1,642         | 1,891           |
| December     | 873           | 1,163           |
| January      | 3,755         | 2,559           |
| February     | 2,456         | 2,359           |
| March        | 3,246         | 3,469           |
| April        | 3,739         | 3,413           |
| May          | 4,796         | 2,692           |
| June         | 2,996         | 4,646           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>33,772</b> | <b>35,999**</b> |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

# Marketing & Public Relations

## Online Marketing Efforts



### Visitor E-mail Newsletter Subscribers

|                  | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| July-September   | 13,105    | 25,322    |
| October-December | 13,518    | 28,847    |
| January-March    | 18,535    | 29,907    |
| April-June       | 22,478    | 34,743    |

### Autumn Advantage Packages

(August 8 - October 3, 2002)

| Referral Source                                   | User Sessions |
|---|---------------|
| Atlanta Direct Mail                               | 142           |
| Visitor e-news                                    | 552           |
| News Release                                      | 201           |
| Online Placement                                  | 186           |
| Link from ExploreAsheville.com/ashevilledeals.htm | 5981          |

### Mountain Holiday Getaway Packages

(November 1, 2002 - January 06, 2003)

| Referral Source                    | User Sessions |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Asheville CVB Visitor e-newsletter | 1,244         |
| Other                              | 4,329         |

### Get Happy Getaway Packages

(January 10 - March 27, 2003)

| Referral Source                            | User Sessions |
|--|---------------|
| Asheville CVB Visitor e-newsletter         | 1,368         |
| News Release                               | 573           |
| ExploreAsheville.com Deals & Packages page | 2,893         |

### Spring Savers Packages

(April 2 - May 23, 2002)

| Referral Source                                 | User Sessions |
|---|---------------|
| Atlanta Direct Mail                             | 49            |
| Asheville CVB Visitor e-newsletter              | 1,207         |
| News Release                                    | 141           |
| ExploreAsheville.com Home Page & Internal Pages | 5,117         |



# Meetings & Conventions

|                                    | 2001-2002    | 2002-2003**  | Variance |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Leads Distributed                  | 265          | 260          | (1.9%)   |
| Room Nights in Leads               | 109,823      | 103,400      | (5.8%)   |
| Booked Room Nights                 | 60,232       | 51,537       | (14.4%)  |
| Conversion                         | 54%          | 50%          | (4.0%)   |
| Economic Impact of Booked Business | \$28,514,211 | \$23,624,249 | (17.1%)  |

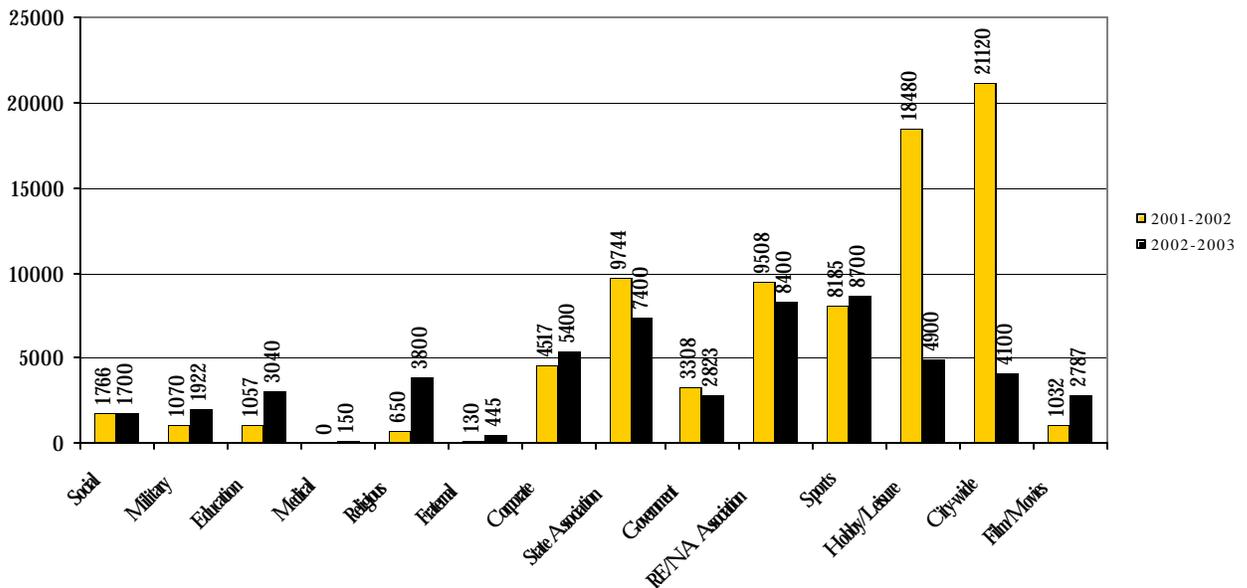
\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

## Booked Room Nights by Market

|                   | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003** |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Social            | 1,766     | 1,700       |
| Military          | 1,070     | 1,992       |
| Education         | 1,057     | 3,040       |
| Medical           | 0         | 150         |
| Religious         | 650       | 3,800       |
| Fraternal         | 130       | 445         |
| Corporate         | 4,517     | 5,400       |
| State Association | 9,744     | 7,400       |
| Government        | 3,308     | 2,823       |
| RE/NA Association | 9,508     | 8,400       |
| Sports            | 8,185     | 8,700       |
| Hobby/Leisure     | 18,480    | 4,900       |
| City-wide         | 21,120    | 4,100***    |
| Film/Movies       | 1,032     | 2,787       |

\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

\*\*\*Numbers calculated in other market segments.



# Visitor Center

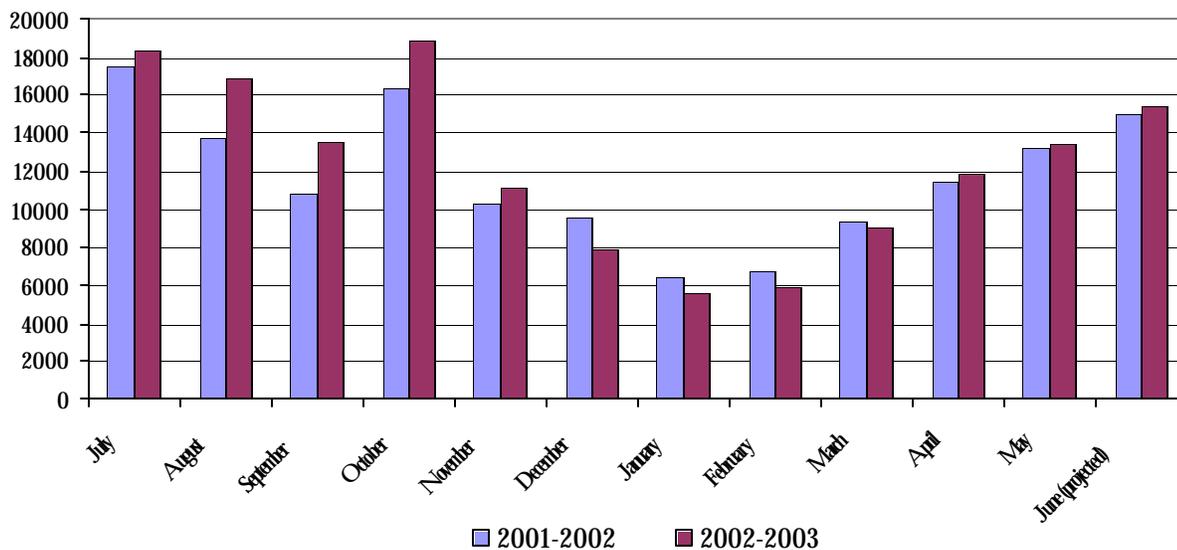


## Number of Travelers to the Asheville Visitor Center

|              | 2001-2002      | 2002-2003        |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| July         | 17,492         | 18,306           |
| August       | 13,803         | 16,786           |
| September    | 10,804         | 13,606           |
| October      | 16,345         | 18,921           |
| November     | 10,302         | 11,057           |
| December     | 9,586          | 7,929            |
| January      | 6,468          | 5,576            |
| February     | 6,798          | 5,826            |
| March        | 9,358          | 9,027            |
| April        | 11,456         | 11,823           |
| May          | 13,209         | 13,423           |
| June         | 15,065         | 15,366**         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>140,686</b> | <b>147,616**</b> |



\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.





## Convention Services

|                            | 2001-2002    | 2002-2003**  | Variance |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Groups Serviced            | 325          | 322          | (0.9%)   |
| Motorcoaches Serviced      | 66           | 72           | 9.1%     |
| Economic Impact            | \$21,549,470 | \$24,940,723 | 15.7%    |
| Hospitality Tables         | 34           | 37           | 8.8%     |
| Conventions Welcomed       | 14           | 12           | (14.3%)  |
| Walk-ins/Call-ins Serviced | 391          | 488          | 24.8%    |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

## Group Tour (Motorcoach)

|                 | 2001-2002   | 2002-2003** | Variance |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Leads Generated | 200         | 171         | (14.5%)  |
| Actual Tours    | 536         | 777         | 45.0%    |
| Room Nights     | 15,261      | 19,959      | 30.8%    |
| Economic Impact | \$2,306,752 | \$3,025,784 | 31.2%    |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.

## International

|                    | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003** | Variance |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Contacts Generated | 53        | 56          | 7.7%     |

\*\* Based on projected figures for June 2003. Actual figures were unavailable at print time.





**2003-2004**

**Marketing &  
Communications Plan**





# Advertising

## Tourism Marketing Business Objective

To increase occupancy tax revenues by 2 percent over the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

### Media Objective

Continue to build brand awareness for the destination in an effort to generate quality inquiries and attain business goal.

### Media Strategies

- Select publications based on past inquiries, conversion results, cost per conversion and cost per inquiry.
- Develop an integrated marketing plan that will create more impact and awareness.
- Primary target audience is adults aged 30-54 years with an average household income of \$50,000 plus.
- Geographic target markets

#### Core

Atlanta, GA  
Charlotte, NC  
Columbia, SC  
Greensboro/W-S, NC  
Miami, FL  
Orlando, FL  
Raleigh/Durham, NC  
Sarasota/Bradenton, FL  
Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL  
West Palm Beach, FL

#### Venture

Texas  
Nashville, TN  
New York City D.M.A.  
Ohio Valley (Cincinnati, Dayton)  
Washington, D.C.

- Time media placements to promote seasons in the following order of priority:
  1. Mid-June through mid-August
  2. Mid-March, April, May and early June
  3. August, September
  4. October
  5. November, December (Holiday Season)
  6. January, February, early March

# Advertising



## Media Tactics

- Primary magazine overview:

AAA Go

AAA Going Places

Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel

Country Living

National Geographic Traveler

Oprah

People Magazine

Southern Living

- Magazine circulations have primarily been bought in the southeast region and within an 8-hour drive of Asheville.
- The majority of media buys are designed to affect business in the top three seasons: Spring, Summer and Fall.
- Purchase a blend of large space impact print ads and limited small space support ads.
- Continue television advertising to provide potential visitors with an expanded view of the total Asheville experience. Re-edit current television spots to provide creative continuity with the print campaign.
- Focus additional attention on the closer-in drive markets using several forms of media including direct mail; also include high-inquiry markets such as New York.
- Continue with fifth consecutive year of cooperative advertising (Ad Fair to be held September 2003). Publications to be determined.
- Participate cooperatively with the NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development in:
  - NC Travel Guide
  - NC Outdoor Recreation Guide
  - Cooperative Advertising Program
- Conversion from internet inquiries is about 65 percent, so continue exploration of new internet marketing vehicles and continue with past successful internet advertising to increase the number of unique visitors and page views at [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com).
- Continue with cost-per-click advertising in an effort to obtain high sponsorship positioning with major search engines (Overture, Looksmart and Yahoo).



## Creative Strategies

Single-minded Proposition - Every time I visit Asheville I feel transformed.

- The brand should be positioned to appeal to visitors that place greater value on the allure of a destination, than price or individual product, and to demonstrate an eagerness to cater to them in a way that consistently exceeds their expectations.
- It is important to describe the brand beyond a unique historical mountain destination hub offering visitors a heritage-rich experience—to subtly include the less obvious, equally and more compelling reasons for visiting Asheville.
- Continue the new creative campaign, “One Day and the Next” that emphasizes the mountains and natural beauty appeal of the destination as well as the great variety of activities available, while encouraging overnight stays.
- These ads follow the central themes

Mountains  
Natural Beauty  
Arts & Crafts  
Unique Shopping

Soft Adventure  
Romantic Escape  
Rejuvenation

- Utilize a mixture of large, impact print ads as well as smaller ads to maximize exposure.
- Re-edit current television spots (two versions) to provide creative synergy with the print campaign.
- The “One Day and the Next” campaign will be carried through all mediums such as internet and direct mail to ensure creative continuity.
- A variety of Internet advertising vehicles will be developed to keep the look fresh consistently throughout the year.
- Primary target is adults aged 30-54 years with an average household income of \$50,000 plus.

# Media Selection



| Publication  | Circulation | Geographic Coverage   |
|--|-------------|---|
| <b>General Tourism</b>   |             |   |
| AAA Go Magazine  | 780,000     | NC, SC  |
| AAA Going Places   | 2,580,231   | AL, FL, GA, TN, VA  |
| Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel   | 517,750     | National  |
| Atlanta Journal Constitution   | 660,543     | Atlanta (GA)  |
| Blue Ridge Mountain Host Guide   | 100,000     | NC  |
| Blue Ridge Parkway Guide   | 80,000      | NC, TN, VA  |
| Country Living   | 903,000     | AL, CT, DE, D.C., FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, MS, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI  |
| Cultural Tour of the South Co-op<br>(National Geographic & National Geographic Traveler)   | 2,092,000   | AL, CT, DE, D.C., FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, MS, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI  |
| Direct Mail (Atlanta)  | 20,000      | Atlanta (GA)  |
| Direct Mail (Raleigh/Durham)   | 20,000      | Raleigh/Durham (NC)   |
| Direct Mail<br>(Tampa/St. Petersburg)  | 20,000      | Tampa/St. Petersburg (FL)   |
| Leisure South Family Travel Insert<br>(Redbook, AAA Home & Away, Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel, NY Times, The Washington Post, and The Baltimore Sun) | 1,000,000   | AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OH, PA, SC, TN, VA, WV  |
| National Geographic Traveler   | 405,000     | AL, CT, DE, D.C., FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, ME, MD, MA, MI, MS, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI  |
| N.C. Outdoor Recreation Guide  | 125,000     | Official N.C. piece   |
| N.C. Travel Guide  | 800,000     | Official N.C. piece   |
| Oprah Magazine   | 411,055     | AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV  |
| People Magazine  | 555,000     | AL, AK, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN  |
| Southern Living Magazine   | 1,210,000   | DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, NJ, PA, SC, VA  |
| Travel Council of N.C. Newspaper Insert<br>(Fall)  | 775,000     | Charlotte (NC), Raleigh (NC), Greensboro (NC), Fayetteville (NC), Charleston (SC), Columbia (SC), Augusta (GA), Knoxville (TN), Richmond (VA), Lynchburg (VA), Roanoke (VA) |
| Travel Council of N.C. Newspaper Insert<br>(Spring)  | 775,000     | Charlotte (NC), Raleigh (NC), Greensboro (NC), Fayetteville (NC), Charleston (SC), Columbia (SC), Augusta (GA), Knoxville (TN), Richmond (VA), Lynchburg (VA), Roanoke (VA) |
| <b>Meetings/Group Tour</b>   |             |   |
| Successful Meetings  | 75,050      | National  |



# Planned Media Placement Schedule

| Activity                       | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Advertising                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Public Relations               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Direct Mail                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Telemarketing                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Radio                          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| TV                             |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Print                          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Out of Home                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Website                        |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Search Engine                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Social Media                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Events                         |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Trade Shows                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Conferences                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Webinars                       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Podcasts                       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Press Releases                 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Media Kits                     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Press Conferences              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Product Launches               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Partnerships                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Collaborations                 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Guest Blogging                 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Interviews                     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Podcast Appearances            |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Panel Discussions              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Keynote Speeches               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Workshops                      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Roundtables                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Networking Events              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Charity Events                 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Community Events               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Local Events                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Regional Events                |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| National Events                |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| International Events           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Virtual Events                 |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Hybrid Events                  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Concerts                       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Performances                   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Art Exhibitions                |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Museum Exhibitions             |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Gallery Exhibitions            |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Theater Performances           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Opera Performances             |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Ballet Performances            |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Classical Music Performances   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Jazz Performances              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Rock Performances              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Pop Performances               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| R&B Performances               |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Soul Performances              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Funk Performances              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Blues Performances             |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Gospel Performances            |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Country Performances           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Folk Performances              |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| World Music Performances       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Latin Music Performances       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| African Music Performances     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Asian Music Performances       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Indian Music Performances      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Pakistani Music Performances   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
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# Public Relations



## Objective

Generate editorial placements that reach \$4 million in advertising value.

## Strategies

- Continue a proactive media outreach program with an emphasis on customization and targeting
- Complement seasonal advertising campaigns with media outreach with an added emphasis on venture markets and Web-based PR.
- Continue to use media efforts to target niche markets, especially family-oriented venues.
- Educate the region about the benefits of tourism in order to maintain support of marketing efforts.
- Use research to help guide marketing efforts and to gauge perceptions of customers and the community.
- Maintain measurement tools to gauge the effectiveness of existing and new projects.

## Tactics

### Media Relations

- Continue to write and distribute news releases and story idea sheets
- Target key journalists and productive freelance writers by customizing specific story pitches and materials.
- Identify and respond to pitch opportunities that are generated through outside sources such as SATW and TIA.
- Write and distribute quarterly calendars to both newspapers and magazines to ensure event placement.
- Develop and design seasonal support materials and market-specific collateral as needed.
- Conduct media trips
  - Washington D.C. metro area
  - Texas
  - Spring core market TBD
- Attend SATW Marketplace.
- Target key journalists for individual site visits.
- Continue an increased emphasis on targeting the family market.



# Public Relations

## Tactics (Media Relations), continued

- Utilize the Southern Foodways Alliance event as a springboard for a more concentrated effort to establish the Asheville area's culinary reputation.
- Continue the local tourism awareness campaign which includes the following
  - The continued use of National Tourism Week as a forum for promoting the industry.
  - Production of the annual BCTDA tourism report to the community.
  - Maintenance of statistics section on new AshevilleCVB.com site.
- Continue to seek television and radio placement through the following activities
  - Sending b-roll to pre-qualified TV news producers for seasonal promotions.
  - Targeting viable cable outlets such as Travel Channel, HGTV, Food Network, CNN and The Weather Channel.
  - Continued targeting of broadcast media as part of media tour efforts.
  - Pitching radio shows particularly in conjunction with seasonal opportunities such as fall foliage and the holidays.
- Utilize editorial calendars to organize a list of placement opportunities. Develop pitches that coincide with selected editions.
- Assist with sales efforts by targeting trades and coordinating coverage in selected markets.
- Continue to use measurement tools to track effectiveness of media relations efforts and examine the value of specific projects by:
  - utilizing a clip service.
  - tracking PR-specific phone inquiries.
  - measuring Internet usage, e-mail requests and online placements.

## Research

- Undertake research that will assist in defining customer awareness and perceptions of the Asheville area.
- Maintain contract with Smith Travel Research to assist in the ongoing monitoring of Buncombe County's tourism industry and its competitive standing.
- Maintain contract for visitor volume research.
- Use e-mail database as a resource for quick surveys as needed.
- Maintain relationship with County officials who assist in providing key tax data that is used in various tourism economic impact reports.

# Web Development and Online Marketing



## Objectives

- Increase Web site usage by 20 percent over 2002-2003.
- Secure at least 50 online placements or links.
- Increase the number of bookings of packaged room nights by 5 percent over 2002-2003.

## Strategies

- Utilize Web site content to maximize conversion potential.
- Provide methods for optimal navigation and searchable criteria that consumers indicate they prefer in a travel Web site.
- Further develop an online outreach program that incorporates e-mail newsletters and viral marketing opportunities.
- Utilize PR placement and search engine optimization to maximize traffic generation to the Web site.
- Utilize the Web to increase communication with industry partners and provide general tourism business information.
- Provide opportunities to convert Web lookers to actual bookings.

## Tactics

- Continue the process of transitioning to a database-driven site.
- Redesign Web site to embrace the dynamic nature of the database.
- Create Web pages to complement seasonal and marketing promotions.
- Maintain a year-round effort to promote “hot deals” and packaging opportunities through the Web site.
- Research, write and publish fall color & spring bloom Web pages.
- Upgrade existing portions of the Web site as needed.
- Maintain ongoing calendar-of-events listings.
- Maintain ashevillecvb.com site for enhanced partner communications.



# Web Development and Online Marketing

## Tactics, continued

- Target e-zines and travel-oriented Web sites for editorial placement and links.
- Continue to actively pursue search engine placement and positioning utilize strategies for effective placement, and actively identify new opportunities for portal listings.
- Maintain integrated media campaign, utilizing traditional advertising, online ads and media relations program to drive potential visitors to the Web site.
- Produce online newsletter that is sent to opt-in e-mail subscriber list.
- Look for opportunities for utilizing viral marketing and other visitation generators to increase traffic to the Web site and increase awareness of Asheville.



# Tourism Promotions



## Objective

To increase the number of AAA booked room nights by 5 percent over 2002-2003.

## Strategies

- Continue to raise awareness and working knowledge of Asheville among AAA auto touring counselors and call center operators in core and venture markets.
- Enhance communication with auto touring counselors to increase awareness of current package offers, community events, product updates, etc.
- Work with NCACVB for additional exposure in the AAA markets.
- Continue to develop marketing opportunities within the different clubs that incorporate services offered by our industry partners.
- Continue to explore and develop strategic alliances with corporate entities.
- Maintain measurement tools to gauge the effectiveness of existing and new projects.
- Provide information and materials to consumers as well as Visitor Specialists in order to convert inquiries to visits.

## Tactics

### AAA Marketing

- Participate in Blue Ridge Parkway Association's annual FAM trip.
- Increase the AAA Explore Asheville e-mail newsletter to five issues per calendar year.
- Investigate and inform the community of opportunities currently available in AAA-driven publications promoting short-term consumer packages:
  - AAA Auto Club South - Slip-aways
  - AAA Carolinas
  - Others
- Conduct two AAA Explore Asheville! collective training trips to select core and venture market areas. Candidates include:
  - AAA Mid-Atlantic (52 branch locations)
  - AAA Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio
- Continue to distribute Visitor Guide, leisure market video and Asheville poster to AAA auto touring agents in core and venture market areas.



# Tourism Promotions

## Tactics (AAA Marketing), continued

- Assist in the implementation of the NCACVB e-mail newsletter aimed towards AAA agents.

## Marketing Promotions

- Expand our Explore Asheville! collective training opportunities to include other large reservation centers and travel agency groups.
- Conduct one 1-800-VISITNC collective operator training session at NC call center.
- Assist with the on-going training of Daniel's Communications operators as related to industry partner presentations.
- Work closely with Journal Communications to enhance and publish the 2004 Visitor Guide.
- Work in conjunction with NCACVB and Southeast Tourism Society on joint marketing efforts.
- Coordinate Asheville's participation in consumer travel shows.



# Meetings and Conventions



## Objective

To book 59,000 room nights for 2003-2004 (Even with 2002-2003).

## Strategies

- Streamline sales approach to maximize results.
- Continue to focus on new business with emphasis on association, corporate and SMERF drive markets.
- Utilize telemarketing for prospecting to maximize sales efforts.
- Update collateral.
- Target regional associations, drive market corporate, soccer, military reunion and religious markets.
- Showcase area to planners one-on-one.
- Develop and implement strategy for hobby/leisure and city-wide groups.

## Tactics

- Cooperative ad placement in the following meeting publications to enhance Asheville's presence in the meetings market:

Successful Meetings Carolinas (November 2003 Issue)  
The Reunion Network (Web site and listing)  
Overseas Brats Ad

- Reprint Meeting Planner's Guide.
- Attend the following trade shows:

### Show

Affordable Meetings  
GSAE  
AENC  
Christian Management Association  
Family Reunion Conference  
Springtime In The Park  
The Reunion Network

### Market

Corporate, SMERF, Association  
State/Regional Association  
State Association  
Religious  
Reunion  
Regional/National Association  
Reunions - Military & Family

- Conduct/host "Asheville Gathering" for Overseas Brats.
- Conduct mini-sites/FAMS for corporate market as necessary.
- Sponsor AENC Golf Tournament.



# Meetings and Conventions

## Tactics, continued

- Sponsor Georgia MPI golf tournament.
- Host SCsAE golf tournament.
- Use a telemarketer to prospect for and qualify leads so sales efforts may better develop and close bookings for the area.
- Make scheduled sales trips to key corporate and association markets on an as needed basis.
- Continue with expansion of quarterly e-mail newsletter and database to reach customers with timely information.
- Increase the number of site inspections to the area.
- Work in conjunction with NCACVB on joint marketing programs.
- Use media outreach to provide editorial opportunities to enhance Asheville's reputation as a place to hold meetings and conventions.
- Meet with corporate related industry partners on a regular basis to monitor business activity.
- Meet with area Director's of Sales on a quarterly basis for industry updates.



# International



## Objective

To capitalize on the increasing market share of international travel through regional gateway cities.

## Strategies

- Maintain our alliance partnership with MountainSouth USA.
- Work closely with the NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development and MountainSouth USA in their international marketing efforts.
- Provide international tour operators and domestic-based receptive service operators the tools needed to sell the Asheville area.
- Expand on the number of catalogues that include the Asheville and Western North Carolina product.
- Increase the competitive marketing edge of Asheville's and Western North Carolina's travel industry by increasing the knowledge within our local industry on selling to and servicing the international market.

## Tactics

- Participate in the following trade shows and marketplaces:
  - POW WOW - MountainSouth USA to be the primary booth holder
  - Delta's Global Showcase - Nashville, TN
- Work very closely with MountainSouth USA in the development of itineraries, hosting of FAM trips and inclusion in the MountainSouth USA Web site to promote international travel from the United Kingdom and Germany.
- Explore and pursue additional regional marketing alliances that foster inclusion of Asheville in receptive operators' product offerings to their international clients.
- Enhance international knowledge of Asheville by incorporating our overseas clients into our opt-in e-mail database.
- Co-host one international marketing symposium with MountainSouth USA for the local industry.
- Continue with research to try and accurately gauge current market share of international visitors to North Carolina, in general, and to Western North Carolina specifically.



# Visitor and Convention Services

## Strategies

- Continually improve the types of services offered to Visitor Center guests.
- Increase the Asheville logo presence in Western North Carolina.
- Improve and expand collateral material promoting Asheville.
- Provide meeting planners with the marketing tools needed to increase convention attendance in Buncombe County.
- Provide a full range of services for meeting planners and delegates.
- Increase the assortment of services for convention attendees and leisure visitors.
- Improve the Asheville experience for visitors.
- Utilize the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce's Visitor Center services to increase travelers' lengths of stay in the area.

## Tactics

- Continue to investigate services offered at other southeastern visitor centers.
- Expand on logo items available for meeting attendees to purchase at Hospitality Asheville tables.
- Continue to provide wedding and speaker's guides, trivia books, outdoor activity guides, convention service packets, theme lists, itineraries, welcome posters and PowerPoint presentations.
- Transit appropriate guides to online versions.
- Continue to offer foreign translations highlighting area attractions and expand the number of languages available.
- Continue to utilize Diplomats to service groups.
- Continue to develop the Diplomat volunteer program with training sessions, FAM trips and appreciation receptions.
- Provide enhanced Asheville logo items for gifts and door prizes for meeting planners to use when promoting future meetings.
- Continue to be involved in community issues that ultimately affect visitors.
- Respond to requests from meeting planners that assist in building convention attendance or provide opportunities to extend visitation.

# Group Tour (Motorcoach)



## Objective

- To book 3,200 group tour room nights in 2003-2004.
- Work to maintain sales production numbers in fiscal year 2003-2004

## Strategies

- Attend key marketplaces, trade shows and conventions to maintain current tour operator relationships and locate new sources for leads.
- Provide tour operators, group leaders & travel agents the tools needed to package and sell tours to the Asheville area.
- Continue to refine effective ways to communicate with tour product decision-makers.
- Work, in conjunction with industry partners, to promote Asheville to the student travel and church youth markets.
- Provide services to tour operators after the initial sale has been made.
- In coordination with our accommodation partners and Biltmore Estate, continue to trend the number of motorcoach tours and travelers into the Asheville area.

## Tactics

- Distribute the student travel package (developed in concert with industry partners) to core market educators.
- Increase the group tour e-mail newsletter to five issues per year.
- Work in conjunction with NCDTFSD and NCACVB on joint marketing programs.
- Co-sponsor the ice-breaker and host a pre-convention tour operator FAM for National Tour Association's 2003 annual meeting in Charlotte.
- Participate in the following trade shows
  - National Tour Association (1 attendee)
  - American Bus Association ( 1 attendee)
  - NC Motorcoach Association



# Group Tour (Motorcoach)

## Tactics, continued

- Sponsor an event at North Carolina Motorcoach Association's 2004 Annual Meeting to be held in Asheville.
- Continue to distribute Group Tour Guide, group tour video, poster, brochure shells and CD-ROM of slides/images to tour operators and qualified group leaders.
- Provide content for updated Web pages to showcase new product and itinerary suggestions, obtain sales leads and announce new group tour opportunities for community partners.
- Partner with North American Journey's to establish an Asheville Web presence targeting domestic and international tour operators at [www.visitnaj.com](http://www.visitnaj.com).
- Partner with other Southeast destinations to develop and promote an itinerary aimed towards the group leader market.
- Continue to meet with industry partners to keep the lines of communication open.





# Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Overview





# Tourism Promotion in Asheville

There are as many ways to organize and fund a marketing and promotional effort for tourism development as there are cities in America. Each community structures its work in a slightly different way. The earliest record we can find of Asheville's efforts to promote tourism dates back to 1898, when someone mistakenly reported in the New York Journal that Biltmore Estate had been a total failure and that George Vanderbilt left Asheville furious—never to return again. A group of business people joined together with the goal to correct this atrocious error and to establish Asheville as an outstanding resort area in the United States. They called themselves the Asheville Board of Trade, which was later changed to the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has continued to keep tourism promotion as a high priority for more than 100 years.

Our community's presence in the tourism arena was advanced in a big way in 1983 after an historic event took place. During the 1983 Session of the NC General Assembly, Buncombe County was among the first counties in our state to be granted authorization to levy a two percent room occupancy tax on the rental of rooms furnished by hotels, motels and inns with five or more units. The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) was established to administer the proceeds of the tax with the caveat that they could expend funds only to further the development of travel, tourism and conventions in the county through state, national and international advertising and promotion. In 1985, an additional one percent tax was approved. Then, in 2001, legislators passed the Tourism Product Development Fund bill which earmarks proceeds from an additional one percent to creation of new tourism product. Qualifying projects must demonstrate the ability to generate substantial new room nights.

The Tourism Development Authority had the option of setting up its own organization and staff to carry out this mission or to contract with an existing organization to do so. The TDA decided to contract with the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, which had been in the tourism promotion business for approximately 85 years at that point. The result has been a win-win situation for everyone. All of the revenue collected from the occupancy tax (minus a one percent collection fee retained by the County) is dedicated to this effort.

This marketing plan and program of work represent how the Chamber of Commerce, through its Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Buncombe County TDA will strive to bring even more economic impact from visitors into the community. There are many avenues open to industry partners to join in this effort. We look forward to working with all of you to make this an even more attractive and sought-after destination.

## Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Mission

**"To Further the Development of Travel, Tourism and Conventions in Buncombe County Through State, National and International Advertising and Promotions."**

## Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Mission

**"To Enrich the Region's Livability by Advancing Its Economic Vitality."**

# Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority



Mr. Chris Cavanaugh  
The Biltmore Company  
One North Pack Square ~ Asheville, NC 28801  
255-1713  
255-1139 Fax  
ccavanaugh@biltmore.com

Ms. Ruth Summers  
Southern Highland Craft Guild/Folk Art Center  
PO Box 9545 ~ Asheville, NC 28805  
298-7928  
298-7962 (Fax)  
ruth@craftguild.org

Mr. Craig Lindberg  
Red Rocker Inn  
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Mr. Craig Madison  
The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa  
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252-2711  
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Mr. John Cram  
Blue Spiral 1  
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Mr. Victor Trantham  
Haywood Park Hotel  
One Battery Park Avenue ~ Asheville, NC 28801  
252-2522  
253-0481  
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Mr. Herman Turk  
Renaissance Asheville Hotel  
One Thomas Wolf Plaza ~ Asheville, NC 28801  
252-8211  
254-1374 Fax  
hermanturk@aol.com

## Asheville City Council Ex-Officio Member

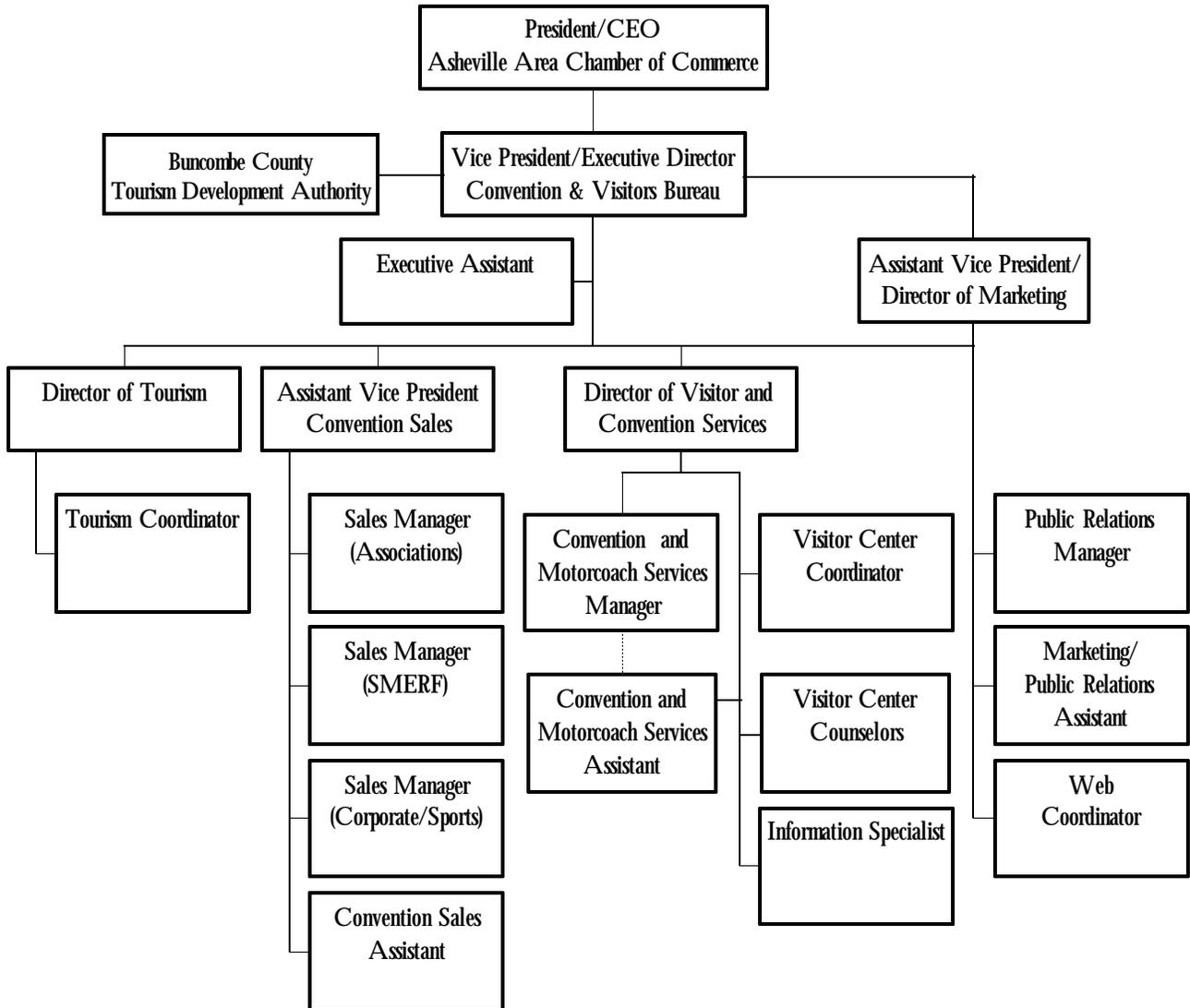
Ms. Terry Bellamy  
City Council  
PO Box 728 ~ Asheville, NC 28802  
251-5330  
251-0180 Fax  
terryb@buncombe.main.nc.us

## Buncombe County Commission Ex-Officio Member

Mr. David Young  
Fugazy Travel  
1550 Hendersonville Road ~ Asheville NC 28803  
274-2555  
274-4212 Fax  
commissioners@co.buncombe.nc.us



# Convention and Visitors Bureau Organizational Chart



# Executive/Administrative



## Kelly Miller

Vice President/Executive Director  
(828/258-6104, [kmiller@exploreasheville.com](mailto:kmiller@exploreasheville.com))



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Serves as liaison to the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board (BCTDA)
- Develops long-range strategic and operational planning
- Oversees budget and financial issues
- Oversees all CVB personnel and operations
- Works with local, state and national elected officials
- Manages product development initiatives
- Carries out community relations
- Serves as a board member of NC Travel & Tourism Coalition, Southeast Tourism Society and NCACVB
- Acts as liaison to the Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee and Board of Directors

## Carolee Knapp

Executive Assistant  
(828/258-6111, [cknapp@exploreasheville.com](mailto:cknapp@exploreasheville.com))



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Provides administrative support to the Executive Director
- Staff Assistant to the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board (BCTDA)
- Coordinates BCTDA meetings and minutes
- Coordinates BCTDA strategic planning retreat
- Coordinates BCTDA Marketing Plan Presentation
- Processes and compiles statistical information for monthly and annual reports
- Maintains information on hotel supply and demand



# Marketing and Public Relations

## Marla Tambellini

Assistant Vice President/Director of Marketing & Public Relations  
(828/258-6138, [mtambellini@exploreasheville.com](mailto:mtambellini@exploreasheville.com))



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages marketing efforts, including advertising and public relations
- Oversees development and promotion of [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com) and [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com)
- Acts as media spokesperson for tourism and CVB-related issues
- Serves as liaison to Public Relations Committee
- Serves as liaison to advertising agency
- Coordinates and manages tourism-related research projects
- Works with advertising agency to produce annual Ad Fair
- Holds membership with PRSA and SATW
- Serves as liaison to Blue Ridge Mountain Host

## Angela Velasquez

Public Relations Manager  
(828/257-4959, [avelasquez@exploreasheville.com](mailto:avelasquez@exploreasheville.com))



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Oversees day-to-day efforts of proactive media relations efforts
- Helps develop and write media materials for local, regional, national and international press
- Works one-on-one with journalists, providing background materials, pitching story ideas and creating itineraries for individual site visits to Asheville.
- Plans and executes media tours and familiarization programs
- Works with the NCDTFSD on specific promotions, domestic and international FAMs, and other publicity opportunities
- Develops trade-oriented media relations aimed at the convention and motorcoach markets
- Serves as liaison to Media Tour and Media FAM task forces
- Facilitates online editorial placements

# Marketing and Public Relations



## Sarah Malpeli

Marketing and Public Relations Assistant  
(828/258-6135, smalpeli@exploreasheville.com)



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Provides support to the marketing department
- Assists with fulfillment of media requests
- Prepares committee and task force meeting minutes
- Manages media and committee databases and oversees news release distribution
- Prepares clip reports
- Coordinates media leads
- Develops copy for tourism-related newsletters
- Assists with marketing analysis
- Evaluates media editorial calendars for placement opportunities and writes and submits pitches accordingly.
- Maintains photo files
- Fulfills media photography requests

## Currently Unoccupied

### Web Coordinator

(828/232-2243)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Coordinates ExploreAsheville.com and AshevilleCVB.com Web sites
- Designs, develops content and maintains Web pages
- Manages e-mail newsletter for consumers
- Produces special Web promotions such as fall and spring color reports for media and consumers
- Oversees search engine optimization

### Services Provided by the Marketing & Public Relations Area Include:

Professional Media Assistance

Asheville Tourism Press Kits

Cooperative Media Blitzes and FAMs

Quarterly Calendar of Events

Collateral Development

Proofing Assistance for Tourism Materials

Cooperative Advertising Opportunities through Ad Fair

Media Leads

Media Materials for Editorial Use:

- News Releases

- Video

- Slides and Digital Images

Media Site Visits

Tourism Research



# Tourism

## Dianna Jackson

Director of Tourism

(828/258-6108, djackson@exploreasheville.com)



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages leisure promotional programs
- Manages AAA marketing
- Manages motorcoach/group tour markets and related trade shows
- Serves as liaison to Tour & Travel Development Committee, AAA Explore Asheville! Collective Training Task Force, NTA Ice Breaker Task Force, NCMA Annual Meeting Task Force and other task forces established throughout the year.
- Serves as liaison to Journal Communications for production of Official Asheville Visitor Guide
- Manages international market and related trade shows
- Holds membership with RSA, ABA, NTA, NCMA

## Lauren Williams

Tourism Coordinator

(828/258-6139, lwilliams@exploreasheville.com)



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Maintains database of tourism business in Buncombe County and provides this information to NCDTFSD
- Coordinates all Tourism task force meetings
- Manages motorcoach/group tour sales and activities in select geographic territories
- Manages details of special events associated with the motorcoach market (NTA Ice Breaker, NCMA Annual Meeting, etc.)
- Produces AAA and Group-Tour e-mail newsletters
- Manages all leisure package programs
- Provides administrative support to the Director of Tourism

### Services Provided By the Tourism Area:

Tour Itinerary Planning  
 Itinerary Shells  
 Group Tour Guide  
 Collateral Development

Promotional Video  
 Sales Leads  
 Promotional Assistance  
 Asheville Visitor Guide

Site Inspections  
 VIP Pass  
 Slides  
 Posters

# Meetings and Conventions



## Susan Ballard

Assistant Vice President/Convention Sales  
(828/258-6105, sballard@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages all meetings and conventions markets
- Serves as liaison to Convention Development Committee
- Manages hobby/leisure and city-wide markets
- Holds membership with ASAE, GWSAE, PCMA, HSMAI and NASC
- NCACVB Group Promotion Committee Chair



## Tamara Benton

Convention Sales Manager - Associations  
(828/258-6121, tbenton@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages national, regional and state association markets and related trade shows
- Serves as liaison to Trade Show Task Force
- Holds membership with MPI, SCSAE, GSAE, AENC, GWSAE and HSMAI



## Clara Hansen

Convention Sales Manager - SMERF and Government  
(828/258-6133, chansen@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages social, military, educational, religious, fraternal and government markets and the related trade shows
- Serves as liaison to the Overseas Brats Task Force
- Holds membership with RCMA, CMA, SGMP, MPI, HSMAI and TRN



## Debbie Knight

Convention Sales Manager - Corporate & Sports  
(828/258-6125, dknight@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages corporate and sports markets and the related trade shows
- Holds membership with MPI and HSMAI





# Meetings and Conventions

**Picheska Marrero**

**Convention Sales Assistant**

**(828/258-6110, pmarrero@exploreasheville.com)**

**Key Areas of Responsibility:**

- Provides administrative support to Director of Sales and Convention Sales Managers
- Works with sales managers on blitz, FAM and trade show task forces
- Coordinates the distribution of weekly convention leads
- Coordinates convention task forces and Convention Development Committee minutes
- Coordinates monthly sales reports



## Services Provided by the Meetings & Conventions Area Include:

Asheville Visitor Guide

Convention Bids

Sales Leads

Meeting Planners Guide

Site Inspections

Convention Calendar

Co-op Sales Blitzes and FAMs

Co-op Trade Show & Marketplace Efforts

Booked Business Subscriptions

# Visitor and Convention Services



## Phyllis Fiscus

Director of Visitor & Conventions Services  
(828/258-6100, pfiscus@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Oversees Visitor Center operation and the retail operation
- Oversees volunteer participation and manages display spaces
- Oversees convention and motorcoach services
- Manages information sales and servicing



## Jim Payne

Coordinator, Visitor Center  
(828/258-6103, jpayne@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Manages Visitor Center operation and the retail operation
- Manages Chamber member brochure stock and maintenance
- Purchases and catalogs retail merchandise
- Coordinates all mailings, Internet and credit transactions
- Manages volunteer participation



## Cyndy Tippett

Information Specialist  
(828/258-6109, ctippett@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Answers daily tourism and relocation calls
- Serves as liaison to Daniel's Communications for visitor inquiry fulfillment & operator training
- Markets to and trains potential clients for subscription and fulfillment inquiry lists
- Coordinates and fulfills subscription reports for tourism and relocation inquiries
- Fulfills all relocation package requests and processes credit transactions



## Thomas Oliver

Manager of Convention and Motorcoach Services  
(828/258-6106, tolover@exploreasheville.com)

### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Services booked groups in all market segments
- Services meetings and social groups without booked rooms
- Services motorcoach groups
- Serves as liaison to Hospitality Asheville Committee
- Coordinates the National Tourism Week program on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce
- Oversees Hospitality Tables and Hospitality Table Diplomat Volunteer Program





# Visitor and Convention Services

## Pam Nieting

Visitor & Convention Services Assistant  
(828/258-6102, pnieting@exploreasheville.com)



### Key Areas of Responsibility:

- Provides administrative support to the Director of Visitor and Convention Services and Manager of Convention and Motorcoach Services
- Serves as receptionist to the CVB
- Coordinates compilation of theme lists, resource guides, itineraries, menu book, and civic and professional contacts
- Maintains Wedding Guide and Wedding Guide request subscription
- Coordinates all mailings for Convention and Motorcoach Services
- Oversees set-up and operation of Hospitality tables
- Maintains follow-up for conventions
- Services booked groups
- Supports Visitor Center staff

## Visitor Center Counselors

- George Pickering
- Jim Wilson

### Services Provided by the Visitor and Convention and Motorcoach Services Area: (Some available only to Chamber members)

Agenda/Brochure Shells  
 Brochure Display  
 Visitor Inquiry Fulfillment  
 Tourism Inquiry Subscriptions  
 Foyer and Mantle Display Opportunities  
 Retail Area  
 Accommodation Board  
 Wedding Guides  
 Attraction/Dining Board  
 Wedding Guide Request Subscriptions  
 Relocation Packages & Inquiry Subscriptions  
 Retirement Inquiry Subscriptions  
 Civic and Professional Organization Listings

Convention Service Packets  
 Hospitality Tables  
 Promotional Assistance  
 PowerPoint presentation  
 Promotional Video  
 Resource Guides  
 Sight-seeing Itineraries  
 Tour Itinerary Planning  
 Trivia Book  
 Promotional Items  
 Images -Color Slides and CD  
 Arrange Mayor Presentation  
 Foreign Translations for Selected Attractions

# CVB Committees and Task Forces



## Convention Development Committee

Offers educational networking opportunities and conducts joint promotions to recruit conventions.

Meets every other month. Committee members may elect to serve on the following task forces:

- Trade Show Task Force
- Corporate Task Force
- Overseas Brats FAM Task Force

## Tour & Travel Development Committee

Offers educational networking opportunities and conducts joint promotions to increase Asheville's exposure to tourism marketing including motorcoach operators and AAA auto counselors nationwide.

Meets every other month. Committee members may elect to serve on the following task forces:

- NTA Pre-convention FAM Task Force
- NTA Ice Breaker Task Force
- NCMA Annual Meeting Task Force
- AAA Explore Asheville! Training Task Force

## National Tourism Week Task Force

Provides input for implementation of National Tourism Week promotion. Meets as needed.

## Public Relations Committee

Offers educational networking opportunities and conducts media efforts to promote tourism in the area.

Meets every other month. Committee members may elect to serve on the following task forces:

- Media Tour Task Force
- Media FAM Task Force

## Visitor Center Volunteers & Hospitality Table Diplomats

Volunteers and Diplomats give information and assistance to tourists and people within our community.



**2003-2004**

**Addendum**





# Industry Trends

## Travel Growth Projections

- US hotels experienced a decline in revPAR of 2.5 percent during 2002, while hotels across the rest of the world reported positive growth in revPAR compared to 2001 when measured in US dollars. Information was presented at the Americas Lodging Investment Summit (ALIS) by Deloitte & Touche and Smith Travel Research. The best performing region was Asia Pacific where revPAR increased by 3.8 percent, followed closely by Europe where revPAR rose 3.4 percent. When measured in euros, revPAR actually fell across Europe by 3.5 percent. In the US, both occupancy and average room rate came under pressure with hotels reporting a 1 percent fall in occupancy combined with a 1.5 percent decline in average room rate. - Beige Book/Federal Reserve Board
- Nationwide, hotel occupancy is expected to creep up by 0.5 percent this year with room rates up 2.3 percent, yielding an average per room revenue of \$51, a 3.2 percent increase. A significant rebound for the hospitality industry won't happen until 2004. The possible repercussions of war with Iraq, which could be ruinous to the industry, were not included in the report. In 2002, moderately priced hotels in drive-to destinations fared better than luxury hotels in gateway destinations that rely on airport traffic, the report said, a product of travelers' ongoing propensity to stick close to home and cut costs. - Ernst & Young's 2003 National Lodging Forecast
- While TIA's December 2002 Travel Price Index increased 2.6 percent over December 2001, most travel-related sectors exhibited few signs of recovery in 2002. Travel prices remained virtually unchanged during the twelve months ending in December 2002, decreasing 0.3 percent. Airfares performed the worst, down 3.3 percent during this period. Motor fuel prices increased 24.6 percent over December 2001, but still fell below historic levels. Only food and beverage bucked overall trends, up over 2 percent both for the year-to-date and in comparison to December 2001. General inflation, as tracked by the Consumer Price Index, rose faster than travel prices, increasing 1.6 percent during 2002. - TIA
- TIA is predicting that 2002 will mark the fourth straight year of decline in business travel volume. Leisure travel will fare much better, as TIA predicts an increase of 2 percent in this segment. Business travel volume for 2002 will be 4.3 percent lower than 2001. - TIA

# Industry Trends



## Economic Trends

- Tourist activity was strong in the mid-Atlantic district ski resorts but softer along coastal areas in recent weeks. Tourism in coastal areas was somewhat weaker since our last report. Reports from the hospitality and tourism sector in the Sixth District (Atlanta & Southeast) revealed some improvement in late November and December. Business travel to south Florida improved modestly, but visitors were not booking much in advance. Some reports indicated that hotel and motel bookings for the holiday period returned to near 2000 levels. Weakness in business travel persisted in Atlanta and the city's convention business continued to suffer. Central Florida theme parks were reportedly packed over the holidays. Seasonal rentals were lagging behind last year's figures because of a decline in demand from "snowbirds" from the northern United States as well as from Canada. - Beige Book/Federal Reserve Board
- The Conference Board index of consumer confidence fell almost two points as expected in January. It is now at 79.0, its lowest level since November 1993. The expectations component was responsible for the entire decline, with the present situation index improving in the month. The report was close to market expectations. Mirroring the Conference Board consumer confidence index, the ABC News/Money Magazine Consumer Comfort index is presently at its lowest level in more than nine years. - Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index

## Internet Trends

- Even though dial-up will remain the primary method of consumer Internet access through the year 2006, DSL subscribers numbers will continue to gain momentum, according to In-Stat/MDR. In-Stat forecasts that nearly 1 out of 4 online households will subscribe to a broadband service by the end of this year. - Center for Media Research
- Packaging technology has arrived, just in time. A number of new companies have introduced essentially self-packaging technology that are being used by the major online agencies who are seeking to replace lost airline commissions by selling more bundled components tailored made by consumers. In the words of Chris Soder, president hotel, automotive and business development, Priceline.com, "The next big wave of migration is the growth of packaged travel on the Internet." - Sept. 30, 2002 Volume 1 Number 22, Travel America
- As noted at the Third Annual E Tourism Summit held recently in Dallas, David S. Litman, founder and CEO, hotels.com notes that online hotel booking by consumers will increase from five percent of the total rooms booked this year to 13 percent in 2005. - Sept. 30, 2002 Volume 1 Number 22, Travel America



# Industry Trends

## Media Trends

- Ad spending is expected to rise 3.3 percent in 2003, up to \$117.5 billion, according to the full-year forecast released January 14th by CMR/TNS Media Intelligence. “For 2003, we see a continued rise in ad spending.” Notes Steven J. Fredericks, president and chief executive officer, CMR/TNS Media Intelligence. “Spending in 2002 benefited from key drivers such as the Olympics and the recent election season. Even though 2003 will not have those market stimulants, we are expecting the year to show improved year-over-year growth.” - CMR/TNS Media Intelligence January 2003
- According to the TVB.org through week 15 of the broadcast season, which ended January 5th, broadcast’s lead over ad-supported cable remained strong. The research was conducted on a level playing field, and included all of ad-supported broadcast television - including the newer network affiliates, Hispanic affiliates, and independent stations - and all of ad-supported cable. Primetime is defined as M-Sa, 8-11pm and Sunday, 7-11pm. Broadcast’s combined delivery tops ad-supported cable’s delivery by 7.2 rating points, or 26 percent; this advantage become more significant when one considers that ad-supported cable encompasses over 55 networks. The seven broadcast networks delivered 32.5 HH rating points combined; by comparison, the top 10 cable networks delivered 12.1 HH rating points, or 37.2 percent of the delivery of the seven broadcast networks. - Center for Media Research January 23, 2003
- Magazines extend brand to TV: In an increasingly crowded newsstand environment, the power of the brand is becoming important for magazine titles. To help build brand awareness among magazine buyers, publishers are increasingly looking to television to create related-content programs. - Media Daily News January 17, 2003
- Media Predictions for 2003: The State of the Media
  - The lines between news, entertainment and advertising get even fuzzier.
  - The networks’ morning news programs will increasingly resemble variety shows, featuring interviews, performances and clips by major stars and comeback-staging celebrities.
  - Ability to poll viewers and readers in near real time accelerates the move toward personalized news delivery and creates advertising opportunities for companies targeting specific audiences
  - The trend toward consolidation in broadcast media will continue, as evidenced by the merger talks between ABC and CNN. (The merger has the support of FCC Chairman Michael Powell and his chief supporter, Sen. John McCain.)
  - Print-Cable/TV alliances continue: Forbes reporters appear on Fox; Wall Street Journal reporters appear on CNBC; New York Times continues to co-produce stories with ABC.
  - Meanwhile, online publications are still struggling to find a way to be profitable. As advertising revenues stay flat or decline, electronic magazines and newspapers increasingly will move their content into a “pay per view” category. - Media Daily News, January 17, 2003
- According to estimates from Newspaper Association of America in the January issue of NAA’s Presstime magazine, newspaper advertising should improve by at least 3.2 percent and possibly as much as 6.1 percent in 2003. After rebounding to positive year-over-year comparisons in 2002’s third quarter, the trend should continue with the fourth-quarter numbers and into 2003. - Center for Media Research January 14, 2003

# Industry Trends



## Lifestyle Trends

- Baby Boomers generated the highest travel volume in the U.S. in 2001 (more than 248 million trips). Boomers (35 to 54 years old) are more likely to stay in a hotel or motel (59 percent), travel for business (33 percent) and to fly (24 percent). Boomers spend more on their trips than other age groups, averaging \$489 per trip, excluding transportation to their destination. - TIA Domestic Travel Report, 2002
- Individuals would hardly admit that a one-percent increase in the price of gasoline could impact their plans to travel, but a new study shows that—in the aggregate—it does. (A 1% increase is approximately 28 cents more for a 20-gallon, regular unleaded fill-up.) Scientists at Cornell studied the relationship between demand for lodging guest rooms and the price of gasoline between 1988 and 2000. The 13-year study confirmed that a one-percent increase in gasoline price will decrease the overall demand for guest rooms by 1.74 percent. The percent of decline varies by “type of property,” from almost -2.9 percent at economy properties to just 0.4 percent at the most upscale hotels. - Center for Hospitality Research at Cornell University
- The latest family travel trends and findings from “A Portrait of Family Travelers” – a study by Yesawich, Pepperdine & Brown, Orlando, FL, were announced earlier this month at the Family Travel Forum, a national conference sponsored by the San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau. Among the key family travel findings:
  - 34 percent of U.S. households have kids under 18.
  - Family travel is considered a highly “value-sensitive” market.
  - 86 percent of parents say they want to go “where I or my children have never visited before.”
  - 75 percent of family travelers prefer a “beach experience.”
  - Among parents, overall interest in skiing has climbed to 26 percent in 2001, up from 16 percent in 1999.
  - 63 percent of kids say they want to take a ski vacation.

Additionally, both parents and kids say they need “to reconnect” and are interested in accommodations that look “more like home,” says Peter Yesawich, CEO, Yesawich, Pepperdine & Brown, the firm that authored the study. He adds that additional research on leisure travelers shows that more than half (56 percent) say they are interested in staying at a condominium resort during the next two years. - Yesawich, Pepperdine & Brown

- Eighty-six percent of affluent older Americans polled by Yankelovich, Inc. indicated that even though there were things they would like to own, they preferred spending money on enriching experiences versus 65 percent who agreed with that statement in 1991. - Yankelovich, Inc.



# Industry Trends

## Travel Agent/AAA Trends

- According to a recent Travel Poll by Tourism Industry Association of America "TIA" 26 percent of Americans say they have used a travel agent to book at least one business, pleasure, or personal trip, flight, hotel room, rental car or tour in the past three years. This translates into more than 54 million American travelers. With more and more Americans using the Internet to book travel, it is not surprising that this figure is down from 32 percent from October 1999. - Tourism Industry Association of America Poll Indicates Changing Travel Booking Patterns, December 2002
- According to a senior travel analyst, EMarketer, US Travel Bookings By Channel in 2001 in billions as a percent of total are:
  - Traditional Travel Agents - \$107.1 (53 percent)
  - Traditional Supplier Direct - \$69.1 (34 percent)
  - Online travel website - \$15.7 (8 percent)
  - Online suppliers website \$10.1 (5 percent).Of the sales through traditional travel agents, cruises account for 95 percent; tours and packages 90 percent; airline tickets 80 percent; car rentals 40 percent and hotels 25 percent. - ASTA, Internet.com, June 2002 as reprinted in Sept. 30, 2002 Volume 1 Number 22, Travel America
- Citing the unprecedented effect of post-Sept. 11 travel woes, AAA has decided to delay the implementation of its new lodging Diamond Rating guidelines for one year until 2003. AAA reviews and revises its Lodging Requirements & Diamond Rating Guide periodically to reflect significant changes within the industry. - June 28, 2002 Volume 1, Number 5, Travel America
- The Internet has affected not only travel agents (fewer travel agencies as well as a shift in emphasis toward service and consulting) but also all brick-and-mortar businesses, according to Cathy Keefe, spokeswoman for TIA. As businesses have had to reinvent themselves, and most have been successful...but more agencies are using the internet technology to capture a more educated, less frugal client...agency customers who want to search the Web for good fares can accomplish that goal through the agency. It offers FareFinder, an online service that searches the low-cost airline ticket Internet sites and consolidators, including the airlines and such popular Web sites as Travelocity and Expedia... Now, our agent can search the global distribution system at the same time the computer is searching Web fares and consolidator companies. Consolidator fares are the real value... - Sacramento Business Journal, June 21, 2002
- According to a national survey conducted by Opinion Research Corp, car travel continues to be the most popular choice as 47 percent of Americans will take their longest vacation in 2003 by motor vehicle and another 11 percent will combine a fly and drive trip. - Confident Americans set Sights on 2003 Travel, AAA Press Release, Orlando Florida, December 18, 2002

# Industry Trends



## International Trends

- US arrivals from Western Europe for 2001 were down 18.3 percent over 2000 for a total of 9.8 million. Europe is still the top tourism-generating region. European arrivals to the U.S. are forecast to remain relatively flat in 2002, but increase 9.2 percent in 2003. - TIA Research: Travel Forecasts - International Visitors to the U.S.
- **Coming to America.** Foreign visitors used to spill off behemoth tour buses and roam the country in slow-moving herds. Now, says American Demographics, only 3% of the estimated 26 million overseas visitors who travel to the U.S. annually do so with tour groups. Some 36% are lone rangers, while another 27% are accompanied by family or friends and 26% travel with just their spouse. These international visitors remain in the U.S. for an average of 16 nights and spend about \$1,647 per person during their stay and despite all the options, two-thirds of overseas guests visit only one state... - American Demographics, November issue, Page 22
- British visitors spent more than \$9 billion in the U.S. in 2001 and continue to make the U.K. our top U.S. market in Europe and the most dependable travel market in the world. - TIA U.K. Travel View: Attitudes and Trends, 2002 Edition
- In the 2002 Forecast of International Visitor Arrivals to the U.S. the United Kingdom is expected to experience a 1.5 percent increase in visitations from 2002/2001 and expected to see a 10 percent increase in 2003/2002 levels (4.6 million as opposed to 4.2 million). Germany is expected to see a -1.6 percent decrease in arrivals from 2002/2001 and to see a 7.4 percent increase in arrivals from 2003/2002 (1.4 million in 2003 as opposed to 1.3 million in 2002).  
- TIA 2002 Forecast of International Visitor Arrivals to the U.S

## Convention & Motorcoach Services Trends

- “A change of scenery can have a positive effect on rebuilding employees’ confidence in the company,” says Ellen Brett, a team leader and senior director at pharmaceutical company Pfizer in New York City - Successful Meetings/October 2002; pg 68
- “Spas have grown tremendously in popularity in recent times-in part because of the growing number of world class facilities, but also as a refresher for attendees, both men and women,” reports Brad Langley, COO, Creative Group, Inc. - Meetings Net/August 2002; pg 37
- “Regardless of world affairs, good times or bad, war or peace, religious organizations continue to hold assemblies.” - Meetings & Conventions, January 2003



# Industry Trends

## Convention & Motorcoach Services Trends, continued

- “In an effort to solidify bonds and hone the competitive edge, teams are increasingly seeking more exhilarating venues to shore up their crews. Not satisfied with role-playing in the boardroom or yet another excruciating PowerPoint presentation, teams are going extreme. From cattle drives to ice climbing to adventure racing, groups are looking to the great outdoors as a backdrop to nurture their collaborative and competitive natures. The trend mirrors a larger cultural affinity toward extreme sports and heightened experience.” - Meetings West/Volume 16, Number 6; August 2002; pg 1
- “Culinary team-building is a specialty...A chili cook-off lets groups collaborate on everything from creating a team name to decorating their aprons to making chili from a pantry that includes “every chili ingredient imaginable.” Off-site venues and service providers offer interesting group activities, too...mock train robberies, casino parties, line dancing and panning for gold...” - Meetings West, May 2002
- Security is the biggest concern since 9/11. In the new environment, the convention centers require us to hire our own security team. - Meetings & Conventions, January 2003
- It appears that companies are beginning to catch on to this secret power of nature. Many have learned that after a few days in the wilderness, employees are better able to share ideas and strategize about the future. - www.meetings411.com, February 2003
- Religious meetings are more resilient than other types of association gatherings to the US’s continuing economic slump and to fallout from September 11. The resilience of religious meetings to world events and economic conditions also stems from the commitment of groups to adhere to their by-laws, as well as from their belief that church business is sufficiently critical to merit meeting attendance no matter what. - Convene, September 2002
- “These are times when people are cutting back on travel, and golf can be the impetus to bring groups like association or hotel sales staffs together on a course”. A golf event can be an excellent substitute for multiple office visits between clients and salespeople. - Meetings South/December 2002
- The National Golf Foundation says there are more than 26.4 million Americans over the age of 12 who play golf, and numbers are rising 30 to 40 percent per year. - Meetings South, December 2002
- Downtowns are back in a big way, especially in the South. In the last decade, leaders in Southern cities and towns have realized that downtown is the heart and soul of their communities. Today, cities are filled with art galleries, museums, entertainment complexes, shops, restaurants and historic sites. If you haven’t considered a Southern downtown stop in recent years, think again. - The Group Travel Leader/January 2003
- Obviously we’re seeing a continuing trend toward extremely short-notice decision-making that’s unprecedented. There is a lot of waiting and making decisions at the last moment in corporate America. - Corporate Meetings & Incentives/January 2003

# Industry Trends



## Convention & Motorcoach Services Trends, continued

- Technology will continue to shape the meeting and conference industry in the future. As a meeting professional, you need to watch for and adapt to the significant changes it brings. - Successful Meetings, January 2003
- Catered corporate outings at parks (attractions) continue to be a staple of many group sales make-ups. Most of the parks do have facilities for company outings and picnics. - Meetings South/October 2002
- Today, tourism organizations are promoting new wine trails and festivals; hotels and resorts are participating in programs with wineries, and there are new opportunities for groups to become involved in an educational activity that's sure to please. - Meetings South/October 2002
- Groups are now more likely to arrive at retreat hunting lodges, golf resorts, and country inns Sundays or depart Saturdays, and spend evenings in the meeting room. Some see groups staying closer to home, with a tendency to drive rather than fly, which can mean an increase in local businesses as a new customer base. - Meeting South/August 2002
- With hundreds of wineries now complemented by a burgeoning culinary scene, historic towns, recreational activities and a growing list of accommodations options, wine and dine country has become a destination in its own right, warranting a multi-day visit. - Meetings West/November 2002

## Visitor Center Trends

- "The new Visitor Center offers us the opportunity to promote the county and our 400 member businesses in a way that has previously been unavailable to us," said Keith Toler, Executive Director of the Bucks County Conference & Visitors Bureau. "Through face to face service, our travel councilors can provide visitors with information specific to their needs, resulting in increased spending opportunities during their visit." - <http://hospitality-1st.com/PressNews/Bucks-County-CVB-pr.html>
- "In Iowa, at their 21 state run visitor centers, 240,000 visitors were served and every 46<sup>th</sup> person was interviewed this past year. It was determined that 1/3 of those interviewed would extend their stay because of information received at the Visitor Center. Sixty percent would extend their stay from 2 hours to one more day and 40 percent would stay two or more days. Using the multiplier of \$183.50 per day, the impact of these extended stays amounts to \$30,000,000 in one year. The group that is most able to be flexible in their travel plans is usually seniors, RVers, empty nesters - not those travelers with small children. Anything from an additional meal to additional nights spent at an accommodation add up quickly!" - DMOU Tele-Conference, Dec. 10, 2002, LuAnn Reinders of the Iowa Office of Tourism



# Industry Trends

## Meetings and Conventions Trends

### Religious Market

- **More Religious meetings are being held than ever before; A larger percentage of religious meetings are being held in retreat settings, attendees continue to invest significant amounts of time to attend religious meetings.** - Religious Conference Manager June 1, 2002
- **Downtown hotels and hotels in resort destinations continue to be the top choice for meeting planners. 18.4 percent of the meetings in 2001 were held at downtown hotels.** - Religious Conference Manager June 1, 2002
- **The Southeast keeps growing in its percentage of religious meetings, up from 15.3 percent in 2000 to 16.4 percent in 2001.** - Religious Conference Manager June 1, 2002

### Reunions Market

- **Approximately 80% of all reunion attendees arrive by auto, yet many planners focus on and decide on the basis of an inconveniently located airport. Interstate highways are usually far more crucial than airports.** - TRNEWS March/April 2002
- **For most reunion attendees, the new or different things to see and do become the dominant factor in deciding whether or not to attend.** - TRNEWS March/April 2002
- **The military reunion market is largely unaffected by 9/11 events. Almost every planner polled by Yesawich, Pepperdine & Brown has expressed a determination not to let the fanatics stop them from having a reunion.** - TRNNNews July/August 2002
- **The number of military planners continues to rise, indicating that the military reunion market is alive and healthy. Despite the increasing attrition of the WWII veteran roll, reunions from more recent conflicts continue to outpace the loss.** - TRNNNews July/August 2002

### Association Market

- **The reliability of group history has been severely diminished by the wildly fluctuating numbers due to 9/11.** - CONVENE June 2002
- **Looking ahead, most association project that year-to-year attendance figures will remain “relatively stable” in 2003.** - CONVENE September 2002
- **The “new normal” has forced planners to revisit attrition clauses and liability issues. But few see regional events replacing national meetings.** - CONVENE September 2002

# Industry Trends



## Meetings and Conventions Trends, continued

### Incentive Group Market

- Massive trips for 500 couples or more are being replaced with more intimate programs. Small groups require fewer support resources, less customization of programs and less onsite labor. - TheMeetingProfessional July 2002
- For U.S. based travelers, exotic destinations now seem less intriguing and more troublesome, while domestic destinations, once considered less attractive, now seem pretty fabulous. - TheMeetingProfessional July 2002
- Seeing a lot of interest in team-building programs that involve a bit of physical drama. Qualifiers (more in their 20's and 30's) are a more fit, excitement-craving population, an adventure component is working its way into many trips. - TheMeetingProfessional July 2002
- Incentive professionals agree: spa programs are hotter than ever. - TheMeetingProfessional July 2002

### Overall SMERF

- Interest in traveling to family reunions has never been stronger. In the past year especially, consumers have begun to reevaluate what is important to them. As a result, we're seeing a growing interest in travel experiences that provide connections to family. - TIA, August 2002
- A steep falloff in corporate meeting business, high interest in drive-in markets since 9/11, a big leap in new convention space (especially in the small- and mid-size market) between 2000 and 2005 are key factors fueling interest in the SMERF market, which tends to be more recession-proof than more deep-pocket meetings. - Association Meetings, December 2002
- SMERF meetings, a lot of them, are more like leisure travel in that people don't go to them for business..They go to them to connect on a more personal level, and there's probably more need for that now than ever. - Association Meetings, December 2002
- Despite the full-court press from venues and destinations, the SMERF market remains somewhat hard to track. Because many of these organizations are run by volunteers, it can be daunting to find them. - Association Meetings, December 2002
- While many family reunion planners surveyed plan to have their next reunion at a relative's home, 64 percent said they plan to use hotel, resort or similar accommodations for their next reunion. Cited as most important factors in selecting a reunion site were reasonable travel time, reasonable cost and location. - Reunions, December 2002/January 2003
- Family reunions are large. Seventy-three percent have 50 or more attendees and 35 percent have over 100. Six percent have over 200 attendees. - Reunions, December 2002/January 2003



# Industry Trends

## Meetings and Conventions Trends, continued

### Corporate Market

- Healthcare is a growing industry and the number of medical meetings is increasing steadily as a result. Medical meetings, by their nature, require a short turn-around time – average lead time is 8 to 10 weeks. - ConventionSouth July 2002
- Corporate planners must cut expenses without diminishing a meeting's effectiveness. - The Meeting Professional November 2002
- The traditional vendor process may be on its way out, as the Web has made shopping around easier. Additionally, free time remains important, but planned recreational events may be expendable. - The Meeting Professional November 2002
- There's no quick end to this economic downturn, but we still have to communicate and still get meetings done. - The Meeting Professional November 2002
- Corporations are looking for cities easy to get in and out of with little additional ground transportation – and they're sending fewer people. - The Meeting Professional November 2002

### Other/General

- Meeting planners will continue to gain negotiating leverage through 2003, as they book meetings several years out. Conventions are a reliable source of revenue because they usually reserve a large block of rooms, they book banquets that can be lucrative for hotels, and they represent potential repeat business. - Hotel Online 1/9/03
- The Internet is dramatically changing the way hotels book business. Convention and association attendees have picked up on the trend, circumventing the regular process of booking at the negotiated convention rate and instead grabbing cheaper Internet rates. That's good for the individual, but tough on the meeting planner who had to guarantee a fixed number of rooms to the hotel in exchange for meeting space and other considerations. - Hotel Online
- The majority of planners visit properties to gauge services and facilities prior to booking a meeting. Fifty percent of planners inspect hotels more than 75 percent of the time, with independent planners conducting the most site inspections; fifty percent of independents examine properties more than 90 percent of the time. - Meetings South, January 2003
- Independent planners take the most FAM trips. While FAM invitations are widely accepted among planners across the board, 80 percent of independents take advantage of familiarization programs, followed by corporate planners (68 percent) and association planners (62 percent). - Meetings South, January 2003

# Industry Trends



## Meetings and Conventions Trends (Corporate), continued

- Eighty-nine percent of planners say they use the services of CVBs to help them plan meetings. Planners most often request general destination information from CVBs, followed by details on meeting facilities, off-site venues, restaurants, local transportation, and events - Meetings South, January 2003
- Trends found through Meetings Media Market Report (Corporate and Association):
  - Corporate: 55 percent of budgets decreased; 33 percent stayed the same; 12 percent increased
  - Association: 27 percent of budgets decreased; 54 percent stayed the same; 19 percent increased
  - Independent: 45 percent of budgets decreased; 45 percent stayed the same; 10 percent increased

### Actions Taken to Reduce Budgets

|                              | <u>Corporate</u> | <u>Association</u> | <u>Independent</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Reduced entertainment        | 72%              | 52%                | 78%                |
| Fewer off-site events/tours  | 69%              | 39%                | 67%                |
| Reduced number of meetings   | 61%              | 26%                | 41%                |
| Reduced F&B                  | 58%              | 61%                | 78%                |
| Reduced room rates           | 58%              | 30%                | 52%                |
| Reduced duration of meetings | 39%              | 17%                | 59%                |
| Reduced number of attendees  | 36%              | 26%                | 30%                |
| More drive-to meetings       | 28%              | 30%                | 30%                |
| Fewer spousal programs       | 22%              | 26%                | 30%                |
| More Web-based meetings      | 17%              | 4%                 | 4%                 |

### Typical Planning Cycles

|                        | <u>Corporate</u> | <u>Association</u> | <u>Independent</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Less than 4 months out | 37%              | 11%                | 19%                |
| 4-6 months out         | 29%              | 19%                | 26%                |
| 7-12 months out        | 26%              | 47%                | 37%                |
| 13-24 months out       | 8%               | 20%                | 15%                |
| More than 24 months    | 0%               | 3%                 | 3%                 |

Meetings South, January 2003



# Industry Trends

## Motorcoach Trends

- Nearly 40 million Americans (or 20 percent of U.S. residents) went on a garden tour, visited a botanical garden, attended a gardening show or festival, or participated in some other garden-related activity in the past five years. This translates to 39.3 million U.S. adults. Ten million U.S. adults participated in a garden-related activity in the past year. College graduates (33 percent), travelers with an annual household income of \$75,000 or more (33 percent), residents of the New England census region (31 percent), married travelers (28 percent) and travelers 55-64 years old (28 percent) are most likely to take in a garden-related activity while traveling. Nearly three-fourths of garden travelers (71 percent) visited a botanical garden in the past five years, making it the most popular garden activity. Thirty-six percent of garden travelers attended a gardening show or festival and 29 percent went on some type of garden tour. Another 16 percent participated in some other type of garden-related activity or tour. - TIA Web site
- Mature Americans age 55 or older, average the longest stays away from home (4.9 nights, excluding day trips), with 18 percent staying seven or more nights away. Conversely, this group also has a higher share of day trips (21 percent). Even when including day trips in the average, mature travelers continue to rank first over other age groups with 3.9 nights average trip duration. Half (52 percent) of mature travelers stay in a hotel or motel on their trip ... Mature travelers are the most likely of all groups to travel alone or with someone from outside their household (49 percent). With their growing numbers coupled with their financial power and availability of time, make them a very attractive market for the U.S. travel industry. - TIA Web site - The Mature Traveler, 2000 Ed.
- Key Group Tour Trends as reported from the National Tour Association November meeting
  - More day trips are being developed with operators hoping to expand those into overnight trips
  - There is increased operator-to-operator partnering as programs expand into new regions
  - While notable in its appeal to suppliers because of the upscale nature of the clientele, the Bank Travel segment has matured and may even decrease in size in the future as the community banks (whose clientele comprise the market) become absorbed by financial conglomerates that see the travel services as unnecessary. - NAJ: Travel America November 5, 2002
- The learning aspect of travel is important to U.S. travelers, with about one-fifth –30.2 million adults– having taken an educational trip to learn or improve a skill, sport or hobby in the past three years. Eighteen percent of travelers in the past year said that taking such a trip was the main purpose of their travel. Overall, educational travelers are more likely than total U.S. travelers to be male (56 percent), younger (39 years, average age), a college graduate (49 percent), have a professional or managerial occupation (38 percent), have children in the household (51 percent), and have a higher annual household income (\$75,000 average annual household income). They are less likely to be married. - TIA Web site - [www.tia.org/Travel/TravelTrends.asp](http://www.tia.org/Travel/TravelTrends.asp)

# Industry Calendar - 2003



| <b>JULY</b>      | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
|------------------|---|--------------------|
| 9                | 2003-2004 Marketing Plan Presentation       | Asheville, NC**    |
| 16               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |
| 18               | PR Committee Meeting                        | Asheville, NC      |
| 23-25            | Media Tours                                 | Washington, D.C.   |
| <b>AUGUST</b>    | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 7-8              | NCACVB Meeting                              | Chapel Hill, NC    |
| 20               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |
| 22               | PR Committee Meeting                        | Asheville, NC      |
| 23-26            | Joint ESTO                                  | Asheville, NC      |
| 24               | Convention Development Committee            | Asheville, NC**    |
| <b>SEPTEMBER</b> | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 2-4              | Affordable Meetings                         | Washington, D.C.** |
| 12               | NCDTFSD Mid-Year Update                     | Raleigh, NC        |
| 18               | Tour & Travel Development Committee         | Asheville, NC**    |
| 17               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |
| TBD              | Fall Media Tour                             | Texas              |
| TBD              | AAA Explore Asheville! Training             | TBD**              |
| <b>OCTOBER</b>   | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 2-3              | NCACVB Meeting                              | Concord, NC        |
| 3                | Public Relations Committee                  | Asheville, NC      |
| 15               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |
| 20-22            | TIA Marketing Outlook Forum                 | Austin, TX         |
| 23               | Convention Development Committee            | Asheville, NC      |
| 29-11/2          | Overseas Brats                              | Chicago, IL        |
| 30-11/2          | Delta Rhythms of the South Marketplace      | Nashville, TN**    |
| <b>NOVEMBER</b>  | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 6-11             | SATW Annual Convention                      | Orlando, FL        |
| 11-14            | National Tour Association PreConvention FAM | Asheville, NC**    |
| 14-19            | National Tour Association                   | Charlotte, NC      |
| 19               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |
| 20               | Tour & Travel Development Committee         | Asheville, NC      |
| 21-23            | AAA Carolinas Superbowl of Knowledge VIII   | Pinehurst, NC**    |
| <b>DECEMBER</b>  | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                        | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 4                | AENC Trade Show                             | Raleigh, NC**      |
| 4-5              | NCACVB Meeting                              | Pinehurst, NC      |
| 5                | Public Relations Committee                  | Asheville, NC      |
| 11               | Convention Development Committee            | Asheville, NC      |
| 17               | TDA Board Meeting                           | Asheville, NC      |

\*\*Opportunities for community involvement.

Dates are subject to change. Please call 828/258-6102 to confirm



# Industry Calendar - 2004

| <b>JANUARY</b>  | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|
| 15              | Tour & Travel Development Committee                    | Asheville, NC**    |
| 16-21           | American Bus Association                               | New York City      |
| 21              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | Asheville, NC      |
| 29-2/1          | NC Motorcoach Association                              | Asheville, NC**    |
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 6               | Public Relations Committee                             | Asheville, NC      |
| 12-13           | NCACVB Meeting   | Burlington, NC     |
| 16-17           | TDA 2004-2005 Strategic Planning Retreat               | Asheville, NC      |
| 17              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | Asheville, NC      |
| 26              | Convention Development Committee                       | Asheville, NC      |
| <b>MARCH</b>    | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 18              | Tour & Travel Development Committee                    | Asheville, NC**    |
| 24              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | TBD                |
| TBD             | VisitNC Presentation                                   | Raleigh, NC**      |
| TBD             | Spring Media Tour                                      | TBD                |
| TBD             | AAA ExploreAsheville! Training                         | TBD**              |
| <b>APRIL</b>    | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 1-2             | NCACVB Meeting   | Williamston, NC    |
| 4               | Public Relations Committee                             | Asheville, NC      |
| 5-7             | Governor's Conference                                  | Charlotte, NC**    |
| 21              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | Asheville, NC      |
| 22              | Convention Development Committee                       | Asheville, NC      |
| 24-25           | NCACVB Meeting   | Fayetteville, NC   |
| 24-28           | POW-WOW  | Los Angeles, CA**  |
| <b>MAY</b>      | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 4-10            | National Tourism Week                                  | Asheville, NC**    |
| 19              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | Asheville, NC      |
| 20              | Tour & Travel Development Committee                    | Chimney Rock, NC** |
| TBD             | Blue Ridge Parkway's AAA FAM                           | Asheville, NC**    |
| <b>JUNE</b>     | <b>MEETING/EVENT</b>                                   | <b>LOCATION</b>    |
| 3-4             | NCACVB Annual Meeting                                  | Greensboro, NC     |
| 4               | Public Relations Committee                             | Asheville, NC      |
| 10-13           | Springtime in the Park - GWSAE                         | Washington, D.C.   |
| 16              | TDA Board Meeting                                      | Asheville, NC      |
| 16              | TDA Budget Hearing                                     | Asheville, NC      |
| 24              | Convention Development Committee                       | Asheville, NC      |
| TBD             | PRSA Travel & Tourism Section/ SATW Associates Council | TBD                |

\*\*Opportunities for community involvement.

Dates are subject to change. Please call 828/258-6102 to confirm

# Glossary of Terms



AAA – American Automobile Association – A not-for-profit organization of some 90 motor clubs serving more than 42 million members in the United States and Canada.

ABA – American Bus Association – A national association of private intercity bus companies, travel industry organizations, motorcoach tour organizers and associates. The ABA offers a marketplace where buyers and sellers meet in one-on-one pre-scheduled appointments.

Association organizations – Organizations of association executives who meet regularly and host annual meetings, conventions and trade shows.

ASAE – American Society of Association Executives

AENC – Association Executives of North Carolina

GSAE – Georgia Society of Association Executives

GWSAE – Greater Washington Society of Association Executives

SCSAE – South Carolina Society of Association Executives

BCTDA – Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority – A ten-member board responsible for overseeing the expenditure of the county's four-percent room occupancy tax revenues. The board is comprised of seven members with voting status (three appointed by Buncombe County, three by the City of Asheville, and one by the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce) as well as three ex-officio, nonvoting members.

B-roll – A broadcast term that refers to video with natural sound on tape.

CMA - Christian Management Association

Conversion study – A study conducted to determine the number of visitors requesting visitor information who actually visit the area.

E-zine – A magazine published electronically for Internet consumption.

FAM – A shortened term for familiarization tour, a common marketing tool used in the travel industry. A FAM is an invitation-only complimentary trip hosted by a destination for the purpose of “familiarizing” a specific group (media, motorcoach operator, meeting planner, etc) with the attributes of the area.

GAMPI – Georgia Meeting Professionals International

Group leaders – Nonprofessional travel planners associated with religious, social and/or senior clubs. Group leaders are working with “preformed groups” drawn from the organization's membership, rather than individuals brought together by a professional tour operator.

Gateway city – A city with an airport servicing direct international flights.

HSMIAI – Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International – An organization of hospitality industry professionals including representatives from hotels, restaurants, attractions and service companies.

IACVB – International Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau – A professional organization for the convention and visitor industry across the world. Educational opportunities are provided at seminars and at the annual convention.

IMG – International Motorcoach Group

Media tour – A tour of a city or cities in a core market in which appointments are scheduled with media for interviews and to distribute information about visiting the Asheville area in hopes of obtaining editorial and broadcast coverage.

MPI – Meeting Professionals International – The leading professional society of meeting planners and suppliers, the organization hosts an annual meeting along with a trade show which the Asheville CVB attends. In addition, state chapters also host their own annual meetings and trade show opportunities.

NCSC – National Association of Sports Commissions – National, professional organization of sports event planners. Members include CVBs, sports commissions, sports venues and planners of sporting events as well as companies which sponsor sporting events.

NCACVB – North Carolina Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus – A private, not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the promotion of North Carolina as a convention and visitor destination. Comprised of more than 30 destination marketing organizations, the group works on cooperative marketing projects in partnership with the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development.

NCDTFS – North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development – A division of the Department of Commerce which oversees tourism affairs and marketing for North Carolina.



# Glossary of Terms

**North Carolina Golf Marketing Alliance** – A not-for-profit corporation formed to promote North Carolina as a primary golf destination for international visitors, the alliance conducts joint marketing ventures in conjunction with the North Carolina Travel & Tourism Division.

**NTA** – National Tour Association – NTA is a nonprofit trade organization of and for individuals who package both retail and wholesale tours. The NTA member company is the “middle man” who sells and/or arranges interstate pleasure tours and motorcoach tours for compensation. The marketplace is designed for buyers and sellers to meet on a one-on-one basis in pre-scheduled appointments.

**PITV** – Per Inquiry Television – Advertising program through which the advertiser pays a pre-negotiated, cost-controlled rate for leads generated from television commercials.

**POW WOW** – Organized by TIA, this is the major marketplace in the U.S. for domestic suppliers and international buyers and is a marketplace structured like ABA and NTA with pre-scheduled appointments, journalists and public relations executives. The organization was created to promote unbiased, accurate and interesting reporting on travel destinations, facilities, and services. The group holds an annual convention as well as regional meetings and educational forums.

**PCMA** – Professional Conference Managers Association – Organization comprised of meeting planners who meet on national and state levels to become better educated on planning conferences.

**PRSA** – Public Relations Society of America – The national professional organization of public relations practitioners and communicators. Each year the Travel and Tourism Section of the organization plans a conference that brings media and travel communicators together in an educational setting.

**RCMA** – Religious Conference Managers Association – A professional, nonprofit, interfaith organization of planners responsible for planning and/or managing meetings, seminars, conferences, conventions and assemblies for religious organizations.

**RSA** – Receptive Services Association – A professional organization designed to help receptive operators serve international tour companies through partnerships with North American suppliers.

**SATW** – Society of American Travel Writers – A not-for-profit professional association of writers, photographers, editors, electronic media.

**SGMP** – Society of Government Meeting Planners

**SMERF** – An acronym for the meeting market segments that comprise social, military, educational, religious and fraternal groups.

**State Motorcoach Associations** – State associations of member motorcoach operators who work together to promote safe travel by motorcoach through networking with other operators and suppliers and by positively influencing state legislation. Each state association typically holds an annual meeting and trade show to offer supplier members an opportunity to meet with tour planners and/or group leaders.

GMCA – Georgia Motorcoach Association

MCASC – Motorcoach Association of South Carolina

NCMA – North Carolina Motorcoach Association

PBA – Pennsylvania Bus Association

OBOA – Ohio Bus Owners Association

TMCA – Tennessee Motorcoach Association

**STS** – Southeast Tourism Society – STS is the private sector voice in the travel industry in 10 Southeastern states, including North Carolina. Membership in STS affords an opportunity for educational seminars, joint trade show ventures and networking.

**TIA** – Travel Industry Association of America – The Washington, D.C. based national, nonprofit association that serves as a unifying organization for all of the U.S. travel industry, which is the second largest employer and third largest retail industry in the nation.

**Travel South** – Travel South is an organization composed of 11 southeastern states including North Carolina. Travel South Showcase is a marketplace structured like NTA and ABA, but limited to Southern suppliers.

**TRN** – The Travel Reunion Network

**Viral marketing** – Marketing concept in which an unusual, interesting or funny message promoting the area is distributed to consumers in hopes that they will forward the message to other people. This method is most often used in e-mail marketing.

# Notes





# Notes





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