

Warren County Tourism Department Marketing Plan 2012

Objective:

Utilize strategic market targeting to promote peak travel periods in key drive markets.

Goals:

1. Drive 4-season destination visitation to the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks through cross-marketing;
2. Generate/increase number of qualified leads for all seasons;
3. Increase brand awareness to the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks;
4. Increase number of first time visitors;
5. Stimulate visitation/spending during mid-week and shoulder seasons;
6. Increase regional and multi-county marketing partnerships;
7. Broaden social media opportunities as appropriate;
8. Develop online audio/video partner opportunity on VisitLakeGeorge.com;
10. Accentuate unique benefits of the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks

Markets:

The Lake George Area in New York's Adirondack Region is a "drive to" destination, ideally positioned and accessible to key markets within a day's drive.

Warren County is poised within a days' drive of 60 million people.

Markets within a day's drive (8 hours), requiring an overnight stay, are targeted. Domestic advertising is directed to drive markets of up to six hours from the region, including the states of New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and across the boarder to the Montreal, Quebec and Toronto and Ottawa, regions of Ontario. Secondary marketing regions may reach to the west which include Ohio and some portions of the mid-Atlantic region to the south (Washington DC, Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, as well as northern parts of Pennsylvania.

Message:

Build on messaging developed in 2011:

"Four great seasons ~ one outstanding destination!" will continue to be utilized to enforce and stimulate consumer travel to the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks throughout 2012. This messaging will support the goal

to cross market the winter season to the summer guest and vice versa. The Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks is known to many as a traditional summer vacationland. While others' may realize this is a year-round destination, the message must be clearer and stronger. With a leading northeast ski industry in Warren County, and a portion of lodging and dining venues remaining open year-round, combined with a large amount of recreation, events and attractions, the message has to reach the prospective visitor that there is a travel experience awaiting them all seasons of the year in the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks. New 4-season video on home page jumped YouTube views over 98.5% in one month from November 2011-December 2012.

Marketing Tools:

Warren County will utilize a mixture of quality media and marketing programs to target potential visitors during their earliest vacation planning stages, via multiple channels, following up to date industry trends and practices for lead generation and branding.

Demographic:

Over 85% of all women are involved in leisure travel decisions. They are the key decision makers in travel. Women make the majority of the household purchasing decisions. This market represents consumers who are vital in the workforce, they are college educated and are wives, partners and mothers.

Advertising:

Traditional media remains a crucial part of any campaign. The goal is to combine the right balance and mix of traditional and social media that reaches our audiences and segments.

Traditional print and broadcast advertising drive online leads.

Print Media – Leisure Market (newsprint/magazine)

Warren County will continue to emphasize seasonal recreation and events with specific calls to action. 2012 publications to be targeted will be similar to 2011 with several exceptions, including TPA Council program changes. Additionally there will be deletions due to poor response rate and high cost per inquiry (CPI). Flexibility is important as new opportunities arise, rates are reduced, and editorial calendars are confirmed. Added value opportunities are commonplace with print buys, such as online links, bonus reader service months, advertorials, photo submission, inclusion in newsletters and/or email blasts.

Advertising will continue to target the female consumer, age 25-64, the key decision maker for travel planning.

Print ads commence early spring for summer travel planning and will continue to run throughout the fall and into December for winter travel planning.

Travel Brochure ads with Reader Service components will be utilized.

All print ads will be individually coded through a unique extension number following the toll free number. Those requesting information online (driven by print ads), versus calling, are queried as to what media prompted them to the website by being provided a list of sources to select from. All campaigns are tracked monthly for response statistics and cost per inquiry. All buys are based on receiving a cost-per-inquiry (CPI) of \$3.00 or less. This goal has consistently been met. Advertising plans are coordinated by season, past performances, editorial calendars and travel sections, added value, partnering, and cost. Schedules change as plans evolve. Primarily Northeast, some Mid-Atlantic, Quebec and Ontario markets will be targeted.

Social/On-Line/Electronic Marketing

All marketing motivates visitation to VisitLakeGeorge.com or lakegeorgeny.com, a specific landing page, and/or video, whether through specific calls to action and/or great visuals and exciting offers, or through QR (Quick Response) codes whose technology enables us to attract new visitors to a mobile or specific landing page to request information by submitting an email address for inclusion in future promotions.

Plans call for continued email broadcasts, created and distributed monthly or bi-monthly to an in-house, permission-based, list of 130,000+ subscribers who have requested deals, incentives and promotions, throughout all four seasons. This list represents a very important qualified customer, and this is our top online marketing tactic. The ability to distribute various messages to specific market segments versus the entire list is utilized as appropriate, however disseminating to the entire blasts list assists in cross-marketing the seasons. A minimum of fifteen electronic blasts will be delivered. Themes and blast dates are determined prior to the start of the next new year. For a \$300 fee each, sponsorships of a maximum of three partners per blast are offered. Partners are provided specific space and a live link to their specific call to action or web page. This partnering affords an opportunity for Warren County to extend their list of email subscribers in a way without compromising the integrity which has been earned and maintained by the Warren County Tourism Dept. for many years.

The Tourism Dept. plans to purchase geo-targeted banner ads through networks of digital online sites, with guaranteed impressions per buy.

Additionally, television station banner ads and online market showcase opportunities offered as added value, enhance online networking.

Maintenance of images/text/links/event listings on several highly recognized travel related websites, in addition to YouTube, Flickr and Facebook, will host video clips and photo galleries of Warren County, at no cost.

Warren County will utilize value added opportunities from print publications for online links from media sites. Working hand-in-hand, print marketing is a leading driver of web traffic.

The 2011 premier of "show only" giveaways while at consumer shows will be offered in 2012. This promotion garners email addresses of potential first time

visitors. Names, email addresses and zip codes collected from this strategy are shared with the individual show sponsor if agreed to by the consumer.

The expansion and integration of social media is certain.

Social media broadens the opportunity to expose innovative and new tourism experiences and travel ideas.

Facebook postings on VisitLakeGeorge.com assist in maintaining interest in the area, while increasing the number of "likes."

Paid advertising through Facebook will be considered in 2012, potentially aimed at reaching specific demographic audiences and/or niches.

All promotions and advertising will prominently display VisitLakeGeorge.com, always maintaining top of mind awareness of the destination.

New mobile website to be launched in 2012. 62,182 users of mobile devices accessed VisitLakeGeorge.com in 2011, a 17.55% increase over 2010 or 11.06% of the total visits.

Search Engine Marketing

VisitLakeGeorge.com, the official site for Lake George, NY (Warren County), continues to rank in the resulting top three positions of most popular search engines, without the cost to optimize. This is evident by searching "Lake George," "Lake George NY," and "Lake George New York" through Google, Yahoo, Bing, MSN and AOL. Additionally, the Lake George Area benefits from the extensive list of Adirondack Regional paid key words and search terms purchased by the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, through its pay per click campaign. Annually, VisitAdirondacks.com continues to be the strongest referring site to VisitLakeGeorge.com.

Television

Successful results tracked by Warren County and its broadcast media buyer determine television advertising will remain an integral component to the 2012 seasonal media buys for summer, fall and winter of 2012.

2012 will represent buys in established markets including Albany, Hudson Valley and metro New York through network, Time-Warner and Cablevision.

Interactive TV is preferred where available. Responses are tabulated by campaign, with results expected to surpass 2011 levels (which were down from 2010 due to Tropical Storm Irene in fall 2011, and a poor month of December for winter activities).

For viewers who prefer to request travel information via the telephone, Warren County Tourism utilizes a separate 800 telephone number for tracking of television commercial leads. Those viewers who pursue the call to action via computer are directed to a specific landing page, lakegeorgeny.com. Some viewers can make contact through clicking their remote to reply (I-TV).

Television advertising will continue to have a distinct call to action, such as a particular brochure, value pak and/or entering a seasonal contest/giveaway. Interactive television (I-TV), available via specific cable television providers, produces timely and favorable response rates and will continue on all buys where available.

Both 15 and 30-second commercials will air, depending on the season, and will be rotated throughout the flight. Specific seasonal videos for VOD (video on demand) in digital households are accessible through Journey TV.

Value added opportunities round out the campaigns including banner ads, web links, bonus spots, billboard sponsorships and unique giveaway opportunities through market showcase and Stop-N-Shop stores in the metro market.

- Late spring-summer broadcast is planned to air early May through early August (13 weeks) and will present brand new creative in 2012. Programming purchased through contract with broadcast media buyer will be based on available technology, past performance, effectiveness and cost to reach an audience of primarily women, ages 25-64. The specific call to action will be savings coupons with value offers totaling in a range of \$1,000-\$1,300 on area lodging, camping, attractions, recreation, and dining. The message will focus on area activities and recreation, the lake itself, and the short driving distance to reach this destination. Annual conversion study will be conducted from this campaign in late October 2012, email addresses of those consumers who downloaded summer saver coupons will receive the survey via email.
- Fall television is directed to women (25-64), and men. A mix of 15 and 30 second commercials (2011 creative to be utilized in 2012) will run mid-August through mid-October. Markets include Albany, Springfield, Hartford, New Haven and Metro New York. A focus of popular area fall events and activities will round out the message. Call to action includes registering for several getaways and a fall events and activities brochure.
- Winter television airs the period of December and January with messaging reaching adults 18+ in age. Markets include metro New York, Hudson Valley, New Jersey and Albany (day-trips). Creative messaging from winter 2010-2011 is planned to be used, or possibly earlier creative. Video includes fabulous winter footage, happy people of various ages partaking in winter recreation and activities, easy access and unbeatable value. Theme is "Winter's Frolic."

The tagline, "**Four great seasons ~ one outstanding destination!**" reinforces the message of a year-round vacation destination in all broadcast.

Direct Mail

Minimal direct mail campaigns, if any, will be considered and if warranted, would utilize a postcard and presort mailing rates, Mailings would be limited to select seasonal inquirers who left mailing addresses. Direct mail is not effective with younger markets.

Out of Home

New Jersey platform posters in 20 high traffic locations, with high HHI riders, will continue winter 2012-2013. The message will include the tagline, logos of three area downhill ski resorts, and the logo of Snow Train. Three NYS Thruway Information Centers will air 60 second videos of winter footage on kiosks

alongside a static ad for winter in the Lake George Area. All OOH, where applicable, will display a QR code which links to three area downhill ski areas and winter activities on VisitLakeGeorge.com.

OOH messaging may continue seasonally, reaching varied demographics in varied applications.

Travel Guides & Collateral

Routinely costly to print and mail, there is a demand for the continuation of an integration of marketing disciplines. Printed guides will continue to be published.

Annual Travel Guide

- 2013 guide same number of pages as 2012 guide, 68 plus covers;
- Print quantity 275,000, distribute all;
- Align ILNY logo with county logo through brand alignment requirements provided by I Love New York;
- Primary response piece to all inquiries;
- Advertisement revenue approximately \$80,000;
- Downloadable version available online:
- Flip page option, including all advertisements, available online;
- Online option to have guide sent by mail;
- Guide produced on cd;

Summer Rates, Dates & Events Brochure

- Print quantity of 100,000, distribute all
- 2012 version, new format - 12 pages, self-cover;

Autumn Events & Activities Brochure

- Align ILNY logo with county logo through brand alignment requirements;
- Print quantity of 75,000, distribute all

Winter Events & Activities Brochure

- Align ILNY logo with county logo through brand alignment requirements;
- Logos of three downhill ski areas & Snow Train logo on front cover;
- Print quantity of 60,000, distribute all

Whitewater/Tubing/Canoe/Kayak/SUP Brochure

- Print quantity of 50,000, distribute all;
- Ads support \$1,175.00 in revenue

Group Tour Planner

- Focus on new themed itineraries;
- Continue current page count;
- Print quantity of 4,500, distribute all;
- Advertisements generate approximately \$8,000 in revenue;

Meeting Planner – Conference & Special Event Spaces

- New Images for covers;
- Request images from area properties;
- Print 100 books, dictated by demand;
- Continue focus of “special events” and outdoor spaces;
- Supply Lake George Regional CVB with copies for distribution

Lake George Fishing.& Boating Map

- Reprint as necessary

Distribution of consumer print collateral is tracked closely. Methods of distribution include, but are not limited to the following sources:

- Fulfillment to advertising/public relations and general leads;
- Consumer/trade show/market place distribution;
- Paid and non-paid brochure distribution locations, visitor centers, local businesses and chambers of commerce;
- Packets for local meetings and conference attendees;
- Group tours:

Website Development

VisitLakeGeorge.com completely overhauled into a Drupal CMS design in 2011. Contract will continue with L&P Media for expanded site development and mobile site.

VisitLakeGeorge.com will continue its momentum to be visually enticing, easy to navigate, offer stimulating incentives, while incorporating critical details for four seasons of vacation planning ideas.

Text on home page and secondary pages will be optimized as appropriate.

Trade segments will expand with new itineraries and experiences.

2012 is expected to see a rise in total visits above the 562,313 visits in 2011.

Target markets include families (female decision maker), geo-travelers, young adults, new age seniors, trade professionals and special event producers.

Consumer Shows

The presence of the Lake George Area at a number of annual shows is tremendously positive. Consumer shows in particular bring out emotions in previous visitors to the Lake George Area who stop at the exhibit wishing to share their family vacation memories from many generations. Visitors are simply pleased to see representation of the Lake George Area and to have the opportunity to talk one on one to staff. Partnering with the New York Travel & Vacation Association (NYSTVA) for brochure distribution opportunities at shows not attended by Warren County will continue.

“Show Only” giveaways at consumer shows will continue from 2011 premier. This promotion garners new email addresses and allows for connecting to first time visitors. All entries including name, email address and zip codes gathered from this promotion will be shared with the individual show sponsor.

Show attendees are provided the opportunity to receive printed collateral as well as sign up to have the travel guide mailed. 2012 will continue to distribute CD's of the entire 2012 Travel Guide, focusing on less paper, less waste, thus addressing environmental concerns. The bag used for literature is biodegradable. Local tourism-related businesses will continue to have the opportunity to display a specified number of their brochures at each of the shows, for a nominal fee, at shows they chose to select.

2012 consumer show circuit follows:

The New York Times Travel Show has been replaced with the Ottawa Travel Show, due to the Lake George Chamber of Commerce's decision to exhibit at the NY Show. Warren County will continue show participation through brochure distribution partnering with NYSTVA (New York Travel and Vacation Association) which allows for expanded exposure while keeping travel costs down.

Garden State Outdoor Sportsmen's Show Edison NJ	January 12-15, 2012
New Jersey RV & Camping Show Edison NJ	January 20-22, 2012
Northeast RV Show Suffern NY	February 17-20, 2012
Springfield Sportsmen's Show Springfield MA	February 23-26, 2012
World Fishing & Outdoor Expo Suffern NY	March 1-4, 2012
Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show Ottawa, Ontario Canada	March 10-11, 2012
Amtrak NY By Rail Day NYC	May 17, 2012
Women's Expo Hartford CT	September 22-23, 2012
Ski and Snowboard Expo Albany NY	November 2-4, 2012

Public Relations

The Warren County Tourism Department will produce some PR work in-house, in addition to utilizing the PR firm of the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (Inphorm Inc.) as appropriate.

Creating press releases, scheduling visits and FAM tours with suitable travel writers, as well as pitching of story ideas will take place.

In 2012, approximately 15 press releases will be written and distributed. Themes will follow that of monthly email blasts. Press Releases will have optimized text and will distribute electronically.

HARO (Help A Reporter Out) leads will stimulate activity and correspondence with reporters/writers as well as utilizing Briefing Wire, a free press release website.

Research/Data Collection

The continuation of a collaborative, annual Occupancy Report conducted by the Tourism and Planning Departments of Warren County is desirable in generating a 2011 report. 2011 data will be released spring 2012. This annual document reveals findings from a survey of area lodging and camping properties and attractions in Warren County. 2011 findings will attempt to reveal seasonal populations in the county. Participation and submission of useable and valid data continues to be problematic, although a more lucrative incentive will be offered as an incentive to respond.

Two online conversion surveys will continue to be conducted in 2012.

Warren County utilizes economic impact studies provided through I Love New York.

Warren County Tourism Dept. subscribes to Smith Travel Research for occupancy trends of member properties and comparison data from other select tourism destinations.

The New York State TPA Council supplies tourism employment figures and spending figures to its members.

I Love New York will continue to provide Tourism Economics (an Oxford Economics Company) data to each region and county. 2011 data will be received in the fall of 2012.

Groups and Group Touring

New marketing initiatives for Warren County in the Group Tour industry will develop in 2012, as the focus on this industry continues to ramp up. Warren County will continue a quarterly group tour e-newsletter, "Group Loop," focusing on new itineraries, new photography, lists of new and developing lodging, dining and attractions within the County, as well newsworthy stories pertaining to group touring.

Area tourism-related businesses interested in the group tour market will be asked to partner in specific marketplaces through providing their brochures for distribution.

2012 plans include collaboration with the Adirondack Region through online FAM tours, the annual ABA binder coop, and a presence at NTA, along with website development on VisitAdirondacks.com

Sales Blitzes serving the group tour market to new and existing marketing areas and moveable marketplaces continues in 2012.

A variety of new themed group trips will continue to be introduced by the utilization of a variety of itineraries produced by the Group Tour Promoter for Warren County. FAM tours will be offered.

Enforcing top of mind awareness of the Lake George Area in New York's Adirondacks to group leaders, tour operators and bus owners, Warren County

plans to exhibit and/or hold appointments at Group Travel tradeshow and marketplaces such as ABA, PBA, Yankee Trails Expo, New Jersey Motorcoach Assoc., QBOA, SYTA, Brown Coach, NTA, Destinations NYS, Maryland Motorcoach, Royal Tours & Cruises, Amtrak NY By Rail, Friendship Tours, Hartford Women's Expo, and OMCA. For the first time, the Ottawa Travel Show will be attended by Warren County, which address both trade and consumer audiences.

Four niche group tour markets to be pursued in 2012, include, but are not limited to the following::

1. Affinity Groups-new age senior market
2. Student/Youth Markets
3. Year-round Athletic Groups
4. Bank Travel Clubs

Meetings/Conferences/Conventions & Special Events

Warren County will continue its contract with the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB in 2012.

Expectations to locate and secure additional special events for all of Warren County and its facilities, throughout the seasons will remain the primary goal of this contract.

Warren County will continue to maintain its meeting & convention/special event webpage and continue to produce the Unique Spaces planner. Warren County will reply to all leads with appropriate material and when appropriate, forward to the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce & CVB.

Branding

Logo includes mountains and water incorporated in the letter "O" of Lake George, emphasizing stunning natural beauty. Area businesses are encouraged to use the logo, where appropriate, in their print and online campaigns, with a link back to VisitLakeGeorge.com. The logo is designed to reproduce in color and black and white.

LAKE GEORGE AREA
IN NEW YORK'S ADIRONDACKS
VisitLakeGeorge.com

Photography/Video

Annually fresh and innovative images are captured by in-house Tourism Department staff. Settings for photo shoots are selected for campaign themes, and based on seasonal spontaneity, area events, and for the replacement of dated and obsolete images. Specific seasonal images of landscapes and activities are sought for a variety of marketing efforts. The purchase of a Nikon D3100 camera, and 55-300 mm telephoto lens, capable of shooting hi-resolution

images is used for candid area photography and scenic pans. A wide angle lens will be purchased in 2012. A videography contract will continue and work hand in hand with specified and arranged photo shoots when appropriate. New footage is utilized in seasonal television ads, specific video channels, YouTube uploads and OOH opportunities. Production of new seasonal video “vingnettes” suitable for the home page of VisitLakeGeorge.com and to be made available to local businesses will develop in 2012.

Adirondack Regional Marketing

Warren County is one of seven counties comprising the Adirondack Region, as identified by New York State. Warren County participates and partners with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council for seasonal programs including; snowmobiling, fishing, and group tour campaigns, by way of the use of NYS Matching Funds and non-matched funds. With the ILNY Matching Funds grants, counties within the Region will collectively promote the Adirondack Region of NYS. The Adirondack Region manages the I Love New York Welcome Center in Beekmantown, NY. The ARTC maintains an email subscriber list of over 120,000 addresses and distributes captivating seasonal communications. The ARTC will continue to produce niche publications for fishing, waterways and hiking. Focus for 2012 is to create a larger presence of hiking on VisitAdirondacks.com and continue to update the website.

Communication/Outreach

Quarterly electronic newsletters produced by the Tourism Department will continue to be issued to approximately 700+unique addresses of area businesses, chambers of commerce, towns and legislators.

Conclusion

Maintain flexibility to focus on the future, stay current with new marketing trends, and not fail to notice opportunity. Maintain a marketing presence through an integration of traditional, digital, social and mobile programs that reaches our target audience. Capture the attention of the traveling market within a days' drive, through the expansion of four seasonality marketing partnerships with local tourism-related businesses.