



**Tourism Committee
Warren County Tourism Department
AGENDA
January 26, 2018**

Committee Members:

- E. Merlino, Chairman
- D. Dickinson
- J. Strough
- E. Frasier
- K. Wild
- K. Geraghty
- J. Diamond
- A. Hogan
- B. Driscoll

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- I. Committee meeting called to order by Chairman Merlino.
 - II. Motion to approve minutes of November 8, 2017 Tourism Committee Meeting.
 - III. Action Agenda

Resolution Requests

- 1. **Request to** authorize an agreement with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council to continue the contractual relationship for regional marketing services.
Rationale: Warren County supports the Region's marketing efforts through the use of NYS Matching Funds; the regional program includes digital and social media, website, email marketing, public relations, video production and market research.
Attachment #1
- 2. **Request to** authorize an agreement with New York's Best Experiences.
Rationale: New York's Best Experiences represents Warren County/The Lake George Area at numerous consumer shows and events throughout New York State; driver's side truck wrap featuring Lake George Area; 2-page spread in Vacation Guide, in the amount \$18,600.
Attachment #2

- IV. Tourism Department Overview and Marketing Plan 2018 – Joanne Conley, Director
- V. Lake George CVB Update - Kristen Hanifin, Special Events & Convention Sales Director
- VI. Privilege of the Floor to discuss any additional items to come before Committee.
- VII. Motion to adjourn.

Attachment #1

Resolution Request – To authorize an agreement with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council

Attachment #2

Resolution Request – To authorize an agreement with New York's Best Experiences

RESOLUTION REQUEST FORM NO. 20

MISCELLANEOUS

**Please List All Other Requests Not Covered by Previous Resolution Request Forms Here.
Please attach any backup information available and be as detailed as possible.*

DEPARTMENT NAME: TOURISM

DATE: 1/26/18

- (a) Purpose of Request:
to continue the contractual relationship with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, Inc. for regional marketing services.

- (b) Details:
Warren County supports the Region's marketing efforts through the use of NYS Matching Funds. Funding supports a Regional Marketing program that includes digital and social media, website, email marketing, public relations, video production and market research.

- (c) Previous Resolution Number:
Res 47 of 2017

- (d) Where are the Funds (if required)? List Budget Code, Object Code, Full Title* and Amount:
A.6417.0001 470, Tourism - Contract \$150,000

Sample: A.8021 470 Planning & Community Development – Contract

* as listed in budget and LOGOS



2017 PLAN - ARTC

DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 2017

SUMMARY:

The following is the recommended marketing plan for 2017 that takes into consideration the needs of the target audience(s), geographic parameters, and behavioral trends of the evolving leisure traveler.

GOAL

The goal for the year is to continue to drive website visitation and, most importantly, direct traffic to partner TPA websites. Secondary and tertiary goals are to continue to elevate and position the Adirondacks brand as the authority for travel in the Adirondacks, to build a strong community of advocates, and to further amplify the message, and inspire travel to this region.

STRATEGY

To achieve this goal, we will continue the shift from a traditional outbound advertising approach to an inbound marketing approach, with an emphasis on content marketing. With budgets nearly cut in half, our focus will remain in the digital realm, leveraging earned and owned media, and, most and foremost, with paid efforts to support and complement as needed.

Instead of telling the traveler what we think they want to know and what we think they want to know, we will start a conversation with the traveler about what they value or desire and empower them to consume more content about the region. For the leisure traveler, content marketing means communicating in an authentic style, while conveying the experience this destination has to offer. This provides the leisure traveler something that is unique, different, and of greater value - a life-changing experience that they will then turn and share with their respective social communities.

We will focus on digital channels that may offer the greatest return during each stage in a traveler's decision process. Utilizing powerful content as the main medium to then disseminate across multiple touch points, travelers will engage with the destination's brand and ultimately be inspired to travel to the Adirondacks.

CREATIVE MESSAGING

The first step is the development of a strong creative message – even a theme for 2017. The messaging will be one that positions the destination well under one unified branded theme that is then a common thread through all marketing and communication channels.

The 2017 Adirondack Regional Tourism Council Marketing Plan is presented here as an example of the work to be expected in 2018. The 2018 plan will be presented at our monthly ARTC meeting in February.

a.

2017 use for
example only

This is imperative to penetrate new markets and continue to elevate the region as a top destination in the northeast. The final concept may be modified to speak to specific audience segments, interests, etc. as needed. Take into consideration the suggestions of research, such as the more recent Adirondack millennial study and Longwood's research.

AUDIENCE AND GEO TARGETS

Geographic Targets

With a reduced media budget, we will focus on tried and true markets that will allow for a greater ROI. Targeting new markets, as we did in 2016, will not be as effective with such small budgets to work with.

- **Canada** – Ottawa, Montreal areas
 - Further/ongoing evaluation is needed to determine the ROI on this. High engagement/positive metrics on media is one thing, are they crossing the border and coming into the region is another. Recent data shows border crossings are still down, although improving.
- **US** – NYC/NJ, Albany, NY state, Eastern PA

Audience Segments

As best as possible, we'll target:

- **Families** – female decision maker, looking for family-friendly activities, value, experiences that all generations can enjoy.
- **Authentic Travelers** – looking for an experience that is off the beaten path, unique relative to both their own experience and experience of others they know (or see in social media).
- **Outdoor Recreation Enthusiast** – they plan trips around outdoor recreation pursuits.
- **Health/Wellness** – these travelers want to unwind, unplug, rejuvenate their soul, and connect with nature at a tranquil retreat while doing yoga by the lake.
- **Value Travelers** – families and baby boomers, looking for a fun, safe experience that meet their budgetary needs.

PAID MEDIA

The 2017 Paid Media budget has been reduced drastically and we will hone in on digital tactics that offer the best return on investment and provide ample data for on-going optimization. This means little to no traditional advertising, such as TV and print. Recommendations for connecting with potential travelers and inspiring travel to the Adirondacks:

- High Priority Tactics
 - **Digital Video** – video assets disseminated through Pre-Roll, Connected, and Programmatic TV.

2017 - Use for
example only

a.

- **Native Advertising** - will be utilized to drive interest and engagement on the website through value-added stories that showcase aspects of the destination.
- **Paid Social Media** - may be leveraged on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to boost and promote organic content or drive specific messages to target audiences.
- Further Consideration
 - **Programmatic Display** – static and HTML5 animated banners will be used to target specific audiences both contextually and behaviorally.

Travel Campaigns

Given the budget for paid, we'll recommend the best use of the money to promote and elicit travel. As an example, we may rely on earned and owned media channels and the great content to promote summer travel and then use the majority of the media budget for fall and winter paid travel campaigns.

CONTENT STRATEGY

Content produced and sourced by Adworkshop, UGC, and influencers will be leveraged across all owned channels (website, social media channels) and incorporated into tactics, such as email marketing, PR, and paid efforts as appropriate.

- Leverage new ag tourism videos, new motorcycle video on all media (owned, paid, earned)
- Develop experiences (itineraries) and promote through earned and paid efforts
- Continue to add stories to Area ADK

SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Instagram** – continuation of content strategy, along with the development of new ideas to execute on this channel.
- **Facebook** –continue to publish compelling imagery and video, while sharing appropriate TPA content.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & INFLUENCER MARKETING

With the success of the 2016 influencer marketing campaign, budgets have been increased in 2017 to leverage this tactic more. Social and brand influencers can be viewed as influential as or even more so than some media outlets. We will coordinate visits with influencers to the region for them to then create content, share on their respective channels and cross-promote with Visit Adirondacks. We will continue with a proactive PR campaign with a national focus for the region

SEO & WEBSITE UPDATES

Launching in 2017 are the revamped Area Adk content hub, along with the new presentation of experiences (itineraries). We will continue to implement on recommend pages the new layout that appears on the Camping, First Time Visitors, Winter Experience, and Fall Foliage pages.

2017- Use for
example only

a.

An objective always kept in mind is how we best elicit action to increased quality traffic off site to the TPA's websites.

Search Marketing

We will continue the organic search program. The search marketing team will closely with content writers to develop appropriate content for key areas, such as Area Adk stories that support TPAs, social media and email strategy, as well as SEO goals.

Additional Priorities

- Improve internal linking, use of region blocks on Area Adk posts
- Navigation overhaul
- Use of social media integration (i.e. Twitter Cards)
- Modify events page
- Utilize Open Graph more

EMAIL MARKETING

With reduced budgets for 2017, we will change up our strategy slightly. For this travel season, we'll compile 3 seasonal preview emails around the Summer, Fall, and Winter seasons. In 2016 we executed a weekly story telling series that highlight one Area Adk post per week. With the success of this campaign, we'll continue the same in 2017.

Warren County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 47 OF 2017

RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISORS MERLINO, DICKINSON, STROUGH, FRASIER, LEGGETT, VANSELOW, SEEBER, MONTESI, MACDONALD, GERAGHTY AND VACANT

EXTENDING AGREEMENT WITH THE ADIRONDACK REGIONAL TOURISM COUNCIL, INC. FOR REGIONAL MARKETING SERVICES

RESOLVED, that Warren County continue the contractual relationship, (the previous agreement being authorized by Resolution No. 52 of 2016), with the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council, Inc., Crestview Plaza, 1992 Saranac Ave., Suite 3, Lake Placid, New York 12946, for regional marketing services, in an amount not to exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000), for a term commencing January 1, ~~2017~~²⁰¹⁸, and terminating December 31, ~~2017~~²⁰¹⁸, and the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors be, and hereby is, authorized to execute said extension agreement in a form approved by the County Attorney with funding to be paid from Budget Code A.6417 ~~470~~^{.0001} Tourism Occupancy, Contract.

RESOLUTION REQUEST FORM NO. 20

MISCELLANEOUS

**Please List All Other Requests Not Covered by Previous Resolution Request Forms Here.
Please attach any backup information available and be as detailed as possible.*

DEPARTMENT NAME: TOURISM

DATE: 1/26/18

- (a) Purpose of Request:
Continue the multi-faceted agreement with New York Welcomes You, Inc for promotion of Warren County and add the option to renew for three additional years.

- (b) Details:
See attached proposal

- (c) Previous Resolution Number:
102 of 2017

- (d) Where are the Funds (if required)? List Budget Code, Object Code, Full Title* and Amount:
A.6417.0001 470, Tourism - Contract \$18,600

Sample: A.8021 470 Planning & Community Development – Contract

* as listed in budget and LOGOS

New York Welcomes You™

P.O. Box 547 | Middletown, N.Y. 10940 | Phone 877-253-8779 | Fax 877-253-8779

New York Welcomes You, Inc.

P.O. Box 547 Middletown, N.Y. 10940

Contact: Josiah Brown – 845-283-1638

Providing services to:

Company: Warren County Tourism

Address: Municipal Center

1340 State Route 9

Lake George, NY 12845

Contact: Joanne Conley

New York Welcomes You agrees to provide the following services to the above mentioned business

New York Welcomes You™ - Marketing Products

Thank-you for joining the New York Welcomes You™ Team in our efforts to win first time visitors to New York and to you!

Program Components: 3 Categories

New York's Best Experiences Mobile Visitors Center – 1 of 15 Featured Destinations

- Lake George featured as 1 of 15 “New York’s Best Experiences” on tour
- 15-17 tour stops with gross attendance of 500,000 people or more yearly.
- Display featuring and branding Lake George with travel guide distribution + team recommendations
- Including co/op aisle space at New York Times Show, Philadelphia Travel Show and Springfield Outdoor and Sportsman’s Show.

New York's Best Experiences – Sherpa Mobile - Traveling Billboard

- Wrapped panel on truck that goes to NYBE events and across the Northeast.
- Major prop for questions and selfies across our yearly tour.
- Prominently positioned in events and trade shows.

New York's Best Experiences – Recommendations Guide

- Full page feature spread highlighting some of Lake George’s best experiences
- Sponsorship of “Fishing, Hiking, Family Fun – Million Dollar Beach, categories (These are items that make the guide experience well rounded but are usually not individually sponsored).

TOTAL: Total Destination Package: \$18,600 (discounted from approx. \$25,000. Cost for destination to do by themselves approx: \$85000)

Creative Info:

We will need any assets including: Pictures, logos, contact info and text sent to Dori@NYWelcomesYou.com.

Payment Information: Submit payments to New York Welcomes You, Inc. P.O. Box 547 Middletown, N.Y. 10940

Early Termination of Contract:

Early termination by client prior to expiration of contract shall be deemed voluntary and the client shall be responsible for the completion of payment(s) outlined in this contract. New York Welcomes You, Inc. reserves the right to terminate this contract at any time when situations beyond its control force it to do so. In the event of New York Welcomes You, Inc.’s early termination, New York Welcomes You, Inc. will return any prepaid portion of this contract.

Client Signature: _____ **Date** _____

(Print Name) _____

Representative Signature: _____ **Date** _____

(Print Name) _____

Warren County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 102 OF 2017

RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISORS MERLINO, DICKINSON, STROUGH, FRASIER, LEGGETT, VANSELOW, SEEBER, MONTESI, MACDONALD, GERAGHTY AND HYDE

AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW YORK WELCOMES YOU, INC. FOR PROMOTIONAL SERVICES FOR THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, the Director of Tourism has requested that the County enter into an agreement with New York Welcomes You, Inc. for a multi-faceted promotional campaign which shall include representation at mobile visitor centers, fairs, festivals and travel shows, a vehicle wrap mobile advertisement, and two-page promotion in the New York Best Experiences Travel Guide, and

WHEREAS, the Tourism Committee has reviewed and approved the proposal by New York Welcomes You, Inc., now, therefore be it,

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors hereby authorizes the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to execute an agreement with New York Welcomes You, Inc. for promotional services as described in the preambles of this resolution for a term commencing ^{on January 1, 2015} upon execution of the agreement and terminating on December 31, 2018 in a lump sum amount not to exceed ^{Eighteen Six} ~~Seventeen~~ Thousand ^{Four} ~~Four~~ Hundred ^{18,600} Dollars (\$~~17,400~~) to be paid upon completion of services, in a form approved by the County Attorney, and

~~be it further~~ *The Agreement can be extended for ^{up to} three (3) additional years from the date of expiration, and no further resolution of this Board shall be needed.*

RESOLVED, that the funds shall be expended from A.6417 470 Tourism Occupancy, Contract.

A. 6417. 0001 470



2018 TOURISM OVERVIEW

2018 will be a year of continued and dynamic growth for the Tourism Department's Marketing Program. In an industry of constant change, we will continue to refine our strategies by taking advantage of professional insight and research to make the best marketing decisions. This, along with exciting new initiatives, position the Tourism Department to brand the Lake George Area as the preeminent year-round vacation destination.



THE *Original* VACATION!

MISSION

Warren County Tourism works to responsibly promote and support the tourism industry in the Lake George Area through marketing, collaboration, and honest communication with regional tourism partners and visitors.

VISION

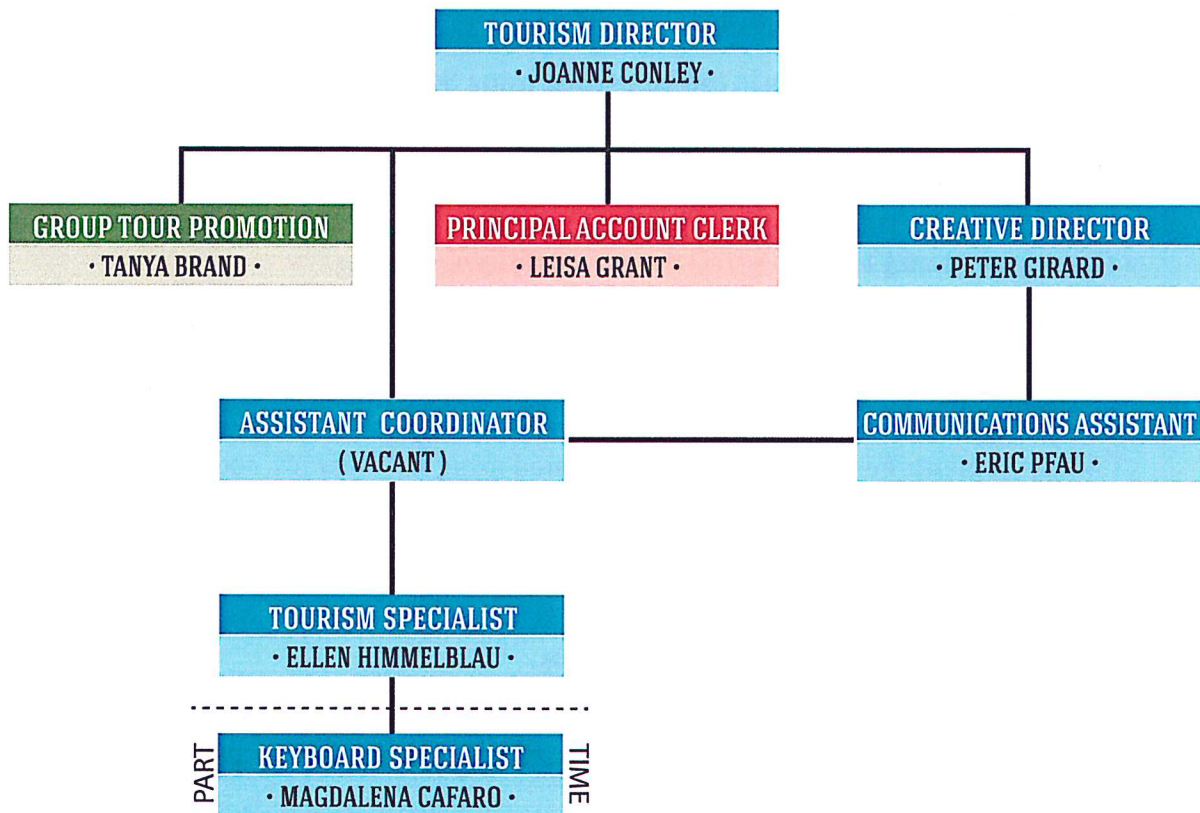
Warren County Tourism will be the official leading source for year-round promotion and visitor services for the Lake George Area, working cooperatively with business partners to manage and cultivate the Lake George Area's brand as *The Original Vacation*.

VALUES

Warren County Tourism uses a professional, team-based approach to provide unbiased, innovative, and honest promotion about the Lake George Area. Staff is dedicated to sharing their enthusiasm for our region using multiple media platforms to provide accessible and timely information that visitors to the region can reliably and efficiently put to good use.

THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT

The 2018 Warren County Tourism Department is comprised of seven full-time positions and one part-time position. One full-time position is vacant.



GOALS

- **Attract overnight visitors and increase Occupancy Tax revenue.**

Strategy: Deploy high-performing marketing material to targeted demographics in a non-traditional mix of digital marketing, social media marketing, content marketing, broadcast media, and print media.

Measurement: Performance can be tracked using Smith Travel Reports (STR) data, Occupancy Tax collections, Sales Tax collections, and annual Economic Impact of Tourism in New York Report

- **Grow year-round tourism using themed content marketing.**

Strategy: Package content around targeted themes, including: in-depth articles, dynamic event listings, and engaging videos, to connect unique experiences with visitors to the region.

Measurement: Performance can be measured using web metrics, social media insights, feedback from business owners, and STR daily-by-month comparison reporting.

- **Leverage State and Regional partnerships.**

Strategy: Expand upon existing relationships and cooperative ventures to continually build on current programs and take advantage of new opportunities.

Measurement: Performance can be measured through website and social media referrals, state and regional co-op programs, representation in international marketplaces, and the annual Economic Impact of Tourism in New York Report.

2018 NEW INITIATIVES

YEAR-ROUND THEMED CONTENT CALENDAR: A content marketing initiative that takes advantage of our robust social media and email following to brand each month with an iconic theme, connecting existing seasonal events and activities with both new audiences and past visitors.

- **January:** Ice Bars • **February:** Winter Carnivals • **March:** Maple Days
- **April:** Indoor Adventures • **May:** Summer Kickoff (Sherpas of the Lake)
- **June/July/August:** Vacation Series (Family / Adventure / On Water)
- **September:** Iconic Events • **October:** Craft Beer and Festivals
- **November:** Shopping • **December:** Winter Fun

MICRO VIDEOS: Create multiple short-length videos that focus on original experiences and can't-miss events to make an emotional connection with the viewer, creating a desire to visit.

BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS: Produce in-depth profiles of unique experiences in Warren County and the business owners and employees who create them. Focus on new business, unique to the area, and milestones.

CONTINUED CO-OPS: Partner with Warren County businesses, combining assets and insight, to generate a broader market awareness.



THE Original VACATION!

THE BRAND

Our new logo was launched in mid-2016 and will continue to be incorporated across all platforms in 2018. The font of the logo harkens back to the days of vintage vacation signage and postcards. The color was pulled directly from the brilliant blues and greens of the Adirondacks.

THE MESSAGE

Finding Our Famous!

The Original Vacation was launched in early-2016 after considerable thought and research on behalf of Tourism Department seeking to “find our famous.” The objective of this exercise was to identify a trait or quality of the area that no other destination could claim. Something that clearly set us apart from the generic “We have it all!” or “Something for everyone!”

Turns out, **The Lake George Area is the birthplace of the American vacation.** City dwellers would “vacate” their homes in New York and Boston in the mid-1800s to travel by train to the lakes and mountains.

To that end, The Tourism Department has trademarked “The Original Vacation” and will expand upon the story in the coming year. “The Original Vacation” will be the cornerstone of the Lake George Area marketing message. Some of the ideas to further this message include, but are not limited to:

- **First Wilderness Heritage Corridor** as a means of exploration along the Hudson River communities of Lake Luzerne, Thurman and North Creek;
- **Adirondack Experience of the Johnsburg/North Creek via the D&H Railroad;**
- **Lake George Steamboat Company** celebrating over 200 years;
- **Fort William Henry Hotel** and the restored French & Indian War era Fort;
- **Great Escape and Storytown, U.S.A.** Opened one year before Disney World;
- **Downtown Glens Falls**, featuring the historic Hyde Collection.

THE *Original* VACATION!

Discover the birthplace of the American vacation. Reconnect, explore, and escape to a timeless place of treasured moments, pristine wilderness, charming towns, and must-see attractions. It's the quintessential getaway destination... and America's first.

The American vacation was born in the Adirondacks

The idea of leaving the city for the mountains and lakes was viewed as an outrageous idea, until a guidebook written by a young preacher from Boston in the mid-1800s touted the idea of an excursion into nature as a way to escape the demands of civilized life. A mere 36-hours by train from Boston or New York City brought cloistered city-dwellers to an expanse of mountains, lakes, and rivers largely unexplored. Readers were charmed and fascinated that such a getaway was within reach.

The D&H Railroad shuttled visitors to the southern shores of Lake George where a stunning view of the lake and mountains beckoned them to further discover the natural beauty of the "North Woods." The Adirondack Railway took riders to North Creek, and the foothills of the Adirondacks, where the rugged mountains inspired visitors to become adventurers.

From the wealthy scions of industry who built summer homes and great camps in the late 1800s to the post-World War II era of motels and lakeside cottages; from the legendary dude ranches to the iconic amusement parks of the 50s, 60s and 70s, the American vacation was, quite literally, born here.

Visiting the Adirondacks has become tradition. Year after year, generation after generation, families pack up their bathing suits, fishing rods, and ski gear for a weeklong visit. Memories have been made of days on a sandy beach, hikes to pristine mountain summits, ice skating on a frozen lake, catching trout from back-country streams, the loop-de-loops of an amusement park or Nordic skiing through snow-covered trees.

It's the vacation you remember...

It's the vacation you wish would never end!



THE Original VACATION!

MARKETS

Geographically, Warren County is within a day's drive for 60 million people, with primary markets of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Additionally, we know from our research and input from local businesses that our key primary markets include metro New York/New Jersey, Springfield, CT, Hartford, MA, and Montreal, Quebec. New secondary markets to consider include Boston, northern Pennsylvania, and western New York.

The Lake George Area is an enviable geographic location with the primary travel corridors of I-87 bringing visitors from the north and south, and I-90 bringing visitors from the east and west.

FUNDING ALLOCATION STRATEGY

65% SUMMER: The focus in 2018 will once again be generating growth during our summer season. While the period of May – August has historically been our strongest season, there is room for growth in these months, as evidenced in Smith Trend reporting.

25% FALL: This season has been strong in recent years. We will aim to keep the momentum of summer moving forward to extend this valuable shoulder season. A strong core of iconic fall events and festivals has bolstered September and October weekends.

10% WINTER: We will focus on proven winter assets such as Gore Mountain, outlet shopping, and other weatherproof activities, while being responsive to weather related opportunities. The winter season no longer utilizes Broadcast Television as a marketing channel. The weather dependent nature of the season is better served through digital campaigns that can be adapted quickly and as needed.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Lake George Area has been a generational and perennial favorite of families for decades. Approximately 50% of our visitors are from within New York State; 12% from New Jersey; 8% from Connecticut, followed by Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Montreal, Canada. Women are the primary decision makers. The average age of that decision maker is 50 years old, with 59% having a college degree.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

- **Families** have been a staple of the Lake George Area for generations. The Lake George Area is clearly a family-friendly destination offering an array of events and activities.
- **Outdoor enthusiasts** can experience a range of adventure tourism activities from recreational to rugged, all within a short drive of comfortable amenities.
- **Authentic Americana** travelers are searching for an off-the-beaten-path experience.
- **Millennials** are a market segment that spans 1977-2000. Two important characteristics of this group of 80 million are that they are looking for new experiences they can share socially with their friends, and they are starting families.
- **Health and Wellness** travelers want to unwind, relax, and connect with nature.
- **Value Travelers** are looking for a fun and safe experience that fits their budget.

WEBSITE

Warren County Tourism/the Lake George Area launched a new website in mid-April 2017. There were three main objectives of the site redesign, each of which has been implemented:

- Create a responsive design that can be accessed on all devices, noting that almost 80% of our web traffic comes from mobile devices.
- Create a user-friendly site that is attractive and intuitive, incorporating search engine optimization (SEO).
- Providing engaging content that goes beyond the listings. Information about properties is the heart of the site, but a new content hub is home to engaging stories that share first-hand experiences with readers. The stories always link back to relevant events, recreation, and businesses within the site.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS AND SEO

The redesigned site is not only user-friendly, but search engine friendly.

- Full Google Analytics configuration, including custom event tracking and goal set-up.
- Site architecture that is easily crawled by search bots.

BLOG

The content hub/blog is arranged by areas of interest that can be easily accessed by site visitors and will remain evergreen. Blog content is populated by in-house staff and guest bloggers.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The department restarted a quarterly newsletter to stay in touch with our business partners. Members of the department are regularly in the community attending events, joining town and county-wide chamber functions, and meeting with local business owners to gain insight for our content features, social media, and more.

EARNED MEDIA

Earned Media (coverage of the Lake George Area resulting from PR efforts, excluding paid media advertising) will be curated through our own media Familiarization (FAM) visits and leads, and in cooperation with the leads received from the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council and I Love New York.

PRINT ADVERTISING

Traditional print media will be a combination of visual top-of-mind awareness ads and reader service call-to-action ads. Print media has been scaled back in 2018 as dollars are redirected to digital and social placements.

Reader Service: We will leverage industry expertise, targeted media buys, and negotiated rates of the New York State Travel Industry Association (NYSTIA), in partnership with I Love New York, to place reader service ads in proven publications. As a call to action, readers provide a name and mailing address and receive a Lake George Area Travel Guide.

Top of Mind Awareness: Print media in top-of-mind awareness magazines is limited, but allows us to access specialty markets. Campground Owners of New York connects us with campers, Brand USA connects us with international travelers, and East Coast Traveler connects us with the French-speaking Quebec market. These placements provide readers with inspiration to travel to the Lake George Area.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

In 2018, the Tourism Department will manage its social media program internally. We will leverage the largest Facebook following for tourism-related pages in the region (approaching a quarter million followers). We will also focus on growing Instagram, as it is the social media platform of preference for millennials.

- In-house staff curate relevant content posted to relevant media channels.
- Added-value social media is tied to several print advertising agreements. A post by an advertiser with a link to our page results in increased engagement with new audiences.



THE Original VACATION!

TELEVISION COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION AND PHOTOGRAPHY ASSETS

Working Pictures of Albany, NY provides comprehensive video and photography production for our summer, fall, and winter campaigns. Their services include casting, scouting locations, sourcing sets and wardrobe, and completing the project with directing, shooting, recording, and editing. The finished product is delivered to the Tourism Department for review and subsequent use by media outlets and on our website.

In 2016, Working Pictures began the process of collecting robust new footage on a seasonal basis. A brand new summer video was released in 2017, and fall production took place for the introduction of a Fall 2018 TV commercial. A new initiative in 2018 will be multiple short-length micro videos that can be promoted on digital and social media platforms.

BROADCAST AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Advertisers Workshop of Lake Placid, NY provides both broadcast and digital media. By researching target audiences and determining their media consumption habits, they can target our markets based on behavior, context, geographic location, and even time of day. AdWorkshop purchases media directly through a programmatic platform, which cuts out the middleman and provides the best ad rate. Campaign performance is regularly reviewed and continuously optimized.

Details about this program can be found in the “2018 Media Summary.”

EMAIL MARKETING

The focus of the e-blast program shifted in 2016 to include timely, content-driven messages. Each email was anchored by a blog story that captured the reader's interest and provided a captivating experience the reader could relate to. Web analytics show that readers clicked on the blog stories and spent several minutes reading. Links within the blast are directed to content on our website or the websites of paid co-op partners. The department's qualified list of 55,000 email subscribers is monitored through our software program which allows us to keep the list current, deleting those who were not opening emails. Our co-op e-blast cost is \$100 per advertiser.

As part of the website redesign, visitors are able to request a Travel Guide and also opt-in to receive information from our business partners. Business partners can choose to send print collateral or email communication.

PRINT COLLATERAL - TRAVEL GUIDE

In 2017, the Tourism Department consolidated print collateral from multiple seasonal and niche pieces to a comprehensive annual Travel Guide. The 88-page 2018 guide is content rich and has the feel of a travel magazine that visitors will want to keep. Our goal is to mail fewer copies and repurpose those resources spent on postage for other initiatives, while using other distribution outlets to promote our destination to prospective visitors. We strive to have a copy of the guide in each hotel room so visitors can see the breadth of our offerings and opt to stay another day, return for another visit, or share with family and friends.

Travel guides will be mailed to those who specifically request them; are distributed at highway information centers, airports, chambers of commerce, AAA offices and other high traffic traveler locations. In 2018 the Department will make a concerted effort to have an Official Warren County Travel Guide in as many hotels, motels, resorts and campgrounds as possible. Our staff delivered guides to those who requested them in 2017 and will continue that outreach in 2018.



THE Original VACATION!

CONSUMER SHOW PARTNERS

New York State Travel Industry Association (NYSTIA) attends targeted travel and outdoor consumer shows in the United States and Canada. The booths are professionally staffed and incorporate dynamic imagery and I Love New York branding. Warren County Tourism selects approximately 10 of these shows and provides our Travel Guide for distribution. Shows include travel and outdoor shows in proven markets such as Hartford, CT, Springfield, MA, Harrisburg, PA, and Montreal, Quebec.

Campground Owners of New York (CONY) attends targeted RV and campground shows, of which we have selected seven for Travel Guide distribution. These include key markets such as Edison, NJ, Hershey, PA, and Springfield, MA.

New York's Best Experiences (NYBE) (Josiah Brown, a.k.a. The New York Sherpa), represents the Lake George Area through multiple levels of promotion. Over the course of three consumer shows and multiple events across New York State, NYBE knows the Lake George Area well and represents us with great enthusiasm and recommendations based on first-hand experiences.

GROUP TOUR

The Lake George Area is a perennial favorite for motorcoach and group travel. Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, works collaboratively with group tour-friendly suppliers to facilitate and strengthen motorcoach tourism to the area. A strong marketing strategy will be implemented which will focus on strategic market segments and group tour trends, attendance of appointment-based Tour Operator Travel Shows, tracking and regular outreach to incoming leads, implementing an effective print and digital advertising campaign, facilitation of Familiarization Tours, and more.

Details about this program can be found in the "2018 Travel Trade Marketing Plan."



THE Original VACATION!

INTERNATIONAL

Recognizing the importance of the international visitor, Warren County is working with our regional partners to cultivate an initiative to attract visitors from New York City to “Go North” and discover what the Adirondacks can offer. This program was introduced in 2017 and received accolades from ILNY, as well as being well-received by International Tour Operators.

A collaborative group of Capital-Saratoga and Adirondack partners has developed a suggested multi-day itinerary that will be promoted by all partners at International Pow Wow. An initial community partner outreach has already taken place and the education component will continue this year, as local businesses understand how to work with a tour operator to attract, and meet the needs of international guests.

Details about this program can be found in the “2018 Travel Trade Marketing Plan.”

CVB

Warren County contracts with the Lake George Chamber of Commerce & CVB to focus on convention sales, sports tourism, and specialty markets.

NEW YORK STATE TOURISM PROMOTION

The Warren County Tourism Department is recognized as the official Tourism Promotion Agency to the I Love New York program and Empire State Development. The department works closely with I Love New York and their partners to populate the ILNY website, facilitate FAMS, provide media/press FAM trips, facilitate photo/video shoots, and much more. Our relationship with I Love New York is invaluable in terms of their global recognition and advertising reach.

The Matching Funds grant program is an annual request for funding offered to TPAs around the state. The Lake George Area is fortunate to have been awarded \$92,000 in 2018. A portion of these funds are used to support an Adirondack Regional Tourism Council Advertising and Marketing Plan, as well as to offset the cost of our Lake George Area Travel Guide.



THE Original VACATION!

ADIRONDACK REGIONAL TOURISM PROMOTION

Warren County is a participating member of the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council (ARTC), a consortium of seven counties that share resources to promote economic development through destination marketing. This organization is officially recognized by New York State/Empire State Development/I Love New York.

As such, we fund ARTC with NYS Matching Funds dollars. This funding is used to promote the Adirondacks as a destination, and also focus on the unique experiences that Warren County has to offer. This is facilitated through a comprehensive marketing program that includes the website VisitAdirondacks.com, digital and social media, public relations, and email marketing.

As outlined below (Data Collection), ARTC commissioned Longwoods International to collect travel data in 2015 and 2016. These visitor reports offer a regional level of insight that can be factored into local and statewide trends.

We recognize the importance of aligning ourselves in this strategic partner program, as we know we are a destination for outdoor enthusiasts in our primary markets: those seeking the authentic Adirondack experience!

DATA COLLECTION

WARREN COUNTY RESEARCH

A Comprehensive Destination Research and Strategic Review was undertaken by BBG&G Advertising and Public Relations from May-November 2016. Based on BBG&G recommendations, the department is working to:

- Identify new market segments that offer significant potential for growth;
- Identify and promote attractors and experiences that are of highest interest to each segment and audience;
- Identify, create, package and promote events and recreational opportunities that will drive extended and four season visitation;
- Establish a standard process for allocation and distribution of tourism funds, as currently being facilitated by the Occupancy Tax Committee;
- Build a county-wide perspective and foster an atmosphere of collaboration and cooperation.

SMITH TREND REPORTS

The Tourism Department contracts with Smith Trend Research to receive the following reports:

- **Custom Forecast** - Will forecast 18 month of performance based on historical performance and specific market dynamics; one time report.
- **Daily by month** - Will show data from each day of the month, by date, with comparison to the same day of the previous year.
- **Monthly multi-segment** - Will show current and year-to-date comparisons
- **Weekly Multi-Segment** - Will show weekly Occupancy, ADR and RevPar for our competitive set.

NEW YORK STATE RESEARCH

“The Economic Impact of Tourism in New York” is an annual survey conducted by Tourism Economics. This report includes all of New York State with an Adirondack focus, with breakdowns for each county, including Warren. The current 2016 report includes economic impact, traveler spending, employment levels, and trends. 2016 Total Traveler Spending for Warren County was \$577,899,000, an increase of 1.3% over 2015.



THE Original VACATION!

ADIRONDACK REGION RESEARCH

Longwoods International of Toronto, Ontario conducts the largest ongoing study ever of American Travelers. The firm has conducted large-scale visitor research since 1990, of a random sample of adults aged 18 and over. The Adirondack Region, of which Warren County is a participating regional member county, commissioned Longwoods to collect data in 2015 and 2016. The 2015 Visitor Report has included questioning relative to the Adirondack Region as a whole, with a breakout comparison of Lake Placid. In 2016, the same survey was undertaken with a breakout for Lake George. These results were available in mid-2017 and will prove to compliment other state and local findings.

MILLENNIAL RESEARCH

“The Adirondacks & the Next Generation” is a 2016 report that was coordinated by the Wild Center in Tupper Lake and the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council with the support of a Market NY Grant funding. Schireson Associates of New York, NY conducted this research in Phase I of the project and a practical application handbook was designed by Trampoline Advertising & Design of Glens Falls. All of this data has been shared with us so that the Adirondacks can collectively move forward to attract the Millennial Market, the next generation of Adirondack enthusiasts. We continue to refer to this to engage this market, as well as track trends.



Proposed Lake George Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau (LGRCVB) 2018 Sales & Marketing Plan

Overview

The Lake George Region comprises more than 9,000 guest rooms (2,400+ seasonal), over 200,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, a 2.5-acre festival/concert space, multiple natural and man-made sporting venues, and unique event spaces. With its picturesque lake and mountain views, easy access off I-87, walkable towns, local attractions and year-round events, the area offers ample assets and opportunities unlike any other regions in upstate New York.

The LGRCVB works closely with many local partner organizations to successfully host and service new and existing events to enhance the visitor experience while developing repeat business. Both marketing and hosting strategies are designed to competitively position and brand the Lake George Region as one of the nation's premier meetings, conventions, sport, and festival event destinations.

The purpose of the LGRCVB is to be an active economic driver for the region to support a year-round economy through the solicitation of meetings, conventions, sporting, and special events. As the designated Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the region, the LGRCVB is the conduit for the hospitality industry in the area to create guaranteed business, oftentimes booked months and years in advance. To create a strong economic impact on the local economy and be competitive within the New York State marketplace, an integrated sales and marketing strategy is outlined, and will include increased market outreach, cultivation of existing relationships, and clear and consistent messaging across multiple platforms (print, digital, and social media.)

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In addition, the LGRCVB proposes adding key tracking tools and resources to monitor national and regional market trends, to better forecast seasonal regional needs, and identify regional/annual marketplace gaps. These shall include adding a subscription to Smith Travel Research, a Customer Relationship Management system, and an economic impact calculator to better track the return on investment on meetings, conventions, sports, festivals, and events booked in the Lake George region.

The LGRCVB realized 21 bookings for a total room night gain of 6,120 room nights booked in 2017 throughout the county. The minimal economic impact of those rooms equated to: \$1,771,189 (6,120 * 1.5 ppl * \$192.94). The 2018 goal is to book 7,000 new room nights, an increase of 13.4% over 2017 for an economic impact goal of a minimum of \$2,025,870.

The 2018 CVB Plan proposes the following strategies to realize the 2018 goal:

STRATEGY 1: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE REGION TO SUPPORT A YEAR-ROUND ECONOMY

- 1) Prospect and book new business including Association, Corporate and Religious meetings, and conventions. Leverage existing memberships and relationships with regional partners, organizations and associations including: Empire State Society of Association Executives (ESSAE), NYS Society of Human Resource Management (NYSSHRM), National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) among others to draw more business and create stronger awareness of the region's assets.
- 2) Actively solicit group tour, reunions (military, fraternal, family) through marketing, one on one meetings, membership opportunities and social media campaigns pre/post annual marketplaces including: NASC, CONNECT, ESSAE Expo and Conference, Travel Media Showcase, Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA Conference), Small Market Meetings and SPORTS Relationship Conference.
- 3) Continue to grow and actively solicit sporting events by cultivating existing relationships with events rights holders and local sport venues/facilities, marketplace appointments, sponsorship opportunities and advertising.
- 4) Develop an annual Meetings/Conventions/Sporting Events calendar to clearly identify activity in the region and better identify gaps for future business prospects.
- 5) Produce high quality bid proposals and presentations for select events, including conferences, special events and sporting events.

- 6) Develop a more updated, comprehensive database of event planners and rights holders and categorize by market for e-marketing purposes. Expand the database by developing new contacts at marketplaces and through prospecting efforts.

STRATEGY 2: IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING EFFORT ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS

- 1) Create a strong brand identity for the Lake George Regional LGRCVB which clearly identifies the region as a world class destination for meetings and events through the following tactics:
 - a) Create new print/digital advertising campaigns aimed at specific target markets (i.e.: association, corporate, sport)
 - b) Create a digital marketing campaign pre/post marketplace attendance and track results.
 - c) Update the LGR LGRCVB website pages with new imagery and resources to demonstrate the Lake George regional assets in a more positive and updated manner.
 - d) Provide consistent convention services, including opportunities for familiarization tours for prospective new business, pre-promotion, and attendance building assistance for booked events.
 - e) Continue to work cooperatively with Chamber/business partners across the region with collaborative cross-promotional activities.
 - f) Utilize sponsorship as key opportunities to activate new markets and cultivate existing relationships.
 - g) Revise the existing meetings/conventions video and create promotional sports video.
 - h) Increase public relations outreach and messaging through traditional media outreach, social media, and advertorial opportunities.
 - i) Develop market-specific advertising creative, increase advertising placement in trade publications and develop a comprehensive database of all market contacts for repeat outreach and messaging opportunities.

STRATEGY 3: CONTINUE TO POSITION THE LAKE GEORGE REGION AS THE “SPORTCATION DESTINATION” IN THE NORTHEAST

- 1) Actively pursue, solicit, and cultivate year-round sporting event opportunities for man-made and natural venues within the Lake George region.
- 2) Develop consistent messaging through public relations and marketing campaigns, social media, familiarization tours, event support and sponsorships.

- 3) Increase local awareness with local and regional stakeholders, organizations, and businesses to clearly demonstrate the economic value of sporting events to the region.
- 4) Continue to develop and strengthen relationships with local host partners and organizations, including AAU, NYSPHAA and others.
- 5) Attend national marketplaces to meet one on one with event owners, rights holders (NASC and Sport Relationship Conference).
- 6) Redevelop sport-specific page on LGRCVB website to better identify regional sport assets and facilities, as well as LGRCVB services.

The Lake George Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau is tasked with promoting the area's properties, meeting/event/sporting venues, attractions, and festival spaces to the following markets:

- Meetings/Convention (SMERF - Social, Military, Education, Religious, Fraternal, Association, Corporate)
- Sporting Events
- Reunions
- Weddings
- Festivals/Events

TRADE SHOWS: Attend 8 conferences/marketplaces in 2018 to generate new business, as well as mine existing leads for new business. Attending these marketplaces will allow the CVB to continue to cultivate existing relationships, as well as prospect for new event opportunities. Five marketplaces are meetings/convention focused, three are sport-focused, one is focused on adventure travel and one on travel media.

They would include the following:

ATTA ELEVATE 2018 Conference/marketplace (Lake George is host in 2019)
 National Association of Sports Commissions Conference/marketplace
 CONNECT
 ESSAE Conference
 Small Market Meetings Conference
 SPORT Relationship Conference
 TEAMS18
 Travel Media Showcase

MEMBERSHIPS: Keep current and active membership levels and add National Council of Youth Sports, Reunion Friendly Network, and Religious Conference Management Association. Adding these memberships will increase the LGRCVB's visibility and provide marketing opportunities through social media, newsletters, and advertising.

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ADVERTISING: Visibility and promotion has been a challenge for the LGRCVB due to lack of resources. To increase exposure - and, ultimately, booked business- the LGRCVB proposes a mix of traditional advertising in various print/digital publications, association websites and organizations, as well as cultivating continued PR and earned media including blog posts, articles, interviews, advertorial/free editorial. In addition, there is also funding allocated for professional graphic design.

MARKETING: To enhance traditional advertising, the LGRCVB will update the current sales/marketing toolkit to better promote and service the various target markets. The creation of compelling e-marketing campaigns for pre- and post-conferences/events will target attending meeting/event planners. Research and relationship management tools are pivotal to reach our goals. They include: Simpleview customer relationship management system, Destinations International (DMAI) event economic impact calculators for meetings, conventions, sports events, and festivals/special events, as well as the Smith Travel Research Reports. All these tools combine to ensure we reach our customers, stay on track with customer management, destination management, media, and the added ability to assist the County and individual towns evaluate current business as to the economic impact, taxes generated, jobs sustained and more.

In addition, increasing convention services, travel trade marketing and community outreach will only further bolster the LGRCVB's opportunities to service clients and visitors and increase economic impact throughout the Lake George region. The LGRCVB will also increase visibility through social media and direct e-marketing tactics through specific messaging to targeted market segments. One of the concepts being considered is a monthly e-newsletter ("MEET me in Lake George") targeted to meeting/event planners which would highlight properties, news, specials and more.

SPONSORSHIP: Technically part of a marketing/promotional function, sponsorships play an integral role in industry relationship development at various events throughout the year and allows the LGRCVB to reach key audience through non-traditional brand activations.

ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATING COSTS: Operating costs, mileage, office rental, internet, phone, salaries, CSEE (Certified Sport Event Executive) certification, website maintenance and equipment fall under this category.

Respectfully submitted by: Gina Mintzer, Executive Director; Kristen Hanifin, Special Events & Convention Sales Director

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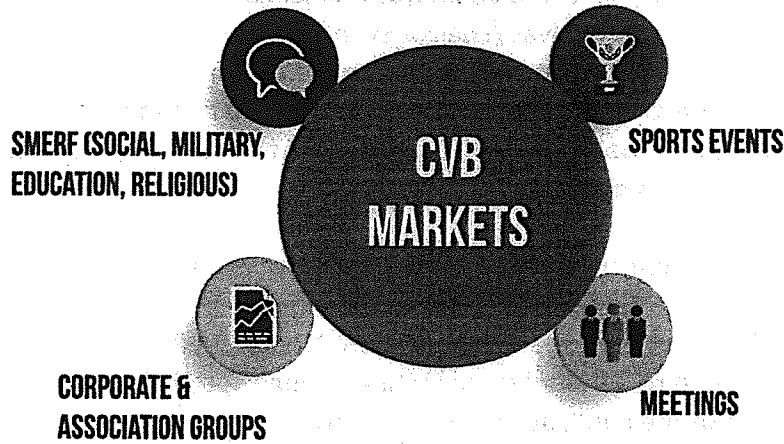
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REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & CVB

2017 OUTCOMES OVERVIEW



BUDGET: **\$175,000**

21 **14** **10**

NEW EVENTS BOOKED IN 2017 PENDING FUTURE EVENTS MARKETPLACES

6,120 **4,536** **483**

HOTEL ROOMS BOOKED/ COMMITTED HOTEL ROOMS EXPECTED SALES CALLS/APPOINTMENTS

\$1,771,189
ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$1,312,736
ECONOMIC IMPACT