

Marketing Strategy Recommendations



INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive tourism environment, destinations face tremendous challenges standing out as appealing places to visit. Tourism marketing organizations, often working with small budgets, struggle to have a marketing presence in potential visitor markets. These organizations are continually solicited with traditional media advertising opportunities from print, broadcast, direct mail, and other media outlets. It is often a daunting task for tourism marketers to sift through the mounds of solicitations and phone calls from media representatives to determine whether a particular media opportunity is the right vehicle to reach the market with the message. It is even more difficult to determine whether the media opportunity is truly one that is effective and can deliver solid results, that is, higher awareness and interest in a destination and ultimately new visitors.

Consumers are bombarded with an average of 1,200 media messages a day. Can the brain process this much information? The simple answer is "not really". Marketers who use traditional print and broadcast media must rely on the frequency of their message to get through to consumers. But most tourism marketing organizations do not have the budget that it takes to generate the frequency of advertising through traditional media to have much, if any, impact on the market.

In order to cut through the media and message clutter, destinations lacking huge media budgets must take a different approach to marketing. First, they must specialize. This means the destination must be known for something specific. Generic messaging no longer captures the attention of the market, which is why DDI has developed a very specific brand for Chautauqua County – something that Chautauqua County can be known for throughout the U.S. and the world.

Just as generic messaging does not work anymore, neither does a 20th century approach to marketing strategies and tactics. Tourism marketing for the new century requires a clear understanding of how the potential market gathers, receives, and processes information, as well as how they make decisions. This understanding leads to reprioritizing old strategies and fully engaging in the most effective media of the future.

The following marketing recommendations are focused on the most effective strategies and actions for gaining awareness of Chautauqua's new brand. Internet and Public Relations strategies are front and center, followed by Collateral, Advertising, Sales, and Monitoring/measurement.

1 EXPAND THE USE OF THE INTERNET AS A KEY MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL

DESCRIPTION:

The overall goal of the Internet as a strategy for Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau is to use the Internet as a way to increase interest in the County as a visitor destination, convert high potential prospects, and facilitate trip planning. We recommend that the Internet become the foundation of all your marketing efforts – the framework around which everything else is built. Use of the Internet for travel information and trip booking continues to grow at a rapid pace. It is the future medium for travel marketers and the future is now.

The CCVB has long recognized the importance of the Internet. The current website, www.tourchautauqua.com, is very good, and much better than most travel websites we see. We think, however, that you should greatly expand your use of the Internet and your website to meet the information demands of today's travel market.

Specific actions to more effectively use the Internet are covered in the following areas:

1. Website Update
2. E-Newsletters/E-blasts
3. Search Engine Optimization
4. RSS

In addition, we've included a discussion of "Social Media" at the end of these recommendations.

1. Website Update

The CCVB has a good website, but we think it can even be better with some structural changes, content revisions, and additions. First and foremost, the World's Learning Center brand will need to be incorporated into the website with the brand graphics and the messaging throughout. We suggest the architecture of the site be redesigned as follows:

- 1) The Home Page – The first look at Chautauqua County needs large and compelling photographs. Clear links are needed to:
 - a. What to do: Visitor experiences, not just passive attractions. Branded experiences – the learning opportunities, should be listed up front and separately from the diversionary activities of shopping, dining and recreation. This is the place to introduce the schedule of learning opportunities – the "course schedule."
 - b. Where to eat: Focus on the best Chautauqua County has to offer.
 - c. Where to stay: Start with the best hotels, write about them, then list the others.
 - d. Where to shop: Start with the best shops, unique shops, provide details such as unique items for sale, and interesting displays.
 - e. Getting here: Have two sections – driving to Chautauqua and flying to Chautauqua. In the driving to Chautauqua section give specific directions to the county using the freeways, along with the distance and drive times. Add driving from the East Coast cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. For air travelers to Chautauqua mention commercial air service into Jamestown as well as Buffalo, Cleveland, and Pittsburg. Include a link to maps.
 - f. Photos and videos: Include both professionally-created and amateur 3-minute or shorter videos of visitors' experiences in the county, such as learning camps, area events, outdoor dining, water recreation, etc. Create a section on videos related to different learning experiences. The sponsors of these learning opportunities should jump at the chance to produce and sponsor these videos.

- g. **Maps, Guides & Information:** The maps available on the current website include a county map, along with maps for each community and links other maps that may be of interest. This is excellent and should be kept up to date.
- h. **Media and Trade:** As with the current website, a link to a media and travel trade area is vital to your efforts.
- i. **World's Learning Center Blog:** The current website has a blog and we suggest this be used more regularly to focus on learning opportunities. Posts should occur at least once a week with something new happening, announcements of future events, a profile of an existing event or a Chautauqua week, and other noteworthy subjects.

2) The "What to Do" link should lead the user to a page where they can "pick your season." We suggest the seasons be divided up by two-month periods that align with the type of product available. For example, you could break up the year as follows:

- Dec/Jan: Feature holiday events, winter sports
- Feb/Mar: Winter sports and events
- Apr/May: Late winter sports (if there is still snow, spring opportunities)
- Jun/Jul: First half of summer
- Aug/Sep: Second half of summer
- Oct/Nov: Fall foliage, fall festivals

Once a user picks their season, they can "Pick Your Passion," which leads them to a variety of experiences available that time of year. Some experiences may be featured in every season, but some will only be showcased in their primary season or seasons,

such as snow-based sports. Include the following categories:

- **Learning opportunities** – lead with learning opportunities – this is your brand. Link to various opportunities, such as various programs, workshops, "camps," clinics, etc. – anything that is a learning opportunity that fits the brand.
- **The Arts** – performing, visual, craftsmanship, public art
- **History** – museums, walking tours, landmarks, etc.
- **Events** – Do not include local events that would only interest residents. Include events that draw from outside the county. Each event should reinforce the brand perception and be worth a special trip.
- **Entertainment** - Any professional entertainment should also be listed under Events. Other entertainment that would be included here would be movies, and theatre productions, for example.
- **Signature Shops** – This includes the best of the retail shops, shops unique to the county and shops that carry specialty items. Link to the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce and individual community chambers for local malls, national retailers, or local favorite stores.
- **Signature Dining** – Include the best dining experiences in Chautauqua County only. No national chains or fast food restaurants. Link to the local chambers for these.
- **Kids & Family** – Include children's entertainment, educational recreation, learning camps, etc.
- **Hidden Treasures** – This would include unusual, off-the-beaten-path places or activities; neat little places known by the locals.

Focus on activities and provide information on learning opportunities available for these activities. Provide specific information with itineraries, don't just list activities and events.

Give details, what to do with a two, three, four, or seven-day visit, how long it takes to drive to specific areas, where to get further information. Interesting details matter.

- 3) In the “Where to Eat,” “Where to Stay,” and “Where to Shop” sections, ALWAYS promote the top-rated FIRST. If need be, have a third party determine these ratings. Do NOT just provide lists. For each, there should be an interior photo, a paragraph telling the visitor what is so special about each, and then details: pricing (\$\$\$), hours, specialties, hotel features, signature items, unique gifts, etc.
- 4) “Getting Here” is one of the most important sections of the site. Show Chautauqua County in relationship to Ohio, Pennsylvania, southern Ontario, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. The primary markets for learning opportunities will come from these areas and it helps to give them the location perspective. It’s fine to link Mapquest or Google maps but there should also be a regional map, much like the current map used, but with features Mapquest won’t have: drive times from various cities, distances in miles, the nearest commercial airports, train or bus connections to major cities. Also include a “Road Conditions” section that is updated often so people can find trouble spots, construction areas, and seasonal considerations for driving.
- 5) “Photos and Videos” – Consumer expectations have gone beyond flash-driven slide shows on destination websites. Their experience with YouTube and Google video has created an expectation of cool videos covering a range of subjects about the destination. They want to see professionally produced vignettes on topics of interest. For these types of videos, be sure to include a call to action at the end or next to the window – i.e., “for more information on the activities you have just seen, click here.”

They also want to see amateur videos that have greater credibility because they represent third-party assessments of



what Chautauqua County really has to offer. A combination of good amateur videos and your own professional efforts is needed. Photos are also welcome, and the photos on the current website are very good. Some viewer-produced photos should be included, with permission, of course. Creating a supply of videos and photos from which to choose can also be done through local contests, where the winner’s efforts are acknowledged and featured on your website.

- 6) The “Maps, Guides & Information” section should include:
 - Good maps showing the county and where major activities take place. The current maps are very good for this.

dd1 Recommendations

- The new “Best of Chautauqua County Guide,” and “Chautauqua County Experiences Guide,” printable events calendars, and any other collateral material that is developed. These should be not only viewable online but downloadable as well.
- Reciprocal links to other organizations, local communities, attractions and activity vendors, the state tourism site, Jamestown Airport, etc.
- Regional and local contact information, including locations of visitor information centers, phone numbers, and operating hours.

7) The “Media & Trade” section would be home to:

- Online Press Room – See detailed recommendation for this under Public Relations. One of the best online Press Rooms in the country can be found at www.exploreshville.com; it’s a good one to emulate.
- Meeting and event planning resources
- Local media contacts and links
- Tour operators, guides, outfitters
- Resources for local partners (the business community, local organizations, regional marketing partners)

Other suggestions for the website:

- On the home page, focus on the highlights. Make a statement about the things you have that are the most unique and reinforce the brand, and things that are the

best (by third party endorsement and use quotes).

- Each category should offer sample events or activities that can be experienced all or most of the time.



- Write the website copy focusing on the specifics, not the generic.
- Include “Did you know” online post-it notes.
- Wherever you can, reinforce the image that Chautauqua County is THE place to come for different learning opportunities.
- Develop podcasts (both video and voice). Let visitors choose from many that might provide examples of what specific learning opportunities are available, and events or attractions that might interest the viewer. Podcasts could be developed for a score of attractions, shops, or restaurants and would feature one to two minute segments about each of the primary businesses in the county. Refer to the Asheville, North Carolina CVB website – www.exploreshville.com. Read through this website to see some very good ideas; in particular the pressroom, the visitors guide, and the way the site portrays the city’s brand image.

2. E-newsletters and E-blasts

E-newsletters and E-blasts are a great way to have frequent contact with your nearby markets, those that are likely to have a short travel decision timeline. These forms of communication are excellent to provide news, updates, new opportunities, and calendars of events. It is an inexpensive way to keep the destination top-of-mind among your market. E-blasts can be used to notify users of last-minute opportunities that are simply too good to pass up or to remind your market of a major event that they should not miss.

The current website offers an E-newsletter for anyone who wants to subscribe. As you have done, keep the E-newsletter an opt-in program. You have to be sure to give your users confidence that you are not using their name to market other things or selling their name to other entities.

The E-newsletters produced by the CCVB are excellent and provide a lot of relevant information and linkages for the use. The following suggestions will help these efforts even be more effective:

- When people opt-in to your E-newsletter do you direct them to a welcome page? The welcome message can link them to previous newsletters, promotions, special discounts, or anything else of interest. It

doesn’t have to be a big thing, just needs to give them a “welcome.”

After all, they have just expressed an interest in getting more information from you. If they are receiving your email in HTML, they can click through to your website right from within the email

- Integrate the brand and brand-related experiences into the content.
- Include the link to www.tourchautauqua.com in several places. In some newsletters the link is in several places and in others it is in one place. Also, don’t forget to include a phone number in an obvious place in the email. Some impulse buyers will want to book immediately.
- Consider shorter newsletters with more frequency – monthly, if possible.
- Include more descriptive visitor experiences and add testimonials to the content.
- If possible, show more people doing things. Many photos are static and don’t convey a sense of excitement.

3. Maximize search engine optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization or SEO is becoming more and more sophisticated with each passing week. Internet marketers want the best possible chance to have their websites to pop up in the first two pages of a search. Most users don’t go beyond the second page of search results, so it is critical to be at the top of the search hierarchy.

SEO today goes way beyond simple key words and phrases. The way one writes content has an effect on SEO, as do the linkages your website has with other websites. Search engines use complicated algorithms that are constantly changing to assign relevance to your web pages for web searches. That is why, for example, you need to use your key words throughout your pages, along with variations, such as synonyms. The methods used by search engines to index web pages today are so sophisticated that they are considered a form of “artificial intelligence.”

The three primary search engines, Google, Yahoo, and MSN, use a technique known as “spiders” to regularly “crawl” through websites indexing by key words and phrases. To be listed in directories, you need to submit your URL

to the major search engines at least once. However, to be indexed, you may want to submit your URL to them a few times. This way your site will be “crawled” more than once. Eventually, with more and more incoming links, your site will be automatically crawled and the indexes updated. That is why it is very important to keep a website up to date.

Increasing the number of linkages is critical to keeping a website moving up the hierarchy of the search engine. One way to increase linkages is to have several other websites have a link to your website. For example, a link to the CCVB could be listed on every members website in a place where it can't be missed. We found www.tourchautauqua.com on a few member websites that we checked but the link was not easy to find. We suggest offering members a slight discount on their membership by allowing the CCVB to have a link on their websites. That way, you can increase your links and hopefully increase your relevancy when a search engine crawls through your site.

In addition to making sure your site is indexed, today's Internet marketers need to know how their site is being used, how long a visitor stays on their site, and what pages are being viewed. It is also important to know whether the key words or phrases that brought the visitor to your site are also helpful in getting the visitor to take a desired action. For example, do you want visitors to sign up for the E-newsletter? If so, what are the key search words that brought the visitor to your site who actually signed up for the newsletter? Do you know?

Because SEO is a rapidly growing and changing discipline, we recommend that the CCVB engage the services of a webmaster who truly understands these issues and can recommend SEO software and strategies for composing your web pages that will help you achieve higher search engine ranks.

3. RSS

RSS is a developing technology that allows the host to format frequently updated information into a standardized format that can be “fed” to interested readers on a regular basis. It eliminates the need for the reader to bookmark and visit favorite websites regularly to find out what's new. Instead, when there is news, the RSS format feeds it directly to the reader who can then read it at their leisure. These feeds can link to the website page where the news is posted so the reader does not have to search for it.

RSS is heavily used among the more traditional news media and many people use RSS feeds to get their news without checking several news sites. In the world of travel marketing, RSS is only starting to be used by DMOs, as more consumers are learning to use RSS for feeds other than general news. For example, North Carolina, South Carolina, Michigan, and Minnesota currently have RSS feeds to subscribers who choose their feeds. When we checked, each of these states had less than 50 subscribers. However, when we checked Frommer's Travel Guide, we found they had 16,500 subscribers!

The CCVB already has an RSS feed on its website, although when we checked it several times over several days it doesn't appear to be receiving or sending news feeds. We recommend that the CCVB use RSS as another distribution method for news and updates, much like the opt-in e-newsletter and e-blasts. The service would be opt-in and users could view regularly updated information about the county's travel offerings. It may take some time for this to catch on but once the framework is in place, it is economical and easy to update information for the feed.

4. Social Media

No discussion of Internet strategies would be complete without touching on social media. The growing popularity of social media sites is extraordinary and the most popular social media sites have tens of millions of subscribers. The use of social media will be another important component of the CCVB's efforts to develop the Chautauqua brand and to drive traffic to the website. Social media can also help drive your search engine rankings. Social media, made popular by MySpace.com, now includes hundreds of sites: some are general interest, such as Facebook.com, and some serve special interests, such as WineLifeToday or TripAdvisor. The general sites also have groups that form around special interests. Facebook, for example, has a general “Chautauqua” group of 350 members who know of or have been to the Chautauqua Institution's program. There is also an official Chautauqua Institution group on Facebook with 300 members. On their group page they post photos, description of upcoming events, and information about related sites. It's like having another website but targeted to Facebook members who have a specific interest in the Chautauqua Institution. And there is no out of pocket cost, except for the time it takes to update the information. Facebook has a number of other travel-related

groups, as well as a range of special interest groups (such as 2,400 members of the Lucille Ball fan group) – and this is just one social media site.

Developing social media strategies starts with research. Through your own social media site research develop a list of social media sites to target and join existing groups or create groups. Start with Facebook and create a brand-themed Chautauqua group. Use the group site to post photos, events, and other brand-related activities. Use this site to drive groups members to your website. Also, join other groups that have interests related to the Chautauqua brand to see what their members are discussing. It will take some time to start seeing the results of this effort, but over the long term the time spent developing social media should pay off.

APPROXIMATE COST:

Website Update/SEO/RSS: \$50,000
 E-newsletters and E-blasts: Staff time
 SEO: Part of Website Update budget for webmaster, software
 Social Media: Staff time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Website Update: 2008 begin planning; 2009 planning and implementation of update

E-newsletters: 2008 and beyond – monthly; E-blasts: 2008 and beyond – when there is something of note to alert subscribers about.

SEO: 2008 - engage webmaster, same planning timeframe as website update; ongoing

Social media: 2008 – do research and create brand-related group on Facebook. 2009-2010 – continue to expand these efforts.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Internet is the single most important marketing tool for travel marketers today and certainly will be even more important in the future. Why?

It's simple: it is the most cost-effective way to reach a variety of markets throughout the world with information. The key is to have a website that visually engages the viewer, provides relevant content, and keeps them coming back for more. More consumers are taking control of the information they receive. Newspaper circulation is down, Network TV is losing market share to the cable stations. Radio is becoming more segmented. Consumers use the Internet because they can choose the content and timing of information. They will not find Chautauqua and its branded product by searching geography, but by searching activities. Chautauqua needs to pop up at the top of the list for leisure learning experiences.

Driving potential visitors to your website is the cornerstone of your overall marketing plan. Effective search engine optimization and key linkages with membership, marketing and other organizations, are proven methods to accomplish this. New methods, such as RSS and social media marketing will only grow in popularity and use over time.

2 EXPAND PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY SIGNIFICANTLY

DESCRIPTION:

Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau should expand its public relations strategy to be a significant portion of its marketing program. It is another cornerstone of the overall marketing strategy. A well thought out public relations campaign is more effective than advertising during the early stages of brand development. Public relations is also a way to get more “bang for the buck,” meaning that a good overall PR strategy often more effectively reaches your target audience with a credible message. Once the brand is more established, PR serves to reinforce the brand.

A strong overall PR strategy for Chautauqua County should include:

- Development of a comprehensive website pressroom
- Development of a hard copy press kit
- Regular press contact and press relationships
- Ongoing media assistance for story writers and editors
- Encouragement of special events supporting the brand
- Coordination of efforts with member businesses, community partners
- Monitoring and reporting of press coverage (see Recommendation #6)

Website Pressroom

The website pressroom should have several pages, each of which is devoted to specific items that will make it easier for the press. These pages should be updated regularly.

1. **Public Relations contact page:** List several contacts and include their photos. The press is generally under deadline, and if they cannot reach one person instantly, they need access to another. It may be your only chance to weigh in on an article they are writing or to get free publicity for an upcoming event.
2. **Story ideas page:** Don't wait on the press, instead write up your own story ideas as “prompts” for the press to pick up on. These can be about the World's Learning Center brand, various learning “camps,” specific workshops, the local scene, entertainment, events, or other visitor experiences, for example. Make sure they know where to go on the

website to download photos that go with each story idea.

3. **Photo gallery page:** A picture *is* worth a thousand words, especially pictures showing people having fun engaged in a variety of activities. Providing great photography is extremely important. Don't just gather up amateur photos from all over town and post them. Think carefully about how you want to position each subject. You will need eventually to script a number of photos and hire professional photographers to go shoot them. Some photos should include models that look like people you would find in your target market. Others can be candid shots of events and visitors having fun, but shot by a professional who knows how to frame them. All of them should be available in high-resolution digital format. Present the photos online in low-resolution and then have the press register online for the high-resolution versions. This way you know who is receiving them, and they will agree to use them for editorial purposes only, assign proper credit and not sell them to be used commercially elsewhere. The same should be done for your logo graphics. Be sure to group your photos by subject so they can be researched easily.
4. **Press Kit page:** This page should contain background materials that can be inserted into any story or article:
 - Interesting facts about Chautauqua County
 - History of the county and the Chautauqua movement
 - Climate and weather
 - Six season variations information
 - Story ideas
 - News release page: Include a running log of all news released that you convert into PDF format so they can be downloaded. Be sure to show the date of the release.
5. **Full Fact Sheet page:** More extensive than the “interesting facts” in the Press Kit, this page would contain an extended list of facts about every facet of Chautauqua County, the brand as it develops, and other local subjects. Here is where you also list historical facts about the region. Each learning opportunity available to visitors should have its own coverage including information about the subject, the teacher credentials and when and where the classes are offered.

6. **Press Trip page:** Some out-of-town writers will want assistance in making arrangements to visit and write about Chautauqua County or a special subject in the county. This page allows prospective writers to request help from the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau in planning their trip, making the right connections with local stakeholders, or gaining access to particular events. They may also be looking for financial assistance or some in-kind consideration. This is the mechanism for them to make their requests.
7. **Media coverage page:** This is where Chautauqua County posts the media coverage they receive from the press. It allows the press to see what's been covered and in what manner. List the stories by year and month and, if possible, include links to the actual story source and photos.

Press Kit

The Press Kit page found in the Website Pressroom should contain all the press kit material in a downloadable form. The CCVB should have a small quantity of hard copy Press Kits on hand for visits with press representatives, to respond to press inquiries, and direct for mailings to the press list. This kit should be printed on high quality stationary and include a CD of photos for use by writers in their stories.

Regular Press Contact

Review your list of press contacts at least once a month to make sure it is up to date, particularly media that will reach your target markets. The list should be made up of key contacts from magazines, newspapers, online websites, travel newsletters, guidebooks, and blogs. These contacts should receive regular press releases and E-bulletins with news-worthy publishing. This means contact at least once every one or two months to keep the destination and its brand top of mind.

Ongoing Media Assistance

Ongoing dialog with press contacts will help you determine who is most likely to write articles on Chautauqua County. Work to identify the highly qualified magazine, newspaper, newsletter, online, and freelance journalists who can place articles in publications aimed at your target markets. Provide the most qualified with assistance in trip planning, such as cost underwriting,

contacts with brand-related tourism products to be featured, and background information. In many cases it may be necessary to accompany the writer, but in other cases the writer may want to travel on their own.

The State of New York's "I Love NY" campaign also has contact with the media and sometimes will sponsor press trips. Many times writers may go to the state agency first when looking for story ideas. Therefore, be sure your contact with the state agency is frequent and that they are kept up to date on the latest developments in Chautauqua County.

Finally, work closely with your community and business partners to support and help them coordinate any special needs they may have when hosting a writer. Solicit ideas from them regularly to be included in the online pressroom and E-bulletins. And remember that the media want to write about experiences, so they want to have the experience themselves. Be sure to have at the ready a variety of learning experiences in which the media can participate so you can make suggestions when they call to plan a trip.

Special Events Supporting the Brand

One way to build early awareness of the new brand is to assist and support large special events that are in support of the brand and designed for out-of-county visitors. These events can be heavily promoted to the media and special media events can be included in the event. For example, at the Wine Festival, learning experiences can be expanded beyond what is currently available to include more workshops or "camps" to learn about making wine, harvesting grapes, pairing wine and food, etc. There can be a special media event where they can find out about learning opportunities related to the brand and the festival, meet the winemakers face-to-face, and perhaps have a short learning opportunity themselves, where they actually do something hands-on. We are not talking about simply wine tasting. We mean they get their hands dirty – or feet dirty – doing something like cooking with wine, or stomping grapes, etc.

Implementing an Overall PR Strategy

Public relations is a very labor intensive activity, but one with big payoffs. The CCVB has a limited staff and many responsibilities, which is why we recommend that a professional public relations agency with community branding and repositioning experience should be contracted. This agency

can work with the CCVB to refine the details of this strategy, such as the criteria for media to qualify for underwriting, and assist with implementation of the strategy in support of the brand.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:

2009 - \$60,000

2010 - \$75,000

2011 - \$100,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

2008 – Contract with PR firm

2009 and beyond – Refine and implement PR strategy

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:

Public relations is a more credible way than advertising to generate large-scale awareness of Chautauqua County's brand and to deliver the county's message to the target audience. Remember, public relations is all about how you build brand awareness, while advertising is about maintaining that awareness. By having other people write about your destination, they spread your message for you and in the process build credibility for you throughout your marketing. The travel markets are more inclined to believe something they read in an article in a magazine, Sunday travel section, or a guidebook than they are an advertisement. And, they are more likely to act on what they read by going to the website for more information.

Public relations also provides a very good return on investment. For every dollar invested in public relations, there is typically a three-dollar return in "earned media" that is, the cost you would have had to pay for equivalent ad space.

3 DEVELOP AND DISTRIBUTE BRANDED COLLATERAL MATERIALS

DESCRIPTION:

Collateral materials, such as visitor guides, brochures, rack cards and posters, are needed to reinforce the brand and provide consumers with accurate trip planning information. Although the Internet has become a major source of travel planning information for today's travelers, printed materials or "printable" materials in PDF format are still needed when the Internet may not be available, such as during a trip, and as a reference source for what to see and do while in the County.

The current county travel guide is chock full of just about everything possible to do within the county. It is great to see a travel guide that has such strong participation from businesses throughout the county. Clearly, the guide plays a role in providing visitors trip planning information and helps to link potential visitors to the county's businesses and attractions. And the CCVB does an excellent job distributing the guide. We saw it everywhere we went. In its current form, however, the travel guide performs more as a reference piece, something you would refer to once in the destination, rather than a sales tool or a "lure" piece – something that whets the appetite of the potential visitor to come experience Chautauqua County.

As you work on building the brand and brand awareness, additional types of collateral pieces are needed. These pieces are essential to developing the image of the brand and the related experiences. Your target audience is looking for detailed information about experiences – what makes Chautauqua County unique. They need to be convinced that you are worth a special trip. The current travel guide does not sell them on the *idea* of experiencing Chautauqua County, nor does it help them differentiate between the *quality* of the experiences. That is why we recommend that three new collateral pieces be developed:

1. "Chautauqua Experiences" Guide
2. "Best of Chautauqua County" Guide
3. Branded Rack Cards



1. “Chautauqua Experiences” Guide

Create a “Chautauqua Experiences” Guide loaded with spectacular photography that will showcase the variety of learning opportunities in the region. This guide will be the primary marketing piece to lure visitors to the area. This is not a marketing piece where everything and everyone is included. Only the unique “gems” of the destination should be included. Everyone will ultimately benefit, but the purpose of the piece is to lure the visitor to get something they cannot get closer to home.

This guide should include special places and special experiences that are highlights of the area, such as a birding workshop with experts at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, or golf camp at Peek ‘N Peak with a world-renowned golf pro, or wine-making seminars at the Wine Festival with a noted winemaker, and of course, the Chautauqua Institution.

This guide could be set up as a “course” schedule for learning experiences. Itineraries should be created and included in the guide that feature what is available for visitors to learn in a short visit (one to four days) or a longer visit (one week or longer) to the area. Details matter, so develop the specifics about the type of learning experience, description of a typical day in that activity, level of experience needed, level of physical activity, number of participants, cost to attend, packages available and other details specific to the experiences. Include a story or an anecdote about the areas featured, such as something historical. Describe at least 30 learning experiences that are worthy of at least a two-hour drive and an overnight stay. Twenty of these experiences should be concentrated into a season of 10 to 12 weeks, perhaps over the summer to start, so there is a “critical mass” of learning opportunities during an initial “peak” season. The other ten learning experiences can be winter oriented, such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, etc. The more you have the more powerful the brand will be.

It is extremely important that this guide be a high-quality and professional publication. It has to be an effective promotional tool that will help close the sale. The graphic look and feel should reflect the county’s brand and be consistent with other marketing tools, such as the brand logo and the website. The title of the guide can be “Chautauqua Experiences,” as in the example provided, or “Chautauqua Life-Learning Guide,” “Chautauqua Camp Guide,” “Chautauqua Learning Camps and Courses,” whichever works the best for the product being marketed.

2. “Best of Chautauqua County” Guide

Develop a new marketing brochure entitled, “Best of Chautauqua County” promoting the specific businesses and attractions in Chautauqua County that offer the best that the county has to offer in



products and services a consumer would enjoy when they visit. Special attention should be given to businesses that provide visitor services and entertainment and are working in support of the World's Learning Center brand. This is the piece used to let visitors know what they can do and see in Chautauqua County after they spent the day in sailing "camp," finished a bird watching workshop, or engaged in another learning activity.

Start with the top five restaurants, the top five retail shops, the top five learning experiences, and the top five activities – all of which would be worth a special trip within the county. This guide should also lodging so that visitors can plan to stay overnight. Each participating business needs to meet certain criteria in order to be included—the brochure needs to promote the very best that Chautauqua County has to offer. They should be recognized for their uniqueness or excellence, be open at least six days a week, including weekends, and be open until at least 9:00 p.m. They should also have good curb appeal. Not every business will meet the criteria to be included in the first brochure, but the guide should encourage proprietors to improve their product enough to be included in future editions.

The "Best of Chautauqua County" Guide should feature something special or unique about each shop or restaurant. Details matter. If a restaurant has a signature menu item, describe it. If a retailer provides a learning opportunity, such as a pottery shop offering pottery-making workshops with the famous artist, or a fabric store bringing in a renowned quilter for a quilting workshop, be sure to let people know. People like specifics, and the more interesting and unusual items you can mention, the better.

The Guide should be written so that each shop or service mentioned is presented in a consistent advertorial format—not just a series of ads. Details about each shop or restaurant should be provided in a way that would make a visitor to Chautauqua County feel he or she MUST go to the area to experience these great shops and restaurants.

Use professional photography throughout the brochure to showcase each shop, restaurant, and location. Special displays should be designed and photographed, special food dishes should be staged, and in some cases, models should be used in pedestrian settings. Feature the pedestrian setting of the shopping area, flowers, banners, outdoor dining, beautification,

lighting, etc.

The guide should contain several maps, including a map of the location of Chautauqua County relative to the Eastern U.S., travel times from major metro areas, a map of the county showing the location of each retail storefront and dining location, and the location of other brand-related stores throughout the area. In addition to stores and places to eat, include other convenience features such as where to park, historical landmarks, hotels and motels, public parks or gathering places, location of public restrooms, etc.

This guide should be a partnership between the CCVB and businesses, with each advertiser paying the costs for their own page. It is important that these brochures address activities, events and attractions in every season of the year. These brochures should also be both printed and available for download on the website.

Once completed, these brochures should be used to fulfill phone and mail inquiries to the CCVB. In addition, they should be distributed to regional visitor information centers, chambers of commerce, visitor information kiosks, hotels/motels, resorts, and B&Bs.

3. Branded Rack Cards

To further promote learning experiences, we recommend you develop a series of branded rack cards that feature different learning experiences. The front of the card would feature the name of the camp or learning experience, i.e. "Chautauqua Golf Camp at the Peek 'N Peak Resort," and the back would include the course description, dates, and other details. These cards could be 8" X 10" but a more useful size would be 4" X 9" to fit neatly into brochure racks throughout the county.

As with the other brochures, the development of these rack cards should be a partnership between the CCVB and the businesses that are featured on each card.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Chautauqua County Travel Guide: CCVB

Chautauqua Experiences Guide: Cooperative venture between CCVB and



GOLF CAMP

GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME HAS BEEN NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.

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Quisque tempus	9am-11am
Quisque tempus	4pm-5pm

Vestibulum arcu sapien, ornare nec, porttitor vitae, blandit sit amet, mi.

Quisque tempus	10am-12pm
Quisque tempus	9am-11am
Quisque tempus	4pm-5pm

Vestibulum arcu sapien, ornare nec, porttitor vitae, blandit sit amet, mi.

www.worldslearningcenter.com/golf
555-555-8555

Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center



selected sponsors of learning experiences
 Best of Chautauqua Guide: Cooperative venture between the CCVB, and selected businesses and attractions
 Branded Rack Cards: Cooperative venture between CCVB and selected sponsors of learning experiences

APPROXIMATE COST:

Chautauqua County Travel Guide: \$120,000
 Chautauqua Experiences Guide: \$30,000 (CCVB portion)
 Best of Chautauqua Guide: \$15,000 (CCVB portion)
 Branded Rack Cards: \$5,000 to 15,000 (CCVB portion)
 Website version management: \$3,000 per year.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau (bed tax); state grant; private businesses, such as retailers, restaurants, attractions, lodging, tour operators, etc.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Develop these brochures during 2009, for use in 2010.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

These brochures are used as “lure” pieces, that is, the collateral material used to entice someone to visit Chautauqua County and participate in a learning experience. Gone are the days when it was sufficient to simply list all the activities, attractions, hotels, restaurants, and shops in your destination. Convenience is at the top of the list for visitors, and this includes the planning stages of their visit to Chautauqua County.

Potential visitors want to be “lured” and they also want to know the specifics of the experience while they are making their decision to visit. They need enough information to say yes to your proposition. These pieces, along with your website, are your opportunity to make a compelling case to the potential visitor as to why they should visit and what is unique about a visit to Chautauqua County that they cannot get closer to home. Again, details matter. That is why simple lists of things don’t work to engage the potential visitor and help them make a decision.

4 DEVELOP TARGETED SALES ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE BRAND.

DESCRIPTION:

The CCVB should engage in a variety of sales activities that support its other branding and marketing efforts. Current sales activities include attending travel shows, and promoting to the group, meeting/conference, sport fishing and hunting markets.

All sales activities need to be focused on creating brand awareness and reinforcing the brand message. The general group tour market is most often reached through traditional tour operators, such as members of the National Tour Association (NTA) or the American Bus Association (ABA). These two associations represent most of the tour operators offering group travel in the U.S. and Canada today. Most of the travel is by motor coach with an escort/guide.

Results of a recent survey of NTA tour operator members show interesting results that have implications for Chautauqua's new brand. A few highlights:

- 64% of tour operator clients were 50+
- 52% of tour operators offer learning/educational packages
- More than half the tours were customized or for pre-formed groups; 31% of the operators offered alumni packages
- More than half the operators offered culinary and wine tasting packages.
- The most important sources of information for developing new itineraries are customer input, tour supplier websites, recommendations from other tour operators, and DMO website.

The group tour market is not a fast growing one, and some question whether the traditional motor coach tours of the past will appeal to the changing demographics of the market today and in the future. The group tour market still has potential for Chautauqua County *IF* it is targeted to selective groups. The following are recommendations for the general group tour market as well as other niche markets that we feel have strong potential for Chautauqua County.

1. General Group Tour Market – We recommend analyzing the tour operators in this market to learn who is really offering learning/educational packages, no matter the destination, and to understand their target market.

Tour operators rely heavily on past customers as a source of additional customers to fill new itineraries. They need to offer new and interesting itineraries to keep their customers interested and coming back for more. If an operator is offering learning/educational packages already, then they have a built in base of clients looking for new experiences. Create a database of these operators, learn about what they already do, create sample itineraries designed specifically for their type of client (don't just create one set of itineraries and send to every operator), particularly clients that come from preformed groups or prefer custom-designed itineraries.

Then begin the sales process. Sales activities should include one-on-one contact with targeted tour operators. After you discover how many tour operators fit your target market you will need to evaluate whether it is worth the time and expense to travel to the typical trade shows (NTA, ABA) or whether it may be better to make targeted sales calls. In addition to meetings with tour operators, other activities, such as press releases, e-blasts, e-newsletters, hosting and helping travel writers from trade publications, etc., and familiarization trips for highly qualified, high potential tour operators should be part of your activities.

It may take a year or two of regular contact, public relations, and education for high potential tour operators to catch on to what they can offer in Chautauqua County that would appeal to their clientele. Those seriously considering the Chautauqua product will want to visit and see for themselves what is available and why it is unique.

This is a market that requires an investment of time – both staff time to develop the relationships, and time for tour operators to understand and be sold on the product. The most important thing to remember is that this is a highly targeted, focused effort only to those tour operators that have the target audience that fits the brand and has the potential to offer a product that fits the brand. This may be a small group of tour operators in the beginning, but over time may grow to be a solid base of business for the county.

2. Alumni Associations – Many college and university alumni associations offer travel programs to their alumni and families. Travel programs are offered to destinations around the world and are quite often educational in nature. Many programs are organized by or include a distinguished professor as the escort. This market is a natural fit for the Chautauqua County brand and represents a strong opportunity.

As with the general group tour market, it will take a bit of work to develop the database of alumni associations and their contacts with potential to develop programs in Chautauqua County. Understanding individual college and university travel programs, who they are targeting, and what kinds of educational experiences they want to offer is key to designing programs that will be appealing to their clientele.

The type of learning experiences that would appeal to this market could range from a week at the Chautauqua Institution during its regular season, to a program created by the college or university with its own professors and experts, using the Chautauqua Institution or other appropriate location as the place to hold the program (during the Institution's off season). Diversionary activities and field trips could be built into such a program.

Developing this market is primarily a one-on-one task with individuals at the alumni association travel offices. Based on our experience, some alumni associations like to develop and arrange their own travel itineraries, others will work through a tour operator, and still others will buy a package "off-the-shelf" and reserve the entire departure date for their clients. Some tour operators specialize in alumni travel. That is why it will be important to do the research to identify the decision-makers for alumni travel at each institution.

The most important aspect of selling to these alumni travel decision makers is developing the personal relationship with them. We suggest starting with a targeted group of colleges and universities located on the East Coast that offer educational alumni travel programs. Learn about their programs on their websites, get the name of the travel arranger, and start developing a telephone relationship to learn more about their potential. Eventually, you will need to develop specific sample itineraries for them and make personal visits to sell the programs. As time and your budget allows, you can expand your efforts to other areas of the U.S. that you have identified as having high

potential alumni travel programs. While the larger East Coast universities may look like tempting resources, they are also most likely to have established relationships with destinations and be more difficult to crack. There are many small and medium-sized colleges and universities in the region that offer these programs as well, and they might be more receptive.

Like the general group tour market, this market will take time to develop. Your other marketing efforts, particularly your website and public relations activities, will be essential to supporting these efforts. A strong branded website, along with good publicity, such as articles appearing in the media read by the alumni market and the travel managers, all provide product credibility.

3. Other Special Interest Groups – In addition to the alumni markets, there are a variety of other special interest groups that will have interest in the Chautauqua County learning opportunities. Elder Hostel already has programs that include Chautauqua County. The CCVB also has a list of various groups interested in experiences in the county. We suggest reviewing that list to make sure it includes the variety of groups that might be interested in the experiences that fit the brand. For example, make sure to include on this list groups that are found in both the short haul drive market as well as the longer haul markets. Also, think beyond the obvious and reach into organizations that have travel programs, such as the Field Museum of Chicago or the Smithsonian Institution. Again, like the other group markets we have identified, stay targeted to groups that fit the brand in terms of interest and market characteristics.

4. Meetings/conference/sports tournaments market – The meetings and conference market to Chautauqua County is already an active market, particularly in the spring and fall months. The new county brand should also be integrated into this market through the marketing activities of the CCVB. Current activities include membership in meeting planner organizations, a meeting planner guide, sales calls to local market areas, some support for groups and conferences. In addition, the same public relations techniques should be used in this market as are used in other markets to continue to build brand awareness and drive the market to the meeting planner pages on your website. All activities for the development of the meetings market should be monitored and measured over time for results.

5. Travel/Outdoor Shows – The CCVB is able to effectively leverage its money with grants and cooperative partnerships to have a presence at travel and outdoor shows in the short haul drive markets. We suggest continuing these shows for 2009 to assess their effectiveness. Gather names, email, and postal addresses to develop a database of people who stop by the booth and express interest in the region. This can be done through an incentive, such as a drawing for a three-day visit to someplace in the county, such as Peak 'N Peek Resort. You can use the names to further develop your subscriber base for e-newsletters and e-blasts (be sure to give them an opportunity to opt-in on the card they fill out). You should also use these names in a conversion study to see if they actually visit the county.

6. Sport Fishing/Hunting Incentives – The current marketing plan includes funding for an independent contractor to develop the sport fishing and hunting markets through attendance at travel shows, writing articles for key publications, radio interviews, and other activities. The plan also includes some money for incentives for fishing tournaments. We recommend that the bulk of this funding be moved to overall Public Relations, and that sport fishing and hunting become one of the market segments within the Public Relations activities. We also recommend that some monies be budgeted for grant support to help attract fishing tournaments to the region.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; Chautauqua-Allegeny Region (travel shows only)

APPROXIMATE COST:

Groups/Meetings/Conferences: \$17,000

Travel/Outdoor Shows: \$11,700 (total budget \$35,000 – equal amounts from 3 partners)

Information Centers: \$6,500

Fishing & Hunting Incentives: \$10,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; state grant; Cattaraugus and Allegeny Counties for travel shows only

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Groups: 2008 – begin identifying brand-related tour operators and groups 2009 and beyond – develop itineraries, make contacts, sales calls, etc.

Travel/Outdoor Shows: 2008 and beyond – work with Tri-County partners to plan for and attend these shows. Information Centers: Ongoing

Fishing & Hunting Incentives: As opportunities arise.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The sales effort outlined in this recommendation is important for several reasons. First, it is likely to produce the fastest, short-term results of increased visitors and visitor spending. More difficult than marketing, sales at least provides tangible, measurable results in real time.

While marketing communications is generally a one-way street, sales is a two-way conversation. It gives you the opportunity to learn about and address concerns about your product that can help make the sale. These learned factors can then be applied to your marketing communications, making them more effective.

Sales provides the most immediate assistance to businesses and organizations currently struggling with staying in business and making a profit. Sustaining these product resources while building the brand is important.

Sales is more effective than marketing with extremely narrow niche markets within the brand, where the small target market is identifiable and reachable through a limited number of contacts. The messages can be tailored directly to them and the product customized to their specific needs.

5 DEVELOP A HIGHLY STRATEGIC AND SELECTIVE ADVERTISING PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION:

Strategically and selectively placed advertising can be used to support the brand- building public relations activities by maintaining awareness of the brand and destination. Destination marketing is a fierce business and everyone is after the potential travel market. Advertising is often the largest portion of a marketer's budget because of the competitive challenges establishing a presence in the marketplace. That is why it is essential to carefully select when and how to enter the fray.

First and foremost any advertising done by the CCVB, whether advertising funded solely by county dollars or advertising funded as part of the Tri-County regional program (partially funded by state grants), should be focused on generating awareness of the brand. The second goal of any advertising program should be to generate leads.

Tri-County Cooperative Advertising Program

The New York Division of Tourism offers matching grants to Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPA). TPAs are encouraged to combine resources with other TPAs in their designated region to further the reach of the marketing dollars. With this in mind, the CCVB has combined some of its matching funds with Cattaraugus and Allegeny Counties with the intention of purchasing advertising in the State's cooperative media program.

The State's cooperative media program includes ad buys in various publications, as well as interactive elements on several Internet sites. Generally, advertising is a way to maintain your brand and because of the cost, should be used sparingly. This new media program developed by the State offers Chautauqua and its partners an opportunity to test the effectiveness of advertising its message.

The CCVB should only consider participating in this program if two key requirements are fulfilled. First, the Chautauqua brand needs to be featured. You are building brand awareness and all your activities, especially an advertising program, should be brand based. Second, the ad campaign needs to be measured by number of inquiries by source, whether generated by BRC, phone, or Internet. The CCVB must be able to measure cost per inquiry. Then, a conversion study should be implemented to determine the overall cost of attracting each visitor from each inquiry source. Don't

forget to assess the expenditures of each visitor. After all, it's the visitor expenditures that matter, not the number of visitors.

If these two requirements can be met, then we suggest the Tri-County Region coop program include approximately half of the coop dollars in print advertising and the half in interactive elements. Treat 2009 as a test year to see whether any of these media opportunities are a good fit for Chautauqua and its brand. If the ad creative and interactive opportunities are done well, they may very well generate quality leads for the county.

Not all cost figures are available yet from the State to develop a final program plan. However, using the criteria we recommend, and some of the estimated costs for participation, a sample cooperative program might look like this:

- Time, Inc./American Express – At least one buy of ¼ page in the Time, Inc./American Express publishing program (with advertorial), which includes Travel & Leisure, Food & Wine, Real Simple, Health. The preferred ad buy would be for the May 2009 issue. Based on discussions with the State's advertising agency, this would be East Coast regional ad buys in these publications. Readers of these magazines fit the profile of the Chautauqua target market for the new brand. Estimated cost: \$16,000.
- AAA Publications – ¼ page in AAA Motorist, ½ page in AAA Going Places, and ½ page in Home & Away – May 2009 issues. Readers of these magazines reside in the key short haul markets. Estimated cost: \$35,300.
- Interactive Elements – All interactive elements should focus on lead generation and most should work on developing brand awareness. Several of the opportunities presented in the program may be good ways to get the word out about the brand, such as providing "Videos of the Week" and "Destination Spotlight/Enhanced Editorials," the Orbitz packages, and e-newsletters. It may be worthwhile to test a Travelocity integrated placement ad as budget allows. Estimated total cost: \$50,000 to \$60,000.

It will be very important for Chautauqua to fully evaluate participation in these programs through monitoring and measurement of the results, rather

than jump on the bandwagon just because the program makes advertising in quality media appear more affordable. If the media is not working for you or if the Chautauqua message gets lost in the process, then it doesn't matter how good a deal it is.

County Advertising

County advertising refers to media advertising that is funded only by the CCVB and not part of the cooperative marketing program described above. This is advertising that would be targeted at the short haul markets. We recommend that this budget be focused on highly targeted opportunities in support of generating brand awareness activities or for last minute travel opportunities. For example, your PR efforts might capture the interest of a newspaper's travel editor in your target market areas. You sponsor the editor to travel to Chautauqua to write a story featuring the county in the Sunday travel section of the newspaper. In order to have more punch to the story, you may want to purchase advertising in that travel section on the day the story is going to run. It could even be the beginning of a special Chautauqua travel section that appears every year.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; Tri-County Regional Group

APPROXIMATE COST:

2009

Tri-County Regional Program: \$100,000 to \$110,000 total – Chautauqua County's portion - \$18,500 from bed tax, \$18,250, \$18,250 from state grant
County Program: \$30,000
2010, 2011 – TBD

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Tri-County Regional Program: CCVB (bed tax), TPA grants, Cattaraugus & Allegeny Counties.
County Program: CCVB (bed tax)

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

2008 – Determine 2009 program
2009 – Implement and evaluate program, plan for 2010
2010 – Implement and evaluate program, plan for 2011

2011 – Implement and evaluate program

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:

Advertising is very expensive and should be done very carefully, especially by marketers with limited budgets. All advertising should have a clear purpose, in this case to maintain awareness of the brand and to generate leads that can be used to develop the market.

The New York Division of Tourism advertising agency, Satchi & Satchi, has proposed an interesting cooperative media program to the TPA's and Regional organizations that provides cost efficient opportunities to reach certain markets. We feel it is worthwhile to test these opportunities with the 2009 program to see if they can develop leads for Chautauqua and drive users to the website. Given the ability of the CCVB to leverage their dollars, the financial risk is small, as long as Chautauqua's brand message can be featured.

The proof is in the pudding. If the evaluations show a reasonable cost per visitor generated, then the program should be refined and continued. Always think of advertising as an opportunity to test the medium, the message or the target market.

Next 2 Pages: Advertising concepts



Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York

Welcome to Sailing Camp
EARNING YOUR SAILING BADGE
WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN

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I ♥ NY

www.worldslearningcenter.com Call (555) 555 - 5555 for more travel info



Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York

Welcome to Wine Camp
LEARNING TO MAKE KOOL AID
WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN

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I ♥ NY

www.worldslearningcenter.com Call (555) 555 - 5555 for more travel info

Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York

Welcome to Golf Camp
GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME
WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.

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I ♥ NY

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Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York

Welcome to Golf Camp
GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME
WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.

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I ♥ NY

www.worldslearningcenter.com Call (555) 555 - 5555 for more travel info

6 DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A TRACKING AND MEASUREMENT SYSTEM FOR MARKETING ACTIVITIES

DESCRIPTION:

Every marketing activity should have some type of tracking or measurement tied to it so that it is possible to make informed decisions for future marketing strategies. The following are suggested tracking and measurement activities for each area of marketing:

1. Internet

There are many ways to track and measure various Internet strategies. The CCVB already tracks key words on the main search engines and refines their word choices from time to time. In addition, the CCVB needs to track:

- Number of E-newsletter and E-blast opt-in subscribers.
- Number of RSS opt-in subscribers.
- Number of members to any social media group sites developed.

To fully track site statistics, we suggest investigating WebTrends, or similar service, to assess all aspects of web usage by your visitors. Website analytics include understanding the effectiveness of content and campaigns in driving visitors to your site, measuring visitor interactions with RSS feeds, and a number of other aspects of your web program. A good webmaster can assist you with the development of web analytics tools like this to help you measure site traffic and usage coming from various sources and evolve your web efforts.

2. Public Relations

Public relations activities can be tracked and effectiveness measured in a number of ways:

- Number of contacts developed
- Number of stories generated
- Number and range of media picking up stories
- Number of column inches, broadcast minutes generated
- Other measurements for PR as recommended by PR firm

3. Sales

All sales efforts should be monitored and tracked. This includes:

- Tracking tour operators, alumni, and special interest groups and product developed in Chautauqua County.
- Maintaining a database of groups visiting the county and developing an estimate of economic impact from groups.
- Tracking all visits to the travel/outdoor show booth.
- Capturing names, emails, addresses, and phone numbers if possible of visitors to travel/outdoor show booth.
- Track number of participants in sport fishing and hunting tournaments that are supported through incentives by the CCVB.

4. Advertising

As much as possible advertising is used to drive potential visitors to the website. All types of advertising should have a variety of metrics that are analyzed. For most media these metrics include:

- Geography and circulation or number of households covered
- Number of responses to advertising (800#, BRC, or website hits)
- Conversion rate of the responses.

In order to measure conversion rates, it is necessary to conduct a Conversion Study. Cost per response and cost per conversion per advertising opportunity can be calculated, providing return on investment information. Initially, we suggest conducting a conversion study on the Tri-County advertising program to fully understand whether purchasing media through the State of New York's cooperative marketing program is an effective way to reach the market with your message. Over time you can increase the number of sources you measure in the Conversion Study.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:

Internet: 2009 - \$10,000,
2010 - \$15,000, 2011 - \$15,000

Public Relations: 2009, 2010, 2011 - \$5,000 per year

Other Metrics: 2009 - \$15,000,
2010 - \$20,000, 2011 - \$30,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:

Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Internet: 2009 – Initiate and implement monitoring and tracking systems.
2010, 2011 – add tracking systems as budget allows.

Public Relations: 2009 - Initiate and implement monitoring and tracking systems. 2010, 2011 – maintain monitoring and tracking systems.

Other Metrics: 2009 – Implement Conversion Study on selected media sources, 2010, 2011 – Expand Conversion Study to include additional media sources

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:

Successful tourism marketing is based on information – what you know about your customers and how to reach them efficiently and effectively. In order to understand how your marketing activities are working, it is essential to monitor and track the results of your efforts. Every marketing activity should have a system of metrics that are used to provide enough information to the marketing manager to guide in the decision making process. Good information allows the marketing manager to continually refine the marketing program so that the program is working hard to help meet the goals of increasing visitors to the destination.

7 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY WIDE WAYFINDING SYSTEM

DESCRIPTION:

Once the “World’s Learning Center” brand and logos have been adopted, a professional firm should be contracted to develop a professional Wayfinding Plan. The plan should incorporate the graphics, imagery, and colors that portray the “World’s Learning Center” brand for Chautauqua County.

We recommend the development of a wayfinding system be completed in two phases as follows:

Phase One: The first phase would focus on the major highway directional signage. The tasks would include:

- A general assessment of highway wayfinding in Chautauqua County including an inventory and assessment of existing conditions.
- Research into current New York sign standards.
- Advice on a schematic wayfinding plan.
- Recommendations on sign placement and messages.
- Signage plan that included summary of existing conditions, proposed sign types, proposed location plans, proposed message schedule, and visual references to places.

Phase Two: The second phase would focus on the signage for gateways for the communities and wayfinding system for attractions, amenities, and services. Included in this phase would be:

- Design and location of gateways for the communities in the county.
- Wayfinding system for attractions, amenities, and services;
- The placement of text on each sign testing for readability at speed; fit; design.
- Signage specifications for bidding purposes, cost estimates, phasing and bid documentation.
- Decorative pole banner designs

- Coordination with State, county, and communities for setbacks, restrictions, and construction standards.
- Design and placement recommendations for visitor information kiosks

The Wayfinding Plan should stipulate the precise wording and exact location for each new sign, as well as mounting options, so it can be used to obtain fabrication and installation bids from regional sign manufacturers.

Visitor information kiosks should be designed to complement local architecture, as well as to enhance the “World’s Learning Center” brand. The kiosks should provide weatherproof brochure holders for 24/7 visitor information, as well as display maps, a calendar of events, visitor attractions, local services and amenities, lodging and dining options, and cross-sell regional attractions. They should have adequate lighting and include prominent signs indicating “Visitor Information.”

IMPLEMENTATION:

Brand Leadership Team, CCVB, State of New York Department of Transportation,

APPROXIMATE COST:

Phase One: Design Services - \$60,000, Fabrication/Installation – TBD by State
Phase Two: Design Services - \$75,000, Fabrication/Installation – TBD, Kiosks - \$4,000 per kiosk Kiosk maintenance: TBD

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Phase One – 2009/2010
Phase Two – 2009/2011
Kiosk construction – 2009

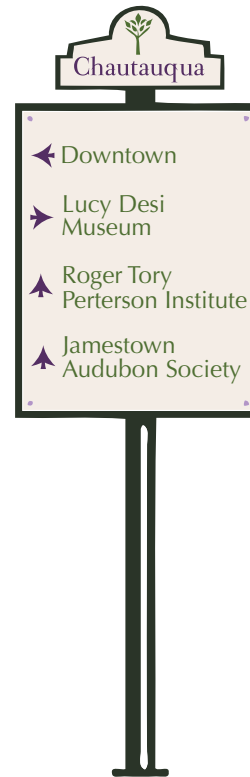
RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:

Signage is critically important for any destination, particularly areas that are lesser known or are undergoing changes. It is even more important for areas such as Chautauqua County, which has two interstates, major state highways, and numerous small roads through open spaces.

The easier it is for visitors to find attractions and amenities, the longer they will stay, and the more they will spend. It can be difficult for the locals, who already know how to get from “point A” to “point B” to see gaps and omissions in existing signage, so it’s best to use the services of a professional wayfinding firm. General highway signs are very important, which help travelers know where they are and how long it will be before reaching their destination. Gateway signs are also a key component of the plan and they need to make a powerful impression. Gateways create a sense of arrival and awareness of “place.” A beautiful gateway can elevate the appeal of the community, increasing its perceived value and instilling pride in the community.

Providing plenty of well-marked visitor information kiosks make it easy for travelers to learn all that your destination has to offer. Only about 5% of travelers stop at Visitor Information Centers, so placing kiosks with visitor information near major attractions and amenities makes it easy to cross-sell activities and help travelers find more to do.

These sample wayfinding signs for Jamestown use the Chautauqua identity to tie the area together. They are simple, and use the approved colors and type.



NEXT STEPS

This Chautauqua County Branding and Marketing Action Plan is chock full of tasks to accomplish in order to fully integrate the brand into the county and the CCVB's marketing program. It will take a few years to fully implement this plan. We recommend that you roll out the marketing slowly, using 2009 as the year to conduct the necessary outreach throughout county and to develop the marketing materials. Plan to roll out the marketing for 2010. In the meantime, here are the top ten next steps for the CCVB and the Brand Leadership Team:

- 1. Adopt the Chautauqua County “World’s Learning Center” brand.**
- 2. Create and empower the Brand Leadership Team**
- 3. Lock up additional URLs that can be used to market the brand.**
- 4. Coordinate with essential organizations to adopt the brand.**
- 5. Develop a database of partners and key contacts.**
- 6. Work with communities to come into the brand.**
- 7. Work with partners to come up with 30 learning experiences, with criteria.**
- 8. Conduct brand-building outreach in the county.**
- 9. Integrate the brand into the Tri-County cooperative advertising program.**
- 10. Create a new funding framework for the CCVB.**

Activity	Current 09 Budget	Recommended 2009 Budget	Recommended 2010 Budget	Recommended 2011 Budget
BRANDING				
1. Adopt the Chautauqua County "The World's Learning Center" Brand	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Create and empower a Brand Leadership Team	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Work with essential organizations to adopt the brand.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Conduct brand-building outreach in the county.		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
TOTAL BRANDING	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
MARKETING				
1. WEBSITE				
Current Activity				
Travel Guide, AV Downloads, emarketing	\$36,000			
Recommendations				
Website Update				
E-newsletters/E-blasts				
Maximize SEO/RSS				
Social Marketing				
TOTAL		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000

Activity	Current 09 Budget	Recommended 2009 Budget	Recommended 2010 Budget	Recommended 2011 Budget
2. PUBLIC RELATIONS				
Current Activity				
Press kits, press communications, inviting/hosting press, writers, Travel Media Showcase	\$5,500			
Recommendations				
Hire PR Firm to do:				
Develop and maintain web pressroom				
Hard copy press kits				
Regular press contacts				
Ongoing media assistance				
Develop/encourage special events				
Coordinate efforts with member businesses				
TOTAL		\$60,000	\$75,000	\$100,000
3. COLLATERAL MATERIALS				
Current Activity				
County Travel Guide - design, production, pre-press, printing, binding, delivery	\$120,000			
Distribution	\$15,000			
Mailing	\$25,000			
Recommendations				
County Travel Guide		\$120,000	\$120,000	\$120,000
Chautauqua Experiences Guide		\$20,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Best of Chautauqua County Guide		\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
Distribution		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Mailing		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

Activity	Current 09 Budget	Recommended 2009 Budget	Recommended 2010 Budget	Recommended 2011 Budget
4. ADVERTISING				
Current Activities				
County Program	\$70,000			
Tri-County Program	\$36,500			
Recommendations				
County Program		\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Regional Program		\$36,500	\$36,500	\$36,500
5. SALES				
Current Activities				
Travel Shows	\$11,500			
Information Centers	\$6,500			
Groups/Meetings/Conferences	\$17,000			
Fishing & Hunting Promotions	\$31,000			
Recommendations				
Travel Shows		\$11,500	\$11,500	\$11,500
Information Centers		\$6,500	\$6,500	\$6,500
Groups/Meetings/Conferences		\$17,000	\$17,000	\$17,000
Fishing & Hunting Incentives		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

Activity	Current 09 Budget	Recommended 2009 Budget	Recommended 2010 Budget	Recommended 2011 Budget
6. MONITORING AND MEASUREMENT				
Current Activities				
Market Research	\$5,000			
Recommendations				
Tracking Internet - Key words, click throughs, RSS subscriptions, newsletter subscriptions, etc.		\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Tracking Public Relations		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Other metrics - conversion studies on selected media, purchase syndicated market research, etc.		\$15,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
TOTAL MARKETING	\$379,000	\$436,500	\$451,500	\$491,500
TOTAL	\$379,000	\$456,500	\$461,500	\$496,500