



VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS[®]
2017 MARKETING PLAN



This marketing plan, developed by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), details a strategic approach to the long-term brand strategy called the Brand Vision.

The [Brand Vision](#) is a progressive plan developed by VTC to strengthen the “Virginia is for Lovers” brand to make it more meaningful and relevant to today’s consumers and connect it to travel. This plan provides VTC and its industry partners, including destination marketing organizations, convention and visitors bureaus, localities, tourism associations and private sector businesses with a detailed map to follow to develop marketing messages about travel in Virginia. By aligning messaging from the highest brand level to niche marketing by small business owners, potential travelers to Virginia will see a consistent and refined message.



The core strength of VTC’s marketing campaigns lie in product categories such as history, family fun, mountains and beach. The leading marketing objective is to maintain the great awareness already achieved for these products and the communities who have developed them. Secondly, VTC seeks opportunities to promote new product and features which are top of mind for the Virginia travelers from these regions and product categories or drivers.

Research shows the leading reason prospective travelers choose another state is unfamiliarity with Virginia travel product besides history. Furthermore, there are high levels of consumer satisfaction but low levels of awareness among our most valued prospective travelers for products besides history. The goal is to eventually elevate awareness of all of Virginia’s core travel products.

THE PLAN



Goals

1. Increase Brand Awareness for Virginia is for Lovers
2. Increase awareness of Virginia is for Lovers major product lures, especially those with high satisfaction and low awareness.
3. Elevate Virginia's share of voice as a premier travel destination.

Strategies

1. Develop and execute integrated brand marketing plan based on VIFL brand vision and research
2. Extend branded design and messaging across all Virginia tourism owned, earned and paid media
3. Product- and season-specific integrated marketing initiatives plan with integrated owned, earned and paid media channels

Key Performance Indicators

1. Increase awareness of Virginia is for Lovers as a travel brand by 10 percent among targeted consumers
2. Show measured lift in awareness of targeted Virginia is for Lovers sub-brand/ travel products based on the integrated brand marketing plan
3. Increase share of voice by five percent against competitor destinations
4. Increase engagement as defined by VTC's proprietary consumer engagement model

VIRGINIA INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

**BOLD
ROCK**
HARD CIDER
Cidery & Tap Room

OPEN 11-6

Friday & Saturday 11-8



Goals

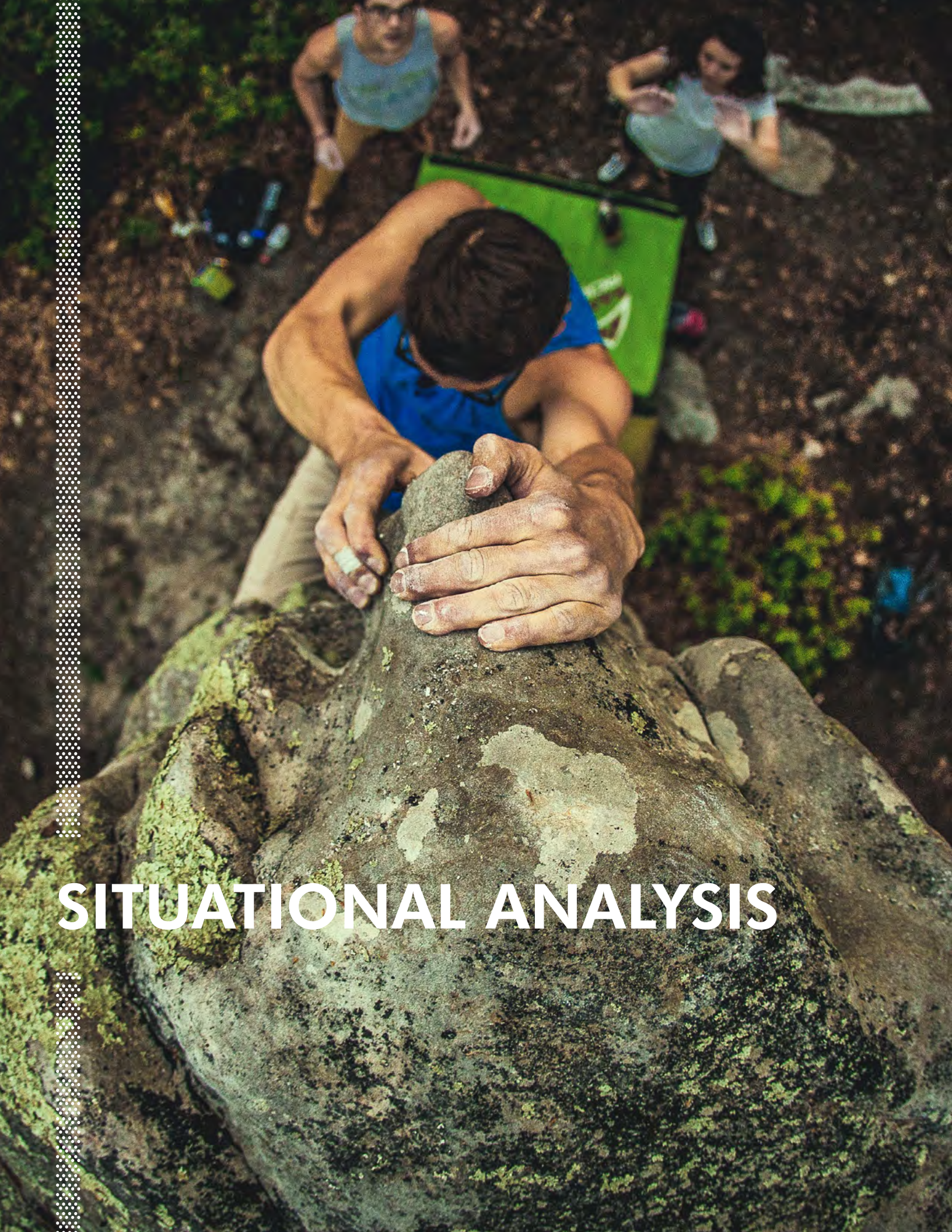
1. Encourage visits and bookings for Virginia industry partners
2. Provide direct benefit from VTC marketing plan to Virginia tourism organizations and businesses
3. Provide accessible ways for Virginia travel industry partners to participate in the Virginia is for Lovers brand vision

Tactics

1. Develop product specific campaigns driving traffic through Virginia owned properties to industry partners
2. Develop and execute the annual Virginia Industry Advertising Program (formerly the co-op plan)
3. Develop and execute an industry outreach program, including toolkits for industry use for easy adaptation of the overall state brand vision

Key Performance Indicators

1. Generate increase in visitation and bookings for Virginia industry partners
2. Generate an increase in referrals from Virginia.org to Virginia tourism industry websites.
3. Secure VIFL brand messaging partnership with at least 25 DMOs and travel industry partners.



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Audience

Three key markets defined by research to be the highest-value consumers.

FAMILIES - This group accounts for 49 percent of travel spending in Virginia and are very important for sustainable growth

UNATTACHED - Young and free or older without kids, these travel groups are smaller but pack a powerful spending punch. They account for 24 percent of travel spending in Virginia. Establishing a relationship with the younger members of this group is key to keep spending strong in the future.

BUCKET LISTERS - Older travelers who now have an opportunity to cross things off their lists of travel goals. Virginia's strong history and lifestyle travel products make the Commonwealth attractive to this group.

Geographic Market Analysis

Tier 1 – Core Top Domestic Target Markets (Excluding Virginia)

1. Washington, DC
2. Raleigh/Greensboro, NC
3. Philadelphia, PA
4. Baltimore, MD
5. New York City, NY

Tier 2 – Domestic Target Markets (Excluding Virginia)

1. Cleveland, OH
2. Cincinnati, OH
3. Columbus OH
4. Nashville, TN
5. Pittsburgh, PA
6. Harrisburg, PA
7. Boston, MA

Tier 3 – Domestic Target Markets (Excluding Virginia)

1. Chicago, IL
2. Atlanta, GA
3. Hartford, CT
4. Charlotte, NC
5. Greenville, NC
6. Tampa, FL



BRAND PLATFORM AND ARCHITECTURE

Brand Platform

Position - Virginia brings joy to life for people in the world who want to create historic life experiences on vacation during an era of generic instant gratification.

Promise - To bring to joy to life by helping people make historic life moments.

Mantra - Historic Life Experiences.

Tag line - Virginia is for Lovers.

Brand Architecture

Virginia is for Lovers

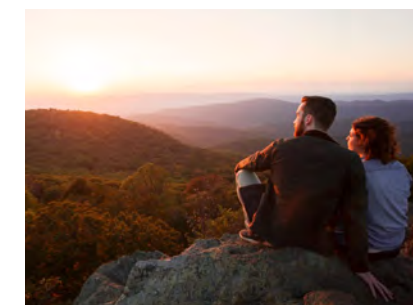
Sub-brands

- Virginia is for Beach Lovers
- Virginia is for Craft Beer Lovers
- Virginia is for Film Lovers
- Virginia is for Food Lovers
- Virginia is for History Lovers
- Virginia is for Music Lovers
- Virginia is for Mountain Lovers
- Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers
- Virginia is for Oyster Lovers
- Virginia is for Sports Lovers
- Virginia is for Wine Lovers
- Weddings
- Family Fun
- LGBT

Specialty messaging

- Groups
- Meetings

MESSAGING STRUCTURE



VTC builds marketing tactics for each sub-brand in the following way:

- 1. Owned Media** - Content distribution on VT ^ C owned channels, such as: Virginia.org, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.
- 2. Earned Media** - Targeted activations and partnership opportunities
- 3. Paid Media** - Targeted advertising, media outlet placements sponsorships and syndicated content partnerships

Potential travelers interact with each media channel (broadcast, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) differently. As such, Virginia is for Lovers brand tone, personality, etc. will be outlined in the Virginia is for Lovers brand book, an addendum to this document.



APPENDIX

Brand Toolkit

- Detailed description of position, mantra, logo, partners, fonts, colors, messaging and creative examples important to brand consistency across all channels
- Examples of photography and video appropriate for brand distribution
- Examples of how we would like the industry to use the brand
- How to request usage of the Virginia is for Lovers logo
- Tone, personality, etc. by media channel

Yearlong Content Development Strategy (ongoing development)

- High level brand messaging overview
 - Breakdown of what we're saying about VIFL at the highest-level channels like broadcast, Virginia.org, travel guide, etc.
- Sub-brand messaging
 - Mantra for each sub-brand product to serve as guide for all messaging; ladders up to Historic Life Experiences mantra
 - Cross platform story development
 - Video
 - Articles
 - Photography
 - Community hub & spoke influence whenever possible
 - Live activations
- Distribution strategy across VTC owned properties, earned media and paid media
 - Channel
 - Timing

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LOVERS®**