

2018-20 Strategic Plan
Virginia Tourism Authority [320]

Mission

Expand domestic and international in-bound travel and motion picture production to generate revenue and employment in Virginia.

Vision

Foster a spirit of partnership within Virginia's tourism and motion picture industries.

Values

Love is Integrity, Passion, and Results.

Integrity: Be the Best You

- Respect, value, and appreciate others with kindness
- Work through differences
- Be transparent
- Take personal responsibility

Passion: Thirst for Knowledge

- Seek new ideas and fresh thinking
- Stay curious and encourage questions
- Be purpose driven
- Value the people, the brand, and the industry

Results: Move Mountains

- Define, measure, and communicate collective goals
- Continuously evaluate and innovate
- Contribute to the success of others
- Celebrate shared accomplishments

Finance

Financial Overview

In FY 2019 the Virginia Tourism Authority will operate with a general fund budget of \$21.0 million. These funds support the marketing, visitor services, Virginia Film Office, partnership marketing, and minimal administrative support functions. The Authority aggressively leverages funding and forms partnerships with industry and government entities to extend the reach of its limited budget.

The Virginia Tourism Authority is not on the books of the State Comptroller, so the only funds reflected are general fund appropriations. However, the Authority does receive about \$1.3 million annually from the Virginia Department of Transportation (about \$1.2 million for operation of the state's 13 Welcome Centers and \$100,000 as a pass-through for the Danville Welcome Center, which is locally operated). These funds, however, are not sufficient to fully fund the Welcome Centers' operations, which total more than \$2.3 million annually.

In addition, the Authority collects more than \$1.8 million annually from a variety of other sources, including brochure rack fees at Welcome Centers and rest areas, reimbursement for the WW I & WW II Profiles of Honor Tour program by the Virginia World War I and World War II Commemoration Commission, royalties from the sale of "Virginia is for Lovers" merchandise, and other miscellaneous fees and collections.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	21,035,424	0	20,810,424	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

(Changes to Initial Appropriation will be 0 when the plan is created. They will change when the plan is updated mid-biennium.)

Customers

Anticipated Changes to Customer Base

Due to the increasing economic reliance on the Internet, the agency's web-based applications (especially mobile) will need to continue to grow and evolve to meet the increasing customer demand. There is also a growing demand for grant funding as more and more local governments and businesses see the benefits of participating in the agency's cooperative marketing programs. Finally, the state's burgeoning motion picture production industry will result in a growing customer base related to both production companies (including producers and filmmakers) as well as Virginia-based crew and actors.

Current Customer List

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Destination marketing organizations	113	113	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Certified Tourist Information Centers	75	75	Stable
Wholesale/Retail Trade	Tourism and hospitality businesses	13,000	30,000	Increase
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Localities	323	323	Stable
Tourist	Tourists	45,500,000	999,999,999	Increase
Employer/ Business Owner	Tour buyers and sports rights holders	400	2,500	Stable
Employer/ Business Owner	Producers, filmmakers, production companies, studios	1,350	1,350	Stable
Contract Employee	Virginia crew, actors, students, association businesses	1,200	1,200	Stable
General Assembly	General Assembly	140	140	Stable
Local or Regional Government Authorities	Grant recipients	548	950	Stable
Tourist	Annual website users	11,400,000	999,999,999	Stable
Tourist	Travelers visiting state Welcome Centers	3,500,000	999,999,999	Increase

Partners

Name	Description
Capital Region USA (CRUSA)	Capital Region USA (CRUSA) is a not-for-profit tourism coalition comprised of the Virginia Tourism Authority, Destination DC, Maryland Office of Tourism Development and Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. Through shared resources and vision, CRUSA strives to increase visitation and economic impact to the region from targeted international markets supported by non-stop daily flights to Virginia's Dulles International Airport by implementing strategic marketing programs and developing public- and private-sector partnerships. The partnership was created because each destination region lacked the financial or human resources to market to the international market by itself. This is an effective means to pool resources to jointly market overseas to direct tourists to the region.
Tourism marketing partners	The Virginia Tourism Authority tries to leverage its limited marketing funds at least 3:1 through strategic partnerships and by offering cooperative marketing opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry. The Authority recognizes that partnerships are critical to success and vital in times of scarce financial resources. Therefore, cultivating partnerships and identifying corporate sponsorships are primary focuses for stretching Virginia's resources and reaching a broader audience to attract visitors.
Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)	A destination marketing organization (DMO) is the principal organization of one or more states, one or more localities, or a combination thereof, that is organized and operated to promote its respective destination, to attract visitors and/or to solicit and service meetings and conventions. A DMO is designated and authorized by its respective incorporated government entity as the representative organization exercising those functions.
Chambers of Commerce	An organization formed to promote and protect the interests of businesses in a particular state, locality or group of localities.

Non-profit organizations	Entities that have been granted an exemption from federal income taxation pursuant to § 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
Localities	In accordance with § 1-221 of the Code of Virginia, locality means a county, city or town as the context may require.
Virginia Production Alliance	A trade association formed to promote and protect the interests of the motion picture industry in Virginia.
Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association	A trade association formed to promote and protect the interests of the hospitality, travel and tourism industries in Virginia.
Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organizations	A trade association formed to promote and protect the interests of destination marketing organizations in Virginia.
State associations	Trade groups formed to promote and protect the interests of a particular industry, profession or occupation within the Commonwealth of Virginia.
Private industry	Any type of corporation, partnership, limited liability company, association or sole proprietorship operated for profit.
Colleges and universities	Institutions of education that are legally authorized within Virginia to provide a program of education beyond high school.
State agencies	In accordance with § 2.2-307 of the Code of Virginia, state agency means any agency, institution, board, bureau, commission, council or instrumentality of state government in the executive branch listed in the appropriation act.

Agency Goals

- **Inspire travel to Virginia by strengthening awareness of the Virginia brand and product.**

- **Summary and Alignment**

- Increase and strengthen the awareness of Virginia as a travel destination. Make the visitor or potential visitor aware of the many opportunities that the Commonwealth offers in the way of destinations, family fun, history, and business travel.

- **Associated State Goal**

- Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

- **Associated Societal Indicator**

- Business Climate

- **Objectives**

- **» Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through commemoration activities.**

- *Description*

- Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through a series of programs and events of national and international significance to build awareness of Virginia's role in the creation of the United States; in 2019 the Commonwealth of Virginia will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the arrival and impact of women on the Virginia Colony, and the original English Thanksgiving in North America.

- *Objective Strategies*

- In conjunction with the 2019 Commemoration, execute the marketing plan and an extended event marketing program.
 - Collaborate with the 2019 Commemoration on key messaging for consistency across materials, strategies and markets.
 - Leverage existing owned/digital/editorial media resources to support the 2019 Commemoration.
 - Acquire multi-media assets and create videos to use across multiple promotion platforms.
 - Work with the 2019 Commemoration to develop and execute an actionable earned media plan.
 - Promote 2019 Commemoration programming to trade blogs and travel trade leaders attending meetings, groups, and sport shows that VTC attends.
 - Provide brochure and ad panel space at all state welcome centers to the extent available.

- Co-operatively sponsor an annual American Indian film festival (“Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival”).
- Implement a grant program to the extent interest exists and funds are available.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programs as part of international media and trade messaging during all international missions, shows, and events.

Measures

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through marketing programs.**

Description

Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through traditional marketing methods, thus supporting tourism jobs and growing the economic and tax bases of the Commonwealth. The Authority uses television, radio, Internet, publications, and travel shows as marketing tools to attract visitors to Virginia.

Objective Strategies

- Enhance the Virginia is for Lovers brand by showing new ad campaigns to targeted audiences in geographically relevant markets.
- Monitor travel trends and form marketing strategies based on visitors' origin markets and demographics.
- Implement the media plan in order to communicate the Virginia is for Lovers brand to highly desirable out-of-state prospective travelers and to make the important connection that Virginia is for Lovers is associated with travel to the state and that the state offers more than just history.
- Increase awareness of Virginia is for Lovers in key markets defined by research.
- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for the Virginia tourism industry.

Measures

- ◆ Cost per one thousand media impressions
- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through film tourism initiatives.**

Description

Use motion pictures filmed in Virginia to promote the state for travel and tourism.

Objective Strategies

- Work with studios and production companies on initiatives designed to cross-promote motion pictures and Virginia's tourism product.
- Require that major motion picture projects receiving incentive funding provide an advertisement or other promotional opportunity as part of their commitment.
- Use the public interest associated with the release of a motion picture shot in Virginia to drive a promotional campaign using advertising, public relations, and social media to promote Virginia visitation.

Measures

• **Increase the economic impact of the tourism and motion picture industries in Virginia.**

Summary and Alignment

Attract visitors and motion picture production to the Commonwealth, resulting in greater economic impact generated by the tourism and motion picture industries.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Business Climate

Objectives

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through marketing programs.**

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- Use the public interest associated with the release of a motion picture shot in Virginia to drive a promotional campaign using advertising, public relations, and social media to promote Virginia visitation.

Measures

» **Increase content manufacturing in Virginia.**

Description

Increase domestic, international, and in-state film, television, video, multimedia, and digital production.

Objective Strategies

- Promote Virginia as a superior place to film because of the versatile palette of available film locations, tech-savvy talent, businesses, and academic institutions, outstanding support by state and local government, experienced crew, and exceptional customer service.
- Work with local filmmakers, production companies, educational institutions, and other media-related organizations to promote the growth of Virginia's in-state film industry.
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with prospects.
- Provide optimum incentive packages to recruit projects.
- Administer a workforce development program designed to increase the number of workers involved in content manufacturing in Virginia.
- Exploit the current disruption in technology as it relates to the creation and consumption of new media content. Recognize the intersection of technology, social media, brand promotion, and storytelling in support of academia, high-wage workforce development, and economic development opportunities statewide.

Measures

- ◆ Dollar amount of economic impact generated by the motion picture industry

» **Increase the Return on Investment associated with marketing spending.**

Description

Increase the economic benefit and state and local tax revenues associated with marketing spending.

Objective Strategies

- Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through traditional marketing methods, including television, radio, Internet, publications, and travel shows.
- Increase inquiries by potential visitors for travel and destination information.
- Increase the effectiveness of website marketing to bring visitors to Virginia.
- Increase and expand Virginia's travel product.
- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for the Virginia tourism industry, and increase the leveraging ratio (match amounts contributed by partners).

Measures

» **Provide financial resources to communities.**

Description

Provide the ability to participate in cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities to communities.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Distribute collateral materials that help community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative marketing.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and presentations.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.

Measures

» **Increase and expand Virginia's travel product through collaboration, development programs, and the work of the agency's field specialists.**

Description

Maximize the tourism potential of Virginia communities by increasing their ability to create sustainable tourism programs that enhance their economic vitality.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Work with local leaders to offer assistance with tourism planning.
- Educate communities on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
- Partner with other state and federal agencies in regional initiatives such as The Stronger Economies Together Program and Rural Community Development Initiative Grants.

- Participate in industry training events such as Entrepreneur Express, Business of Tourism workshops, and Agritourism workshops.
- Assist with tourism product development efforts, including ongoing projects such as the Coal Heritage Trail and Spearhead Trails, as well as new programs such as the Clinch River Valley Initiative and related programs of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation; Appalachian Spring; South Boston; Downtown Development; the Burlap Trail; Southern Virginia Wild Blueway; Tobacco Heritage Trail; Bike the Valley; Eastern Legacy Trail, Coastal Virginia Trails, the Virginia Oyster Trail; River Realm, Virginia Mountain Region initiatives; Chesapeake Bay Region Trails; Back of the Dragon; New River Water Trail; Heart of Appalachia Trails; the Virginia Growth Alliance; Space Tourism opportunities; and community planning.
- Conduct quarterly orientation sessions.
- Update the State Tourism Plan to identify the best lures to attract visitors as well as the new assets needed to make Virginia's communities more competitive.

Measures

» **Increase the number of partners participating in Virginia Tourism Authority promotional opportunities.**

Description

Increase the number of tourism industry and community partners participating in cooperative advertising and marketing programs.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide lower cost media opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry through volume negotiation.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.
- Administer a grant program for music festival sponsorships.

Measures

» **Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through commemoration activities.**

Description

Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through a series of programs and events of national and international significance to build awareness of Virginia's role in the creation of the United States; in 2019 the Commonwealth of Virginia will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the arrival and impact of women on the Virginia Colony, and the original English Thanksgiving in North America.

Objective Strategies

- In conjunction with the 2019 Commemoration, execute the marketing plan and an extended event marketing program.
- Collaborate with the 2019 Commemoration on key messaging for consistency across materials, strategies and markets.
- Leverage existing owned/digital/editorial media resources to support the 2019 Commemoration.
- Acquire multi-media assets and create videos to use across multiple promotion platforms.
- Work with the 2019 Commemoration to develop and execute an actionable earned media plan.

- Promote 2019 Commemoration programming to trade blogs and travel trade leaders attending meetings, groups, and sport shows that VTC attends.
- Provide brochure and ad panel space at all state welcome centers to the extent available.
- Co-operatively sponsor an annual American Indian film festival (“Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival”).
- Implement a grant program to the extent interest exists and funds are available.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programs as part of international media and trade messaging during all international missions, shows, and events.

Measures

» Increase the number of consumer inquiries for travel information and convert such consumers into visitors to Virginia.

Description

Increase inquiries by potential visitors for travel and destination information, thus creating awareness of Virginia's tourism product and bringing more leisure travelers to the Commonwealth. Increase the effectiveness of website marketing to bring visitors to Virginia, thus growing the economic and tax bases of the Commonwealth.

Objective Strategies

- Contribute to Virginia Tourism Authority's overall lead generation goals through print advertising, sweepstakes, and Internet traffic by delivering effective interactive and media elements to the media plan.
- Monitor and report web traffic weekly utilizing website analytics software and online research utilities to develop and refine tactics to respond to trends and key travel interests.
- Cultivate Consumer Relations Management database opportunities to increase consumer loyalty and buy-in.
- Develop robust online content (Virginia experiences, monthly articles, and unique opportunities) to keep prospects and consumers engaged.
- Explore opportunities to further the development and implementation of effective search engine marketing to increase visitation to Virginia.org and social media sites that foster consumer engagement.
- Invest in technologies that automate personalized content, create and disseminate 360-degree video, and utilize augmented reality.

Measures

- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions
- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» Assist businesses and localities to grow Virginia's tourism and motion picture industries.

Description

Assist tourism businesses and localities to grow their indigenous tourism and motion picture production businesses through research assistance, community planning and development, marketing leveraging grants, and one-on-one assistance.

Objective Strategies

- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry to leverage commercial media buying opportunities at lower rates through volume negotiation.

- Provide the industry with tourism planning assistance, tourism research trends, marketing recommendations, and vision planning guidance in order to help with marketing decisions and ultimately produce more customers for their businesses.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.

Measures

- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» **Leverage the Virginia Tourism Authority's advertising and marketing funds.**

Description

These programs enable the Virginia Tourism Authority and participating partners to combine resources to extend marketing reach into targeted markets with limited dollars. Private-sector partners are required to match partnership advertising funds. The results will reflect the dollar value match by public and private partners for each dollar provided by the Virginia Tourism Authority for the program.

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Measures

- ◆ Amount leveraged for every grant dollar invested

• **Increase the number of jobs supported by the tourism and motion picture industries in Virginia.**

Summary and Alignment

Attract visitors and motion picture production to the Commonwealth, resulting in more jobs supported by the tourism and motion picture production industries.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Employment Growth

Objectives

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through marketing programs.**

Description

Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through traditional marketing methods, thus supporting tourism jobs and growing the economic

and tax bases of the Commonwealth. The Authority uses television, radio, Internet, publications, and travel shows as marketing tools to attract visitors to Virginia.

Objective Strategies

- Enhance the Virginia is for Lovers brand by showing new ad campaigns to targeted audiences in geographically relevant markets.
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- Implement the media plan in order to communicate the Virginia is for Lovers brand to highly desirable out-of-state prospective travelers and to make the important connection that Virginia is for Lovers is associated with travel to the state and that the state offers more than just history.
- Increase awareness of Virginia is for Lovers in key markets defined by research.
- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for the Virginia tourism industry.

Measures

- ◆ Cost per one thousand media impressions
- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through film tourism initiatives.**

Description

Use motion pictures filmed in Virginia to promote the state for travel and tourism.

Objective Strategies

- Work with studios and production companies on initiatives designed to cross-promote motion pictures and Virginia's tourism product.
- Require that major motion picture projects receiving incentive funding provide an advertisement or other promotional opportunity as part of their commitment.
- Use the public interest associated with the release of a motion picture shot in Virginia to drive a promotional campaign using advertising, public relations, and social media to promote Virginia visitation.

Measures

» **Increase content manufacturing in Virginia.**

Description

Increase domestic, international, and in-state film, television, video, multimedia, and digital production.

Objective Strategies

- Promote Virginia as a superior place to film because of the versatile palette of available film locations, tech-savvy talent, businesses, and academic institutions, outstanding support by state and local government, experienced crew, and exceptional customer service.
- Work with local filmmakers, production companies, educational institutions, and other media-related organizations to promote the growth of Virginia's in-state film industry.
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with prospects.
- Provide optimum incentive packages to recruit projects.
- Administer a workforce development program designed to increase the number of workers involved in content manufacturing in Virginia.
- Exploit the current disruption in technology as it relates to the creation and consumption of new media content. Recognize the intersection of technology, social media, brand promotion, and storytelling in support of academia, high-wage workforce development, and economic development opportunities statewide.

Measures

- ◆ Dollar amount of economic impact generated by the motion picture industry

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Description

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Measures

» **Increase and expand Virginia's travel product through collaboration, development programs, and the work of the agency's field specialists.**

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Maximize the tourism potential of Virginia communities by increasing their ability to create sustainable tourism programs that enhance their economic vitality.

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Measures

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- Implement a grant program to the extent interest exists and funds are available.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programs as part of international media and trade messaging during all international missions, shows, and events.

Measures

» **Increase the number of consumer inquiries for travel information and convert such consumers into visitors to Virginia.**

Description

Increase inquiries by potential visitors for travel and destination information, thus creating awareness of Virginia's tourism product and bringing more leisure travelers to the Commonwealth. Increase the effectiveness of website marketing to bring visitors to Virginia, thus growing the economic and tax bases of the Commonwealth.

Objective Strategies

- Contribute to Virginia Tourism Authority's overall lead generation goals through print advertising, sweepstakes, and Internet traffic by delivering effective interactive and media elements to the media plan.
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- Cultivate Consumer Relations Management database opportunities to increase consumer loyalty and buy-in.
- Develop robust online content (Virginia experiences, monthly articles, and unique opportunities) to keep prospects and consumers engaged.
- Explore opportunities to further the development and implementation of effective search engine marketing to increase visitation to Virginia.org and social media sites that foster consumer engagement.
- Invest in technologies that automate personalized content, create and disseminate 360-degree video, and utilize augmented reality.

Measures

- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions
- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» **Assist businesses and localities to grow Virginia's tourism and motion picture industries.**

Description

Assist tourism businesses and localities to grow their indigenous tourism and motion picture production businesses through research assistance, community planning and development, marketing leveraging grants, and one-on-one assistance.

Objective Strategies

- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
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- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.

Measures

- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» **Leverage the Virginia Tourism Authority's advertising and marketing funds.**

Description

These programs enable the Virginia Tourism Authority and participating partners to combine resources to extend marketing reach into targeted markets with limited dollars. Private-sector partners are required to match partnership advertising funds. The results will reflect the dollar value match by public and private partners for each dollar provided by the Virginia Tourism Authority for the program.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Promote industry participation in the Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry to leverage commercial media buying opportunities at lower rates through volume negotiation.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.

Measures

- ◆ Amount leveraged for every grant dollar invested

• **Increase the tax revenues generated from the tourism and motion picture industries in Virginia.**

Summary and Alignment

Attract visitors and motion picture production to the Commonwealth, resulting in greater tax revenues generated by the tourism and motion picture industries.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Business Climate

Objectives

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through marketing programs.**

Description

Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through traditional marketing methods, thus supporting tourism jobs and growing the economic and tax bases of the Commonwealth. The Authority uses television, radio, Internet, publications, and travel shows as marketing tools to attract visitors to Virginia.

Objective Strategies

- Enhance the Virginia is for Lovers brand by showing new ad campaigns to targeted audiences in geographically relevant markets.
- Monitor travel trends and form marketing strategies based on visitors' origin markets and demographics.
- Implement the media plan in order to communicate the Virginia is for Lovers brand to highly desirable out-of-state prospective travelers and to make the important connection that Virginia is for Lovers is associated with travel to the state and that the state offers more than just history.
- Increase awareness of Virginia is for Lovers in key markets defined by research.
- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for the Virginia tourism industry.

Measures

- ◆ Cost per one thousand media impressions
- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions

» **Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through film tourism initiatives.**

Description

Use motion pictures filmed in Virginia to promote the state for travel and tourism.

Objective Strategies

- Work with studios and production companies on initiatives designed to cross-promote motion pictures and Virginia's tourism product.
- Require that major motion picture projects receiving incentive funding provide an advertisement or other promotional opportunity as part of their commitment.
- Use the public interest associated with the release of a motion picture shot in Virginia to drive a promotional campaign using advertising, public relations, and social media to promote Virginia visitation.

Measures

» **Increase content manufacturing in Virginia.**

Description

Increase domestic, international, and in-state film, television, video, multimedia, and digital production.

Objective Strategies

- Promote Virginia as a superior place to film because of the versatile palette of available film locations, tech-savvy talent, businesses, and academic institutions, outstanding support by state and local government, experienced crew, and exceptional customer service.
- Work with local filmmakers, production companies, educational institutions, and other media-related organizations to promote the growth of Virginia's in-state film industry.
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with prospects.
- Provide optimum incentive packages to recruit projects.
- Administer a workforce development program designed to increase the number of workers involved in content manufacturing in Virginia.
- Exploit the current disruption in technology as it relates to the creation and consumption of new media content. Recognize the intersection of technology, social media, brand promotion, and storytelling in support of academia, high-wage workforce development, and economic development opportunities statewide.

Measures

- ◆ Dollar amount of economic impact generated by the motion picture industry

» **Increase the Return on Investment associated with marketing spending.**

Description

Increase the economic benefit and state and local tax revenues associated with marketing spending.

Objective Strategies

- Increase the number of visitors to Virginia through traditional marketing methods, including television, radio, Internet, publications, and travel shows.
- Increase inquiries by potential visitors for travel and destination information.
- Increase the effectiveness of website marketing to bring visitors to Virginia.
- Increase and expand Virginia's travel product.
- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for the Virginia tourism industry, and increase the leveraging ratio (match amounts contributed by partners).

Measures

» **Provide financial resources to communities.**

Description

Provide the ability to participate in cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities to communities.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Distribute collateral materials that help community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative marketing.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and presentations.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.

Measures

» **Increase and expand Virginia's travel product through collaboration, development programs, and the work of the agency's field specialists.**

Description

Maximize the tourism potential of Virginia communities by increasing their ability to create sustainable tourism programs that enhance their economic vitality.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Work with local leaders to offer assistance with tourism planning.
- Educate communities on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
- Partner with other state and federal agencies in regional initiatives such as The Stronger Economies Together Program and Rural Community Development Initiative Grants.
- Participate in industry training events such as Entrepreneur Express, Business of Tourism workshops, and Agritourism workshops.
- Assist with tourism product development efforts, including ongoing projects such as the Coal Heritage Trail and Spearhead Trails, as well as new programs such as the Clinch River Valley Initiative and related programs of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation; Appalachian Spring; South Boston; Downtown Development; the Burlap Trail; Southern Virginia Wild Blueway; Tobacco Heritage Trail; Bike

the Valley; Eastern Legacy Trail, Coastal Virginia Trails, the Virginia Oyster Trail; River Realm, Virginia Mountain Region initiatives; Chesapeake Bay Region Trails; Back of the Dragon; New River Water Trail; Heart of Appalachia Trails; the Virginia Growth Alliance; Space Tourism opportunities; and community planning.

- Conduct quarterly orientation sessions.
- Update the State Tourism Plan to identify the best lures to attract visitors as well as the new assets needed to make Virginia's communities more competitive.

Measures

» **Increase the number of partners participating in Virginia Tourism Authority promotional opportunities.**

Description

Increase the number of tourism industry and community partners participating in cooperative advertising and marketing programs.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide lower cost media opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry through volume negotiation.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.
- Administer a grant program for music festival sponsorships.

Measures

» **Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through commemoration activities.**

Description

Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through a series of programs and events of national and international significance to build awareness of Virginia's role in the creation of the United States; in 2019 the Commonwealth of Virginia will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the arrival and impact of women on the Virginia Colony, and the original English Thanksgiving in North America.

Objective Strategies

- In conjunction with the 2019 Commemoration, execute the marketing plan and an extended event marketing program.
- Collaborate with the 2019 Commemoration on key messaging for consistency across materials, strategies and markets.
- Leverage existing owned/digital/editorial media resources to support the 2019 Commemoration.
- Acquire multi-media assets and create videos to use across multiple promotion platforms.
- Work with the 2019 Commemoration to develop and execute an actionable earned media plan.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programming to trade blogs and travel trade leaders attending meetings, groups, and sport shows that VTC attends.
- Provide brochure and ad panel space at all state welcome centers to the extent available.
- Co-operatively sponsor an annual American Indian film festival ("Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival").

- Implement a grant program to the extent interest exists and funds are available.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programs as part of international media and trade messaging during all international missions, shows, and events.

Measures

» Increase the number of consumer inquiries for travel information and convert such consumers into visitors to Virginia.

Description

Increase inquiries by potential visitors for travel and destination information, thus creating awareness of Virginia's tourism product and bringing more leisure travelers to the Commonwealth. Increase the effectiveness of website marketing to bring visitors to Virginia, thus growing the economic and tax bases of the Commonwealth.

Objective Strategies

- Contribute to Virginia Tourism Authority's overall lead generation goals through print advertising, sweepstakes, and Internet traffic by delivering effective interactive and media elements to the media plan.
- Monitor and report web traffic weekly utilizing website analytics software and online research utilities to develop and refine tactics to respond to trends and key travel interests.
- Cultivate Consumer Relations Management database opportunities to increase consumer loyalty and buy-in.
- Develop robust online content (Virginia experiences, monthly articles, and unique opportunities) to keep prospects and consumers engaged.
- Explore opportunities to further the development and implementation of effective search engine marketing to increase visitation to Virginia.org and social media sites that foster consumer engagement.
- Invest in technologies that automate personalized content, create and disseminate 360-degree video, and utilize augmented reality.

Measures

- ◆ Number of annual website user sessions
- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» Assist businesses and localities to grow Virginia's tourism and motion picture industries.

Description

Assist tourism businesses and localities to grow their indigenous tourism and motion picture production businesses through research assistance, community planning and development, marketing leveraging grants, and one-on-one assistance.

Objective Strategies

- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry to leverage commercial media buying opportunities at lower rates through volume negotiation.
- Provide the industry with tourism planning assistance, tourism research trends, marketing recommendations, and vision planning guidance in order to help with marketing decisions and ultimately produce more customers for their businesses.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority

offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.

- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.

Measures

- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» **Leverage the Virginia Tourism Authority's advertising and marketing funds.**

Description

These programs enable the Virginia Tourism Authority and participating partners to combine resources to extend marketing reach into targeted markets with limited dollars. Private-sector partners are required to match partnership advertising funds. The results will reflect the dollar value match by public and private partners for each dollar provided by the Virginia Tourism Authority for the program.

Objective Strategies

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- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.

Measures

- ◆ Amount leveraged for every grant dollar invested

• **Provide resources to communities to maximize their tourism potential.**

Summary and Alignment

Support the enhancement, expansion, and development of new and existing tourism products, events, and services. Strengthen and increase partnerships each year that benefit the tourism industry. Access new funding and leverage advertising, marketing, and public relations resources by partnering with tourism organizations, other nonprofit entities, private industry, and government.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Business Climate

Objectives

» **Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through commemoration activities.**

Description

Partner with the 2019 Commemoration to promote Virginia as a tourist destination through a series of programs and events of national and international significance to build awareness of Virginia's role in the creation of the United States; in 2019 the Commonwealth of Virginia will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World, arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the arrival and impact of women on the Virginia Colony, and the original English Thanksgiving in North America.

Objective Strategies

- In conjunction with the 2019 Commemoration, execute the marketing plan and an extended event marketing program.
- Collaborate with the 2019 Commemoration on key messaging for consistency across materials, strategies and markets.
- Leverage existing owned/digital/editorial media resources to support the 2019 Commemoration.
- Acquire multi-media assets and create videos to use across multiple promotion platforms.
- Work with the 2019 Commemoration to develop and execute an actionable earned media plan.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programming to trade blogs and travel trade leaders attending meetings, groups, and sport shows that VTC attends.
- Provide brochure and ad panel space at all state welcome centers to the extent available.
- Co-operatively sponsor an annual American Indian film festival ("Pocahontas Reframed Storytellers Film Festival").
- Implement a grant program to the extent interest exists and funds are available.
- Promote 2019 Commemoration programs as part of international media and trade messaging during all international missions, shows, and events.

Measures

» **Provide financial resources to communities.**

Description

Provide the ability to participate in cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities to communities.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative advertising and marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Distribute collateral materials that help community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative marketing.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and presentations.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.

Measures

» **Increase and expand Virginia's travel product through collaboration, development programs, and the work of the agency's field specialists.**

Description

Maximize the tourism potential of Virginia communities by increasing their ability to create sustainable tourism programs that enhance their economic vitality.

Objective Strategies

- Provide effective cooperative marketing opportunities for Virginia's communities.
- Work with local leaders to offer assistance with tourism planning.
- Educate communities on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.

- Partner with other state and federal agencies in regional initiatives such as The Stronger Economies Together Program and Rural Community Development Initiative Grants.
- Participate in industry training events such as Entrepreneur Express, Business of Tourism workshops, and Agritourism workshops.
- Assist with tourism product development efforts, including ongoing projects such as the Coal Heritage Trail and Spearhead Trails, as well as new programs such as the Clinch River Valley Initiative and related programs of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation; Appalachian Spring; South Boston; Downtown Development; the Burlap Trail; Southern Virginia Wild Blueway; Tobacco Heritage Trail; Bike the Valley; Eastern Legacy Trail, Coastal Virginia Trails, the Virginia Oyster Trail; River Realm, Virginia Mountain Region initiatives; Chesapeake Bay Region Trails; Back of the Dragon; New River Water Trail; Heart of Appalachia Trails; the Virginia Growth Alliance; Space Tourism opportunities; and community planning.
- Conduct quarterly orientation sessions.
- Update the State Tourism Plan to identify the best lures to attract visitors as well as the new assets needed to make Virginia's communities more competitive.

Measures

» **Increase the number of partners participating in Virginia Tourism Authority promotional opportunities.**

Description

Increase the number of tourism industry and community partners participating in cooperative advertising and marketing programs.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide lower cost media opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry through volume negotiation.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.
- Administer a grant program for music festival sponsorships.

Measures

» **Assist businesses and localities to grow Virginia's tourism and motion picture industries.**

Description

Assist tourism businesses and localities to grow their indigenous tourism and motion picture production businesses through research assistance, community planning and development, marketing leveraging grants, and one-on-one assistance.

Objective Strategies

- Educate communities and the industry on tourism zones and tourism plans that would qualify them to participate in the Tourism Development Financing Program.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.
- Promote industry participation in Virginia Tourism Authority's media advertising plan.
- Provide opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry to leverage commercial media buying opportunities at lower rates through volume

negotiation.

- Provide the industry with tourism planning assistance, tourism research trends, marketing recommendations, and vision planning guidance in order to help with marketing decisions and ultimately produce more customers for their businesses.
- Stimulate new tourism marketing programs through the creation of local and regional partnerships.
- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and association presentations.
- Evolve the media plan by increasing the number of interactive and new media offerings as well as buy-down opportunities for Virginia's tourism industry.
- Maintain Web-based applications for grant programs.

Measures

- ◆ Number of digital referrals to industry partners

» **Leverage the Virginia Tourism Authority's advertising and marketing funds.**

Description

These programs enable the Virginia Tourism Authority and participating partners to combine resources to extend marketing reach into targeted markets with limited dollars. Private-sector partners are required to match partnership advertising funds. The results will reflect the dollar value match by public and private partners for each dollar provided by the Virginia Tourism Authority for the program.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help industry and community partners realize the benefits and services the Virginia Tourism Authority offers to assist in cooperative advertising and marketing.
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- Evaluate applications and award funds from the Virginia Tourism Authority's Marketing Leverage Program and the WW I & WW II Tourism Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 Return on Investment on leveraged funds.

Measures

- ◆ Amount leveraged for every grant dollar invested

• **Strengthen awareness of the value of tourism as an economic engine for Virginia.**

Summary and Alignment

Foster strong working relationships with elected officials and key opinion leaders to gain support and growth for Virginia's tourism industry.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Business Climate

Objectives

» **Increase awareness about the value of tourism and motion picture production as an economic engine for Virginia with state lawmakers, local officials, and citizens.**

Description

Increase awareness through research and education about the value of tourism and motion picture production as an economic engine for Virginia with state lawmakers, local officials, and citizens.

Objective Strategies

- Distribute collateral materials that help state lawmakers, local officials, and citizens realize the value of tourism and motion picture production as an economic engine for Virginia.
- Encourage localities to educate local officials and citizens about the value of tourism and motion picture production as an economic engine for Virginia.
- Provide assistance to localities in educating local officials and citizens about the value of tourism and motion picture production as an economic engine for Virginia.
- Increase outreach through community meetings and presentations.

Measures

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
FY 2019 VTA Operating Plan	Adobe PDF
FY 2018 VTA Year-End Expenditure Report	Adobe PDF
CY 2018 VTA Marketing Plan	Adobe PDF

Tourist Promotion Services [53607]**Description of this Program / Service Area**

VTA's marketing activities include a number of domestic and international programs aimed at promoting Virginia as a premier travel destination, including brand management, creative services, national and international media relations, domestic sales, international trade and sales, promotions, digital marketing, merchandising, and research.

The visitor services program develops overall strategies for sound customer and visitor relations and information distribution systems. It manages activities aimed at providing superior customer service, evaluating and improving customer fulfillment functions, and increasing community outreach. VTA works cooperatively with the Virginia Department of Transportation in the operations of the state's Welcome Centers to promote and encourage traveler visitation to Virginia.

The partnership marketing program works closely with communities throughout Virginia through tourism development and grant programs. It provides communities and tourism entrepreneurs with tourism planning expertise and support. It also assists with strategic planning, product planning, and identifying funding resources to achieve the planning goals and grow the Commonwealth's tourism product. In addition, the program is a resource for the industry to seek and secure grants to supplement marketing and product development programs. The Authority works closely with Virginia's localities and attractions to identify grant opportunities and options for stretching limited resources to market the Commonwealth's tourism product.

The Virginia Film Office is committed to attracting film and video production to Virginia and supporting the indigenous production industry, with the ultimate goal of bringing economic and employment benefits to the Commonwealth. Film, video, and multi-media production is a growth industry worldwide, and the potential economic benefits to the state have increased significantly. The Virginia Film Office pursues its goals through the creation and implementation of innovative marketing and development programs, and by delivering exceptional customer service to inspire repeat business.

Mission Alignment and Authority

This service area directly aligns with the Virginia Tourism Authority's mission of promoting and developing the tourism and motion picture industries to stimulate Virginia's economy and enhance the quality of life of all Virginians.

§ 2.2-2315 et seq., Code of Virginia (Virginia Tourism Authority)

§ 58.1-3851.1, Code of Virginia (Entitlement to tax revenues from tourism project)

§ 58.1-3851.2, Code of Virginia (Entitlement to tax revenues from tourism project of regional significance)

Products and Services**Description of Major Products and Services**

The Virginia Tourism Authority provides the following services:

Brand Management: The advertising program develops and promotes the Virginia brand through social media, broadcast, and digital media. The media plan targets frequent travelers within markets that provide the highest potential number of visitors to Virginia. The media plan includes buy-downs and cooperative support for Virginia's tourism industry.

Digital Marketing: The digital marketing program manages VTA's three primary websites: virginia.org, blog.virginia.org, and vatc.org. Virginia.org and blog.virginia.org are trip planning and travel inspiration websites for consumers, while vatc.org is a business-to-business website for Virginia's tourism industry. Digital marketing manages VTA's Internet communications technologies and develops web-based business initiatives and partnerships. Digital marketing also regularly educates the industry on the use of online technologies, marketing strategies, and the benefits of full participation in VTA's consumer website. In addition, digital marketing manages VTC's robust social media program.

Grants: The grants program provides supplemental financial assistance to Virginia destination marketing organizations and tourism businesses. The competitive grants application process is designed to leverage scarce resources, promote the Virginia is for Lovers brand, encourage the creation of partnerships, and enhance the development and marketing of Virginia's tourism product. In addition, VTA works to identify and publicize other grant opportunities available to the state's tourism industry from federal, state, and private sources.

Film: The Virginia Film Office is committed to attracting film and video production to Virginia and supporting the indigenous production industry, with the ultimate goal of bringing economic and employment benefits to the Commonwealth. Film, video, and multi-media production is a growth industry worldwide, and the potential economic benefits to the state have increased significantly. The Virginia Film Office pursues its goals through the creation and implementation of innovative marketing and development programs, and by delivering exceptional customer service to

inspire repeat business.

Communications: The communications program is responsible for generating editorial coverage in targeted national, regional, and in-state publications for promotion of Virginia as a premier travel destination. Communications also provides VTA with visibility in niche publications to promote special and unique attractions in Virginia. The program also is responsible for developing talking points for press conferences and interviews with the Governor and First Lady. In addition, it disseminates tourism-related news to the Virginia tourism industry and works with the industry on generating media coverage.

International Marketing: The international marketing program develops and implements integrated direct sales, marketing, promotions, and public relations strategies that are innovative in order to bring more foreign visitors and vendors to Virginia. The geographic targets are synchronized with air service to gateway airport and are supported by research.

Domestic Sales: VTA markets the Commonwealth as a premier travel destination to tour operators, select travel agents, meeting planners, and sports events rights holders. VTA represents the Commonwealth and provides the Virginia tourism industry with partnership opportunities to collaborate at professional trade shows, sales missions, site inspection tours, and marketing initiatives strategically targeting national, regional, and in-state domestic trade markets.

Research: The research program utilizes a wide range of tourism industry data, metrics, and insights in order to quantify Virginia's tourism industry and measure organizational goals that are aligned with VTA's overall strategy. The aims of VTA's research program are to measure tourism industry performance, conduct consumer studies, and perform competitive industry analysis. The research program works with internal and external partners in primary survey data and segmentation analysis, developing domestic and international visitor profiles, calculating domestic and international market shares, and determining the economic and fiscal impact of tourism on the state and localities. The program also provides detailed and timely information for VTA to measure the benefit-cost ratio of its integrated marketing, digital media, and incentive programs.

Creative Services: The creative services program provides in-house graphic development and production services for VTA. VTA's library of photography, film, videography, and digital graphics files is managed by creative services.

Fulfillment: The fulfillment program provides information to, and responds to inquiries from, consumers seeking information on travel and tourism in Virginia. Telephone and Internet inquiries are answered by a consumer services center and VTA publication requests are processed by a fulfillment house that provides storage, processing, delivery, and freight services. In addition, VTA operates a full-service distribution center to process customized and bulk orders and to manage the mailing needs of VTA and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

Welcome Centers: Virginia's welcome centers are designed to be first-stop destinations for the traveling public, strategically and conveniently located throughout Virginia on major arterial highways. VTA provides a broad array of services to the visitor, including personal travel counseling, informational materials, transportation maps, and lodging reservation assistance. In addition, the welcome center program serves Virginia's tourism industry by promoting a variety of destinations and attractions through advertising opportunities, product demonstrations and exhibits, and the distribution of travel publications.

Tourism Planning: VTA provides communities and tourism entrepreneurs with tourism planning expertise and support. It assists with strategic planning, product planning, and identifying funding resources (including grant opportunities and other options for stretching limited resources) to develop and market the Commonwealth's tourism product.

State Tourism Plan: VTA has developed a comprehensive state tourism plan, which provides a thorough assessment of the tourism needs in each of Virginia's tourism regions. This plan provides a competitive analysis of the state, including recommendations on increasing visitation through focused product development, promotions, improvements to infrastructure, and policies at the state and local level to support tourism economic development. VTA will be updating the plan this biennium.

Tourism Development Financing: VTA helps to administer and promote a financing program for qualified tourism-related development projects (the Tourism Development Financing Program). This program provides gap financing to compensate for a shortfall in project funding in partnership with developers, localities, and financial institutions.

Products / Services	
Product / Service	Authority Citation
Brand Management	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Digital Marketing	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Grants	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Film	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Communications	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
International Marketing	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Domestic Sales	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia

Research	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Creative Services	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Fulfillment	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Welcome Centers	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Tourism Planning	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
State Tourism Plan	§ 2.2-2318, Code of Virginia
Tourism Development Financing	§ 58.1-3851.1, Code of Virginia
Tourism Development Financing	§ 58.1-3851.2, Code of Virginia

Anticipated Changes

VTA anticipates it will need to upgrade its website and travel blog to provide device-agnostic experiences that meet the expectations of a technology-savvy customer base. The demographic profile of travelers has shifted to younger travelers and families. Therefore, technologies that automate personalized content, create and disseminate 360-degree video, and utilize augmented reality are becoming more mainstream and expected by the digital consumer.

The Partnership Marketing program is focused on helping Virginia's industry partners maximize their tourism potential by assisting in the development of strategic tourism plans and providing financial assistance for both tourism development as well as to market and promote an area's tourism assets. As new tourism programs and projects are developed, the need for such services will continue to increase.

Factors Impacting

A number of factors are impacting the delivery of travel-related content to increase awareness of Virginia travel destinations. Consumer use of mobile devices to interact with VTA websites is now the greatest focus when delivering content. Also, website usage continues to grow with the largest increases in consumer interaction related to travel content syndication and experiential articles as well as video content. In addition, the explosive growth of social media has had an enormous impact on marketing. As a result, VTA will need to be prepared to create authentic content, engaging videos, and interactive social media experiences to attract visitors to Virginia.

In terms of expanding tourism products, more local and regional tourism partners are looking to extend the reach of their very limited financial resources to promote their regions and to develop new products. They look to VTA to assist in this area through matching grants for marketing, technical program assistance and planning, and development financing.

Financial Overview

In FY 2019 the Virginia Tourism Authority will operate with a general fund budget of \$21.0 million. These funds support the marketing, visitor services, Virginia Film Office, partnership marketing, and minimal administrative support functions. The Authority aggressively leverages funding and forms partnerships with industry and government entities to extend the reach of its limited budget.

The Virginia Tourism Authority is not on the books of the State Comptroller, so the only funds reflected are general fund appropriations. However, the Authority does receive about \$1.3 million annually from the Virginia Department of Transportation (about \$1.2 million for operation of the state's 13 Welcome Centers and \$100,000 as a pass-through for the Danville Welcome Center, which is locally operated). These funds, however, are not sufficient to fully fund the Welcome Centers' operations, which total more than \$2.3 million annually.

In addition, the Authority collects more than \$1.8 million annually from a variety of other sources, including brochure rack fees at Welcome Centers and rest areas, reimbursement for the WW I & WW II Profiles of Honor Tour program by the Virginia World War I and World War II Commemoration Commission, royalties from the sale of "Virginia is for Lovers" merchandise, and other miscellaneous fees and collections.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	21,035,424	0	20,810,424	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
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