

**VIRGINIA  
IS FOR  
LOVERS®**

**2025-2026  
VTC DOMESTIC  
MARKETING  
ACTION PLAN**

# OVERVIEW

Virginia's tourism industry is poised for growth, but to remain competitive with neighboring states, we must accelerate visitor spending, attract new travelers, and improve overall trip satisfaction. This marketing plan provides a strategic roadmap to achieve these goals while supporting our industry partners and leveraging Virginia's unique travel experiences.



# STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES

## Overall Tourism Growth Targets

- **Visitor Spending:** Reach \$36.5 billion annually (~\$100M/day), with 4.1% annual growth.
- **Visitor Demand:** Add 1M new visitors (totaling 44.7M overnight stays) and surpass 2019 records for first-time travelers (140K+).
- **Trip Satisfaction:** Restore pre-pandemic 'very satisfied' ratings to 77%.

## Marketing & Industry-Specific Goals

- **Increase Brand Awareness:** Raise household awareness of Virginia as a travel destination to 40%.
- **Drive Incremental Visitors:** Generate 1.1M additional visitors with an average spend of \$2,286 per trip.
- **Hotel Bookings:** Set a record with 40,000 attributed hotel bookings.
- **Industry Support:** Assist 7,000 partners, certify 2 new tourism financing projects, and award \$3.7M in grants leveraging \$11.1M in tourism marketing to support 1,400 partners and small businesses.



# AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION & TARGET MARKETS

## Key Visitor Segments

- **Outdoor Excursionists:** Prefer scenic, nature-focused travel (hiking, fishing, national parks). Primarily engage with digital content via streaming and YouTube.
- **Urban Explorers:** Seek cultural experiences, shopping, and nightlife. Heavy users of Google, Expedia, and social media.
- **Travel & Activity Enthusiasts:** Want to experience everything a destination offers, from adventure sports to culinary tourism. Engage heavily with OTA platforms.

## Geographic Priorities

- **High-Value Markets:** Florida, Pennsylvania, Atlanta, Los Angeles, San Francisco, NYC, Dallas, Chicago.
- **Mid-Value Markets:** North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, Tennessee, Cleveland, Boston.
- **Washington, DC:** Due to its unique balance of proximity, already high destination awareness, and high-visitor spending, the Washington DC DMA has its own specific budget.
- **Niche Audiences:** History buffs, outdoor adventure seekers, wine and food lovers.

*High-value markets drive higher-visitor spending per-traveler and provide the opportunity to reach new visitors. Mid-value travelers have higher baseline rates of travel to Virginia, and represent a core loyal audience, but offer less potential for reaching new visitors.*

## OUTDOOR EXCURSIONISTS



## URBAN EXPLORERS



## TRAVEL & ACTIVITY ENTHUSIASTS



## CORE MESSAGING & POSITIONING

*Brand Positioning: “All That You Love. All in One Trip.” Virginia offers a diversity of experiences that other states require multiple vacations to deliver. This theme will be reinforced across our five core pillars:*

- **Family Fun:** Hands-on history, kid-friendly museums, festivals, and outdoor activities for all ages.
- **Culture:** Vibrant arts scenes, Black heritage experiences, music festivals, and city-based adventures.
- **Outdoors:** From the Blue Ridge Mountains to coastal beaches, Virginia provides outdoor escapes for all adventure levels.
- **Culinary:** A blend of regional flavors—oyster trails, wineries, Appalachian cuisine, and fine dining.
- **History:** Engaging historical sites and immersive storytelling, from early American history and beyond.



# MARKETING STRATEGY & EXECUTION

VTC's marketing strategy is built on a data-driven approach to elevate brand visibility, drive visitation, and support sustained industry growth. Grounded in the campaign theme **"All That You Love. All in One Trip,"** our integrated efforts across paid, owned, and earned channels strategically target travelers seeking abundant, activity-rich vacations. By showcasing Virginia's unmatched diversity of experiences within a single destination, we position Virginia as the premier choice for travelers who seek variety, authenticity, and memorable connections.

## Paid Media

- Implement **targeted digital campaigns** across streaming services, social platforms, and travel booking sites.
- Invest in **high-impact video content** on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook to showcase Virginia's diversity.
- Leverage **programmatic advertising** to retarget potential visitors based on their travel interests.

## Resources

- [2025 Paid Media Plan](#): VTC's Flagship campaign reminds travelers that Virginia is the ultimate destination for memorable getaways. All that you love, is all in one trip!
- [FY25 Co-op Program](#): The co-op program aims to offer industry partners simple, affordable and flexible advertising opportunities.
- [Flagship Campaign Partner Program Toolkit](#)

## Owned Media

- Optimize Virginia.org with compelling itineraries, blog content, and interactive trip planning tools.
- Develop regional guides to highlight unique attractions and itineraries per visitor segment.
- Expand email marketing personalization to deliver customized travel suggestions based on user preferences.

## Earned Media

- Partner with influencers and travel bloggers specializing in history, outdoor adventure, and culinary experiences.
- Launch press trips for media exposure in key markets.



## INDUSTRY & PARTNER SUPPORT

- **Grant Programs:** Allocate \$3.7M in tourism marketing grants with a 3:1 leverage ratio.
- **Education & Training:** Conduct [DRIVE Tourism+ workshops](#) and DMO industry training.
- **Tourism Development Financing:** Certify two major infrastructure projects to support visitor and asset growth.
- **Partnership Marketing:** Offer co-op advertising opportunities and enhance industry engagement through Welcome Center promotions and trade events.
- **Statewide Strategic Tourism Plan:** VTC, in partnership with Hunden Partners, is developing a Statewide Strategic Tourism Plan to strengthen Virginia's tourism competitiveness by attracting more visitors, extending stays, and increasing visitor spending through targeted product development and strategic promotion.
- **Domestic Sales:** Partnership opportunities at trade shows, sales missions and client events to promote your destination for group tours and sporting events. Three trade websites to market your business to tour operators, meeting planners and sports event rights holders.



## MEASURING SUCCESS

	METRIC	TARGET BY 2026
<b>Strategic Industry Targets</b>	Industry Economic Impact	\$36.5 Billion
	Total Visitor Count	44.7 Million Overnight Travelers
	First-time Visitors	140,000
	Length of Stay	3.3 Nights
	Trip Satisfaction (Very Satisfied)	77%
<b>Marketing Targets</b>	Attributed Hotel Bookings	40,000+
	Campaign Household Awareness	40%
	Incremental Campaign Visitors	1.1 Million
<b>Partner &amp; Industry Support Targets</b>	Industry Partners Assisted	7,000
	Certified Tourism Development Financing Projects	2
	Grants Awarded	350





## CONCLUSION

By focusing on Virginia's unique blend of travel experiences, leveraging data-driven marketing, and deepening partnerships, this plan aims to position Virginia as a top-tier travel destination. Through strategic investments in branding, digital marketing, and industry collaboration, we will achieve long-term growth while enhancing the visitor experience.

*"We measure success by how helpful we are to our partners."*

**THANK YOU**

