



Virginia Tourism Corporation  
Strategic Marketing Plan FY13

LOVE. It's at the heart of every Virginia vacation.

Virginia   
*is for Lovers*<sup>®</sup>  
Virginia.org

# VTC Strategic Marketing Plan FY13

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## Virginia is for Lovers® Travel Brand:

Virginia is for Lovers® is about love-pure and simple. Love is universal. People vacation with those they love. Virginia is a vacation destination where visitors can completely connect with those they love, doing things they love to do while on vacation.

A consumer literature review conducted by Texas A&M concluded that vacations have positive effects on families by:

- Strengthening family cohesion
- Increasing overall life satisfaction
- Creating lasting life-long memories for children and parents
- Providing open communication channels between family members

Also, Grand Travel and Generational Travel is an emerging trend:

- Two-thirds of Grandparents travel with family each year. MetLife estimates in 2010 there were nearly 65 million grandparents in the U.S., more than one in every four adults is a grandparent
- Grand Travel strengthens family cohesion between generations
- Grandparent's overall life satisfaction increased

A vacation in Virginia can be as diverse and beautiful as the state itself with sandy beaches; exhilarating amusement parks; majestic mountain vistas; iconic historic sites such as Monticello, Mount Vernon, Colonial Williamsburg; the Blue Ridge Parkway; Skyline Drive; Shenandoah National Park; Arlington National Cemetery; and Appomattox Courthouse. Virginia also features quaint, small towns, picturesque state parks, diverse arts and culture, roaring NASCAR and mo-

torsports events, natural wonders, world-class resorts, hotels and inns, and more than 200 wineries statewide – all connected by beautiful scenic byways. Virginia is always ready to welcome visitors. Love is at the heart of every Virginia vacation.

Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) FY13 marketing campaign focuses on growing leisure travel to Virginia by targeting families year-round and couples in the fall and spring.

VTC's marketing plan includes a mix of digital, broadcast and print advertising, an aggressive public relations and social media campaign, promotions, sales and a comprehensive international marketing program. The strong call to action for all communications is "Love is at the heart of every Virginia vacation". Visit [Virginia.org](http://Virginia.org) for planning information.

### The Power of Love:

Virginia is for Lovers®, is 43 years old and still strong. In addition to the state's superior tourism product and accessibility, Virginia is for Lovers ® is one of the most highly recognized tourism slogans in the world. The year 2009 marked the 40th anniversary of the popular state tourism slogan and logo. In June of 2009, Forbes.com named Virginia is for Lovers ® one of the top ten tourism marketing campaigns of all time. Forbes had this to say about Virginia is for Lovers ®: "Forty years later, the Virginia is for Lovers ® state tourism campaign is still going strong – and still ranked as one of the top travel campaigns in history. Who after all is against love?" says travel journalist and Forbes judge Rudy Maxa. Virginia is for Lovers ®, launched in 1969, and is a brand that has endured and is supported by superior product and vacation experience. The Virginia is for Lovers ® LOVE campaign focuses on generation X and baby boomer families, year- round, and couples, seasonally.

**Why market Virginia’s tourism assets?  
Tourism provides instant revenue for Virginia.**

The revenue generated by tourists is immediate. The state realizes an immediate return on investment the minute tourists make purchases for hotels, restaurants, shops and transportation. Therefore, tourism plays a vital role in Virginia’s diverse economy. Virginia attracts approximately 40 million domestic visitors annually.

**In 2011, Virginia Tourism:**

- Generated \$20 billion in visitor spending
- Supported 207,000 jobs
- Provided \$1.32 billion in state and local taxes for Virginia’s coffers

**What tourism tax revenue means to Virginia**

State tax revenues generated by tourism in Virginia are estimated to be enough to pay for:

- Salaries and benefits of more than 11,340 new state police officers, or
- Education of over 76,880 Virginia students, or
- Maintaining more than 57,000 miles of Virginia roads annually.

Additional information on the economic impact of tourism in Virginia, including information for localities, is available at <http://www.vatc.org/research/economicimpact.asp>.

Longwood’s International, a respected tourism research firm based in Toronto, conducted a study of Virginia Tourism Corporation’s (VTC) 2009 and 2010 marketing campaigns and found a significant return on investment for tourism marketing and advertising.

The study determined that tourism marketing provides an immediate return on investment for the state and that for every \$1.00 spent on advertising, \$75.00 is spent by travelers and \$5.00 is returned in state and local taxes within the same year.

In addition to the financial benefits, tourism-related businesses contribute to the quality of life for all Virginians because the same attributes that make the state appealing to visitors also make it a better place to live and work for Virginians.

Like tourism, the Virginia Film Office and the state’s film and television industries benefit the Commonwealth through the production of films, television shows, commercials, documentaries, video games and educational videos. Filmmakers act as “super tourists.” They provide financial benefits for the state and local economy when they hire workers, rent hotel rooms and vehicles, shop, purchase meals and local goods and services. Virginia’s film industry has grown to be a vital part of the state’s economy, employing 2,700 Virginians and generating a yearly economic impact of more than \$346 million.

**A Proud State**

Tourism marketing has become increasingly competitive as states and destinations worldwide have focused more attention on generating the significant jobs and tax revenues the industry yields.

In order for Virginia to remain competitive and provide jobs and instant revenue, it is essential that the state’s tourism assets are marketed frequently, broadly and effectively with an adequate and competitive budget.

In 2007, Virginia moved up in national rank from number 10 in domestic visitors spending to number 8. The state has held onto the number 8 position to date. Prior, Virginia held the number 10 position for thirteen years.

Expenditure Rank State Domestic Expenditures (\$ Millions)		
1.	California	\$79,516
2.	Florida	\$49,093
3.	Texas	\$45,709
4.	New York	\$38,423
5.	Illinois	\$27,257
6.	Nevada	\$23,284
7.	Pennsylvania	\$19,157
8.	Virginia	\$18,893
9.	Georgia	\$18,306
10.	New Jersey	\$17,610

## FY12 International Growth:

The Capital Region USA (CRUSA) is the official regional destination marketing organization promoting Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Maryland as a premier vacation destination to overseas travelers.

Travelers from overseas markets visit multiple destinations, stay longer and spend considerably more than domestic visitors. By working together, the partners have created a regional destination that is more compelling to overseas visitors and mirrors their vacation patterns.

### Overseas Visitation & Spending to the Capital Region USA (CRUSA) Sets Records in 2011

CRUSA achieved record overseas arrivals in 2011. Arrivals grew by 7% to 2.18 million overseas visitors, outpacing the rate of growth in overseas arrivals to the USA. Total direct spending by overseas travelers to CRUSA also set records, posting an 11% increase to \$1.7 billion. Their length of stay remained constant at 8 nights.

While overseas arrivals to Virginia declined by 2% to 362,000 visitors, spending in Virginia set a new record at \$390 million, a 21% increase. This is largely the result of an 8% increase in the length of stay in Virginia. Overseas travelers to Virginia now spend nearly 14 nights on average per trip in the Commonwealth.

Other findings in the 2011 overseas visitation report include:

- More than 1.4 million overseas travelers visited CRUSA for leisure purposes in 2011, up 14%.
- CRUSA outpaced the U.S. growth rate and grew or maintained market share from four of the region's top five markets, including the United Kingdom, China, Germany and Brazil.
- In contrast, CRUSA lost market share in France, Mexico and the Benelux, although spending increased by 13% from France.
- The strongest growth in arrivals came from China, which grew by 91%, and Brazil, where arrivals increased by 47%.
- Visitors from Western Europe accounted for 42% of the region's total visitors, as compared to 45% in 2010, reflecting the large growth in arrivals from the Far East (China) and South America (Brazil).

- The percentage of first-time visitors increased to 32%, representing nearly 1/3 of all CRUSA visitors. By comparison, 28% of U.S. overseas arrivals were first-time travelers.
- The number of visitors using Washington, DC as a port of entry contracted by 2% in 2011, reflecting emerging markets using other ports of entry to reach CRUSA, most notably Miami and Los Angeles.
- CRUSA visitors continued to travel throughout the region and to other U.S. destinations, visiting 3 states on average.
- Advance trip decision time grew by 7 days to 99 days, reflecting a larger share of leisure travelers who plan further out, and fewer business travelers.
- Nearly 666,000 CRUSA travelers rented a car, a 9% increase since 2010.
- CRUSA continues to exceed the national average in the propensity of its visitors to visit historic places, sightsee in cities, visit art galleries, museums and cultural/ heritage sites, visit small towns and national parks and tour the countryside.

### Canadian Growth

In 2011, Virginia enjoyed an increase of 10.6% in overnight visitation from Canadians and a 11.3% in spending\*.

Virginia ranks second regionally in Canadian visitation and third in spending.

#### Canadian visitation up in 2011 in Virginia

Overnight visits: 633,400  
(10.6% increase over 2010)

Total CDN dollars spent: \$148,057,588  
(11.3% increase over 2010)

## FY13 Marketing Plan

### Executive Summary

The Virginia Tourism Authority, doing business as the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), is a subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The primary role of VTC is to promote Virginia as a unique and premier travel destination to consumers and to stimulate visitation worldwide that will result in a positive impact for statewide tourism businesses and state and local tax coffers.

### The VTC mission statement:

**VTC is a highly productive, creative and dynamic organization blazing new paths in tourism and film marketing.**

The Virginia Tourism Corporation develops an annual strategic marketing plan focused on getting consumers to visit, stay longer and spend more money. Virginia has a strong and diverse tourism product and ranks eighth nationally in visitation. It is less than a day's drive for those living along the densely-populated eastern seaboard which makes it an easily accessible and affordable vacation and business destination.

Ninety-seven percent of all Virginia's tourism businesses are small and 75% of those listed on Virginia.org have an annual marketing budget of less than \$10,000.00. Tourism affects a wide range of large and small businesses that are found in virtually every part of the state and is a generator of much-needed instant revenue with an immediate impact that is felt every time a visitor spends money in the state. Consumers buy a destination when shopping for a vacation, not an individual business. Therefore, VTC marketing programs are vitally important; they are often the only practical means of advertising and marketing available to small tourism businesses and localities.

### The VTC Goals:

1. Become a valued resource for stakeholders
2. Exceed customer's expectations
3. Identify the best prospects for marketing based on the most immediate and highest return of expenditure
4. Continue to make Virginia is for Lovers ® relevant to today's consumer in order to inspire increased visitation to Virginia destinations
5. Engage industry partners in relevant cooperative marketing initiatives that strengthen the Virginia is for Lovers ® brand and leverage marketing funds to increase frequency and reach
6. Develop and promote authentic signature Virginia experiences for travelers
7. Promote niche markets, including but not limited to the growing wine industry, history and heritage, golf, music, outdoor adventure and small towns
8. Forecast travel trends of prospects for impact on Virginia destinations
9. Produce effective marketing campaigns that are tested annually for positive ROI
10. Increase assistance to small and medium-sized businesses and communities with tourism planning, development and marketing
11. Attract investment and development for rural communities where industrial commerce has closed
12. Develop a statewide tourism development plan comprised of regional development initiatives and branding
13. Position and market Virginia as a premier international tourism destination and welcome foreign guests to the commonwealth
14. Position and market Virginia as the top film location in the southeast for producers of movies, films, television shows and commercials





**Tourism Marketing is an investment for the state.**

VTC develops and implements strategies and tactics for Virginia's tourism industry to leverage their limited budgets so they can market their tourism assets more widely and effectively. For communities in economically-distressed areas, VTC is the only resource for marketing their tourism products on a national and international scale. VTC works in collaboration with Virginia's tourism industry to:

1. Strengthen Virginia's competitive position in national and international travel and tourism markets
2. Increase tourism market share and annual visitor spending in Virginia
3. Provide dynamic, innovative and research-based marketing programs that are cost-effective, performance-driven and provide a proven return-on- investment
4. Leverage funds at least 3:1 through cooperative marketing programs
5. Assist communities in tourism development, tourism planning and capital access
6. Prepare Virginia's tourism workforce for the future
7. Increase the number of television, video and film projects in Virginia



## FY12 in Review:

In 2010, Governor Bob McDonnell began to achieve his goal of doubling tourism's budget by the end of his term of office, by appropriating 3.6 million dollars in FY11 to tourism and film marketing which included \$1 million for the tourism marketing leverage program. The Governor also added \$2 million for the Governor's Motion Picture Opportunity for incentives for filming in Virginia. In 2012, the Governor added another \$500,000 to VTC's budget for FY13 to market Virginia as a travel destination.

The Governor's tourism goals are aggressive, consistent, performance-driven and listed below:

### Governor McDonnell's Tourism Goals

1. Double the funding for VTC by 2013
2. Encourage groups based in Virginia to stay in the Commonwealth for conventions, meetings, and vacations
3. Preserve another 400,000 acres of open space in Virginia, to continue to make the state the best place in America to hike, fish, and hunt and be in the great outdoors
4. Make Virginia the leading destination for America's commemoration of the 150th Commemoration of the Civil War and Emancipation
5. Promote Virginia as a leader in wine tourism – Increase the amount of funding dedicated to the Virginia Wine Board for marketing and research. Ensure that 5% of Wine Liter Tax revenues are used for promotion of the wine industry
6. Increase funding for the Governor's Motion Picture Fund by \$2 million
7. Immediately re-open Virginia's closed rest stops and welcome centers
8. Provide additional resources to allow localities and smaller tourism businesses the chance to participate in marketing programs they could not otherwise afford. Added resources will be used to promote whole regions as a destination market, rather than just specific venues, which better leverages our limited resources.
9. Enlist the help of key Virginia celebrities and film experts to be ambassadors to Hollywood and other film production locations to recruit film business to Virginia.
10. Convene a Tourism Summit – Improve focus on Virginia's treasures to help generate renewed interest in many key landmarks such as Jamestown, Mt. Vernon, the State Capitol, Ferry Farm, Luray Caverns, Montpelier, Monticello, Washington DC, and destinations such as Virginia Beach, Appalachian Trail, ski areas, and Virginia's lakes and rivers.
11. Use Virginia First – Require all executive branch agencies, institutions of higher education, board and commissions to recruit national and regional organizations to hold their conferences and conventions in Virginia.
12. Make Wallops Island the top commercial spaceport in America. Aggressively promote space tourism initiatives.





## Vision and Planning: Virginia State Tourism Plan

A result of Governor McDonnell's Economic Development and Jobs Creation Commission, Virginia's Statewide Tourism Plan (STP) was developed as a blueprint on how to make Virginia more competitive over the next five years in generating additional tourists through focused product development attractive to traveling parties.

More than 1,300 Virginia tourism industry stakeholders spent a year providing PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) with directional ideas and suggestions about how to best grow Virginia's tourism industry. PwC analyzed this input with research on Virginia visitors and prospective visitors, overall consumer travel trends, economic trends, and other research including a competitive analysis of surrounding and competing destinations.

The STP is comprised of two parts: Statewide Section highlighting overall recommendations and priorities and a Regional Section that examines Virginia's existing nine tourism regions and provides primary and secondary areas of focus for each region as well as suggested measures of success.

### The STP Tenets of Belief

There are three core components of STP that unite the recommendations and related actions and priorities. Everything in the plan is rooted in these three principles:

- **Authenticity:** Maintain character and personality and create new development in a sustainable manner.
- **Connectivity:** Develop clusters of new experiences (attractions) which complement and leverage current assets and enable "hub and spoke" experiences. This regional approach will allow Virginia to be more competitive in attracting and gaining visitors.
- **Visitor Experience:** Focus on the complete visitor experience by developing diverse product offerings in an effort to extend traditional visitor seasons. Leverage current strong assets of the Commonwealth, including cities and towns, history, nature and outdoor recreation, music and the arts, culinary, sports, group business, events, industry base, and commercial assets.

## Virginia's Vision Highlights

Virginia visitors spend \$55 million a day in Virginia. The industry is a significant economic engine for the Commonwealth and contributes greatly to Virginia residents' quality of life.

In February of 2013, the VTC commissioned a Quality of Life study which focused on Virginia residents' perception of tourism's impact on quality of life and economic development. The study concluded that overall, Virginia's residents have a positive view of the impact of tourism on economic development and the quality of life in their communities.

Specifically, the report seeing economic benefits such as jobs, income and tax revenues. They also believe that tourism can improve community well-being by providing better public facilities, better infrastructure and public transportation.

The Statewide Tourism Plan is designed to focus the industry and state-level tourism organizations to further grow and develop the tourism industry within the Commonwealth. Below are highlights of this plan's vision:

- Enhanced prominence as a world-class destination, delivering distinctive visitor experiences
- Generation of incremental economic development by leveraging rich natural beauty, recreational opportunities, historic and cultural assets, unique attractions, and other existing and new visitor experiences
- Growth and development of tourism realized while communities maintain their unique and valuable socio-cultural attributes, character, and sense of place
- Investment in assets to enhance, preserve, and support tourism in a sustainable and environmentally-sensitive manner for visitors and residents
- Emphasis on the visitor experience and focus on creating, promoting, and connecting diverse and authentic experiences in both urban and rural areas that attract increased numbers of visitors and spending across all demographics

## Five Focus Areas of the Plan

The Statewide Tourism Plan is built around five major outcomes, or categories. These outcomes apply to both regional and state level initiatives and include:

### 1. Product Development

Attractions stay relevant to the changes of activities and desires of today's travelers. Product development must be able to exceed expectations of today's domestic and international high-value visitors.

### 2. Pillars (Infrastructure)

Virginia's transportation infrastructure supports a quality visitor journey in all aspects of the travel throughout the Commonwealth.

### 3. Partnerships

Cooperation among various stakeholders is conducted on a regional basis to develop multi-level itineraries that will position Virginia as an attractive alternative for leisure and business trips.

### 4. Promotions

Internal communications will convert high-yield ambassadors for the importance of tourism in building diverse economies for Virginia's regions. External communications should focus on building brand relevancy to targeted out-of-state markets that produce the highest return on investment.

### 5. Policies

State and local governments will put into place policies that will build investment into communities through tourism development while also improving the quality of life for its residents.

Highlights of each outcome or category is below:

1. Product Development
2. Refresh history to be relevant, maintain authenticity and connecting to current-day experiences.
3. Hub & spoke approach to focus to increase visitor stay, spending and experience.
4. Regional highlights have specific Lures and Challenges identified.
5. Regional sections have primary and secondary focuses for product development.
6. Build upon many of the Governor's recommendations such as Wine, Agri-tourism, Aqua-tourism, Sports, Outdoor Recreation, and Space Tourism.

## The Benefits of Tourism Planning:

Virginia's tourism industry wanted a statewide tourism plan (with regional details) to better:

- Rise above the competition
- Understand and exceed travelers' expectations
- Optimize regional appeal for enhanced economic development
- Plan for future growth and sustainability of tourism industry for years to come

### Economic Benefits:

- Tourism generates local employment, both directly in the tourism sector and in various support and resources management sectors.
- Tourism stimulates profitable domestic industries – hotels and other lodging facilities, restaurants and other food services, transportation systems, handicrafts, and guide services.
- Tourism injects capital and new money into the local economy.
- Tourism diversifies the local economy, particularly in rural areas where agricultural employment may be sporadic or insufficient.
- Employment opportunities will be created in the business communities due to the influx of tourists who will need goods and services.
- Increased entrepreneurial opportunities will provide goods and services not already available in the community and create new tourist products.

### Social Benefits:

- The quality of life of a community can be enhanced by economic diversification through tourism, following the principles of sustainable development.
- Tourism creates recreational and cultural facilities that can be used by local communities as well as visitors.
- Public spaces may be developed and enhanced through tourism activity.
- Tourism enhances local community esteem and provides the opportunity for greater understanding and communication among peoples of diverse backgrounds.

### Cultural Benefits:

- Tourism can enhance local cultural awareness.
- Tourism can generate income to help pay for preservation of archaeological sites, historic buildings, and districts.

- The sharing of cultural knowledge and experience can be beneficial for both the locals and the visitors at tourist destinations, and could result in the revival of local traditions and crafts.

**Environmental Benefits:**

- Nature tourism encourages productive use of lands that are marginal for agriculture, enabling large tracts to remain covered in natural vegetation.
- Parks and nature preserves may be created, and ecological preservation supported as a necessity for nature-based tourism.
- Improved waste management can be achieved.
- Increased awareness and concern for the environment may develop.

## VTC's FY12 Marketing Performance:

The VTC marketing team is a national leader in domestic and internet marketing and is often ahead of the growing trends in social media and non-traditional marketing. During FY12, visitation to Virginia.org grew to more than 6.7 million unique visitors, setting a new all-time high for site visitation.

VTC works with Texas A&M annually and continually monitors the conversion of a Virginia.org visitor to an actual Virginia vacationer. Here are 3 key highlights that show the success of convincing visitors to Virginia.org to actually visit Virginia.

- 62.1% of visitors to the Virginia Web site can be claimed as converted visitors (net conversion) to the state of Virginia
- 34.0% of visitors stated that the website encouraged them to stay longer in the state of Virginia, for an average of 2.4 additional nights.
- When asked how the website affected their decision to travel to Virginia, 99.7% of visitors were persuaded (83.4% somewhat persuaded, and 16.3% extremely persuaded).

The Virginia is for Lovers ® Facebook page communicated with more than 225,000 fans while the @VisitVirginia Twitter account had more than 16,300 followers. The Virginia is for Lovers® Travel blog continues to reach a very large and growing audience, capturing 163,098 views in FY12 from 145 blog posts.

## FY12 Marketing Objectives and Results:

1. Continue to evolve the Virginia is for Lovers campaign and strengthen the brand. **Always!**
2. Leverage media buys at least 3:1 and increase industry participation by 5%. **Achieved!**
3. Increase the number of unique visitors to Virginia.org by 3% or to 6.5 million. **Exceeded!**  
Unique Visitors to Virginia.org: 6,781,650 and online guides generated 51,708 views

4. Increase consumer engagement through social media by 20%: **Exceeded!**
  - Facebook Likes – 45% increase. 71,263 new likes
  - Twitter - @VisitVirginia – 72% increase. 6,883 new followers
5. Establish engagement benchmarks and performance metrics for VTC social media platforms. **Complete!**
  - YouTube – 540,841 video views
  - Facebook Stories – 255,133 stories created from page posts
  - Twitter Retweets and Mentions – 4,428
6. Generate \$9 million in domestic earned media. **Exceeded!**  
Earned Media: \$9.3 million  
Circulation: 43 million  
Placements: 4,139  
Media contacts: 1,873  
Media leads to industry partners: 162  
Visiting media: 53  
References to Virginia.org: 1,134
7. Generate 75,000 incremental leads through promotions and sweepstakes. **Exceeded!**  
Generated 103,289 leads and 36,000 opt ins, exceeding the goal by 37%.
8. Increase 21,157 domestic sales leads by 5% to 22,215 leads and distribute to Virginia's tourism industry. **Exceeded!** Exceeded goal by 41%, distributed 29,782 sales leads to the industry.
9. Generate \$10 million in international earned media. Results: **Exceeded!**  
Generated \$15 million
10. Increase international visitation from Canada and target overseas markets by 2% . **Exceeded!**  
Increased visitation by 10.6%
11. Produce a minimum of \$500,000 in Canadian earned media: **Exceeded!**  
Canada: FY12 total is \$652,497.00 a 30% increase.

12. Assist Virginia's tourism industry by providing outreach and access to research, grants, business and entrepreneurial development, trail development, attraction and community planning, work force training, customer service training, education about VTC marketing services and benefits that help them attract visitors, local community help desks, wired sessions, brain exchanges and tourism vision plans. **Achieved!**
14. Develop a statewide tourism plan. **Achieved!**
15. Increase the number of contacts with producers, script writers, production companies, and studios by 5% annually to encourage film production in Virginia. **Achieved!**



## FY13 Strategic Marketing Plan

All VTC marketing programs are research based and work to drive our best prospects to Virginia.org to plan and book their next vacation to Virginia. All VTC marketing segments work together to deliver the right message to the right target to convince them to vacation in Virginia.

### Marketing Research:

All VTC marketing decisions are based on sound research derived from the following sources:

1. Current travel trends
2. Virginia Traveler Profile
3. Quarterly Attitudinal Study
4. Virginia is for Lovers brand equity/relevance monitoring
5. Pre and post creative testing for each campaign or promotion
6. Pre and post broadcast awareness testing
7. Consumer sentiment for all marketing initiatives, especially social media
8. Marketing effectiveness study

VTC sets standard performance measurements for every marketing program and campaign, including but not limited to, the following:

- Leverages all marketing funds at least 3:1 and provides at least a 5:1 ROI
- # of unique visitors to Virginia.org
- # of Referrals to partner sites from Virginia.org
- # of referrals to Virginia.org from online marketing partners
- # database opt-ins
- \$ of earned media
- # of sweepstakes entries
- # of leads generated
- Conversion of inquiries
- # of re-tweets
- Facebook performance and engagement metrics (likes, shares, fans, comments, referrals, etc.)

### Consumer Travel Trend Outlook

VTC continually and consistently monitors consumer travel trends and responds with appropriate marketing strategies. The outlook for travel is optimistic. Some of the current consumer travel trends include:

1. “Hub and Spoke” concept. Nine in ten travelers visit more than one destination on a trip.

2. Travelers plan and think in hours and not in miles.
3. Discounts are imperative. Consumers are looking for packages and deals and know they can get them. 60% say “I look for a deal or travel discount.”
4. Consumers are placing a premium on experiences that will provide great memories.
5. Consumers want to learn something on their vacation and share the secrets and discoveries they experience with family and friends.

### Why do people travel?

73% agree “Life has become too complicated.”

76% agree “I need new ways to reduce my stress.”

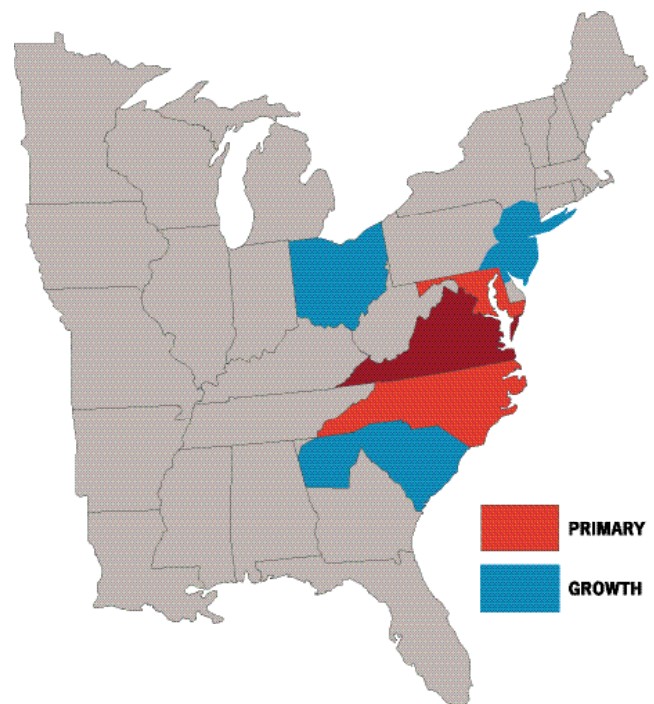
Consumers want time to catch their breath and reconnect with loved ones, especially children.

86% agree travel increases their level of happiness and provides positive feelings.

82% say travel builds or strengthens their relationship with family and friends

Consumers like to take many weekend getaways.

A map showing Virginia’s geographic target markets and detailed profiles for Virginia’s primary, growth, and sustaining audiences follows:





### **Primary Audience**

#### Origin Markets:

Washington, DC  
Baltimore  
North Carolina  
Virginia

#### Demographics:

30 – 50 years old  
Traveling with children (7 – 18 years old)

#### Trip Type:

Short getaway / extended weekend  
Year-round with emphasis on spring and summer for families and fall for couples  
Drive market

#### Message:

Virginia is the best place to take a short, relaxing trip with your family. Beautiful scenery, outdoor recreation, beaches, theme parks and historic and cultural sites offer a variety of activity to keep the entire family entertained year after year.

### **Growth Audience**

#### Origin Markets:

Philadelphia  
New York City  
South Carolina  
Ohio  
Atlanta

#### Demographics:

35 – 55 years old  
Traveling with children (7 – 18 years old)

#### Trip Type:

Extended weekend /traditional week-long vacation  
Year-round with emphasis on spring and summer for families and Fall for couples

#### Message:

Virginia is the best place to take a relaxing trip with your family. Beautiful scenery, outdoor recreation, beaches, theme parks and historic and cultural sites offer a variety of activity to keep the entire family entertained year after year.

### **Sustaining Audience**

#### Primary and Secondary Markets:

#### Demographics:

35 – 55 years old  
Bachelor's degree or higher  
Couples

#### Trip Type:

Short getaway / extended weekend  
Year-round with emphasis on increasing spending in fall

### **The Role of the Female head of household:**

While the primary information-gatherer and trip-booker is the female head of household, she takes into consideration the input from all in the family travel party and discusses the options and ideas with her partner. She is the one making the vacation destination short list and presenting the options to the group. Once the travel party arrives at a decision, she makes the majority of the travel plans including researching all trip options. The female head of household therefore remains the primary person with whom the marketing needs to connect emotionally. She has to become aware of Virginia when thinking about future travel, connect while in the planning stage of the vacation and she must see a connection that the Virginia travel experience will appeal to the vacation desires of all in the family/travel party.

### **Travel Planning:**

Most people plan shorter trips to Virginia two weeks to two months in advance. Therefore speed to market is important. Travelers must be able to easily find information about their trip up until the time they are ready to travel and should be encouraged to choose Virginia throughout the peak travel season. And, many look for deals and discounts when planning and booking their trip and while actually on the trip -- especially when it comes to filling in their itineraries with attractions and events. Today's traveler is looking for a good value while they focus on findings a destination (and activities at the destination) that will help them reconnect and catch their breath with those they love. We must constantly be in front of consumers as Virginia is becoming a year-round destination.

More than 90% of consumers use the internet when planning and gathering information for travel. They look for inspiration from online sources from search engines to specific user-generated sites like Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Yelp and TripAdvisor. Consumers are inundated daily with information. Communication needs to be powerful and engaging.

**Traveler Attitudes:**

In FY12, VTC commissioned quarterly studies to examine the attributes most desired in a leisure destination. Studies can be found on [www.vatc.org/research](http://www.vatc.org/research). In addition, VTC has an active online research community comprised of travelers in our key markets. These consumers help keep our research on the cutting-edge for trends and traveler needs and desires.

**Top line findings include:**

- Virginia's identity as a travel destination is strongly tied to its history
- Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina have similar attributes so the marketing needs to differentiate
- Virginia is recognized for offering 6 of the top 10 ideal vacation attributes
- Relaxing means different things to different people and varies by niche
- Virginia needs to show that it is an exciting destination
- It is important to stay on top of ever-changing travel trends and have a sense of speed to market place
- Expectations for future travel are up
- Secondary trips are shorter, cheaper and closer to home
- Virginia is for Lovers enjoys high awareness, but isn't always understood. Marketing must increase awareness of Virginia's culinary offerings, arts and outdoor recreation
- Virginia's regions are unique, with many perceived as having big offerings in outdoor recreation

The messages we deliver to our primary, growth, and sustaining markets are important and changing. VTC marketing works to entice people to enjoy a relaxing vacation in Virginia and focuses on key drivers. All VTC messages strive to provide a relevant, emotional connection that engages the target audience and causes them to learn more and book a Virginia vacation. We have to make the connection between what is most important to visitors and what Virginia delivers best. And we have to choose appealing, compelling words and imagery that speaks to multiple generations. We test these words and images with our consumers on a regular basis to ensure what is on [Virginia.org](http://Virginia.org) and what we recommend to industry partners is aligned with consumer desires.

**What is important to visitors overall:**

Good place to relax  
 Warm, sunny beaches  
 Warm, friendly people  
 Great for scenic drive  
 Great for walking/strolling around  
 Not too crowded  
 Interesting small towns and villages

**What Virginia offers:**

Great for scenic drives  
 Noted for colonial history  
 Noted for Civil War historic sites  
 Interesting small towns and villages  
 Good place to relax  
 Warm, sunny beaches  
 Beautiful parks and gardens

**Baby Boomers**

76 million

Born 1946 to 1964

Formative years: 1956 to 1974

Age in 2012: 48 to 66

Seventy-six million Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964, an age of prosperity and boundless potential that made them optimists by nature. Boomers have a powerful work ethic, yet their sense of entitlement to the good life made them big borrowers and poor savers. They are at a stage of life where it is less about acquiring more stuff and more about enriching life's experiences.

**Generation X**

65 million

Born 1965-1982

Formative years: 1975 to 1990

Age in 2012: 30 to 47

The 65 million members of Generation X grew up during a period of social and economic disruption. Suffering the fallout from soaring divorce rates, single parents and working mothers, they became self-reliant and skeptical. Their independence and autonomy means they like to manage their lives themselves, using new media and technology to learn about, and plan and share travel experiences.

## **Current Consumer Media Consumption Trends:**

### **Newspaper**

- Most big newspapers saw their circulations decline in 2012 and will continue to fall in 2013
- Digital news sites have gained momentum
- Sunday papers still have a following and some newspapers have found marketing opportunities with Sunday-only subscriptions
- Pew Research Center indicates 72% of adults are quite attached to following local news, with local newspapers the source they rely on most for local information
- Those who read local news in a print format prefer doing so because it is a relaxing and satisfying experience

### **Magazines**

- Relevancy of print will remain a concern as information is instantly available online and accessed through mobile and read on tablets.
- The shift of consumer habits away from impulse buys has likely been a contributing factor to decline in newsstand sales
- Digital publishing is still finding its place
- 75% of consumers feel that digital content complements print
- There has been growth and movement in 2012 as publishers have been looking for new revenue streams and approaches.

### **Radio**

- Radio listeners are on the rise, mainly facilitated in part by the proliferation of mobile devices with Internet connectivity
- Ad awareness remains strong with 58% of digital audio listeners indicating they have recalled having seen or heard an Internet radio ad in the last month, up from 52% in 2011.
- Among listeners who recalled ads, 44% said they responded to an Internet radio ad, up from 40% in 2011.
- Broadcast radio reaches 93% of the total U.S. population per week
- Internet radio has penetrated to 42% of adult U.S. broadband households, up 8% from 2011
- 87% online radio listeners also listen to over-the-air radio

### **Television**

- Netflix, iTunes, Hulu, DVRs, and other platforms have added 25% more TV viewing to our lives
- Netflix subscribers alone watched more than 1 billion hours of online video in June 2012, mainly due to easy access to high speed internet and mobile use
- Americans spend more than 33 hours per week watching video across screens
- Nielsen has indicated primetime cable TV viewership was a staggering 70% by Q2 2012
- Broadcast viewership is continuing to descend with 46% of all nightly GRPs as of Q2 2012. Nielsen projects broadcast to drop to 30% share of primetime by the end of 2012
- Time shifting, mobile/tablet streaming and online video now account for 1/4th of all total monthly video consumption
- TV has become “more of a creative and cultural force than it’s ever been,” thanks to the proliferation of cable TV networks and the resulting viewer fragmentation
- The Leichtman Research Group has found that video is increasingly being watched on different platforms and different places, yet these emerging video services generally act as complements to traditional television rather than as substitutes

### **Interactive**

- Google sites remain the most visited web property in the US, while Facebook continues lead in engagement
- While time spent using web-based email is declining for younger generations, time for adults 25-44 remains flat and for adults 45-54 it has risen
- 83.5% of internet users now watching video online at an average of over 20 hours per month
- The web has slowly transformed from an information-seeking medium to one that is more oriented toward entertainment and leisure content.

### **Mobile**

- More than half of US mobile users will have a smartphone by the end of next year
- 33.5 million mobile phone owners now watch video on their phone, up 35.7% since 2011
- An estimated 16 million Americans will book travel via mobile this year, up from 12 million in 2011

- The highest smartphone penetration rate in the US is among adults ages 25 to 55, whereas for general mobile phone users the age bracket skews a bit younger, ages 18 to 44, because people under the age of 25 are less able to afford higher-priced phones.
- However, eMarketer expects declining prices, along with increased integration of smartphone functionality into daily life, to drive smartphone ownership among teenagers up to 50% by 2014.
- While mobile phones won't replace other screens anytime soon, they are part of the ever-increasing medium in which consumers consume content.
- Significantly more mobile users will research, but not necessarily purchase, travel on their phones throughout the forecast period: 37.8 million this year, rising to 74.3 million by 2016.
- Growth in SmartPhones and their ability to provide instant gratification is leading to rising content consumption, providing more touch points for marketers.

#### **Out of Home**

- Consumers feel more positive when exposed to OOH advertising
- 41% of global online consumers trust pre-movie cinema messages
- Digital OOH opportunities continue to grow, as well as associated measurement capabilities

#### **Social Media**

- 79% of internet users in the U.S. use social networking sites, a 26% growth from two years ago
- Social media is gaining ground on a trend called "Life Tracking." We will continue to see a rise in "checking-ins" and other forms of tracking as consumer data becomes more commercialized
- Twitter reaches 1 in 10 internet users worldwide with a 59% growth between 2010 and 2011
- Pinterest has moved into the #3 spot behind Facebook and Twitter
- 700 YouTube videos are shared every minute on Twitter
- Google+ is still struggling for relevance

## **FY13 Marketing Objectives, Strategies and Tactics:**

### **Research**

VTC believes research should serve as the foundation for key marketing and partnership outreach programs. To best serve the key audiences, VTC Research must stay informed, relevant and able to effectively interpret research for staff, industry, and all other partners. At the base of VTC's research program, we must include a range of tourism-related studies designed to gather relevant data, and interpret it for internal and external audiences. These include:

- Estimating the economic contribution of tourism (including jobs!) for the commonwealth, regions and localities
- Measuring and analyzing VTC's advertising and marketing campaigns (before and after they run)
- Analyzing the impact of VTC's programs and departments
- Developing current visitor profiles to best understand who comes today, what they do, how long they stay, and what they were exposed to along the way
- Understanding the ideal Virginia visitor and how we can best target and communicate with them
- Determining why prospective visitors (and the secondary opportunity) choose other destinations
- Interpreting national travel data and trends for Virginia
- Monitoring the international travel market to best understand who Virginia and the Capital Region USA should target
- Educating the industry about key research and how to use it to their benefit

#### **VTC Research Goals**

- Collect relevant and meaningful information to keep Virginia attractive and competitive
- Interpret the data to go beyond "survey says" to recommend strategic solutions
- Package the information in a concise and action-oriented manner
- Share (and educate) with key audiences in applicable and timely way
- Follow-up to ensure research is being used correctly and in the best way to enhance a project, program or partner

**Contact:** Elizabeth McLaughlin,  
Vice President-Research

Online resources: [www.vatc.org/research](http://www.vatc.org/research)

### **Advertising and Promotions**

#### **Goals:**

1. Influence the Virginia tourism audience to consider Virginia as a travel destination
2. Effectively reach the Virginia tourism audience as defined by research
3. Increase Virginia tourism share of voice in the mid-Atlantic competitive set of state travel DMOs
4. Integrate media plan with Electronic Marketing, Public Relations, Trade, International and Partnership Marketing departments

#### **Department Objectives:**

1. Increase interactive spend by 25% to reflect media consumption habits
2. Increase number of buy downs by 97% to address current budgetary constraints due to economy
3. Grow industry partner participation by 10%
4. Continue to leverage 3:1 total industry value versus VTC spend
5. Generate 75,000 incremental leads as a result of promotions and sweepstakes

#### **Strategies:**

1. Continue to manage and promote industry participation in the VTC 18-month media advertising plan
2. Contribute to overall VTC lead generation goals, through print advertising, sweepstakes, web traffic and eGuide downloads by delivering effective interactive and media elements to 18-month plan
3. Manage the evolution of the VIFL brand through new ad campaign development and implementation
4. Build on the success of print and interactive campaigns by testing new media vehicles
5. Provide opportunities to Virginia's tourism industry to leverage commercial media buying opportunities at lower rates through volume negotiation
6. Continue to identify growth markets and specific target audiences
7. Monitor and analyze media performance metrics to insure campaigns are performing according to established goals
9. Insure consistency in messaging in all aspects of advertising ranging from creative units to advertorial and imagery
10. Collaborate with VTC Creative Services team and agency of record to produce ads, collateral and support materials for VTC initiatives and campaigns

11. Develop promotions that extend the brand message and generate leads and opt-ins
12. Develop consumer promotions that integrate the brand, product, electronic marketing, public relations and advertising to maximize awareness, leads and consumer participation

**Tactics:**

1. Make 18-month media plan accessible on vatc.org and update regularly and as needed
2. Participate in joint marketing with state media organizations including but not limited to the Virginia Association of Broadcasters and the Outdoor Advertising Association of Virginia for in-state advertising campaign
3. Collaborate and manage the development and production of the fall marketing campaign with additional appropriated funds
5. Collaborate with Electronic Marketing, Public Relations, Sales, Promotions, Creative Services and Partnership Marketing to extend the VIFL brand through online, print, broadcast and earned media campaigns
6. Review and respond to all promotional and sponsorship proposals
7. Develop, implement and evaluate effectiveness of approved promotions
8. Develop an annual thematic calendar outlining promotional activities
4. Negotiate added-value, exposure, logo placement and links
5. Provide talking points for media and approve copy and signage that extend and support the brand
6. Secure prizes for each promotion
7. Provide leads to participating industry partners
8. Educate the industry at VA-1, Help Desks and other outreach outlets about the value of promotions and secure participation
9. Evaluate the ROI and success of each promotion

**Contact:** Thad Smith,  
 Director of Advertising  
 Online resources: [www.vatc.org/advertising](http://www.vatc.org/advertising)

## Electronic Marketing

**Department Objectives:**

1. Exceed 6.5 million unique visitors to Virginia.org
2. Assist 1,500 tourism industry partners by helping to manage their content on Virginia.org
3. Collect 100,000 new email addresses for the Virginia eNewsletter database
4. Design and launch a new web site for the Virginia Travel Industry to connect them with marketing opportunities, workshops and research information
5. Reach 70,000 visits to the newly designed VATC.org website
6. Produce three (3) webinars that deliver best practices in online marketing and training opportunities for Virginia.org
7. Increase the number of fans to the VIFL Facebook page by an additional 50,000 fans
8. Manage ten (10) distinct Search Engine Marketing (SEO) campaigns

**Strategies/Tactics:**

1. Provide training and assistance to Virginia's tourism industry by assisting in adding and maintaining tourism-related listings on Virginia.org
2. Develop robust online content (Virginia Experiences, Monthly Articles, and Unique Opportunities) to keep prospects and consumers engaged
3. Cultivate CRM database opportunities to increase consumer loyalty and buy-in
4. 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
5. Work closely with all VTC divisions to ensure campaign promises are delivered and featured on Virginia.org
6. Develop, maintain and grow additional revenue-generating programs with the assistance of key industry partners
7. Evaluate existing eCRM programs and research and implement strategies to improve these programs
8. Determine the effectiveness of existing Social Media policies and tactics and refine underperforming and introduce new programs and strategies
9. Meet with key industry stakeholders and industry professionals to better understand their needs from Virginia Tourism and develop communication tactics
10. Communicate daily with consumers and industry partners via social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn



11. Monitor and report Web traffic weekly utilizing Web site analytics software and online research utilities to develop and refine tactics to respond to trends and key travel interests
12. Produce and distribute monthly consumer eNewsletter, specialized consumer emails and monthly industry Dashboard
13. Conduct Web site effectiveness studies for Virginia.org and review online strategies of key competition and best of breed DMO's
14. Continue to upgrade Virginia.org with interactive components, advanced mapping technologies and improved trip planner functionality to ensure the site remains competitive, consumer-friendly and easy to use
15. Develop, maintain and provide regular updates to Virginia.org, VATC.org, group, sports marketing and meeting planner Web sites
16. Work with Public Relations to maintain and manage the online press room
17. Maintain, manage search engine marketing, content development, rss feeds, Web partner marketing services, domain registration, and renewal, hosting and maintenance services
18. Attend educational meetings and conferences in order to survey the competition and learn competitive best practices
19. Feature Virginia Getaways, travel ideas, travel packages, deals and discounts, promotions on Virginia.org, through social media channels and in eCRM efforts
20. Manage Meetings and Convention web site on Virginia.org
21. Provide 24/7 central location for Virginia tourism partners to access information on VTC services and marketing opportunities
22. Manage the Virginia.org search engine optimization plan by developing Web content, tags, key words, pages and links
23. Improve visibility, rank, frequency and relevance in the organic listings of search engines and directories by utilizing sitemaps and other technologies
24. Enhance the existing mobile versions of Virginia.org to make these sites friendlier to consumers using mobile devices

**Contact:** Dave Neudeck,  
 Director of Electronic Marketing  
 Online resources: [www.vatc.org/emarketing](http://www.vatc.org/emarketing)

## **Public Relations**

Public Relations works to increase tourism in Virginia, as part of VTC's integrated marketing efforts, with powerful public relations strategies that build buzz about Virginia's tourism destinations in traditional and social media outlets.

### **Department Objectives:**

1. Generate \$9 million in earned media
2. Host 50 visiting travel writers/bloggers
3. Increase media outreach to top market outlets by 7%
4. Increase media leads to industry partners from 250 to 300
5. Generate 1,200 media references to Virginia.org
6. Provide images to a minimum of 200 media outlets

### **Strategies/Tactics:**

1. Focus pitches on travel experiences that Virginia delivers best and connects with Virginia's key audience in target markets
2. Integrate social media into all public relations outreach, including social media sites to share news stories with key media
3. Build Twitter following of quality media outlets, writers and bloggers who will raise positive awareness about Virginia travel destinations
4. Research the top websites and bloggers who cover travel, green, wine, family and women's interests to build relationships to increase coverage of Virginia tourism stories
5. Increase outreach to top bloggers
6. Maximize the VTC pressroom to give bloggers and writers easier access to the resources they need to cover Virginia
7. Incorporate social media features into news releases and all press materials
8. Conduct media tours with top producing journalists to promote tourism experiences that set Virginia apart from the competition
9. Work with local partners across the state to assist in their invitations to national and in-state journalists
10. Pitch and set up individual visits for qualified journalists in key target markets
11. Continually update and upgrade photography and video available for journalists
12. Conduct quarterly media calls in key markets including but not limited to New York and D.C.

**Contact:** Richard Lewis,  
 Interim Director of Public Relations  
 Online resource: [www.vatc.org/pr](http://www.vatc.org/pr)

## **Creative Services**

VTC's graphics/photography department is the in-house creative agency and provides creative and collateral assistance to support the VIFL brand and campaign

### **Department Objectives:**

1. Manage a complex design program of approximately 250 projects a year that support VTC's tourism marketing objectives, the Virginia Film Office programs and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) projects
2. Provide Virginia's tourism industry with brand tool kit support and assistance upon request (approximately 50 requests annually)
3. Create an annual Virginia Travel Guide that is self-sustained by advertising and produce 600,000 copies in print and unlimited copies available online via Virginia.org
4. Provide and implement art direction on Virginia Travel Guide, Meetings Planning Guide and Tour Planning Guide
5. Determine through research if the guides help visitors with decision to travel to Virginia and participate in specific activities and whether the guides are beneficial for travel planning and extending length of stay
6. Increase image database, based on current research, to support all VTC publications, public relations and electronic marketing programs
7. Develop at least 25 photo shoots for VTC
8. Develop 15 video shoots to increase B-roll data base
9. Provide graphic support to the Office of the Secretary of Commerce and Trade as needed

### **Strategies:**

1. Ensure brand standards and cohesion in all graphic design projects
2. Ensure highest standard of imagery in all design projects
3. Support all VTC and VEDP divisions with creative, collateral materials and generic graphic services
4. Work with VTC advertising director and advertising agency of record to plan and create effective collateral materials in-house
5. Provide graphic direction, assistance and insure quality control for all VTC in-house creative projects
6. Work with Leisure Publishing to produce guides

7. Work with Director of Public Relations at VTC to coordinate editorial content for Travel Guide
8. Provide creative direction for all VTC publications (Travel Guide, Meetings Planning Guide, and Tour Planning Guide) and produce visually appealing and effective content that supports the brand and campaign
9. Ensure that each guide has a companion online version
10. Develop and implement a yearly photography plan
11. Develop and manage a corps of contract photographers and photography interns

### **Tactics:**

1. Provide brand standard and VIFL logo and image support to tourism industry partners upon request
2. Maintain and update VTC image library database
3. Manage to insure quality and diverse imagery that supports the brand and the campaign
4. Develop new photography shoots that support research, public relations and advertising
  - a. Increase images representing Small Town/Main Street across the state by 50 images
  - b. Increase images with families enjoying the outdoors by 50 images
5. Work with industry partners on shared photography shoots

**Contact:** Cheryl Exley,

Director of Creative Services

Online resources: [www.vatc.org/advertising](http://www.vatc.org/advertising)

## **Domestic Sales**

### **Department Objectives:**

1. Increase distribution of domestic sales leads by 5% to the Virginia tourism industry to generate new business and economic development, resulting from participation at national and regional industry trade shows for group travel, meetings and conventions and sports trade markets.
2. Rebrand Sports Virginia marketing to increase the number of visits to the trade website by 5%.
3. Secure five new sales and marketing opportunities to leverage with industry partners to showcase Virginia as a premier destination.
4. Initiate, develop, produce partnership opportunities with Virginia industry and distribute 5,000 of the 2014 Virginia Tour Planning Guides and 5,000 of the 2014-15 Virginia Meeting Planning Guides fulfillment publication.

**Strategies:**

1. Acquire and implement a new sales database to better plan, direct, and manage domestic sales and marketing initiatives, projects and special events with the Virginia hospitality and travel industry.
2. Engage tourism industry to increase Virginia's brand and marketing message through the power of partnership by providing sales and marketing opportunities with Domestic Sales staff at select targeted industry trade shows.

**Tactics:**

1. Acquire, and manage a new database to provide innovative communication regularly and effectively through electronic marketing and direct contact for domestic packaged travel buyers, tour operators, AAA Clubs, meeting and convention planners and sports event rights holders.
2. Update the relevance of the domestic group website, [Virginia.org/groups](http://Virginia.org/groups), to effectively market statewide tour product integrating with current LOVE campaign. Encourage the industry to provide their suggested tours online to be utilized in the production of the 2014 Virginia Tour Planning Guide to further promote and actualize new group tour business.
3. Update the relevance of the meetings website, [Virginia.org/meetings](http://Virginia.org/meetings), to effectively market the Virginia meetings and convention industry utilizing the recently branded Virginia Declaration of Meeting Excellence.
4. Update and redesign the Sports Virginia website, [SportsVirginia.org](http://SportsVirginia.org), to integrate Virginia sports venues, information and message with new rebranding.
5. Represent the Virginia travel and tour industry and secure Virginia industry participation at select national and regional group tour and AAA trade shows, including development of supportive marketing and promotional collateral. Secure Virginia travel industry participation when applicable by leveraging funds for industry partnerships to showcase Virginia at Student & Youth Travel Association Convention, Virginia & North Carolina Motorcoach Association Conference, AAA Carolinas Superbowl, American Bus Association Convention, National Tour Association Convention, Bank Travel Conference, Travel South Showcase and Travel Alliance Partners Conference.

6. Represent the Virginia meetings and convention industry and secure Virginia industry participation by leveraging funds for partnerships to exhibit and showcase Virginia at national, regional and conventions industry trade shows, including development of supportive marketing and promotional collateral. Secure Virginia travel industry participation when applicable by leveraging funds for industry partnerships to showcase Virginia at: Fraternity Executives Association Annual Meeting, CONNECT Marketplace, HSMIA's MEET National, Virginia Society of Association Executives Fall Educational Symposium & Expo, Holiday Showcase, Religious Conference Management Association World Conference & Exposition, Collaborate Marketplace and Society of Government Meeting Professionals Educational Conference.
7. Represent the Virginia sports events industry and secure Virginia industry participation by leveraging funds for partnerships to exhibit and showcase Virginia at national sports industry trade shows and sales missions, including development of supportive marketing and promotional collateral. Secure Virginia travel industry participation when applicable by leveraging funds for industry partnerships to showcase Virginia at: TEAMS Conference and Expo (Travel, Events and Management in Sports), National Association of Sports Commission Symposium, Olympic SportsLink and sales mission(s).
8. Produce and distribute Sales Lead Reports to the Virginia travel industry for their sales action to generate new bookings resulting from VTC's participation at the domestic group travel, meetings and conventions and sports trade shows noted above and in Marketing Calendar on [www.VATC.org](http://www.VATC.org).
9. Redesign, produce and distribute 5,000 of the 2014 Virginia Tour Planning Guide, companion piece to the 2014 Virginia Travel Guide, utilizing tour product on [Virginia.org/groups](http://Virginia.org/groups) and provide opportunities for Virginia travel industry to advertise and be visible in the sole VTC fulfillment for packaged travel trade shows, database, trade show leads, 800# requests and website solicitations.
10. Redesign, produce 10,000 and distribute 5,000 each calendar year of the 2014-15 Virginia Meeting Planning Guide, as the sole VTC fulfillment for the meetings and convention trade shows, database, trade show leads, 800# requests and website solicitations.

11. Provide inside sales and customer service follow up to secure new leads for distribution to the Virginia industry, resulting from cooperative advertising in trade publications, added-value e-blasts or online website listings. Encourage industry to partner with VTC to achieve a greater impact that results in qualified leads through trade advertising, co-ops and special VTC added-value opportunities for domestic travel, meeting and sports marketing professionals.
12. Provide an educational training workshop in addition to one-on-one sales and marketing education for Virginia hospitality communities through the VTC Help Desk Program, representing our three domestic trade markets and provide through our outreach as follows:
  - a. sales lead reports of interested buyers, for industry action
  - b. domestic sales is an extension of the industry's sales efforts
  - c. opportunities to promote industry on Virginia.org three trade websites
  - d. current domestic marketing opportunities and initiatives noted on Marketing Calendar of trade shows
  - e. call to actions and industry updates on Vtc.org
  - f. visibility in our Virginia Tour Planning Guide and Virginia Meeting Planning Guide fulfillment publications
13. Partner with the Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus and Virginia Green Advisory Marketing Committee as applicable on initiatives to market Virginia as a premier destination to the group travel trade, meetings and sports markets.
14. Partner with Virginia tourism industry to leverage funds and showcase Virginia as a premier destination by sponsoring select qualified domestic regional familiarization tours for the AAA-consumer and cruise markets, packaged travel, meetings and conventions and sports event markets.
15. Partner with Virginia Welcome Center staff to represent the domestic sales team at AAA Travel Shows and select trade shows as they arise.
16. Maintain VTC memberships in key professional packaged travel, meetings and conventions and sports marketing organizations, as noted on Vtc.org/domestic sales and participate in sales and marketing trade shows that provide relevant face time with member trade buyers.

17. Research innovative marketing initiatives, trends and social marketing to prospect for ROI developments, new clients and stay up to date with industry trends.

**Contact:** Carol Torricelli,  
Director of Sales

Online resources: [www.vatc.org/marketing](http://www.vatc.org/marketing)

## **International Marketing**

International marketing has been growing at a significantly faster rate than domestic U.S. tourism over the past two decades. The international market remains a great source for visitors to the Commonwealth with Washington Dulles International Airport making its home in Chantilly, Virginia.

Primary Markets: Canada, United Kingdom, Germany  
Secondary Markets: Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Latin America (Brazil and Mexico)  
Emerging Markets: China, South Korea

### **Objectives: Canada**

1. Increase visitation from Canada by three (3) percent
2. Conduct a minimum of 30 sales and follow up calls to third party sellers in the territories of Quebec and Ontario
3. Conduct a minimum of six (6) Canadian site inspection tours
4. Leverage the promotions and advertising budgets by 75% percent annually through effective Canadian marketing partnerships
5. Increase inquiries from consumer promotions in Ontario and Quebec by 6% percent annually
6. Implement five multi-media grand promotions in the territories of Quebec and Ontario
7. Achieve a minimum of 60 story placements in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario highlighting the Virginia tourism product
8. Produce a minimum of \$500,000 in Canadian earned media
9. Develop and execute a Canadian sales mission in the provinces of Ontario & Quebec targeting a minimum of five Virginia suppliers
10. Maintain and promote a French Facebook site
11. Update and reprint a French consumer travel guide
12. Participate in a minimum of 11 trade/consumer shows in the provinces of Ontario & Quebec
13. Conduct a minimum of 9 travel trade training seminars in the provinces of Ontario & Quebec

14. Conduct a minimum of 3 travel trade webinars in the provinces of Ontario & Quebec

### **Overseas Marketing**

Capital Region USA (CRUSA) is the official regional destination marketing organization promoting Washington, DC, Virginia and Maryland internationally, in partnership with Destination DC, the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Maryland Office of Tourism Development and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

The partnership recognizes that travelers from overseas visit multiple destinations, stay longer and spend considerably more than domestic visitors. By working together, the partners have created a regional destination that is more compelling to the overseas visitor and mirrors their vacation patterns.

### **FY13 Objectives:**

1. Leverage CRUSA budget by 65% through marketing partnerships
2. Leverage funds at least 6:1 by partnering with Maryland, Washington, D.C., the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and other new relevant partners (travel industry and non-traditional) who can bring dollars or other resources to the organization
3. Create and implement integrated marketing strategies that are innovative and leading edge that advance the CRUSA brand and attract funding. Ensure that geographic targets are synchronized with available air service to CRUSA gateway airports
4. Ensure that all trade marketing efforts provide an opportunity to deliver CRUSA brand messages to the consumer to drive room nights and increase length of stay. Cooperative marketing activities must result in a 1:1 or 2:1 match of CRUSA funds
5. Generate an earned media value of at least \$12 million from public relations activities
6. Enhance and maintain an interactive website in eight languages and a robust search engine marketing campaign that supports the brand, reaches at least 230,000 unique visitors by 2017 and will become CRUSA's primary marketing tool
7. Commit to digital marketing initiatives to push the brand to the international consumer. Develop a database of at least 100,000 opt-in consumers across all languages by 2017 and deploy emails to the database at regular intervals

8. Strengthen research tools to better understand the CRUSA customer, assess the economic impact of overseas arrivals to the region and to measure and evaluate CRUSA marketing programs
9. Influence the consumer directly through integrated print and digital marketing initiatives, tour operator co-ops, scenic byways campaigns and public relations activities
10. Establish strategies and commitment that ensure sound governance structure and long range organizational leadership ability

For additional information on Capital Region USA please click here: [www.capitalregionusa.org/Partners](http://www.capitalregionusa.org/Partners)

**Contact:** Heidi Johannesen,

Director of International Marketing

Online resources: [www.vatc.org/marketing/international.asp](http://www.vatc.org/marketing/international.asp)



## Consumer Services

Consumer Services includes eleven Virginia Welcome Centers responsible for assisting more than 2 million visitors annually. A team of professional travel counselors generate additional travel revenue through one-on-one visitor assistance, on-site reservation service and brochure distribution. In addition, our Consumer Services Center (CSC) responds to inquiries, (24/7), received via telephone, live assistance on [virginia.org](http://virginia.org), email and mail. These inquiries are then integrated into VTC's primary consumer database for which the CSC is responsible. Consumer Services also oversees the fulfillment and distribution of more than 650,000 Virginia Travel Guides. Consumer Services also managing the VTC's licensed merchandising program.

### Department Goals:

1. Ensure that consumers have a positive experience during every aspect of their Virginia vacation, from planning to visiting
2. Integrate Virginia's tourism industry to present a unified, branded travel program to all visitors

### Department Objectives:

1. Distribute 600,000 Virginia Travel Guides
2. Assist more than 2 million visitors at 11 Virginia Welcome Centers
3. Assist consumers by making more than 4,000 lodging reservations
4. Secure at least 2 Tourism Blitzes at each Virginia Welcome Center
5. Work with Target Marketing to generate a 5% increase in Virginia is for Lovers merchandise sales
6. Benchmark a program that will integrate social media response into the Consumer Services Center

### Strategies/Tactics:

1. Provide ongoing Welcome Center staff training through seminars, site inspections and fam trips
2. Provide ongoing training to call center staff about new product and tourism opportunities
3. Support Highway Information Media with marketing and advertising opportunities at the Commonwealth's Safety Rest Areas and Virginia Welcome Centers
4. Monitor travel guide distribution monthly and devise strategies to increase or decrease distribution based on volume
5. Work with Target Market to design, order and monitor sales of Virginia is for Lovers Merchandise

**Contact:** Val Guffy,

Director of Consumer Services

Online resources: [vatc.org/consumer services](http://vatc.org/consumer-services)

## Partnership Marketing

**Our Goal:** The goal of Partnership Marketing is to maximize the tourism potential of every Virginia community and destination, thus increasing their ability to create sustainable tourism programs that enhance their economic vitality.

**Our audience:** Virginia tourism stakeholders. Whether you are trying to market a Bed & Breakfast on a \$2,000 budget, a community looking to establish a tourism development plan, or a long-established, robust tourism destination, we can help.

Ways in which the Partnership Marketing team assists industry partners:

- Coordination and execution of the Statewide Tourism Plan
- Brain Exchange with local leaders to offer assistance with tourism planning
- Education on tourism zones and tourism plans that qualify communities to attract funding for Tourism Development Gap Financing
- Creation of partnerships with other state agencies
- Business and Entrepreneurial Development
- Tourism development of trails, attractions and community planning
- Customer Service training
- Supervisory training
- Help Desk by Appointment and Help Desk by Association
- Quarterly orientation sessions

### Department Objectives:

1. Assist 1,000 small businesses
2. Leverage \$1 million marketing leverage fund to \$6 million through industry partnerships
3. Engage 50 DMOs in State Tourism Plan
4. Provide customer service training to 2,000 front line employees
5. Assist three communities in the Tourism Finance Program in completing successful applications

### Department Initiatives:

- Develop and grow the Virginia tourism industry through the creation and execution of a Statewide Tourism Plan that is industry-driven, and is built on the vision and input gathered from Virginia's tourism stakeholders.



- Facilitate community applications for the Tourism Development Financing Program (TDFP) including the development of tourism development plans, establishing tourism zones and securing a certification letter if approved.
- Assist with Tourism Product Development efforts, including ongoing projects such as the Coal Heritage Trail and Spearhead Trail, as well as new programs such as the Clinch River Valley Initiative and related programs of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation; the Southern Virginia: Charting a 21st Century Region Together programs, and Space Tourism opportunities.
- Participate in industry training events such as Entrepreneur Express, Business of Tourism workshops, and Agritourism workshops.
- Partner with other state and federal agencies in regional initiatives such as The Stronger Economic Together Program and Rural Community Development Initiative Grants.
- Evaluate applications and award funds from the VTC Marketing Leverage Program, the Tourism and the Arts Marketing Program, and the Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Marketing Program to assist industry partners in collaborative advertising campaigns producing at least a 3:1 ROI on leveraged funds.
- Work with convention & visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, local governments and private tourism-related businesses to improve performance and profit by enhancing customer service skills and management skills.
- Partner with local community colleges to deliver customer service training and management training opportunities on campuses across the state.
- Reach out to new and existing tourism businesses in an effort to educate on the profitability of partnering with all VTC divisions. Hold one-on-one Help Desk opportunities to offer suggestions for partnering with VTC through marketing, research, product development, and workforce training.
- Attend regional association meetings and offer Help Desk opportunities to participants.
- Host quarterly orientation sessions for new members of the tourism industry, offering a day-long event in the Richmond office where participants will meet with each division of VTC and learn how that division can assist with their tourism efforts.

For a complete list of services that can benefit you, please go to [www.vatc.org](http://www.vatc.org) and click Partnership Marketing.

Online resources: [www.vatc.org/PAM](http://www.vatc.org/PAM) or please contact the Directors listed below:

**Contact:** Chris Canfield,  
Vice President, Partnership Marketing  
at [ccanfield@virginia.org](mailto:ccanfield@virginia.org)

**Contact:** Steve Galyean,  
Development Director,  
at [sgalyean@virginia.org](mailto:sgalyean@virginia.org)

**Contact:** Bobbie Walker, Education Director,  
at [bwalker@virginia.org](mailto:bwalker@virginia.org)

**Contact:** Wirt Confroy, Partnership Director,  
at [wconfroy@virginia.org](mailto:wconfroy@virginia.org)



## Virginia Film Office Marketing

### Department Objectives:

1. Insure that Virginia's Film Office remains competitive in recruiting national film industry productions through continued incentive funding and the pursuit of creative marketing opportunities.
2. Attract domestic and international film, television, video, multi-media and digital production to the state and increase economic benefits to the commonwealth.
3. Increase the number of contacts with producers, script writers, production companies, studios by 5% annually to encourage film production in Virginia.

### Strategies:

1. Promote best location advantages
2. Support the growth of Virginia's in-state production industry
3. Conduct one-on-one meetings with prospects
4. Provide optimum incentives package to recruit the project

### Tactics:

1. Attend pertinent trade shows that generate qualified leads for new business
2. Provide industry with Governor's Motion Picture Opportunity Fund and Motion Picture Tax Credits incentive programs
3. Participate in trade advertising
4. Maintain and update Virginia film office website
5. Maintain an online location library and update with photographs on on-going basis
6. Provide an annual research paper documenting economic impact
7. Participate in the Virginia Production Alliance
8. Produce online Film Production Services Directory
9. Develop and implement marketing opportunities with films made in Virginia

**Contact:** Andy Edmunds,  
Vice President, Virginia Film Office  
Online resources: [www.vatc.org/film](http://www.vatc.org/film)



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Richmond, Virginia

The Honorable Douglas W. Domenech  
Secretary of Natural Resources  
Richmond, Virginia

## **Appendix**

VTC Executive Staff:  
[www.vatc.org/administration](http://www.vatc.org/administration)

VTC Staff:  
[www.vatc.org/administration/contactus.asp](http://www.vatc.org/administration/contactus.asp)

VTC Board of Directors:  
[www.vatc.org/administration/board.asp](http://www.vatc.org/administration/board.asp)

Advertising Agency of Record:  
[www.vatc.org/advertising/agency.asp](http://www.vatc.org/advertising/agency.asp)

Virginia Travel Guide Publisher:  
[www.vatc.org/advertising/guideadvertising.asp](http://www.vatc.org/advertising/guideadvertising.asp)

Multi-Cultural Marketing agency:  
[www.JohnsonMarketing.com](http://www.JohnsonMarketing.com)

Media Plan:  
[www.vatc.org/advertising](http://www.vatc.org/advertising)

Marketing Leverage Program:  
[www.vatc.org/pam/leverageprog.asp](http://www.vatc.org/pam/leverageprog.asp)

Capital Region USA Marketing Plan:  
[www.vatc.org/marketing/inter/crusa.asp](http://www.vatc.org/marketing/inter/crusa.asp)

Capital Region USA Annual Report:  
[www.vatc.org/marketing/inter/crusa.asp](http://www.vatc.org/marketing/inter/crusa.asp)

