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Williamsburg Tourism Council
2019 Annual Report

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Background

Background

Virginia Senate Bill 942 created the [Williamsburg Tourism Council \(WTC\)](#), which became operational on July 1, 2018.

The statute increased sales tax by one percent in Williamsburg and James City and York counties. Those dollars are collected by the state Comptroller's Office and 50 percent is directed to the WTC for [marketing](#), [advertising](#), and [promoting](#) the Historic Triangle.

The Williamsburg Tourism Council replaced a destination marketing program once administered by the Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance.

Background

The organization's primary objective is to increase overnight visitation to the Historic Triangle, a travel region comprised of three municipalities - City of Williamsburg, York County, and James City County.

Strategic goals include:

- Increase overnight visitation
- Increase tax revenue
- Unify the region under the Destination Marketing Organization's (DMO) tourism brand and strategy
- Improve reporting, analytics, and data driven optimization
- Foster collaboration with the region's primary entry points, i.e. airports
- Bolster international marketing efforts

Background

Attorney General Opinion

In June, Senator Thomas Norment requested an official advisory opinion related to whether the Williamsburg Tourism Council is a public body as defined by the [Virginia Freedom of Information Act](#), subject to the [Virginia Procurement Act](#), [Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act](#), [Virginia Investment of Public Funds Act](#), [Virginia Security for Public Deposits Act](#), and [Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act](#).

On August 16, 2019, Attorney General Mark Herring concluded that the Tourism Council is a public body and therefore subject to all of the previously stated Acts.

The full opinion can be found here:

<https://www.oag.state.va.us/files/Opinions/2019/19-023-Norment-issued.pdf>.

Williamsburg Tourism Council Members

Voting

York County

Hotel/Motel Association

James City County

Busch Gardens

Jamestown Rediscovery

Colonial Williamsburg

Restaurant Association

Jamestown/Yorktown Found.

City of Williamsburg

Jeff Wassmer, Chair

Neal Chalkley, Vice Chair

Ruth Larson, Treasurer

Kevin Lembke

James Horn

CEO *or designee

Mickey Chohany

Phil Emerson

Doug Pons

Ex Officio

GWCTA

Virginia Tourism Corporation

Cheri Green

Rita McClenny

Strategic Accomplishments

Hiring/Structural Creation

Procurement

Hiring

In October 2018, the Williamsburg Tourism Council engaged [SearchWide Global](#), a full service executive firm that specializes in searches for destination marketing organizations, to find its Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

After a national search, [Victoria Cimino](#), New Hampshire's state tourism director, was offered the position. She began in her new role as Visit Williamsburg's CEO on April 15, 2019.

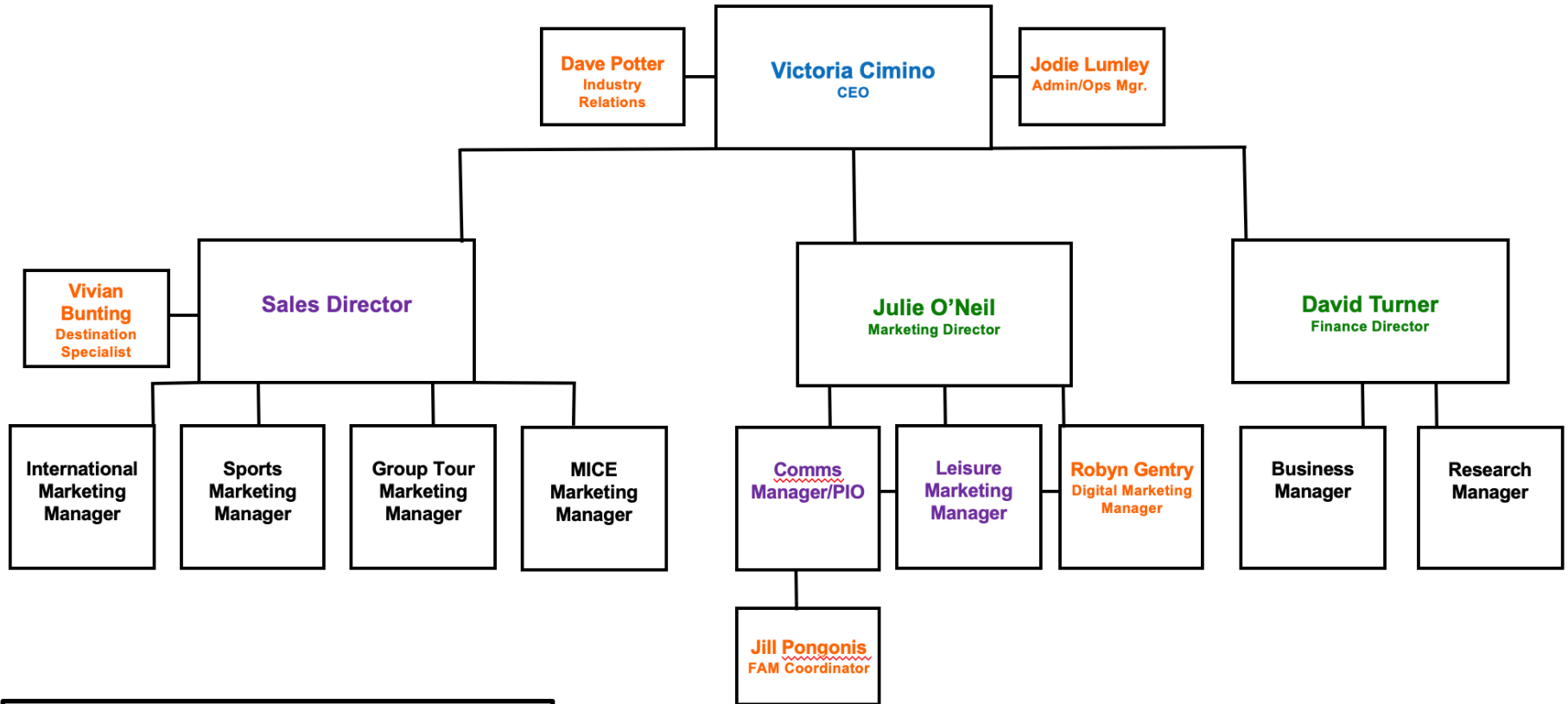
Cimino's subsequent focus included:

- Structural creation/hiring
- Procedure creation/refinement
- Procurement activities

Structural Creation

- Organization chart development
- Personnel competitive set research
- Job description development
- Internal transfers to new/relevant positions
- Hiring
 - Two leadership positions filled
 - Current postings
 - One leadership position
 - Two marketing positions
 - Future postings
 - Sales team
 - Business office

Structural Creation



Color Key:

CEO, Hired (April 2019)

New Positions, Filled Internally (September 2019)

New Positions, Filled Externally (November 2019)

New Positions, Current Postings (Have Yet to be Filled)

New Positions, To Be Filled in 2020

Procurement

Requests for Proposals (RFP) issued in accordance with:



Virginia **Department of General Services**

Serving Government. Serving Virginians.

RESEARCH

ADVERTISING AGENCY OF RECORD

STRATEGIC PLANNING

MAILHOUSE/DISTRIBUTION

RESEARCH SERVICES

Awarded to: Strategic Marketing and Research Insights

Key Deliverables:

- Monthly/Seasonal Travel Reports
- Monthly Lodging Reports
- Annual Market Share Report
- Campaign Effectiveness and Return on Investment Reports
- Forecasting
- Annual Domestic Travel Profiles

RFP Timetable

Request for Proposals Issued	Wednesday, October 2, 2019
Deadline for Questions	Thursday, October 10, 2019
Responses to Questions	Wednesday, October 16, 2019
Written Proposal Deadline	Friday, October 25, 2019
Invitations to Present	Tuesday, October 29, 2019
Oral Presentations	Monday, November 4, 2019
Negotiation Process	November 4-8, 2019
Award Announcement	Tuesday, November 12, 2019

ADVERTISING AGENCY OF RECORD

Awarded to: Connelly Partners

Key Deliverables:

- Strategic planning sessions with key stakeholders
- Creative Development
- Production
- Media Planning and Buying
- Digital

RFP Timetable

Request for Proposals Issued	Wednesday, October 2, 2019
Deadline for Questions	Thursday, October 10, 2019
Responses to Questions	Wednesday, October 16, 2019
Written Proposal Deadline	Wednesday, October 30, 2019
Invitations to Present	Friday, November 8, 2019
Oral Presentations	Wednesday, November 20, 2019
Negotiation Process	November 21 – 27, 2019
Award Announcement	Monday, December 2, 2019

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Key Deliverables:

- Culture/team dynamic assessment
- Staff retreat
- Vision, Mission, and Value(s) work session/development
- Process design and facilitation
- CliftonStrengths assessment and work session

RFP Timetable

Request for Proposals Issued	Monday, December 16, 2019
Deadline for Questions	Monday, December 30, 2019
Responses to Questions	Friday, January 3, 2020
Written Proposal Deadline	Friday, January 10, 2020
Negotiation Process	January 13 – 15, 2020
Award Announcement	Friday, January 17, 2020

MAILHOUSE/DISTRIBUTION

Key Deliverables:

- Storage/warehousing
- Cost effective and timely literature fulfillment
 - Processed via Address Verification System software, Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS), and Presort Accuracy Verification Equipment
- Monthly activity reports (distribution, inventory, etc.)

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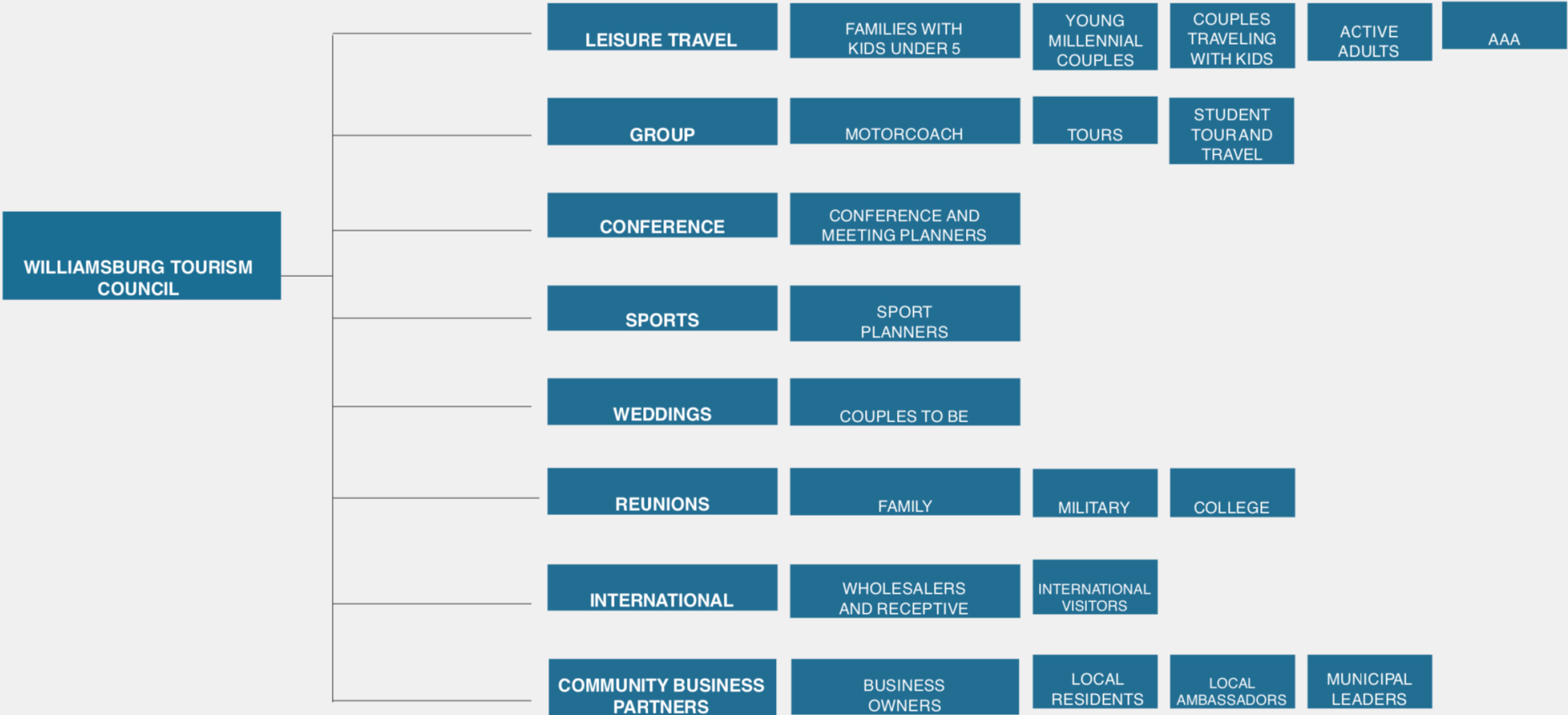
2019 Marketing Campaign

OVERALL DESTINATION STRATEGY

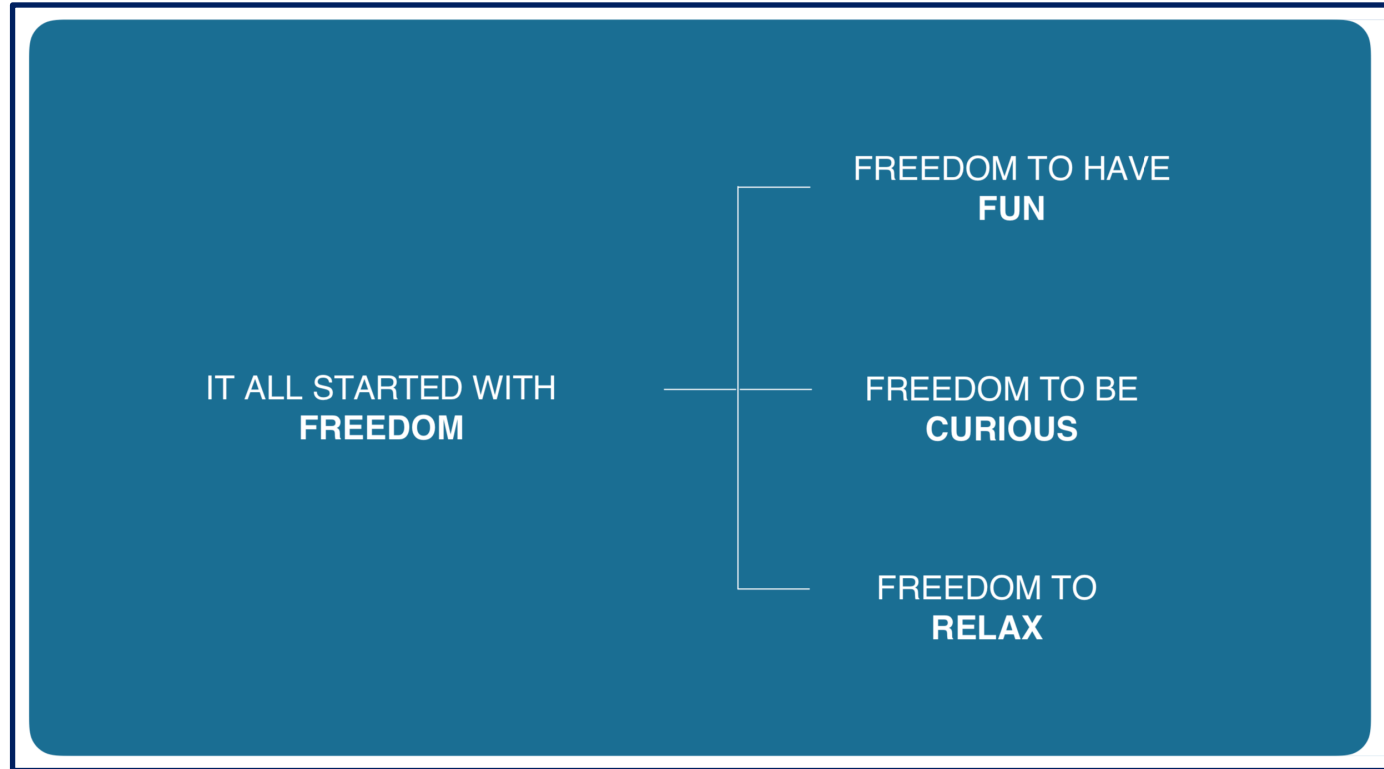
Expand the perception and understanding of Greater Williamsburg across all audience segments to increase relevancy, preference and economic impact year-round.



EXPANDED REACH



Creative Strategy





The place where everything you thought you knew about vacations gets a Funexpected twist.



FUNEXPECTED
GREATER WILLIAMSBURG

In Greater Williamsburg, you can find heart-pounding thrills, exciting exploration, mind-blowing discovery and even breathtaking romance. Your adventure includes the world's most beautiful theme park, thrilling water parks, world-class living-history museums, acres of outdoor activities, and a vibrant culinary and arts scene. Find your vacation inspiration and then start planning your FUN getaway today at VisitWilliamsburg.com.

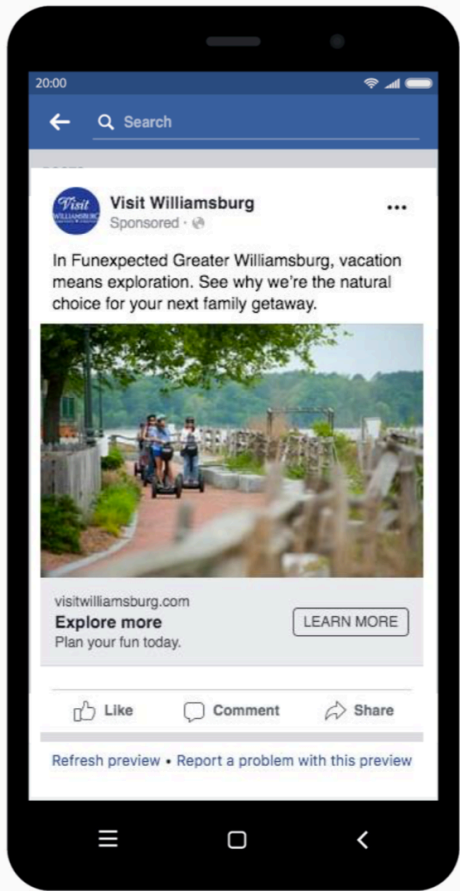
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VISITOR & GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

Proven (Blue)

Immediate markets historically successful

- **Washington D.C. (Hagerstown MD)**
- Baltimore MD
- **Raleigh-Durham (Fayetteville) NC**
- Charlottesville VA
- Harrisonburg VA
- Roanoke-Lynchburg VA
- Salisbury MD
- Greenville-New Bern-Washington NC

Planned (Green/Orange)

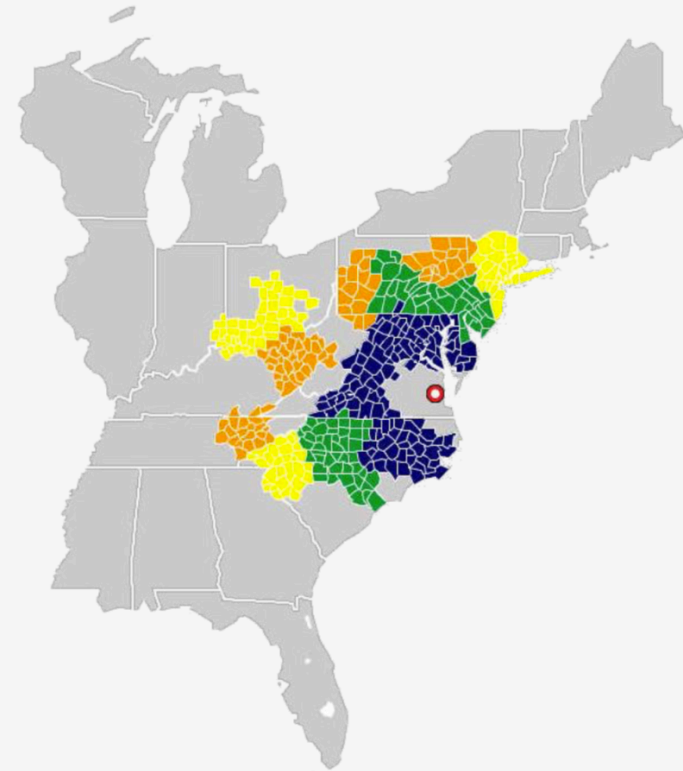
Within top markets of origination, further drive and longer planning cycle

- Charlotte NC
- **Philadelphia PA**
- Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon-York PA
- Johnstown-Altoona-State College PA
- Greensboro-High Point-Winston Salem NC
- Florence-Myrtle Beach SC
- Pittsburgh PA
- Charleston-Huntington WV
- Wilkes Barre-Scranton PA
- Knoxville TN

New (Yellow)

Markets that have shown interest but not top priority with more limited budgets

- Columbus OH
- Cincinnati OH
- Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson
- New York NY



DIGITAL IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CAMPAIGN



Social Media Awareness

Utilize profile and behavioral **data** to reach segments and interests across **social media platforms, like Facebook**



Display Awareness

Utilize demographic, behavioral, and contextual **data** to reach segments across **native, video, and banners**



Travel Consideration

Banners and video running across **travel and OTA websites, like Trip Advisor**, targeting segments and lower funnel travel intenders



Retargeting Activation/Booking

Use **Visit Williamsburg's website and newsletter data** to continue communication with those who have expressed interest in the destination.



Content Marketing Advocate

Strategic partnerships with reputable publishing companies and influencers to **curate and promote content** in the form of **editorial and video**

SEGMENTATION AND MEDIA TIMING

	Families With Older Kids	Families With Kids Under 5	Young Millennial Couples	Couples Traveling Without Kids	Active Adults	Group
SPRING	December-January	February-March	February-March	February-March	February-March	January-December
SUMMER	April-July					
FALL		August-September	August-September	August-September	August-September	
WINTER	October-November					

Late Summer Augmented Campaign

Late Summer Augmented Campaign


Scenario:

The Smith Travel Research (STR) June report showed that "Rooms Sold" was down 2.4% and Revenue was down 2.2%. Directed a late-summer augmented advertising campaign to push overnight visitation.

Direction:

- Spend = \$350K
- Target drive market, as transactions will be last minute travel decisions
- Demo to include young families, families with older children, young couples, and active adults
- Digital media plan, with a focus on online travel partners - call to action must motivate transactions/bookings
- Paid media effort supported via pr and social


Creative



The **WILLIAMSBURG**
**MAKE SUMMER
LAST LONGER.**

Make the most of last-minute summer fun. Plan your getaway now to Greater Williamsburg.

[PLAN NOW](#)



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Fall Augmented Campaign

Augmented Fall Campaign

Scenario:

Hoteliers reported October/November bookings were down; directed an augmented fall advertising campaign to push overnight visitation.

Direction:

- Spend = \$500K
- Target drive market, as well as NYC and Atlanta DMAs
- Demo to include:
 - Millennials, with and without children
 - Gen-X, with and without children
 - Active mature
 - Golf enthusiasts
- Digital media plan, with a focus on online travel partners
- Call to action must motivate transactions/bookings
- Paid media effort supported via pr and social

Augmented Fall Campaign Creative



Metrics/Performance

2019 Ad Effectiveness/ROI Study

Pending Completion
(Late 2019)

CYTD Profit and Loss Statement

Greater Williamsburg Tourism Council
3rd Quarter - July to September 2019

	July 2019			August 2019			September 2019			3rd Quarter to Date			Year to Date			Annual
	Jul 19	Budget	+/- Budget	Aug 19	Budget	+/- Budget	Sep 19	Budget	+/- Budget	Jul - Sep 19	Budget	+/- Budget	Jan - Sep 19	YTD Budget	+/- Budget	Budget
Income																
SB942	976,586.16			485,681.68			1,052,203.32			2,514,471.16			7,829,586.03			
\$1 Transient Tax	102,767.12			195,325.78			165,626.19			463,719.09			1,086,350.48			
Total Tax Revenue	1,079,353.28	629,783.00	449,570.28	681,007.46	746,932.00	-65,924.54	1,217,829.51	766,051.00	451,778.51	2,978,190.25	2,142,766.00	835,424.25	8,897,936.51	6,100,390.00	2,797,546.51	8,500,000.00
Interest	5,428.44	0.00	5,428.44	14,704.42	0.00	14,704.42	5,204.82	0.00	5,204.82	25,337.68	0.00	25,337.68	78,809.90	0.00	78,809.90	0.00
MOE Funds	503,359.00	503,359.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	503,359.00	503,359.00	0.00	1,341,247.50	1,341,247.50	0.00	1,675,777.00
Other Tourism Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00	481.95	0.00	481.95	602.00	500.00	102.00	1,083.95	0.00	1,083.95	20,780.96	4,500.00	16,280.96	6,200.00
Total Income	1,588,140.72	1,133,142.00	454,998.72	696,193.83	746,932.00	-50,738.17	1,223,636.33	766,551.00	457,085.33	3,507,970.88	2,646,125.00	861,243.88	10,338,774.87	7,446,137.50	2,892,637.37	10,181,977.00
Expenses																
Destination Marketing	74,461.35	806,121.00	-731,659.65	535,666.72	1,009,692.00	-474,025.28	1,323,849.16	898,169.00	425,680.16	1,933,977.23	2,713,982.00	-780,004.77	6,724,468.96	7,929,635.00	-1,205,166.04	9,030,695.00
Consumer Marketing	9,809.24	2,825.00	6,984.24	60,335.74	5,250.00	55,085.74	56,176.71	10,591.00	45,585.71	126,321.69	18,666.00	107,655.69	223,930.92	247,470.00	-23,539.08	270,905.00
Conference Marketing	4,100.00	750.00	3,350.00	250.00	5,575.00	-5,325.00	972.63	22,250.00	-21,277.37	5,322.63	28,575.00	-23,252.37	19,771.76	57,750.00	-37,978.24	66,000.00
Group Tour Marketing	2,335.76	6,470.00	-4,134.24	1,466.68	5,850.00	-4,383.32	3,788.99	4,650.00	-861.01	7,591.43	16,970.00	-9,378.57	18,262.20	29,010.00	-10,747.80	39,285.00
Sports Marketing	2,014.12	35,875.00	-33,860.88	15,952.50	3,850.00	12,302.50	3,481.47	14,050.00	-10,568.53	21,448.09	53,575.00	-32,126.91	63,721.34	129,475.00	-65,753.66	157,520.00
Administrative	80,891.11	96,137.65	-15,246.55	94,772.96	136,157.49	-41,384.52	89,811.10	96,135.35	-6,324.26	265,475.17	328,430.49	-62,955.33	814,173.80	1,052,521.49	-238,347.69	1,342,346.95
Total Expenses	173,611.58	948,178.65	-774,567.08	708,444.60	1,166,174.49	-457,729.88	1,478,080.06	1,045,845.35	432,234.70	2,360,136.24	3,160,198.49	-800,062.26	7,864,328.98	9,445,861.49	-1,581,532.51	10,906,751.95
Net Income	1,414,529.14	184,963.35	1,229,565.80	-12,250.77	-419,242.49	406,991.71	-254,443.73	-279,294.35	24,850.63	1,147,834.64	-514,073.49	1,661,306.14	2,474,445.89	-1,999,723.99	4,474,169.88	-724,774.95

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Thank You

Questions?

Please contact Victoria Cimino
victoria.cimino@visitwilliamsburg.com