2012-2013 Marketing Plan
Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce
Tourism Division
Objectives/Strategies/Tactics/Metrics

Objective #1: Develop & Execute Integrated Marketing Plan

Using current analysis from previous campaigns, we will deliver on an advertising campaign that allows us to draw more visitors into the area. With a focus on increasing overall economic impact for the destination, the campaigns will have a clear call to action that incorporates partner participation to increase our overall market participation.

Strategy #1: Launch Integrated Marketing Plan that focuses on achieving the goals set forth by the Tourism Advisory Committee

Building on the 2011-2012 campaigns, the strategy is to expand Beaufort’s message by reinforcing our brand positioning through an integrated approach that includes an appropriate mix of Traditional, Online, Social, and Public Relations. The intent is to protect loyal repeat guests’ interest while pioneering new markets and guest profiles.

GUIDING STRATEGIES:
- Total transparency
- Lean on continued research to confirm that our guests believe what we believe
- Influence product development consistent with the brand
- Total integration of all marketing channels, ensuring cross promotion of messaging, content and those products/assets

REDEFINING MARKETING:
- Strategic channel applications and integration = total engagement
- Passionate development of a true “brand tribe” who will be our evangelists
- Communicate as if we are speaking to each individual interest
- Be fluid as trends develop
- Build a powerful reporting matrix

THE GAME PLAN:
- Target conversions from marketing campaigns (how the brand generates visitation and bookings)
- Embrace all things digital, maintaining a careful blend of traditional and new media
- “Be specific”...by season, interest, profile and point of origin segmentation
- Create, maintain and update a dynamic database of signature assets, calendars, events and facts
- More conversions...from strategic social media to interactive communications tools
• Protect strongholds (Spring and Fall season and in-state saturation), while venturing out (Summer seasons and broader regional appeal)
• Develop private sector partnerships

THE PLAYING FIELD:

TRAVEL TRENDS WE NEED TO NOTICE:
• Growth in U.S. economy is static. However, tourism spending increased over 3% (first quarter of the year)
• Americans are feeling more confident about the economy
• Although Americans still plan to travel more, they continue to look for deals
• Two thirds of travelers are influenced by peer reviews
• Seventy-nine percent of respondents plan to spend a minimum of $3,000 on vacations in the coming year
• 57 percent will pay out at least $5,000
• 21 percent will invest $10,000 or more on 2012 leisure travel.
• Ninety percent of respondents are planning to take two or more leisure trips next year, and 24 percent are planning five or more getaways.

REASONS FOR TRAVEL:
1. Beach trip (44%)
2. Cultural trip (42%)
3. Road trip (40%)
4. City trip (36%)
5. Guys/girls getaway (24%)

Source: TripAdvisor’s Annual Travel Trends
THE PLAYING FIELD con’t:

Lodging Barometer: Travelers’ Accommodation Picks for 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Going Up:</th>
<th>Stayed in 2011</th>
<th>Planning to stay in 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vacation Rentals</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B&amp;Bs/ Inns</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All-inclusive resorts</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Going Down:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying with friends/family</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TripAdvisor’s Annual Travel Trends

CHALLENGES:

- Fragmented funding mechanism (competition for funds and legitimate “pulls”, such as infrastructure and beach renourishment)

- Technology...keeping up with essential tracking, lead management, booking needs and transition to digital concierge visitor services

- Industry Participation/Reporting
  - Hotel response to leads
  - Occupancy & ADR
  - Industry Surveys
  - Website updating – area offerings

- Fluctuating SC Tourism Funding

- Aggressive establishment of one unified brand

- Competing intelligently (sample funding):
  1. Myrtle Beach $23 million
  2. Charleston $11 million
  3. Outer Banks $5,895,897
  4. Hilton Head Island $5 million
KEYS TO MEETING CHALLENGES:
• Build the brand
• Total marketing integration
• Visitor service
• Industry support
• Digital transformation
• Research
• Reporting

Channel Saturation:
• EARNED:
  i) Amplify Beaufort’s voice beyond imagination
  ii) Expand the brand’s story
• OWNED:
  i) Claim our space
  ii) Constant communication
  iii) Clearinghouse for lead generation and cross-media
      (a) Enhancements
• PAID:
  i) Balanced and purposeful
  ii) Targeted
  iii) Trackable

EARNED STRATEGIES = PR STRATEGIES:
• Leverage media relations to garner positive media coverage of Beaufort
• Foster open communication with area restaurants, hotels and attractions to maximize efforts
• Identify or create newsworthy events and celebrations
• Maximize efforts by keeping the SCPRT informed and up to date on Beaufort news

PR Tactics: Editorial calendar research, Added-value opportunities per paid channels, Media Hosting/FAM trips/Desksides/Tours, SCPRT media relations outreach, Field organic media inquiries and qualify leads, Solicit information from Chamber members fit for media distribution; Communicate media highlights and PR efforts to Chamber members, News release development, distribution and follow up
OWNED STRATEGIES = SOCIAL MEDIA
- Actively build and engage a social media fan/follower base
- Enhance existing platforms to amplify Beaufort’s social media footprint and exposure
- Increase the number of fans, followers and viewers
- Utilize social media as a customer service tool
- Use Social Media to increase traffic to Beaufort’s website
- Use Social Media to acquire more opt-in email addresses

PAID STRATEGIES = CORE OBJECTIVES
- Balance...even in the face of a massive shift to digital
- CTA is the new acronym for destinations...invite interaction in all we do
- Don’t spread too thin. Claim a footprint and grow it
- Targets that are true to the brand
- Efficiency and measurability

Paid Media Plan 2012-2013
**Objective #2: Conduct Research**

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”
~ Zora Neale Hurston

In an effort to continue to assemble as much information from our target market as possible, it’s essential that research be expanded to include as many different avenues as possible.

**Strategy #1: Identify and secure research sources**
Continue to promote and expand research to all festivals and events. We desire to focus our efforts on expanding participation to conduct research at the festivals/events/attractions.

Timing: Ongoing throughout the year
Success metrics: Secure at least two additional festivals/events in 2012-2013 to partner with an educational institution to conduct research.
*Finished FY12-13 completing research on the Beaufort Film Festival.*

**Strategy #2: Baseline Visitor Profile Data**
Utilizing the existing longitudinal databases, we will capitalize on the opportunity to capture key data on our existing customer base. The existing database is a derivative from our leads programs, as well as our email/e-newsletter opt-in form. We will initiate web based surveys at several locations including: Visitor Center, Hunting Island, (as funds permit marina, Fripp Island, etc).

Timing: Ongoing – Begin process September 2012
Success metrics: Gain a better understanding to narrow our advertising/marketing focus for budget efficiency and effectiveness.
*Completed the 2012 MSA Visitor Demand Analyses in November of 2012.*

**Strategy #3: Baseline Visitor Industry Data**
Promoting and encouraging all accommodations partners to participate in the Smith Travel Research (STR) report is essential to accessing the full scope of visitor travel into our area. To date 13 out of 24 total properties are sharing their data with STR. BRCOC will also work with our vacation rental properties/VRBOs to develop a reporting plan and mechanism to deliver the most accurate picture of our diverse travel market.

Timing: Ongoing – Beginning Sept 2012
Success metrics: Finalize sign-up/registration for remaining 19 properties with STR; receive monthly reporting from 14 lodging properties
*Still working to add additional properties. We added analysis from smaller markets in South Carolina to do a comparative summary.*
Strategy #4: Complete Competitive Set Analysis
To ensure we’re remaining competitive in the marketplace and differentiating ourselves from the competition, it’s essential that we conduct research on our competition. Information gathering is essential to marketing and advertising efforts, specifically with search-engine optimization, keywords & rankings. We will use 2 different sets. One will contain three comparative cities. The second set will be South Carolina small town specific.

Timing: Ongoing
Success metrics: Task completion. The Comparative cities are as follows: New Bern, NC; Brunswick, GA; St. Augustine, FL / Smith Travel Research SC Small Cities set. Ongoing.

Strategy #5: Conduct Research with Group Travel Tour Operators (Motorcoach, Cruise Ship, etc)
It’s mutually beneficial to conduct an electronic survey for new learnings and to better understand how we can simplify their process for the financial benefit of Beaufort, Port Royal & the Sea Islands. If we can better understand their decision-making process, including travel routes/itineraries, there’s a greater possibility that the region can increase the economic impact of such groups.

Timing: Surveying tour operators will begin in Spring 2013.
Success metrics: Completed survey with report analysis presented to the public via website.
Have not started due to funding.

Strategy #6: Complete Conversion/ROI Analysis per month
Monthly metrics will be provided by our partner agency that keeps the advertising campaigns in-line with the core goals set forth by Tourism Board.

Timing: Length of Advertising Schedule.
Success metrics: N/A
Ongoing and reports have been provided on a monthly and quarterly basis.

Objective #3: Sustain Stakeholder Relationships/Partnerships
“What we want to do, we can do and will do, together. A glorious future!”
~ Ingvar Kamprad

As the leader of the tourism industry in Northern Beaufort County, we must collaborate with our stakeholders to ensure we present the very best destination to our visitors.
Strategy #1: Continue and Expand Co-op Marketing Opportunities
Co-op marketing opportunities allow for an extension of marketing dollars and budget through negotiated advertising rates, which represent significant savings.

Timing: Begin of Advertising Campaign / Ongoing
Success metrics: Number of co-ops, industry participation volume and total revenue generated - $20,000 Budgeted Line Item
We Co-op’d with Datas Island, Fripp Island, Big Storytelling Fest, Beaufort Inn, Lowcountry Real Estate, Historic Beaufort Foundation, Mainstreet Beaufort, Beaufort Film Society, etc.

Strategy #2: Conduct Regular Director of Sales/General Manager Roundtables
Roundtable discussions to be initiated to review results, share research, implement ideas, and continue communicating on a combined front. Developing packages for events, partnering for group travel promotion, tradeshow updates, lead generation suggested best practices are examples of industry data that will be shared during these meeting.

Timing: Quarterly Meeting (or as necessary) – Beginning September 2012 Ongoing. We have Identified a sales mission to begin in Spring 2014

Strategy #3: Strengthen partnership With Port Royal & the Sea Islands
It’s important to ensure successful partnerships with Port Royal and the Sea Islands as they are also within our DMO. We will continue to strike a balance to effectively promote these areas – in conjunction to marketing Beaufort.

Timing: Ongoing
Success metrics: Public Relations tracking through Meltwater News monitoring service
Ongoing.

Strategy #4: Build on Existing Relationships with Festivals and Events
We will form partnerships and play larger development roles in the marketing of events & festivals to increase the overall reach of audiences in markets that are key to overnight travel. In addition, there are organizations that have expressed interest in creating new partnerships such as the Storytelling Festival and Beaufort Water Festival.

Research conducted by USCB for the Shrimp Festival and the 2011 MCAS Beaufort Air Show, indicate that approximately 90% of the polled population (in combination of both surveys) indicated that they would return again the following year.

Timing: Conversations are in progress currently. Schedule a meeting of event/festival stakeholders.
Success metrics: Stakeholder participation and overall coordination. 
*Partnered with all of the major festivals and events as well as their organizations to deliver their message through our marketing o*

**Objective #4: Influence Product Development Consistent With Brand**

To capitalize on the quality and amount of products available to tourists, the TTCD needs to initiate and facilitate all communications surrounding this objective in order to ensure all tactics are consistent with the overall brand.

**Strategy #1: Serve as a Liaison between the Festivals/Events and Lodging Partners**
The various festivals/events taking place every year in our area, is of significant opportunity for the BRCOC to develop packages that can assist in the increase of overnight stays.

Timing: To begin during Lodging Partners Roundtable  
Success metrics: Stakeholder participation and overall coordination.  
*Worked with festivals to deliver package opportunities with the hotel providers. To date several have made advances toward this but there is still room for more to partner.*

**Strategy #2: Develop Beaufort Area Relocation Guide**
Develop, design, & create a relocation guide that provides important local information. The guide will be distributed to those inquiries that are actively pursuing the area as a potential new residence.

Timing: Early Fall begin sales to advertisers. Production and release in Early 2013  
Success: Meet revenue goals and distribution goals.  
*Pushed into FY 2013-2014*

**Strategy #3: Manage Content on Travel Sites Featuring or Promoting the Beaufort, SC, Area**
It is a common and healthy practice to ensure destination information is being communicated accurately.

Timing: Begin July 2012 – ongoing  
Success metrics: Compile list & ensure accurate information on all partner sites  
Cost: Time  
*Worked on syncing our main website with chamber master database. Working with SCPRT to update and deliver the most up to date listings on their website. Ongoing.*
Strategy #4: Redesign BeaufortSC.org to better disseminate destination information and to provide a mobile platform for visitors.
The new website will present the destination in an aesthetically appealing manner allowing for visitors to navigate the site with greater ease. It will also be offered in a mobile platform for users on the go. The data on the site will consolidate with the current chamber database (Chamber Master) and allow for data to be updated in an easy to sync method. There will be an emphasis on the collection of pertinent data for research as well as leads for our partners to share.

Timing: Begin in early fall 2012
Success metrics: Completion of the site

Completed redesign in March 2013. The new website is complete with better SEO, delivery of information, and synced with the chamber master database maintained by the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Objective #5: Increase Group Travel

While we know group travel is an important part of our destination and our annual revenue, it’s important that we qualify the extent that holds true. The DMO needs to lead a more concerted effort in quantifying the area’s group market but also qualifying those segments to determine which are advantageous for us to pursue.

Strategy #1: Develop Protocol for Handling Group Leads
With a group lead form already in the works, finalizing the format and posting it to the web site is a priority in finalizing the group lead process. And to ensure a positive experience, the TTCD will confirm that once the lead forms are compiled on the front end, a protocol and execution process is in place on the back end, to ensure that the customer receives the information they requested. Group lead categories to be considered on the form:

- Meetings
- Motorcoach
- Weddings
- Students/Education
- Families/Reunions
- Religious
- Recreational Group

Timing: October 2012
Success metrics: Complete automation and back end fulfillment process

Have instituted lead delivery beginning July 2013
Strategy #2: Attend Industry Tradeshows/Sales Missions
Whether it is a face-to-face sales pitch at ABA Marketplace or a three city sales mission, we have to be where potential group business does their business. With the recommendations from area properties, we will develop a list of events, tradeshows, and missions that we will target in the next year.

Timing: Fall 2012
Success metrics: Compile list of events, tradeshows, and missions; determine budget and partners; and attend the events providing leads to those who partner for that event.
Sales mission is planned for Spring FY 2013-2014.

Objective #6: Extend Length of Stay

Strategy #1: Develop Packages and Suggested Itineraries & Evaluate Offers to Include Additional Nights at Special Offers
Will implement the strategy from 2011-2012 Marketing Plan by developing packages around festivals and events, as to ensure we’re doing all that we can to impact this goal. It should also be considered that we partner with the festivals and events to inquire about sending our email marketing offers to their database list.

Timing: Prior to January
Success metrics: Increase overnight stay from 2.4 nights to 2.6 nights.
Have not completed to date. A conversion research study may be needed to ensure accurate representation.

Strategy #2: Provide Pre and Post Military Graduation Trips
With the military being the third highest-represented ‘trip purpose’ based on the branding study, indicated in the graph below, focusing our efforts on marketing to them with cost-effective advertising, can be a substantial revenue generator for the
TTCD and the area hotels and restaurants. Based on the revised and segmented Visitor Guide request form previously mentioned, we’ll be able to actively market special pre and post packages to the military families coming to town for graduations at Parris Island or other military-related events. Once they have self-identified, we can easily partner with businesses to offer them incentives to extend their stay or come a day prior than they were originally anticipating.

Timing: Launch following the revision of the VG request form
Success metrics: Number of pre and post packages clicked-thru or purchased through our booking engine
Not completed to date.