May 16, 2019

To: Board of Directors - Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB

From: Robb Wells

Subject: President’s Report

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**March-April at a Glance**

- Attended Initial Formal Sports Council meeting.
- Hosted 15 British Travel writers as a part of British Airways South Carolina Immersion FAM.
- Research Completed with Beaufort International Film Festival
- Revenues are up through April 2019.
- Celebrated National Travel & Tourism Week May 6-11, 2019.

**Marketing and Public Relations**

**Advertising:** During April, our digital display, search and social campaigns continued running.
- Sessions increased 33% month over month.
- Goal completions decreased 8% month over month
- In April, the CTR slightly decreased while the conversion rate greatly decreased. Currently investigating why the tracking of this goal dropped.
- Year over year, the CTR decreased by 2% and conversion rate decreased by 63%.
- The "Harbor Island" campaign was the top performer in regards to conversion rate, different than February and March where "Parris Island" and "Port Royal" received the highest conversion rate respectively.
- The "Things To Do" campaign continued to drive the most amount of conversions.
- The daily budgets have been slightly reduced to ensure we do not exceed total campaign budget by end of May.

*For more insight, please refer to the April Paid Media Reports.*

**General Media Relations:** PR team had 6 media pitches in April. We hosted 15 British Travel writers.
April's PR value finished at $648,098.69 in earned media. February's touch-points finished at 97, setting a new bar for media touchpoint in a month. We also made 6 active story pitches regarding Spring Break Travel, Undiscovered Destinations, Reconstruction National Park, Nao Santa Maria, Travel South FAM followups, and Juneteenth. CBS, New York Times and Coastal Living, all had stories that included Beaufort, Port Royal and the Sea Islands. We closed the month with over 70 million media impressions.

**Destination Services**

**March 2019:** Year over year, the number of visitors decreased by 40% with 2,831 visitors in March 2019 compared to 4,748 in March 2018. Our Etrax counting system has been malfunctioning which may attribute to a lower visitor count.

Fulfillment numbers (Kennickell) were down for the month at 1,986 compared to 5,862 the previous year. Our local fulfillment initiative was about even YoY.

**Welcome Bag Fullfillment:** 337 (HOAs, Groups, Hotels & Clubs)

Coupon Initiative for downtown merchants/attractions continued.

**Bus Registration/Travel:**
- Number of Buses: 38
- Number of Cruise Ships: 8

**Groups:**
- SC Visitor Center Manager Fam Tour (12)
- Gullah Festival planning visit - Majestic Tours (50)
- Adidas Golf Tournament at Dataw - provided Visitor Guides and Maps.
- SC Garden Club - (150)

**Meetings/Festivals:**
- MCCS, Beaufort Kayak Tours, CDAB

**Advertising Sales:**
- Meetings: Ballenger Realty, Islands of Beaufort
- Website, Leads and Advertising Billing: Continue to send out invoices and collect payments.

**Visitor Guide Updates:** VC staff continues to work on corrections and updates.

**Visitor Comments:**
*Thank you for sharing your area expertise. We were ‘sold’ on the city and all it has to offer.*

*Wonderfully detailed information and so helpful. Thank you.*
April 2019: Year over year, the number of visitors decreased by 22% with 3,799 visitors in April 2019 compared to 4,919 in April 2018.

Fulfillment numbers (Kennickell) were up for the month at 5,832 compared to 4,273 the previous year. Our local fulfillment initiative continues to be up with a 200% increase YoY. (700 - April 2019 vs. 227 - April 2018). Again, increased efforts and communication with local partners in offering visitor guides to them and the provision of Welcome Bags to groups has provided a steady increase in our distribution.

Welcome Bag Fulfillment: 50 (HOAs, Travel Writers)

Coupon Initiative for downtown merchants/attractions continued. Approximately 300 were distributed to groups and cruise ships in the course of the month.

Bus Registration/Travel:
Number of Buses: 47
Number of Cruise Ships: 8

Groups: Worked with VMFA-115 (2 group/ 100), Road Scholar (20), and Darla Fowler (20), Tales of the South (June visit).

Restaurant Map: Map updated to include newest downtown restaurant (Smoothie) May goal is to sell advertising.

Visitor Guide Updates: Nearing completion. By end of May, all updates will be noted and we will provide to Lowcountry Weekly staff.

Meetings/Festivals:
MCCS, Beaufort Kayak Tours and Cultural District Advisory Board meeting.

Advertising Sales:
Meetings: Islands of Beaufort, Celadon
Website, Leads and Advertising billing. Continue to send out invoices.

Visitor Guide Updates: VC staff started continues to work on corrections and updates.

Visitor Comments:
Janie was fabulous and so friendly and helpful. Laura & Debbi, Georgia
Very good! Keep up the happiness. :-)  
Great! The enthusiasm was ecstatic. Fantastic staff. Couldn’t recommend more. Keep it up. ;-)

Group Sales
• Continue to visit and familiarize myself with local restaurants, businesses, tours and attraction sites to determine markets best suited for each.

• Joined Student Youth Travel Association and registered for the annual marketplace and convention in August.

• Registered for Travel Alliance Partners annual convention (TAP Dance) in June.

• Creating itineraries for multiple market segments, updating Tour Operator Profile sheets to include itineraries.

• Met with Rhonda Carey to discuss possible performance venues and opportunities in City for student band and choir groups.

• Created one-page hand-out of “Annual Events” and “Things To Do” for an hour, two hours, 1/2 day- to be distributed at Visitor center and to motorcoach groups visiting for a short stop.

• 4/9 & 4/29/19- Met with Mark Lofton, GM , Kelly Tours. They plan to launch weekly 1/2 day sightseeing tours from Savannah to Beaufort on June 1. Organized meetings with City staff to discuss permitting and regulations and with local tours and attractions that will be included in this program.

• 3/19 and 5/10-13 - MARS - site visits for Southern Porches tour program (currently more than 1200 room nights booked). Also coordinating and finalizing plans for VIP FAM Tour for 30 tour operators 7/21-24/19

• Working with Victory Cruise Lines for the possibility of two cruise ships - 200 passengers each — to make a stop in the area (likely Port Royal) during the winter and spring of 2020-2021 - this year they will stop in Charleston and then in Savannah. In contact with William Annand, Pres/CEO of Seaward Services and James Palmeri, VP Product Development. I have put them in touch with Whit Suber, Port Royal Terminal Manager, to coordinate possibilities. If this can be arranged, Beaufort will gain the opportunity to shuttle passengers via motorcoach to downtown restaurants, tour options and businesses.

• Worked with Phil Azzolino, Group Tours & Travel, NJ - 4/28/19 tour in Beaufort - currently just a stop from Savannah to Charleston. Talked about activities for the group and they may consider a longer 1/2 day or overnight visit in the future. Sent maps, Foodie guide, Things to Do.

• Coordinated National Travel and Tourism Week with CVB colleagues, city staff and local businesses. Wrote and presented Proclamation to City Hall. Worked with Linda Roper and Lise Sundrla to organize NTTW Rally at City Hall on May 6th attended by City Council members, City Staff, BAHA representatives and several tourism partners.
Community Affairs

Tourism Product Development: The CVB staff secured advertising placement and grant funding for the Taste of Beaufort, Shrimp Fest and the Gullah festival in Beaufort for 2018-2019 FY. For more transparent records, a new checking account was established for the grant. Submission of receipts for checks to be cut have been processed for the 2018 Shrimp Festival.

Stakeholder Engagement: In March, Threshold had 6762 views (February had 5055 views), 1758 engagements with the videos, and 1528 completions. Estimated media value is $3,815. (Comparatively, in February, we had 1408 engagements and 1087 completions.) In April, Threshold had 5795 views, 1553 engagements, and 1211 completions. Estimated media value is $4,364.

Threshold 360 will be coming back to Beaufort at the end of the month to finish filming locations.

All new contacts from ABA and Travel South have been added to the Hubspot database for easy communication.

Strategic Plan and Administrative Activities

Administration: Magellan Strategy Group has completed their work and will be delivering the CVB Organizational plan to us in June 2019. The work is thorough and allows us to focus on next step strategies for further long term direction for both the organization and the destination. The timing is perfect as our Financial Assessment being conducted by CFOByDesign will be completed by the end of June 2019 and the two companies have been working with one another to ensure that both deliverables are in alignment strategically.