The View From Here

As a member of the board of directors for Niagara USA for nine years and Chairman for five, Frank Strangio has been instrumental in the growth and development of this region. His tireless contributions and truly collaborative spirit has led to a busy and productive year working together to take the region to new heights. Fortunately, he was able to find a few moments in the midst of his busy schedule to let us know how things were going.

Q. HOW HAVE THINGS PROGRESSED IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN NIAGARA USA OVER THE COURSE OF YOUR TENURE AS PRESIDENT?
A. There has been quite a rebirth in Niagara Falls, especially in the downtown corridor. Development is happening at a pace that I haven’t seen in my lifetime which is extremely encouraging. I have witnessed a lot more cooperation amongst all the community stakeholders which can only positively impact further growth.

Q. WHAT CAN WE DO MOVING FORWARD TO CONTINUE AND IMPROVE THE COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT ACROSS NIAGARA USA?
A. The most important thing is for all of us to think in terms of "we" and not "I." If we all work together, we will all do well and everybody prospers.

Q. WHAT DID YOU FEEL WAS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT ROLE AS A BOARD MEMBER?
A. Being a staunch advocate for the organization across the community. I believe in the mission of this organization, the goals as well as the team. The NTCC works and the numbers prove it. Open discussion amongst board members is extremely important and it can be healthy to not always agree with one another. In the end, being able to reach a consensus for the good of the organization and the destination is key.

Q. WHAT HAS YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF NIAGARA USA?
A. The current leadership that we have in place and the positive energy that is picking up steam. Thanks to the development boom, we can see and feel the progress and everyone — residents and visitors — are excited. The NTCC plays an enormous role in this. By continuing to spread the word and getting more visitors here, the development will continue to grow and the destination will expand.

I am proud to have been part of this organization for nine years. It was my honor to be able to serve as Chairman and work alongside such a dedicated and hardworking group of professionals.

TOURISM ECONOMICS

2015 Was a Record Breaking Year

Travelers to Niagara County spent a total of $608,837,000 in 2015. That represents an increase of 4.8% over 2014.

This includes:
- Lodging
- Recreation
- Food and Beverage
- Retail and Service Stations
- Transportation

$40,735,477 in local taxes were generated in 2015 by tourism, a 5.2% increase over 2014.

Combined with local and state tourism generated taxes, the reduced tax burden per Niagara County Household in 2015 was $841.

Niagara County employs 14,585 people making up 20% of the total workforce.

Source: Tourism Economics, a division of Oxford Economics produces the Economic Impact of Tourism in New York 2015 Calendar Year
Getting the Word out across the World

MARKETING PROGRAMS

Our advertising and marketing programs are created to motivate prospective visitors to vacation in Niagara USA. By developing inspiring and engaging content, we showcase the variety of experiences the destination has to offer through web, media and social channels. Through these channels we deliver relevant content that drive awareness and ultimately incremental visitation and sales to Niagara USA businesses.

NIAGARA USA 2015 CAMPAIGN IMPACT

$19.8 MILLION INCREMENTAL VISITOR SPENDING
328,582 WEBSITE VISITORS, AN INCREASE OF 275,000 MORE THAN 2014
20,000 LEADS GENERATED
10,104,236 IMPRESSIONS DELIVERED FROM OUR PROGRAMMATIC DIGITAL DISPLAY ADVERTISING
1,561,884 DOMESTIC EMAILS DELIVERED
54,940 INCREMENTAL PAID ROOM NIGHTS (Digital Display & Email Communications)

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

We live in a digital world and email has become an increasingly effective and cost-efficient way to target prospective visitors. We provide our high value consumers, engaging and relevant content after they opt in to receive our monthly communications. Starting the program in 2014, we executed a survey to our initial email subscriber list to seek insight for improving email content and ultimately improving visitation from among subscribers. The survey provided us direction on what our consumers wanted to see in our emails. Since August of 2014, we have delivered more than 3.5 million emails while continuing to build our database.

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DOMESTIC PROGRAMMATIC DIGITAL ADVERTISING

2015 Summer/Fall Campaign

Our goal was to deliver 7.5 million impressions geo-targeting key areas with themes including romantic getaways and family vacations across 40,000 sites. We created a powerful interactive ad unit to increase the chance of consumer engagement and inspiration. We tracked engagements of 745,015 with video views totaling 95,930.

Hotel Data

SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH DATA (STR REPORT)

$105.92 AVERAGE DAILY RATE (4.6% increase from 2014)
63.2% OCCUPANCY (decrease of .2% from 2014)
$66.95 REVPAR (4.4% increase from 2014)
Capturing the World’s Attention

**FROZEN FALLS**
Frozen Falls generated a global media frenzy with many media outlets coming into the destination and/or requesting photos and video. CNN, NY Times, CBS, MSN, The Weather Channel, Good Morning America online, Global News, The Guardian (U.K.), Baltimore Sun, and The LA Times were among a sampling of the global outlets highlighting the Falls.

**MEDIA PROMOTIONS**
We hosted several journalists and bloggers in market including National Geographic, USA Today, BBC, AM NY and Mook Taiwan (travel guide) as well as journalists from Midwest Travel Writers Association, a leading organization for travel journalists.

**LET’S MAKE A DEAL**

**A Digital Wonder**

**WEBSITE VISITATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 WEBSITE VISITATION: 1,807,719</th>
<th>2015 PAGE VIEWS: 5,845,740</th>
<th>2015 UNIQUE VISITS: 1,444,268</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70% INCREASE OVER 2014</td>
<td>67% INCREASE OVER 2014</td>
<td>62% INCREASE OVER 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOOK DIRECT**
Our Book Direct online reservation referral system launched March 2, 2015. This new platform allows consumers to view available accommodations or attraction partners and their rates during a specified date range and click direct to their reservation page. The new platform follows researched trends that consumers prefer to book direct with the actual hotel/attraction rather than through a third party. This platform allows our partners to manage their reservations and rates more efficiently.

**BOOK DIRECT VISITATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>222,450 SEARCHES THROUGH BOOK DIRECT</th>
<th>13,587 ACTIVITY &amp; EVENT REFERRALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94,181 CLICK THROUGH TO HOTEL SITES</td>
<td>12,497 PACKAGE REFERRALS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SELECTED AS AMERICA’S BEST KID-FRIENDLY DESTINATION BY USA TODAY**

| 402 DESTINATION ARTICLES/BLOGS WRITTEN BY MEDIA | 724,272,197 MEDIA IMPRESSIONS (Individual Views) |
Social Media

FUN PHOTO

The digital arena is a great place to engage visitors and turn them into Brand Ambassadors. This year we utilized Instagram and Twitter to run our Fun Photo contest which enticed people to share their photos of the region with the rest of the world.

FACEBOOK & TWITTER GROUP STATS

75,133 INTERACTIONS
BY 63,662 UNIQUE USERS
11,512,190 POTENTIAL REACH

FACEBOOK DEMOGRAPHICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE &amp; GENDER</th>
<th>TOP COUNTRIES</th>
<th>TOP CITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-17</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Buffalo, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Niagara Falls, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Cleveland, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This contest launched the use of our new social media outlet Pinterest and generated a following of 330 participants. To date we have almost 600 followers.

Our Department of First Impressions

For us, it is a privilege and honor to make sure everyone’s first exposure to Niagara USA is a positive one.

VISITOR CENTER

The Niagara USA Official Visitor Center welcomed
- 106,233 visitors from over 80 countries.
- A 159% increase of traffic over 2014!

The Niagara USA Volunteer Greeter program assisted in welcoming
- 21 convention groups.
- 13 motor coach groups.
- 2,443 visitors at Niagara Falls State Park.

Investing in Our Partners

EXP TRAINING

We introduced our new EXP Program in 2015. This new training program provides the Niagara USA hospitality and tourism community with the training needed to enhance visitor experiences by educating them on our destination’s tourism product as well as customer service training specifically designed for the visitor. This is a FREE program and can be accessed from any computer, tablet or mobile device.

DAY OF APPRECIATION

We launched the Day of Appreciation, May 6, 2015 to celebrate all hospitality employees and their contribution to the area’s tourism industry. Food and entertainment were enjoyed by over 400 attendees. Tourism is the second largest employer in Niagara County, employing approximately 14,585 people or 20% of the total workforce.
Global Initiatives

- Partnering with ViaAir, a charter airline that brings visitors from New York City directly to Niagara Falls, purchasing day trip packages sold through Viator (a TripAdvisor subsidiary). In 2015, ViaAir brought 2,259 people to Niagara USA. A 130% increase over 2014.
- Secured additional Niagara USA product within packages sold by Dongbu, a large South Korean tour operator who previously has featured little of the American side of the Falls.
- Met with tour operators at World Travel Market and bought into a co-op with America As You Like It, a U.K. tour operator.
- Collaborated with the State of New York to host a familiarization tour with U.K., Germany, and Irish tour operators resulting in a collateral piece prominently featuring “How To Sell New York State” including Niagara USA. This piece is used as a training tool in the U.K. for businesses selling travel to the U.S.
- Attended the 2015 International Pow Wow (IPW), the travel industry’s premier international marketplace and the largest generator of Visit U.S.A. travel, in partnership with Fashion Outlets of Niagara, Hard Rock Café, Niagara Jet Adventures, Whirlpool Jet Boats and Niagara Adventure Theatre. Participated in 93 appointments with international tour operators resulting in 73 leads for Niagara USA partners and new business booked with IPW participants.
- L & L Tours, a Chinese receptive operator, brought 150,000 Chinese visitors to Niagara USA. A 25% increase over 2014.

A “WONDER”FUL INITIATIVE

Wine, Water & Wonders of Upstate New York (WWW) continues to be a successful multi region marketing program. In December of 2015, WWW was awarded a $400,000 grant from the State of New York, which will allow WWW to broaden the marketing reach into Australia and continue expanding efforts in China, U.K., France and Germany. WWW will also begin to expand visibility through consumer channels.

INTERNATIONAL WEBSITES

Germany, U.K. and Australia are top countries of origin clicking on Niagara USA city page on the VisitTheUSA.com and GoUSA.com websites with a total of 2884 page views of the enhanced Niagara USA page: http://www.visittheusa.com/usa/states/new-york/cities/niagara-usa.aspx
WWW and Brand U.S.A., were part of a video production produced in Mandarin and posted on the Discover America website which is now VisitTheUSA.com

International Connections

THE INSPIRATION GUIDE

The Inspiration Guide is an international print publication, in collaboration with Brand USA, featuring partners in formatted “advertorial” style layouts. Over 550,000 print copies are distributed in 21 markets. This includes 10 languages and 13 versions of the Guide.

TAIWAN TRAVEL GUIDE

Mook Taiwan publishing was met at IPW 2015 at the Media Marketplace. After the meeting, they included Niagara USA in their Travel Guide focusing on the East Coast of the U.S. The Guide Book is printed in Traditional Chinese and the majority is distributed throughout China in bookstores and convenience stores focusing on the business and leisure traveler.

Buffalo and Niagara Canadian Digital Campaign

In 2015, Niagara USA and Visit Buffalo continued their collaboration with an annual marketing program targeting Southern Ontario. The “girlfriend getaway” was inspired by testing a variety of interest areas digitally and showed the highest engagement. The joint initiative continues to be supported by Brand USA and I Love NY grants.

Canadian Email Communications

54.5 MILLION INCREMENTAL VISITOR SPENDING

431K EMAILS DELIVERED 92K WEBSITE VISITS GENERATED 19K LEADS GENERATED
Get Your Motor Running

Group traffic has always been a significant part of our annual growth. As such we make a concentrated effort to reach out and connect with tour operators to educate them on how profitable a destination Niagara USA can be for them.

**TRADE SHOWS**

- Group Leader Shows: attended 5 including Pennsylvania Bus Association, Breakaway Tours Travel Show and Trans Bridge Group Leader show in PA, Great Day Marketplace in Cleveland and Greater NJ Motorcoach Association.
- Participated in consumer shows to increase visibility and engage interested consumers in OH, NY, FL, PA, MA, CT and Toronto.

**CONVENTION SALES**

We are World-Class Hosts

From the grandeur of the region to adrenaline-pumping activities, we are uniquely positioned to be the perfect hosts for regional and national conventions. In fact, convention sales continue to build a strong presence in New York State and National Association marketplaces.

**CONFERENCES**

- Conventions that NTCC booked and were held in 2015: 28 total - Estimated Economic Impact - $9,741,030*
- Conventions that NTCC booked for future dates: 23 total - Estimated Economic Impact - $3,765,126*

**Return on Investment** — 18 to 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOTORCOACH TOURS*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>99</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$929,350</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$1,100,560</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$223,610</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$2,253,520</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRADE SHOWS**

- 11 Domestic tour operator shows
- Met with 323 tour operators

Group Leader Shows: attended 5 including Pennsylvania Bus Association, Breakaway Tours Travel Show and Trans Bridge Group Leader show in PA, Great Day Marketplace in Cleveland and Greater NJ Motorcoach Association.

- Participated in consumer shows to increase visibility and engage interested consumers in OH, NY, FL, PA, MA, CT and Toronto.

**Return on Investment** — 63 to 1

*Not all motorcoach business is reported to NTCC. **Groups booked and assisted in 2015 may not arrive in same calendar year.

*EEI formula for conventions is $192 per person per day based on Longwoods Travel USA research.
The Inside Scoop on Our Outdoor Activities

Niagara USA is known for the wide variety of outdoor activities it has to offer—and we’re making sure that it is well known. From articles in national publications to hosting national events, we are recognized as a destination of choice for outdoor enthusiasts everywhere.

**PUBLICATIONS**

TV, radio, digital and print advertising in key markets have increased our exposure in publications including Wisconsin Outdoors, Illinois Outdoors, Great Lakes Angler, Lake Ontario Outdoors, Outdoor Guide (mid-west), Lake Ontario Counties Trout and Salmon Newspaper, NY Outdoor News Newspaper, Lake Ontario United.

Approximately 30 visiting media over the course of the year including publications like Bassmaster Magazine, FLW Outdoors, Fishing 411 TV Show, Point-Click-Shoot TV Show, Mid-West Outdoors TV, Great Lakes Angler, Ken Schultz Outdoors and many more. Niagara USA had excellent outdoor coverage representing over 200 articles, TV shows, radio shows and blogs with a readership of over 15 million combined.

**FISHING & OUTDOOR EXPO**

The Greater Niagara Fishing and Outdoor Expo was held at the Conference and Event Center Niagara Falls for its second year, doubling attendance to over 7,000. Booth space from vendors sold out. This provided additional overnight stays in Niagara Falls hotels, generating revenue for local businesses in January, a typically slower month.

**THE BEAT GOES ON**

The Outdoor Beat, hosted by Bill Hills Jr., has just completed its first year. It has become one of the most popular outdoor shows on LCTV in Western New York.
FILM INDUSTRY

A Rising Star

Niagara USA has seen an increase of film crews coming in to capture the panorama of the region. From documentaries to dramas, our region has become a celebrity in its own right, providing the perfect backdrop to tell stories of all kinds.

MOVIE & TV PRODUCTION

We continue our support of the Buffalo Niagara Film Commission in their marketing of the Niagara Region for movie and television production. Due to their efforts, Niagara County saw 137 production days, with 611 hotel room nights booked. That translates into an economic impact of $3,656,000.

GREAT AMERICAN RAILROAD JOURNEYS

BBC Network’s “Great American Railroad Journeys” traveled to Niagara to shoot a segment at the Falls for broadcast to millions of viewers across Europe and Asia.

FILM INDUSTRY

A Brand New World is Coming

As stewards of a global icon, we understand the need for a brand that plays well on the world stage. That’s why in 2015, we started an initiative to re-brand the entire region to differentiate Niagara USA from other destinations. We want a brand that celebrates the uniqueness of our region, one that all our partners can proudly get behind. Launching in 2017, our new brand will provide us with:

• An authentic destination brand that will drive additional awareness, overnight visitation, and increased spending to Niagara County.
• A competitive assessment of Niagara USA based upon research.
• Establish a clear brand promise that clarifies what the destination offers and sets it apart from other competitive destinations.
• A value proposition statement.
• A long-term brand strategy that guides future sales and marketing of the destination and will include stakeholders throughout the county.
• The emotional brand drivers for Niagara County as a destination and, based on research, create a sustainable destination position statement for the county.
• Brand identity options and an identifying name for the destination.
• Suggested metrics for measuring the impact of the new brand and tracking results.
• A brand standards manual for the destination, in both online and offline formats.

NFL Films used Niagara Falls as a key location for “The Four Falls of Buffalo” which was televised on ESPN and told the story of the Buffalo Bills’ four consecutive trips to the Superbowl.

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2015 Board of Directors

**BUSINESS**
- Deanna Alterio-Brennen – Niagara USA Chamber
- Anthony Brindisi – Keller Insurance
- Thomas Deal – Deal Realty
- Kevin Schuler – LP Ciminelli
- Michael Fiore – The Village Bake Shoppe

**HOSPITALITY**
- Ron Droegmyer – Sheraton at the Falls
- Barb Hughes – Webster’s Bistro
- Duncan Ross – Arrowhead Spring Winery
- Frank Strangio – Quality Inn Niagara

**INVESTOR**
- Mayor Paul Dyster – City of Niagara Falls
- Tom Callahan – Lockport Representative
- Henry Wojtaszek – Investor Appt Niagara County

**EX-OFFICIO**
- Angela Berti – NYS Parks
- Chris Schoepflin – USA Niagara Development

2015 Board Committees

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
- Frank Strangio – Chairman
- Anthony Brindisi – Vice Chair
- Deanna Alterio-Brennen – Treasurer
- Thomas Deal – Secretary

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**
- Frank Strangio
- Ron Droegmyer
- Anthony Brindisi
- Duncan Ross
- Deanna Alterio-Brennen
- Kevin Schuler

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**
- Frank Strangio
- Barb Hughes
- Thomas Deal
- Michael Fiore

**MARKETING AD HOC**
- Frank Strangio
- Ron Droegmyer
- Barb Hughes
- Angela Berti
- Duncan Ross

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**2015 NTCC Financials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE</th>
<th>% OF REVENUE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niagara Falls Bed Tax</td>
<td>$1,740,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockport Bed Tax</td>
<td>$82,959</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niagara County Bed Tax</td>
<td>$118,451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Generated Revenue</td>
<td>$437,657</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casino Funds used</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>$1,134,219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer and Group Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention and Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Promotion</td>
<td>$97,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and Administration</td>
<td>$180,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$4,073,914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our Mission

The mission of the Niagara Tourism & Convention Corporation (NTCC) is to expand the economic prosperity of the Niagara USA communities by generating individual and group visitation.