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Overview
Overview

In this strategic planning method for Destination Niagara USA’s sales & marketing plan, we utilize an integrated approach to target three distinct customer-focused groups (leisure traveler, meeting planner and local community). We apply diverse perspectives throughout our entire organization to create a holistic plan with the best ideas for success in achieving Destination Niagara USA’s overall goals and objectives.

As we continue to build on the foundational strength of the Niagara Falls USA brand, and communicate the feeling, position and promise of Niagara Falls USA as a destination, we focus on our organizational strategic plan including:

- Drive increased overnight room demand.
- Advocacy for Destination Niagara USA’s value proposition and long-term funding.
- Product development to sustain long-term growth.
- Destination Niagara USA’s ROI tracking and reporting.
Overview

We are continuing to see the success of the Niagara Falls USA brand in the following areas:

- Enhanced destination awareness, customer conversion and competitive advantage.
- Alignment of our destination’s strategic goals and measurable marketing/sales programming.
- Integrated support from partners on main destination messaging and community vision.
- Increased opportunities for coordinated and reinforced destination and visitor industry marketing messages.
- Further definition of competitive advantage.
Overview

Our strong brand reaches across all of our market segments and provides a pathway to engage all visitors to embrace their adventurous side with a brand voice that is, PROUD, BOLD, FUN, GENUINE, CHALLENGING, NATURAL and INSPIRING.

To position all of our messaging consistent with the brand, and ensure best practices, we developed both a brand promise and a brand positioning statement.

Our Brand Promise is our promise to prospective visitors on what type of experience they can expect when visiting Niagara Falls USA.
Niagara Falls USA—anchored by one of the world’s most astonishing natural wonders—is a land of stunning vistas and waterways. From the majesty and power of Niagara Falls, to scenic river gorges, lakes, beaches, streams and the historic Erie Canal—the area will inspire you with extraordinary landscapes and activities. Experience living history, arts and culture or trek through pristine hiking trails—and discover local flavors when you shop, dine and explore. The region is dotted with the simple goodness of orchards, wineries and breweries offering agri-tourism that will delight nature lovers and foodies alike. Niagara Falls USA offers a remarkable blend of natural beauty and outdoor adventure—visit us and then you will understand why this is where adventure comes naturally.
Brand Positioning Statement

Our Brand Positioning Statement provides us with a platform that guides all of our marketing, sales and communication programs and materials:

For those who would rather go and do rather than just see, Niagara Falls USA is the embodiment of America’s adventurous spirit, connecting people to nature through immersive experiences that move, challenge and inspire them.

With our branding program supporting a targeted approach to all of our sales and marketing efforts, we anticipate increases in:

- Visitor spending
- Length of stay
- Traffic to other areas of the destination beyond the Falls
Leisure Traveler
Customer Based Destination
Sales & Marketing Plan
As we launched several successful seasonal campaigns in 2019, we continue to learn what engages the consumer and what paid media drives bookings. Our markets through our paid efforts show high engagement with NYC, Washington DC, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Boston and Cleveland. Our website shows origin markets including NYC, Cleveland, Chicago, Philadelphia Washington DC, Pittsburgh and Boston which aligns predominantly with our paid media origin markets.

Through more personalization and understanding of our consumer’s path to purchase, we continue to evolve and provide specific content for that specific traveler persona. We have expanded our families and couples focus as that content is driving the highest performance in level of engagement and bookings.

As NYC continues to be a top origin market for the destination, we will again be activating, along with our targeted digital campaign efforts, an out of home (OOH) campaign, utilizing street furniture throughout the City. “The Other Side of New York” drove over 3.4 million impressions with 24,900 clicks through to our landing page. The average time on site was over 4 minutes which shows extremely high engagement.
Tourism Impact

$752,676,000*
TOTAL SPENT BY TRAVELERS IN NIAGARA COUNTY IN 2018

6.3% INCREASE OVER 2017

$49,858,759*
IN LOCAL TAXES WERE GENERATED IN 2018 BY TOURISM
A 9.5% INCREASE OVER 2017

Niagara County Employs
16,373
22.6% of the Total Workforce

*Source: Tourism Economics: Economic Impact of Tourism in New York 2018
Paid Media Top Origins Market

- New York City: 16.1%
- Washington DC: 5.8%
- Chicago: 4.9%
- Philadelphia: 4.7%
- Cleveland: 4.3%
- San Francisco/Bay Area: 4.2%
- Los Angeles: 4.1%
- Boston: 3.7%
- Atlanta: 3.7%
- Dallas/Ft Worth: 2.3%
Organic Search Top Hotel Booking Origin Markets

1. New York City: 12.0%
2. Cleveland: 4.9%
3. Chicago: 4.2%
4. Washington DC: 4.2%
5. Philadelphia: 4.2%
6. Pittsburgh: 3.3%
7. Boston: 2.9%
8. Buffalo: 2.7%
9. San Francisco: 2.6%
10. Columbus: 2.4%
Paid Media Age Distribution

- **18-24**: 0.3% impressions, 0.2% conversions
- **25-34**: 9.5% impressions, 10.9% conversions
- **35-44**: 30.2% impressions, 34.3% conversions
- **45-54**: 31.1% impressions, 32.3% conversions
- **55-64**: 19.3% impressions, 16.6% conversions
- **65+**: 9.5% impressions, 5.7% conversions

% Impressions and % Conversions
Organic Search Age Distribution

Age Distribution:

- 18-24: 0.5%
- 25-34: 14.5%
- 35-44: 30.9%
- 45-54: 29.7%
- 55-64: 16.8%
- 65+: 7.7%
Paid Media Household Income

% Impressions | % Conversions
---|---
<$49K | 11.7% | 9.7%
$50K-$99K | 34.6% | 31.0%
$100K-$149K | 42.7% | 45.2%
$150K-$199K | 8.5% | 10.9%
$200K-$249K | 2.4% | 3.1%
$250K+ | 0.1% | 0.0%
Paid Media Trip Planning Window

Hotel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>First Search to Book</th>
<th>Book to Arrival</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.6</td>
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<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Booking

First Search to Book

Book to Arrival
Organic Search Trip Planning Window

- Hotel:
  - 11 Days First Search to Book
  - 36.8 Days Book to Arrival

- Flight:
  - 10.5 Days First Search to Book
  - 50.3 Days Book to Arrival
Top Line Strategies

- Generate incremental leisure travel, room nights and economic impact.
- Continue to build comprehensive travel-trade and meetings strategy.
- Increase data insight to refine audience targeting and measuring impact.
- Destination stewardship by balancing economic development, sustainable tourism and quality of life.
- Community alignment by building public support around a shared vision for the destination.
- Digital conversion connecting with visitors on mobile devices to drive real-time sales in-destination.
Leisure Group Traveler

The leisure group market has seen a continuation of decline from the Ontario, Canada group market due to the unfavorable exchange rate with the U.S. dollar. The Canadian motor coach groups are staying on the Canadian side to experience attractions, restaurants and hotel stays for less money but will still visit to shop in Niagara Falls USA. We are planning to participate in Ontario Motorcoach Association marketplace this year to better understand what the Canadian Tour Operators are planning for 2021 and see if we can position for future trending.

We will continue to focus our efforts on growing the student youth market. We will be increasing visibility at the SYTA Annual Conference by having a booth on the trade show floor. We are also planning on hosting a student tour operator FAM and educational forum with Tour Operators from across the U.S. to gain insight on what student groups are looking for when choosing a destination.

Our origin markets continue to be New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. We are going to expand our sales efforts into Michigan, Ontario and Virginia to ensure visibility in those markets for Niagara Falls USA.
As our budget has decreased for 2020, we continue to stay focused and targeted by leveraging our current partnerships in Niagara Falls USA and identifying new potential partners outside of our destination such as I LOVE NY, Brand USA, Wine, Water & Wonders of NY State, compatible product destinations such as Discover Long Island and NYC, airlines and rental car companies, to expand our visibility and opportunities in key markets.

As we look at the global economy we do see it slowing with the trade war effects and financial market turmoil heading the list. However, France, India, Canada, Mexico and the UK were the top tourist generating countries in 2018 and continue to do so. Brand USA has stated that India will become a strong opportunity market in the very near future. The changing profile of the Indian traveler offers great opportunity. The Indian visitor is well-informed, sophisticated and educated. They are increasingly looking for rich experiences through a variety of things to do, one being adventure and outdoor activities, now in high demand matching Niagara Falls USA brand attributes.
Destination Niagara USA has been involved with Outdoor Promotions for over 10 years as the result of an agreement with Niagara County to assume the responsibilities of the Sportfishing Promotion Program. Since then, the program has expanded to include other popular outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, birding and boating.

In 2020, the Outdoor Sports budget will accommodate the same number of sport, travel and outdoor shows from 2019 but will expand to Suffern, Somerset, NJ, Harrisburg, PA and Springfield, MA shows. New in 2020 will be Columbus, OH, replacing Monroeville, PA. Attendance at all shows is over 500,000 attendees. While it’s not easy to gauge success of these consumer shows, we feel that they are very effective due to key individual contacts, media contacts and contacts with local fishing/outdoor groups.
Utilize Strengths

1. Natural resources.
2. Globally recognized.
3. Visitor offerings – we have several very unique product offerings in the downtown corridor.
4. Brand defined destination.
5. Walkability of downtown Niagara Falls USA.
Utilize Strengths cont.

6. Improved hotel product.
7. Affordability.
8. Close proximity to highly populated market areas.
9. Temperate climate during high visitation times of year.
Mitigate Weaknesses

1. Travel patterns – how to increase day trips into overnight/low winter occupancy and how to increase shoulder seasons.
2. Downtown parking/traffic and public transportation limitations.
3. Limited winter activities.
4. Competitor (Niagara Falls, Canada) offers expanded experiences.
5. Perception that Canadian view is better.
6. Wayfinding
7. Lack of year-round retail and attraction products throughout Niagara County.
8. Inconsistent customer service awareness of attraction products across Niagara County.
Monitor Opportunities

1. Expand visitor markets - niche audiences/international efforts/
   *bleisure/fly markets (*bleisure is a person traveling for business and leisure).

2. Leisure Group sales partnerships.

3. Transportation relationships - airline opportunities and airport.

4. Targeted sales calls for meetings, international and group leisure markets.
Monitor Opportunities cont.

5. Leverage Brand to expand visibility and awareness in meetings, domestic and international markets.

6. Impact meeting attendee experience for leisure visitation.

7. Influence conference attendees to add pre and post leisure activities to their meeting schedule.

8. Expand awareness of things to do throughout Niagara County for in-market visitors to extend their stay.

9. Expand product throughout all seasons.
Prepare for Contingencies or Threats

1. Weather and environmental hazards
2. Economy
3. Competition
4. International currency flux
5. Political situations (funding)
6. Visa issues
7. Terrorism
8. Epidemics
OBJECTIVE 1

Continue to generate an increase in incremental leisure hotel room nights and incremental leisure travel spend in Niagara Falls USA.
S T R A T E G Y

Launch targeted, integrated marketing campaigns over need periods (spring, fall, winter) for tourism related businesses including accommodations, retail, attractions and restaurants.
Tactics

- Place strategic digital, including programmatic, paid search and social media buys promoting Niagara Falls USA to consumers in targeted media markets to drive incremental visitation, spending and repeat business.

- Highlight creative of the Falls but also focus on activities beyond the Falls showcasing the variety the destination offers and encouraging multiple night stays.

- Utilize all digital channels to amplify the targeted messaging.

- Continue to test new distribution channels.

- Expand target audiences more inclined to travel during need periods ie: couples getaway in spring and fall, etc.

- Promote packages with lodging, retail, activities and dining partners to offer vacation options during need periods.
Tactics cont.

- Use PR Agency to pitch stories of the destination through credible media sources.
- Plan a quarterly content calendar to guide messaging, timing and placement.
- Create partnerships with motor coach-friendly attractions and hotels to offer shoulder season and winter packages. Distribute information to tour operator database and during sales calls/appointments at trade shows.
S T R A T E G Y

Encourage meetings attendees to add a pre and/or post leisure stay.
Tactics

- Develop and distribute (far in advance of the meeting) hotel packages that encourage meeting attendees to extend their stay in the destination for pleasure.
- Build a meeting planner marketing tool kit including photography and video, logos, pre-written destination copy blocks (could be included on our microsite), email template, and social media graphics to allow meeting planners to promote their upcoming meeting in Niagara Falls USA.
STRATEGY

Educate international travel influencers (media and travel trade) on Niagara Falls USA attributes that are most attractive to each country’s market.
Tactics

- Continue building/reinforcing relationships with international tour operators to include additional attraction products to existing itineraries and/or establish new itineraries.
- Develop story ideas relevant to each market and distribute through country representatives if available.
- Evaluate VisaVue research to continue targeting high value international consumers by geographical location.
- Maintain and increase relationships through continued dialogue with Receptive Tour Operators (RTOs) and Tour Operators (TOs) on customer insights.
- Identify online booking channels for priority countries to increase Niagara Falls USA content.
- Leverage Wine Water & Wonders marketing program to provide additional itinerary options.
STRATEGY

Convert day-trippers to overnight leisure visitors and extend the stay.
Tactics

- Survey day trippers from various data points to determine what would encourage them to spend at least one night.

- Execute an in-market survey program through the Visitor Center during summer hours to determine why day trip visitors aren’t spending the night to provide another data overlay.

- Develop high visitation, high value drive market campaigns focused on overnight visitation for regional audiences.
Tactics cont.

- Continue current travel trade incentive plan to tour operators, adding additional benefits for overnight stay.
- Create packages with lodging partners including a focus on activities that draw day trippers with overnight options.
- Create content and provide itinerary options to encourage overnight stays.
S T R A T E G Y

Increase motor coach groups to Niagara County by 15% over previous year.
Tactics

- Target geographical areas where we are seeing growth (PA, OH, MI, and VA).
- Sales calls to OH and MI to increase motorcoach business from those markets.
- Continue sales calls to local motorcoach companies.
- Prospect for new business using reports from our CRM (customer relationship management) system, tradeshow databases, industry research and by monitoring downtown Niagara Falls USA motorcoach parking.
- Send out relevant and timely yearly mailers to domestic tour operator database.
- Re-connect with Ontario, Canada Tour Operators to better understand trending from the Canadian market.
Tactics cont.

- Direct follow up to leads produced from phone calls, appointments and past visits.
- Work with partners to develop more interactive/hands-on group experiences.
- Strategically partner with hotels and attractions on their low volume times.
- Create promotional packages that are geared specifically toward leisure groups.
- Send information via email blasts and incorporate with sales calls/appointment shows.
- Develop student motorcoach advisory groups to better understand those markets and increase number of groups in those areas.
OBJECTIVE 2

Increase the leisure traveler’s overall destination experience and guest satisfaction levels while they are planning a trip to Niagara Falls USA or are in Niagara Falls USA for a leisure vacation or getaway.
S T R A T E G Y

Connect with all in-market visitors (leisure travelers, meeting attendees, travel trade customers) via one-on-one personalized customer service. Share the brand story to drive repeat visitation and positive word of mouth endorsements for Niagara Falls USA.
Tactics

• Utilize the Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center to directly impact the visitor experience of the 130k+ visitors that walk through our doors each year.
  • Promote the Visitor Center (VC) as an ‘Official Visitor Center’ and the go-to resource for destination information and trip planning.
  • Provide exemplary customer service and personalized assistance.
  • Tell the story and message of the Niagara Falls USA brand through personalized assistance, exhibits, collateral and digital enhancements.
  • Offer one-of-a-kind branded merchandise for visitors to purchase and serve as “walking billboards” that promotes the iconic Niagara Falls USA brand all over the world.
  • Assist with attraction ticketing in an effort to becoming a true one-stop-shop resource for visitors in the destination.
  • Script interactions with visitors to gain insight and reinforce marketing message of seasonal highlights.
Promote EXP Niagara, the Official Destination Education & Visitor Services Online Training Program to Niagara Falls USA tourism partners to ensure their employees are educated on the destination’s tourism products and customer service best practices.

- Communicate with Niagara Falls USA tourism partners through e-newsletters and direct outreach to ensure they are aware of the EXP program and its benefits in order to enroll their employees.
- Connect with Niagara Falls USA residents through printed publications offering the EXP program to local communities to increase destination awareness and enhance sense of community pride.
- Expand the EXP program into the Niagara Falls school system to increase local pride and destination awareness.
- Provide travel trade the EXP program to increase their product knowledge and brand positioning for consumer sales.
Utilize the Niagara Falls USA Greeter Program to add enhanced experiences to meeting attendees, motor coach groups, passengers arriving to the Niagara Falls International Airport and within Niagara Falls State Park.

- Offer Greeter services to meetings and with motor coach groups when necessary and schedule appropriately.
- Connect with local university to coordinate intercept surveys in and around Niagara Falls State Park using “On-The-Go” branded bike.
- Expand programming at Niagara Falls International Airport greeter station to include scripting conversations with travelers for insight and reinforcing the marketing message.
- Create collateral pieces to aid the visitor in navigating the destination and expanding on their experience within the Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center and the destination, where appropriate.
- Produce and distribute Downtown Niagara Falls USA Walking Map, Niagara County Map, Downtown Niagara Falls USA Parking Map, Fishing & Outdoor Activities Map, and Niagara Falls USA suggested itineraries.
Tactics cont.

- **Utilize Niagara Falls USA digital assets by developing in-market resources that provide immersive and useful content.**
  - Continue to build enhanced mobile experience that caters to each visitor’s unique desires and interests.
  - Share and post visitor generated content on all social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google, Pinterest and YouTube.
  - Continue to provide visitors timely responses to social media inquiries.
  - Continue to post up to date events, content, videos, blogs, and develop a special offers/promotions web page.
  - Create website-landing pages with content that meets the current visitor needs.
  - Research and develop tools to assist visitors with disabilities plan their stay and help avoid any circumstances that might hinder their experience in the destination.

- **Expand messaging and visibility of the Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center to provide personalized Niagara Falls USA experiences.**
  - Connect with NFTA Metro with advertising on bus routes between Niagara Falls USA and Buffalo Niagara International Airport.
  - Refresh branding at Niagara Falls International Airport Greeter station to increase brand visibility with Airport travelers.
OBJECTIVE 3

Increase global awareness for Niagara Falls USA.
S T R A T E G Y

Increase brand awareness for Niagara Falls USA through brand building initiatives on a global scale that creates a more positive impact for Niagara Falls USA beyond the Canadian side.
Tactics

- Develop a “big idea” guerilla-marketing tactic that will increase global brand awareness and generate far reaching media interest in Niagara Falls USA.

- Continue to build compelling video storytelling content.

- Attend outdoor-focused consumer trade shows throughout the Northeast and other key market areas for niche markets.
Integrate new direction from brand research along with imagery into all integrated marketing campaigns, initiatives, business units and throughout the destination.
Tactics

- Develop integrated campaigns across all channels targeting Niagara Falls USA market personas.
- Engage additional market segments through strategic media placement and content development.
- Continue to build library of imagery, video assets and messaging to support brand and highest performing market segments.
- Integrate and leverage new destination assets in communications.
S T R A T E G Y

Increase global brand awareness of Niagara Falls USA as a tourism destination through positive earned media coverage showcasing the destination and its attributes with an emphasis on garnering high-profile media placements.
Tactics

- Continue to work with our public relations firm to educate journalists and travel writers about Niagara Falls USA through pitches and in-market familiarization tours.
- Attend outdoor travel media events providing compelling story ideas.
Event Calendars
# Leisure Group Sales Event Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>STAFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 9-15</td>
<td>American Bus Association (ABA)</td>
<td>Omaha, NE</td>
<td>TM, JP, HA, LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 28-March 1</td>
<td>Heartland Travel Showcase (Heart)</td>
<td>Lansing, MI</td>
<td>TM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2-3</td>
<td>Michigan Sales Calls</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>TM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 24</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA) Marketplace</td>
<td>York, PA</td>
<td>HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Breakaway Travel Show</td>
<td>New Castle, PA</td>
<td>HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22-25</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Bus Association Sales Retreat</td>
<td>Bethlehem, PA</td>
<td>TM</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 13-15</td>
<td>Student Travel Planner forum</td>
<td>Niagara Falls, NY</td>
<td>TM</td>
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<td>July 27-29</td>
<td>Ohio Sales Mission</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>TM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 14-18</td>
<td>Student &amp; Youth Travel Association (SYTA)</td>
<td>Winnipeg, MB</td>
<td>TM, HA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 25-28</td>
<td>Virginia Motorcoach Association (VMA) Regional Meeting</td>
<td>Harrisburg, VA</td>
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<td>Nov. 1-3</td>
<td>Bus Assoc. of New York Marketplace (BANY)</td>
<td>Cooperstown, NY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 8-11</td>
<td>Ontario Motorcoach Association (OMCA)</td>
<td>Niagara Falls, ON</td>
<td>TM</td>
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Staff: Tina Mt. Pleasant, Director Leisure Group Sales (TM), Holly Avino (HA)
Contact: tmtpleasant@niagarafallsusa.com, 716-282-8992 x. 315
### International Sales Event Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 3-5</td>
<td>IITA Summit</td>
<td>St Petersburg, FL</td>
<td>AG</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 30–June 3</td>
<td>USTA IPW</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
<td>JP, JG, TM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 21-25</td>
<td>Brand USA Travel Week Europe</td>
<td>London UK</td>
<td>JG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 5-9</td>
<td>Brand USA Travel Week India</td>
<td>New Delhi, India</td>
<td>JP</td>
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Staff: Julie Gilbert, VP Sales & Marketing (JG)
Contact: jgilbert@niagarafallsusa.com, 716-282-8992 x310
### Outdoor Promotions Event Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 18-20*</td>
<td>Greater Niagara Outdoor Fishing Expo</td>
<td>Niagara Falls, NY</td>
<td>BH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 15-17</td>
<td>Pittsburgh - Allegheny Sport Show</td>
<td>Monroeville, PA</td>
<td>BH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 16-19</td>
<td>Assoc. of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers (AGLOW)</td>
<td>LaCrosse, WI</td>
<td>BH</td>
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Staff: Bill Hilts, Outdoor Promotions Director (BH)
Contact: bhilts@niagarafallsusa.com | 716-282-8992 x303
*Denotes Hosting Event in Niagara Falls USA
# Media Event Calendar

<table>
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<td>July TBD</td>
<td>Philadelphia Media Desk Side Meetings</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>LW, KI</td>
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</table>

Staff: Libby Woock, Director of Marketing (LW) | Krystina Iacovelli, Communications Manager (KI)  
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Meetings & Conventions
Customer Based Destination
Sales & Marketing Plan
Meetings Market

The meetings and convention sales department has increased visibility of Niagara Falls USA to the meetings market by integrating targeted marketing programming and destination positioning highlighting our unique sales proposition as a sought after meetings destination.
Utilize Strengths

- Globally known bucket list destination
- Accessibility to county-wide attractions
- Marketing support
- Motivated sales staff with partner support
- Strong brand and positioning
- Incentives
- Economical
Mitigate Weaknesses

- Perception
- Location for certain targeted markets such as the NY State Association.
- Lack of additional walkable attractions outside of Niagara Falls State Park.
Monitor Opportunities

- Increase customer awareness of destination.
- Develop & execute targeted meetings marketing.
- Leverage local resources.
- Create an Ambassador program.
- Continue to market the destination and the increase of meeting hotel inventory to the meetings market.
- Individual personalized site visits.
- Attend targeted tradeshows.
Monitor Opportunities cont.

- Incentive plan for booking business in Niagara Falls USA.
- Co-op with local partners.
- Product development.
- Position destination as ideally sized for small to medium sized groups.
Get Ready for Contingencies or Threats

- Weather and environmental hazards.
- Economy
- Epidemics
- Competition
- Nearby competition claiming attractions as part of their inventory.
- Rates and room block availability during summer season.
OBJECTIVE 1

Generate 15% increase in contracted room nights*

*Destinations International Event Impact Calculator will be utilized for measuring economic impact for meetings & conventions.
STRATEGY

Promote Niagara Falls USA meetings brand. Advance the unique brand of Niagara Falls USA group meeting sales through experiential touch-points; cohesive and effective messaging and strong media outreach opportunities.
Tactics

- Adopt and refine the Niagara Falls USA brand campaign for multiple and varied selling environments and tactics through custom imagery and powerful messaging, emphasizing how the Niagara Falls USA brand is consistent with each meeting planner’s organization.
- Work with marketing department to create a list of meeting trade publications to share compelling meeting opportunities.
- Initiate individual site visits for key meeting-industry entities and influencers.
- Send out destination updates through the year that includes RFP contests, incentives and direct mail pieces.
- Execute digital marketing campaigns in key target markets.
Deliver targeted, consistent communication to qualified meeting planners. Establish fully integrated, targeted marketing communications to support tradeshow and event opportunities, sales incentives and key market opportunities.
Tactics

- Design customized, branded, direct-sales initiatives to address key audiences such as lost business leads, tentatives and verticals.
- Create compelling, value-add offers to accompany an RFP promotion.
- Revamp pre-and-post tradeshows communications at every touch-point, including personalized invitations and custom follow up pieces.
- Create memorable mailings for post-event and hot leads follow up.
- Personalized contact with meeting planners.
- Utilize **Knowland** database to identify new sales prospects and use pipeline to measure viability of leads.
STRATEGY

Maximize ROI of paid partnership programs with third party organizations as well as other industry alliances.
Tactics

- Enhance Niagara Falls USA supplier profiles on partner search platforms, using branded language and fresh, compelling imagery.
- Capitalize on opportunities available with paid partnerships including advertorial, targeted incentives and unique digital content.
- Secure ESSAE sponsorships to increase exposure to NYS Associations.
- Use membership directories for prospecting and follow up with targeted mailings.
S T R A T E G Y

Encourage consistent collaboration with property and venue meetings sales partners. Engage these partners at multiple levels to foster consistent, thorough understanding of the values of working with Niagara Falls USA, creating more symbiotic cooperation within the group-sales market.
Tactics

- Continue to build ongoing positive relationships with partner hotel sales staff by working collaboratively to identify destination needs to increase meeting sales.
- Establish quarterly convention sales meetings with Sales Managers at each partner property.
- Elevate quarterly sales development meetings to include general management and Director of Sales to discuss strategy.
- Bi-annual Destination Update meetings.
- Bi-annual Marketing Committee meetings.
- Extend sponsorship opportunities and trade show collaboration to partners targeting the meetings market.
STRAIGHT

Leverage community members and resources to drive business.
Tactics

- Presentations to community group leaders encouraging them to host group events in Niagara Falls USA.
- Host events in conjunction with local colleges and universities.
- Create a plan to establish an “ambassador” program encouraging local leaders to host group events.
S T R A T E G Y

Broaden group sales and services selling tools. Leverage technology and creative abilities to create resources for sales.
Tactics

- Design a fully branded collection of marketing materials for conference services which targets meeting attendees and inspires longer stays pre and post conference.
- Remain up to date on the marketing department’s plan to align on campaigns and expand their relevance for a meeting audience.
- Coordinate with the marketing department to ensure meeting-related changes are implemented across all platforms.
- Implement social channel advertising (Facebook) geo-targeting at Meeting Event locations and increase content through LinkedIn channels.
- Redesign profile sheet to include hotel location maps and destination attributes.
## Convention & Meeting Sales Event Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>STAFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 6</td>
<td>ESSAE Annual Meeting &amp; Awards Banquet</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>MPI Potomic Mid-Atlantic Conference &amp; Expo (MACE)</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March TBD</td>
<td>PCMA Mix &amp; Bowl &amp; Sales Calls</td>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 18-20</td>
<td>Experient EnVision</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 13-14</td>
<td>Small Market Summit</td>
<td>Panama City, FL</td>
<td>RD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>ESSAE Tradeshow</td>
<td>Saratoga Springs, NY</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 17-19</td>
<td>Connect Marketplace</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>LB, RD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>ESSAE Harvest Highlight &amp; Sales Calls</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 8-10</td>
<td>Smart Meetings 3 Day National</td>
<td>Nashville, TN</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>Albany Client Reception</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>ESSAE Holiday Party &amp; Sales Calls</td>
<td>Albany, NY</td>
<td>LB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff: Lindsey Bowman, Director of Convention & Meeting Sales (LB) | Contact: lbowman@niagarafallsusa.com, 716-282-8992 x331
Reanna Darone, Sales & Services Manager (RD) | Contact: rdarone@niagarafallsusa.com, 716-282-8992 x305
Local Community

Customer Based Destination Marketing Plan
Local Community

The relationship with local tourism stakeholders cannot be overestimated. Continuous outreach is critically important in order to secure and maintain local support as well as strengthen our image as the “go to authority” on subject matters related to hospitality and tourism across Niagara County.
Utilize Strengths

• Visible growth in tourism industry.
• Positive relationships with elected officials.
• Strong core of engaged Niagara County hospitality industry partners.
• State government awareness and attention on tourism as an economic engine.
Mitigate Weaknesses

- Impoverished areas surrounding tourism corridor.
- Lack of local resident awareness on the impact of tourism to the community.
- Visual appearance (trash, flowers, etc) needs improving.
- Invisible barrier between City and Niagara Falls State Park.
Monitor Opportunities

• Engage the community to support/help generate leads for off-season meetings.
• Become more involved in meetings with various local community groups including Niagara Falls State Park and business associations.
• Continued exposure for the EXP program.
• Work with local hoteliers to help build a stronger Hotel/Motel Association.
• Consider a local pride day or weekend during National Tourism Week.
Get Ready for Contingencies or Threats

- Confusion between our organization and Visit Buffalo Niagara.
- Work closely with other local organizations that also focus on tourism related issues to avoid the perception of competition (Tourism Advisory Board, NGTI, etc).
- Regular meetings with local elected officials to be prepared for any changes in political environment.
- Proactively advocate on our own behalf to protect against financial vulnerabilities.
OBJECTIVE 1

Increase awareness with local community leaders and influential community partners of the economic value of tourism and Destination Niagara USA’s role as one of the driving forces of tourism economic development.
S T R A T E G Y

Develop a community-partnership strategy with key community partners and leaders to drive awareness for the importance of tourism and meetings in Niagara Falls USA.
Tactics

- Design customized KPI dashboard that is distributed electronically to community partners, stakeholders and elected officials to build a foundation of the economic impact of tourism and meetings to the local economy with easy to understand and trusted metrics.
- Continually communicate our mission, role and contributions through press releases, email communications and local presentations to various community groups.
- Continue to promote Welcome Program increasing visibility of our organization to local businesses.
- Communicate positive impact that travel & tourism and partners have on the community utilizing social media.
OBJECTIVE 2

Develop more comprehensive content for the “Locals” and “Partners” pages of our website.
STRATEGY

Regularly update web pages with content relevant to our hospitality partners to provide them access to important data, metrics, etc. that can be used to better plan their own marketing and sales efforts.
Tactics

- Set up Destination Dashboard after deployment onto website “Partners” page.
- Upload any relevant third-party research (Tourism Economics, Longwoods, etc).
- Work more closely with local community groups to increase Destination Niagara USA’s visibility.
OBJECTIVE 3

Work to strengthen personal relationships with local elected officials.
STRATEGY

CEO should meet with every elected official at the state, county and city level twice-yearly for an organization update as well as to discuss the positive returns to the industry.
Tactics

- Formal presentations to Niagara County Legislature, Niagara Falls City Council and Lockport City Council.
- One-on-one meetings with State Senator and Assembly Member in the district.
- Share news and media coverage with all elected officials via email along with the metrics of each media story.
- One on one meetings with newly elected officials throughout the county.