

HISTORY. MOVING FORWARD.



**Richmond Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau
2009-2010 Sales and Marketing Plan**

2009-2010 Marketing and Sales Plan

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Executive Summary/Overview

The Richmond Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau (RMCVB) is charged with marketing the Richmond Region as a unique travel destination. RMCVB presents this 2009-2010 Sales and Marketing Plan to be implemented as the approved budget allows. This plan focuses on generating business from meetings and conventions, group tours and individual leisure visitors. It strives to increase demand in our Region for hotel rooms, attraction visits, packaged tours, restaurant and retail sales, local transportation, sports and event participation, and other activities that positively affect the economic impact of the tourism industry and the Richmond Region as a whole.

Tourism and the Economy

In a tough economy, tourism becomes even more important as a primary economic driver in the Commonwealth and in the Richmond Region. Travel is a powerful economic engine in the Region, where nearly 6 million visitors spend almost \$2 billion annually. The tour and travel industry employs more than 26,000 people, and thanks to traveler spending, each Richmond Region household saves almost \$600 per year on taxes. Nationally, tourism is growing at a rate of 4.5 percent annually. Because the Richmond Region is affordable, accessible, historic and authentic, it has enjoyed strong business, convention and leisure visitation for many years.

Leisure and Business Travel

Although leisure travel is stable, business travel is projected to decline in 2009, according to the U.S. Travel Association (USTA). Despite current economic conditions and lagging consumer confidence, the forecast shows that leisure travel volume remains stable for 2008 (-0.2 percent) and is expected to decline modestly in 2009 (-1.3 percent). According to the latest *travelhorizons*TM survey co-authored by USTA and Ypartnership, seven out of 10 (71 percent) respondents intend to take an overnight trip of 50 miles or more from home through mid year. Half (48 percent) of all respondents stated they were not planning any changes to their future travel plans as result of the recent turmoil in the financial markets.

Consumers are likely to plan and purchase leisure trips differently with the pursuit of a “good value.” Three quarters (76 percent) “expect to book a packaged vacation to save money” and six out of 10 (58 percent) “plan to comparison shop for prices and rates specifically on the Internet.” Seven out of 10 (67 percent) “plan to stay fewer nights” and a comparable percentage expects to “spend less on food, beverages and entertainment” when traveling.

The outlook for business travel is more challenging, with a 3.7 percent decline in volume projected for 2008 and another 2.7 percent decline forecasted for 2009, according to USTA’s annual travel forecast. Companies are making decisions to scale back in the current environment, and business travel is no exception. Business, meeting and convention travel volume is expected to begin to recover in 2010 (+2 percent).

Committed to Success

The demands generated by an increasingly competitive marketplace in a down economy continue to motivate RMCVB to maintain its competitive edge with increasingly limited resources. Meeting planners are faced with the challenge of maintaining attendance levels in an environment in which companies and associations are increasingly cutting back on travel expenditures. Still, these clients expect continually higher levels of service and incentives, which greatly impacts RMCVB staff and budget. Even still, RMCVB is committed to continuing its tradition of providing the best experience for visiting conventions and groups – experiences that set us apart as we compete for future business. Furthermore, the affordability and accessibility of the Richmond Region, combined with an increased supply of hotels and exceptional convention facilities, can give the Region an edge over many competitive destinations.

In this time of economic downturn, it is in the Richmond Region’s best interest to continue strong support of RMCVB’s marketing efforts. Because the Richmond Region is an affordable destination, it is well positioned to capitalize on both leisure and business/convention visitors looking for good value.

Major Richmond Region Anniversary Events

Upcoming anniversary events in the Richmond Region offer new opportunities to entice potential visitors.

Edgar Allan Poe Bicentennial

Edgar Allan Poe's international appeal and popularity will focus attention in 2009 on the Richmond Region, where Poe spent what would become known as the formative years of his literary career. A year-long series of events, activities and special exhibits at the Edgar Allan Poe Museum, the Library of Virginia and other area locations are promoted under the "Poe Revealed" banner. Highlighting the year of Poe is the U.S. Postal Service dedication of a commemorative Poe stamp at the Library of Virginia in January. RMCVB is proud to partner with the Poe Museum, Library of Virginia and U.S. Postal Service on these high-profile initiatives.

Civil War Sesquicentennial:

The 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War in 2011-2015 provides a unique opportunity for any destination with significant Civil War history to attract visitors. Thanks to its rich history as "ground zero" of this epic period in American history, Richmond Region is exceptionally well-positioned to realize a significant gain in tourism during the sesquicentennial period. The Richmond Region has a distinct advantage over many other Civil War destinations, thanks to its hip and authentic setting, complete with plentiful, affordable hotels, world-class dining, extensive performing and visual arts offerings, and ample shopping, entertainment and nightlife. The Region offers travelers a complete destination experience.

Successful Civil War marketing initiatives and solid infrastructure make visiting Civil War sites in the Richmond Region easy and rewarding. The Virginia Civil War Trails program allows visitors to follow the footsteps of troops in the 1860s, linking more than 400 sites through self-guided driving tours statewide. Sites along Virginia Civil War Trails include national parks complete with interpreters and hands-on exhibits as well as obscure country crossroads

with signs to explain their significance. The Civil War Trails program has been so successful that it has now spread to neighboring states North Carolina, Maryland, Tennessee and West Virginia – and will soon have a presence in the Gettysburg area.

RMCVB is proud to lead the Richmond Region Civil War 150th committee in promoting the commemoration to potential visitors. Already, a marketing plan outlining strategies and tactics for capitalizing on this historic event has been generated. Pending the availability of funding to support these destination marketing initiatives, the committee plans to begin executing plan tactics in early 2010.

400th Anniversary of the Citie of Henricus and the 400th Anniversary of Henrico County:

Two additional historic commemorations, the 400th anniversary of the Citie of Henricus in Chesterfield County, and the 400th anniversary of Henrico County, are slated for 2011, the first year of the Civil War Sesquicentennial. The significance of these anniversary events, not only to the regional community, but to prospective heritage visitors, adds to the appeal of the Richmond Region as a must-see historic destination up to and beyond 2011.

The 32-acre Henricus Historical Park celebrates the 400th anniversary of the Citie of Henricus, established in 1611. The park includes a recreated settlement, including a watch tower, small dwellings, gardens, and a large barn, and offers interpretive historical re-enactments that engage, educate and entertain visitors. Additional restoration and interpretive work on the site will continue through 2011.

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors has established a 2011 Henrico County 400th Anniversary Commission that will meet on a regular basis for the next four years to plan special activities, events and programs to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of Henrico County in 1611.

Industry Facts and Relevant Trends

Leisure Visitor Profile

- Average age: 46
- Household income: 37 percent \$75,000+
- Repeat visitors: 68 percent of visitors have been here at least once; 37 percent five+ times
- Top feeder markets:
 - Washington, D.C.
 - Roanoke/Lynchburg
 - Raleigh-Durham
 - New York
 - Norfolk/Portsmouth/Newport News
 - Philadelphia
 - Baltimore
 - Charlotte
 - Greensboro/High Point/Winston-Salem

Top 10 Domestic Origin Markets (States)

Virginia • North Carolina • Maryland • Pennsylvania
• New York • Florida • New Jersey • Ohio • South Carolina • California

Top 10 Domestic Origin Markets (DMAs)

Washington, D.C. • Roanoke/Lynchburg • Richmond/Petersburg • Raleigh/Durham • New York • Norfolk/Portsmouth/Newport News • Philadelphia • Baltimore • Charlotte • Greensboro/High Point/Winston-Salem

Top Places or Activities that Motivate Trips to Virginia

- Visit friends/relatives
- Richmond
- Williamsburg
- Reunions
- Colonial Williamsburg
- Kings Dominion
- Washington, D.C.
- Scenic drive
- Virginia Beach
- Shopping/malls
- Beaches
- History/Civil War

RMCVB Research Highlights

2006 visitor intercept study key findings:

- The Region is known for history.
- Most visitors heard about the Region from friends and family.
- Visitors are unaware of all there is to see and do.
- After friends and family, the Internet was the most common way that visitors learned about the Region.

Industry Trends

General

- While total domestic travel was projected to grow slightly (1.6 percent) in 2008, the recession will continue to have an impact on travel throughout 2009.
- Domestic and international travelers spent close to \$700 billion in 2006, up 7 percent from 2005. Total traveler spending in the U.S. (excluding international airfare) was expected to increase 5.7 percent in 2008.
- Domestic and international travel spending generated more than 7.5 million jobs for the industry in 2006, a 0.5 increase from 2005. Total travel-generated payroll was more than \$178 billion in 2006, up almost 4 percent from 2005.
- Hotel/motel room demand decreased 3.7 percent and room revenue decreased 4.2 percent in 2008 from twelve months earlier.
- Airline employment was down 2.9 percent and lodging employment decreased 2.7 percent from October 2007.
- Amtrak ridership increased 4.4 percent nationally in 2008.
- A recent USTA study shows that more than half of travelers use the Internet for planning, including destination information. Nearly one-third do all planning online.

Meetings & Conventions

- Shift from seller's market to buyer's market – providing possible flexibility with rates, dates and space.
- Increase competition among destinations of all sizes, as first-tier destinations become more flexible.
- Forecasted -0.5 percent growth in occupancy nationally in 2009.
- Overall, no anticipated decline in actual number of meetings planned.
- Customer demand will meet corporate social responsibility relating to “going green.”
- 2.5 percent increase in hotel room supply forecasted nationally.
- Overall hotel room rate forecasted to increase at, or slightly above, the level of inflation.
- Overall meeting and convention attendance nationally forecasted to decline. Meeting planners will need to show the value of a meeting to prevent significant attendance declines.
- Hotel group room inventory forecasted to increase for short-term business (meeting in the next 18 months).
- 15 percent reduction in airline capacity is forecasted for frequency and aircraft size.

Group Motorcoach Industry

- The motorcoach industry provided approximately 750 million passenger trips in 2007, according to the American Bus Association (ABA) 2007 census.
- Historic/cultural group travelers account for 81 percent of group travelers. On average, they spend \$166 more per day and stay 1.8 nights longer than other group travelers.
- The industry moved individual passengers a total of

65 billion miles in 2007 and provided nearly 631 million trips in 2005. Half were taken by students and seniors, and half were taken by females.

- Motorcoaches lead every other travel mode in terms of their fuel efficiency on a per-passenger basis, averaging more than 200 passenger miles per gallon in 2008 according to a study by MJ Bradley & Associates released by the ABA Foundation.
- Group tours last significantly longer than the typical U.S. trip.
- The average group traveler spends \$183 per day.
- A motorcoach group (42 passenger average) visiting a historical/cultural destination that stays one night spends an average of \$7,685 per day. A two-night stay averages \$12,199. The average for a day trip is \$2,536 per day.
- Tour operators report that historic/heritage group packages remain popular — 74 percent offer historic/heritage packages. Event, learning, family, wine tasting, shopping and gay/lesbian group packages increased in 2008.
- Current active tour operator members of Student Youth Travel Association accounted for almost \$1.55 billion in student and youth travel, providing trips for more than 2.2 million participants each year.
- Student groups must justify trips by meeting a national or state learning measurement.
- Consumers are more knowledgeable. They seek more visceral, emotional experiences.
- The group tour experience is seeking more hands-on and soft-adventure activities.
- Culinary arts, float trips, themed dining and group participation in theater are becoming more popular.

Service

- 68 percent of customers do not return to a destination, hotel or attraction due to poor service.
- As unemployment remains low, motivating a multi-generational workforce continues to challenge employers.
- The industry struggles with increased loads from more guests and a shortage of well-trained employees.
- Educational programming and training are significantly underutilized.
- Businesses can no longer differentiate themselves with competitive products or pricing.
- Quality customer service has become a critical competitive advantage.

Local Trends

Marketplace Complications

- 19 new hotels, representing 2,260 sleeping rooms, a 13 percent increase in inventory.
- Top 20 Richmond Region company stocks were down 40 percent in 2008, impacting local corporate travel and meetings.

Marketplace Opportunities

- Development of (Broad Street) central business district commercial properties.
- Completion of Miller & Rhoads Hilton Hotel (February 2009) provides more hotel rooms adjacent to the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

RMCVB Goals and Key Messages

2009-2010 Goals

- Retain current visitor levels in recessionary environment.
- Maintain Richmond Region travel-related expenditures at current level of \$1.84 billion per year.
- Maintain annual occupancy and support average daily rate (ADR) retention among the Region's hotels.
- Build positive awareness of the Richmond Region as a desirable vacation and meeting destination.
- Establish a national presence in the convention and meetings industry and increase group room night production for the Richmond Region.
- Increase production from domestic tour operators.
- Leverage the RMCVB public relations budget by ten fold.
- Grow multicultural group business.
- Shift consumer-based inquiries online in order to hold down fulfillment costs.
- Increase traffic to VisitRichmondVa.com and grow the consumer database by 10 percent.
- Increase Visitor Center attendance by 5 percent.

Key Messages

History & Authenticity

Research confirms that the Richmond Region is known for its history, and the "authenticity of place" visitors experience really sets the Region apart.

RMCVB launched a major new creative campaign in 2007 highlighting the Region's historic appeal and wide array of visitor favorites, such as world class dining, NASCAR racing, Kings Dominion, shopping

options, gardens and more. The “history” creative campaign has proven to have excellent sustainability across multiple applications and formats including billboards, traditional advertising, tradeshow promotional materials, publications and more. The success of the “history” campaign was one reason RMCVB was named CVB of the Year by the Southeast Tourism Society in 2008.

Unique Selling Propositions – Why the Richmond Region is *Easy to Love*

- Fresh vitality in a historic setting: New hotel projects, a renovated Richmond International Airport and a dramatic revitalization continuing downtown are just some of the indicators that the Richmond Region continues to be an exciting and dynamic leisure and meeting destination.
- A heritage of history: When it comes to authenticity of place, no destination delivers more than the Richmond Region. More than 400 years of history live on in the Region’s magnificent architecture, cobblestones, monument-lined avenues and world-class museums.
- Outdoor beauty that flows naturally: The James River not only provides a scenic, dramatic backdrop, but also makes the Richmond Region the only urban setting with class IV whitewater rapids, ready to challenge outdoor thrill seekers.
- Great taste abounds: With more than 900 restaurants, the Region offers something for every culinary craving and every wallet. And variety is the name of the shopping game in the Region, with everything from eclectic boutiques to stylish upscale malls.
- Easy does it: The Richmond Region is easy to get to, and easy to navigate once visitors arrive. Just two more reasons why the Richmond Region is *easy to love*.

Communicating the Messages

- Since research indicates history is the primary selling point for the Richmond Region, RMCVB will continue to focus online messaging, advertising creative, direct marketing materials, public relations and publications to emphasize history as a primary asset in an affordable, accessible and authentic destination.
- Continue to recognize and support the need to educate visitors and their primary source of information—friends and family—about the Region’s offerings primarily through RichmondInsideOut.com and other regional initiatives.

RMCVB Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Be a world-class organization known for our superior service and innovative marketing

Mission

Grow the economy of the Richmond Region by attracting conventions, meetings and visitors and ensuring that all have a great experience

Values

Inclusiveness

Collaboration
Diversity
Regional focus

Integrity

A culture of honesty
Credibility
Fairness

Superior Service

Customer focused
Exceeding the promise

Passion

Enthusiasm
High Energy

Innovation

Creativity
Resourcefulness
Catalyst

Administration

RMCVB's Administration Department provides support for its staff as well as its 21-seat RMCVB Board of Directors, which governs RMCVB, and the five-seat Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority (GRCCA), which governs the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The department also provides financial and human resources, community relations and overall RMCVB management.

RMCVB Board of Directors

The RMCVB Board of Directors is comprised of the following matrix of members:

- Henrico County: 3 seats – 1 elected official and 2 seats filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- City of Richmond: 3 seats – 1 elected official and 2 seats filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- Chesterfield County: 2 seats – 1 elected official and 1 seat filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- Hanover County: 1 seat – 1 elected official
- New Kent County: 1 seat – 1 elected official
- Retail Merchants Association: 2 ex officio voting members - 1 CEO and 1 President of Hotel/Motel Association
- Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce: 1 seat – CEO
- Attraction/Museum: 1 seat appointed by the Museum Directors Association
- Capital Region Airport Commission: 1 seat – CEO
- Kings Dominion: 1 seat – CEO
- Richmond International Raceway: 1 seat – CEO
- Venture Richmond: 1 seat – CEO
- Virginia Tourism Corporation: 1 seat – CEO
- Richmond Sports Backers: 1 seat – CEO
- At-Large: 1 seat appointed by the RMCVB Board of Directors

Administration Plan

Objective: Effective management of all aspects of RMCVB.

Tactics:

- Manage office facilities, equipment, office supplies and inventory.
- Control purchasing and cost management.
- Manage IT support.
- Manage Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- Manage reception and mailroom.
- Manage employee relations.
- Manage the recruiting and hiring process.
- Ensure effective internal communications.
- Maintain job descriptions and evaluations.
- Ensure the employee handbook is updated continuously to reflect recent laws and legislation. Communicate all changes to staff in an efficient manner.
- Manage RMCVB's finances and accounting.

Marketing

The Marketing Department is responsible for advertising, promotions, public relations, communications, electronic marketing, publications, group tour marketing, development, customer service, and three Richmond Region Visitor Centers.

Advertising

Richmond Region Brand Positioning Statement:

“The Richmond Region experience offers an affordable, accessible, authentic sense of place in a naturally beautiful setting, rich with history, warm with Southern hospitality, and vibrant with world-class dining, shopping and entertainment.”

RMCVB’s messages are:

- Polished by culture: The Richmond Region is full of progressive areas and endless pockets of discovery.
- Rich history: The Richmond Region spans five centuries of history and reminds us of who we are as Americans.
- Unmatched quality of life: The Richmond Region is easy, fun, accessible and affordable.

Objectives:

- Consistently communicate the Richmond Region brand via integrated marketing.
- Increase overnight visits with an emphasis on shoulder seasons.
- Emphasize the Richmond Region as a premier meeting and convention destination among the general (associations and corporate) and multicultural (meetings and reunions) group segments.
- Support the strategic initiative to “Sell the Richmond Region on the Richmond Region” by communicating messages that resonate with both residents and visitors.

- Market target-specific benefits to multicultural (African-American, Hispanic, Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender) and niche (green, history) market segments.
- Emphasize the Richmond Region as an affordable, accessible, authentic destination.

Advertising Strategies:

- Continue history-themed creative executions (online, print, outdoor and electronic marketing) that highlight the Region’s unique selling propositions.
- Tie marketing messages to landing Web pages and micro-sites that enhance overall message delivery and deliver a call to action.
- Track telephone and Web inquiries and adjust online and print media buys accordingly.
- Maximize RMCVB’s marketing dollars by taking advantage of co-op advertising and creating Richmond Region cooperative efforts.
- Maximize exposure through value-added opportunities.
- Serve as primary funding partner in appropriate co-ops and grant-funded promotions with the Region’s attractions.

Media Strategies:

- Shift increasing percentage of advertising budget online (pay-per-click and keyword) to support launch of VisitRichmondVa.com.
- Include specific media that target female leisure travel influencers.
- Focus a portion of budget on history and heritage visitors.
- Participate in Virginia Tourism Corporation (and other partners’) traffic-generating promotions.

- Use advertising to generate Web site, phone and reader service inquiries and bookings.

- When appropriate, offer mini co-op programs to leverage buying power.

Lifestyle targets:

- History buffs
- Active adults/couples
- Families
- Outdoor/sports enthusiasts
- African-Americans
- Wine/dining aficionados
- Shoppers
- Hispanics
- Girlfriend getaways
- Motorcoach, student groups, and other group tour consumers
- GLBT

Public Relations

Through media outreach, RMCVB positions the Richmond Region as a distinctive, affordable and accessible destination. Because of budget constraints, strong media relations efforts are critical.

Objectives:

- Boost awareness of the Richmond Region and RMCVB through targeted, assertive and frequent media outreach.
- Generate positive media coverage of the Richmond Region as a visitor and meeting destination.
- Generate positive local coverage of RMCVB and promote positive economic impact of tourism on the Region.
- Produce \$2 million in earned media through proactive media relations including consistent distribution of press materials and direct contact to local, regional, national, international and trade media.

- Launch new media section of Web site and promote the resource to media as a valuable tool.

- Maintain media contact database with particular emphasis on increasing blogosphere contacts.

- Host 24 site visits per year.

- Measure all public relations efforts by earned media value, circulation and impressions.

Tactics:

Consumer Media

- Distribute Richmond Region news and advisories to media as needed.

- Attend SATW, MATPRA, and PRSA marketplaces to promote the Region to travel media.

- Develop an annual editorial calendar to outline Region events and programs to promote through public relations.

- Pitch hot topics, packages, deals, themed getaways and travel trends, as well as stories that embody RMCVB's "history" campaign.

- Develop one- to two-day media events focusing on topics in tune with overall messaging goals.

- Invite key travel editors to the Region for focused one-on-one press trips.

- Develop and implement schedules for national, regional and local media calls.

- Identify and target niche publications and provide story ideas/descriptions of Richmond Region features appealing to their audiences.

- Support public relations efforts behind major local/statewide initiatives and position the Richmond Region as a key component of these programs. Upcoming initiatives include the Edgar Allan Poe

Bicentennial, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts expansion, the Historic Route 1 project and the lead up to key anniversaries commemorated in Henrico County and Henricus and the Civil War Sesquicentennial.

- Capitalize on industry partner initiatives such as VTC's "Live Passionately" campaign and the "Virginia Green" initiative. Position the Richmond Region as the best representation for these and other various programs.

Trade Media

- Strengthen relationships with journalists.
- Submit story ideas based on editorial calendars.
- Create and distribute a regular update with information on hotels and facilities.

Local Media

- Support strategic initiative to "Sell the Richmond Region on the Richmond Region" and promote RichmondInsideOut.com.
- Keep local media abreast of RMCVB successes, events and activities to increase exposure and positive messaging of tourism/conventions as economic drivers.
- Distribute media leads (requests) to the local community.

Target Audiences:

- Travel media: regional, national and international travel editors, writers, freelancers and bloggers
- Trade media: meetings/conventions and motor-coach/group tours
- Mainstream media: local, regional and national

Online Marketing

Objectives:

- Provide a Web site to offer the best possible resource for visitors and increase the exposure of the Richmond Region.
- Generate online bookings of hotel rooms, attractions tickets and packages.
- Promote the abundance of activities and ease of travel through personalized e-mails.
- Expand reach of RMCVB throughout community and out of market through e-mail based marketing.
- Increase usage of electronic tools for marketing the Richmond Region.
- Use latest technology and viral marketing strategies to attract incremental visitors and enhance awareness of the Richmond Region among niche markets.
- Enhance positive word-of-mouth advertising among local residents who influence visiting friends and family.

Tactics:

Web Sites

VisitRichmondVa.com:

- Launch new Web site, VisitRichmondVa.com, in January 2009.
- Implement online pay per click (PPC), online advertising and search engine marketing (SEM) programs to maximize traffic to the new Web site.
- Implement measurement and maintenance strategy to maximize the site, increase page views and time spent on site.
- Implement online booking engine to maximize value of Web site for Region's hotels, attractions, etc.

- Expand image and video library making high-quality resources easily accessible to media outlets and clients promoting the Region.
- Use NAVTEQ interactive maps for strategic promotions.

RichmondInsideOut.com

- Continue to post and add content to this user-generated site for locals.
- Work with local blog sites and other online, viral marketing resources to drive traffic to the site.
- Increase community participation by notifying businesses and organizations through e-mail when they are the subject of a post.
- Expand profile of site by feeding content onto VisitRichmondVa.com.
- Continue to drive traffic by placing ads on in-house electronic materials.

Historic Route 1

- Partner with Virginia Department of Historic Resources under its Cost Share Program to develop a Historic Route 1 Web site.
- Continue to work with state tourism offices and DMOs along the Route 1 corridor to add content to the new site and further develop Route 1 as a tourism destination.
- Foster community participation by serving on the board of the Jefferson Davis Association (soon to be renamed Historic Route 1 Association).

Civil War 150th (CW150)

- Pending availability of funding, develop a new Richmond/Petersburg Region Civil War 150th Web site designed to promote tourism to the larger region.
- Utilize NAVTEQ features to highlight the abundance of CW150 points of interest in Richmond Region.

- Continue to enhance profile of CW150 Commemoration with linked advertising on VisitRichmondVa.com and e-newsletters. (Refer to separate CW150 Marketing Plan for specifics.)

- With assistance of attractions and jurisdictional partners, continue to upload and update Richmond Region “Then and Now” content on VirginiaCivilWar.org, the Virginia Commission’s official Web site.

E-mail

- Develop visitor e-mail program targeting visitor interests and travel dates.
- Produce monthly River City e-News.
- Produce quarterly tour operator e-newsletter.

Social Media

- Continue to grow the Richmond Region and RichmondInsideOut.com presences on Facebook and MySpace.
- Expand the video library and enhance the Richmond Region YouTube channel.
- Incorporate additional social media sites such as Flickr, Twitter, etc. as appropriate.

Target Audiences:

- Leisure travelers
- Meeting planners
- Tour and travel buyers
- Journalists
- Local community/industry
- Richmond Region residents

Development

Overview

Just like many other Destination Marketing Organizations, securing additional revenue through a targeted sponsorship program has become increasingly important because of the slowed economy. A sponsorship program will be instrumental in augmenting RMCVB's budget, providing opportunities that will engage stakeholders and the local community and enhancing events and programs to ensure goals are met.

Objectives:

- Develop sponsorship program that supports the RMCVB mission to generate demand for the destination while creating value for potential sponsors and/or partners. Program will augment RMCVB budget and underwrite RMCVB operating costs by securing outside funding for programs and events.
- Support RMCVB Foundation.
- Successfully coordinate partner and RMCVB events in the Richmond Region while creating value for RMCVB partners.
- Create unique advertising, promotional and co-op opportunities as sponsorship benefits which provide economical ways for partners to enhance their agenda and expand resources.

Tactics:

- Generate \$25,000 in sponsorship/partnership revenue in 2009 and 2010 to offset operational expenses.
- Secure incremental sponsorship and Foundation funding by soliciting and recruiting 40+ new businesses and other organizations into the newly-developed sponsorship program.
- Create sponsor/partner benefits which provide value for partners' investment by offering economical

ways for local businesses to partner with RMCVB.

- Offer sponsorship/partner benefits which include but are not limited to: advertising potential sponsor on landing page and other sub-sections of RMCVB new Web site, promotional advertising at RMCVB Visitor Centers and Gift Shop, "sponsor/partner-only" sponsor opportunities at RMCVB media and sales client events, and presenting and title sponsorship opportunities at RMCVB industry events.
- Create sponsorship marketing collateral materials which outline sponsor benefits, reiterate value of developing a partnership with RMCVB, and provide a sponsorship program overview which will assist in securing prospective sponsors.
- Educate RMCVB staff, local stakeholders and businesses about new program once developed.
- Update and streamline Community Currents, the monthly Sponsorship/Partner e-newsletter.
- Create partnership section on new RMCVB Web site.
- Host Richmond Region Open and generate \$15,000-\$20,000 for Foundation each year.
- Develop additional revenue-producing activities and marketing strategies at Richmond Region Open to reach new target audiences.

Target Audiences:

- Local business, corporations and stakeholders to invest in Partnership
- Client event and press trip attendees: meeting planners, tour operators, media, etc.
- Local industry/community

Tourism Sales

Objectives:

- Increase group attraction attendance by 5 percent each year over 2008 figures at 10 core group attractions.
- Continue to increase awareness of the Richmond Region to target audiences and to improve the level of professionalism and services offered.
- Support sales efforts with promotional activities to strengthen relationships with tour operators, AAA counselors and group leaders.
- Continue strengthening and building partnerships and relationships with local and regional stakeholders.
- Work on improving the method and formula used to report group tracking for the Region.

Tactics:

- Exhibit at suitable industry marketplaces. (See RMCVB Activity Calendar for complete list.)
- Organize familiarization tours and site visits.
- Organize and/or participate in sales missions to targeted markets.
- Create sample itineraries.
- Work with marketing efforts of the Richmond Motorcoach Network to create a cohesive picture of the Richmond Region.
- Distribute a group e-newsletter to keep the Richmond Region foremost in operators' minds and communicate new ideas and itineraries.
- Create educational seminars for the local industry with an emphasis on the group tour market.
- Continue with the new incentive (annual prize) for

groups to stop at the Visitor Center to track numbers.

- Participate in membership trade organizations that are working on tracking methods for tour operators.
- Revise tracking with the new CRM reports from leads generated.
- Create a new incentive for hotels and attractions to report groups by name for research history.
- Increase exposure in membership directories with an enhanced listing to draw attention to the Richmond Region information.
- Increase exposure at trade shows with sponsorships where applicable, volunteering in booths with VTC, and major trade show organizations.
- Boost advertising in group tour publications when budget permits.
- Explore new niche markets and themed itineraries for new marketing trends in group travel.
- Work with VTC on their new itinerary "Passionalities."
- Create regional tours with neighboring areas to promote international tours and join forces to create a longer tour.
- Streamline the process of leads and trade show appointments through CRM for better communication with operators and industry organizations.
- Work on getting a bid pool to support the opportunities to bring trade industry shows to the Richmond Region.

Target Audiences:

- Tour operators – adult, student, niche
- AAA/CAA travel counselors
- Group leaders
- Local industry stakeholders

Visitor Centers

Overview

RMCVB operates two Visitor Centers located downtown at the Greater Richmond Convention Center and at the Richmond International Airport. Within the first quarter of 2009, RMCVB will open its newest satellite Visitor Center location at the new Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World located in Hanover County. The Airport Visitor Center will be relocated to a more prominent location at the heart of the lower level baggage claim area. Staffing will be expanded to cover increased hours of operations at both the airport and the new Bass Pro locations. These three prime locations will give the Richmond Region greater presence to visitors arriving by air or car.

Objectives:

- Provide current information about Regional attractions, lodging and retailers to visitors.
- Encourage visitors to extend their length of stay and/or return to the Richmond Region at a later date. Increase value-added services to visitors to encourage overnight stays.
- Position the Visitor Centers as a resource for the local community.
- Manage operations of three Visitor Centers to increase attendance by 5 percent.
- Attract interstate travelers to the downtown and Bass Pro Visitor Centers.
- Manage downtown location's gift shop operations to increase net income by 10 percent and increase traffic to the shop.
- Seek out promotional opportunities to increase exposure and visitation.

Tactics:

Visitor Center

- Promote Visitor Centers on billboards as budget allows.
- Participate in Virginia State Welcome Center showcases.
- Establish a benchmark and measure Visitor Center traffic using VTC's online reporting.
- Provide maps and visitor guides and display stakeholders' brochures.
- Encourage visitors to view "Who Knew" video.
- Ensure staff is knowledgeable, customer service-oriented and responsive to challenges.
- Market last-minute hotel reservation service.
- Generate human-interest stories and media opportunities.

Gift Shop

- Increase number of Virginia-made products.
- Promote shop locally and to conventions.
- Manage online store.
- Offer good neighbor discount to businesses near the convention center.

Target Audiences:

- Visitors: interstate travelers, airport visitors
- Area residents and workers
- Local constituents
- Convention and meeting attendees

Publications and Printed Materials

Objectives:

- Increase awareness of the Richmond Region as a visitor destination.
- Reinforce the brand messages by emphasizing history and authenticity.
- Raise local awareness of RMCVB and communicate the impact of travel on the economy.
- Maintain a consistent look and feel among publications and ensure Easy to Love brand is represented in all publications.
- Ensure the Region's diversity of demographics and geography is represented.

Tactics:

Out of Market

- Produce high-quality Meeting Planners Guide in 2009.
- Produce high-quality Visitors Guide in 2009 and 2010.
- Produce high-quality Group Tour Manual in 2010.
- Produce high-quality rack brochure in 2009 and 2010.
- Produce a variety of maps to aide in traveling around Region.
- Reprint multicultural brochure as needed.
- Reprint coupon book for meeting attendees as needed.
- Produce a variety of targeted mailers and information/profile sheets to meeting planners, tour operators and media.

In Market

- Produce RMCVB Impact brochure.
- Contribute quarterly articles for Retail Merchants Association newsletter.
- Submit articles for Venture Richmond and Greater Richmond Chamber e-newsletters.
- Produce collateral for RMCVB events and training programs.
- Support "Selling Richmond Region on Richmond Region" strategic initiatives via collateral materials.
- Produce Historic Richmond Region Attractions Pass in 2009 and 2010.

Target Audiences:

- Leisure travelers
- Meeting planners
- Tour and travel buyers
- Journalists
- Local community/industry

Customer Service and Events

Overview

Traditionally high turnover in the hospitality sector creates the need for a comprehensive, certified customer service training program. An inclusive customer service training program can be the engine behind top-notch customer service and guest loyalty.

RMCVB recommends partnering with other Central Virginia CVBs or VTC in investing in a program such as the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) training program for Central Virginia. A nationally recognized program such as the CTA will provide front-line employees and volunteers critical customer service training that will help improve performance as well as attitude. It will also help build relationship and networking partnerships within Central Virginia and enhance RMCVB's value to the community.

Objectives:

- Ensure superior customer service for visitors to the Region, as well as RMCVB customers and local stakeholders.
- Ensure superior customer service during press trips, convention sales and tour operator client events and industry events.

Tactics:

- Customize a certification program curriculum to fit RMCVB needs.
- Work with VTC and regional DMO partners to create a certification program that meets the needs of the tourism community.
- Identify key stakeholders to participate in initial research phase, thus, engendering critical buy-in toward the success of the program.
- Create and implement volunteer program in conjunction with certification program to support staffing at Visitor Centers, RMCVB events,

RichmondInsideOut.com and for special projects and tasks.

- Assist in coordinating and developing client events, FAMs and press trips.
- Coordinate RMCVB National Tourism Week: Easy to Love Customer Service Award, Great Richmond Region Adventure race and annual celebratory event.
- Create and coordinate hospitality training and appreciation events for industry partners such as the semi-annual Taxi Drivers' appreciation meals.

Target Audiences:

- Hospitality sector employers and employees
- Local businesses and stakeholders
- Client event and press trip attendees: meeting planners, tour operators, media, etc.
- Local industry/community

Sales and Services

The mission of the Sales and Services Department is to creatively and aggressively market the Richmond Region as a national convention destination and to enhance our offerings of convention services to meeting planners.

Overall Strategy:

Develop a strategic action plan for each market segment focusing on enhanced client involvement via increased sales missions and innovative client events. In an effort to increase lead potential, RMCVB will more stringently focus on saturating larger association-based markets in Chicago and Washington, D.C., including penetrating the Southeast associations specifically in the Atlanta region.

Department Objectives:

- Market the Richmond Region through increased exposure to state, regional, and national meeting and convention planners.
- Work in tandem with hoteliers to create stronger yield strategies that will enable stronger vantage points from a negotiating standpoint.
- Develop a more stringent services program that will include the orchestration and implementation of an attendance builder program that will assist planners in driving attendee and exhibitor attendance.
- Continue to foster relationships with existing clientele through consistent sales missions focusing on new business, as well as the maintenance of existing accounts.
- Maintain strong relationships with hoteliers to increase trade show and sponsorship involvement.

Marketplace:

The current market for meetings and conventions is defined by uncertainty. Overall, the current economy has created a dramatic shift in the “balance of power” from a negotiating standpoint. Essentially this creates a scenario in which buyers are negotiating guest room and function room rates aggressively, while hotel executives are seeking other strategies to maximize revenue. The range of revenue maximization

may include stronger yield management practices based on pattern and seasonality, as well as additional labor charges and surcharges, with stricter cancellation and attrition penalties. In this shift, meeting planners negotiating opportunities will increase. This scenario will increase competition for third-tier destinations, due to the advantage meeting planners will have negotiating with first- and second-tier destinations, including resorts. While pace is projected to stay on target for the association and SMERF, or primary markets, again, the “balance of power” may affect the strong draw to third-tier or more affordable destinations.

Specific to Richmond Region: As the top concerns for 2009/2010 meetings are shifting toward forecasted attendance declines, decreased airline capacity, and hotel rates, maintaining low-cost airline carriers will be vital to our success with national meeting and conventions. Increasing our face-to-face opportunities with clients is critical to fortifying our core accounts and further penetrating our top-producing market segments. It is anticipated that fewer sale opportunities will exist for 2009/2010, therefore, our quality per sale will need to increase through attendance builder programs and new point of sale technology. While a recovering economy should stimulate demand growth in the last half of 2009, the Richmond Region will increase hotel room inventory by 2,000 rooms over the next 18 months. This surge in inventory will create over-saturation and possibly negate any potential opportunity for occupancy growth. Finally, increased competition from our select destination competitors will force the local hospitality community to develop new marketing strategies.

Department Tactics:

- Sales managers will each make 80+ calls each month to state, regional and national meeting planners.
- Attend 25 trade shows throughout the year. If hotels participate, sponsorship opportunities may exist in conventions with a more heavily attended executive planner scenario.

- Sales missions by city and market segment:
 - Religious market – Nashville, Colorado Springs
 - Fraternal market – Indianapolis
 - Southeast Association – Atlanta, Kentucky
 - Northeast Association sales mission – Philadelphia
- Washington, D.C. sales trips per year:
 - 1 national sales manager, monthly
 - 1 sales manager, monthly
 - Second national sales manager, six trips
 - Second sales manager six trips
- Chicago sales trips per year:
 - 1 national sales manager, three trips
 - 1 sales manager, three trips
- Meeting and convention advertising will support trade shows and sales missions within a specific market segment. Currently, the following meeting and convention publications are included within the overall strategy:
 - Association News
 - Convene
 - USAE
 - Black Meetings & Tourism

Market by Market Overview

Market Segment: Association

Relevant Trends:

- Nationally, 18 percent of meeting planners expect the number of meetings they plan to decrease in the next year.
- National associations represent the largest growth market for the Richmond Region.
- For 2009, hotel availability is up and hotel pricing should drop accordingly.
- The new Hilton Garden Inn Downtown, Westin, Hilton Garden Inn Airport, Courtyard by Marriott Airport, Aloft and Hotel Sierra have increased the number and variety of meetings hotels in the area.

- Anticipate consolidation of regional and state meetings.
- Contracts will be signed closer to event dates hence affecting pace and forecasted figures. Additionally there will be a significant reduction of space blocked to compensate for the reduction in attendees and exhibitors.
- There will be a greater exploration of online alternatives to meetings and conventions.
- Meeting planners report they are being forced to book much more short term (wait and see) and that contracts must be more flexible on attrition/cancellation clauses.
- Association attendance forecasted to decrease 7 percent nationally.

Competitive Analysis

- Hampton Roads area; Williamsburg and Roanoke and now Fredericksburg are biggest competitors for Virginia State Association business. Other top competitive destinations include:
 - Louisville • Columbus • San Antonio • Portland
 - Raleigh • Memphis • Baltimore • Milwaukee
 - Pittsburgh • Birmingham • Mobile • Baton Rouge
 - Jacksonville • Tampa • Savannah

Objectives:

- Position Richmond Region as a value-enhanced alternative to first-tier cities.
- Focus on face-to-face relationship building with current customers and prospective clients.
- Improve destination perception through client events and FAM tours.
- Increase association leads by 5 percent for 2009 and beyond.
- Average 20,000 definite room nights annually

Target Audiences:

- VSAE, PCMA and ASAE
- Potomac Chapters of PCMA and PMPI
- Northern Virginia, Washington, D.C.
- National associations in convention calendars of our competitive set
- Chicago-based associations
- National associations with strong state chapters
- Association planners specifically, but not limited to North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia
- Convention calendars: Atlanta, Raleigh and Charlotte

Strategy:

Establish a strong presence in Washington, D.C., Chicago and Atlanta as well as Northeast regions, Mid-West, Southeast regions and Virginia.

Tactics:

- Continue to be active in VSAE, serving on community services committee and trade show committee; attend monthly luncheons; attend VSAE Annual Meeting and coordinate VSAE Fall Marketplace Richmond aisle.
- Serve on board of HSMIAI.
- Conduct sales missions with hotel partners in Alexandria and Washington, D.C.
- Focus on regional meetings opportunities while performing sales calls to the national associations.
- Seek sponsorship opportunities at trade shows and educational meetings.
- Create unique promotion opportunities for trade shows, sales missions and local client events. Attend industry trade shows/educational conferences and take advantage of networking opportunities. (See RMCVB Activity Calendar for list of trade shows.)
- Develop appointments with “Top 15 Clients” of Association Sales Managers, increasing “face-to-

face” time. Register all for e-news.

- Increase presence in Chicago and Mid-West region. Penetrate new regions with the high concentration of national associations: research the opportunities with high-concentration of association headquarters in Mid-West and West regions (KS, MO, IN, TX). Build sales missions for these territories and research trade shows and professional membership opportunities (chapters of PCMA, ASAE).

- Increase face-to-face time with the clients by inviting strong potential clients in Washington, D.C. and Chicago areas to dinners, games and educational seminars to create a better rapport.

- Implement cross-selling among the colleagues, especially to the top 15 accounts.

- Organize group presentations for the major third-party meeting planning companies.

- Develop membership involvement in GSAE and trade show.

- Strong presence in the Georgia and Southeast regions, including but not limited to; trade shows and sales trips/sales missions.

- Organize client event in Atlanta in conjunction with the sales blitz.

- Organize group presentations for third-party meeting planning agencies based in Southeast region.

Market Segment: Corporate

Relevant Trends:

- Increased local hotel sleeping rooms, will create additional flexibility in hotel contract negotiation.

- Corporate meeting planners report their meetings will be shorter, less extravagant, will combine meetings whenever possible to save money during this economic recession.

- Electronic/Webinar meetings will increase, thereby negating the need for hotel contracts.
- This market will avoid air travel when possible, look at drivable locations more.
- Corporate planners with limited budgets are considering second and third-tier destinations for potential rate reductions.
- Corporate incentive travel will decrease significantly due to perception issues.

Competitive Analysis:

Top competitors:

- Virginia Beach, Williamsburg
- Carolina resorts such as Pinehurst, Hilton Head, Kiawah Island
- Raleigh for pharmaceutical and medical
- Hartford
- Milwaukee
- Portland
- Charlotte

Objectives:

- Create value-added programs with hotels and promote the drivability of Richmond to Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. clients.
- Create more awareness of Richmond Region (especially resorts and five star facility) to potential corporate clients.
- Generate curiosity and enthusiasm for new hotels/attractions.
- Average 1,000 definite room nights for each year (2009 and 2010).

Target Audiences:

- MPI: VAMPI, PMPI-Potomac Chapter, GAMPI-Georgia Chapter
- Local corporations
- Pharmaceutical and medical markets

Tactics:

- Sales missions with hotel partners to Northern Virginia and Washington D.C.
- Build relationships with corporate clients.
- Build sales missions and events around MPI and VAMPI conferences.
- Make face-to-face appointments with “Top 15 Clients,” sign up each for e-news updates on progress in Richmond Region.

Market Segment: Fraternal

Relevant Trends:

- The professional fraternal market continues to be the largest generator of definite business within the fraternal market segment.
- The educational fraternal market continues to grow.
- The social fraternities tend to book in first tier or resort destinations.
- Richmond Region is attractive to the more established historic fraternities, multicultural fraternities and sororities.

Competitive Analysis:

- The fraternal market is relationship-driven.
- The geographic location of chapters impacts where conventions are held.

Objectives:

- Maintain strong relationships with current client base to ensure repeat.
- Average 1,000 definite room nights for each year (2009 and 2010).

Target Audiences:

- Fraternal Executive Association members
- Professional Fraternal Association members

- Regional fraternal organizations
- Local fraternal organizations
- Indianapolis-based fraternal organizations

Tactics:

- Build stronger relationships with both professional and educational fraternal groups by hosting a client event in Indianapolis.
- Target fraternity executives by sponsoring events, such as turn down gifts during FEA trade show.
- Pursue the opportunity to host future PFA conventions. The event organizers have expressed great interest in hosting this trade show in Richmond.
- Sales missions and sales calls to Indianapolis.
- Organize client events in Indianapolis to reach the masses of executive directors.
- Involvement in National Panhellenic Conference.
- Further increase sponsorship at FEA, the largest of all the fraternal trade shows.

Market Segment: Government

Relevant Trends:

- Gov. Tim Kaine ordered state government to curb travel and purchases (including lodging) due to budget deficit.
- Many Federal government agencies have a moratorium on travel.
- Virginia state per diem hotel rates increased in the City of Richmond and counties.
- Government agencies give preference to SWAM (small, women and minority-owned businesses) certified properties.

Competitive Analysis:

- Washington D.C./Northern Virginia continues to be a challenge for Federal meetings – too close, too far.
- State government rotates, similar to state associations.
- Norfolk is a top competitor.

Objectives:

- Increase definite room nights 15 percent by 2010 for state and federal government.
- Average 6,000 leads for the overall government market for each year (2009 and 2010).

Target Audiences:

- State government.
- Members of Society of Government Meeting planners for federal government business.
- Third-party meeting planner.

Tactics:

- Develop new local state contacts.
- Maintain presence at Federal level.
- Increase presence at the national SGMP annual meetings for Federal government businesses.
- Continue face-to-face meetings and presentations to the new prospects.
- Host a client dinner event in conjunction with the SGMP Annual Conference.
- Active involvement in the Old Dominion SGMP Chapter to uncover new opportunities in the local government segment.
- Strengthen rapport with third party meeting planners.

Market Segment: Hobby

Relevant Trends:

- Hobby is a growth market for Richmond Region.
- Attendees pay out of their own pocket; discretionary funds are limited due to the weak economy.
- Seek moderately priced destinations.
- Opportunities begin with local chapters and organizations.
- Typically no headquarter location.
- Hotel locations may be spread throughout region, this segment is a viable fit.
- No national conference or trade show.
- Some events require a bid fee.

Competitive Analysis:

- Location of conventions is typically determined by the region/regions with the largest concentration of members.
- Destinations with adequate outdoor space.
- Target Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southern destinations that are of similar size to Richmond.

Objectives:

- Average 1,000 definite room nights for 2009 and beyond.
- Average 3,000 lead and tentative room nights for 2009 and beyond.

Target Audiences:

- Groups who have held meetings or conventions in the Richmond Region in 1999 or earlier.
- Programs that utilize fairgrounds or racetracks.
- Groups that have opposite rooms-to-space ratio need.

- Groups listed on the DMAI MINT report system.
- Local hobby shops.

Tactics:

- Establish a list of new target-accounts for hobby market.
- Research outdoor auto shows.
- Build a resource list from other hobby contacts that have held meetings or conventions in the region.
- Continue researching for viable trade shows or other opportunities to establish RMCVB presence in the hobby market (marketing, advertising).
- Utilize market research position to uncover potential tradeshow and networking events for this market. Identify the largest state and regional hobby organizations.
- Seek leads from convention calendar of regional destinations.

Market Segment: Sports

Relevant Trends:

- Continues to be a growth market for Richmond Region, specifically youth sports.
- Statewide sports initiatives developed by VTC.
- Appropriate venue is most important.
- Seek moderately-priced destinations, with transportation costs being a key factor.
- Strong local affiliates and volunteers provide advantage over other destinations.

Competitive Analysis:

- Richmond Region purchase of sports flooring and the development of incentive fund for bid fees are major advantages.
- A number of sports groups host their events in the same destinations with multi-year bids due to success of the event, local members, and relationships with officials.
- Target Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southern organizations and USOC (Colorado Springs).
- Virginia Beach, Roanoke and Louisville have a strong partnership with their local sports commission and a budget for bidding on sports events.

Target Audiences, Primary:

- National events held in similar sized destinations to the Richmond Region.
- USA (Olympic) Sports Groups (USOC)
- Amateur Athletic Union Groups (AAU)

Target Audiences, Secondary:

- Taekwondo
- Lacrosse
- Archery
- Shooting
- Team handball
- Cheerleading and dance
- Triathlon
- Field hockey
- Fencing
- Expanded soccer and volleyball tournaments
- AAU Baseball, Golf, Baton Twirling and Bowling

Objectives:

- Increase definite room nights by 5 percent for 2009 and 2010.
- Increase leads 20 percent by 2010 for all sports markets.

Tactics:

- Continue to develop relationships at sports trade shows.
- Participate in the Virginia Sports statewide initiative annually at the TEAMS conference.
- For the AAU market, develop partnership with state AAU office to bid on groups requiring bid fees maximum \$5,000.
- Improve visibility at sports trade shows via continued sponsorships and client events.
- Conduct annual sales missions to Colorado Springs for USOC groups.
- Development of national and regional events through local contacts.
- Continue to work with the Richmond Metropolitan Sports Backers and solicit organized sporting associations including AAU and U.S. Olympic sporting organizations.
- Advertise the wealth of athletic facilities in the Richmond Region.
- Host a client sports-focused familiarization trip in Richmond Region.
- Visit Fredericksburg AAU office twice annually.
- Bid events during AAU annual trade show.

Market Segment: Religious

Relevant Trends:

- Development of successful resume of definite groups will assist in converting other organizations to Richmond Region.
- Seek packaging and moderately-priced destinations, with downtown hotels as the top choice, followed by conference centers and suburban hotels.

- Book further in advance to secure best dates and pricing.
- Prefer hotels within walking distance to restaurants, shops and area attractions.
- Attendance at national meetings and conventions is expected to increase slightly.

Competitive Analysis:

- First-tier destinations have recently begun marketing heavily to this market through packaging and price-breaks.
- The addition of two new convention centers to Virginia and one in Raleigh will impact Richmond Region efforts.
- The second and third tier moderately-priced destinations with two or more hotels within walking distance (two blocks) have an advantage in this market.

Objective:

- Increase definite room nights by 7,000 by 2010.

Target Audiences:

- Religious market meeting planners
- RCMA (Religious Conference Management Association) trade show attendees
- Rejuvenate Marketplace

Tactics:

- Develop new business opportunities through current marketing efforts and new marketing initiatives.
- Continue development of current business relationships.
- Continue to further penetrate this market through the RCMA and Rejuvenate trade shows.
- Improve visibility at religious trade shows via continued sponsorships.

- Host client events in key cities, as well as create familiarization tours.
- Seek new opportunities through involvement in the CMCA trade show.
- Seek leads from convention calendar of similar size destinations to Richmond Region.
- Continue relationship building of RCMA and Rejuvenate members.
- Conduct at least one sales mission per year to Colorado Springs/Denver, Nashville or Charlotte to target the greater base of religious meeting planners.

Market Segment: Multicultural

Relevant Trends:

- Multicultural market is a secondary market for the Richmond Region.
- Primary multicultural “sub-group” for Richmond Region has been African-American market segment.
- Development of successful resume of definite groups will assist in converting other organizations to Richmond Region.
- Seek upscale venues at a moderate price.
- Strong local affiliates are a plus.

Competitive Analysis:

- Richmond Region has visible African-Americans in leadership positions (city government, CVB, etc.)
- Richmond is home to the Metropolitan Business League, Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Asian American Business Center Assistance Center and Asian American Society of Central Virginia.
- Target northeast, Mid-Atlantic and southern organizations.

Objective:

Increase definite room nights by 750 in 2009

Target Audiences, Primary:

- African-American related groups; groups associated with the NCBMP (National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners).
- Hispanic related groups; groups associated with the IAHP (International Association of Hispanic Meeting Planners) and NLMP (Network of Latino Meeting Professionals).
- National and regional events held in similar size destinations.

Target Audiences, Secondary:

- Advancing Minorities Interest in Engineering
- Association of Black Cardiologists
- National Conference of Black Mayors
- National Organization of Blacks in Government
- National Association of Black Social Workers
- Conference of Minority Public Administrators
- National Dental Association

Tactics:

- Continue to further penetrate the African-American market through NCBMP trade shows.
- Attend Black Caucus event in Washington, D.C.
- Continue to further penetrate the Hispanic market through IAHP tradeshow and NLMP monthly meetings in Washington, D.C.
- Seek opportunities to increase exposure at IAHP.
- Develop new opportunities through NLMP through event sponsorships.
- Considering developing a mini-FAM specific to the multicultural market.
- Develop a multicultural focused sales mission with partner Sales Manager (Washington, D.C. or Atlanta).

- Join and become an active member in the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

- Seek opportunities in the Asian market.

Sales Department Market Segments

- **Cleo Battle**, Vice President of Sales & Services Watchtower; Sports**
- **Linda Worthington**, Director of Sales & Services Amway; Corporate**, Associations** Hobby** (Washington, D.C. groups alphabetically A-I and Texas, South, Southeast, Northeast)
- **Mary Kay Ayscue**, National Sales Manager Religious**, Fraternal**, Government**, Multicultural**, Associations** (Washington, D.C. groups alphabetically J-Z and West, Midwest, Southwest except Texas)
- **Dasha Runyan**, Senior Sales Manager Government*, Hobby*, Associations* (Washington, D.C. groups alphabetically J-Z and National Association except Virginia)
- **Allison Boehm**, Sales Manager Multicultural*, Religious*, Sports (all USOC groups, all groups in Northeast/Southeast territory), does not include AAU groups*
- **Nancy Bass**, Sales Manager Corporate*, Associations* (Washington, D.C. groups alphabetically A-I and Virginia Associations)
- **Amanda Coate**, Sales Manager Fraternal*, Reunions*, Sports* (all AAU groups, all groups located west of Northeast/Southeast territory), does not include USOC groups.
- **Sabrina Granderson**, Convention Sales Coordinator Small meetings of 50 room nights or fewer for all markets

*groups with 599 or less peak room nights

** groups with 600 or more peak room nights

Convention Services

Relevant Trends:

- Meeting planners are seeking creative attendance builders.
- Meeting planners seek consistency in services offered from each destination.
- The role of convention services managers in the sales process is increasing.

Target Audiences:

- Meeting planners of definite group business for the Richmond Region.
- Lead and tentative group meeting planners.

Objectives:

- Provide start-to-finish meeting and convention services.
- Develop local resources with the meeting planner to produce a successful event.
- Improve attendance-builder programs.

Tactics:

- Manage convention housing software provider services for meeting planners.
- Develop unique attendance-builder programs to include but not limited to electronic, phone and mail.
- Manage post-convention survey.
- Continue leadership in both the Virginia and national ACOM chapters.
- Develop meeting and convention services lead form for community.
- Maintain and manage local hospitality services directory.

- Maintain local retail promotions for meeting and convention attendees.

Services Department Market Segments

- **Judy Draucker**, Convention Services Manager
Amway, Corporate, Association, Hobby, Government
- **Doretha Wiggins**, Convention Services Manager
Religious, Fraternal, Sports, Multicultural, Reunions

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VisitRichmondVa.com

RMCVB 2009-2010 Activity Calendar

January 2009

- 7-12: American Bus Association (ABA)
- 8-19: Association for Convention Operations Management Annual Conference (ACOM)
- 11-14: Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA)
- 27-30: Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA)
- 2009 Richmond Region Visitors Guide complete
- New VisitRichmondVa.com launches

February 2009

- 3: Celebrate, Appreciate and Educate Taxicab Operator dinner, Richmond Region
- 7-10: Meeting Professionals International (MPI) – Professional Educational Conference
- 10-21: Bank Travel
- 26: Destination Showcase

March 2009

- 1-4: Trailways
- 4-5: Conference Direct
- 16-19: Family Motor Coach Association
- 17: St. Patrick Day's Mix It Up with RMCVB, Richmond Region
- 18-22: Heritage Clubs Peer Group
- 24: Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA) Group Leader Show

April 2009

- 1-2: Affordable Meetings Mid-America
- 4-9: Travel South Showcase
- 16: Springtime in the Park
- 21-23: National Association of Sports Commissions
- 25: Great Richmond Region Adventure, Richmond Region
- 29-May 1: Virginia Society of Association Executives

May 2009

- 4: Christian Meetings & Conventions Association (CMCA)
- 5-8: Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Travel and Tourism Conference
- 13-16: Society of Government Meeting Planners (SGMP)
- 14: National Tourism Week Event, Richmond Region
- 18-21: Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) Marketplace
- 27-29: Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE)
- 31-June 4: Travel Alliance Partners (TAP) Dance
- National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners (NCBMP)

June 2009

- 16-19: PBA Annual Meeting
- 24: Destination Showcase Chicago
- VIP Visit, Meeting Planner Client Event, Richmond Region

July 2009

- 8-11: Fraternal Executive Association (FEA)
- 11-14: MPI
- 21-24: Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives (CESSE)
- 29-31: Destination Showcase DMAI

August 2009

- 4: Celebrate, Appreciate and Educate Taxicab Operator Luncheon, Richmond Region
- 5-7: International Motor Coach Group
- 15-18: American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
- 20-22: Going on Faith
- 29-Sept. 1: Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA)
- Helms Briscoe
- Richmond Region Meeting Planners Guide complete

September 2009

- 2-3: SYTA Post FAM, Richmond Region
- 8-11: Travel Media Showcase
- 9-10: Affordable Meetings
- 10-12: Professional Fraternity Association (PFA)
- 21: 6th Annual Richmond Region Open Golf Tournament, Richmond Region
- Virginia Motorcoach Association

October 2009

- 1: Virginia Society of Association Executives (VSAE) Fall Market Place, Richmond Region
- 8-13: Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) Annual Conference
- 13-17: TEAMS
- VIP Visit, Meeting Planner Client Event, Richmond Region
- DMAI Membership Shirtsleeves

November 2009

- 8-11: Ontario Motor Coach Association (OMCA)
- 14-18: National Tour Association (NTA)
- Rejuvenate

- National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners
- Holiday Mix It Up with RMCVB, Richmond Region

December 2009

- CMCA
- International Association of Hispanic Meeting Professionals (IAHMP)
- Expo Expo
- Holiday Showcase

January 2010

- 15-19: ABA
- ACOM
- PCMA
- RCMA
- 2010 Richmond Region Visitors Guide complete
- Celebrate, Appreciate and Educate Taxicab Operator Dinner, Richmond Region

February 2010

- Bank Travel
- MPI
- Destination Showcase

March 2010

- PBA Group Leader Show
- Heritage Peer Group
- Conference Direct
- St. Patrick's Day Mix It Up with RMCVB, Richmond Region

April 2010

- 4-9: Travel South Showcase
- Affordable Meetings Mid-America
- Springtime in the Park
- National Association of Sports Commissions
- Great Richmond Region Adventure, Richmond Region

May 2010

- CMCA
- SGMP
- GSAE
- POW WOW
- PRSA Travel and Tourism Conference
- MATPRA Marketplace
- National Tourism Week Event, Richmond Region

June 2010

- Tap Dance
- Destination Showcase Chicago
- VIP Visit Meeting Planner Client Event, Richmond Region

July 2010

- FEA
- MPI
- GESSE
- Destination Showcase DMAI

August 2010

- ASAE
- Helms Briscoe
- Celebrate, Appreciate and Educate Taxicab Operator Dinner, Richmond Region
- Richmond Region Group Tour Manual complete

September 2010

- Affordable Meetings
- PFA
- 7th Annual Richmond Region Open Golf Tournament, Richmond Region
- Travel Media Showcase

October 2010

- VSAE Fall Market Place, Richmond Region
- TEAMS
- DMAI Membership Shirtsleeves
- SATW Annual Conference
- VIP Visit, Meeting Planer Client Event, Richmond Region

November 2010

- 6-9: OMCA
- 13-17: NTA
- Rejuvenate
- National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners
- Holiday Mix It Up with RMCVB, Richmond Region

December 2010

- CMCA
- IAHMP
- Expo Expo
- Holiday Showcase

Richmond Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau
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