



**2015
Business
Plan**

*Adopted by the
Board of Directors on
September 30, 2014*

About Visit Buffalo Niagara

Visit Buffalo Niagara is the destination marketing organization for Erie County, the City of Buffalo and its incorporated cities, towns and villages. As the primary programmatic arm for Buffalo Niagara's travel and tourism promotion, it leads the Buffalo Niagara tourism industry to work together to generate visitor spending by developing and implementing comprehensive destination marketing programs. It is a self-governing private not-for-profit corporation with a Board of Directors.

The 2015 Business Plan is a reflection of the dramatic developments taking place in our community. New hotels, events and attractions are fueling a renewed appreciation for Buffalo Niagara as a visitor destination. VBN is prepared to leverage these assets through creative and innovative messaging, programming and branding. In addition, the sales and marketing efforts we have planned for the year ahead are aligned with a new 5-year strategic plan.

These are truly exciting times for Buffalo Niagara. Area visitor receipts were at an all-time annual high in 2012, with estimates totaling \$1.567 billion in tourism economic impact for Erie County—a 5.1% increase over the prior year—while also supporting 28,909 local jobs and producing visitor state and local tax revenues estimated at \$192 million. The high rate of tourism economic receipts also translated into a tax savings per Erie County household over \$505 in 2013.

In 2013, Visit Buffalo Niagara's sales team produced solid results in 2013, securing 164,327 future hotel room nights; booking 443 conventions, meetings, amateur athletic event and tour and travel tours and generating 823 sales leads. These efforts will result in \$122 million in future economic impact. VBN has also been successful in its marketing efforts generating non-local media coverage with a total media value of nearly \$1million and increased the number of unique website visitors to VisitBuffaloNiagara.com to 1,325,102, an increase of 18.7% over 2012.

Mission Statement

Visit Buffalo Niagara sells and markets our assets and attractions to visitors outside the Buffalo Niagara region as a convention, tourism and leisure destination for the economic benefit of the community. VBN is Erie County's lead marketing organization for conventions, meetings, amateur sporting events, cultural and heritage tourism and consumer travel.

Internationally Accredited Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) – 2015 Application

Visit Buffalo Niagara (DMO) is applying for accreditation by Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of the Destination Marketing Association International in 2015.

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Visit Buffalo Standing Committees

An evaluation to realign the VBN Standing Committee structure to enhance the priorities of the 2015-2020 VBN Strategic Plan will be completed by the end of the current fiscal year. An updated committee list and description will be included on this page in the final version of this document.

Marketing and Tourism Trends for Fiscal Year 2015

As of August 2014, “Oxford Economics believes that after expanding at an annual rate of 4% in the second quarter following a temporary contraction in the first quarter, the U.S. economy should continue to rebound in the second half of the year. For the year overall, real GDP is expected to increase by 2.1% in 2014.” (as cited by the U.S. Travel Association, USTA).

According to David Huether, senior vice president of research and economics at USTA, “on the employment side, the travel industry continues to lead the way in U.S. economic growth and recovery. As of July 2014, travel employment stands at an all-time high of just 17,000 short of 8 million. The travel industry now employs 236,000 more workers than the pre-recession peak set in June 2008. Since the employment recovery began in March 2010, the travel industry has been creating jobs at a 42% faster pace than the rest of the economy.”

Based on USTA forecasts, domestic leisure travel will grow by 1.7% in 2014, and domestic business travel will grow by 1.6% in 2014; both are on a faster growth pace than immediately prior years. Total domestic travel spending in the U.S. will increase by 4.3% in 2014.

Other USTA forecast for travel nationwide are:

- Total travel expenditures in the U.S.: up 4.3% in 2014, up 5.1% in 2015
- Total international visitors to the U.S.: up 3.5% in 2014, up 4.1% in 2015
- Total domestic person trips: up 1.7% in 2014, up 1.7% in 2015
- Leisure domestic person trips: up 1.7% in 2015
- Business domestic person trips: up 1.4% in 2015

According to a recent TravelClick North American Hospitality Review, U.S. hotels will close out their 2014 books showing healthier performance, with “both the transient (individual business and leisure travelers) and group segments...experiencing gains in occupancy and average daily rate (ADR).” Based on its hotel booking data, TravelClick expects a strong uptick in revenue per available room (RevPAR)” nationwide (as cited by USTA).

In recent years, group business travel across the country had trended toward less attended, less expensive and more localized meeting and convention bookings. More recent reporting of American meeting planner outlooks is trending faintly more positive for the travel and tourism industries.

“According to PKF Hospitalities Research, LLC, while transient demand started to grow during the latter part of 2009, significant gains were not seen in group room-nights until 2011. But after two years of steady growth in the number of group events hosted by hotels, PKF is now reporting some ‘mixed messages’” (as cited by USTA). That is, while booking pace nationwide is reportedly stronger and meeting expenditures are increasing; planners are still reporting declines either in the number of events being held or overall attendance.

According to TravelClickFor the next 12 months (July 2014 – June 2015), overall committed occupancy* is up 3.0% when compared to the same time last year. ADR is up 4.1% based on reservations currently on the books.

Transient bookings are up 4.9% year-over-year and ADR for this segment is up 5.4%. When broken down further, the transient leisure (discount, qualified and wholesale) segment is showing occupancy gains of 4.7 and ADR gains of 6.0%. The transient business (negotiated and retail) segment is up 5.1% with an ADR increase of 4.5%. Group segment occupancy is ahead by 2.1% and ADR is up 1.0%, compared to the same time last year.

The more often cited industry sources are more sober in their U.S. lodging revenue predictions, “STR and Tourism Economics project RevPAR growth will continue to slow during the next two years. According to the forecast model, RevPAR growth will slow to 5.3 % in 2014 and 4.7 % in 2015” (as cited by USTA). Tourism economics president Adam Sacks said, “We expect RevPAR to continue to grow but not at the rates seen over the past four years” (as cited by USTA).

STR’s U.S. forecast predicts 2015 hotel occupancy to grow 1.3% and 2015 hotel ADR to grow 4.4%

Specifically for calendar year 2015, STR envisions increases for Erie County:

- Supply: 2.40%
- Demand: 2.80%
- Occupancy: 0.40%
- ADR: 2.60%
- RevPAR: 3.10%

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, the Buffalo Niagara region consistently ranks in the Top 25 destinations for all U.S. inbound overseas (excluding Canada and Mexico) arrivals.

In a September 2014 study by U.S. Travel Association stated, “Travel is the second-largest U.S. export by industry (\$214.8 billion in 2013), trailing only transportation equipment (\$240.4 billion) and well ahead of sectors like financial services (\$84.1 billion) and agriculture (\$66.2 billion).”

- Travel accounts for almost a third (31.2 percent) of U.S. service exports, and almost a tenth (9.4 percent) of exports of all goods and services;
- U.S. travel exports grew by 69 percent between 2006 and 2014-faster than the 55 percent increase in all other exports;
- Travel exports grew 72 percent faster than travel imports from 2003 to 2013, with the travel trade surplus now standing at \$78 billion. By contrast, the trade deficit in all other U.S. goods and services deteriorated by \$44 billion;
- Travel is more labor-intensive than other industries. \$1 million in travel exports supports 6.6 American jobs-far more than the number of jobs in agriculture (2.0 jobs) or manufacturing (1.8 jobs) supported by \$1 million in exports;
- Travel has created jobs 42 percent faster than the rest of the economy since the 2007-2009 recession, reaching an all-time employment high of nearly eight million jobs in July 2014.

Visitor Profile for Buffalo Niagara Region

Sources: Longwoods Travel USA and U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration Office of Travel and Tourism Industries

Domestic Visitation

- There were 2.6 million overnight visitors in 2013 – up 4% from 2012. These visitors spent \$484 million in Erie County – a 4.3% increase over the previous year.
- Average party size was 2.5 adults and 0.8 children.
- Average per person expenditures on an overnight trip was \$129 for leisure travelers; \$269 for business travelers.

Visitor Breakdown

- Average age for Erie County's overnight visitors is 39 years old.
- The most popular overnight travel months to Erie County were July-September, followed by January-March.
- 56% of overnight visitors have average household incomes over \$50,000.

Geographic Breakdown

- 22% of overnight visitors to Erie County in 2013 came from New York State.
- The Top 5 States for visitation to Erie County are:
 - New York – 22%
 - Pennsylvania – 11%
 - California – 10%
 - New Jersey – 8%
 - Florida – 7%

Canadian Visitation

- Buffalo Welcomes 3.1 million Canadian visitors annually
 - 1.2 million are overnight trips
 - 1.9 are day trips
- Canadians spend \$933 million in the Buffalo Niagara region annually
- The typical Ontario shopper makes one overnight trip to Buffalo Niagara each year.

International Visitation

- Buffalo Niagara ranks as the 25th U.S. destination for all overseas international visitations.

Visitor Activities and Motivators

- Activity participation of Erie County overnight visitors in 2013:
 - 44% - Shopping
 - 32% - Fine Dining
 - 22% - Historical Site / Museum
 - 15% - Art Gallery
 - 12% - Waterfront

- 8% - Attend Fair/Festival
- 7% - Brewery

Average Occupancy, And Average Daily Rate History

The following is a summary of the average occupancy and average daily rates for 2013 and the previous five years in Erie County.

YEAR	AVERAGE OCCUPANCY	AVERAGE DAILY RATE	BED TAX REVENUE	VBN BUDGET*
2009	62.3%	\$87.82	\$7,514,807	\$3,115,000
2010	64.6%	\$87.98	\$7,918,120	\$3,609,200
2011	65.9%	\$90.79	\$8,556,982	\$3,729,050
2012	66.3%	\$93.91	\$8,861,557	\$3,862,600
2013	65.4%	\$96.47	\$9,751,127	\$4,005,000

**includes Erie County grant allocation and VBN generated revenue*

New Developments for Fiscal Year 2015

- Official opening of new Visit Buffalo Niagara Downtown Visitor Information Center
- Opening of new hotel properties including the Buffalo Marriott HarborCenter, Hyatt Place Hotel, Home 2Suites and several other projects
- Launch of new destination website
- Full integration of new organization graphic identity and extension of Buffalo For Real branding
- Implementation of Strategic Plan 2015-2020
- Implementation of Visit Buffalo Niagara Academy program
- Continued implementation of Canadian Marketing Initiative in partnership with NTCC
- Expanded and enriched partnership with Brand USA
- Continued partnership with the Seneca Gaming Corporation
- Expanding air service development at Buffalo Niagara International Airport
- Host National Hockey League Combine
- Host 8th Annual International Ice Hockey Federation Under-18 Women's World Championship
- Host International Paralympic Committee Ice Sledge Hockey World Championship
- Implementation of international leisure market strategy
- Implementation of LGBT leisure market strategy
- Continued development of the UB Medical Campus
- 75th Anniversary of Buffalo's Kleinhans Music Hall
- "Curious George" traveling exhibit at Buffalo Museum of Science
- FinnFest USA will celebrate Sibelius 150 in Buffalo
- Opening of Roycroft Visitor Center
- "Animation in Contemporary Art" exhibit at Albright-Knox Art Gallery

- Preparation for anticipated 2016 completion of Darwin Martin House restoration; opening of boutique hotel at the Richardson Olmsted Complex; move of Explore & More to Canalside

Goals for Fiscal Year 2015

- Work with the County's VBN Funding Advisory Committee to explore ways to increase the VBN marketing and sales budget.
- Ensure that VBN remains as the official voice of tourism in Erie County as we continue to work with economic development partners to be involved in decisions that impact the visitor and tourism infrastructure.
- Continue to explore regional marketing and advertising opportunities to jointly promote the Western New York region to regional, national and international visitors.
- Remain engaged with our hotels by providing expanded intelligence on meetings and sports hotel bookings including detailed pace reports and competitive analysis.
- Implement effective sales and marketing programs to remain as a top meetings and sports destination for state, regional and national programs.
- Work with the region's economic development organizations, academic and medical institutions to identify other key sectors to consider launching future conventions in.
- Work to maintain and attract new, key conventions and signature sporting events to the county that have significant hotel room-nights and fit into our brand attributes.
- Continue to advocate to elected officials and the private sectors for enhancements to our sports venue options in Erie County in order for VBN to retain existing while attracting new sporting events and tournaments to the area.
- Maintain excellent customer service programming in all aspects of the VBN. Work with visitor-sector businesses, organizations and employees in the Buffalo Niagara region to monitor, maintain and enhance the service experience at all visitor touch points.
- Ensure that VBN remains on the cutting edge with social media platforms and technology to engage new and existing customers of the destination.
- Continue to grow and enhance the VBN's Ambassador Program to elevate the understanding of the importance of conventions and sporting events to the region and generate support from the local stakeholders to increase the number of conventions and events in Erie County and VBN's overall work and economic impact on the community.
- Complete the DMAI's accreditation program for best practices of a destination marketing organization.

Marketing Goals

The Marketing Department is responsible for the overall brand strategy as well as marketing to targeted domestic and international leisure visitors; as well as convention, sports and travel trade markets. The primary goal of the department is to create compelling advertising, promotions, online, social media and partner programs, increasing overall visitation and hotel and sales tax revenue.

Marketing Objectives

- Position and brand the destination through leisure and lifestyle imagery.
- Continue to establish Buffalo Niagara's brand position and evolve its brand strategy by working with regional hospitality partners.
- Increase hotel occupancy and revenue through captivating domestic and/or international marketing programs – advertising, online, social media, and promotions.
- Continue to establish VisitBuffaloNiagara.com as the single official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction, event, meeting, sports, fishing, travel media and partner information.
- Establish Buffalo Niagara as the meetings/conferences, sports/events and domestic/international tour and travel destination of choice through compelling advertising, collateral, social media and online marketing communications.
- Encourage visitors to do and spend more by creating persuasive promotional guides showcasing all that Buffalo, Erie County and Western New York have to offer and distribute them in visitor welcome centers and areas with high visitor traffic.
- Increase website traffic levels (unique visitors, length of sessions, page views) via search engine optimization, search engine marketing and other tactics.
- Expand Visit Buffalo Niagara advertising impact or reach by offering convincing, co-op opportunities to local partners for buy-in.
- Convert Canadian day-trippers to overnight visitors.
- Continue to partner with the Seneca Gaming Corporation on cooperative leisure sector regional marketing initiative.

Marketing Strategies, All Sectors

- Expand the scope of the destination brand strategy through additional online marketing campaigns and video productions as well as through outreach with local partners, creating more brand strategy synergy in cooperative partner marketing.
- Continue implementation of a variety of tactics to take full advantage of social networking and video content marketing and position Buffalo and Erie County competitively among its peer destinations.
- Launch the new VisitBuffaloNiagara.com enhancing aspirational positioning, integrating user-generated content through third party vendors, and integrating social media content.
- Grow Visit Buffalo Niagara Marketing Committee to encompass new niches.
- Continue to generate new photo assets of destination experiences.
- Explore and secure outside funding for regional marketing initiatives through statewide funding programs such as the Power Proceeds program and the Regional Economic Development Council Consolidated Funding Application grant process.
- In cooperation with Destination Development staff, develop a local strategy for National Tourism Week that will promote Visit Buffalo Niagara to Erie County businesses and residents.

Marketing Strategies, Leisure Visitors

- Continue to produce annual touring guide, marketing collateral and related sales materials.
- Manage and maintain VisitBuffaloNiagara.com website, Trip Advisor page and social media presence.
- Produce and distribute compelling promotional videos.
- Continue implementation of digital advertising campaign domestically and in Canada.
- Grow e-newsletter subscriber database through a targeted lead generation program.
- Continue to invest in Brand USA partnerships and incentives that position Buffalo for international visitation.
- Expand marketing and promotion of LGBT and multicultural assets.
- Develop a leisure visitation campaign strategy that promotes the Buffalo brand across multiple activity/interest/personality categories (e.g. architecture, art, history, culinary, fishing, performing arts, girlfriend getaways, medical tourism, etc.) with related calls-to-action, packaging and cross-promotions.

Marketing Strategies, Meetings & Conventions

- Arm sales staff with new collateral to supplement tradeshow booth installations at major shows throughout the year.
- Continue to develop persuasive and comprehensive meetings content for website.
- Enhance the venue content and assets in the meetings section of VisitBuffaloNiagara.com.

Marketing Strategies, Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission

- Continue to support sports marketing with advertising, promotional brochures, and enhanced website content, tools and assets.

Marketing Strategies, Convention Services

- Continue to produce map pad and restaurant guide of the area for use in servicing meeting/conference delegates, sports/events attendees and leisure visitors; increase distribution of the map as budget allows.
- Identify one high profile convention every quarter to receive our social media package that includes signage, social media monitoring, contests and Random Acts of Kindness.

Marketing Strategies, Travel Trade

- In concert with other regional DMOs, I Love NY and Brand USA, cross-promote the region's assets to domestic and international markets.
- Increase visitation regionally by promoting festivals, special events, concerts, sports and cultural and historical venues through integrated marketing.
- Create and distribute new, targeted email messaging to domestic and international tour operators.
- Produce and distribute foreign language promotional videos to international audiences in partnership with Brand USA.
- Create customized, downloadable foreign language overviews of Buffalo Niagara and distribute via VisitBuffaloNiagara.com.

Marketing Department Success Measures

- Increase website visit by 15% - 1,400,000
- Maintain website local ratio at 30%
- Increase website page views by 35% to 5,128,330
- Increase website length of stay on site to 3:20
- Increase website electronic guide views by 25% to 5,000
- Increase mobile website total visits by 25% to 285,143
- Increase consumer email database by 60% to 116,000
- Increase Facebook fans by 4% to 66,000
- Maintain Facebook local fan ratio to 40%
- Increase Twitter followers by 35% to 19,000
- Increase YouTube views by 8% to 925,000

MARKETING ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Marketing Committee Meeting	■			■			■			■		
Website content	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Consumer E-Newsletter	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Monthly Meeting Marketing Meeting with Seneca Gaming Corp.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Buffalo For Real TV									■			
African American Heritage Guide									■			
Shopping Guide										■		
Restaurant Guide	■					■						
Map Pad					■							
National Women's Show, Toronto											■	
Toronto Travel Show	■											
Website Launch		■										
Touring Guide				■								
Annual Report			■									
ESTO Conference								■				
DMAI Annual Conference							■					
Destination Brand Strategy Reassessment	■	■	■									
New Research Exploration (ongoing)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Communications Goals

The Marketing Department is also responsible for managing all external communication activities, including all public relations, media relations and community awareness functions. The out-of-market PR strategy will focus on media outlets reaching high-yield audience with the greatest likelihood to travel to Buffalo Niagara and Erie County, thus providing the greatest return on investment. Outlets will include national and regional in geo-targeted markets and targeted niche segments.

Communications Objectives

Local Objectives

- Elevate Visit Buffalo Niagara’s brand awareness to local consumers, media and members of the Buffalo Niagara hospitality community.
- Engage in building strong relationships with local television, print, radio and online media to help build credibility in the local and business community.
- Promote positive impact of tourism through public awareness initiatives and a series of press releases detailing travel figures specific to Erie County and the Western New York region.
- Work with appropriate communications and public relations representatives in local organizations to collaborate on story ideas and to ensure consistent messaging on branding and marketing the destination.
- Develop a local connectors’ network of travel writers to pitch “hometown” travel articles to state, regional and national publications.

Out-Of-Market Objectives

- Generate positive media coverage on the Buffalo Niagara area as a premier domestic and international leisure, meetings and sports destination, while increasing the quality and quantity of print, broadcast and online coverage.
- Promote Buffalo as a top destination in the Northeastern United States and Canada by using brand attributes to attract leisure visitors.
- Pursue qualified travel media to visit the destination on individual visits or during planned group press trips.
- Work to develop and discover story ideas, new developments, events and unique publicity angles from local tourism industry.

Communications Strategies

- Write and distribute press releases around new developments, major exhibitions and events as well as renovations of current hotel properties and attractions.
- Write and distribute seasonal releases and ready-to-publish stories aimed at regional media outlets.
- Develop and regularly keep an online press room updated with press releases, backgrounders, media alerts and industry facts and figures to communicate news and information for easy access to media.
- Develop public relations campaigns to complement marketing plan initiatives.
- Continue to produce collateral pieces for media contacts, I Love NY media events and Discover America Day.

- Create an updateable press kit for digital marketing platform use with travel journalists and writers.
- Expand photo library.
- Build and maintain a database of international travel and cultural journalists for outreach and press trips.
- Work with I Love NY's Media Department to participate in media receptions in key markets.
- Host 30 individual media visits in 2015. This is a 35% increase due to proactive targeting of online travel journalists and bloggers on a consistent basis.
- Travel to New York City in cooperation with PR firm to hold desk-side visits with key media writing for leisure, lifestyle and meeting and convention publications.
- Pitch in key markets via desk-side visits and events with leading media writing for leisure, lifestyle and meeting and conferences publications.
- Attend Public Relations Society of America Travel and Tourism Conference and Marketplace.
- Continue to strengthen the use of social media as a proactive tool for media outreach, research and targeted pitching.
- Position VBN executive staff as travel industry experts for journalists to use as top-of-mind sources for stories on area tourism.

Communications Relations Success Measures

- Increase VBN Blog posts by 60% to 104
- Increase out of market media placements by 10% to 55
- Increase in market media placements by 9% to 60
- Host a minimum of 30 media visits
- Increase media impressions by TBD based on FY 2014 total impressions
- Increase ad equivalency value by TBD based on FY 2014 total value

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ongoing Media Relations	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Individual Media Visits	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
NYC Media Event										■		
Toronto Media Event			■									
I Love NY Media Marketplace					■		■					
Regional Media Desk Visits					■				■			
Discover America Day, Toronto										■		
PRSA Travel & Tourism Conference						■						
Some Social Media Conference											■	
TBEX									■			

Conventions Sales

The primary goal of the Visit Buffalo Niagara Sales Department is to promote Buffalo and Erie County as a convention and meetings destination, establishing a strong regional and national presence in the meetings industry, thus initiating direct economic impact by increasing hotel room night production for area hotel partners and incremental sales for restaurants, cultural attractions and transportation companies.

Convention Sales Objectives

- Generate leads and produce hotel room business for Erie County hotels and other county venues.
- Enhance awareness of Buffalo Niagara region by increasing our sales team's presence in key feeder markets (Mid-Atlantic and Northeast), targeting key meeting planners and decision makers who will bring conventions and meetings to Erie County.
- Partner with Buffalo Ambassadors from local and regional universities, associations and corporations. Work toward the common goal of selling our destination alongside these connectors who serve on boards and councils of national and regional organizations, as identified by backyard marketing. Educate them on the importance of their participation, to assist in bringing their respective organizations to the Buffalo Niagara region.
- With a focus on direct sales, continue to participate in industry related tradeshow; conduct sales blitzes and sponsor high profile events that will put the sales team and Buffalo/Erie County in the forefront of planners' minds.
- Work closely with the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center to identify and solicit conventions and meetings that have the potential to use the facility.
- Visit Buffalo Niagara sales team members will continue to serve on and seek out leadership board of director and committee positions with national and regional industry organizations (e.g.; MPI, BNSME, ESSAE).
- VBN Sales team members will work with the Destination Development/Industry Relations department to put together an educational program for the local public, aiding us in our quest for local connectors' support.

Conventions Sales Target Markets

Overall strategy is a concentration of sales efforts towards:

- National, State and Regional Business *
- National, State and Regional Association Business *
- Continue to focus on regional in-house business that is within the drive market or one-hour flight time, by emphasizing value, bottom-line cost and ROI to the host organization when meeting in Buffalo Niagara.

(*emphasis on Faith-based, Fraternal, Preservation, Medical, Science & Technology, Sustainability, Higher Education and Military Reunion vertical markets)

Conventions Sales Strategies

- Participate in industry trade shows and events which focus on key markets. This focus will be monitored, and redesigned, if need be, based on changing economy, altered product availability or newly realized market potential.
- Conduct site inspections for prospective and tentative clients.
- Utilize and enhance listings within third party online destination sales and marketing channels like Cvent.

- Work closely with Erie County Office of Economic Development and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership to identify, high growth industry clusters based on recognized strengths of the region. Concentrate on new emerging markets that are coming into the county, such as clean tech and advanced manufacturing.
- Through the Buffalo Ambassador program, host community partners to bring members together and educating them on hotels and venues we have to offer.
- Conduct regional third party planner “Meet and Greet” events, concentrating on Experient, Helms Briscoe and Conference Direct to educate them on existing and new Erie County area product.
- Partner with the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center to convene the Customer Advisory Council. The second annual meeting of established executive level convention, meeting planning professionals will continue dialogue dedicated to assisting us in strategic meetings destination management planning.
- Put emphasis on e-marketing tools to promote Buffalo Niagara area and generate leads, through an integrated digital marketing campaign. Send e-newsletter “Tourism Insider” to targeted planners in CRM database, pre and post tradeshow contacts, and other potential clients, updating them on destination product, as well as directing them to website.
- Continue to work with marketing department to assist in developing dynamic collateral materials for consistent brand positioning for tradeshows, sales missions and other sales initiatives and programs.
- Work with marketing department to keep advertising placement consistent with target sales markets.
- Work with marketing department’s media relations/social media staff to develop story pitches to local newspaper and broadcast media, to aid in educating locals on the Visit Buffalo Niagara sales efforts and its mission of increasing sustainable economic impact from conventions, meetings and reunions.
- Work with marketing department’s media relations staff to develop quarterly news releases and briefings targeting the meetings industry through publications such as; Meetings East, Religious Conference Manager & Association News.
- Conduct quarterly business strategy meetings with hotel directors of sales to review need periods and target prospects.
- Explore the opportunity to cross market with other destinations when applicable to expand customer prospect outreach and database.
- Introduce an updated and coordinated trade show presence to include new corporate identity and color palette.

Conventions Success Measures

- Generate 363 leads.
- Generate 72,250 definite hotel room nights.
- Conduct a minimum of 15 weekly solicitations per sales director.
- Conduct 15 site inspections for prospective and tentative clients.
- Conduct quarterly hotel director of sales meetings.
- Attend 16 tradeshows and industry events targeting convention/meeting planners.
- Book 10 Convention Center pieces of business.
- Convene Visit Buffalo Niagara Sales Advisory Council meeting.
- Conduct quarterly sales missions to Washington, DC to coincide with the Potomac chapter of MPI and AMPS.
- Conduct 2 sales missions in Chicago, host client reception.
- Host client reception in DC.
- Host client reception in Albany for State Association planners.

- Conduct sales blitz in Albany designed to identify new accounts and update accounts currently in CRM system.
- Conduct a sales blitz in DC designed to identify new accounts and update current accounts in CRM system.

CONVENTION SALES ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Religious Conference Managers Association	■											
PCMA	■											
DMAI Destinations Showcase			■									
Experient Envision			■									
Christian Meetings Association				■								
Conference Direct Partner Meeting Tradeshow				■								
Direct Selling Association					■							
ESSAE						■						
Collaborate Marketplace						■						
MPI WEC							■					
Council of Engineering and Scientific Executives							■					
YMRC Show								■				
Connect Marketplace								■				
Connect SMERF								■				
Rejuvenate Marketplace										■		
MPINENY											■	
Host It Here Program			■			■			■			■
EESAE Functions	■											■
Customer Advisory Council									■			
New York City / New Jersey Sales Calls		■		■		■	■		■			■
National Association Sales Calls – DC & Chicago	■					■			■		■	
Albany Sales Blitz			■									
DC Sales Blitz				■								
Albany Networking Reception		■								■		
VIP Chefs Table											■	
DC Client Reception									■			
Chicago Client Reception								■				
Sales Advisory Committee			■			■		■				■

Sports Sales

The Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission, a division of the Visit Buffalo Niagara sales department, markets and promotes the Buffalo Niagara region and the area's sports venues in order to attract new business for the region in the form of sports events, tournaments and championships. The BNSC also works closely with local partner organizations to successfully host and service existing events primarily for the purpose of enhancing the product and developing repeat business. Both the marketing and service components are designed to effectively position and brand Buffalo Niagara as one of the nation's premier sports event destinations.

Sports Marketing Objectives

- Generate sports business leads and produce hotel room night business for Erie County hotels and other county businesses.
- Generate positive media exposure and visibility for Erie County and its venues.
- Provide excellent leadership and/or support in the area of hosting and servicing.
- Position Buffalo Niagara as a "premier destination" for hosting sporting events.
- Continue to develop and strengthen relationships with local host partners and organizations.
- Increase local awareness of the sports/events industry as a key generator of economic impact in Buffalo Niagara.
- Advocate for new and improved sports facilities and venues in Erie County. Consult, advise and provide data upon request to public and private entities and community constituents on proposed product development. Encourage sports facility development that will ultimately generate increased visitor business and economic impact for Erie County.
- Continuing the 2013 sports facility assessment, engage Sports Advisory Council to prepare an Amateur Sports Master Plan designed to advise and provide data upon request to public and private entities and community constituents on proposed product development. Encourage facility and venue development that will create increased visitor business and economic impact.
- Utilizing the expertise and contacts of the Sports Advisory Council, establish a sports speaker series program that will articulate the importance of sports sales for the destination as well expand the event opportunities for Buffalo Niagara venues.

Sports Sales Target Audiences

- Professional sports.
- Collegiate sports (NCAA Championships, MAAC & conference championships).
- High School sports.
- Core sports: Soccer, softball, baseball, lacrosse, ice hockey, swimming & diving, track & field, ice skating, equestrian, emerging sports, extreme sports, fresh water sports/fishing and cycling.
- Focus on organizations: NCAA, MAAC, NYSAA, NHL, NFL, USOC National Governing Bodies, plus many youth and amateur organizations and associations.
- Geographic scope: National, regional and statewide (and occasional international).

Sports Sales Strategies

- Attend national tradeshows to meet one on one with event rights holders and national governing bodies to promote Buffalo Niagara as a premier destination to host sport competitions.
- Prospect strategically for new business, primarily through existing contacts and client relationships, but also via NASC events database, the internet, sports directories, industry publications, industry contacts and similar resources.

- Develop a comprehensive Sports Master Plan that will extend the 2013 sports assessment study to establish the future direction of VBN’s sports sales and marketing efforts as well as provide an outline of future venue needs and development and event opportunities.
- Research and evaluate potential events (in coordination with our host partners) to determine which ones are the “right fit” for Buffalo Niagara.
- Contact local sports organizations, clubs and associations to learn which events they compete in at the statewide, regional or national levels, and determine which of those events might be a reasonable and desirable fit for Buffalo Niagara. At the same time, determine which of those organizations would be interested in helping to recruit, manage and host the event once it has been booked.
- Develop and generate qualified sports leads for Buffalo Niagara hotels.
- Produce high-quality bid proposals and presentations for select sporting events.
- Work closely with hotels, venues and local host organizations and partners to develop lead opportunities and to provide quality services.
- Travel as needed to make sales calls and presentations, in order to recruit and secure new sports business.
- Organize and host site inspections and client events for rights holders and event planners to showcase the area’s sports venues, accommodations and attractions.
- Engage Buffalo Niagara Sports Commission Advisory Council through targeted communications/ quarterly meetings and special events.
- Continue to work closely with the communications department to identify media opportunities to increase awareness of the BNSC.
- Work with communications department to develop quarterly news releases and briefings targeting the sports industry through publications such as; Sports Travel and Sports Events Magazine.

Sport Sales Success Measures

- Generate 280 sales leads for sporting events and competitions.
- Generate 83,400 definite room nights.
- Conduct a minimum of 15 weekly solicitations for new business per sales director.
- Attend 8 tradeshows targeting sports/events planners such as; NASC, CONNECT Sports, TEAMS, US Sports Congress.
- Complete a comprehensive Sports Master Plan for VBN and the Buffalo Niagara region.
- Host a FAM trip targeting sports/event planners.
- Conduct a minimum of 15 individual site visits for sports/events planners.
- Generate a quarterly communication for the sports advisory council.
- Coordinate and execute one to two sports speaker series sessions.

SPORTS SALES ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
National Association of Sports Commission				■								
Connect Sports								■				
US Olympic Committee									■			
S.P.O.R.T.S. Institute									■			
US Aquatic Sports									■			
TEAMS										■		
United State Track & Field Assoc.												■
US Sports Congress												■
Sport FAM						■						
Sports Commission Master Plan				■	■	■						
Sport Commission Communications	■			■			■			■		
NASC Board Meetings					■						■	
Sports Speaker Series Sessions						■						■
Sports Advisory Council Meeting		■			■			■			■	

Travel Trade Sales

Travel trade is a division of VBN's sales department is designed to market and promote Buffalo Niagara and Western New York to attract domestic and international group and F.I.T. visitors to the region in the form of leisure Motor coach groups and individual international travelers.

Target Audiences

Domestic Seniors/Adults

International / FIT

Primary target markets: Canada, China, Germany & UK

Secondary markets: Brazil, Japan, Mexico and South Korea

Emerging markets: Australia and Russia

Domestic and International Student / Youth

Travel Trade Strategies

- Attend and participate at domestic and international tradeshows such as IPW, NTA & OMCA, to promote Buffalo Niagara as a premier destination for tour groups.
- Host NYC Sales Marketplace, to bring together Buffalo Niagara hotels and attractions with NYC based receptive operators.
- Work with tour operators to identify unique overnight stay options with Erie County hotel properties that match the specific needs of targeted markets/countries.
- Identify appropriate opportunities with tour operators to market and promote Buffalo Niagara attractions to increase group and FIT visitation.
- Work closely with The Greater Niagara Region, I Love NY and the international I Love NY offices to cultivate new sales relationships through co-op marketing/site inspections/FAMs that could become revenue generating opportunities through visitation.
- Partner with I Love NY offices on the Germany sales mission designed to meet face to face with tour operators in order to sell them on the greater Buffalo Niagara region.
- Explore the opportunity of creating an online international tour operator/travel agent certification program for 2016 to better sell the destination in-market to consumers.
- Further develop Buffalo Niagara technical tour opportunities/product.
- Bid to host the Heartland Travel Showcase for 2019, which represents Midwestern, states tour operators. Hosting the conference would educate these operators to the benefits of bringing future tours to the region.

Travel Trade Success Measures

- Generate 172 sales leads.
- Generate 10,350 definite room nights.
- Conduct a minimum of 15 weekly solicitations.
- Conduct 12 site visits and fam tours.
- Attend 5 tradeshows targeting the travel trade and group planners.

TRAVEL TRADE SALES ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
American Bus Association												
National Tour Association												
Heartland Travel Showcase												
Pow Wow												
I Love NY Workshop in Germany												
DONYS CA Sales Mission												
NYC Receptive Operator Marketplace												
Ontario Motor Coach Association												

Client Services

Client Services is responsible for enhancing the visitor experience through excellent customer service and differentiated product development and delivery. Our purpose is to work with destination partners to help deliver a wonderful and distinct Buffalo Niagara experience to visitors. Client Services focuses deployment in two areas: Convention services (services provided to Conventions, meetings, Conferences, reunions and other groups) and sports services (services provided to sports and events groups). VBN's leadership for the destination will focus on integrating programs that will add value and maximize the group visitor experience. We believe that by building strong relationships and providing extraordinary experiences, we build a "services to sales" approach that will affect repeat and referral business and positively impact the county's economy.

Client Services Objectives

- Increase attendance at Buffalo Niagara conventions, meetings and sporting events.
- Provide an exceptional experience to event organizers to ensure rebooking opportunities for the destination.
- Serve as liaison between event organizers/clients and the destination's tourism industry.
- Maintain a high commitment to customer service excellence internally (to partners and peers) and externally (to clients and visitors).
- Use the servicing and planning process to grow client relationships one meeting/event at a time. By providing "one stop shop" services, we will integrate a cooperative spirit between planners and Erie County hospitality partners.

Client Services Strategies

- Consult with clients to identify specific needs. As their partner, provide a menu of services, past successes and examples as guidelines to customer services.
- Identify local partners, venues and other services to assist planners in producing successful events.
- Offer a social media platform as additional resource for attendees to enhance their visitor experience.
- Identify opportunities for Client Services to participate in events and meetings with the Sales Department for a seamless sharing of client's expectations.
- Create customized attendance building materials.
- Conduct meetings or conference calls with planners, their marketing and public relations departments to strategize how Visit Buffalo Niagara can assist with their efforts to create event awareness and promote the destination.
- Offer the services of VBN Marketing Department when appropriate, including press releases, social media, creative messaging, and customized accurate maps for reproduction.
- Educate clients on other services offered by Visit Buffalo Niagara including housing services, welcome letters, volunteers, visitor information and welcome from local dignitaries.
- Utilize volunteer management software to assist in scheduling volunteers for meetings, convention and sporting events.
- Continue ongoing quarterly training for Buffalo Ambassador volunteers to keep them up-to-date on changes in cultural attractions, restaurants, and events.
- Recruit Buffalo Ambassador volunteers to increase the pool of volunteers to assist VBN and BNCC when needed.
- Create customer satisfaction survey for both meeting/conventions and sports planners, and implement an incentive program to increase completed surveys.
- Investigate the creation of a registration program that could be utilized when a client requests registration staff.

- Assist clients in identifying possible local area corporations that may be considered for sponsorship.

Client Services Success Measures

- 50% returned Customer satisfaction surveys
- An average customer satisfaction score of 4.5 out of 5
- 65 groups serviced
- Conduct quarterly training for Buffalo Ambassadors

CONVENTION SERVICES ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Create Customer Satisfaction Survey	■											
Deploy/Collect/ Review Customer Survey	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Buffalo Ambassador Volunteer Training	■			■				■			■	
Buffalo Ambassador Recruitment	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Attend ESPA	■											
Update VBN Services Collateral Materials		■			■			■			■	

Destination Development and Industry Relations

The Destination Development and Industry Relations Department leads Visit Buffalo Niagara's destination development efforts by working with tourism industry partners and the business community to enhance and strengthen the visitor experience in the destination. It is also responsible for providing excellent customer service to visitors at information centers while, at the same time, providing education, engagement and partnership opportunities for industry partners.

Destination Development and Industry Relations Objectives

- Improve and communicate the value of VBN efforts regarding the VBN mission, its objectives, its marketing process, the value of its works and economic impact thereof, along with market data that is useful for its constituents.
- Continue to serve leisure and group visitors to the destination, ensuring they have all the resources necessary to enjoy their stay or extend their stay while in the Western New York region.
- Provide timely and comprehensive fulfillment to requests for information received via telephone, email and reader response.
- Work with Client Services to ensure that meetings and sports delegates receive the necessary assistance and information to make their stay pleasant and memorable.
- Maintain a high commitment to customer service excellence internally (to Visit Buffalo Niagara partners and the industry) as well as externally (to visitors and clients).
- Serve as the official resource for visitors and the industry of:
 - Visitor information
 - Enhancing the visitor experience
- To foster a culture of connecting, learning and collaborating within the industry to promote destination prosperity.
- To cultivate relationships that advances the hospitality and tourism profession to educational institutions.

Destination Development and Industry Relations Strategies

- Provide comprehensive visitor resources and consultation services through two Visitor Centers.
 - Adequately staff and train Visitor Center personnel and volunteers
 - Ensure that city, county and regional tourism businesses are represented appropriately through brochure display and distribution
 - Provide oversight on pricing and mix of merchandise being sold at visitor centers.
 - Explore opportunities for the downtown Visitor Center to be the originating location for various tours.
 - Explore opportunities for assisting visitors in making hotel or dinner reservations, using kiosk or other available means.
- Provide ongoing training for visitor information center staff to include site visits to attractions, hotels and other venues as well as printed handbook of policies and procedures for dealing with visitor inquiries.

- Provide region-wide brochure distribution to hotels, attractions, restaurants, and other high-profile, trafficked areas to maximize availability for visitors to obtain the most current visitor publications.
 - Develop a schedule to sight-check high-traffic locations to ensure VBN literature availability
- Identify new and existing tourism-related businesses and encourage them to connect with VBN and the tourism industry.
 - Conduct community outreach by working with chambers of commerce, neighborhood groups and official improvement districts
- Under the Visit Buffalo Niagara Academy umbrella, provide year-round programs to ensure industry partners receive, understand and utilize their benefits:
 - With the implementation of a new website in January, host a series of training sessions throughout the region to offer training on VBN extranet capabilities for print and web-based collateral exposure;
 - Implement new “arrival to departure” tourism awareness certification training program for all partners
 - Host twice per year orientation events to familiarize tourism-related businesses with the VBN team and the opportunities that the organization affords them, as well as how they can use VBN to grow their business.
 - Provide familiarization tours for industry front-line staff and volunteers.
 - Develop a series of educational programs for engaged tourism industry businesses based on relevant content associated to their needs (for example, experiential travel, packaging, sales, training and social media).
 - Coordinate annual Visit Buffalo Niagara Holiday Open House.
 - Continue to improve communication with the tourism industry through technology, the quality of information provided and participation from the industry.
- Increase awareness of the National Travel & Tourism Beacon Awards luncheon to encourage and increase award nominations and table sponsorships.
- Assume the lead while working in cooperation with the Marketing Department to develop a local strategy for National Tourism Week that will promote and engage Visit Buffalo Niagara with Erie County businesses and residents.
- Implementation of VBN and Hotel/Motel Association and Western New York Chapter NYS Restaurant Association annual scholarships (to be given at luncheon).
- Continue to recruit and train volunteers to assist and serve in various capacities to welcome and engage visitors to the destination.

Destination Development and Industry Relations Success Measures

- Combined merchandise sales goal of \$265,000 in 2015, an increase of slightly more than 3%.
- Combined traffic to visitor centers of 105,000, an increase of slightly more than 3%.
- Plan, coordinate and execute the National Travel & Tourism Beacon Awards luncheon.
 - Maintain 2014 levels of attendance and table sponsorship
- Plan, coordinate and execute annual scholarship program.
- Plan, coordinate and execute National Travel & Tourism week activities.

- Plan, coordinate and execute annual industry educational summit with input from Sales and Marketing Department.
 - Maintain 2014 levels of attendance and sponsorship
- Plan, coordinate and execute 3 industry meetings (each with educational topic), breakfasts and other networking opportunities
- Train major attractions, cultural institutions and hotels on functionality and use of new website, achieving 75% success rate by end of year.
- Plan, coordinate and implement of new tourism awareness certification program, recognizing first graduates at luncheon in May.
- Continue to grow Buffalo Ambassador Network from 3300 contacts to 5000 contacts by 2020.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT / INDUSTRY RELATIONS ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beacon Awards Luncheon / Annual Meeting												
Beacon Awards Planning Committee												
Beacon Awards Nomination Period												
Scholarship Program Application Period												
Educational Summit Planning Committee												
Educational Summit												
Quarterly Industry Meeting												
Volunteer Orientation												
Partner Extranet Training												
Frontline Staff FAM Tour												
Holiday Open House												
Touring Guide Distribution												
Touring Guide Distribution Quality Control Check												
Industry Relations Social Media Updates												
Tourism Insider												
Travel Pulse												

Administrative Goals

The primary goal of the Administrative Department is to provide managerial guidance to all Visit Buffalo Niagara Departments related to staffing, management, operational efficiencies, organization strategic planning, education and community-based initiatives that position Visit Buffalo Niagara as the leader in hospitality and tourism-based economic development for Erie County.

Administrative Objectives

- Maintain the proactive reporting, measurements and formats of monthly, quarterly and yearly tourism data through the acquisition of third-party research and economic metrics to better communicate economic impact to media, industry and policymakers.
- Implement a comparative reporting and benchmarking system for group sales, group booking pace and interactive analytics from media placement, social media outlets and VisitBuffaloNiagara.com. These measurements will be used for both internal and external analysis.
- Continue to seek out all Western New York regional partnerships with area organizations that can positively impact Buffalo Niagara visitation, make Western New York regionalism beyond our borders a standard practice rather than an exception.
- Continue to provide efficient, convenient, responsive and customer-oriented support services to the organization.
- Provide essential human resource functions to the organization.
- Safeguard Visit Buffalo Niagara's financial assets and manage its financial resources in accordance with the organizational by-laws.
- Provide contract compliance support services and centralized guidance to all Visit Buffalo Niagara departments related to contract planning, execution, performance and monitoring.
- Continue to reach out to elected officials, the business community, media and local residents to educate them on the economic value of tourism and the value of Visit Buffalo Niagara's efforts.
- Establish mechanisms for the development of alternative funding sources for Visit Buffalo Niagara by creating partnerships with local and national vendors specific to tourism economic development and visitation that assist in creating shared revenue channels beyond tax collection.
- Position Buffalo Niagara as a sustainable destination through collaborative initiatives with our public municipal leaders. Seek out certification promotion opportunities with organizations to positively impact visitors and partners.
- Encourage Visit Buffalo Niagara staff to take leadership roles with local, state and national organizations to raise the level of credibility of the organization.
- Work with economic development partners to be the official source of visitor and tourism information for any hotel developers, attractions or other hospitality related projects.
- Work with local, state and national organizations to monitor and actively voice our opinions or concerns relating to legislative issues that may impact Visit Buffalo Niagara or the tourism industry in general.

- Continue to create committees or taskforce groups to address our various destination needs to ensure we have a collaborative marketing message throughout Erie County and Western New York.
- Throughout the year implementation and engage the process to incorporate and implement the 2015-2020 Visit Buffalo Niagara Strategic Plan.
- Complete DMAI DMAP accreditation.

Administrative Strategies

- Visit Buffalo Niagara will engage a third-party provider (ARENA) to aggregate the data from our CRM system and Website and provide a comparative reporting and bench marketing system for group sales transactions, group booking pace and interactive analytics from VisitBuffaloNiagara.com. This data will be shared with our hotel and facility partners for forecasting, budgeting and ROI measurement.
- Provide timely IT problem resolution and customer service to Visit Buffalo Niagara staff.
- Have a work environment that inspires employees through recognition and open communication.
- Ensure that administrative directives and policies are easily accessible and understood by staff.
- Oversee and monitor all expenditures of the organization to ensure operational budget is maximized.
- Provide timely financial reports to board members and other stakeholders to enhance the quality and efficiency by which financial services are delivered.
- Manage and coordinate the annual budget process including the revenue and expenditure forecasting.
- Administer all accounting functions to assure proper control and recording of financial transactions and compliance with fiscal policies.
- Continue to oversee the management and coordination of various contractual obligations for Visit Buffalo Niagara.
- Continue to execute a strategy with other Visit Buffalo Niagara departments to identify alternative revenue channels and cooperative cost savings to include partnerships and program revenues from travel, entertainment, media, retail and advertising agreements. The fiscal year 2015 business plan will include an obtainable non-tax revenue goal and focus on programming related to the following:
 - Video content
 - VisitBuffaloNiagara.com
 - Visit Buffalo Niagara Touring Guide and other collateral materials
 - Passkey Enabled Housing
 - Consolidated sponsorship strategy for signature events
 - Visitor Information Centers
- Coordinate the opportunity to conduct regular speaking engagements with area civic groups. Attend various area events and activities hosted by local organizations and civic groups.
- Conduct community presentations to governmental/municipal, standing committees and departments, county based town councils and area chambers of commerce. Throughout the year, assign staff to cover various community events and to act as liaisons between Visit Buffalo Niagara and the host organizations.

- Work with area media and meet with their editorial staffs to educate them on the value of tourism programs that Visit Buffalo Niagara is involved with that have a positive impact for businesses and residents.
- Make sure that Visit Buffalo Niagara staff is involved with U.S. Travel Association, Brand USA, Destination Marketing Association International, Empire State Development, New York State Hospitality and Travel Association, New York State Destination Marketing Organization as well as other national, state, regional and local associations to ensure that we have a voice on local, state, national and international issues impacting Buffalo Niagara tourism.

ADMINISTRATION ACTION CALENDAR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
VBN Board Meeting	■			■			■			■		
VBN Executive Committee Meeting	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
VBN Finance/Audit Committee Meeting	■			■			■			■		
VBN Travel Pulse	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Sports Advisory Council Meeting		■			■			■		■		
Quarterly Meeting with Erie County Executive		■			■			■			■	
Preliminary FY2016 Budget to Erie County			■			■			■			■
Erie County VBN Funding Advisory Committee												
Erie County Convention Center Study Committee												
Quarterly Meeting with City of Buffalo Mayor	■			■			■			■		
Monthly Meeting Marketing Meeting with Seneca Gaming Corp.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
NYSDMO Meeting			■			■			■			■
NYSHTA Legislative Day			■									
US Travel Destination Council Board Meeting		■			■			■				■
US Travel Destination Capitol Hill			■									
US Travel ESTO								■				
Destination Marketing Association International							■					
Submit DMAI DMAP Application				■								
Buffalo Niagara Partnership CAN AM Meeting	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bi-National Mayors Quarterly Meetings												
Quarterly Hotel General Manager Meeting		■			■			■			■	
Annual Audit			■									

Summary of Visit Buffalo Niagara Measurable Performance Objectives				
Organization Measure		2014 Actual	2015 Goal	% Change
Administration				
1	Erie County Occupancy (STR)			
2	Erie County Average Daily Rate (STR)			
3	Erie County RevPAR (STR)			
4	Erie County Hotel Tax Collection			
5	Monthly Travel Pulse Distribution			
6	In-Kind Partnership Services Value			
7	Paid Partnership Services Value			
8	Marketing Grant Funds Received			
9	Speakers Bureau Presentations			
Marketing				
Digital				
10	Website Total Visits			
11	Website Local Ratio			
12	Website Page Views			
13	Website Length of Visit			
14	Website Electronic Guide Views			
15	Mobile Site Total Visits			
16	Email Consumer Database			
Social Media				
17	Facebook Fans			
18	Facebook Local Ratio			
19	Twitter Followers			
20	Twitter Local Ratio			
21	YouTube Views			
22	Visit Buffalo Niagara Blog Posts			
23	Social Media Posts			
Media Relations				
24	Media Placements			
25	Impressions			
26	Ad Equivalency Value			
27	Media Visits			
Sales				
Conventions				
28	Conventions Leads Distributed			
29	Conventions Definite Room Nights			
30	Conventions Definite Room Nights			
31	Conventions Economic Impact			
32	Conventions Weekly Sales Calls			
33	Conventions Site Visits			
34	Conventions Tradeshow Prospects			
Sports				
35	Sports Leads Distributed			
36	Sports Definite Room Nights			
37	Sports Definite Room Nights			
38	Sports Economic Impact			

Measurable Performance Objective data will be included in December 2014, near the end of the current fiscal year for more accurate reporting.

39	Sports Weekly Sales Calls			
40	Sports Site Visits			
41	Sports Tradeshow Prospects			
Travel Industry				
42	Travel Industry Leads Distributed			
43	Travel Industry Definite Room Nights			
44	Travel Industry Definite Room Nights			
45	Travel Industry Economic Impact			
46	Travel Industry Weekly Sales Calls			
47	Travel Industry Site/FAM Visits			
48	Travel Industry Tradeshow Prospects			
Services				
49	Groups Serviced			
50	Completed Services Surveys			
51	Services Average Survey Score			
Destination Development Industry Relations				
52	Visitor Center Traffic			
53	Visitor Center Retail Sales			
54	Partner Database			
55	Partner Extranet Training Sessions			
56	VBN Academy Programs			
57	VBN Academy Average Survey Score			
58	VBN Beacon Awards Sponsorship			
59	VBN Beacon Awards Attendance			
60	Tourism Insider Distribution			

Industry Membership and Leadership Positions

Patrick Kaler, President & CEO

- U.S. Travel Association
- U.S. Travel Association, Destination Council Board of Directors
- U.S. Travel Association, Destination Council 2nd Vice Chair
- U.S. Travel Association, ESTO Planning Committee
- Destination Marketing Association International
- New York State Hospitality & Travel Association
- New York Destination Marketing Organization Association
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership CAN AM Council
- Member, Leadership Buffalo

Lindsay Carucci, Sports Services Manager

- Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer
- The Female Athletic Administrators of Buffalo Professional Development Group

Linda D'Agostino, Director of Sales and Government Relations

- Meeting Planners International Northeastern NY Chapter Board (current President)
- Membership Committee for New York State Association Executives

Mike Even, Vice President of Sales and Services

- Trocaire College – Advisory Council for the Hospitality Management Program

Karen Fashana, Marketing Manager

- Visitor Experience Committee at the Martin House
- Marketing Committee at the Science Museum
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership Marketing Committee

Pete Harvey, Director of Sports Development

- NASC Sports Legacy Committee
- Brian Moorman Punt Foundation Board of Directors

Ed Healy, Vice President of Marketing

- Innovation, Creativity & Entrepreneurship Advisory Council at SUNY Buffalo State
- Darwin Martin House Marketing Committee
- National Garden Festival Executive Committee

Cindy Kincaide, Director of Destination Development & Industry Relations

- Board President – Buffalo Green Fund, Inc.
- Board Member – GOBike Buffalo
- Board Member – Buffalo Civic Auto Ramps, Inc.
- Community Advisory Board Member – WNED-TV
- Culinary Advisory Group Member – Erie 1 BOCES
- Member, Leadership Buffalo
- Advisory Board Member – Garden Walk Buffalo/National Garden Festival

Leah Mueller, Director of Tourism Sales

- Shea’s Marketing Committee
- OMCA Supplier Council
- OMCA Conference Committee

Lori White, National Sales Director

- 43 North Planning Committee
- Kenmore Farmers Market co-chair

Dionne Williamson, Sales Director; SMERF and Corporate

- Friends of Broderick Park Committee