

Destination Gettysburg Marketing Strategy – 2019 Gettysburg Inspired

It is the mission of Destination Gettysburg, the official destination marketing organization of Adams County, to market Adams County as a premier travel destination producing a positive economic impact.

Destination Gettysburg is responsible for inspiring travel to Adams County. This is done by addressing a variety of defined audiences. Each audience is addressed in this strategy with the primary focus on the leisure traveler. At the core of all audiences is the individual – we must utilize our messaging and distribution channels to strike an emotion that will lead to travel to Adams County.

A specialized strategy for group business – both domestic and international – as well as meetings is outlined. These groups require a different approach, though our messaging and themes will be carried out across these markets.

This plan is organized by audience and the strategy that will be used to reach each audience, including seasonally specific changes.

The LEISURE Market

The leisure market is the transient business that arrives in Adams County as individual travelers, either overnighting or day tripping. The average leisure traveler is coming in a group of 4 or less and the average age is 52. The majority travel within a 300-mile radius, though we do host guests from around the world. Our target markets reflect the proximity of our audience with focus on PA, MD, VA, NJ, OH and NY.

Research consistently shows that over 60% of visitors are repeat visitors, often a tradition tied back to childhood. This audience is a core market that offers an opportunity to extend their stay based on stories of undiscovered experiences. The second market, our new visitor, is the primary focus of the marketing investment in 2019. Our existing market will be addressed through our owned content including our website, blog, newsletter and through social media.

The leisure traveler falls into the following personas, which will define our stories and advertising content.

The Civil War traveler – this is our traditional visitor in that they are looking for our history. However, this is also often the repeat visitor that seeks deeper experiences in the history. They will attend our scholarly events, including panel discussions, seminars, book signings, etc. This visitor tends to be 45+, but do have younger Civil War travelers. This is a year-round traveler but will migrate to anniversary experiences.

- Content will be developed for all platforms for this messaging. This will include blogs and itineraries.
- Images will be included in print advertising to represent this segment of our product offering.
- A series of digital ads will be included in our annual display campaign which targets behaviorally and contextually.
- This content will also be included in our family stories.
- Influencers will be considered to help tell the story of modern historic experiences in Gettysburg.
- Seasonal focus will be on Abraham Lincoln in winter to tie into Presidents Day and in Fall for Dedication Day and general battle/civilian history the remainder of the year.

The foodie – from ag experiences, to craft beverage, unique dining, to events, this visitor plans their trip around local fare and interesting experiences. Foodies come in all age brackets and will travel as couples or as a group of friends. Food is year-round, making seasonal offerings essential.

- Social media will be a primary distribution channel for our story reaching this market.

- A variety of list blogs will be developed to help create short food trails that can be promoted throughout the year and that members will also have the ability to use as content.
- Video components will be incorporated into the storytelling for this segment. Boosted social posts of videos will assist with reach and engagement.
- Digital campaigns will include content for this segment
- An influencer campaign will be incorporated into reaching this segment.
- The Adams County Pour Tour will be a component of our marketing to this segment.

The family – the 2017 California University of PA Intercept Study notes that 34.4% of leisure visitors are traveling with at least one child. Gettysburg is a traditional destination for families who wish to share the history of our country. These are both intergenerational experiences as well as immediate unit families. Primary season for travel is summer vacation, though school holidays are a great tie in. They are looking for a mix of history, agriculture and family connection. Kids are much more hands-on and look for engaging experiences. Technology is a plus, though some parents want the kids to disconnect.

- A more traditional approach will help support this segment. This will include print and radio advertising that will run April through September.
- A digital campaign will deploy in April and run through September focusing on family travel.
- Intergenerational travel will be a focus through images and stories for this segment.

- The Li'l Lincoln - Li'l Lincoln is similar in concept to Flat Stanley. With Li'l Lincoln, we will be encouraging visitors to print the president and bring him along for some fun pics that they can post socially to share their #GettysburgInspired experiences with friends and family. The idea is to generate more reach for our destination on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.

Additional ideas include a life-size Li'l Lincoln for in market promotion. Li'l Lincoln will be available for download at www.destinationgettysburg.com. This is the perfect family interaction experience. A contest may be incorporated into this story.

GO TO OUR WEBSITE
DestinationGettysburg.com
 AND DOWNLOAD YOUR
 FREE DIY LFL LINCOLN
 TO CUT OUT AND TAKE
 ALONG WITH YOU AS
 YOU EXPERIENCE
 GETTYSBURG. MOVE
 OVER, FLAT STANLEY!



The outdoor enthusiast – ready to take on any outdoor adventure, Gettysburg and Adams County offers this group a soft-rec experience as a primary driver. The outdoor enthusiast is inclined to check out a few history experiences while they are in the area. This will be more of our 25-45 age group. These are primarily couples and males. This traveler can be broken into two groups – winter lovers and warm weather experiences. Additional attention will be given to the Appalachian Trail and State Park options in the region.

- Social media will be a primary distribution channel for our story reaching this market.
- Blogs will be updated and developed to help promote these experiences.
- Digital campaigns will include content for this segment

For all segments, our content will have a seasonal direction with the primary divisions of January through March for winter stories, April through Memorial Day for spring stories, summer will kick off with Memorial Day and run through Labor Day, extending longer if the weather dictates. Fall will be in high gear through Remembrance Day. Holiday promotions will begin before Thanksgiving and run through the end of the year. With the flexibility of social media, these story segments will be based on weather and related issues. However, digital advertising will stay true to these breaks. Our family content from a paid standpoint will start in market in April and run

through September with an overlap of couples' getaways overlapping throughout the year. Digital will add a layer for our 60+ aged traveler in our winter and fall campaigns, though at a smaller investment than our primary focus of new visitors 25-45.

The Authentic Adams stories will continue in 2019. We will produce two videos for 2019, the intent is that one will focus on the fruit industry featuring the apple industry and the other will be a town piece on East Berlin. We will continue to use the video content that has been created and develop social posts, blogs and itineraries that have an Authentic Adams feel.

Destination Gettysburg's approach will be to share stories that inspire travel to our destination. This will be done through vivid images, videos, engaging social posts, experiential and listing blogs, as well as sharing user generated content.

Destination Gettysburg will continue to work with TripAdvisor and Expedia Media and develop the Google DMO Partnership. The goal with these platforms is to reach the traveler when they are in the destination selection and planning stages. While ultimately, we would like all potential visitors to reach our content, with today's traveler, we must deliver our content where they are searching.

Working with journalists and influencers creates the editorial base of our stories. These writers will include print – both newspaper and magazine, as well as bloggers and television programming. While staff will continue to distribute general releases to a larger travel writer database, we will also develop specialized pitches to specific journalists targeting their audience and editorial calendars. Specialized pitches will be developed as multimedia campaigns with video, photos, quotes, story ideas and, where appropriate, a list of expert sources.

In addition to our ongoing story pitches, the staff will attend media marketplaces and work with the State Tourism Office on media mission opportunities. This will allow our team to have face-to-face discussion with the media. In addition, we will invite media to the destination individually and as a group for familiarization tours.

Destination Gettysburg will continue to promote the My Gettysburg app to drive visitors to the destination, events and itineraries using the push notifications. The app will be promoted through social media, consumer newsletter, the website and all print advertising.

The Travel Planner will remain the primary printed fulfillment piece for all visitor requests as well as follow up for groups and meeting planners. The piece will highlight a variety of inspirational stories on the history, culinary, recreation and events that are the product of Gettysburg and Adams County. In addition to direct distribution, the guides will be distributed at camping shows through Anderson Brochure Distribution, AAA offices, and various outlets operated by PA on Display.

The consumer newsletter will continue with monthly distribution. Advertising opportunities will be available to members with a limit of three per email. Additional efforts will be made to grow the database, including social media and in-app promotion. As well, the list will look to be segmented in 2019 for quarterly communications highlighting the users' special interest in one or more of our primary categories of history, culinary, recreation and events.

DestinationGettysburg.com and the Road to Gettysburg blog will continue to host content that presents the full story of our destination. We will work throughout the year to update content and drive users to the information

they seek for planning a visit. The blog will offer a mixture of inspirational stories, photo blogs, video blogs and lists. Both platforms will be promoted through our consumer newsletter, app and social media. Both platforms currently host a tremendous amount of original content that will be shareable on social and with members. While new content will be added and new members will be incorporated in, we will utilize much of what we have generated over the last 12-18 months.

Social media continues to be a strong connection with our visitor base. Destination Gettysburg will continue utilize Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest to inspire new visits with engaging content that communicates the benefits of visiting. This will be done by sharing with our audience the true visitor experience with posts and by driving traffic to our owned-content and ultimately our destination. Posts will be developed around seasonal connections, Authentic Adams County and Gettysburg Inspired. The voice will continue to be that of a fun, confident and respectful insider who inspires travel by sharing insider tips, links to blogs, videos and images. In addition to posts, we will respond to comments, seek feedback and inspire others to post while in our destination. Our CrowdRiff software will assist us in creating conversations with visitors and allow us to find additional content to share and like, increasing the number of new followers on various platforms. Both organic and paid content will be managed on the various platforms.

Together, these owned, earned and paid marketing opportunities will work to reach potential and existing visitors inspiring them to travel to the destination to experience all we have to offer.

GENERAL PAID MEDIA OVERVIEW

Winter – couples targeting

- Digital and SEM
- Boosted social posts

Spring – couples targeting with families beginning late spring

- Regional print publications/lifestyle and women's
- Radio in DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
- Expedia campaign begins
- Ongoing digital, SEM and video

Summer – family targeting with some couple targeting

- Regional print publications/lifestyle and women's
- Radio in DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
- Expedia & TripAdvisor campaigns
- Ongoing digital, SEM and video
- Billboard – Pittsburgh

Holiday

- Regional print publications/lifestyle and women's
- Ongoing digital, SEM and video

THE ADAMS COUNTY POUR TOUR

During the second year of the Adams County Pour Tour, Destination Gettysburg will market the craft beverage trail through digital marketing, radio tags, social media, sponsored events, owned-content and app promotions. A concert series promotion will be developed to broaden the brand messaging. Pour Tour merchandise will launch in January and will be available first through official Pour Tour partners, then through additional retailers interested in distributing.

GROUP and INTERNATIONAL

The group tour market is key to the success of our destination. During 2019, we will work to better define the group tour marketing and the destination offering. We will continue to utilize suggested itineraries, communicated through newsletters, tradeshow follow up, and familiarization tours. Within the group tour market, we have several segments that we market to. These segments are outlined below.

Tour operator/Receptive – ultimately, we must identify the tour planner. While pricing is different, the message they need is the same – fresh new itineraries that keep their groups interested in booking. Holiday continues to be a growing season, while adult tours hit primary in fall. This group also works with the student market, which has begun to travel in both fall and spring after a primarily spring travel trend in the past.

- Attend tradeshow and conduct sales calls to conduct face-to-face discussion of needs and offerings
- Send quarterly newsletters with sample itineraries, new experiences and shareable content
- Continue with direct mail postcard incentive program
- 'live' itineraries and other fun video marketing will be incorporated into our group marketing in 2019
- A member co-op marketing program will be developed to assist our members in reaching this market
- Promote the Warm Welcome program to our database through a direct mail program with follow up email. The Warm Welcome program allows us to track what groups are booking.
- We will continue to utilize digital options to reach the international market, including TripAdvisor and BrandUSA

Adult/senior group leader – this is the ultimate decision maker for this segment. They tend to fall into one of the Leisure defined audiences. They seek immersive experiences, mixing a traditional history stop with a food stop and possibly an event of free time. Positioning the experience to this group should include the things they didn't know, as the Civil War travelers is a niche in the group tour market.

- This market is primarily reached through the tour operator, while the inspiration is delivered to the end user through our leisure marketing efforts.

Teacher/student – history focused with an opportunity to mix in ghostly adventures and agtourism experiences. This has been a group that ranges from middle school to high school. A new segment in this group is the performance group market. It is key that messaging connects with lesson plans and engages the students in history, science, and critical thinking.

- In addition to reaching this marketing through tour operators, Destination Gettysburg has established a direct link to teachers through Social Studies tradeshow. This has allowed us to develop a database with teachers and school administrators for direct marketing.
- Staff will develop or purchase a school database for Pennsylvania and Maryland-based schools that will be used for marketing purposes.

International operator – for the first-time international traveler, the operator needs to know what the basic experience is for the guest. This group is a smaller set of operators who also work with Foreign Individual Traveler (FIT) to generate individual international travelers. It is key to have a set and easy plan for the traditional, as well as the authentic deep dive for the FIT traveler. Travel patterns are country dependent.

Based on research conducted by California University of Pennsylvania, international visitors make up approximately 3% of our overall visitation. Each year, we dedicate a small portion of our budget to reach this market through sales, paid advertising and media relations working in partnership with the State and regional partners. Our primary focus is on the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Canada and China.

Our location on route from New York to Washington, DC allows us to capture visitors looking to see the United States. We have been able to take advantage of this for decades and plan to continue. Itineraries will be created to help show how easy it is to make Gettysburg part of an international visit. In addition to promoting the

destination as a natural connection between tier one cities, we will showcase our history, small town America assets and our countryside.

As we have done in the past, Destination Gettysburg will attend IPW, the largest in-bound international tradeshow in the US. We will take appointments both with operators and with journalists. In addition, we will participate in North American Journeys East to reach New York-based receptive operators. In addition to attending these two shows, the destination receives representation on the associations web portal which includes a destination overview, images and itineraries. Pre- and post-show communication with attendees is carried out and leads are shared with members.

In spring, the destination will participate in a Brand USA MegaFam focusing on travel representatives from the UK and Ireland. Our participation will connect us with Pittsburgh and Baltimore. Additional opportunities with Brand USA and regional DMO partners will be established to support sales calls to United States-based receptives. Destination Gettysburg will also continue to work with CRUSA when available to connect our destination with the Washington, DC region.

New in 2019, an electronic communication will be established to communicate itinerary ideas and share usable content with international receptive and operator contacts. This will allow us to keep Gettysburg in the forefront of the planner's mind as they are creating travel experiences for the international market.

MEETINGS

The meetings segment represents a growth market for the destination. However, based on our limited product and access to a major airport, we have struggled to make much of an impact when compared to years of investment. As a primary leisure destination, we can utilize the meetings industry to supplement mid-week and off-season travel. Due to our lack of air service and smaller facility size offering, Destination Gettysburg targets meetings and events that host up to 500 attendees and peak room nights of 200 rooms. We look to associations, corporate travel and specialty groups in Harrisburg, Washington, DC and Philadelphia, as well as local companies who may host meetings, to drive the traffic. Our differentiator in the market is our leadership development programs partnered with our unique meeting venues. While we have seen a growing interest in our destination as a meeting site, we are still working to establish our brand in this segment. There are two main areas of focus within this market.

Association – Both Harrisburg and Washington, DC are home to a variety of statewide and national associations that represent every segment of business, non-profit and social group. Typically, these groups are on a rotation of regional location for booking meetings. Opportunities for regional, board and full association meetings are available.

- Maintain membership in meeting planner associations and attend regular networking events
- Using our database and updates through our memberships in industry organizations, develop an ongoing brand awareness program to ensure we are considered for the rotation. Working with our members, identify a target list of 10 state associations not currently coming to Gettysburg that we can target for bookings.
- Digital and SEM with the addition of CRM look-a-like audience targeting
- Re-establish our newsletter

Corporate – this segment offers opportunities for trainings, regional meetings and board retreats. Typically, this segment will have a higher budget for accommodation and off-site opportunities. As well, spouses are additional guests that can present an opportunity for bleisure travel before or after the official meeting dates.

- Maintain membership in meeting planner associations and attend regular networking events
- Digital and SEM with the addition of CRM look-a-like audience targeting
- Re-establish our enewsletter
- Work with leadership development members and meeting facility members to develop a focused target list for an in-market two-day familiarization event.

Gettysburg Inspired will be utilized to promote the meeting segment to planners and corporations. We will continue to highlight our leadership development and unique meeting venues. With the decision to eliminate a dedicated sales person, the 2018 efforts included an investment in digital marketing – both display and SEM. The campaign targeted meeting planners, HR and CLO targets as well as association and corporate executives. Retargeting from our website was also implemented. This resulted in a 300% increase in traffic to the site. This program will be continued, and a member co-op/retargeting program will be outlined for the meetings digital campaign.

While we will continue to utilize Cvent to accept and share RFPs. All RFPs will be followed up on and a destination packet will be sent to the planner for future consideration.

We will also work to secure earned media regarding Gettysburg in the industry. In addition to reviewing editorial calendars to see where Gettysburg fits, we will establish pitches on topics including unique venues in a historic destination, leadership development programs and Gettysburg as a meeting location for small meetings and conventions.

Throughout the year, we will connect with members and planners to determine if our efforts are resulting in bookings. The ongoing Welcome Bag program is an additional way to track, which will continue. We will also work with members to create a Bounce Back/Incentive program for these bags, We will do this through meetings and tracking logs with members.