

2018 Strategy and Marketing Plan

DESTINATION GETTYSBURG

Destination Gettysburg 2018 Strategy and Marketing Plan

Our Story

As a destination we must inspire people. We inspire visitors to learn about history, ride horses and Segways, go hiking, reconnect, taste new foods, listen to new music, explore our countryside, try wines and ciders. We inspire people to slow down and enjoy life. Destination Gettysburg's messaging in 2018, building on the success of 2017, will work to create a strong consistent brand that our promise is to inspire you.

The story will be told through several channels. Paid advertising will utilize images and videos of couples, families and individuals experiencing our destination. User generated content will continue on our website, social media and blog. We will work with travel writers and bloggers to help tell our story. Our Authentic Adams County story platform will continue, allowing a larger story of our destination to be told through our special places, people and food. We will also utilize our app more to share information on our destination. While it is important to promote our history, it is equally important to showcase it as part of an experience that is modern and current.

"To have authentic travel experiences, immerse yourself in the current culture of a place, not the past."

Samantha Brown, Host, The Travel Channel

In order to craft the best story of the destination, one must understand the location and the elements that make up the story. Our storytelling will utilize the entire destination, calling attention most often to our members. We will incorporate experiences, such as events, into our platform to tell a more robust story. As we have successfully done in past years, Destination Gettysburg will include history, recreation, agritourism and culinary elements to inspire travel to our destination. The seasonality of our destination and how it changes the available experiences will also be showcased.

Both our tagline, "Make your own history," and our **Gettysburg** Inspired headline will continue. Both the headline and the tag will be utilized in all markets for continuity.

Our Market

Every plan must start with an audience and a story. Our primary audience include leisure travelers – both domestic and international, group travelers and meeting planners. Secondary audiences include the media who assists us in telling our story and our members, who should carry the destination message. Each segment is defined:

- **Leisure traveler:** primarily female, age 25-45, lives within a 300-mile radius of Gettysburg, enjoys foodie travel, culture, history and outdoor recreation. In fall, some budget will be applied to the 45-65 aged market.
- **Group traveler:** focus is on connecting with the group leader by communicating with tour operators and receptive operators in order to deliver our message and increase the offerings and bookings of retail tours to our destination
- **International traveler** – visitors from the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Australia and China. We will begin to shift our focus to the FIT traveler.
- **Meetings traveler** – our target is the meeting planner, and third party planners, focusing on those who plan for smaller conventions, regional meetings, retreats, corporate leadership development and

associations. We will also look directly to high level executives for leadership development. The final segment is the local business contact who seeks mid-week lodging and localized meetings.

Our Goals

Destination Marketing is about inspiring people to travel to our destination. It is about connecting them with the places, the people and the experiences that connect to their individual needs. How a successful destination does this is through stories and experiences. For Destination Gettysburg, 2018 will be the year of **INSPIRATION**.

Leisure Market:

- Maintain overall traffic (calculated by sessions) to our website
- Increase traffic to the blog by 20%
- Increase the use of the My Gettysburg app
 - o Users to increase 25% for the year over 2017
 - o Sessions to increase 25% for the year over 2017
- Increase reach and engagement on social media platforms
 - o Facebook:
 - increase average monthly reach to 340,000
 - increase average number of reactions to 7,250
 - o Twitter:
 - increase average monthly impressions to 75,000
 - increase average retweets a month from to 85
 - increase average link clicks to 125
 - o Instagram:
 - increase number of followers to 4750
 - increase average number of likes to 3,500
 - o Pinterest:
 - increase average number of impressions a month to 33,000
 - increase average number of saves a month to 175
- Increase the open rate of the consumer newsletter from 16% to 18%
- Increase the overall demand for room nights by 1% as calculated by the STR Report.
- Media Relations
 - o Secure media coverage in our top five media target markets: Washington, New Jersey, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
 - o Generate at least one story per writer that attends a group fam
 - o Complete at least 30 unique media pitches a month

Group Market:

- Clearly define the group tour product and message
- Develop relationships with ten new tour companies
- Move at least five companies from day trips to overnight trips
- Bring on one new retail tour
- Secure coverage in a minimum of five group tour publications
- Maximize SYTA being in Baltimore with pre and post fams

International Market

- Increase the awareness of Gettysburg as a travel destination for British, German, Canadian, Australian and Chinese travelers

- Place an ad in the Brand USA Inspiration Guide
 - Attend IPW
- Define and promote the FIT program

Meetings Market

- Fully develop the meetings brand with consistent messaging and imaging
- Secure media coverage in at least two meeting/business publications

Each market will be approached with a multi-faceted marketing approach using traditional, digital and media relations efforts to achieve our goals.

The Leisure Traveler (\$743,000)

The leisure traveler is highly influenced by the female decision maker. It is that female, 25 to 45, with and without children that we are speaking directly to in our marketing. These travelers live within a 300-mile radius of our destination. This proximity allows us to reach 60 million potential visitors.

This strategy has been in place for several years. With this in mind, we have increased our repository of images that showcase women. During the summer, we will focus heavily on families with couples being secondary. The remainder of the year, we will focus on couples, with families as a secondary audience. Fall promotions will stretch to include couples, age 45-65, in the regional markets.

Our campaigns will be organized seasonally, winter (January through March), spring (April and May to be extended should we find summer travel pushed back due to snow), summer (June through mid-September), fall (mid-September through Thanksgiving) and the holidays (Thanksgiving through December). The plan, as developed, will utilize several distribution channels – print, digital including desktop and mobile, social, owned media, earned media and radio. The annual digital plan will launch in January, ramping up as we move into season, and tapering off for the holidays.

We will continue to add to the Authentic Adams County story with additional videos. These will be promoted through digital, social, owned and earned media.

A full outline of paid media is shown at the end of this section.

As indicated earlier, our 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 to raise the awareness of our destination and the full array of experiences available. This will be done both through a sponsorship and display advertising. We will also investigate additional opportunities with Expedia Media. The goal with both platforms is to reach the traveler when they are in the destination selection and planning stages.

The 2018 marketing efforts will also rely on active pitching to a variety of journalists. 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.

Destination Gettysburg will also develop a Travel Media “newsletter” that will include story ideas, images links, events, etc. Utilizing our Cision platform, we will be able to distribute a robust product to an accurate list.

General themes that will be covered in 2018 include:

- The seasonality of the destination
- Gettysburg/Adams County as a road race destination highlighting the variety of marathons, half marathons and 5Ks that are hosted
- Culinary tourism
- Highlighting the craft beverage experience to include cider, wine and spirits
- The holidays – i.e. Christmas and New Year

- History – the concept will be to present what is new, hands on and offers a different approach to the traditional experience
- Multi-generational travel
- Best of lists – this is a format that has seen a great deal of success for destinations both with traditional and social media engagement
- Authentic Adams County
- Beyond the battlefield – while this is not new, it is still of interest to most media

In an effort to achieve a higher level of coverage, the Cision software will be used to update our media list. We will look to conduct media missions in Washington, DC and Philadelphia. To provide a first-hand experience, Destination Gettysburg will host individual writers throughout the year. Organized FAM Tours will be conducted to showcase the unique product offering under a themed topic which may include Authentic Adams County, holidays or special events. Previous group FAMs have resulted in online and print coverage.

Staff will continue involvement with MATPRA, including attending the annual Media Marketplace, which allows us to reach domestic travel writers with the likelihood of writing about the Mid-Atlantic.

Destination Gettysburg's owned content is a platform to ensure that the destination story is being told completely. These tools include our website, app, travel planner, consumer newsletter, blog and social media. Throughout the year, additional itineraries will be added to our website to incorporate new members and experiences.

Destination Gettysburg will take a greater advantage of the My Gettysburg app to drive visitors to the destination, events and itineraries using the push notifications. One notification a week will be delivered. It is suggested that we develop an opportunity for members to purchase a push notification in the form of an exclusive offer for My Gettysburg App users. For a fee, an offer would be promoted through the push notification. The member would be asked to provide data on how many offers were claimed. New videos will be uploaded as well as new Destination Stories. The app will be promoted through social media, consumer newsletter, the website and all print advertising.

The Travel Planner will be the main 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 through various outlets operated by PA on Display.

The consumer newsletter will continue with monthly distribution. Members will still have the opportunity to advertise in the eblast with a limit of three per eblast. Additional efforts will be made to grow the database, including social media and in-app promotion.

The Road to Gettysburg blog, which lives within the DestinationGettysburg.com website, will continue to be updated each month. The goal will be to post a blog weekly. Content will be a mixture of inspirational stories, photo blogs, video blogs, recipes and lists. The blog will be promoted through our website, consumer newsletter, app and social media.

Social media continues to be a strong connection with our visitor base. Destination Gettysburg will continue utilize Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest to inspire new visitors, engage existing visitors, communicate the benefits of visiting our destination, educate our audience on the true visitor experience and drive traffic to our owned content and ultimately our destination. Posts will be developed around four themes which are found throughout the overall marketing strategy – My Gettysburg, 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 – both owned and third party, 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. We will continue the Instagram contest, this year utilizing #GettysburgInspired with a monthly winner. This will generate more followers and additional content. YouTube is a social media platform that we utilize as a home base for video content.

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

	Print	Digital	Radio
January	Home School Guide	Ongoing digital through December	
February			
March	Discovery Map DC Visitor Guide Harrisburg Magazine PA Travel Guide		
April	Harrisburg Magazine Recreation News Baltimore Magazine		(Through Oct.) WMZQ & WPOC
May	AAA World Home School Guide Whirl Gettysburg Times Newspaper wrap South Jersey Magazine	Washington.org display campaign Expedia media campaign	iHeart Radio WASH-FM WMZQ-FM IASH-FM IMZQ-FM WPOC-FM
June	Harrisburg Magazine Philadelphia Magazine Baltimore Magazine Good Housekeeping – DC, Cherry Hill, Columbus Redbook - DC, Cherry Hill, Columbus Women’s Day - DC, Cherry Hill, Columbus	Washington.org Email sponsor TripAdvisor display campaign thru Aug.	WZFT-FM IPOC-FM IZFT-FM NPR (begins in June)
July	AAA World South Jersey Magazine Whirl	TripAdvisor destination sponsorship	NPR
August	Recreation News Good Housekeeping – DC, Cherry Hill, Baltimore Redbook - DC, Cherry Hill, Baltimore		NPR iHeart Radio WASH-FM WMZQ-FM IASH-FM IMZQ-FM

	Women's Day - DC, Cherry Hill, Baltimore PACOA Co-Op		WPOC-FM WZFT-FM IPOC-FM IZFT-FM
September	AAA World South Jersey Magazine Whirl Pittsburgh Magazine Philadelphia Magazine DC Visitor Guide Baltimore Magazine		
October	Golfstyles Magazine Harrisburg Magazine Recreation News		
November	Recreation News		
December	Harrisburg Magazine Frederick Magazine Baltimore Magazine Baltimore Fishbowl Holiday Guide		NPR

In addition to the above, Destination Gettysburg will provide cooperative advertising opportunities with the National Park Traveler, AAA and Recreation News.

Annually, we will continue with our lead generator sites including civilwartraveler.com, travelinfo.com and freetravelguides.com. This is the only lead generator other than the website that we will utilize in 2018.

Destination Gettysburg will be unveiling a new logo in January. This will require rebranding of all corporate materials and career wear, signs, owned media platforms and giveaways. Gettysburg Inspired materials will continue to be used, as this will continue as the campaign theme.

The International Visitor (\$35000)

Visitors from around the world make their way to and through Adams County. 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. Destination Gettysburg has been working within the international market for decades in partnership with the State and regional partners. In the last ten years, we have lost support of the state in the form of in-country representation. This has made it increasingly difficult to connect with the international market.

In 2018, Destination Gettysburg will focus specifically on the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Canada and China. We will do this through media relations, trade show attendance, and our partnership with Brand USA.

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. Follow up from the show, both for media and operators, will be in the form of customized emails and mailers, completed within three weeks of returning from the show. Once follow up has been completed, leads are shared with members through the portal.

Our sales team will also attend North American Journeys West in February to reach California-based receptive operators and North American Journeys East in April 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.

Following on the State Sales Mission to Germany in 2017, Destination Gettysburg intends to participate in the 2018 China Mission. Prior to attending, we will work with a translation company to develop business cards and profile sheets in Mandarin.

A sales mission to New York is planned for March, prior to attending NAJ East. Building upon the sales mission and show, we will host a FAM tour for these New York Receptive Operators to highlight the destination with the goal of increased inclusion of our destination in catalogs and FIT trips that are developed, many in September.

In addition to attending the media marketplace at IPW, we will attend the International Media Marketplace in New York City in January. We will work through our membership in Travel Media Association of Canada to pitch Canadian media on the idea of snowbirds making Gettysburg an “on the way” destination. Our media efforts will also include targeted distribution of stories to the United Kingdom through TravMedia.

To provide an overall international message, the destination is represented on the Brand USA website, as well as in the Inspiration Guide as a paying partner in the State co-op. To understand the impact of our efforts, Destination Gettysburg will continue to purchase the Visa Vue report with state partners.

The Group Tour Traveler (\$70,000)

The group tour market is key to the success of our destination. In the spring season, Gettysburg hosts thousands of school students here to see first-hand where the famous Civil War battle was fought and where President Lincoln delivered the “Gettysburg Address.” In addition, we have been promoting the agricultural learning opportunities to student groups, especially those who visit from urban areas. Later in the season, our market turns to the adult traveler who will take advantage of the variety of experiences available throughout the county. This group, especially, has become the more difficult to target based on the nature of the traveler and the market. While we will continue to attend Group Leader Shows, we will focus more on the operator in 2018.

The Student Market

Traditionally, most US schools study the American Civil War between 5th and 9th grade. There is no better way to understand that impact of the American Civil War than to have a student visit this destination. Specialized marketing materials will be developed to tell this story. Our database of teachers, administrators and student operators will continue to be added upon in 2018. We will reach these contacts through individual email, mail and newsletter. We will also search out publications that target teachers to pitch our field trip story.

In 2018, SYTA will be held in Baltimore, providing us immediate access to student operators. In addition to our attendance at SYTA, we will be hosting a pre and post show FAM Tour. Additionally, we will look at performing groups as a potential market in the student segment when attending SYTA. Destination Gettysburg will also work with Hagerstown on a July Student FAM.

The postcard program targeting the teacher/school will continue with mailed distribution in February, April, September and November. Each postcard will have trivia that can be used in the classroom. As well, we will have a call to action to reach out to us to learn more about planning a field trip to Gettysburg.

We will continue to deliver quarterly eblasts to our teacher database. Once a quarter, a blast will be sent highlighting an inspirational experience that ties in Gettysburg as a living classroom, a sample itinerary, a new attraction/program/member and information on an incentive program or co-op opportunity. Individual follow up will be done with anyone who opens the email.

The Adult Market

At one time, the adult market was referred to as the Senior Market and skewed to a more elderly traveler on a motor coach who had enjoyed traveling as a group and followed a strict schedule. Today’s adult traveler, many of whom are baby boomers, are looking for a different group travel experience. These groups are looking for hands-on experiences that give them a taste of the destination’s culture. This group is also not interested in having every moment planned out for them. We must package this destination in a new way and assist operators and charter companies in expanding their business with our destination. We will continue to utilize opportunities that have been effective in telling our story while incorporating new approaches.

FAM Tours have been highly successful in educating both tour operators and group leaders on what our destination truly has to offer. Regardless of how many times we communicate with the audience, it is not until they are here and experience the attractions and dining that they understand. We will conduct an operator FAM in December to feature Gettysburg as a holiday destination. Anyone unable to attend will be extended an open invitation to visit for an individual site visit.

A continuation of previous efforts, the postcard mailer program will continue in 2018, being sent to qualified operators with the potential to bring new or additional business to the market. Each card will use the theme

of “Gettysburg Inspires Groups to...” and will be sent out quarterly. A call to action will be developed to determine impact.

In addition to our traditional postcard campaign, we will do a FAM-In-A-Box mailing. The box will be developed and distributed to qualified operators that have both group leaders and retail and have the ability to drive more overnight business to Gettysburg. Recipients will be reminded to contact Destination Gettysburg if an itinerary is booked to take advantage of our “Warm Welcome” gift.

The “Warm Welcome” program that started in 2016 will continue. This program will be promoted through a postcard and through an eblast. A newly designed magnet will be distributed.

Destination Gettysburg will continue to deliver quarterly eblasts to our operator database. Once a quarter, a blast will be sent highlighting an inspirational experience, a sample itinerary, a new attraction/program/member and information on an incentive program or co-op opportunity. Individual follow up will be done with contacts who open the email.

In 2018, Destination Gettysburg will attend the following trade shows. For each show, research will be conducted, and appointments will be made (where appropriate). Preshow emails will be sent to encourage mutually requested appointments. We will work with members who attend the same shows to coordinate appointment efforts. During the show, we will utilize our Gettysburg Inspired profile sheet and slideshow to tell the story of our destination. Following the shows, emails will be sent based on information shared at the appointments. Operators will be added to the group tour eblast database as well as the quarterly postcard mailing list. In addition to the general follow up with the eblasts and postcards, a personalized follow up will be scheduled every four months based on information shared during appointments.

2018 Travel Tradeshow will include:

- American Bus Association in Charlotte, NC
- Heartland Travel Showcase, Buffalo, NY
- Pennsylvania Bus Association Marketplace in York, PA
- Maryland Motorcoach Association Marketplace in York, PA
- Student Youth Travel Association Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD
- Virginia Motorcoach Association, Greenville, SC
- Ontario Motorcoach Association Marketplace in Windsor, Ontario, Canada
- National Tour Association Travel Exchange in Milwaukee, WI

While tradeshow are a great way to meet new contacts, more personalized meetings build relationships. For this reason, we will plan on four sales missions in 2018. Based on the review of our reports, three locations will be selected that have a large number of operators that have the likeliness to drive traffic to the destination. In addition to meeting with operators, we will ask to do a presentation to anyone on the sales team. We will also leave a Gettysburg gift basket behind for the driver’s lounge as a thank you. Upon return, we will follow up with a handwritten thank you, as well as sending an email providing information on anything specific discussed and offering a site visit. These missions are currently targeted for Illinois, New York/New Jersey, Wisconsin/Michigan and Canada. Many will be aligned with a tradeshow.

These efforts will all be supported with the distribution of specific press releases relevant to the group tour market and established pitches based on editorial calendars. Destination Gettysburg will develop four releases this year that will include what’s new in Gettysburg – this may include programs, events, attractions and other things that are not being talked about, new hotels, the Authentic Adams County story and holiday group travel. Any coverage that is secured will be used to communicate to tour operators through direct emails and blasts.

In addition to our marketing efforts, we will work with members to educate them and provide assistance to them in order to strengthen their marketing effort. We will continue to utilize the Group Leader Guide for group leader shows and as a mailer for operators with Group Leaders. We will continue to provide information in our Sales Newsletter and Going Places regarding the shows that we attend to highlight what was learned during appointments in order to encourage more download of leads. We will also revamp our quarterly meetings to highlight what we are learning more and discuss ways to reposition our product to the group market.

Throughout the year, staff will connect with members and operators to determine if our efforts are resulting in bookings. We will do this through meetings and tracking logs with members. Any time we are made aware of a group visiting, we will share the information with our social media team who will welcome the group on social media. We will also ask group tour visitors to use #GettysburgMoments to share their experience on their social media. For operators, we will compile a complete database of everyone we meet with through the year and ask for a report – this will be done quarterly – on business that was conducted in Gettysburg.

The Meetings Market (\$20,000)

While meetings represent a growth market for the destination, 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.

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, we have developed a pure marketing plan to continue to grow the idea of Gettysburg as a meeting destination.

Our biggest investment in this segment will be in digital marketing – both display and SEM. We will look at running a campaign targeting meeting planners, HR and CLO targets as well as association and corporate executives. Retargeting from our website will also be implemented. We will investigate the opportunities to geofence Small Market Meetings and DC Connect. A member co-op program will be outlined for the meetings digital campaign.

While we will continue to keep our content updated on Cvent, we will discontinue our sponsorship package. The free platform available to DMOs will still allow us to process 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 culinary aspects of the destination, unique venues in a historic destination, leadership development programs and Gettysburg as a meeting location for small meetings and conventions.

Our quarterly eblast will continue and feature meeting ideas, articles, venue highlights, culinary highlights and more to encourage interest in the destination.

A new high-end marketing piece will be designed to highlight the destination for planners. We will make this piece available to members to distribute with their proposals. It will be available both in hard copy and electronically.

Throughout the year, we will connect with members and planners to determine if our efforts are resulting in bookings. We will do this through meetings and tracking logs with members. Any time we are made aware of a meeting, we will share the information with our social media team who will welcome the group on social media. We will also ask meeting attendees to use #MeetInGettysburg to share their experience on their social media.

Membership – Retention and Recruitment (\$45,000)

As a membership-based organization, it is important to communicate to retain and assist members in connecting with potential travelers in the various segments. We continue to refine our message in an effort to reach more people with targeted information.

Going Places, delivered to a member’s inbox each Tuesday at 2pm, will continue to provide information on industry news, advertising and educational opportunities, member news, group and meeting segment information and current marketing efforts of the organization. Starting in January, a monthly newsletter targeted to sales will launch. Content will include member opportunities, tradeshow highlights, educational information on both group tour and meeting markets as well as marketing and itinerary ideas.

We feel it is extremely important to reach the frontline staff of our member businesses. These employees are the heart and soul of our industry and the direct link to our visitors. They must be knowledgeable of the destination and provide the best service possible. Our Hospitality Heroes program, which launched in 2017, will continue with monthly newsletters highlighting new members, events, special tours and activities, and customer service tips. We will also continue to host events for our Hospitality Heroes, providing an opportunity for members to host this frontline group in order to educate them on the product so that they may assist with cross promotions.

In addition to communication, Destination Gettysburg offers a tremendous amount of benefits to our members. These benefits will be better defined and communicated throughout the year. Benefits will be reviewed and highlighted differently for each segment of our membership. This will allow us to better use these benefits as a recruitment tool for new members.

During the year, Destination Gettysburg offers a variety of educational and networking events as part of our benefits offered. A general schedule includes:

January 17	Promotional Product Day
February 6	Build, Inspire, Innovate Summit
March 20	Annual Dinner
March TBD	Window Display/Merchandising
April (all month)	Online Job Fair
April 27	Brochure Swap
May 7-11	Tourism Week
July 1	Membership Renewals
August	FIT Travel
September 19	End of Summer Social
November 8	Member FAM
December 13	Holiday Gathering

One of the largest events that takes place each year is the annual marketing summit. This event is open to non-members, including those outside of the tourism industry. It is our goal to increase attendance at the event. New speakers and topics have been developed for the event, focusing on areas that members indicated were of interest.

In addition to organized events, the staff will continue to reach out to members to schedule individual appointments as needed. During these appointments, we will review benefits, update the member on our activities and determine what needs the business has that we can assist with. We believe, with better communication and explanation of benefits that we will maintain a retention rate of 90% or better.

In order to expand our ability to tell the destination story, we will continue to recruit members throughout Adams County. A new member recruitment tool will be developed that will be fully electronic. It will be developed in a such a way that it can be personalized for each segment of membership. Member testimonial videos will also be incorporated into the recruitment efforts. A specific strategy focused on meeting the marketing needs of each segment will be developed for our primary targeted growth segments of restaurants and agritourism businesses.

Destination Gettysburg will also develop a small marketing piece that can be left behind when a staff member visits a business – member or non-member – to let the owner and/or manager know that we were there and are interested in connecting. This piece will be a call to action tool so that we can have a direct connection with a decision maker of the business. It is our goal with these new tools to increase membership by 7%.

The Industry Story

While we spend the majority of our time marketing the destination, it is just as important to market our organization and our industry to the local audience. They must understand the importance of tourism and the positive impact it has on our community. All too often, it is thought that tourism is a burden, but the opposite is true, providing thousands of jobs and millions of tax dollars to support for our police, schools and citizens. We tell this story in many ways – media efforts with local print and radio, presentations to local government officials, personal relationships with community and corporate leaders, and through our website, gettysburgtourismworks.com.

In 2018, we will increase our efforts to tell more stories through news releases on our efforts and impacts. We will highlight our story through presentations to the Council of Governments, to various municipalities in Adams County, through ongoing communication with the County Commissioners and columns in the newspaper and Chamber Chat. It is also planned that we will start a quarterly newsletter specific to community leaders to help share our impact story and show them what we are doing to provide a positive economic impact on Adams County.

[Gettysburgtourismworks.com](http://gettysburgtourismworks.com) will continue to be a platform for information on our industry and our organization. We will add new research, earned media links, current advertising efforts and industry information. We will add new Faces of Tourism and Business Profiles to highlight the efforts of our tourism community. The site will continue to support the businesses by providing a platform for tourism jobs in Adams County. We will promote this site through our media efforts and newsletters. As well, we will serve as a sponsor for events such as the Build, Inspire, Innovate Summit held annually in February.

The Glossary of Terms

Brand: the essential truth or value of a product or company; it is a promise of what your company or product delivers. It is not your mission, vision, logo, or your tagline – but each of these should convey your brand.

Group leader – the individual who organizes a group of people – their church, bank, fraternal club, class, or retired friends – to travel. This person may work with a receptive operator or tour operator to help plan and book their group travel experience.

Receptive Operator – this is a company or individual that will book the itinerary for a group traveling together. They typically get a reduced rate from a business because they are booking for several groups throughout a period. Receptive operators usually specialize in the area that they are based.

FIT – This acronym stands for many phrases - Foreign Inbound Traveler, Frequent Inbound Traveler, Foreign Independent Traveler, Free Independent Traveler – but all identify an individual, family or group of less than ten who are self-booking.

User Generated Content – any images, posts, or videos created by visitors to the destination that you have acquired permission to reuse.

Cision - a global company that provides media relations software and services. Destination Gettysburg utilizes media monitoring, media list building and media analysis services to track story placement and develop relationships with media.

MATPRA – Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance – media relations staff members from DMOs of Pennsylvania, Maryland, DC, Virginia and West Virginia. The group meets quarterly for professional development purposes and works together on larger destination stories. The group also hosts an annual media marketplace, allowing destinations to connect with approximately 60 journalists in a conference setting.

CrowdRiff – a portal for curating user generated content from various social media platforms. This portal allows Destination Gettysburg to push user generated content to our website, social media pages as well as out to presentations as determined by the destination.

Content Campaign – a paid marketing program in which a vendor creates stories about your destination, which can live on your site or that of the vendor. The vendor then creates promotions, including social media advertising and native network advertising to push readers to the story platform.

IPW – previously known as International Powwow, IPW is the largest in-bound international show in the United States. Our staff meets, by appointment, with tour operators and media to help tell our story and increase international visitation.

Brand USA – this is the country’s international destination marketing organization. Utilizing private business funding, the Brand USA matches federal dollars to create multi-million-dollar marketing campaigns in a variety of countries to generate incremental growth in international visitation.

Tour Operator – a company or individual who books group tour activities. This group does not typically own their own buses. Tour Operators may offer retail tours or provide booking services for a pre-formed group.

ABA – America Bus Association – a membership organization comprised of motorcoach operators, tour operators, tourism-related organizations, as well as suppliers. Members represent an industry providing more than 600 million passenger trips annually on charters, tours, schedule service and shuttles. Each year, ABA hosts a marketplace in January allowing us to connect with approximately 60 attendees.

PBA – Pennsylvania Bus Association – the only statewide trade association dedicated to the needs and issues of the motorcoach industry. Includes motorcoach operators, companies servicing the industry, and travel suppliers. Annually, PBA hosts a group leader marketplace in March and an annual operator meeting in June, both providing sales opportunities for suppliers.

MMA – Maryland Motorcoach Association - an organization dedicated to representing the business and governmental interests of private bus companies operating in Maryland. MMA promotes travel by motorcoach, and tour and charter service provided by operator members in cooperation with and support for its travel industry supplier members. MMA hosts an annual group leader marketplace, providing a sales opportunity direct to group leaders as well as to Maryland-based operators.

SYTA – Student Youth Travel Association - SYTA is the non-profit, professional trade association that promotes student & youth travel and seeks to foster integrity and professionalism among student and youth travel service providers. SYTA is "The Voice of Student and Youth Travel.®"

OMCA – Ontario Motor Coach Association – a membership organization championing the motor coach industry in North America. Each year, OMCA hosts a trade show providing an opportunity to meet with Canadian operators.

NTA – National Tour Association – a business association for professionals serving group tour and international travelers to, from and within North America. NTA offers one to two trade shows each year to connect suppliers with operators.

Cvent - the global meeting, event and travel technology company, offering software solutions to event planners for online event registration, venue selection, event management, mobile apps for events, e-mail marketing and web surveys. Cvent provides hoteliers with an integrated platform, enabling properties to increase group business demand through targeted advertising and improve conversion through proprietary demand management and business intelligence solutions.

MPI – Meeting Professionals International - the largest meeting and event industry association worldwide. The organization provides innovative and relevant education, networking opportunities and business exchanges, and acts as a prominent voice for the promotion and growth of the industry. MPI has a global community of 60,000 meeting and event professionals in more than 90 chapters and clubs in 24 countries. Destination Gettysburg belongs to the Middle PA chapter and the Potomac chapter.

PASAE – Pennsylvania Society of Association Executives - PASAE exists to educate the individuals who are managing associations. PASAE provides educational, leadership, and professional development opportunities to association executives and staff, as well as supplier members, which enhances the performance of the organizations they represent.