The official destination marketing organization for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, Maryland, USA

MARKETING PLAN

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

FISCAL YEAR 20
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VAAAC MISSION

The mission of Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County is to market the destination, provide economic prosperity, and enhance employment opportunities.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

President & CEO
Connie Del Signore

Chief Operating Officer
Erin McNaboe

Chief Financial Officer
Dani Bottcher

Destination Expert: International Media & Internal Communications
Susan Seifried

Destination Expert: Visitor Services
Tatiana Wells

Destination Expert: Group & Hotels
Elizabeth Joyner

Destination Expert: Partnership
Christine McNichols

Destination Expert: Special Projects
John Fulginiti

Marketing Coordinator: Group & Hotels
Karla Armstrong

Marketing Coordinator: Partnership
Alexis Fish

Special Assistant to the President
Ronnee Zilonis

Director, Symmetry Agency
Ben Isenberg

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman
Senator John C. Astle

Vice Chairman
Gary Jobson, Owner, Jobson Sailing, Inc.

Treasurer
Dale Hilliard, Chief, Policy and Corporate Affairs Maryland Aviation Administration

Secretary
Eric Ruden, Deputy Athletic Director, Naval Academy Athletic Association

Immediate Past Chair
Robert Clark, President & CEO, Historic Annapolis

City of Annapolis Representative
Mayor Gavin Buckley

Anne Arundel County Representative
Tyler Patton

Marketing Committee Chair
Willie Wright, General Manager, BWI Marriott

Government Affairs Committee Chair
Lou Zagarino, Director, University of Maryland/Baltimore-Washington Medical Center Board

Nominating Committee Chair
Gene Condon, Vice President/General Manager Arundel Mills Mall

President & CEO
Connie Del Signore,
Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County
AT LARGE MEMBERS

Lisa Barge, Agricultural Marketing & Development, AAEDC

Carol Benson, Executive Director, Four Rivers: The Heritage Area

Sally Comport, Principal, Art at Large, Inc.

Margaret Davis, President & CEO, Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts

Alan Friedman, Attorney at Law

Brian Gallagher, Director, Council Baradel

Rodney Gooden, General Manager, The Westin Annapolis

Michael Hughes, Managing Partner, MH Media Strategies

James LoBosco, Executive Vice President Hospitality Division, Southern Management Corporation

Robert Norton, President, Cordish Global Gaming and Live! Casino

Roberta Pardo, Owner/Creator, Urban Walls Brazil

Brian Riddle, President, Homestead Gardens

Steve Stavropoulos, Interim General Manager, Westfield Annapolis

Kevin Warntz, Senior Manager SP+ Municipal Services

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce Representative

CDR. Alana Garas, USNA Public Affairs Officer/ Miriam Stanicic, USNA Community Relations Director

Felicia Nolan, Development & Events Specialist, City of Annapolis

Gina Stewart, Executive Director, BWI Business Partnership

Jerry Walker, President & CEO, AAEDC

CHAIRMAN’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tom Baum, Founding Partner, La Terra Homes

Elizabeth Kinney, President, Light House Social Enterprise LLC Board

Terry Martini, VAAAC Information Specialist & Retired Librarian

Patti Moriarty, Sales Associate, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

Trent Newman, VP, Relationship Manager, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Alderman Frederick Paone, Annapolis City Councilmember – Ward 2

Lauren Russell, Creative Director, Maine Cottage + Thos. Baker

Patricia Zeno, Chair, Historic Preservation Commission, City of Annapolis

COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS

Yousuf Ahmad, CEO, Northern Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce

Liz League, CEO, Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce

Alissa J Santoro, Executive Director, Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce

Julia Howes, Executive Director, Southern Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce

Raj Kudchadkar, Esq., President & CEO, Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce
### VAAAC Visitor Industry Economic Impact

**2017 Tourism Economics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>People</strong></th>
<th><strong>Dollars</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.3 MILLION</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3.8 BILLION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitors to Anne Arundel County</td>
<td>Total Direct Visitor Spending in Anne Arundel County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8% GROWTH RATE</td>
<td>2.1% GROWTH RATE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Visitor Spending by Category

- **Transportation**: $2.36 MILLION
- **Lodging**: $2.96 MILLION
- **Restaurants**: $453 MILLION
- **Retail**: $300 MILLION

#### Jobs

- **31,078** Total Jobs Supported by Anne Arundel County Visitor Industry
- **$1.86 MILLION** Total Payroll Supported by Anne Arundel County Visitor Industry

#### Taxes

- **$472 MILLION** State & Local Taxes Generated by Anne Arundel County Visitor
- 2.1% GROWTH RATE
MARKETING APPROACH

Dear Partner:

As a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), our goal is to position Annapolis & Anne Arundel County as an ideal leisure travel (domestic and international), group business (meetings, team building, family reunions, sporting events), and wedding destination. Within our core markets, we encourage regular and repeat visitation, and consistently identify new source markets to share our Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County message.

As Anne Arundel County’s DMO, every staff member is a dedicated and informed Destination Expert, promoting our brand both domestically and internationally. The FY20 Plan leverages our entire team to holistically market the destination and highlight our diverse network of partners. We will continue to utilize advertising, social media, press & media relations, group business, and visitor center resources to accomplish our mission and influence the influencers. Starting in FY20 we have realigned to ensure a comprehensive and collaborative marketing approach by all staff members. Our marketing organization will rely on the execution of its program with both destination experts and marketing coordinators.

The FY20 Plan ensures a variety of marketing tactics including content development, new photo & video assets, advertising campaigns, connecting with relevant media contacts and social influencers, social media engagement, attending events, and more. Through a collaborative approach we will successfully position the county and our partners to relevant markets and to drive more business to Anne Arundel County.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County DMO tracks and communicates the results of its efforts on the following:

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Hotel Occupancy
- Hotel Tax Collections
- Anne Arundel County Hotels’ Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR)
- Destination Visitation

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- VAAAC Website Traffic
- Social Media Analytics
- Total Lead Generation via Advertising, Social, Groups, and Communications
- Media Mentions (stories about the county and our partners)
- Total Business Partners
CORE MARKETING OBJECTIVES

TO BRAND ANNAPOLIS & ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

We continue to position Annapolis & Anne Arundel County to our target markets through regional and international promotions, as well as multi-channel advertising campaigns focused around the four niche product lines.

PRODUCT LINE PROMOTION

TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT:

As the county’s DMO, our goal is to engage our visitors as well as our industry partners. Through content development and publishing campaigns, we are able to tell the stories of our businesses while engaging the consumer and encouraging visitation.

PROCESS:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Story & Campaign Ideas

EDITORIAL & SOCIAL STRATEGY
Content Based Marketing

ENGAGEMENT
Partner & Consumer Connections
TO INFLUENCE THE INFLUENCERS

Traditional and digital media outlets continue to influence how travelers plan their vacations. Our approach addresses the traditional media channels and the evolving digital/social media channels by providing assets and communication in their preferred formats while continuing to grow relationships with key contacts.

TRADITIONAL CHANNELS
- Deskside Media Visits
- Asset Support
- Familiarization Trips
- Press Trips / Onsite Media Visits

DIGITAL / SOCIAL CHANNELS
- Social Engagement
- Targeted Communication
- Writer Meet Ups
- Niche Outreach

TO SELL THE DESTINATION:

The Annapolis & Anne Arundel County sales team is focused on presenting the destination as the ideal location for meetings, conferences, weddings, sporting events, reunions, and team building events. The Destination Expert: Group & Hotels and the Marketing Coordinator have identified industry events that will provide the highest level of brand awareness for the destination as well as turn qualified opportunities into future business. The marketing team is also continuing to look at how to brand the destination for group business and drive more relevant leads to our partners through direct calls, RFPs, and website traffic.

The industry partners are invited to join in at different points of the buyer qualification process and present their business offerings. Conversely, partners may invite the Destination Expert to join their sales process at various industry events.
As the county DMO, branding and promotion is at the core of everything we do. The entire team is involved with how we present Annapolis & Anne Arundel County to consumers, event planners, and media contacts. The media plan is strategically tailored to support each of our source markets and through our defined brands.

In FY20 our media plan will be based on the overall allocations:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>COUNTY PROMOTION</th>
<th>PRODUCT PROMOTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
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**County Promotion**

Our county promotion budget allocation will be utilized to support marketing efforts and marketing for the entire county. Allocation for this budget is against three segments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Development</th>
<th>Campaigns</th>
<th>Regional/International</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production costs (writers, photography, videography, additional assets) to help develop and promote the product in the county.</td>
<td>Media spend to promote overnight visitation around major events, call to actions, or seasons.</td>
<td>Media spend for regional promotion (i.e., MASN), international (i.e., CRUSA), and additional opportunities.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Brand Promotion**

The budget allocated for our three brands includes an advertising budget allocated to brand the product, drive traffic to the website, showcase the partners, and present deals/packages.

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<tr>
<th>40%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.visitannapolis.org">Visit ANNAPOlis.org</a></td>
<td><a href="https://www.expativetbourne.com">EXP at BWI</a></td>
<td><a href="https://www.annapolisdiscovered.com">ANNAPOlis DISCOVERED</a></td>
<td><a href="https://www.weddingsinannapolis.com">Weddings in ANNAPOlis</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VisitAnnapolis.org is VAAAC’s website providing visitors with the information they need to get the most out of a visit to Annapolis. Partnering with local businesses, we aim to help travelers find hotel rooms, restaurants, tours, upcoming events, things to do, and much, much more.

Website

visitannapolis.org

Facebook

Visit Annapolis

Instagram

@visitannapolis

FY20 ANALYTICS

Website Traffic

731,268 Sessions
ELEMENTS

The Visit Annapolis brand was developed to promote the tourism offerings in and around the city of Annapolis, including southern Anne Arundel County, the Chesapeake Bay, BWI region, and surrounding areas. Our marketing strategies highlight our main tourism product offerings in the area including:

- History
- Arts & Culture
- Outdoor Recreation
- Food & Drink
- Maritime
- Naval Academy

MARKET

Our marketing plan focuses on two market segments:

— **Customer Type:**
Leisure traveler, meeting & event planners, family travel.

— **Geography:**
Virginia, Washington DC, Delaware, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, France, Germany, UK, China, Canada, and CRUSA markets.

APPROACH

We execute our marketing plan via three avenues:

— **Media Placement:**
Includes a multi-channel approach across our geographic market, segmented by our customer type. This campaign includes print advertising (Southern Living, Condé Naste, Travel + Leisure, AAA, USA Today, Preservation, Food & Wine, Coastal Living) video advertising (Comcast, YouTube, and Facebook), digital advertising (Google, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and directly with publishers), and radio and outdoor when relevant.

— **Influencer Outreach:**
Focuses on editorial channels to help present and promote the destination. Our team monitors influencers (traditional channels, bloggers, social, etc.) and tracks interests, channels, and mentions. We then influence the influencers by seeding them with story ideas, destination assets, and updates on new tourism offerings in the county. We have also identified our top editorial channels and contacts and will plan visits and regular communication to encourage editorial coverage.

— **Content Production:**
Continued development of content (copy, articles, video, photos, social) to help promote our partners and the county overall. Visit Annapolis is fueled by the Annapolis Discovered.com website which currently has more than 25 local writers developing content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEBSITE TRAFFIC</th>
<th>SOCIAL COMMUNITY</th>
<th>BUSINESSES</th>
<th>STORIES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY19</td>
<td>731,268</td>
<td>59,398</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td>15% INCREASE</td>
<td>10% INCREASE</td>
<td>5% INCREASE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Whatever you need from a hotel – venues capable of hosting hundreds, or simply a comfortable place to rest for the night – you’ll find it in the BWI region. Home to over 50 hotels, the BWI region has a little something to accommodate any need. Whether staging a conference for hundreds, or looking for a small space to hold a reunion, the Hotels at BWI offer everything you need to ensure your event goes off without a hitch.

Website  thehotelsatbwi.com
Facebook  ExperienceBWI
Instagram  @experiencebwi

FY20 ANALYTICS
Website Traffic
468,132 Sessions
ELEMENTS
The Experience BWI brand was developed to promote the area known as the BWI Region, including the West Nursey District, the Arundel Mills Entertainment District, The Baltimore-Washington International Airport, and the surrounding areas.

- Shopping
- Maryland Live! Casino
- Arts & Culture
- Outdoor Recreation
- Food & Drink
- Nightlife & Entertainment
- Events & Festivals
- Group Business
- Sporting Events
- BWI Airport
- Washington DC
- Baltimore
- Annapolis

MARKET
Our marketing plan focuses on two market segments:

- **Customer Type:**
  Leisure traveler, business traveler, outbound travel from BWI, meeting & event planners, family travel.

- **Geography:**
  Virginia, Washington DC, Delaware, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, France, Germany, UK, China, Canada, CRUSA markets.

APPROACH
We execute our marketing plan via three avenues:

- **Media Placement:**
  Includes a multi-channel approach across our geographic market, segmented by our customer type. This campaign includes print advertising (Southwest Magazine, EnRoute Magazine, Toronto Star, AAA, Pittsburgh Magazine, Philly Magazine) video advertising (YouTube, and Facebook), digital advertising (Adara, Google, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and directly with publishers), and radio and outdoor when relevant.

  **Influencer Outreach:**
  Focuses on editorial channels to help present and promote the destination. Our team monitors influencers (traditional channels, bloggers, social, etc.) and tracks interests, channels, and mentions. We then influence the influencers by seeding them with story ideas, destination assets, and updates on new tourism offerings in the county. We have also identified our top editorial channels and contacts and will plan visits and regular communication to encourage editorial coverage.

- **Content Production:**
  Continued development of content (copy, articles, video, photos, social) to help promote our partners and the county overall. In FY20 we are launching a content production plan for Experience BWI. This will be the first time we are creating regular promotional content for the BWI region. We are planning for 1-2 articles a month as we roll out this plan.

<table>
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<th>BUSINESSES</th>
<th>STORIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY19</td>
<td>468,132</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td>15% INCREASE</td>
<td>100% INCREASE</td>
<td>15% INCREASE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our wedding focused site inspires through inspirational images, from amazing wedding venues to breathtaking floral arrangements and all the other fun details. You’ll find a broad array of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County wedding vendors that cover all your needs and those of your guests, from the ceremony and reception to the fun that beckons in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County before and after the wedding.

Website  weddingsinannapolis.com
Facebook  Weddings in Annapolis
Instagram  @weddingsinannapolis

FY20 ANALYTICS
Website Traffic
128,686 Sessions
ELEMENTS
The Weddings In Annapolis Brand was developed to promote the wedding product across Anne Arundel County, including Southern Anne Arundel County, Annapolis, and the BWI Region. The brand is designed to promote our variety of wedding options including; historic, on the water, countryside, and traditional.
- Wedding Venues
- Lodging
- Vendors

MARKET
Our marketing plan focuses on two market segments:
— Customer Type:
  Brides, grooms, and wedding planners.
— Geography:

APPROACH
We execute our marketing plan via two avenues:
— Media Placement:
  includes a multi-channel approach across our geographic market, segmented by our customer type. This campaign includes print advertising (The Knot, Philly Magazine, Wedding 411), digital advertising (Google, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and directly with publishers).

— Content Production:
  With the relaunch of the Weddings In Annapolis website in FY19 we created a process of telling real wedding stories through the site. Local photographers and our partners provide blog posts about real weddings with digital assets. We use these stories to help promote our partners and the county overall to future brides.

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<th>STORIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY19</td>
<td>128,686</td>
<td>1,262</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td><strong>20% INCREASE</strong></td>
<td><strong>15% INCREASE</strong></td>
<td><strong>15% INCREASE</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Annapolis Discovered is the official editorial site for Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County. It is the place where the stories of Annapolis are told by the locals that know it best. Here you will read about the latest news and updates related to Arts, History, Lifestyle, Food and more! Written by local bloggers, our stories are your guide to the City.

Website  annapolisdiscovered.com
Instagram  @annapolisdiscovered

FY20 ANALYTICS
Website Traffic 197,046 Sessions
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WEBSITE TRAFFIC</th>
<th>SOCIAL COMMUNITY</th>
<th>BUSINESSES</th>
<th>STORIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY19</td>
<td>197,046</td>
<td>73,022</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY20</td>
<td>15% INCREASE</td>
<td>10% INCREASE</td>
<td>100% INCREASE</td>
<td>5% INCREASE</td>
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</table>
OBJECTIVES

Our job as the county’s DMO is to connect consumers to our local partners. In FY20, we will focus on three major goals as part of our engagement objective:

**GOAL 1**

**More Impressions**

Our FY20 plan will leverage a multi-channel campaign to present the county and drive interested visitors to our branded sites. The conversion point is lead generation for our partners by showcasing their listing, event, or deal on the site and sending them to the partner’s website.

**GOAL 2**

**More Partners**

As a DMO, we are dedicated to promoting the product(s) our partners provide (attractions, dining, events, rooms, merchandise, etc.). In FY20, we will continue to increase the number of businesses we support and partners of our organization.

**GOAL 3**

**More Visitors**

Content continues to influence consumers buying decisions, especially with travel planning. The FY20 plan continues to influence the influencers to cover the county events and partners as well and repurpose content we create. We will also continue to create content and push through our own channels, helping to promote our partners.

ADVERTISING & PROMOTION

**OBJECTIVES**

- Explore and implement promotion through new and varied digital opportunities and appropriate traditional placements for Visit Annapolis/BWI branding and marketing initiatives.
- Continue to leverage the Matching Funds Grants Program established by the Maryland Office of Tourism and Development (OTD) for leisure advertising.

**STRATEGIES**

- Leverage our marketing and advertising budget to increase brand awareness with all four products.
- Continue our current Google/Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/YouTube/Pinterest marketing strategies and create new options to maintain and grow our current engagement.
- Cross our social media engagement with interactive options with our partners, members, and corporate clients while continuing to promote Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County as a tourism destination.
DESTINATION EXPERTS

Deepening the relationships with the community (consumers, businesses, associations, media) is critical to promoting the destination and encouraging visitation. Our job as the county’s DMO is to connect consumers to our local partners and continuing to strive to make that connection. In FY20, we will focus on three major goals as part of our engagement objective:

GROUP & HOTELS

Driving group business to Anne Arundel County continues to be a key objective for our organization. We’ve hired a new position to lead the Group Business segment, a Destination Expert: Group & Hotels. This position will work with our hotel and group focused vendors to ensure our product line is accurately and effectively positioned to the proper target market. This position will work directly with the COO, marketing team, and agency of record to design and launch marketing campaigns as well as conference and networking event strategy for FY20.

IDENTIFIED CONFERENCES & NETWORKING EVENTS

- Annapolis Wednesday Night Sailboat Races Meeting Planner FAM
- Annapolis/Alexandria Meeting Planner Event
- Waterside Venue & Crab Feast FAM
- Annapolis/Long Island NY Meeting Planner Event
- BWI/Arundel Mills BWI/Arundel Mills Meeting Planner FAM
- 2019 Military Bowl Client Appreciation Event
- Charlotte-Raleigh Meeting Planner Event
- 8th Annual Sports Night
- Philadelphia Meeting Planner Luncheon March
- New York City Meeting Planner Reception
- Annapolis/Newport Meeting Planner Luncheon
- Annapolis Art Week Client
- Annapolis/San Diego Meeting Planner Event
- Annapolis Wednesday Night Sailboat Races Meeting Planner FAM
- TEAMS 19’ Conference & Expo
- Your Military Reunion Connection - Military Reunion Planners
- PCMA Convening Leaders
- ASAE Xperience Design
- Professional Fraternity Association (PFA) Annual Convention
- NASC Sports Symposium
- MPI World Education Congress (WEC)
- Trade shows as invited by Hotel partners
INTERNATIONAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

- Initiate and enhance relationships with journalists in key VAAAC international feeder markets, prioritizing by depth of reach.
- Maximize involvement and exposure of VAAAC through the CRUSA partnerships.
- Continue with ongoing efforts to establish VAAAC as the definitive go-to resource for international visitors and journalists seeking information about Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.
- Continue to identify and expand outreach into new and developing international media markets that will yield the greatest return on human and capital investment.
- Enhance efforts to build strong support for VAAAC, its initiatives and accomplishments among key international stakeholders.
- Continue coordinating public relations efforts internally to ensure dissemination of a unified organizational message.

VISITOR SERVICES

- Establish and implement the groundwork to better engage with the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County business community.
- Increase ambassador visibility in high-impact geographic areas, developing districts, and major County events.
- Regular training and education to have all ambassadors as destination experts.
- Boost local and larger community recognition of Visitor Services.
- Innovate current recruiting methods to grow diverse volunteer base.
- Enrich the volunteer experience to ensure long-term retention.
- Broaden ambassador roles to include community-minded efforts.
- Maximize positive visitor experience at the Visitor Center and Visitor Information Booth.
- Optimize knowledge of industry trends and technologies to streamline Visitor Center operations. Maintain a safe, up-to-date Visitor Center and Visitor Information Booth.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Develop and Promote special programs/benefits to encourage businesses participation and awareness with VAAAC.
- Build relationships and synergies with all businesses in Anne Arundel County through Chamber of Commerce interaction and networking opportunities. This also includes regular in person outreach with all hotels, tourist destinations, resorts and B&B’s.
- Promote and expand Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Tourism through Concierge and Hotel visits in Washington DC, Baltimore and Northern Virginia.
- Support objectives and goals of several departments within VAAAC including Partnership Programs, Sales, Communications and Visitor Services.
- Explore international tourism (group and individual) opportunities with an emphasis on Canada, through Trade Shows, Seminars and Direct Sales Call activity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAMPAIGNS</th>
<th>JUL</th>
<th>AUG</th>
<th>SEP</th>
<th>OCT</th>
<th>NOV</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>JAN</th>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Campaign</td>
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<td>Restaurant Week</td>
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