



WNC Soccer Foundation/John B. Lewis Soccer Fields—TPDF Grant Recipient

# Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Annual Plan | 2011–2012

Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau | Asheville, North Carolina | [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com) | [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com)

Pack Square Conservancy/Pack Square Park—TPDF Grant Recipient



**ASHEVILLE**  
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## The Asheville Area Brand Promise

We guarantee you a life enriching experience each and every time you visit Asheville. It's personal, personal to you. And it is personal to us. We live this same genuine experience and want to share it with you. We empower you to discover a collection of experiences that is as unique and varied as each individual who visits and allow you to do so in a warm, embracing and creative environment.

## Find Us!

ExploreAsheville.com  
AshevilleCVB.com  
BCTDA.org  
FoodtopianSociety.com  
AshevilleVisitorGuide.com  
FallInTheMountains.com  
CoolAshevilleSavings.com  
MyWeddingInAsheville.com  
MotorToAsheville.com

## Like Us!

Facebook.com/Asheville  
Facebook.com/Foodtopian.Society  
Facebook.com/AshevilleMotorcoachGroupTours  
Facebook.com/AshevilleCVBMeetingTeam

## Follow Us!

Twitter.com/Foodtopia  
Twitter.com/AshevilleTravel  
Twitter.com/AshevilleDeals  
Twitter.com/AvlMeetingGuru

## Watch Us!

YouTube.com/ExploreAsheville

## Read our Blogs!

Blog.ExploreAsheville.com  
AshevilleWeddingCrashers.blogspot.com

# Messages to the Industry

## From Ron Morin, BCTDA Chairman

As Chairman of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), I want to thank each of you for your unwavering support, commitment, and dedication in showcasing and promoting all that is great about the Asheville area during difficult economic times.

Looking back at fiscal year 2010-11, we have much to celebrate, including:

- Voted "BeerCity USA 2011" (three years in a row).
- Recognition by *Fodor's* as one of the "21 Places We're Going in 2011."
- Addition of a variety of new accommodations which will offer even more travelers the opportunity to visit.
- Selected as *AmericanStyle* magazine's number one "Small City Arts Destination" (narrowly beating Santa Fe for the top spot).
- Listed as having one of the top 10 minor league stadiums (McCormick Field) on *Livability.com*.

Our collective hard work over the past year has positioned us to better manage and adapt to changing economic conditions. As we move into fiscal year 2011-12, we must remain focused

and committed—as there's still much work ahead of us as outlined in this year's BCTDA Annual Plan. While travelers have many destination choices, Asheville continues to maintain a competitive edge with our natural scenic beauty, rich history and culture, and an eclectic and vibrant community spirit not typically found in most travel destinations. It's simply up to us to seize each opportunity to promote the Asheville area as the destination of choice for travelers.



I know I speak for the Board when I say we look forward to working with you, our tourism industry partners, to generate a greater economic impact through increased tourism expenditures, greater tax revenues, and job growth.

—Ronald E. Morin, Chairman  
Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority  
Vice President & Managing Director  
The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa  
rmorin@GroveParkInn.com

## From Kelly Miller, CVB Executive Director

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority's Annual Plan is your road map to the year ahead, as well as a review of the successful accomplishments of FY 2010-11. It provides research data, tourism statistics, the media plan and an outline of our strategies and tactics for the upcoming year. Plain and simple and straight to the point, this plan is laser-focused on delivering the greatest return on investment for every room tax dollar spent.



The process for developing the plan begins in January when the CVB team, in conjunction with the BCTDA, works with community stakeholders and tourism task forces to get valuable input and insight on past strategies, trends and emerging markets. We listen and learn what's working for you and what needs tweaking. Broader strategic issues are brought to the table for in-depth discussions each March at the BCTDA's annual strategic planning retreat. A draft plan is presented to the BCTDA in May and the final Annual Plan is approved with an accompanying budget in June.

In fact, this process, along with many other policies, procedures and best practices, were instrumental in the Asheville CVB's accreditation in July by the Destination

Marketing Association International. After going through the rigorous accreditation program, the Asheville CVB joined the ranks of more than 130 distinguished destination marketing organizations in the U.S., Canada and Europe in achieving the destination marketing industry's most prestigious organizational recognition.

Our ongoing collaboration with tourism partners is a best practice that is critical to our ability to produce a plan that achieves results. We also realize that it is the collective, integrated effort of the area's industry that keeps the Asheville area front and center. In that spirit, we hope you will review this document and engage wherever it fits your own needs. Continue to give us feedback. Tell us what is working in your world to attract visitors. Ultimately, this plan represents your voice—one that we know will resonate with potential visitors when Asheville calls.

The CVB team is confident the Asheville area's brand equity will continue to rise as our nation slowly emerges from this economic setback. Today's visitors want enriching travel experiences and, with your help, we can continue to deliver on that brand promise.

—Kelly Miller, CDME, Executive Director  
Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau  
kmiller@ExploreAsheville.com



# What is the BCTDA?



2011-12 BCTDA board members (L-R): Ron Storto, Councilman Jan Davis, Vice Chairman Bob Patel, John Ellis, Paula Wilber, Chairman Ron Morin, Steve Frabitore, Commissioner K. Ray Bailey.

## The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is a quasi-governmental entity created by the room tax legislation first passed in 1983. The BCTDA oversees tourism marketing, sales and product development efforts and the expenditure of the county's four percent occupancy tax revenues.

The board is comprised of nine members:

- Two owners/operators of lodging properties with more than 100 rooms (appointed by Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commissioners)
- Two owners/operators of lodging properties with 100 rooms or fewer (appointed by Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commissioners)
- Three owners/operators of tourism-oriented businesses who do not own or operate taxable accommodations (appointed by Asheville City Council, Buncombe County Commissioners and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce)
- Two ex-officio/non-voting members (one member each from Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commission)

## Marketing Asheville

In 1983, hoteliers in this community put a plan together to tax themselves and earmark the proceeds toward tourism marketing. The enacted legislation allowed for authorization of a two percent room occupancy tax (and an additional one percent increase implemented in 1985) on lodging properties with five or more units. It created a Tourism Development Authority as the entity responsible for administering proceeds of the tax to "further the development of travel, tourism, and conventions in the county through state, national and international advertising and promotion." The legislation also allows the BCTDA to "contract with any person, firm, or agency to advise and assist it in the promotion of travel, tourism, and conventions."

To implement the marketing plan, the BCTDA contracted with the Convention & Visitors Bureau of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, which was already promoting tourism in the Asheville area. Within 20 years of the legislation, the economic impact of tourism grew 400 percent in Buncombe County and now accounts for more than \$1.8 billion in direct and non-direct spending from overnight visitors. More than 2.76 million leisure visitors stay overnight in our community, attracted by the enriching experiences they find here.

## Managing the Destination

A critical shift occurred in 2001, when the industry went back to state legislators with a bill designed to create an innovative funding process for tourism product. The NC General Assembly passed the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) bill which increased the room tax by one percent for a total room occupancy tax of four percent.

The bill dedicates proceeds from the one cent increase to help with capital expenditures for new tourism products that will generate substantial new room nights in Buncombe County. Rather than just a marketing organization, the BCTDA took a leap forward in becoming managers of the destination, ensuring its viability and sustainability.

More information on the TPDF and its impact on the community can be found on pages 10-11.



Eric Scheffer, 2010-11 BCTDA Chairman, Kelly Miller, Executive Director of the Asheville CVB, and Kit Cramer, President & CEO of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, take a break during the 2011-12 BCTDA strategic planning retreat.

## 2011-12 Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

**Ron Morin, Chairman**  
The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa  
rmorin@groveparkinn.com  
County Appointment – Lodging 101+ Rooms

**Bob Patel, Vice Chairman**  
Bhuna Corporation/Quality Inn & Suites  
bpatel@holidayinnbiltmore.com  
City Appointment – Lodging 101+ Rooms

**John Ellis**  
Diana Wortham Theatre  
jellis@dwtheatre.com  
City Appointment – Tourism Related

**Steve Frabitore**  
Tupelo Honey Café  
steve@tupelohoneycafe.com  
County Appointment – Tourism Related

**Ron Storto**  
Biltmore Farms, Inc.  
rstorto@biltmorefarms.com  
City Appointment – Lodging <101 Rooms

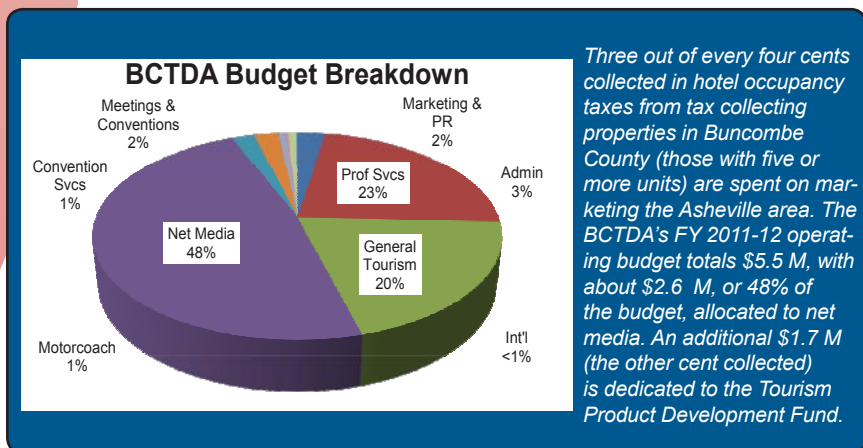
**Paula Wilber**  
Biltmore  
pwilber@biltmore.com  
Chamber Appointment – Tourism Related

**To Be Announced**  
County Appointment – Lodging <101 Rooms

**Buncombe County Commissioner K. Ray Bailey**  
ray.bailey@buncombecounty.org  
Buncombe County Commission Ex-Officio Member

**Asheville City Councilman Jan Davis**  
jandavis@main.nc.us  
Asheville City Council Ex-Officio Member

*Board members may serve up to two consecutive three-year terms.*



## The Chamber/BCTDA Relationship at a Glance

- The BCTDA contracts with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau, a department of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, to implement its marketing and sales strategies and tactics.
- CVB staff members are Chamber employees, but serve as contract agents for the BCTDA which authorizes, directs, oversees and funds its program of work. The BCTDA also contracts with other vendors including its advertising agencies, fulfillment services and Web developer.
- The Chamber funds, staffs and operates the Asheville Visitor Center.

## BCTDA Mission Statement

To be a leader in the economic development of Buncombe County by attracting and servicing visitors, generating income, jobs and tax revenues which make the community a better place to live and visit.

## BCTDA Vision Statement

Asheville/Buncombe County will retain its unique, authentic and environmental charm while welcoming global visitors searching for personal enrichment and memorable experiences.

## 2011-12 BCTDA Meetings

BCTDA board meetings are held on the fourth or last Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. at the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce (with the exception of the March strategic planning retreat and board meeting).

All meetings are open to the public.

- July 27, 2011
- August 24, 2011
- September 28, 2011
- October 26, 2011
- November 22, 2011
- December 21, 2011
- January 25, 2012
- February 29, 2012
- March 22-23, 2012
- April 25, 2012
- May 30, 2012
- June 27, 2012

### Need more info?

Check out AshevilleCVB.com or contact Jonna Reiff at jreiff@ExploreAsheville.com.



# 2010-11 Highlights & Happenings

## Top Media Placements

**Fodor's** Fodors.com listed Asheville as one of its "21 Places We're Going in 2011," saying:

*"Why Go Now: Get a taste of Asheville while it still feels local and before it goes global."*

## The New York Times

In October 2010, *The New York Times* featured Asheville as part of its "36 Hours in..." travel feature:

*"Whether it's culture, the great outdoors or homegrown food and beer, Asheville takes its pleasures seriously."*

The paper also covered the River Arts District and Hotel Indigo in a separate article.

**AP** PR staff worked with writers from the Associated Press, resulting in a fall color story that was picked up by *USA Today* and dozens of other newspapers nationwide:

*"The city of 76,000 in Western North Carolina, with its small-town, artsy feel, has become a big-time fall foliage destination, not just for the leaves but also for festivals celebrating the area's arts culture, beer and bluegrass music."*

**tripadvisor** TripAdvisor.com, a leading travel website worldwide, listed Asheville as the #1 Destination for Fall Foliage in 2010:

*"Travelers can enjoy the beautiful views by pedaling through the Appalachian Mountains on one of many biking trails, or hop in the car for a scenic drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway."*



National men's magazine GQ shared the Asheville love in the May 2011 issue:

*"...after a few meals, a few local microbrews, and a rock show or two, you realize that loving Asheville's basically a reflex."*



Dancing Santa busts a move in front of Biltmore House for the CVB's holiday video promotion. The **B-Boy Santa** video went viral with close to 500,000 views on YouTube and Bing.



The Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission (ABRSC) was formed in the fall of 2010, and the website launched in May 2011. The Asheville CVB took a leadership role in working with the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, UNCA and other community partners to create the ABRSC. Check it out at AshevilleSports.org.

More than 200 Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) executives and strategic staff members gathered in Asheville for their annual meeting held in October 2010. Meeting attendees also participated in a clean-up project in the River Arts District.



The BCTDA-led Partnership on Wayfinding completed the installation of more than 300 wayfinding elements in a community-wide signage program designed to help visitors and residents find their way around Asheville. The vehicular signs are topped with finials from local artisans, and the backs of the signs feature quotes from 14 Western North Carolina authors.



More than a dozen area chefs, brewers, and other epicurean partners brought a taste of Asheville to Atlanta for the "Meet the Foodtopians" culinary event in April 2011, part of a guerilla marketing campaign to engage potential travelers and media in this key market.

Leslie Brewer with Biltmore elaborates on the reasons to visit Asheville during a AAA Carolinas Destination Training webinar, hosted by the CVB. These webinars reached more than 290 AAA auto touring counselors.



The "Mountains to the Sea" FAM hosted 12 tour operator companies in both Hilton Head Island and Asheville. The FAM included group-friendly attractions, restaurants and accommodations, highlighting the best of the Carolinas.



In May 2011, Asheville won the title of BeerCity USA for the third straight year (which includes sharing the first place title with Portland, Oregon, in 2009). Out of the 14,999 votes cast in the national online poll coordinated by Examiner.com, 7,002 went to Asheville.



The 30 Days of Asheville campaign took place in March 2011—a full month of events aimed to tempt Atlanta travelers to come to Asheville by offering free hot air balloon rides, artisan food tastings, brew tap takeovers, farm-fresh cooking classes, film screenings and a flash mob surprise from members of the Asheville Drum Circle.



In March 2011, 559 representatives from North Carolina's travel, tourism and hospitality industries gathered at The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa for the 2011 NC Governor's Conference on Tourism, making it the most attended conference in the past five years.



# Visitor Profiles & Target Audiences

## Target Audience

Target Groups from a 2007 Acxiom PersoniX cluster/segmentation analysis of inquiries over an 18 month period:

### Target Group: Aging Upscale

- Represents 6% of U.S. households and over 12% of Asheville inquirers
- Ages 46-65+
- Married and single
- No kids at home
- Upper middle+ incomes
- Net worth \$250K - \$1 million

### Target Group: Mature Wealth

- Represents 5% of U.S. households and almost 9% of Asheville inquirers
- Ages 46-65
- No kids living at home
- Married and single
- Wealthy incomes
- Net worth \$1 – 2 million+

### Target Group: Suburban Folks

- Represents 5% of U.S. households and almost 9% of Asheville inquirers
- Ages 46-65
- Married
- No kids living at home
- Upper middle to affluent income
- Net worth under \$500K

### Target Group: Boomer Barons

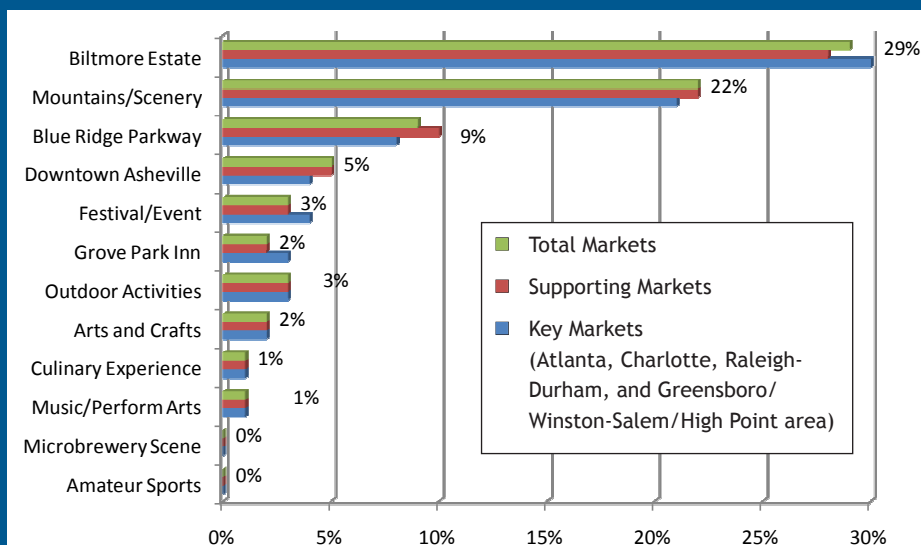
- Represents 6.7% of U.S. households and over 9% of Asheville inquirers
- Age 36-55
- Wealthy and affluent incomes
- School-age kids
- Married
- Variable net worth

## Economic Impact

- The Asheville area receives 3.13 million overnight leisure visitors annually.
- More than 25,000 jobs are supported through the hospitality industry in Buncombe County.
- The economic impact of tourism is now \$2.12 billion annually.

## Primary Reasons for Visiting Asheville

Source: 2010 TNS Segmentation Study



## Visitor Profile

Demographics of visitors coming to the Asheville area based on a 2006-2007 intercept study:

- HH income: approximately \$100,000
- No children in the home (empty nesters)
- More than half employed full-time, more than 1/3 retired
- Married and traveling as a couple
- Has Internet access
- Average Party Size: 2.6 people
- Average Length of Stay: 2.8 days
- Average Spend: \$171.45 per person, per day
- 3.3 million households plan to visit Asheville within one year, and of those, 1.8 million live within four key markets: Charlotte, Atlanta, Raleigh/Durham and Greensboro

## Top Inquiry States

Top 10 states requesting *Official Asheville Travel Guides* through the Asheville CVB:

1. North Carolina
2. Florida
3. Georgia
4. South Carolina
5. Ohio
6. Virginia
7. New York
8. Pennsylvania
9. Texas
10. Illinois

## Top Feeder Markets

Top 10 points of origin (DMAs) of Asheville visitors based on a series of intercept studies conducted in the summer and fall of 2006 and spring 2007:

1. Charlotte
2. Raleigh
3. Atlanta
4. Greenville/Spartanburg/Asheville
5. Greensboro
6. Orlando tied w/ Tampa-St. Petersburg
7. New York City
8. Boston
9. Detroit
10. Knoxville tied w/Nashville
11. Jacksonville, FL

# Industry Snapshot

## Last Year by the Numbers

Note that some numbers are provided on a fiscal year (FY) basis of July 1 through June 30, while others are based on a calendar year.

- **Hotel Sales** in FY 2010-11 totaled \$169,518,057, an increase of 9.8% over FY 2009-10. Eleven of the 12 months of FY 2010-11 showed increases in hotel sales.
- **Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)** was \$63.94 in FY 2010-11, an increase of 6.7% over FY 2009-10.
- **Average Daily Rate (ADR)** increased 1.7% in calendar year 2010 and is up 2.4% in calendar YTD 2011 (January-June).
- **Hotel Occupancy** increased 4.3% in calendar year 2010 and is up 4.5% calendar YTD 2011 (January-June).
- **Asheville Visitor Center patronage** totaled 195,617 in FY 2010-11, an increase of 3.7% over FY 2009-10.
- **User sessions on ExploreAsheville.com** totaled 2,242,462 in FY 2010-11, an increase of 13.4% over FY 2009-10.
- **Convention Bookings** in FY 2010-11 totaled 181, an increase of 10.4% over FY 2009-10.
- The **Total Room Count** of tax collecting properties in Buncombe County (those with five or more units and excluding vacation rental properties), is 7,031 as of June 2011.

Hotel sales figures are received from the Buncombe County Finance Department. Hotel occupancy and ADR figures are received from Smith Travel Research (STR) and may vary due to the timing of reports submitted by STR's participating properties. RevPAR is calculated by CVB staff.

Updated tourism statistics are compiled into monthly visitor indexes and posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

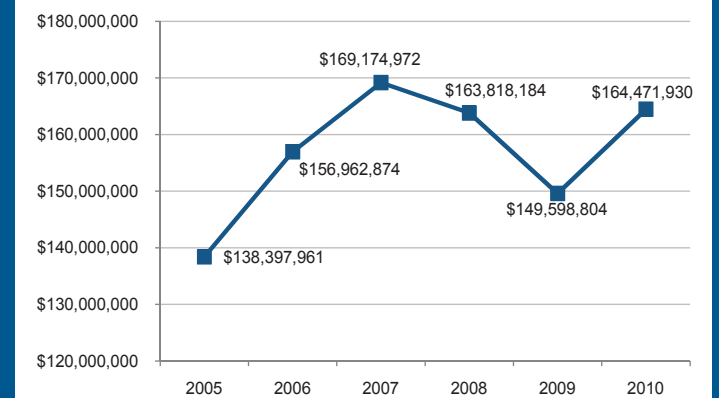
## Asheville Lodging Occupancy by Month

2000 to 2010 - 11 Year Average

January	36.4%
February	43.8%
March	51.8%
April	63.4%
May	64.3%
June	72.1%
<b>July</b>	<b>76.7%</b>
August	68.6%
September	64.5%
<b>October</b>	<b>76.6%</b>
November	61.4%
December	54.2%

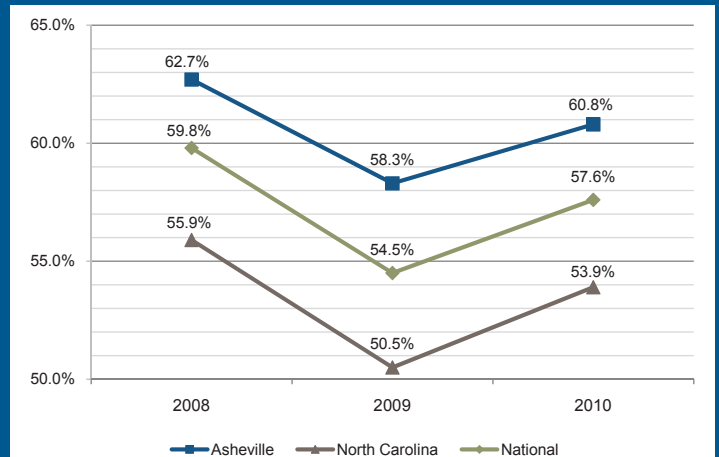
## Buncombe County Hotel Sales

Calendar Year | Source: Buncombe County Finance



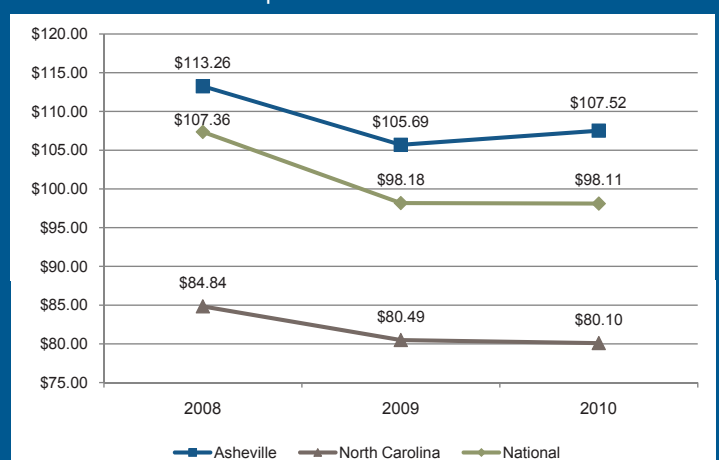
## Hotel Occupancy

Calendar Year | Source: Smith Travel Research



## Hotel Average Daily Rate

Calendar Year | Source: Smith Travel Research





# Tourism Product Development Fund

## What is the TPDF?

In 2001, the Buncombe County hotel occupancy tax increased from three percent to four percent and established the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) and the oversight committee structure. The additional one cent tax on each dollar spent on lodging generates approximately \$1.7 million of room tax revenue annually, which is dedicated to financial assistance for major tourism projects that will substantially increase patronage of lodging facilities in Buncombe County.

## Planning for Development

Through dialogue with its partners and constituent groups throughout the community, the BCTDA continues to work toward a sustainable, vibrant destination that will generate revenue for all sectors of the community.

The TPDF committee, a nine-member committee appointed by the BCTDA, is responsible for managing the fund, reviewing applications and making funding recommendations to the BCTDA. The next funding cycle will begin in late 2011 and applications will be due on January 9, 2012. A copy of the TPDF application, time line updates and more information about the fund can be found in the Product Development section of AshevilleCVB.com.

## Funding Process & Criteria

All projects must demonstrate feasibility and go through the formal funding process, which includes completion of the application, applicant interviews and possibly a site visit. As guided in the enabling legislation, requested funds must be used for capital costs (i.e., bricks and mortar) only. The TPDF committee may award funds to qualified projects as grants, guaranteed loans or pledges of debt service.



Buncombe County Commissioner K. Ray Bailey, 2010-11 BCTDA Chairman Eric Scheffer, Asheville Mayor Terry Bellamy, and CVB Executive Director Kelly Miller share a laugh at the wayfinding ribbon cutting ceremony held at the informational kiosk in front of the Asheville Civic Center.

By law, any funded project must demonstrate that it will generate additional lodging room nights in Buncombe County. Additional core criteria include more expansive economic impacts and returns as well as destination brand alignment. If a project meets the core criteria, additional criteria principles are assessed.

The BCTDA approves final funding following recommendations from the TPDF committee. In return for funding, projects provide annual updates to the BCTDA on their progress.



Prior to making funding recommendations to the BCTDA, the nine-member TPDF committee, made up by a majority of hoteliers, undergoes a comprehensive review process to ensure all applications submitted meet the established funding criteria.

## Core Funding Criteria:

- Return on Investment (ROI) and Economic Impact
- New room nights generated in Buncombe County
- Repayment revenue generated if project receives a loan guarantee versus a grant
- Ratio of dollars loaned to anticipated revenue generation based on room nights
- If applicable, number of new local jobs created based specifically on new employment for the proposed project
- Asheville destination brand alignment

## Additional Criteria:

- Community value
- Environmental sustainability
- Feasibility of the project
- Time line of project completion
- Current financial picture
- Financial resources, partnership funding structure, project costs
- Ability of project to leverage additional development for the community

## Tourism Product Development Fund Projects

Since its inception, 14 projects have received funding through the TPDF. With almost \$13.7 million awarded to these area projects, the BCTDA has become one of the largest granting organizations in Western North Carolina. The BCTDA continues to shape the destination of tomorrow by being a catalyst for smart growth and development today. These projects that benefit the residents and visitors of Buncombe County demonstrate that *tourism truly does build community*.

Project Funded	Total Amount Awarded	Funding Cycle(s)
John B. Lewis Soccer Complex at Azalea Park	\$1,300,000	2002, 2004, 2009
The Grove Arcade	\$500,000	2002
Bonsai Garden at The NC Arboretum	\$750,000	2003
Asheville Visitor Center	\$750,000	2003
Pack Square Park	\$2,500,000	2004, 2007, 2009
The Health Adventure/Momentum	\$1,500,000	2004, 2007
Asheville Art Museum	\$1,500,000	2007, 2009
Western North Carolina Veteran's Memorial	\$67,000	2007
Buncombe County Civil War Trails	\$16,500	2007
Asheville Area Wayfinding Program	\$1,800,000	2007, 2010
Bob Moog Museum	\$600,000	2009
The Orange Peel	\$300,000	2009
Asheville Civic Center	\$2,000,000	2010
Smoky Mountain Center	\$100,000	2010



"The TPDF made possible the construction of the Bonsai Exhibition Garden at the NC Arboretum, one of the finest of its kind in North America. In addition to creating a sustainable attraction that has boosted the Arboretum's visitation substantially, this funding has also increased the length of visitor stay and garnered extensive national media coverage, broadening the Arboretum's draw of out-of-market visitors."

—George Briggs, Executive Director, The North Carolina Arboretum



The Orange Peel was awarded a TPDF grant that served as both a cash donation and loan guaranty, which allowed an expansion to attract more people and bigger acts to the venue.

To learn more about the **Tourism Product Development Fund**, check out [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com) or contact **Cate Marvill** at [cmarvill@ExploreAsheville.com](mailto:cmarvill@ExploreAsheville.com) or **828.210.2724**.



"The \$500,000 TPDF grant awarded to the John B. Lewis Soccer Complex in 2009 was used to install field lighting (see front cover) and is a great example of a BCTDA investment that benefits all stakeholders. The lights have increased our tournament hosting capacity by over 1,400 hotel room nights per year and have increased youth and adult programming time at the park by over 65%. Our soccer community of over 6,000 registered players, hotel properties, and any business that gains from overnight sports tourism, are all benefiting from this investment."

—Michael Rottjakob, Executive Director, Asheville-Buncombe Youth Soccer Association



# The CVB Team

## DMAP Accreditation

In July 2011, the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau joined the ranks of 130 distinguished destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in the U.S., Canada, and Europe in achieving the destination marketing industry's most prestigious organizational recognition. The CVB received accreditation from the Washington, D.C.-based Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) through its Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP). DMAP is an independent international accreditation body and a leader in defining quality and performance issues in destination marketing.



As part of the application process, the CVB was required to provide documentation to comply with high accreditation standards covering a wide variety of topics including governance, finance, management, human resources, technology, visitor services, group services, sales, communications, brand management, destination development, research/market intelligence, innovation and stakeholder relationships.



James Wood, DMAP Board Chair, officially congratulated Kelly Miller on the Asheville CVB's accreditation through the DMAP program at the DMAI annual convention, held July 20-22, 2011, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

# Executive Office



Kelly Miller, CDME  
Executive Vice President  
Executive Director  
828.258.6104  
kmiller@ExploreAsheville.com



Jonna Reiff  
Executive Coordinator  
828.258.6111  
jreiff@ExploreAsheville.com

Serving as the liaison to the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), the executive office maintains communication with board members to develop and implement long-range strategic and operational planning aimed at delivering Asheville's brand promise to area visitors.

In an effort to ensure the voice of Asheville tourism echoes throughout the community and regional hospitality industry, the executive director serves as a board member of the U.S. Travel Association, North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition, National Council of Destination Organizations, Southeast Tourism Society, UNC Asheville Board of Trustees, Leadership Asheville, and The North Carolina Arboretum Society. The executive team also works closely with local, state and national elected officials on numerous issues regarding managing the destination.

The executive office oversees budget and financial issues and all departmental personnel and operations. Support is provided for BCTDA meetings as well as many Tourism Product Development Fund Committee functions (TPDF).

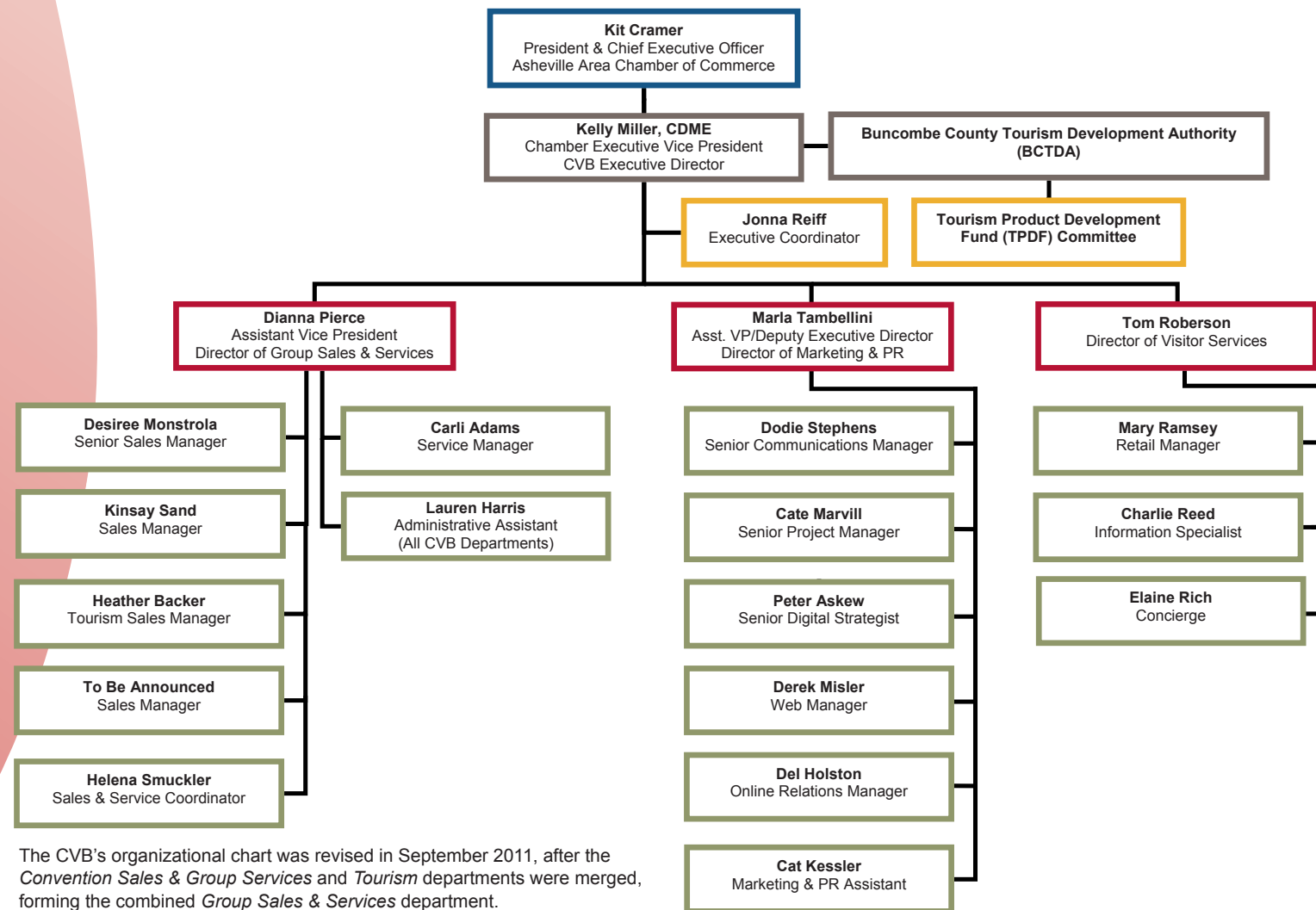
Statistical information on the tourism industry is compiled for monthly reports that are presented to the board and also available to the industry and general public. Monthly Visitor Indexes are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

## 2011-12 Tourism Marketing Business Objective

Increase occupancy tax revenues by 5%.



Kelly Claus made an appearance at the annual BCTDA/CVB Holiday Open House in December 2010, surprising almost 200 tourism industry partners and visitor center volunteers.



The CVB's organizational chart was revised in September 2011, after the Convention Sales & Group Services and Tourism departments were merged, forming the combined Group Sales & Services department.

Activity	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Overall	65.3	63.0	3.0%	49.0	47.4	3.2%
Impact						
Hotel Occupancy (April)*	65.3	63.0	3.6%	\$12,929,710	\$12,869,922	10.3%
Hotel Sales (April)	\$142,113,027	\$136,603,818	9.9%	\$98.84	\$99.80	3.5%
Average Hotel Rate (April)*	\$165.51	\$98.84	5.2%	\$66.80	\$62.55	8.0%
Revenue PAR (April)	\$66.80	\$61.35	8.6%	53,335	58,609	-9.0%
Total Airport Passengers (April)*	53,335	58,609	-9.0%	18,828	18,094	4.1%
Visitor						
Asheville Visitor Center	18,828	18,094	4.1%	2,210	2,314	-4.5%
Black Mountain Visitor Center	2,210	2,314	-4.5%	20,627	18,566	11.1%
Convention						
Convention Bookings	25	9	177.8%	1,616	145	10.3%
Sales and Number of Delegates	5,469	5,625	-2.7%	7,056	7,056	0.0%
Group						
Estimated Spending	\$2,630,864	2,110		8,304	8,304	0.0%
Sales Leads Distributed	25	7,056		\$4,253,173	3	
Room Nights Represented	38	3		55	55	0.0%
Groups Served - Meetings/Conventions	38	3		1,680	1,680	0.0%
Groups Served - Delegates	8,304	3		\$307,440	1	
Groups Served - Estimated Spending	\$4,253,173	3		9,489	11,447	-17.1%
Groups Served - Motorcoach	3	3		1	1	0.0%
Group Tour						
Group Tour Bookings	55	1		228,988	193,877	18.1%
Group Tour Room Nights Generated	1,680	1		6,441	5,084	26.3%
Group Tour Estimated Spending	\$307,440	1		11,447	11,447	0.0%
Group Tour Sales Leads Distributed	1	1		228,988	193,877	18.1%
AAA Room Nights Generated	9,489	11,447	-17.1%	6,441	5,084	26.3%
Visitor Inquiries	228,988	193,877	18.1%	1,887,386	1,764,814	12.6%
Public						
Total Advertising Value (April)	\$100,597	\$1,186,589	-91.5%	\$100,597	\$1,186,589	-91.5%
Column Inches (April)	405	157	159.9%	7,053,875	11,521	61.2%
Total Circulation (April)	7,053,875	11,521	61.2%	24	10	140.0%
Significant Placements (April)	24	10	140.0%	329	201	63.7%

Up-to-date tourism statistics are available on AshevilleCVB.com.

## Executive Office Calendar

Date	Event	Location
July 20-22, 2011	Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) Annual Convention	New Orleans, LA
Aug. 23, 2011	BCTDA Marketing & Communication Plan Presentation	Asheville Chamber
Aug. 28-30, 2011	Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO)	Salt Lake City, UT
Nov. 8-10, 2011	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Fall/Annual Meeting	New Orleans, LA
Dec. 6, 2011	BCTDA/CVB Holiday Open House	Asheville Chamber
Mar. 11-12, 2012	NC Governor's Conference on Tourism	Concord, NC
Mar. 22-23, 2012	BCTDA Strategic Planning Retreat	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 26-28, 2012	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Spring Meeting	TBA
April 18-20, 2012	Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) CEO Forum	Asheville, NC
May 12-20, 2012	National Tourism Week	Nationwide
June 22-23, 2012	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) June Board Meeting	TBA



# Marketing & PR Department

Generating awareness, showcasing the Asheville area and creating emotional connections with the destination brand are the primary objectives of the CVB's marketing team and partners.

The department oversees the relationship with the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority's (BCTDA) traditional and digital advertising agencies as well as its Web vendor; works with national and regional media outlets to generate substantial editorial and broadcast coverage; executes viral and social media efforts; conducts ongoing research and statistical examination of the industry; maintains ExploreAsheville.com, AshevilleCVB.com and BCTDA.org; and proactively manages and markets the Asheville area brand. Educating the community and serving as liaison to partners is of prime importance as part of the ongoing effort to develop the area as a sustainable destination. Staff also assists in fostering new product by overseeing the tourism product development funding process.

The CVB continues to increase its investment in digital strategies, including advertising. In 2011, the culmination of a year-long revamping of ExploreAsheville.com will result in a newly re-designed web site with improved access and reporting for partners on the back end. Additionally, with the creative energies of our advertising agencies, a new print, TV and digital ad campaign entitled, "Asheville Calling," will hit the marketplace in late summer. These efforts will be complemented by aggressive PR outreach and social media efforts that continue to advance the buzz about the destination.

## 2010-11 Milestones

1. Shot and produced new "Asheville Calling" campaign.
2. Developed updated ExploreAsheville.com Web site which launches in August 2011.
3. Launched first viral video—Dancing Santa—achieving more than 400,000 views on social media channels.
4. Implemented a series of guerilla marketing efforts in Atlanta, combining traditional advertising, street teams, media relations and social media efforts.

## Marketing & PR Calendar

September 2011	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	Asheville, NC
Sept. 19-23, 2011	Fall Media Tour	I-40 Corridor, NC
January 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	Asheville, NC
January 2012	Tentative: New York Media Tour	New York, NY
Spring 2012	Florida Media Tour	Florida
April 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	Asheville, NC
May 12-20, 2012	National Tourism Week	Nationwide
June 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	Asheville, NC
June 3-6, 2012	Public Relations Society of America Travel & Tourism Conference	Columbus, OH



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# Advertising

## Strategies & Tactics

The 2011-12 advertising plan revolves around creating an invitation for travelers living within driving distance of Asheville to come visit and experience all that Asheville has to offer. The invitation to travelers will be made through an integrated digital and traditional campaign that leverages the key traffic drivers for Asheville as a reason to visit.

### Target media campaigns to key markets to accommodate travelers' preference for destinations closer to home:

- Continue to focus on supporting the four key markets within driving distance of Asheville:
  1. Charlotte
  2. Atlanta
  3. Greensboro
  4. Raleigh
- Because of production limitations/efficiencies, some media will cover wider geographies (Southeastern states or states east of the Mississippi).
- Test an online campaign in the Nashville market, based on research that indicated strong market potential.

### Target media campaigns to key audiences based on the primary travelers, as identified through market research:

- Focus on core target audience, defined as women ages 35-64, with a household income of \$100K+. This core audience has been identified as the primary traveler, or the travel decision maker for couples and families traveling to the Asheville area.
- Target all audiences who fit the psychographic profile of a Traveler, defined as:  
*People to whom travel is essential, who view travel as an investment in their development, who look to travel as more about enrichment than entertainment, who have a fearless curiosity about new experiences.*

### Schedule traditional and digital media efforts during time periods when they have the best chance of influencing travel plans:

- Execute efforts during the early spring travel planning season, which is when many travelers are making their plans for late spring/summer travel.
- Execute efforts during the late summer/early fall to encourage shoulder season visitation and plant the idea for fall weekend getaways.
- Leverage digital media retargeting efforts and search engine keyword marketing to provide support throughout the year, bridging these two primary media windows.

### Plan and execute three primary consumer campaigns:

- **Asheville's Calling** – The primary campaign for this fiscal year focuses on extending an invitation to travelers to visit Asheville, and in particular, highlights how the Asheville experience can provide a refuge from the humdrum experiences of day-to-day life.
- **Asheville DMA Deals** – This campaign will utilize creative from the Asheville's Calling campaign and will focus on offering specific deals to residents of target DMAs to encourage travel to Asheville in the off-peak late winter season.
- **Foodtopian Society Campaign** – This campaign is a continuation of the existing Foodtopian effort, and will continue to highlight the culinary culture of Asheville, inviting travelers for whom good food is a travel consideration. The ultimate goal of the campaign is to place Asheville in the top tier of U.S. destinations for culinary travelers.

### Continue two niche campaigns:

- Destination weddings campaign
- Meeting/convention planners campaign





# Advertising

## Strategies & Tactics (continued)

Strategically position funds in each of three media areas to capture key audiences and markets:

- Television** – A budget increase of 42% for television advertising this year will provide for heavier media weight levels, longer media flights and the use of :30 spots throughout the entire flight. The television plan uses a mix of Prime and Early Morning dayparts, supplemented by local cable buys on networks and in neighborhoods skewing toward the primary target audience.
- Print** – A budget increase of 44% for print placements will provide double the number of print insertions (30) in ten key magazines and 63% more campaign impressions. The Foodtopian Society campaign will focus on two key food magazines, with a schedule that will generate 24% more impressions than last year. Both print campaigns feature the use of full page, four-color ads.
- Digital** – Digital spending will increase by 33%, allowing for a longer campaign and a broader array of ad units and messaging. Targeted online video placements will carry the Asheville brand message to travelers in the defined key markets. Year-long retargeting will be used to remind consumers who have visited the Asheville web site to return in order to complete their vacation planning.

Build strategic partnerships that leverage the brand, expand buying power and create media efficiencies:

- Explore viable partnerships with like brands to enhance and augment the Asheville area destination brand while maximizing media efficiencies.
- Participate in cooperative opportunities offered through industry organizations such as the NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development, AdvantageWest and Blue Ridge Mountain Host.

Leverage synergies between print, broadcast, online components and media relations to maximize financial efficiency and increase reach:

- Seek added value opportunities for media buys that focus on online initiatives.
- Create integrated campaigns that weave traditional print and broadcast media with online initiatives and media relations efforts to create a broader, deeper reach while increasing brand engagement.

### Advertising Agency Contacts

The BCTDA contracts with two agencies to carry out the advertising efforts. Advertising proposals are reviewed and considered during the annual strategic planning process, and a fixed media plan is set in June.

**For traditional media inquiries, including print, television & radio, contact:**

**Luckie & Company** | Birmingham, Alabama  
Jon Sharpton | 205.874.8112 | jon.sharpton@luckie.com

**For interactive and web-based inquiries, contact:**

**Nurun** | Atlanta, Georgia  
Dena Martin | 404.591.1639 | dena.martin@nurun.com

# 2011-12 Media Schedule

Campaign	3rd Quarter 2011					4th Quarter 2011				1st Quarter 2012				2nd Quarter 2012			
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN					
Brand																	
<b>PRINT</b>																	
Frommer's Budget Travel			Full Page							Full Page			Full Page				
Travel + Leisure		Full Page							Full Page	Full Page							
Garden & Gun		Full Page	Full Page (Added Value)						Full Page	Full Page							
Oxford American			Full Page							Full Page							
Atlanta Magazine		Full Page	Full Page							Full Page	Full Page						
Our State		Full Page	Full Page							Full Page		Full Page					
Charlotte Magazine		Full Page	Full Page								Full Page	Full Page					
Southern Living		Full Page								Full Page		Full Page					
AAA Going Places South			Full Page							Full Page							
AAA Go Carolinas			Full Page							Full Page							
<b>BROADCAST</b>																	
Spot TV & Cable (Atlanta, Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh)																	
<b>DIGITAL</b>																	
Digital Banner Campaigns		Harvest							Winter	Winter/Spring	Spring						
Digital Remarketing																	
Keyword Advertising																	
<b>Foodtopia</b>																	
Food & Wine		Full Page	Full Page							Full Page							
Cooking Light		Full Page	Full Page								Full Page						
Destination Weddings																	
Martha Stewart Weddings						Full Page				Full Page					Full Page		
Weddings Digital																	
<b>Co-ops</b>																	
Black Mountain Co-ops																	
State/BRMH Co-ops																	
Meetings and Conventions																	
TBD Meetings and Conventions																	
Guides/Directories/Newspaper Inserts																	
Spr/Sum 2012 Granite NC Travel Guide												Half Page					
2012 Official NC Travel Guide													Spread - Inside Front Cover				Full Page - Page One
Blue Ridge Mtn Host Visitor Guide													Half Page - AVL & Black Mountain				Half Page - AVL & Black Mountain
Blue Ridge Parkway Directory													Half Page				Half Page



# Public Relations

## Strategies & Tactics

Continue a proactive media outreach program to generate earned media with an emphasis on relationship-building and targeting to ensure the brand message is conveyed in editorial, broadcast and online placements:

- Create customized pitches aimed at journalists, bloggers, cable network producers and online editors. Identify and respond to pitch opportunities generated through outside sources.
- Cultivate new and existing media relationships through meaningful one-on-one connections including media tours, targeted pitches, networking events and site visit facilitation.
- Encourage journalists on assignment to expand and infuse stories with brand messages as well as seasonal and niche story ideas. Promote inclusion of call-to-action, conversion-oriented elements including online resources, campaign-specific URLs, travel packages and events.
- Continue to leverage and optimize multimedia news releases as a proactive tool for inspiring media coverage. Develop tracking methodology to better assess reach and pick-up.
- Leverage popular fall foliage season to generate maximum media exposure.
- Identify packages, programs or innovative ideas for creating buzz through integrated marketing efforts.
- Work in tandem with online relations manager to broaden use of social media as an integrated tool for media outreach, relationship development and targeted pitching.
- Integrate targeted keywords into traditional and online PR efforts to align with SEO efforts.

Continue to target emerging and existing niche markets, especially culinary, budget, the arts and international travel, while maintaining emphasis on primary travel motivators (i.e. the mountains, Biltmore):

- Leverage media industry trends (i.e. the freelance writer boom) and the growing international/UK travel marketplace as opportunities for coverage and relationship-building.
- Expand opportunities with niche media, especially culinary, through dynamic, character-focused content.
- Update and develop media materials and pitch ideas for specific content areas to generate media placement.

Educate the region about the benefits of tourism in order to maintain support of marketing efforts:

- Continue to tell the story of the local value of tourism through awareness campaigns and media relations that include: continued media outreach surrounding National Tourism Week, cultivation of local media relationships and continued development of AshevilleCVB.com to ensure communication.

## 2011-12 Objective

Generate at least five nationally significant media placements.

- Utilize BCTDA.org as a forum for background and positioning statements on key issues.
- Continue to develop the PR/Marketing Committee as a forum to educate, update and share key messages with tourism partners and fellow communicators.

Complement sales efforts through media relations efforts:

- Target trade publications for possible editorial.
- Maintain focus for general coverage on key markets also targeted by the CVB's sales team.
- Respond to media leads from select trade publications seeking input and story ideas.
- Build relationships with trade magazine editors during media trips.

Utilize measurement tools to gauge effectiveness of existing and new projects:

- Continue to track effectiveness of media relations efforts and examine the value of specific projects by utilizing a clip service, tracking contacts, fulfilling email requests and assessing online and broadcast placements.
- Identify and evaluate emerging tools to measure the value and reach of online media relations efforts and social media placements.
- Use Google Analytics to monitor effectiveness of driving traffic to the website through public relations campaigns and adjust tactics accordingly.



FOX 5 Atlanta visited Asheville in the spring for a live remote featuring artists, chefs, shopping and cultural attractions.

# Research & Accolades

## Strategies & Tactics

Understand the profile and pulse of the traveling consumer and Asheville visitor in order to make effective marketing decisions:

- Update segmentation study to provide comparative data against the benchmark which evaluated the traveling consumers' perceptions of the Asheville area, travel drivers, interest level and engagement with the destination.
- Incorporate insights gained from Web analysis and online data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the traveler.
- Use research as part of the creative messaging process to ensure wide appeal to targeted audience.
- Use Internet research shareware on an as-needed basis to conduct input research utilizing the e-newsletter database.

Follow an integrated research approach to ensure information-driven decision making on marketing, advertising and sales messages, as well as destination management issues:

- Provide research updates to staff and tourism community through the AshevilleCVB.com website.
- Stay abreast of cultural and industry trends.
- Evaluate measurement of all marketing efforts, including social media.

Conduct economic impact calculations in order to outline the contributions of the tourism industry:

- Contract with Smith Travel Research for historical overview of hotel statistics including occupancy, average daily rate (ADR) and competitive standing.
- Maintain relationships with county officials who assist in providing key tax data that is used in various tourism economic impact reports.
- Use Internet research shareware to survey industry partners and community on an as-needed basis.

Utilize public and private research resources and partnerships to maximize resources:

- Partner with regional organizations to expand knowledge of the Asheville visitor (i.e., shared zip code research from Biltmore and research information through the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development).

## Asheville Ranked & Rated

Each year, Asheville ranks among top cities nationwide in polls and media roundups.

Here are some of the ways Asheville stacks up:

- The international travel website TripAdvisor.com named Asheville the **#1 Destination for Fall Foliage in 2010**.
- Thanks to an eclectic mix of homespun crafts and up-and-coming artists, Asheville came in as **#1 Small City for the Arts** for the second year in an annual poll by *AmericanStyle* magazine.
- Fodors.com included Asheville in its list of **"21 Places We're Going in 2011."**
- Popular Asheville hotels, including The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa and the Inn on Biltmore, consistently rank **among the world's top accommodations** in publications such as *Travel & Leisure* and *Condé Nast Traveler*.
- Asheville held on to its **BeerCity USA** title for the third year in a row following a wellspring of national support in an informal poll on Examiner.com.
- *Yoga Journal* named Asheville as one of **"10 Fantastically Yoga-Friendly Towns"** in its August 2011 issue, citing the city's 12 yoga studios and wealth of alternative healing practitioners.
- *US News & World Report* has deemed Asheville one of **"America's Best Affordable Places to Retire."**
- Asheville came in at #6 in Forbes.com's 2009 ranking of **"Best Places for Business and Careers."**
- GoVeg.com named Asheville **"America's Best Vegetarian-Friendly Small City"** in 2006.
- Livability.com lists Asheville as one of their **"10 Most Surprisingly Vibrant Food Cities."**
- DogFriendly.com included Asheville in its list **"Top 10 Dog-Friendly Resort Regions."**





# Online Relations & Social Outreach

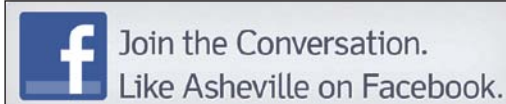
## Strategies & Tactics

Use key social media tools to drive awareness and create engagement with traveling consumers:

- Use social media tools to complement specific promotions.
- Use Twitter and Facebook to monitor discussions, to engage travelers and select audiences such as media and to add to the conversation.
- Collaborate with other key partners to complement and extend tourism messages in social spheres.
- Build the Asheville area's presence in other key social channels such as YouTube and Flickr.
- Cross-pollinate social channels to maximize engagement.
- Evaluate other emerging social tools and technologies to further expand Asheville's presence.

Use insights and measurement tools to gauge effectiveness of specific social campaigns and to make adjustments as needed:

- Use Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, Hootsuite, Radian6, Tube Mogul and other tools to measure social buzz and insights that can be integrated into a digital dashboard.
- Use insights to further develop campaigns or create new actionable items to help advance business objective.
- Refer fans and users of social media sites to key landing pages on ExploreAsheville.com to gauge effectiveness of campaigns.



## 2011-12 Objective

Double the number of Facebook "likes" (from 15,000 to 30,000) and generate 200,000 YouTube video views.

Build relationships with influential bloggers that result in publicity for Asheville:

- Interact with bloggers visiting Asheville either on assignment or for blogger conferences or events.
- Create a database that ranks blogger influence and reach using resource tools such as Alexa, Radian6, QuantCast and Technorati.
- Plan and implement a blogger FAM scheduled for the spring of 2012.

Use the Asheville blog (a top feeder of new visitors to ExploreAsheville.com) to increase website visits and SEO:

- Redesign the Asheville Travel Blog for improved aesthetics that align with the new ExploreAsheville.com, as well as for an enhanced user experience.
- Update blog an average of five times per week with posts that contain strategic keywords.
- Link back to various pages on ExploreAsheville.com multiple times within the blog post to encourage website visitation.
- Distribute blog posts via social media tools for further engagement and greater visitation to ExploreAsheville.com.

Continue to implement online outreach to maximize traffic to website and interest in email newsletters:

- Target e-zines, bloggers and travel-oriented websites for editorial placement and links.
- Look for viral marketing opportunities and other triggers to increase traffic to the website and generate awareness of the Asheville area.
- Use online efforts to drive growth of the Asheville Traveler email database.

Use online video to better showcase the destination and its attributes.

- Invest in development of video content that results in timely reasons to visit Asheville.
- Upload video content via TubeMogul for widespread distribution and monitoring.
- Promote new Asheville video on website, in Asheville Traveler e-newsletter and via new widgets on ExploreAsheville.com.

# Web Development

## Strategies & Tactics

Launch expanded and upgraded version of ExploreAsheville.com:

- Effectively use and promote new dynamic widgets to encourage more user interface and engagement in the site.
- Unveil new and improved partner interface and educate partners on information upload opportunities and reports.
- Monitor traffic to the site and use Google Analytics to further tweak and develop content so as to increase page views, extend time on site, gauge interaction and decrease bounce rate.

Maintain and develop key content areas on the site:

- Change out home page content and imagery on a seasonal basis.
- Update web pages to complement seasonal promotions, in particular the fall foliage season, as well as specific marketing promotions.
- Evaluate options that could lead to more robust calendar of events listings.

Utilize forwarding URLs and micro-sites to appeal to specific target audiences and to build awareness among travelers less familiar with Asheville, as well as repeat visitors:

- Maintain CoolAshevilleSavings.com in order to motivate consumers who are driven by deals and value.
- Generate new content for MyWeddinginAsheville.com.

Continue an online outreach program that incorporates email newsletters and viral marketing opportunities, utilizing a more customer-focused approach:

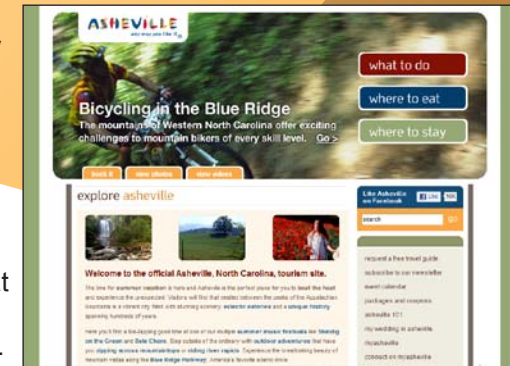
- Explore opportunities to increase e-newsletter subscriber database and open and click-through rates.
- Experiment with development of niche content for e-newsletters aimed at segmented audiences.
- Maintain a year-round effort to promote package deals and opportunities through the website.

## 2011-12 Objective

Increase traffic to ExploreAsheville.com to more than 2.4 M annual site visits as measured by Google Analytics.

Maximize traffic to the website through online efforts including search engine optimization and links strategy that complement other marketing efforts aimed at driving Web traffic:

- Employ search optimization tactics and findings from Google Analytics, as well as Google AdWords, in developing new content pages, seasonal updates and microsites. Continue to monitor organic search engine placement and maintain positioning.
- Incorporate keyword strategy in all messaging to assist in driving traffic to websites.
- Seek link opportunities on large external sites that could enhance ExploreAsheville.com in search engine standings.



Develop a robust metrics and analysis plan to effectively evaluate marketing efforts and create actionable insights that drive future programs and projects, ensuring the strongest return on investment:

- Develop a new digital dashboard that is regularly monitored for insights.
- Use data from the digital dashboard to develop a monthly digital index.
- Expand use of current analytic tools and evaluate additional needs and resources that will yield critical metrics.

Utilize the Web to increase communication with industry partners and provide general tourism business information:

- Expand partner resources and data available on AshevilleCVB.com.
- Further develop BCTDA.org for information about the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority, its efforts and local impact and evaluate ways that it can be more fully integrated into communication and education efforts locally.



# Visitor Services Department

Often the first stop for travelers, the Asheville Visitor Center offers a wide array of services to the approximately 200,000 visitors welcomed throughout the year. Knowledgeable volunteers staff the Asheville Visitor Center information desk to offer insider advice and ensure that each visitor begins living the brand as soon as he or she walks through the door.

For guests looking for the tastiest restaurants, most comfortable rooms and exhilarating attractions, trained volunteers and an on-site concierge serve as a primary touch point. In addition, a light-board allows for visual representation of accommodations, tours, attractions and restaurants in the area. Phones are available at these stations to encourage visitors to call immediately to directly book reservations.

Sponsorship opportunities for Chamber members are located throughout the Asheville Visitor Center to ensure that member businesses are prominently showcased to our visitors.

## Chamber Concierge Services

The Chamber's concierge services program, managed by Concierge Elaine Rich, provides visitors with convenient trip planning and personalized service. Chamber member accommodations are welcome to register for the program. All Chamber member properties are visited by the concierge, regardless of whether or not they choose to participate in the program, to learn the amenities available at each property to promote to inquiring visitors.

The concierge works to personalize each guest's experience by ensuring that accommodation recommendations match the style and preference of what is desired by the visitor. Extended vacations lasting as long as eight days have been booked through the program.

## The Asheville Shop

The Asheville Shop is the only gift shop that sells merchandise sporting the Chamber logo and the Asheville destination brand logo. It's also home to a wide assortment of items authentic to the Western North Carolina region, including pottery, food items, soaps, jewelry, music and traditional souvenir items.

Tickets for many Asheville attractions and tours are also sold through the Asheville Shop, including Go Blue Ridge cards, Haunted Asheville Ghost Tours, WNC Insider discount cards and the Asheville Independent Restaurant (AIR) Passport, among other seasonal event tickets, attraction tickets and tours.



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## 2011-12 Objective

Increase walk-in, phone and email room night bookings by 10%.

## Strategies & Tactics

Continually improve the types of services offered to Asheville Visitor Center guests:

- Manage all visitor-related activities in the Asheville Visitor Center, including the accommodations concierge service, relocation services, and retail sales.
- Provide trained, knowledgeable volunteers and staff to relay information to visitors.
- Distribute relocation information to those who are considering moving to the Asheville area, a motivator for 25% of all visitors to the Asheville area.

Utilize the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center services to increase the length of stay of visitors in the Asheville area:

- Utilize the concierge service to promote longer overnight stays in Asheville.

Create awareness of the Asheville area brand and improve the Asheville experience for visitors:

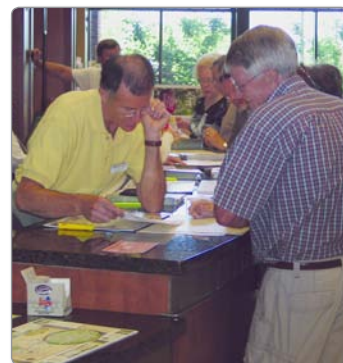
- Use Twitter, @AshevilleDeals, to spread news of the availability of deals in the Asheville area.
- Develop the volunteer program with training sessions, FAM trips and appreciation receptions.
- Increase involvement in community issues that ultimately affect visitors by participating in community forums.
- Provide enhanced Asheville destination branded logo items for the Asheville Shop.



The visitor center is a warm welcome and a one-stop shop for travel services.



Nearly 200,000 people enter the visitor center every year to get maps, brochures, and insider information on Asheville area accommodations, dining, attractions, outdoor activities, shopping and more.



More than 60 volunteers staff the information counter at the Asheville Visitor Center, playing a vital role in providing quality information to our guests.



Concierge Elaine Rich booked 890 rooms in FY 2010-11 and provided 6,569 accommodation referrals through email, phone, and walk-ins.



Partnerships with Biltmore, Asheville Historic Trolley Tours, GrayLine Trolley Tours, and Moving Sidewalk (Segway) Tours enable our visitors to purchase tickets hassle-free in the visitor center while picking up free regional and state maps, Official Asheville Travel Guides and brochures.



The Asheville Shop is a treasure trove of locally made items and Asheville memorabilia, and is open seven days a week excluding major holidays.



# Group Sales & Services Department

In September 2011, the *Tourism* and *Convention Sales & Group Services* departments of the CVB merged to form one full service department: *Group Sales & Services*.

Tourism initiatives touch the leisure, group and international travel markets. Of these, the leisure market represents the largest area of concentration and focus.

Leisure initiatives include working with local partners to develop interesting and distinct overnight packages, managing the production of the *Official Asheville Travel Guide*, and implementing programs designed to build strong relationships with AAA and other key travel influencers through on-site and web-based training programs.

Motorcoach efforts consist of a variety of outreach methods, including direct sales efforts, attendance at national marketplaces and bringing target clients to town to experience the area's offerings firsthand.

Strong state and regional partnerships remain a critical element in all international sales efforts. The department partners with the NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development at key marketplaces in hosting international buyer FAMs.

## 2010-11 Milestones

- Forty-five industry partners attended a "how-to" travel packaging seminar (cosponsored with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) that highlighted industry best practices.
- Approximately 300 travel influencers across NC, SC, TN, GA, AL and FL participated in web-based destination training programs hosted by the Asheville CVB.
- Twelve tour operator companies attended the Asheville-Hilton Head Island motorcoach FAM.



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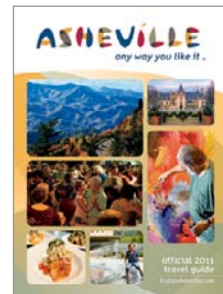
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300,000 copies of the 2011 Official Asheville Travel Guide will be distributed as the primary fulfillment piece for the Asheville CVB.

## Tourism Calendar

Sept. 9-11, 2011	AAA Explore Asheville! Atlanta FAM	Asheville, NC
Sept. 15, 2011	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Sept. 19-22, 2011	NC Domestic Sales Mission	Pennsylvania & Ohio
Sept. 23-25, 2011	AAA Explore Asheville! Alabama FAM	Asheville, NC
Nov. 18-20, 2011	AAA Suberbowl of Knowledge	Greensboro, NC
Nov. 29 - Dec. 2, 2011	Joint Asheville CVB/Visit Charlotte Tour Operator FAM	Charlotte & Asheville, NC
Dec. 15, 2011	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Winter 2011-12	AAA Explore Asheville! Destination Training	Kentucky & Tennessee
Jan. 6-10, 2012	American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace 2012	Grapevine, TX
Feb. 24-26, 2012	Heartland Travel Showcase	Knoxville, TN
Spring 2012	Tour Operator FAM	Asheville, NC
Mar. 4-7, 2012	Travel South Showcase	Louisville, KY
Mar. 15, 2012	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Apr. 14-22, 2012	AAA Blue Ridge Parkway FAM	Asheville, NC
Apr. 21-25, 2012	POW WOW International Marketplace	Los Angeles, CA
June 2012	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
June 13-14, 2012	North American Journeys East Coast Summit	New York, NY

# Tourism, Group Tour & International

## 2011-12 Tourism Objective

Expand knowledge of the Asheville area visitor experience among key Southeast leisure travel influencers.

## Tourism Promotions - Strategies & Tactics

Expand knowledge of the area among Southeast AAA branch offices and call centers:

- Host a AAA South FAM targeting Atlanta-based offices.
- Launch the *AAA Asheville Destination Specialist* certification program.
- Conduct two in-office AAA Explore Asheville! Destination Training visits to core market locations.
- Participate in the Blue Ridge Parkway Association's AAA FAM trip and AAA Carolinas Super Bowl of Knowledge.

Expand the variety of creative overnight packages available on [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com):

- Launch a redesigned industry partner based "speed packaging" program, bringing together traditional and non-traditional area partners with an aim toward producing attention worthy packages.
- Promote special value offers supplied by industry partners.

Provide information to consumers and travel influencers to build awareness and encourage visitation:

- Continue to produce and distribute 300,000 issues of the *Official Asheville Travel Guide*.
- Expand distribution of the digital travel guide through placement on social media and non-traditional partner web sites.
- Coordinate participation in Southeastern consumer travel shows.



The Secrets of Packaging seminar, cosponsored by the Asheville CVB and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, hosted 45 industry partners to gain insight on how to successfully package their tourism products. With Heather Backer are Joe Veneto, "The Opportunity Guy," and Mary Jane Ferguson with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

## 2011-12 Group Tour Objective

Produce 3,200 group tour room nights and 102 sales leads.

## Group Tour - Strategies & Tactics

Find new sources of business and maintain tour operator relationships:

- Attend the NC Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development sales missions to Pennsylvania and Ohio.
- Attend American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace, Travel South Showcase and Bank/Alumni Travel Conference.
- Host "Holiday Lights and Mountain Sights" tour operator FAM (November) and targeted spring 2012 FAM.

Enhance the motorcoach section of [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com):

- Continue outreach efforts using social media, e-newsletters and video.
- Promote partner specials and added value programs.

Expand the motorcoach group service program:

- Launch an improved motorcoach service plan.
- Greet groups upon arrival at the Asheville Visitor Center; offer complimentary Asheville amenity item.

## 2011-12 International Objective

Launch innovative/cost-effective marketing programs to elevate the Asheville area brand with key international buyers.

## International - Strategies & Tactics

Provide retail and FIT operators with resources needed to package and sell tours to the Asheville area:

- Hold four in-office area trainings at key North American receptive tour operator companies.
- Create new itinerary on [TheTourOperator.com](http://TheTourOperator.com), targeting domestic and international tour operators.



Dianna Pierce attended the US Travel Association's International POW WOW in San Francisco along with several Asheville tourism industry partners.



# Sales & Services

## 2011-12 Objective

Produce 45,000 group room nights.

The sales and service team has two unique, but connected, functions. The sales team attracts meetings and conventions to the area through a variety of outreach methods, including direct sales efforts and targeted marketing. Enhancing the meeting planner and attendee experience through exceptional customer service and knowledge of local resources is the responsibility of the service department. The team is united in its efforts to connect groups to the dynamic Asheville brand, while at the same time, bringing unexpected levels of enthusiasm and service to our clients. We are always looking to enhance the economic outlook for our industry partners.

## 2010-11 Milestones

- Sent sales leads totaling an all-time department record:
  - 2003 – 266 leads
  - 2004 – 263 leads
  - 2010 – 253 leads
  - 2011 – 292 leads**
- Launched D3000 Extranet site, which allows partners to receive and respond to leads electronically.
- Took on a leadership role in working with community partners to create the Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission.



Biltmore Farms Hotels' Herb Arnold and Megan Bunck at the 2010 AENC Tradeshow in Raleigh, NC.



Members of the sales and service team, along with several industry partners, were in Atlanta as part of the 30 Days of Asheville campaign and met with area meeting planners.



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To Be Announced—Sales Manager



The City of Asheville has been named the host city for the Southern Conference mens' and womens' basketball tournaments. Asheville will be the home of the tournament for three years, beginning in March 2012.

# Group Business Development

New markets and clients rarely come from conventional reach-out methods. For 2011-12, the sales team commits to vigilantly focusing on the exploration of new approaches to finding business that will enjoy the Asheville brand; striving to find the groups that may even need the Asheville magic but have never been alerted to its virtues. Strategies and action steps will include proven sales methods of connecting, and inviting potential clients to experience Asheville. Simultaneously, our department will attempt to incorporate every technologically advanced, leading edge, approach we can consider.

## Strategies and Tactics

Let Asheville do the talking. Visiting Asheville is much more powerful than just talking about it. The primary sales objective for the 2011-12 campaign is getting the right people here:

- Strategically research a superior list of conferences that fit the Asheville brand and size and are not currently considering Asheville.
- Research unique groups that have been successfully hosted; evaluate how we found them in the past and find related groups.
- Assemble strategic partners in similar cities to share lead potentials. In addition, monitor RSS feeds for significant meetings in Asheville type cities.

- Seek organizations and industry clusters that have a brand connection with Asheville. Particular areas of interest include the outdoor industry, arts, health and wellness, etc.
- Customize site visits, FAMs and proposals with "The Answer is Asheville" theme. Invite qualified clients to town using special events and targeted personalized itineraries.
- Commit more time to basic prospecting.
- Create a new "Meeting in Asheville" video.

**New tactical choices—participate in trade shows that have not been tried recently:**

- Become a significant partner with the Senior Industry Planner Network (SPIN). Events currently under consideration include Live Think Tanks, Destination Diary and Seminar Road Show.
- Meetings Quest Trade Show in Charlotte.
- Springtime in the Park, Washington D.C.

**Continue the close relationship with ABRSC as partners in presenting the Asheville brand to new athletic markets:**

- Host an Amateur Athletic FAM in early August.
- Provide support in entertaining four additional event planners throughout the year.
- Develop the conference potential within the broad category of health and wellness and pursue a regional leadership role in hosting these types of conferences.
- Solicit 50% of all athletic events to meet during shoulder seasons.

## Sales & Services Calendar

July 14-15, 2011	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Wallace, NC
September 2011	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Sept. 20, 2011	Meetings Quest	Charlotte, NC
Sept. 21-23, 2011	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Charlotte, NC
Sept. 21, 2011	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon	Atlanta, GA
November 2011	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Luncheon	Charlotte, NC
Nov. 8, 2011	Wedding Networking Event	Asheville, NC
Nov. 16, 2011	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon & Annual Meeting	Atlanta, GA
Dec. 8, 2011	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Tradeshow/Meeting	Raleigh, NC
January 2012	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Jan. 6-8, 2012	Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) 2012 Annual Conference	San Diego, CA
Jan. 26-27, 2012	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Salisbury, NC
February 2012	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon	Atlanta, GA
February 24, 2012	Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) Destinations Showcase	Washington, DC
March 2012	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 1-6, 2012	Southern Conference Basketball Tournament	Asheville, NC
April 2012	American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Springtime Expo	Washington, DC
Apr. 12-13, 2012	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Clayton, NC
June 2012	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Annual Meeting & Tradeshow	Panama City Beach, FL
June 2012	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Annual Meeting	Wilmington, NC



# Convention Servicing

## 2011-12 Objective

Increase the number of groups serviced by 6%.

The most significant strategic development in convention services is positioning itself as a valuable marketing partner to meeting planners. As the trend of digital marketing assistance offered by CVBs grows, the Asheville CVB services department will develop several new electronic resources to help planners promote their meetings. By integrating these tools, convention services will continue to be a significant partner in the planning process and will be better able to assist planners in building attendance, connecting attendees to the Asheville brand, and encouraging repeat business.

## 2010-11 Milestones

1. 339 groups utilized convention services in 2010-11; a 36% increase over the previous fiscal year.
2. Supported major events: The Outdoor Industry Association 2010 Rendezvous and the 2011 NC Governor's Conference on Hospitality and Tourism.



Carli Adams, CVB staffer and Association for Convention Operations Management member, hosted local industry partners for ACOM's First Annual National Celebrate Services Day.



CVB staff at the 2011 Governor's Conference on Tourism hosted in Asheville at The Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa.

## Strategies & Tactics

### Expand digital marketing services for meeting planners:

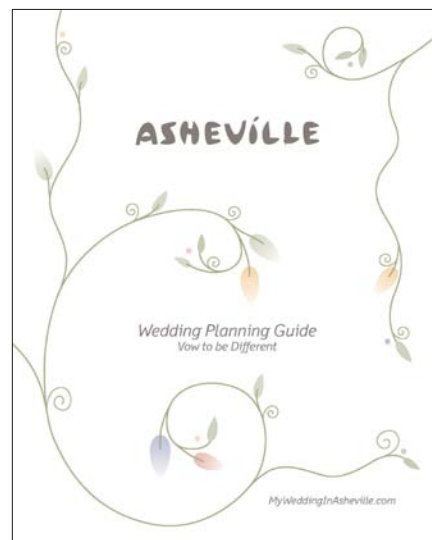
- Create online meeting promotion toolkit that includes electronic postcards, digital promotional banners and customizable email templates.
- Extend micro-site service to conferences of all sizes and include more dynamic content with an emphasis on promoting longer stays and connecting to CVB social media platforms.

### Continue to collect post-event surveys:

- Goal of at least 60% return rate on electronic surveys to keep informed of meeting planner expectations and to evolve service offerings.
- Use survey to get ideas about unique Asheville elements that were incorporated into meetings that can be used as case studies to potential clients, in sales efforts and in pitches to meetings related media.

### Maintain connection with industry partners to keep CVB Convention Services top of mind and thereby increase the number of groups utilizing CVB services:

- Organize second annual "Celebrate Services" luncheon and webinar for Asheville area hotel convention service managers in August.
- Assist in planning a successful third annual wedding industry partner event.
- Schedule meetings with hotel sales staff throughout the year to educate them about convention services and to collect new ideas for service.



The CVB's complimentary wedding planning guide showcases Asheville as a premiere destination wedding location and lists area venues and vendors. It is available by request at [MyWeddingInAsheville.com](http://MyWeddingInAsheville.com).

# Want to Get Involved?

## Committees & Task Forces

One of the many ways that the CVB works with its industry partners is through our committees and task forces.

We invite you to join the conversation in 2011-12. If you are interested in serving on a task force for Group Business Development, Tour & Travel Development, or Marketing & Public Relations, please contact the appropriate CVB staff liaison.

## Group Business Development Team

Industry partners interested in joining their community peers to learn more about the meetings market for Asheville are encouraged to attend the Group Business Development Team (GBDT) meetings.

GBDT meetings are held four times a year beginning in September. Meetings will focus on the accomplishments year-to-date of the different task forces and updates of CVB internal projects affecting the meetings and conventions markets.

Anyone who is affected by tourism, i.e. restaurants, shops, hotels, and attractions, is encouraged to attend. We invite you to become active in our meetings to increase business contacts with meeting planners and other industry partners.

We look forward to a great year and hope you will join the CVB staff to help make all of our community projects a success for Asheville's meetings and convention market.

2011-12 Chair: Lyn Gleasure  
Conference Sales Manager | Biltmore

CVB Staff Liaison: Helena Smuckler  
[hsmuckler@ExploreAsheville.com](mailto:hsmuckler@ExploreAsheville.com)

## Tour & Travel Development Committee

The Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) meetings are held quarterly and focus on accomplishments of the different task forces and updates on CVB internal projects affecting the group tour, motorcoach and leisure markets.

TTDC meetings are held every three months at 3:00 p.m. at various Asheville area locations to be announced. We start with networking and task force updates, followed with an educational component.

Attending TTDC affords a great opportunity to get to know other industry partners and learn how to be more involved in CVB activities. We hope that everyone interested in the motorcoach, AAA auto travel and seasonal packaging markets will join us for what is sure to be an exciting year for the TTDC.

2011-12 Chair: Corky Cordell  
Sales Manager | Biltmore Farms Hotels

CVB Staff Liaison: Heather Backer  
[hbacker@ExploreAsheville.com](mailto:hbacker@ExploreAsheville.com)

## Marketing & Public Relations Committee

Marketing & Public Relations committee meetings are attended by those who fulfill marketing and PR roles in their respective organizations. Meetings are typically held once per quarter on a Friday afternoon in the Chamber's Boardroom. The meetings provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, networking and educational opportunities. In addition, the meetings provide an opportunity to discuss trends and stay informed regarding the media relations activities of the CVB, including semi-annual media tours.

2011-12 Chair: Abby Burt  
Branding & Marketing Leader | Navitat Canopy Tours

CVB Staff Liaison: Cat Kessler  
[ckessler@ExploreAsheville.com](mailto:ckessler@ExploreAsheville.com)



Together, our tourism industry partners and the CVB team celebrated the end of the fiscal year with a focus on community service by participating in a clean-up project in cooperation with the RiverLink organization. The event also served as the year-end meeting for the TTDC, GBDT and PR committees. Participants cleared out a portion of the Riverside property, planted new plants and pulled out the overgrowth blocking the sidewalk that connects Carrier Park to the French Broad River greenway.



# 2011-12 Industry Calendar

Date	Event	Location
July 24-29, 2011	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Marketing College	Dahlonega, GA
July 20-22, 2011	Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) Annual Convention	New Orleans, LA
July 27, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
July 14-15, 2011	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Wallace, NC
Aug. 23, 2011	BCTDA Marketing & Communication Plan Presentation	Asheville Chamber
Aug. 24, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Aug. 28-30, 2011	Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO)	Salt Lake City, UT
September 2011	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
September 2011	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Sept. 7-8, 2011	Blue Ridge Parkway Association Fall Meeting	Roanoke, VA
Sept. 9-11, 2011	AAA Explore Asheville! Atlanta FAM	Asheville, NC
Sept. 15, 2011	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Sept. 19-22, 2011	NC Domestic Sales Mission	Pennsylvania & Ohio
Sept. 19-23, 2011	Fall Media Tour	I-40 Corridor, NC
Sept. 20, 2011	Meetings Quest	Charlotte, NC
Sept. 21-23, 2011	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Charlotte, NC
Sept. 21, 2011	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon	Atlanta, GA
Sept. 23-25, 2011	AAA Explore Asheville! FAM	Asheville, NC
Sept. 28, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Oct. 26, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Oct. 26-27, 2011	U.S. Travel Association Marketing Outlook Forum	Fort Worth, TX
November 2011	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Luncheon	Charlotte, NC
Nov. 8, 2011	Wedding Networking Event	Asheville, NC
Nov. 8-10, 2011	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Fall/Annual Meeting	New Orleans, LA
Nov. 16, 2011	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon, Awards & Annual Business Meeting	Atlanta, GA
Nov. 18-20, 2011	AAA Suberbowl of Knowledge	Greensboro, NC
Nov. 22, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Nov. 29-Dec. 2, 2011	Joint Asheville CVB/Visit Charlotte Tour Operator FAM	Charlotte & Asheville, NC
Dec. 6, 2011	BCTDA/CVB Holiday Potluck Open House (4:30 to 6:30 p.m.)	Asheville Chamber
Dec. 8, 2011	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Tradeshow/Meeting	Raleigh, NC
Dec. 15, 2011	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Dec. 21, 2011	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Winter 2011-12	AAA Explore Asheville! Destination Training	Kentucky & Tennessee
January 2012	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
January 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
January 2012	Tentative: New York Media Tour	New York, NY
Jan. 4-5, 2012	Blue Ridge Parkway Association Winter Meeting	TBA
Jan. 6-8, 2012	Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) 2012 Annual Conference	San Diego, CA

Date	Event	Location
Jan. 6-10, 2012	American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace 2012	Grapevine, TX
Jan. 12, 2012	Application Deadline for 2012 Funding Cycle of the Tourism Product Development Fund	Asheville Chamber
Jan. 25, 2012	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Jan. 26-27, 2012	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Salisbury, NC
February 2012	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Quarterly Luncheon	Atlanta, GA
Feb. 7-9, 2012	Bank/Alumni Travel Conference	Memphis, TN
Feb. 24, 2012	Destination Marketing Association Int'l (DMAI) Destinations Showcase	Washington, DC
Feb. 24-26, 2012	Heartland Travel Showcase	Knoxville, TN
Feb. 29, 2012	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
Spring 2012	Tour Operator FAM	Asheville, NC
Spring 2012	Florida Media Tour	Florida
March 2012	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 1-6, 2012	Southern Conference Basketball Tournament	Asheville, NC
Mar. 4-7, 2012	Travel South Showcase	Louisville, KY
Mar. 11-12, 2012	NC Governor's Conference on Tourism	Concord, NC
Mar. 15, 2012	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 22-23, 2012	BCTDA Strategic Planning Retreat	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 23, 2012	BCTDA Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Mar. 26-28, 2012	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) Spring Meeting	TBA
April 2012	American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Springtime Expo	Washington, DC
April 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
Apr. 12-13, 2012	Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina (DMANC) Meeting	Clayton, NC
Apr. 14-22, 2012	AAA Blue Ridge Parkway FAM	Asheville, NC
April 18-20, 2012	Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) CEO Forum	Asheville, NC
Apr. 21-25, 2012	POW WOW International Marketplace	Los Angeles, CA
Apr. 25, 2012	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
May 2012	Group Business Development Team (GBDT) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
May 2-3, 2012	Blue Ridge Parkway Association Annual Meeting	TBA
May 12-20, 2012	National Tourism Week	Nationwide
May 30, 2012	BCTDA Meeting	Asheville Chamber
June 2012	Tour & Travel Development Committee (TTDC) Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
June 2012	Georgia Society of Association Executives (GSAE) Annual Meeting	Panama City Beach, FL
June 2012	Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) Annual Meeting	Wilmington, NC
June 2012	PR/Marketing Committee Meeting	TBA - Asheville, NC
June 3-6, 2012	Public Relations Society of America Travel & Tourism Conference	Columbus, OH
June 13-14, 2012	North American Journeys East Coast Summit	New York, NY
June 22-23, 2012	Southeast Tourism Society (STS) June Board Meeting	TBA
June 27, 2012	BCTDA Public Budget Hearing & Meeting	Asheville Chamber



# The Asheville Area Brand Promise

*We guarantee you a life enriching experience each and every time you visit Asheville. It's personal, personal to you. And it is personal to us. We live this same genuine experience and want to share it with you. We empower you to discover a collection of experiences that is as unique and varied as each individual who visits and allow you to do so in a warm, embracing and creative environment.*

## **Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority**

**Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau**

**Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce**

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P.O. Box 1010 | Asheville, NC 28802

P. 828.258.6102 | F. 828.254.6054

[ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com) | [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com)



The Asheville CVB is accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of the Destination Marketing Association International.

**ASHEVILLE**  
any way you like it®