



CLARK-FLOYD COUNTIES
CONVENTION AND TOURISM BUREAU

**2015 DESTINATION
SALES & MARKETING PLAN**

CONTENTS

The Destination 3
 I. Market Overview 4
 II. Regional Overview 5
 SWOT Analysis 5
 • Strengths 6
 • Weaknesses 7
 • Opportunities 8
 • Threats 9
 III. Universal Brand Development and Messaging 10
 Guiding Principles 10
 2014 Market Research 11
 IV. Market Segments 12
 A. The Leisure Traveler Market 12
 B. Leisure Group Tours 19
 C. Sports Tourism 24
 D. Small Business Meetings and SMERF Market 27
 V. 2015 Research 30

THE DESTINATION

Clark and Floyd Counties are characterized by a mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities heavily influenced by the culture and economy of Louisville, Kentucky. Its residents, however, maintain a proud identity as truly Indiana. As a destination long known as “The Sunny Side of Louisville,” we benefit from the connection to Louisville and its unquestionable position as a premier visitor destination, but we also offer visitors additional and alternative experiences not available across the river.

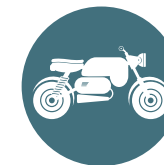
THE DESTINATION VISION 2020

Southern Indiana’s Clark-Floyd Counties are nationally recognized as the original Lewis & Clark Expedition embarkation point with preserved Ohio River sites, fossil beds, trails and notable attractions. With three riverfront cities, the area boasts revitalized, vibrant downtown centers, exciting heritage festivals and events, nearby rural agritourism experiences and varied meeting and sports entertainment venues. All are accessible through an efficient cross-river transportation and wayfinding system. At the key juncture of Interstates 64, 65 and 71, the Clark-Floyd Counties’ communities are on the north bank of the Ohio River bordering Louisville, Kentucky.

THE DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION

As created in Indiana Code, the Clark-Floyd Counties Convention & Tourism Bureau (CTB) is the official destination marketing organization for these communities. The Indiana General Assembly has defined the organization along with the appointment structure for its Board of Managers, which represent the governments of the two counties along with the cities of Jeffersonville and New Albany and the town of Clarksville.

The CTB is funded by a 4% Innkeepers Tax. This is split with 3% dedicated to marketing the destination and 1% dedicated to debt service on bonds issued for capital projects that add to the visitor experience.



THE DMO VISION 2020

As a brand driven and engaged destination leader, the Clark-Floyd Counties Convention & Tourism Bureau is innovative and partner-vested in the Louisville metropolitan area in providing new visitor business to its two Southern Indiana counties’ tourism/hospitality industry and host communities.

THE DMO MISSION

The mission of the Clark-Floyd Counties Convention & Tourism Bureau is to promote and develop the unique “Sunnyside” visitor experience brand to priority targeted group and leisure travelers to achieve new tourism spending benefits for the industry, communities and residents of Clark-Floyd Counties.

STRATEGIC GOAL – MARKETING

Destination Marketing, Sales and Services
 To increase the awareness and conversion of persuadable visitors through targeted market strategies focusing on innovative and measurable promotional, sales and services programs.

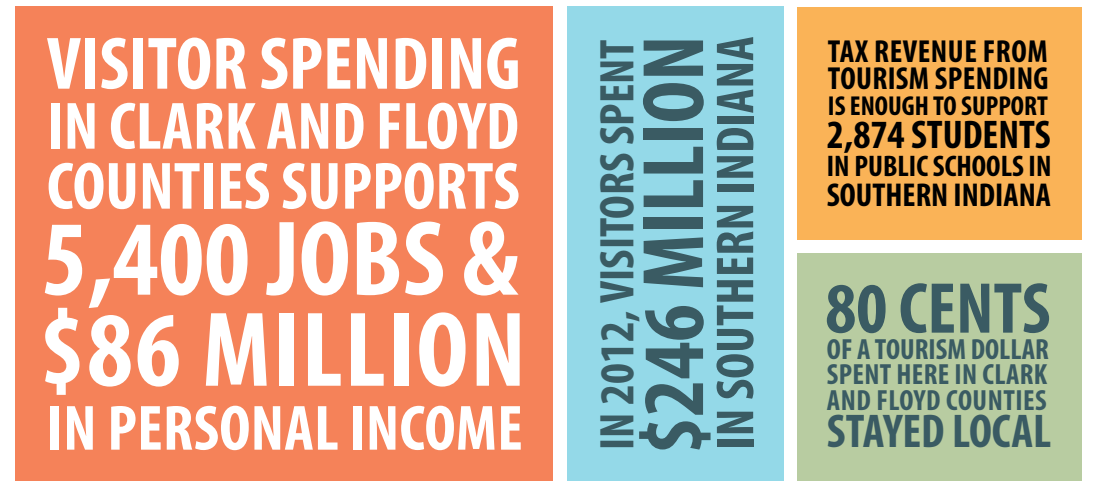
To add focus to the long-term goals, we will use the following key marketing and sales principles to gain competitive advantage:

- Increase how long and how often visitors stay in Clark and Floyd Counties
- Leveraged partnerships so funds spent on marketing by the Bureau and tourism partners will go further (in terms of either a larger presence or better rates)
- More focused marketing of festivals and events
- Continue product development with an eye on strategic tourism development and promotion

I. MARKET OVERVIEW



TOURISM'S IMPACT IN SOUTHERN INDIANA



II. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

CLARK AND FLOYD COUNTIES: SITUATION ANALYSIS

Southern Indiana amenities are popular for people who value a day trip or weekend getaway. With time and effort, we can grow our industry into a more mature tourism market. To do this, we must give visitors a compelling reason to travel to our area, visit our attractions, and stay in our hotels.

SWOT ANALYSIS	
To understand our destination's current situation, the Bureau undertook a SWOT analysis defining our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to assess the regional situation. We found the following:	
STRENGTHS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterfront destinations: • Revitalized Downtowns • Big Four Pedestrian Bridge • Location near Louisville and interstate highways • Passionate, entrepreneurial partners who show pride in local goods • Good programming in parks & recreation
WEAKNESSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sharing/silo mentality within and among communities • Limited meeting space • Perceived "sidekick" status
OPPORTUNITIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of fresh new partnerships • Affordability and value • Within a day's drive of 50% of the U.S. population • Revisit and refine the destination's brand identity
THREATS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Louisville hotels • Bridge tolls, construction, and access • Past ill-will toward some organizations • Global events beyond our control

STRENGTHS

Our location on the north bank of the Ohio River is just one mile from Louisville, Kentucky. This gives us the advantage of being in a large metropolitan area with a built-in base of visitors who come to experience the region where bourbon is king, the Kentucky Derby, the Louisville Slugger Museum, and other cultural attractions.

While in a destination, visitors will often cross into another city, county, or state without realizing it. No passports are required, and no entrance requirements are imposed. Territories, therefore, are in the minds of the municipalities more than in our customers' minds. Visitors go where the amenities are regardless of city, county, or state boundaries.

WATERFRONT AMENITIES

Jeffersonville and New Albany have revitalized their downtowns and are continuing to expand and improve them. As a result, visitors can experience each community's offerings easier. They can shop and dine while walking through our quaint tree-lined streets.

The Ohio River Greenway Commission's work is both a strength and an opportunity for Clark and Floyd Counties. Once completed, the park's design will create a strong attraction enhancing our area as a tourist destination. The parks can enhance residents' quality of life as well as visitors'. News stories have discussed the project's transformative nature. Proponents have likened the greenway project plans to those by Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed New York's Central Park as well as Louisville's Cherokee and Shawnee Parks.

New attractions encourage the flow of visitors from Louisville into Indiana such as the Big Four Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge. Along with residents, many visitors have experienced the novelty of walking from one state to another. Downtown Jeffersonville has experienced increased foot traffic because of the bridge. Merchants have capitalized on its popularity by using sidewalk chalk to promote special events such as a Friday wine walk. As a result, an unusually high number of participants joined the walk.

In addition, new tourism products have resulted from the increased business in our area generated by River Ridge Commerce Center near Jeffersonville and Charlestown. A new hotel is being built in Charlestown to accommodate these travelers. This commerce center will likely continue bringing travelers to our area. Naturally, they will need to dine out when they visit, and many will stay overnight. These travelers will also look for tourism attractions to patronize during their stay.



The eclectic tourism products that have come online in the past few years appeal to a wide variety of tourists. Travelers have found amenities in our area in arts, culture, wineries, breweries, shopping, dining, and sports, and they have become enchanted with the passionate, entrepreneurial spirit of our business owners. The new energy bringing visitors to the area will continue to make this region a success.

WEAKNESSES

IS BIGGER BETTER?

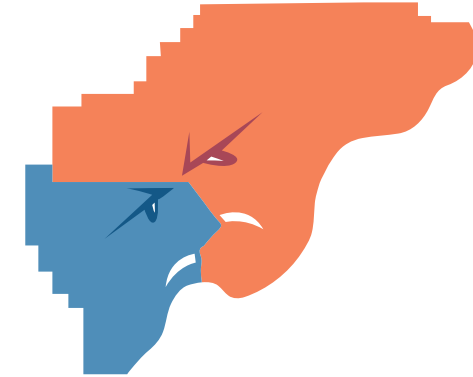
While being next to Louisville is one of our strengths, we also know that it can be a weakness. Some have the perception that our smaller size means we may not "measure up." Also, we do not have the tax base or the hotel inventory to fund the amount of tourism development that we would like. We lack the budget and staff that our larger counterparts have to compete in areas such as the convention and meetings market. We may not be able to book some business simply because of our current inventory of hotels and amenities cannot accommodate them.



For some travelers our smaller size is a strength. The quaint downtowns of New Albany and Jeffersonville plus the rural experiences to be found in Starlight, Sellersburg, Charlestown, and Utica, may be just the right niche. With our proximity to Louisville, our destination can give the perception that we offer the best of both worlds. Continuing research into our Visitor Profile and Destination Image Study can help us determine to what extent size matters.

LOCAL RIVALRIES

Traditionally, there has been competition among communities within Clark and Floyd Counties. This can create animosity among business members. If taken to extreme, the rancor may "turn off" visitors, which can hurt local businesses.



SILO MENTALITY

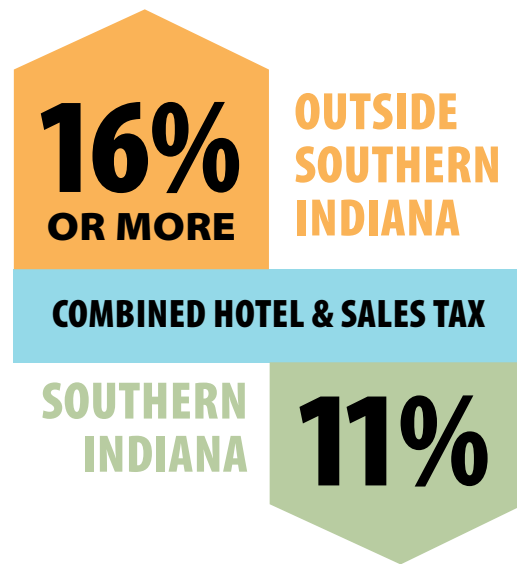
Though it's important to focus energies on your business, too narrow a focus can be a weakness in that it prevents businesses from working together. The silo mentality that results can create challenges.

Destinations that use cross marketing, open communication channels and integrated partnerships to promote their area are usually more successful than those who don't. Therefore, individual businesses and community members who work with other partners, are informed about the area, and know about the other tourism offerings nearby will add value to a visitor's experience. This added value will increase the likelihood that the visitor will share information about their trip with their friends, return to the destination, or both.

OPPORTUNITIES

VALUE IN OUR MARKET

As we build on our strengths, we have the opportunity to educate audiences about our attractions and their value in the marketplace. Compared with other destinations who have higher tax rates of 16 percent and more, our combined hotel and sales tax rate is an affordable 11 percent. This is especially relevant to group tour leaders and meeting planners who keep a close eye on their profit margins, as this can have a positive impact on them.



Value conscious consumers may be attracted to southern Indiana hotels. Realizing this may entice visitors to return to southern Indiana in the future and spend nights in our lodging facilities.

A NEW DAY

Since June 2014, staffing changes have brought new perspectives and skill sets into the Clark and Floyd Counties Convention & Tourism Bureau. Two new staff positions were added and filled, while another position was modified to allow greater focus on individual marketing activities.

Kate Kane was hired as Director of Sales,

and Regina Walker-Tekulve was hired as the Marketing and Communications Assistant. Jennifer Abbott's role changed as she became Director of Marketing, with a focus on paid advertising. In addition, Luanne Mattson was hired as the new Director of Communications as John Gilkey retired in August. The shift in the organization has created a greater focus in each of the bureaus services: advertising, public relations, and the group, sports and meetings markets.

This greater focus improves the Bureau's capacity to grow individual market segments. As a result, the Bureau hopes to encourage tourism partners to work with the CFCCTB staff as well as each other to build the destination's offerings.

In 2014, the Bureau held six Southern Indiana Tourism Coalition meetings, which brings together our tourism partners and gives individuals time to network, discuss common challenges, share knowledge and build alliances within the community. Our goal is to make the meetings a venue where partners can learn and grow together. As they become more successful, the region's tourism industry will also become successful. The Bureau also created a dedicated Facebook page for the group to foster better communication among industry partners.

We have a variety of informative Facebook posts including:

- Educational Articles
- Industry Trends
- Tourism Industry Stats
- Bureau Announcements
- Event Information
- Convention Reminders

THREATS

HOTEL DEVELOPMENT... OR LACK THEREOF

As we continue to build the tourism infrastructure in Clark and Floyd Counties, other destinations are building theirs. In recent years, Louisville has gained accolades as a destination to watch, and some say it is as a result of hotel products coming online in the city. In addition, tourism investments in Louisville are increasing with the expansion of the Kentucky International Convention Center, downtown distilleries, and other attractions.

Seven new hotels in the construction or design phase will add more than 1,200 rooms by 2017 to the Louisville hotel inventory, about half of which are scheduled to open by the end of 2015. Since many of these hotels are within downtown Louisville, our hotels may see a softening of demand in 2015 and beyond.

Will the addition of these hotel rooms mean that Louisville will be able to attract bigger convention business than it has in the past? If so, this could create greater spillover of visitors who come to Indiana to spend the night. Or, will it mean that fewer hotels will be needed on the Indiana side because Louisville can accommodate the visitors they have? While this is good news for Louisville, the impact on Southern Indiana remains to be seen.

Louisville has a varied mix of hotel properties. They include luxury brands like 21c Museum Hotel, The Seelbach Hilton Louisville and The Brown Hotel, medium scale properties, corporate owned brands with frequent traveler programs, bed and breakfast inns and other limited-service properties. Competition within the area can be substantial. In addition, Louisville's hotel products include a wide range within each area of the city (downtown, airport corridor, etc.).

The last hotel built in Clark and Floyd Counties was scheduled to open in fall 2014 in Charlestown. This limited-service property caters to business in the area near River Ridge Commerce Center.

Another development, originally envisioned as an anchor hotel property along with restaurants and retail, was scheduled to begin in 2015 or later at the gateway to Jeffersonville at 10th and Spring Streets. Because of zoning issues, some variations of the plan may still go forward, but the exact scope of the project is unknown. This modified plan is still in flux, so the community is unsure about how the project will impact the economy.

With Louisville hotel development at a bustling pace, visitors will have more choices than ever for their overnight stays. This growing market puts pressure on our hoteliers, who may have to work harder to attract customers. Given that many of our lodging choices are limited-service hotels, they may be forced to compete on price, which could impact their profit margins.



WILL BRIDGE TOLLS IMPACT TOURISM?

This year, a company was selected to collect tolls on the East End and I-65 bridges. As the bridge tolls come closer to reality, businesses may be affected. Will this impact locals? Yes. A number of businesses and residents cross the bridges frequently as part of their daily routines. How will the tolls affect visitors and tourism as a whole?

Many merchants are concerned that locals will not cross the river to patronize their businesses or will not cross as frequently. Will visitors exhibit the same behaviors? This remains to be seen, as no comprehensive study of this issue has been conducted. Did tolls affect tourism in Orlando? No. The tourist assets in the community were a sufficient draw so tourism was not negatively impacted. It remains to be seen if this will be the case in our area.

This growing market puts pressure on our hoteliers, who may have to work harder to attract customers.

III. UNIVERSAL BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND MESSAGING

For more than 30 years, the brand identity for the CFCCTB in destination marketing efforts has been “The Sunny Side of Louisville.” Signature design elements have included the bright yellow “sunny” color and characterization of the sun along with the image of the Bureau’s hot air balloon. This identity has the distinction of being the oldest destination brand in Indiana and one of the oldest in the U.S.

Since the Sunny Side brand pre-dates the more modern art and science associated with place (or destination) branding, the CFCCTB lacks the background information that its competitors have related to the destination brand’s structure or architecture.

Without that, the CFCCTB staff finds it difficult to develop websites, publications, ads and every other marketing effort that delivers a message that promises the emotional connection each visitor should have with our destination after they visit. As a result, past efforts have been inconsistent in design and imagery and have resorted to the “laundry list” of things to do in the area. Lists don’t inspire engagement or motivate customers to book trips.

Does this current brand identity accurately reflect who we are and what we offer? Some industry leaders argue that the “Sunny Side of Louisville” moniker puts us at odds with our neighbors. If so, this could hinder efforts to build cohesive partnerships with the Louisville tourism community, a destination that is an enticing draw for visitors. Lonely Planet named Louisville a “destination to watch,” and *Saveur* magazine has named it a top “foodie destination.” Visitation to Louisville is increasing; community leaders, therefore, see great potential in building partnerships.

Some leaders have said the “Sunny Side of Louisville” invites an unfavorable comparison to our big-city neighbor. They say the nickname is confusing or that it casts us in the role of the “sidekick” rather than as having our own identity. Anecdotal evidence shows that visitors think the name means we are in the business of promoting Louisville area attractions.

To find out what the general perception is of Clark and Floyd Counties, we have begun a Destination Image and Visitor Profile Study, with Strategic Marketing & Research Inc. conducting the study. It will be used to make sure our marketing efforts are backed by solid research and evidence. The first part began in summer 2014 with small focus groups of industry partners, stakeholders, and our customers to find out general perceptions of our current image and branding.

Once results are in, the Bureau will determine if concerns about our current brand are warranted and whether re-branding efforts should proceed. The Destination Image Study and Visitor Profile Study will also help the Bureau see the way forward in economic development and product development efforts.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In planning its sales and marketing efforts, CFCCTB will strive to organize around the following fundamentals:

LINKAGE WITH LOUISVILLE

Because Louisville is showing up on the top lists of destinations, it is not in our best interest to set ourselves apart from the city. We must position our area as a natural extension of the Louisville visitor experience. As the leader of the visitor industry in Southern Indiana, we must encourage tourism businesses to become active participants in and beneficiaries of the larger regional visitor industry.



Lines drawn on a map are often of no importance to visitors. Unless they have to make special arrangements to enter (as in another country), the border of another city, county, or state is of little or no consequence to visitors. We must act more like our visitors and recognize that they don’t see town, city, county or even state borders as barriers to their travel. Therefore, we must work to include Louisville area tourist offerings, partner with the Louisville CVB and its member businesses, and claim Louisville attractions as part of our attraction offerings.

LEVERAGE WITH PARTNERSHIPS

As a destination marketing organization, we don’t own the attractions or the hotels, nor do we have cash registers. Our sales and marketing efforts ultimately must drive sales for our regions’ tourism businesses. Therefore, it makes sense for us to seek opportunities to market in partnership with those businesses wherever possible – even those on the other side of the Ohio River. We should maintain and expand existing regional partnerships with other Southern Indiana destinations as well as with the Louisville CVB.

MEASURABLE AND ACCOUNTABLE

Philadelphia merchant John Wanamaker is credited with originating the statement “Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don’t know which half.”

Technology has given us powerful tools to measure the impact of advertising. Tools like paid search, where an advertiser only pays when a potential customer clicks through to a website, and social media advertising provide detailed data to analyze the effectiveness of marketing efforts. Some proven media choices may never have the measurability of newer online marketing after options but that does not mean they should automatically be rejected. However, the Bureau will continue to include measurability in its decision making criteria for advertising media and all marketing and sales efforts.

STORYTELLING AS MARKETING

Destination marketing has come a long way. Travelers are much savvier and have many choices for vacation experiences. They want to be wowed. No longer are they motivated by a laundry list of hotels, attractions, or amenities. They are starving for a story – one that will captivate them and motivate them to book a destination. Their standards have been raised, they have more disposable income, and many more destinations are within reach. Because they are looking for memories to last a lifetime, it is essential to market creatively and show the story possibilities in our destination.

2014 RESEARCH

As we await the Destination Image and Visitor Profile Study results, we have used the following:

- Traditional advertising responses
- Requests and comments from visitor centers
- Readers service cards
- Online data
- Google analytics
- Keyword analysis
- Social media metrics
- Anecdotal evidence from our tourism partners

We must act more like our visitors and recognize that they don’t see town, city, county or even state borders as barriers to their travel.

Some industry leaders argue that the “Sunny Side of Louisville” moniker puts us at odds with our neighbors.

IV. MARKET SEGMENTS

We have identified four market segments we will pursue with the most potential for our destination: the Individual Leisure Travelers market, Group Leisure Tours market, Sports Tourism market, and the Small Meetings Market.

Below is a discussion of each of those segments, a review of past efforts, as well as 2015 marketing initiatives associated with each.

A. THE LEISURE TRAVELER MARKET

The Leisure Traveler market consists of individual travelers who are not part of a formal group. Categorizing these travelers can be difficult, since individuals have a wide range of motivations to visit any particular destination. They travel for pleasure, are free of business obligations, do not have preset agendas, and can visit any day or season.

The CFCCTB's formal mission is "to achieve new tourism spending benefits for the industry, communities and residents of Clark-Floyd Counties." Our historic downtown areas and rural communities have been a draw to Louisville visitors, who are an important source of day-trip visitors. Both overnight and day-trip visitors influence overall visitor spending. The Bureau, however, will spend the bulk of its advertising dollars luring overnight visitors since statistics show that an overnight visitor generally spends more per day.

NATIONAL TRENDS

An Enterprise Rent-A-Car study released September 2014 showed Americans travel patterns have evolved. They prefer shorter weekend road trips versus week-long vacations. More than half (57 percent) reported they would drive up to 300 miles one way for a weekend trip.

Leisure travelers represent every generation: from couples taking "babymoons" (trips just before the birth of their baby) to retired couples celebrating the end of their working careers. Our community features weekend festivals, which make travel to our area a natural choice for leisure travelers looking for short getaways.

The CFCCTB has not conducted a visitor profile study in recent years. Because we lack this data, we will use demographics data based on other similar Midwest destinations and data provided by media outlets in which we advertise. Our marketing efforts include paid advertising, public relations, digital platforms, publications and visitor centers.

The millennial generation (those born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s) is an upcoming market to consider. More than 80 million are classified as millennials. They have grown up with digital marketing, and they are constantly connected.

2014 REVIEW

In 2014, the Bureau marketed Clark and Floyd Counties as a destination through owned, paid, and leased content channels. Examples of each content channel follows.

These channels are defined as:

- Owned content channels: the Bureau owns both the platform and controls the content that is distributed on it
- Paid content channels: the Bureau controls the content and message, but does not own the channel
- Leased content channels: platforms that are neither owned or controlled by the Bureau

57% OF AMERICANS SURVEYED WOULD DRIVE
300 MILES ONE WAY FOR A WEEKEND GETAWAY

OWNED

The Bureau staff works with our website, www.sunnysideoflouisville.org, on an ongoing basis to keep it updated and functioning efficiently. In 2014, we made adjustments to the site's structure and menu options to be more user-friendly. We included keywords and messages so they are consistent with our online advertising messages and consumers' perceptions. Pages were added to increase the site's usefulness and show visitors a more complete picture of the area's tourism offerings.

We increased the amount and quality of our website's content so visitors will see it as a valuable resource. Improvements made included:

- Updated calendar of events page
- Added social media links to encourage visitor interaction and increase the number of fans and followers
- Made website responsive so users accessing it through mobile devices would have better views

We continue to work with the website's host and designer, to make improvements in its functionality.

E-NEWSLETTERS

In June we changed our monthly consumer e-newsletter to focus on specific themes. In each newsletter, we included a variety of attractions, events and dining suggestions. Themes have included "August Artsy Adventures" and "Festivals, Foliage, Food and Frights." The themes have been developed to help the consumer see our community with a fresh, new perspective that ignites creativity and passion for travel to Southern Indiana. The newsletters drive traffic to our website, social media sites, and our partners' websites as well.

PUBLICATIONS

The Bureau's annual visitors guide was produced in cooperation with the News and Tribune newspaper. The full-color magazine is distributed locally and at state welcome and visitor centers. It includes listings for attractions, events and lodging along with display advertisements.

At the beginning of the year, the Bureau developed a lure brochure. We contract with Tourist Information Services and Ad Rack Services to distribute these brochures throughout Indiana and the Louisville area.

We also produced a brochure that included the land events happening in conjunction with the Centennial Festival of Riverboats, Jeffersonville's Steamboat Days, and the Clarksville RiverFest. This was distributed to hotels, municipalities, restaurants and shops in Clarksville, Jeffersonville and New Albany. It was a key piece at our Centennial Festival booth.

PAID

We placed ads in the following publications in 2014. Both print and digital components were included in every ad we placed in 2014. The digital component helps us track our performance, and it will help us gain insight into future ad-buying decisions.

- *Indianapolis Monthly*
- *Evansville Living*
- *Experience Indy* newspaper insert (six regional newspapers)
- Louisville Visitor Guide
- "See Louisville" newspaper insert (seven regional newspapers)
- *AAA Home & Away*
- Indiana Travel Guide
- Indiana and Kentucky newspapers (more than 10 regions in the two states)
- Indiana Festival Guide

The Bureau, however, will spend the bulk of its advertising dollars luring overnight visitors since statistics show that an overnight visitor generally spends more per day.

Ads were placed on various web sites targeting a multi-state region referring visitors to our website. Placements included popular sites like www.weather.com and more niche-focused websites pertaining to parenting, culinary, and other interests.

Pro Media Group coordinated these ads with the Marketing and Communications team’s input. We used keywords specifically tested and targeted to drive users to our website. We reviewed the list regularly to achieve maximum efficiency. As a result, we made changes to the Sunny Side website tabs and text to closer align the search terms with those consumers used.

‘MY SUNNY SIDE’ AD CAMPAIGN

The Bureau launched “My Sunny Side,” a new advertising campaign in spring and continued throughout 2014. The campaign focused on stories woven throughout the community and included video, print and digital ad components. A special emphasis was placed on the attractions that make Clark and Floyd Counties unique.

The first six videos were released in April and featured: Derby Dinner Playhouse, Falls of the Ohio, Howard Steamboat Museum, Huber Orchard & Winery, Joe Huber Family Farm & Restaurant and Schimpff’s Confectionery. The next four themed videos were released in September and featured: arts and culture, craft breweries and wineries, dining in New Albany, and riverfront dining in Jeffersonville. The videos were used as ads on various sites, then shared on our website, our partners’ websites, as well as on social media platforms.

LEASED CHANNELS

Leased channels include social media platforms, consumer shows, trade shows, and public relations.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS

A new advertising tool for the CFCCTB was paid Facebook advertising. We featured specific events in an effort to increase “Likes” for our Facebook page. The paid ads began in July. At the beginning of the campaign we had 787 likes and within one month we tripled our likes. At the end of October, more than 6,500 people liked our Facebook page.



We also added Pinterest and Twitter to our social media lineup. Primary users of Pinterest are women, who are also the primary decision makers for family travel plans. Often, people use Twitter for real-time updates. Staff members use the platform to send information about events, festivals and news from Clark-Floyd Counties. Since millennials are heavy Twitter users, this channel will allow more effective communication.

CFCCTB staff devised a social media campaign to use on Twitter for the National FFA Convention held in Louisville at the end of October. FFA is a high school and college student agricultural education organization whose annual convention had more than 60,000 delegates. We focused on marketing Clark-Floyd Counties’ attractions, restaurants and events to National FFA attendees. Their tagline for this year’s convention was “Go All Out!” They used #GoFFA in their social media campaign, and we piggybacked on their efforts by using the hashtag in tweets about our partners’ special offers and programs for FFA delegates.

DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING - LEISURE

Platform & Name	Purpose	Audience	Goal
Website: sunnysideoflouisville.org	Promote region, relevant info source, access portal, digital home	Potential visitors, local & regional partners & community	Reliable regional travel info source, stay/pay visitor conversion
Facebook: facebook/ SunnySideOfLouisville	Engage, inform, interact, convert audience using paid & earned content	Multi-demographic traveler, community partners, regional attraction owners	Grow audience 25%, increase/enhance visitor stay & experience
Twitter: @SunnySideOfLou	Promote region, “right now” info source, linkable, cross-platform content	Regional/national/international travel industry & community partners, travelers to region	Increase followers 25%, communicate/interact w/younger/untapped demographics, increase event onsite use
YouTube: Clark Floyd	Visually entertaining, informative attraction source, feeds multi-platform content- paid & free ads	Travel industry & community partners, potential travelers to region	Increase use of YouTube 25%, visibility & traffic to attractions, pay/stay conversion of travelers to region
Pinterest: ClarkFloydCTB	Promote region w/use of visual, unconventional content	Individuals, groups, clubs, specific in theme/interests	Grow content, use & audience by 25%
Monthly e-newsletters	Inform subscribers of events, attractions, news, increase click-throughs & traffic on other platforms	Subscribers, which also includes board, news media & industry partners	Increase subscribers, linkability, creativity & value of content

CONSUMER SHOWS

CFCCTB promoted our destination at several trade shows and festivals. We had a display at the AAA Indiana Travel Show in February. We distributed our annual visitor guide and promoted events such as Centennial Festival of Riverboats.

Family travelers, retired couples and some group leaders attended the AAA Indiana Travel Show. We collected email addresses and added them to our e-newsletter database. We also sent follow-up emails with relevant information on our destination. We distributed our lure brochure at the Indianapolis Boat, Sport and Travel Show through Tourist Information Services.

PUBLIC AND MEDIA RELATIONS

The Bureau communicated its brand message through media relations by communicating directly with journalists. Media relations included working with several journalists to place articles about our destination. We hosted media, pitched story ideas, and supplied photos. We keep a media database of qualified journalists of who are looking for stories of interesting tourist destinations. Working mainly through existing bureau relationships, we had more than 25 media placements about our area as a tourist destination.

2015 INITIATIVES

We will continue to use all available channels in our marketing toolbox to communicate our brand message and entice visitors to experience our destination. Through paid, owned, and leased media, we will build upon our established audiences to increase our fan base and engage them within each channel. We will emphasize email collection and social media channels as a way to communicate to leisure travelers.

OWNED MEDIA AND MARKETING PLATFORMS

WEBSITE

Purpose: To be the definitive resource for visitors who wish to plan trips to Clark and Floyd Counties.

For a website to be most effective, of course, it must be relevant to the consumer's needs. We will optimize our content for consumers and search engines, and we will ask our partners to communicate with us on a regular basis to ensure their info is up-to-date and accurate.

- Event information
- New visitor businesses
- New services offered by existing businesses
- Updated hours
- Tour information
- Other relevant visitor information

We will evaluate staffing needs and, if warranted, may ask partners to provide and update their listings with the use of an extranet site. We will also consider adding a blog to our website to inform visitors about new attractions and to showcase existing attractions and tourism amenities.

BROCHURES AND COLLATERAL

Purpose: Encourage visitor spending by promoting experiences, attractions, events and lodging facilities in Clark and Floyd Counties

Because savvy travelers want relevant information from people they trust, the 2015

Visitors Guide will be published in a consumer-led, conversational format. The Bureau has contracted with freelancers to write articles about visitor experiences in Clark and Floyd Counties. These will be the writers' firsthand accounts.

ENHANCED VISITOR CENTER SERVICES

Purpose: Provide frontline contact and engaging service that will give visitors useful travel and tour information and create valuable customer relationships.

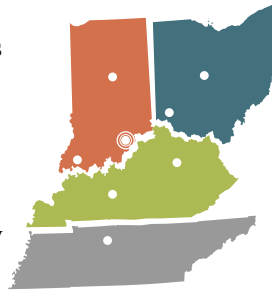
For 2015, we will improve the Southern Indiana Visitor Center to make it a more engaging environment with displays that encourage interaction. The displays will help to create a "sense of place" targeted to visitors. Our goal is to increase traffic to the center and give staff more opportunities to engage with visitors and gather email addresses.

PAID MEDIA AND MARKETING PLATFORMS

Purpose: Deliver responsive message to a targeted audience and use a digital component for effective tracking.

Target markets for leisure travelers include residents in cities within a 250-mile radius:

- Indianapolis and surrounding communities
- Evansville, Indiana
- Cincinnati, Ohio
- Lexington, Kentucky
- Nashville, Tennessee
- Bowling Green, Kentucky
- Columbus, Ohio



Other areas such as Charleston, West Virginia and Owensboro, Kentucky – plus second- and third-tiered cities within that radius – will be considered based on opportunities and effective media.

Our paid advertisements will use traditional media along with digital components. This ensures advertising will drive traffic to our website. We will then track this increased

website traffic to help us make future marketing decisions. Targeted social media ads promote our destination to celebrate life's milestones such as engagements, birthdays and anniversaries.

LEASED MEDIA AND MARKETING PLATFORMS

MEDIA RELATIONS

Purpose: Include our area and its tourism entities in stories travel journalists produce in print, broadcast, and online media.

Media relations efforts will include a number of diverse activities including:

- Build upon database of travel journalists
- Highlight our area's unique experiences
 - Culinary, wineries, and breweries
 - Agritourism
 - Arts and culture
 - History and heritage
 - Shopping
- Host travel writers and bloggers on familiarization tours
- Communicate with travel writers through media newsletters, pitches and press releases
- Subscribe to media lead services and provide leads to partners
- Build our photo library with vibrant images of attractions and experiences
- Work with partners to conduct FAM tours for journalists
- Attend media marketplaces such as the Travel Media Showcase, which will be held in Bloomington in 2015

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Purpose: Engage potential visitors on an ongoing basis with compelling content about Southern Indiana

As technology improves, we will refresh our messages to align them with consumers' preferences. We will strive to deliver the information they want in the format they want it. We will use print and digital platforms

including media placements, social media channels, newsletters, and publications.

Since women are the primary decision makers for travel, we will target women for family trips, couples' retreats and reunions. We will also use a mix of social media.

CONSUMER AND TRADE SHOW EVENTS

Purpose: Increase the Southern Indiana Visitor Center's presence at consumer shows and festivals with engaging activities and promote Clark-Floyd Counties as a visitor destination

The CFCCTB will have a display booth that showcases Southern Indiana as a visitor destination at more consumer events such as AAA travel shows and other festivals. We will again participate at the Indiana AAA show and add the Columbus AAA Ohio Travel Expo to the mix. This will give us one-on-one contact with potential visitors. We will develop an easy-to-use display "kit" for regional festivals that has all tools necessary to feature our destination at these events and interact with consumers.

This type of exposure will help our destination get out in front of adventurous people who are likely to travel. We will rely on our hospitality partners for giveaway items and to help staff these booths. The Bureau will supply additional visitor services staff to travel with the booth and be responsible for set-up details. We will consider festivals in Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Evansville, Lexington and Madison.

We will use the Bureau's hot air balloon more effectively as a traveling promotional tool instead of as a static display. Visitor Services staff will accompany the balloon to regional events and distribute visitor information and collect email newsletter signups. This will be similar to booths at the regional festivals, but the balloon will provide the backdrop. We will consider hot air balloon events such as the Kentucky Derby Festival, Bardstown Bourbon Festival, Sellersburg Celebrates and Seymour Oktoberfest.

Since women are the primary decision makers for travel, we will target women for family trips, couples' retreats and reunions.

GOALS AND MEASUREMENT

OWNED

Website

- Increase average number of monthly unique visitors to our website from 3,400 to 4,000
- Maintain a bounce rate equivalent to or lower than the industry average
- Match or exceed industry average for the average time visitors stay on our site
- Increase average number of pages per session meet or exceed industry average

Brochures and Collateral

- Produce a compelling visitor guide that tells stories and evokes emotions; increase requests for visitors guide by 10 percent
- Redesign visitor map to showcase Clark & Floyd Counties

E-Newsletters

- Increase number of subscribers from 1,300 to 2,500
- Match or exceed industry averages for open rates (18.2%) and click-through rates (10.6%)

Visitor Center Services

- Improve the staff's use of technology to assist visitors
- Add interactive technology for visitors to find information on our destination

PAID

Advertising

- Test print and digital ads for effective content and messaging
- Meet or exceed industry standard for digital ads' click-through-rate
- Implement paid advertising programs in Social Media platforms to increase Facebook likes to 15,000 and Twitter followers to 1,000

LEASED

Social Media

- Match or exceed industry average of fan/follower engagement of fans and followers

Consumer Shows

- Collect addresses for the Bureau's email newsletter

Public and Media Relations

- Contact journalists with pitches three times or more per month on average
- Increase the number of stories in which CFC staff directly assists journalists by 50 % over 2014
- Respond to appropriate media leads from HelpAReporter.com, Indiana Office of Tourism Development, Louisville CVB, other Indiana Tourism Association colleagues
- Develop a FAM tour in conjunction with the Louisville CVB to showcase both sides of the Ohio River



B. LEISURE GROUP TOURS

DESTINATION OVERVIEW

The Leisure Tour Group market (more popularly known as motorcoach or the group tour market) can be defined as tours that consist of 10 or more people traveling together for a common interest involving a leisure activity or activities.

Traditionally, the majority of leisure tour groups are senior citizens who have an abundance of free time as well as a surplus of disposable income. CFCCTB staff has studied the baby boomer market and the student market who have been an increasingly larger part of group tours to determine their potential within our market niche.

BABY BOOMERS

Baby boomers represent the most important up-and-coming group trend in travel. In 2015, according to Deloitte Consulting, boomers will control more than 60 percent of the nation's wealth, and they will account for about 40 percent of our national spending.

What are the characteristics of this group, and how do we market to them successfully? In general, they want to stay active with their interests. They emphasize participatory travel, are looking for "bucket-list" trips, and are tech savvy.

While it may seem contradictory, boomer travelers don't like to experience things as a group; they want more personal experiences. They do, however, like the built-in social aspect of group tours. That's why they tend to gravitate to tours that incorporate free time in the schedule. This allows for personal discoveries that may not be possible as part of the larger group.

Non-traditional groups within the boomer market include motorcycle or car clubs, girlfriend getaways and "man-cations." The list is endless.

As a group, boomers tend to be tech savvy. They conduct extensive online research to ensure they get value for their travel dollars.

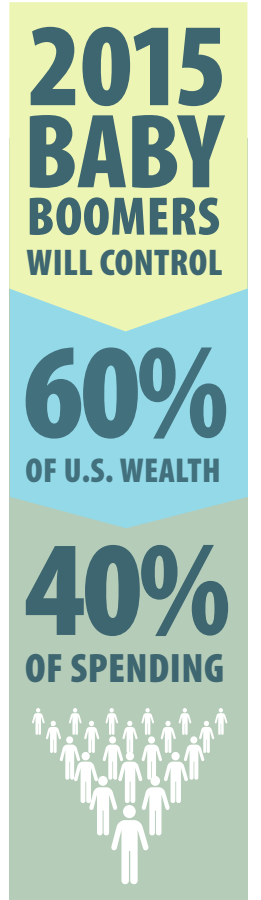
They look for the businesses and travel products that have the best reputation and put special emphasis on first-person recommendations. While boomers like to blaze their own trail, they like to do so knowing their choices will be validated.

STUDENTS

Student groups are a huge niche and are recession proof for the most part. Most schools offer an 8th grade overnight trip and a senior trip overnight (multi-day). Most of their trips, however, are based on educational curricula or need musical components such as clinics with noted clinicians or a performance opportunity. Trip organizers who base their choices on educational curricula tend to select first-tiered destinations such as New York, Washington, D.C., or Philadelphia. Trips based on musical components tend to choose destinations like Orlando that have musical competitions as part of their festivals, parades or amusement parks. Though the CFCCTB has not pursued this market in the past, staff members will continue to monitor this market and work with destination partners to develop student friendly itineraries.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Global issues, while seeming remote, do affect travel to our area. During the recession in 2009, many first-tiered cities such as Washington, DC, New York City and Orlando saw a drop in tour groups. Smaller cities like Louisville saw an increase in business due to their overall value. Travelers were hesitant to spend money on larger more expensive destinations or wanted to stay closer to home. They didn't feel comfortable being gone for longer periods. Also, threats of pandemics will have more people driving or riding motorcoaches than taking a chance on their health with air travel. They too will be staying closer to home and taking shorter trips.



WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

Under new leadership, marketing to leisure group tours became more targeted and precise. The primary emphasis has been on senior groups; CFCCTB staff members are also following new markets that may offer future prosperity. We worked to strengthen relationships with existing tour operator clients and develop new markets that include faith-based, bank and alumni travel and multi-generational tours.

Staff members attended marketplaces where we met with qualified tour operators and group leaders from around the country to showcase our area. The Bureau attended the following industry marketplaces:

- American Bus Association (ABA)
- Heartland Travel Showcase
- Select Traveler (formerly Bank Travel)
- Great Day! Tours Group Leader Showcase

One of the most powerful tools in the relationship-building phase of selling a destination is conducting familiarization (FAM) tours. These tours are important because they get tour planners to “taste test” our product. Rather than simply reading about our destination they can have personal experiences, which will help them accurately describe the destination to their customers.



In 2014, we hosted a FAM tour for planners during the Centennial Festival of Riverboats, which celebrated the Belle of Louisville’s 100th Birthday. The two-day, one-night FAM tour throughout Clark and Floyd Counties ended with a brunch cruise aboard the Spirit of Peoria on the last days of the Centennial Festival. This festival was a great “hook” to capture group tour operators’ attention.

These FAM tours are important because they get tour planners to “taste test” our product.

2015 INITIATIVES

As the segments of leisure group tours grows, so shall we. We will seek new ways to market to targeted audiences to increase their interest in our destination. We will also seek new niche markets.

We will continue working with local partners to educate them in this market segment through individual meetings as well as email communications, Southern Indiana Tourism Coalition meetings, and social media.

LOCAL SELLING AND MARKETING

Purpose: Inform our partners and community members of the Bureau’s purpose and goals so we sell a cohesive overall brand message.

The CFCCTB will continue to work with local attractions, hotels, retail, and restaurants to enhance our commitment to leisure group tours. We will communicate the message: “Southern Indiana is open for business and ready for groups.”

We will forge alliances among partners and communities to promote a regional message. One community can’t carry our region. We all have to work together to solidify our place in this industry. Our goal will be to shopkeepers, restaurant owners and hotel proprietors have to stop thinking “ME” but change their mindset to “WE.” We will increase our presence with Develop New Albany and Jeffersonville Main Street to help us achieve this.

Regional partnering is key to expanding our product line. This will help draw from many different feeder markets. Partnerships with connecting Indiana counties and Louisville to provide better content and a deeper visitor experience. We must position ourselves as an authentically Southern Indiana destination experience while aligning ourselves with Louisville to provide a full range of tour options.

We will continue to help educate our communities with experts in a variety of fields that will help us propel our identity forward.

MARKETPLACES

Purpose: Build relationships with face-to-face meetings with tour planners and increase their confidence in our area.

In 2015, the Bureau will attend marketplaces dedicated to building group tour business. We will conduct face-to-face meetings with clients to promote our brand and our products. Partnering with the Louisville CVB, the Indiana Office of Tourism, and with regional partners at designated marketplaces will widen opportunities we will create to sell our destination. We will deliver collateral material that the Bureau has developed and are developing specifically for the group tour market.

The CFCCTB will attend the following marketplaces:

January

American Bus Association, St. Louis, Missouri*

National Tour Association / Faith Travel Association, New Orleans

Tennessee Motorcoach Association, Franklin, Tennessee

February

Heartland Travel Showcase, Chicago

June

Travel Alliance Partner’s TAP Dance, Oklahoma City

October

Great Day! Tours Group Leader Show, Cleveland

December

Lakefront Lines Holiday Showcase, Cleveland

* Several southern Indiana partners and destinations will also be present. This is important since the 2016 ABA convention will be held in Louisville.

FAMILIARIZATION (FAM) TOURS/SITE VISITS

Purpose: To showcase our destination and allow tour planners to see what their clients would experience in our destination.

As stated earlier, the key to our success is to let clients experience our destination firsthand. Once they experience our product offerings firsthand, it will be easier for them to determine that their clients will enjoy themselves. They need to taste our eateries’ foods to determine if our restaurants will suit their clients’ needs. Once our clients have good experiences with our hospitality industry, they will then bring their clients to our destination. This of course, means an increase in visitor spending and overnight stays.

Tour operators and group leaders need to see the value in our market: exceptional products at affordable prices. Personalized FAM tours and site visits for qualified tour operators and group leaders are some of the most important tools at our disposal. As important as they are, it is impossible for the Bureau to conduct FAM tours by themselves. We will develop and coordinate these tours in conjunction with our partners to ensure that we give them the best experiences possible.

SALES CALLS

Purpose: To build relationships with clients by meeting them on their “home turf”

We will participate in small groups for sales calls to targeted areas. Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Illinois are great feeder markets for overnight business. We will also partner for day-trip business to Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Evansville. Throughout the year we will work with partners’ individual missions as needed.

Once our clients have good experiences with our hospitality industry, they will then bring their clients to our destination.

GROUP FRIENDLY ITINERARY DEVELOPMENT

Purpose: To provide well-researched roadmaps based on themes that tour planners may use for successful tours.

Our office will create dynamic itineraries that will include many of our attractions structured in themes. We will provide meal recommendations to coincide with the themes. These itineraries can be used by any of our local hotels to help promote room nights. We will offer both 2 day/1 night and 3 day/2 night standard itineraries as well as offer custom itineraries based on our client's needs.

Room night data from hoteliers and attendance information from attractions and restaurants will help us determine who is visiting and the time of year they visit.

COMPREHENSIVE DATABASE

Purpose: A well designed database will help us track our clients and market specifically to them based on their market segment and each customer's individual needs.

The Bureau will build an extensive database to communicate effectively with our customers and partners. We'll be able to zero in on clients based on their need. We will continually add to this list from a variety of sources such as marketplaces, giveaways (raffles), trade shows, etc.

TRACKING LEISURE TOUR GROUPS

Purpose: To measure our return on investment and determine who is visiting and who is not

We will develop a system that will track group tour activity. We will ask our hoteliers, attractions, and group tour vendors to report on the leisure groups that visit their properties and use their services each month. Once we have this information, we can then determine what areas are successful and what areas we can improve upon. This is a community-wide effort and can only be successful when all partners cooperate.

MEASUREMENTS/GOALS

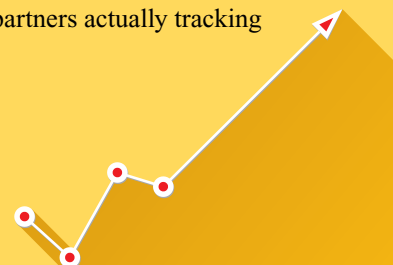
Leisure group travel is one of the hardest markets to measure. We do not have a turnstile at our county borders, nor do we sell tickets to our destination. Since we do not have dedicated numbers to count, we must rely on our tourism partners to help us paint an accurate picture.

We will gather room night data from hoteliers and attendance information from attractions and restaurants. This will help us determine who is visiting and the time of year they visit. This data will only be used for understanding trends. We will not make this data public.

The destination will become successful only if our partners are successful. We will continue to build relationships with partners as to help develop the Leisure Group Tour market segment for our area. We can NOT do this alone, so we will focus on creating a team atmosphere and helping our partners become successful.

2015 Goals (based on 2014 numbers supplied by partners):

- Tour operator: 157
- Group Leaders: 50
- FAM Tours/ Site Visits: 5
- Overnight Coaches: 50
- Daytrip Coaches: 500
- Group tracking: to achieve 75% of partners actually tracking



DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING - GROUP

Platform & Name	Purpose	Audience	Goal
Website: sunnysideoflouisville.org	Promote region, relevant info source, access portal, digital home	Group tour planners, organizations, industry partners & group travelers	Create specific group tour content (blogs, videos) to increase visibility/sales in the group tour market
Facebook: facebook/ SunnySideOfLouisville	Engage, inform, interact, audience using paid & earned content	Group tour planners, organizations, industry partners & group travelers	Increase group tour planner content, audience, and industry use & visibility
Twitter: @SunnySideOfLou	Promote region to group travel planners & group travelers. "Riiight now" group tour info source	Regional/national/international group travel industry & community partners	Follow group tour industry professionals, clubs, associations, create/use group travel hashtags, post pics of group tours
YouTube: Clark Floyd	Visually entertaining, informative attraction source, feeds multi-platform content- paid & free ads	Group tour planners, group travel industry partners, group travelers	Create professional videos for group tour sales presentations & association meetings
Pinterest: ClarkFloydCTB	Promote region to group travelers/planners using photos	Individuals, groups, clubs, specific to group travel	Create group travel board, follow group tour industry professionals, groups, etc.
e-newsletters: N/A	Inform group tour planners/travelers of tours, group-friendly attractions, send invitations	Group tour planners, industry partners, community leaders, group travelers	Increase communication & invitations to group tour planners, group travelers, industry professionals, associations

C. SPORTS TOURISM

In Sports Tourism, visitors travel away from their homes to attend or participate in a sporting event. While this statement may seem obvious, the sports market is more than this. Whether across town or across the country, these events can be as simple as a local little league team's game or an elite athlete attending a national event (e.g., Super Bowl, triathlon). Those who engage in activity can do so for the health benefit or for the joy of participating in the activity itself.



Visitor spending is directly related to family members who travel with their children to these events. Parents may sacrifice or save up their vacation time to support their child's youth sports teams. That is, they will make sure they have enough vacation time left to be with their children at any end-of-season tournaments. They also spend weekends in the stands or on the sidelines supporting their child's events. Extended family members will also cheer on their young relatives. When the extended family also travels to these events, this, of course, translates to increased hospitality spending (food, drinks, possibly hotel rooms, etc.).

Sports mega complexes are springing up in cities across the country. In many cases, sports tourism is breathing new life into small destinations that may lack a convention center and/or convention hotels found in larger destinations.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

The Bureau has not aggressively pursued the sports market. Individually, our communities offer options for those considering hosting sporting events. They have capabilities for little league and soccer tournaments, to name a few. City and county parks and recreation departments and various nonprofit leagues have spent millions building state-of-the-art facilities scheduled to open in the next two years.

In 2014, the CFCCTB received RFPs for a 180 team World Fast Pitch Tournament and Cabela's King Kat Fishing Tournament for 2015. While our communities may be able to handle these events in the future, we do not have the well-oiled processes in place required to host them successfully. Once we join together to use all of our communities as one product, we can become a player in this market.

Elizabethtown Sports Park in Kentucky and Grand Park in Westfield, Indiana, are examples of the business potential of the sports tourism market segment.

To understand the sports tourism market segment better, Kate Kane, the new director of sales, attended the National Association of Sports Commissions Market Segment Meeting in Chicago and Sports Indiana's educational workshop, "Becoming a Sports-Friendly Community" in Indianapolis.

The National Association of Sports Commissions meeting was both a networking opportunity to share ideas as well as an educational session to learn how communities can improve their positions in this market. The meeting gave us a glimpse into the potential and showed us how to grow visitor spending by working with local government and facility management contacts. The Sports Indiana educational workshop delved into what communities need to become sports-friendly and how to handle the event process.

In 2014, the Bureau hosted a meeting with Clark and Floyd Counties' parks and recreation management teams to discuss a specific Request for Proposal. It became clear why we weren't successful: municipal boundaries were getting in the way. Understandably, each community was working on its own potential, but no communication existed among the communities. This silo mentality was preventing larger successes. Together, Clark and Floyd Counties have a critical mass of impressive sports facilities that can be used if partners work together.

2015 Initiatives:

- Networked Resources for Success
- Educational Development
- Professional Inventory Assessment
- Appointment Marketplaces

SPORTS RESOURCE GROUP

Purpose: To help the Bureau understand which events to pursue based on community input.

To help combat the silo mentality, our communities need to come together on a regular basis to discuss the area as a whole and make it successful. We need to begin an honest, thoughtful analysis of our strengths and areas where we could improve. This SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis will help us shape the direction of Southern Indiana's sports tourism. As a group, we can then advise on events that would benefit our facilities and guide the development of new ones to enhance sports tourism.

Another way to ensure success is for community leaders, city officials, and community members to be involved in developing this market segment. All stakeholders should have input and buy into the strategy to ensure all can benefit from visitor spending sports can bring to Clark and Floyd Counties.

We propose forming a Local Organizing Committee to advise the Bureau about potential events and whether they are appropriate for our communities.

The committee will consist of sports experts who live and work in the area and who can use their passion to help secure events.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Purpose: To become experts in sports tourism so we can promote our destination properly.

CFCCTB staff members will pursue professional development opportunities by working with National Association of Sports Commission, Sports Indiana and the Indiana Sports Corporation. We will also provide professional development to our facility management by having guest speakers who will facilitate discussions on trends, concerns and issues. This will help us submit solid proposals to secure high quality events. It is our goal to book business two, three or more years in advance.

INVENTORY ASSESSMENT

Purpose: To assess our strengths and areas of improvement so we can be objective about our area's capabilities and potential.

To make sure we submit proposals on events that are a good fit for us, we will have a professional inventory taken of our facilities. While we want to get as much business as we can, we want to secure the right business to fit our communities.

Once we join together to use all of our communities as one product, we can become a player in this market.

APPOINTMENT MARKETPLACES

Purpose: Build relationships with event planners and stakeholders and build their confidence in our destination.

We will attend at least one marketplace where we can sit down for face-to-face appointments with event planners. These invaluable meetings help us learn what they are looking for from a destination. These marketplaces also offer professional development opportunities, which will ultimately benefit our communities.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The following chart shows how our digital marketing tools will be used to reach event planners, stakeholders and rights holders within the sports tourism market:



DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING - SPORTS

Platform & Name	Purpose	Audience	Goal
Website: sunnysideoflouisville.org	Promote region, relevant info source, access portal, digital home	Sports event planners, stakeholders, rights holders, region sports/park organizations, sponsors	Create specific sports/ facilities content to inform audience of region being a viable sports market
Facebook: facebook/ SunnySideOfLouisville	Engage, inform, interact, audience using paid & earned content	Sports event planners, stakeholders, rights holders, region sports/park organizations, sponsors	Create specific sports market content to attract/engage those vested in sports market
Twitter: @SunnySideOfLou	Creatively promote region as viable sports market to audience. "Right now" inform, engage, prospect	Sports event planners, stakeholders, rights holders, region sports/park organizations, sponsors	Follow sports market professionals, sponsors, stakeholders, rights holders, facilities, create/use sports market hashtags
YouTube: Clark Floyd	Visually entertaining, informative attraction source, feeds multi-platform content- paid & free ads	Sports event planners, stakeholders, rights holders, region sports/park organizations, sponsors	Create professional videos for sports market sales presentations & meetings
Pinterest: ClarkFloydCTB	Promote region to sports event planners, sponsors, stakeholders using photos	Individuals, groups, clubs, etc. specific in sports/parks/facilities themes	Create sports market board, follow sports industry planners, stakeholders, etc.
e-newsletters: N/A	Inform sports market audience of news, events, & send invitations to sports events, facility tours, meetings, etc	Sports event planners, stakeholders, rights holders, region sports/park organizations, sponsors	Enhance/increase communication & invitations to sports event planners, stakeholders, etc.

D. SMALL BUSINESS MEETINGS AND SMERF MARKET

NATIONAL OUTLOOK

Meeting and conference trends haven't changed significantly in the past year. There is an upswing in business however incremental. The economy, along with the public perception, plays a large role in the sight selection and size of meetings and conferences.

President Obama's 2009 negative comments regarding meetings and conventions not being held in lavish cities like Las Vegas actually helped many second-tier cities like Louisville, Kentucky. Just one mile across the Ohio River, Louisville was able to secure two large meetings that were previously considering Las Vegas and Miami. Despite the negative connotation as not appearing lavish or "sexy," Louisville gained not only room night revenue, but it also gained additional visitor spending and branding opportunities with future visitors.

Southern Indiana benefits when larger conventions come to Louisville. As area hotels near their maximum occupancy, Indiana hotels get "spillover" business. This translates to southern Indiana room nights and increased spending. The Kentuckiana region is also perceived to be a good investment on a company's bottom line. We are a practical and affordable alternative.

The small meeting market consists of two distinct segments:

- Small Business Meetings, which are generally business meetings or educational conferences
- SMERF market, which stands for Social, Military, Educational, Religious and Fraternal groups.

As a whole, this market has shown some interesting changes over the last few years. The SMERF meetings market has become increasingly popular as hotels are finding them to be quick turnaround business. Often, they do not require as much service time as conventions or larger business meetings.

While the economy has improved, event planners are still wary of planning long or extravagant events. Events still tend to have more content in fewer days along with dynamic off-site events. The American Express Global Meetings and Events forecast sees an increase in total meetings and attendance. But it predicts that total meeting costs will hold steady. Midwestern cities are becoming more attractive because they can offer space and amenities similar to those in larger cities at a lesser price.

Technology has and will continue to prove invaluable to smaller meetings. Venues will see positive results if they offer higher bandwidth and secure internet connections. Meeting planners will look for venues and meetings hotels that have dedicated AV techs and equipment.

While the economy is in an upswing, planners are still looking for bargains. Hotels without attrition clauses (or with more lenient policies) will see more demand from planners. Food and beverage policies will have to be less strict as well. Planners are savvy.

OUR POSITION IN 2014

The CFCCTB has had mixed success with the meetings market. As our region has neither a convention center nor a convention-style hotel, we are at a disadvantage. The SMERF market has more potential for Southern Indiana.

The Bureau has not attended trade shows or marketplaces to solicit new business consistently. We have addressed needs and provided services based on calls to our office. Our staff is limited, therefore, it is difficult to provide extensive onsite concierge service or registration staff. While providing these labor-intensive services can provide goodwill, staff time may be better spent on business that has greater potential for overnight stays.

The SMERF meetings market has become increasingly popular as hotels are finding them to be quick turnaround business.



WHERE WE ARE GOING?

As we focus on increasing room nights and visitor spending, the Bureau will work locally to build Southern Indiana meeting business. The counties' diverse industry has great potential for meetings. We will work with groups like associations, corporations, hobbyists, and more to flush out potential leads. CFCCTB staff members will meet with community leaders to help guide us in this; we will also partner with One Southern Indiana to stay abreast of local businesses that have the potential for meetings business. We will communicate with local hoteliers so we do not compete with their efforts in securing local corporate business.

2015 INITIATIVES

We will work closer with local businesses to cultivate local meeting leads that could produce local, regional, and statewide business to our counties. Because we don't have a current database, we will work with tourism partners to develop more opportunities for meetings in our area.

SALES CALLS

Purpose: To build quality relationships with potential meetings clients.

Our main goal is to identify business professionals in our community that have regional and statewide association connections that could produce viable leads. We will partner with local hoteliers on sales calls to local businesses to help build a targeted database for potential meeting business. We will also partner with One Southern Indiana where we can add value to their meetings efforts.

FACILITY AND SERVICES INVENTORY

Purpose: To help planners quickly find the best facility for their needs.

The Bureau will develop a comprehensive meeting and facility inventory we can share with local hoteliers who either don't have meeting rooms or have limited space.

We will also research nontraditional meeting spaces. An inventory can help organizers see the facilities and services available and help them determine if our area will serve their needs.

SITE VISITS/FAM TOURS

Purpose: To showcase our destination and allow tour planners to see what their clients would experience.

CFCCTB staff members will work with local companies and/or community members to showcase our area as a viable location for meetings. We will offer site visits and FAM tours so qualified potential clients can visit our communities. This is one of the best ways to secure future business.

CONVENTION SERVICES

Purpose: To determine the best use of our time so we provide the best service possible and give ourselves advantages over other destinations.

As our meeting business grows, we will outline services the Bureau can offer to help secure small meeting business and develop diverse services such as building an ambassador program in which volunteers could help staff registration booths and act as concierge staff.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The following chart shows how our digital marketing tools will be used to reach event planners, stakeholders and rights holders within the Small Business and SMERF meetings market:

DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING - MEETINGS

Platform & Name	Purpose	Audience	Goal
Website: sunnysideoflouisville.org	Promote region, relevant info source, access portal, digital home	Meeting event planners, associations, organizations, sponsors, site/facility managers	Create specific meeting/facilities content to inform audience of region being suitable for meetings
Facebook: facebook/ SunnySideOfLouisville	Engage, inform, interact, convert audience using paid & earned content	Meeting event planners, associations, organizations, sponsors, site/facility managers	Create specific meeting content to attract/engage those vested in meetings
Twitter: @SunnySideOfLou	Creatively promote region as meeting-friendly to audience. "Right now" info, engagement & prospecting	Meeting event planners, associations, organizations, sponsors, site/facility managers	Follow meeting market professionals, associations, facility managers, create/use meeting market hashtags
YouTube: Clark Floyd	Visually entertaining, informative attraction source, feeds multi-platform content- paid & free ads	Meeting event planners, associations, organizations, sponsors, site/facility managers	Create professional videos to promote region/facilities for meetings, use in sales presentations
Pinterest: ClarkFloydCTB	Promote region to meeting event planners, associations, facility managers	Individuals, groups, associations that meet (various themes, industries)	Create meeting specific board, follow associations, planners, facility managers, etc.
e-newsletters: N/A	Inform audience of meeting space opportunities, events, facility/association news, invite stakeholders to preview facilities, events	Meeting event planners, associations, organizations, sponsors, site/facility managers	Enhance/increase communication & invitations to meeting planners, facility managers, etc.

We will work with tourism partners to develop more opportunities for meetings in our area.

MEASUREMENTS/GOALS

- Identify 10 potential future events from local sources
- Host 7 site visits for potential new and repeat business
- Develop mission for an ambassador program and begin to develop program including community volunteers



V. 2015 RESEARCH

As the Bureau goes forward, more research may be conducted to test our marketing, sales and communications efforts.

- What marketing messages are resonating with visitors?
- What marketing messages are falling flat?
- Why did visitors choose a competitor instead of Clark and Floyd Counties?

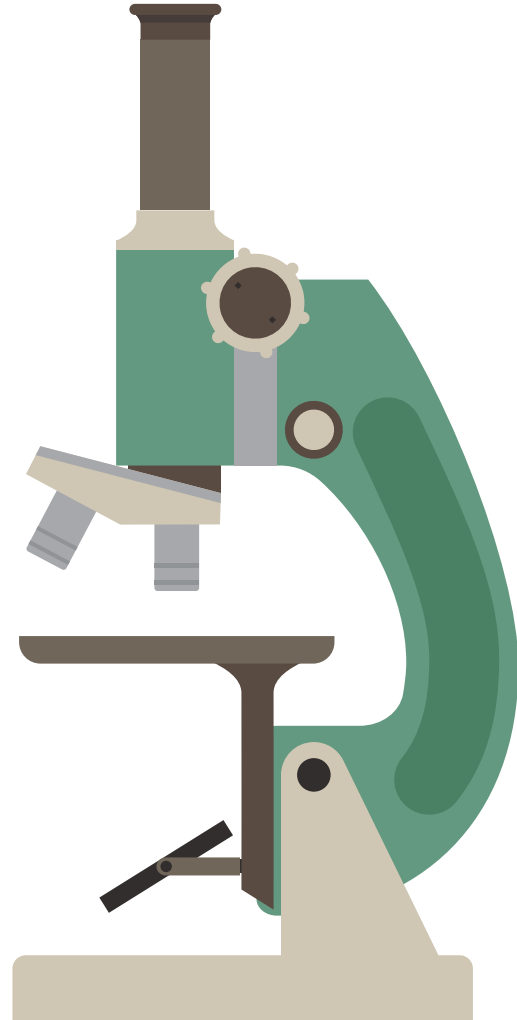
To answer these questions, we may need additional research. SMARI, the Indianapolis-based consulting firm who is conducting our Destination Image and Visitor Profile Study, works with many other Indiana Destination Marketing Organizations.

Because they are working with these DMOs, it may be possible to conduct research in which other DMOs participate and share the costs. We may be able to partner with other Indiana DMOs to conduct focus groups and conversion studies that are more costly.

As we move forward in 2015, we will look for opportunities to test the effectiveness of our website, collateral materials, public relations and sales efforts. We might consider polling customers to measure our marketing efforts' effectiveness.

These studies may include:

- Website users survey
- Visitor guide user focus groups
- Others as opportunities arise





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