

The Huddle

Sports strategies planned to increase visitors in 2018

Hamilton County's reputation for premier sports facilities and events continues to gain momentum across the Midwest and nationally. Hamilton County Sports Authority will continue to market the benefits of the county in 2018, and will invest nearly \$100,000 to help local clubs and facilities attract more visitors.

That's a quick synopsis of the 2018 Hamilton County Sports Authority business plan. It combines a local strategy built on partnerships and collaborations with a national strategy to introduce Hamilton County to even more players in the sports tourism arena.

Locally, the Sports Authority will continue to offer services to help local clubs grow or develop new events. Clubs and facilities can apply for grants to help fill financial gaps or seek additional funding for event development. It all brings more visitors to Hamilton County and helps local clubs succeed.

Hamilton County Sports Authority also will market the county as a sports destination to national governing bodies and event owners through trade shows, a strategy that has paid off big over the years.

In 2018, it also will reach out to corporations to bring in new sponsorships and dollars. The Sports Authority's new strategy will work to tap into corporate dollars. It will begin with a sponsorship research initiative. Seven local organizations or facilities have agreed to be part of this pilot project. Once research is complete, the Sports Authority will develop a portfolio to introduce Hamilton County to national corporations looking for new sponsorship opportunities.

"This will help us maximize our support locally and introduce ourselves to new market segments in the sports tourism arena," said Karen Radcliff, Hamilton County Tourism's vice president and chief strategy officer. "We're going to work to open doors in corporate America."

Hamilton County Sports Authority

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VisitHamiltonCounty.com/Sports



Stay and Play promotion gets tech makeover

Hamilton County Tourism launched its Stay and Play golf packages at least two decades ago, and while the game hasn't changed much in 20 years, the way golfers book their getaways have. Golfers want more ways to customize those trips. Hamilton County Tourism found a way to give them what they want, but still offer great golf packages. Instead of booking the trip through a hotel representative, who then helps arrange tee times, golfers will schedule tee times and hotel rooms at IndianasPremierGolf.com. Tee times are powered by GolfNow.

Hamilton County Tourism challenged the popular online tee-time booking service GolfNow to develop an online tool that would allow people to book tee times. Beginning in January, golfers can build their own getaways. It gives golfers an easier way to book and customize their own trips. They'll also be able to search for local hotels and other attractions while on the site.

The new booking system and golf packages will be promoted through the GolfNow network, including Golf Advisor and the Golf Channel with digital marketing, banner ads, email blasts and by attending consumer golf shows around the Midwest.

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