

The Outer Banks®

OF NORTH CAROLINA
outerbanks.org

A Travel Industry Publication From The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

Spring 2013

Outer Banks Marketing Strategy 2013-2014

Dear Travel Partners,

We look forward to the new fiscal year and the opportunity to once again welcome returning guests and make a few new friends.

In terms of marketing, the Bureau's focus is on engagement - encouraging interaction and deeper connections with our marketing messages. We plan to expand the use of rich media in our online buys. Rich media allows the viewer to interact with our ads in a variety of ways, like

checking out the Outer Banks Twitter feed, reading about top OBX activities, viewing a destination video and ordering a travel guide or signing-up to become an email subscriber. All in one ad.

We expect better engagement through our traditional media efforts, too. We've shifted significant dollars to television to take advantage of the branding power of the medium. Television budgets have been increased by more than 50% with spring and

fall TV efforts planned that selectively target markets in VA, NC, PA, DC and NY. The 2012-13 fiscal year saw a few steps in this direction, with a Comcast buy in Feb-Mar, 2013, underwriting of several episodes of "Diners, Drive-ins and Dives" on Food Network and a per-inquiry buy on a New York City cable system. Engaging our visitors sometimes means engaging the gatekeeper to those visitors. For instance, Bureau Tourism Sales and Event

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Outer Banks Tourism Summit Recap

The staff of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau would like to thank everyone who attended the inaugural Outer Banks Tourism Summit held May 7-8, 2013 in Avon, NC for contributing to make the event a landmark gathering of Dare County tourism professionals and media. It was a fitting collaboration to showcase the newly renovated Beach Klub at Koru Village, our state's first oceanfront theater, and anyone



The inaugural Outer Banks Tourism Summit brought together people from across Dare County's 100 miles to Hatteras Island for networking, learning more about how to work with the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau and keeping ahead of emerging trends and changing habits among travelers.

Tourism Summit continues on Page 8

VISION STATEMENT

The Board envisions a premier travel destination and year-round tourism economy that enhances the quality of life for visitors and residents while celebrating and sustaining the Outer Banks' vibrant natural, historic, and cultural offerings.

ABOUT THE BUREAU

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is the lead marketing and promotional agency for the destination and is funded by 1% of the occupancy tax and 1% of the prepared meals tax collected in Dare County.

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Letter from the Board Chair



*Anna Sadler, Chairwoman
Dare County Tourism Board*

As your new Tourism Board Chair, it is indeed a pleasure to write this first newsletter of the 2013 tourist season, one which has gotten off to an exciting early start with so many events held already. Taste of the Beach continues to surpass previous attendance and visitor experience benchmarks, and coupled with other concurrent events such as the St. Patrick's Day Parade, offers rewarding reasons to visit the Outer Banks in early spring. Add to the offseason roster various Easter celebrations,

Outer Banks Bike Week, Spring Restaurant Week, Duck and Wine Festival and the brand new Hatteras Storytelling Festival held May 3-5, among a growing list of other new and established events and activities, one can easily find it a challenge to get around for all there is to see and do. A great way for us on the Tourism Board to begin 2013 is to promote and support great events which bring visitors and residents together on the OBX.

We hope and anticipate that 2013 will yield strong results for many of the issues and goals discussed last year. Our renewed efforts to put Hatteras Island "back on the map" show early signs of success, as I understand that vacation bookings for summer have been favorable for many accommodations providers. With events that show off our destination's diverse appeals such as the Triple-S Invitational kiteboarding event returning to Waves, NC in June and the celebration of commercial fishermen known as Day at the Docks reeling in folks to Hatteras, NC this September, we feel visitors both new and loyal will delight in their experience.

Please visit our website OuterBanks.org to discover both new and established events that are upcoming. Some of these will surely strike your "interest button." Family Movie Night is new this May and will be held at the Outer Banks Event Site in Nags Head, and the town of Duck will again hold its popular summer music series at the amphitheater, with the Fourth of July Parade to follow in the coming weeks. The perennially anticipated outdoor drama, The Lost Colony, now in its 76th season is always memorable, whether it's your first or tenth time to Waterside Theater outside Manteo.

Our staff continues to get media exposure and acknowledgements via national public relations outreach, and our motorcoach and student field trip business remains a vibrant and growing segment of our economic mix thanks to the efforts of our tourism sales office. They

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work hard and take pride when they see their efforts have produced the desired results. Please visit soon what will be our newly renovated Roanoke Island Welcome Center when completed over the next few weeks, and let us know if you have suggestions or concerns regarding our advertising of these beautiful Outer Banks of North Carolina. Through the efforts of the Bureau, our desire is to increase visitation numbers and make the traveler experience pleasant as possible. It is also our reward to see the joy that our many local grant-funded projects bring to our residents.

Best,
Anna Sadler, Chair
Dare County Tourism Board



Our State
NORTH CAROLINA
presents
**Hatteras
Storytelling
Festival**
Yarn Tellin', Foot Tappin' —
Hatteras Style

CONNIE REGAN-BLAKE
CLYDE EDGERTON
BLAND SIMPSON
TOM CARLSON
BEN CHERRY

JOIN OUR STATE FOR THE FIRST-EVER
HATTERAS STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
MAY 3-5, 2013 · HATTERAS VILLAGE · OUTER BANKS
Featuring Storytelling with:
CONNIE REGAN-BLAKE — one of America's most celebrated storytellers
CLYDE EDGERTON — novelist, musician, and storyteller par excellence
BLAND SIMPSON — author, storyteller, professor, and member of The Red Clay Ramblers
TOM CARLSON — author of *Hatteras Blues*, UNC Press
BEN CHERRY — storyteller, A.K.A. Blackbeard the Pirate

Also featuring:
• Lots of local tellers • Live music with Banjo Island and Clifford Swain
• Local food options and flavor throughout the weekend

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON

For more information please visit www.HatterasYarns.com.
For information on where to stay, please visit outerbanks.org.

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This project is funded in part by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau.



The Lost Colony, 2013 TONY Honor for Excellence in The Theatre winner, celebrates its 76th season. The drama is performed May 31st to August 23rd at 8 p.m.



The Town of Duck's Annual 4th of July parade is one of many Independence Day events for visitors to enjoy.

Visitors as far as Michigan travelled to Hatteras Village for the inaugural Hatteras Storytelling Festival, May 3-5, 2013.

Social Media and Online Communities

Social Media Engagment			
Channel	April 2013	April 2012	Percent Increase
Facebook	374,154 likes	252,147 likes	48%
Twitter	13,395 followers	8,074 followers	66%
Pinterest	5,374 followers	676 followers (launched June 2012)	694%
Instagram	547 followers	108 followers (launched Dec. 2012)	406%
YouTube	63,981 views	39,761 views (June 2012)	60%
Foursquare	1,577 likes	30 likes (June 2012)	5,156%
Flickr	8,578 total views	6116 total views (Jan. 2013)	14%
Outer Banks Email	222,474	72,321	208%

2013 School Schedules

District	Spring Break	End of Year
Alexandria, VA	June 20	June 20
Arlington, VA	June 20	June 20
Baltimore, MD	June 18	June 18
Chesapeake, VA	June 13	June 13
Chevy Chase, MD	June 14	June 14
Columbus, MD	May 30	May 30
Durham, NC	June 7	June 7
Fairfax, VA	June 20	June 20
Hampton, VA	June 13	June 13
Newark, NJ	June 25	June 25
Norfolk, VA	June 12	June 12
Philadelphia, PA	June 21	June 21
Pittsburgh, PA	June 13	June 13
Portsmouth, VA	June 13	June 13
Raleigh, NC	June 10	June 10
Richmond, VA	June 14	June 14
Trenton, NJ	June 24	June 24
VA Beach, VA	June 20	June 20
Washington, DC	June 20	June 20

eGuide Readers (formerly Downloads)

Month	12/13	11/12	10/11
July	6,979	6,617	9,743
August	5,951	5,151	8,727
September	2,785	2,225	6,023
October	1,389	1,600	2,859
November	930	1,201	1,792
December	1,359	1,320	1,475
January	3,612	3,976	4,405
February	3,844	5,652	4,315
March	5,685	6,215	5,163
April	4,723	6,778	4,334
May		7,758	4,983
June		8,108	6,224
<i>YTD Totals</i>	<i>37,257</i>	<i>40,735</i>	<i>48,836</i>
TOTALS	37,257	56,601	60,043

Manager, Lorrie Love, attends travel shows and meets with motorcoach tour operators responsible for planning the tour stops for busloads of travelers. National stats say that each fully loaded motorcoach represents about \$10,000 a day in visitor spending. Individual tour operators are often responsible for dozens of motorcoach trips. You get the idea: one-on-one relationships can quickly lead to big business.

Likewise, our Public Relations Manager, Aaron Tuell, has been successful in cultivating relationships with travel writers. This segment has really been affected by the changing media landscape. For example, now Aaron has to evaluate bloggers, social media site writers and travel website authors alongside other more traditional media. The Bureau's public relations activity for the upcoming year will include fulfilling in-coming writer requests, continuing to participate in a golf travel writer co-op program, and conducting our own writer familiarization trips where the Bureau can cherry-pick national and regional writers to immerse in the Outer Banks.

As the media landscape changes, so too does vacation marketing. It used to be that all you had to worry about was getting a travel guide into a prospect's hands. Travel guides are still important and play a significant role, but now, we're equally interested in growing email subscribers and social media followers. These audiences have taken action to stay in touch with us. Often, they are our brand advocates, spreading the word about the Outer Banks. Travel brands are being shaped

increasingly online. Remember the expression, "Good enough to write home about"? Well, these days it's "Good -- or bad -- enough to write to the world about." What we say online, and the way we interact with guests online is every bit as important as face-to-face, especially since what's said online is out there forever. Think of it as online hospitality.



*Lee Nettles, Executive Director
Outer Banks Visitors Bureau*

With all of the things that are beyond our control – the weather, the economy, gas prices and to a large extent, roads and bridges – and with the fast pace of technology, it's reassuring that a smile and a kind word can still make the difference in what somebody thinks about the Outer Banks.

Your Visitors Bureau is excited about the upcoming season and proud to represent you. Please let me know if we can do anything to assist your efforts.

Best regards,
Lee Nettles
Executive Director



Travel Writers explore Hatteras Island during one of several spring familiarization tours.

outerbanks.org Internet Activity

outerbanks.org Internet Activity												
Inquiry Fulfillment			Unique Visitors (Absolute)			Visits (User Sessions)			Page Views			
MONTH	12/13	11/12	10/11	12/13	11/12	10/11	12/13	11/12	10/11	12/13	11/12	10/11
July	16,602	18,794	21,475	284,587	275,413	250,371	372,907	355,681	323,420	1,459,121	1,748,978	1,465,587
August	22,331	15,170	25,382	226,865	270,772	228,534	295,402	361,053	288,677	1,102,670	1,659,596	1,178,976
September	17,898	19,822	25,146	152,310	129,637	152,931	193,547	172,573	191,757	636,980	664,951	727,479
October	13,198	31,990	21,646	109,098	100,058	87,248	137,103	128,230	109,508	421,186	489,522	424,356
November	14,235	30,746	13,899	85,450	81,530	62,758	103,992	102,040	77,153	312,871	351,630	289,949
December	16,915	13,329	4,998	103,534	78,458	51,277	123,639	98,287	62,356	340,257	368,850	278,242
January	27,169	17,225	13,618	169,425	133,256	119,169	216,013	170,694	151,215	776,099	651,221	808,877
February	20,260	28,919	20,777	169,481	137,965	133,662	214,111	172,558	167,300	758,601	638,470	887,478
March	47,596	39,558	34,204	233,202	165,699	170,231	294,614	212,236	215,381	1,053,524	760,107	1,150,821
April	42,775	44,573	35,355	224,184	176,197	165,435	284,161	228,928	208,685	1,027,311	819,646	1,072,587
May		54,320	37,221		241,332	218,524		311,940	276,280		1,201,926	1,400,588
June		38,072	35,026		275,536	274,430		359,260	351,547		1,404,280	1,741,284
Year to Date	238,979	264,957	181,145	1,758,136	1,548,985	1,421,616	2,235,489	2,002,280	1,795,452	7,888,620	8,152,971	8,284,352
Total	238,979	352,013	288,747	1,758,136	2,065,853	1,914,570	2,235,489	2,673,480	2,423,279	7,888,620	10,759,177	11,426,224

Gross Occupancy by Class									
Vacation Rental Homes				Hotel/Motel			Cottage Courts		
MONTH	2013	2012	2011	2013	2012	2011	2013	2012	2011
January	3,980,546	3,024,434	3,474,206	921,382	1,131,377	1,006,701	66,436	76,078	68,657
February	1,830,830	1,910,908	1,588,185	982,956	1,131,307	1,130,152	71,376	73,574	63,916
March	3,696,150	2,826,596	1,968,641	2,109,403	2,247,260	1,703,998	161,047	171,375	122,208
April		8,703,332	7,683,428		4,334,738	3,989,460		288,356	293,817
May		16,630,269	15,533,680		5,823,106	6,182,404		515,312	485,843
June		59,324,183	49,741,594		9,185,928	8,293,465		1,066,304	932,815
July		95,883,352	94,563,458		11,845,553	11,967,859		1,527,797	1,580,909
August		75,396,648	78,909,645		9,884,242	8,944,456		1,288,837	1,107,528
September		31,422,894	29,888,400		6,878,120	5,483,326		616,445	438,948
October		11,657,939	12,605,453		3,687,069	3,720,593		331,938	368,809
November		4,536,251	4,655,384		1,282,951	1,789,977		152,646	189,901
December		1,932,497	1,737,073		988,027	1,029,752		77,430	66,011
Year to Date	9,507,526	7,761,938	7,031,032	4,013,741	4,509,944	3,840,851	298,859	321,027	254,781
Totals	9,507,526	313,249,303	302,349,147	4,013,741	58,419,678	55,242,143	298,859	6,186,092	5,719,362

An Event-filled Concept Continues to Develop



The Outer Banks Event Site, jointly owned and managed by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau and the Town of Nags Head, continues to groom for a robust and growing itinerary of events this season. If you are interested in hosting your event here, or would like to learn more, please contact Lorrie Love, Tourism Sales and Events Manager at 252.473.2138 or email love@outerbanks.org

Outer Banks Visitors Bureau Gross Meals Summary

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
January	5,737,827	5,908,401	5,149,079	4,946,077	5,553,193	5,315,203
February	5,873,076	6,001,197	5,600,305	5,306,714	5,878,828	5,901,277
March	10,153,689	9,324,697	8,342,477	7,944,634	7,371,099	9,906,602
April		15,272,146	13,937,220	12,643,388	12,570,914	10,696,837
May		20,033,102	17,884,885	17,420,030	17,237,550	17,902,993
June		30,676,562	28,170,717	25,929,735	25,850,095	26,110,903
July		36,914,627	36,454,367	35,295,259	32,687,202	33,163,197
August		33,521,889	27,024,599	31,515,361	31,285,408	32,095,228
September		22,057,864	19,239,630	18,678,839	19,444,780	17,335,174
October		13,282,164	13,084,800	13,295,890	12,630,255	12,192,193
November		8,637,935	8,587,922	8,822,724	8,298,475	8,044,142
December		7,025,072	7,391,106	5,983,306	6,123,554	6,457,727
Year to Date	21,764,592	21,234,295	19,091,861	18,197,425	18,803,120	21,123,082
Total	21,764,592	208,655,656	190,867,107	187,781,957	184,931,353	185,121,476

Gross Occupancy by Class

	Bed and Breakfasts			Campgrounds			Time Shares			Totals		
	2013	2012	2011	2013	2012	2011	2013	2012	2011	2013	2012	2011
Jan	25,775	25,893	21,014	31,394	22,069	55,780	11,879	9,383	2,407	5,037,412	4,289,234	4,628,765
Feb	33,008	55,881	30,638	29,264	29,432	60,029	20,675	12,721	5,197	2,968,109	3,213,823	2,878,117
Mar	194,229	76,104	156,535	125,483	106,917	125,528	52,255	22,429	13,246	6,338,567	5,450,681	4,090,156
Apr		203,144	209,481		212,212	282,296		51,725	30,639		13,793,507	12,489,121
May		263,884	286,926		475,510	486,979		40,888	35,183		23,748,969	23,011,015
June		324,477	320,837		903,870	871,358		109,216	81,561		70,913,978	60,241,630
July		400,639	413,944		1,251,002	1,493,221		182,723	188,338		111,091,066	110,207,729
Aug		390,578	244,708		864,730	693,221		128,858	143,828		87,953,893	90,043,386
Sept		194,298	174,824		395,134	<13,383>		61,302	51,113		39,568,193	36,023,228
Oct		148,653	171,544		211,070	41,776		25,885	26,733		16,062,554	16,934,908
Nov		36,066	79,856		8,086	61,416		22,976	18,720		6,038,976	6,795,253
Dec		39,742	91,818		10,561	9,927		9,465	12,079		3,057,722	2,946,610
YTD	253,012	157,878	208,187	186,141	158,418	241,337	84,809	44,533	20,850	14,344,088	12,953,738	11,597,038
Totals	253,012	2,159,359	2,202,125	186,141	4,490,593	4,168,147	84,809	677,571	608,994	14,344,088	385,182,596	370,289,918

would tell you that the weather was about as perfect as you could ask. In addition, we'd like to thank Comcast and our partners Ketch 55 restaurant and The Catering Company of Hatteras Island for recognizing the conference's value and offering their support.

The idea of a summit was to bring the tourism community together. It was hoped the conference would celebrate Dare County tourism, and leave attendees with a better understanding of each other and current trends that are driving tourism on the OBX and Hatteras Island.

Highlights included a welcome reception and dinner at Ketch 55 in Avon the night of Tuesday, May 7, followed by a full day of networking, keynote speakers, presentations, and breakout sessions on the following Wednesday. In addition staff-hosted breakout sessions focused on maximizing daily working relationship with the Bureau, including website, public relations and media, event marketing and motorcoach business, Nettles pulled together a talent-rich roster of high profile presenters.

National radio host, inspirational speaker and author John St. Augustine opened the summit programming with a nice allusion to "The Wizard of Oz" and how its underlying themes have relevance in daily life and personal discovery and renewal. Robert Patterson, Vice President of

Social and Influencer Marketing for MMGY Global presented a revealing look at current online marketing trends and the power of social media when it comes to today's leisure traveler and researching vacations. Lee Nettles, Executive Director of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, gave the audience a look into OBVB marketing strategies and where the Bureau is headed in 2013 when it comes to advertising and opportunities for co-ops with local partners.

One of the most anticipated sessions was delivered by Brent Lane, Director of the UNC Center for Competitive Economics. His early findings in the Bureau-funded Hatteras Island Economic Impact Study were shared publicly for the first time during the Outer Banks Tourism Summit with some enlightening and reinforcing data. The project scope was an

industry analysis of, and to produce a model for, the economic contributions of Hatteras Island as part of the Outer Banks. The full report will be made public in the coming weeks and we look forward to sharing this information with all of you.

Nettles announced the dates for next year's summit, May 7-8, 2014 so mark your calendars. The 2nd Annual Outer Banks Tourism Summit will incorporate the feedback from attendees and promises to be even better. The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau will be sending out emails on how you can download some of the presentations unrolled at the summit in the coming days, so stay tuned. If you have any questions, you may contact Lorrie Love or Dana Grimstead at 252.473.2138



Presented by The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau

Download Presentations, www.outerbanks.org/outerbanks-obx-tourism-summit/