

TRAVEL

**TACOMA +**

PIERCE COUNTY, WA



**2018**  
**STRATEGIC**  
SALES + MARKETING  
**PLAN**



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## STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT OUR TOP PRIORITIES

### EXECUTIVE + ADMINISTRATIVE

- President + CEO
- Partner Relations Manager
- Finance + Benefits
- Partnerships

PRIORITIES: Financial and organizational stability; Board relations; community relations; partnership development; collaboration; alternative revenue generation

### MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS + VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Vice President
- Senior Communications Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Visitor Experience Manager
- Senior Tour and Travel Marketing Manager
- Contract: Public Relations/Media Relations Services
- Contract: Website development

PRIORITIES: Destination Marketing and Branding - increase awareness of Tacoma + Pierce County and help visitors connect emotionally to our brand; packaging; leisure visitor information; collaboration

### SALES + SERVICING

- Vice President
- Senior Convention Sales Manager
- Convention Center Sales Manager
- Convention Center Sales Manager - Short Term
- Regional Sales Manager
- Regional Sales Manager - Part Time
- Sales Coordinator
- Conference Servicing

PRIORITIES: Generate economic impact through sales activities that provide a consistent return on investment for funders by delivering revenue and room nights; stakeholder relationships; collaboration



## WE ARE NORTHWEST UNFILTERED

We create **honest experiences**. We construct cities with color—murals, sculptures and glass art.

We get **down to earth** with mountains, lakes, land and sea.

We embrace the unknown and **leap headfirst, fearlessly**.

We **test new flavors**, relish rhubarb, harness hops and make a splash with spirits.

We **cultivate community**. Our shared pride brings us together and sets us apart.

We **celebrate culture** over local brews, down the fairway and from the stage.

We live life with our **arms open**, welcoming others to be inspired by the natural beauty that invigorates us.

We mold **playgrounds for all**—from mountaineers to makers and those who pine for yesteryear.

We revere our industrial identity as we **nod to the future**.

We are **true** to our roots.

We are **explorers**. We are **storytellers**. We are **artists**.

We are the **Northwest unfiltered**.

## OUR DESTINATION

### BRAND STANDOUTS

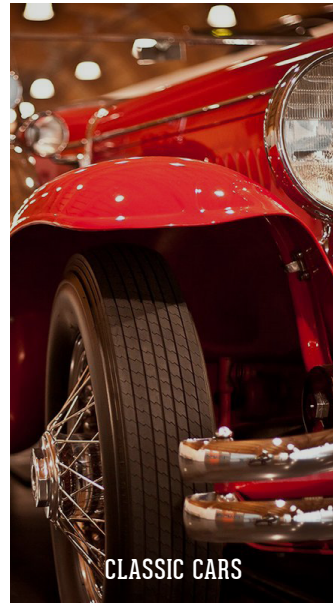
Fly Markets: Glass Art, Mount Rainier, Classic Cars and Championship Golf.



GLASS ART



MOUNT RAINIER



CLASSIC CARS



CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF

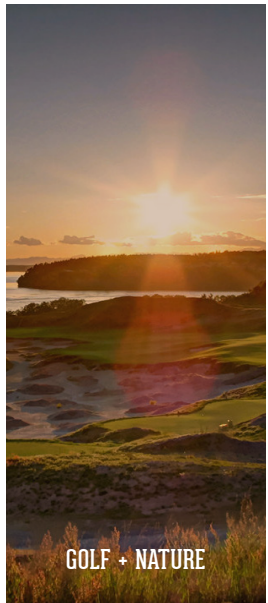
Drive Market: Vintage Americana, Stunning Waterfront, Golf and Nature, Adventures, Cultural Hub.



STUNNING WATERFRONT



CULTURAL HUB



GOLF + NATURE



PURE AMERICANA



UNFILTERED ADVENTURE

### OUR VALUES AND CORE FUNCTIONS

#### CORE VALUES:

##### Visitor First

We will always consider the primary reason we exist – to be a resource and voice for the visitor.

##### Accountability

We hold ourselves accountable to each other and our community.

##### Collaboration

We actively collaborate with our strongest resources – each other, our community and our businesses.

##### Innovation

We don't accept the status quo but look to what will come, or what can come next.

#### CORE FUNCTIONS:

##### Destination Awareness

Promote the region and generate interest and awareness for Tacoma + Pierce County as a destination through branded messages to targeted audiences.

##### Familiarization Tours

The best way to have top-influencer's connected and enthusiastic about our destination is to have them experience it first-hand. That's why we bring media, meeting planners and tour operators to Tacoma + Pierce County to touch, see, and taste all this destination has to offer.

##### Marketing Trade Shows

Direct marketing helps turn casual interest in the destination into a booked trip. This is done through Search Engine Marketing, and Social Media Marketing. The Travel Tacoma + Pierce County website provides comprehensive information for customers and is the core driver in our direct marketing efforts.

##### Visitor Information

Influence visitor spending, regional visitor distribution and lengthen stays by providing visitors with reservation services, recommendations, visitor guides, brochures, and maps of the region.

##### Convention Center Sales

Pro-actively sell the Greater Tacoma Convention Center as a location for meetings, conventions and tradeshows to generate revenue, room nights and increased economic impact throughout the community. Goals will be achieved through advertising and marketing, pro-actively prospecting, tradeshow participation, industry memberships, networking, site visits, hosting client events, community relationships, sponsorships and partnering with other CVBs.

##### Regional Sales

Pro-actively sell Pierce County as a destination for meetings and events, and generate leads for members and book business in the region. Through proactive sales calls, tradeshow participation, sponsorships, industry networking, client site visits and FAM tours, the sales team connects key decision makers with partnering businesses.

## MARKETING + SALES STRATEGY

### WE WORK WITH VISITORS AND DECISION-MAKERS THROUGHOUT THEIR PROCESS

Our Marketing and Sales Strategy employs tactics to meet the target audience at every stage in their planning and decision making process; from inspirational moments, to on-the ground visitor experience moments.

DESTINATION AWARENESS  
[ASSUME NO KNOWLEDGE, OR OUTDATED]

CONSIDERATION

DECISION/PLANNING

IN-MARKET EXPERIENCE

### FIRST IMPRESSION

- » Online and print marketing
- » Social media marketing
- » Industry memberships/sponsorships
- » Public relations/media relations
- » Fall campaign
- » Tradeshows
- » Prospecting
- » Sponsorships

### WEIGHING OPTIONS

- » TripAdvisor
- » Search engine marketing
- » Social media marketing
- » Email marketing
- » Familiarization tours
- » Sales calls

### CHOOSING A DESTINATION

- » Website
- » Site tools (businesses)
- » Visitor and dining guides

### ARRIVAL AND EXPERIENCE

- » Visitor Information Center
- » Ask253 street team
- » Visitor and dining guides
- » Conference services
- » TIMBR at local events

## DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT GOALS

### SALES - CORE FUNCTIONS

The Sales team is responsible for securing meetings and events [local, regional, state and national conventions, conferences, tradeshows, and other event business] for Tacoma + Pierce County. The Sales team reaches out to a wide variety of markets to support our range of unique meeting facilities, Convention Center, hotels and attractions throughout cities in Pierce County [Tacoma, Mount Rainier area, Puyallup, Fife, Lakewood, Gig Harbor, DuPont and Sumner]. The sales team is dedicated to improving destination awareness, delivering room nights and increasing economic impact throughout Tacoma + Pierce County.



| SALES RESULTS'                                     | 2013        | 2014         | 2015         | 2016         | 2017 YTD     |
|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Booked Room Nights                                 | 19,610      | 24,914       | 22,710       | 24,312       | 33,041       |
| Events with No Room Nights (Non Convention Center) | 13          | 7            | 23           | 25           | 28           |
| Estimated Economic Impact                          | \$9,175,963 | \$12,200,725 | \$30,199,531 | \$26,100,276 | \$27,854,904 |

**2017 SALES GOALS**  
\$2.6 million convention sales, 19,000 guestrooms, 15 events with no room nights.

### MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE- CORE FUNCTIONS

The Marketing team is responsible for brand and direct marketing efforts; visitor information and management of the visitor information centers; corporate communications; and media relations.

Primary Audience  
*Independent Leisure Traveler+ Tour Operators*

| MARKETING RESULTS                       | 2013   | 2014   | 2015    | 2016    | 2017 YTD |
|---|--------|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| New website visitors                    | 47,404 | 42,127 | 112,708 | 200,175 | 131,045  |
| Published articles/*Influenced articles | 219    | 203    | 199**   | 207**   | 438      |
| Social media following                  | 5,302  | 6,599  | 9,735   | 17,377  | 20,859   |

**2017 MARKETING GOALS**  
85,000 new website visitors, 15 influenced articles, 22,000 new social media followers.

\* 2013 and beyond goals are reflective of convention center sales beginning on April 1, 2013. Results and goals are combined destination and convention center sales. Booked meetings & events have no room nights and are booked throughout Pierce County. 2015 revenue goals are increased due to short-term market being added to the destination and convention center City of Tacoma contract.

\*\* In 2015, we started counting only the articles we worked on. Prior to that, the number represents general tourism articles on Pierce County.

## TARGET AUDIENCES



### DREAM TRIPPER

- » 51-65 years old
- » HHI @ \$150K+
- » Couples traveling together; sometimes with friends
- » Lots of planning, includes tours and package options
- » 8+ trips per year, 2 big vacations & 6 getaways including visiting family
- » Not highly engaged in social media, loyal to associations
- » Desired Experience: Leisure and culture; story telling



### WEDDING PLANNER

- » Not professional planners, typically the bride
- » Personally invested
- » Seeking high value with unique experience
- » Easy transportation and parking
- » Utilizes a number of event service providers and is looking for convenience
- » Expects very personalized service
- » Word of mouth and social media is a resource



### GO FOR IT FAMILY

- » 36-50 years old
- » HHI @ \$200K+
- » Kids are older and can engage at the parents' level
- » Mom makes decisions
- » 7+ trips per year, 2 big vacations and 5 getaways
- » Lots of travel centered on activities
- » Unique experiences, higher end activities, creating memories matters most
- » Desired experience: Leisure, culture, and adventure; excitement



### ADVENTURE SEEKER

- » 25-35 years old
- » Moving up in their career
- » No family or very young family
- » HHI @ 100K+
- » 6+ trips per year, 2-3 trips around authentic experiences
- » Frequently travels with other individual travelers
- » Active on social media, spends time and money on interests
- » Desired experience: Culture and adventure; motivation



### PROFESSIONAL MEETING PLANNER

- » 35-50 year old woman
- » Highly engaged in the industry and aware of current trends and issues
- » Experienced traveler for professional and personal purposes
- » Searching for new and unique experiences
- » Influenced by tourism assets that support interest in pre/post stays
- » Seeking convenient, safe and affordable
- » Utilizes online resources
- » Association, corporate, government



### BUCKET LISTER

- » 66+ years old
- » HHI @ \$100K+
- » High percentage of income is fixed, tied to investments
- » 5+ trips per year with longer stay periods
- » Longer lead times, lots of research
- » 2+ trips per year tied to visiting family
- » Engaged in hobbies and interests
- » Desired Experience: Culture; breath-taking



### HOBBY MEETING PLANNER

- » 55-75 years old
- » Retired
- » Highly invested in the hobby and highly enthusiastic and passionate
- » Not a professional meeting planner
- » Most likely assigned to plan meeting because of board position or volunteering
- » Infrequent traveler that prefers to travel on an itinerary
- » Looking for a good overall value and affordability
- » Not highly engaged in social media, prefers face to face interactions
- » Seeking highly engaging locations to meet with ample of activities, restaurants and attractions



### REUNION PLANNER

- » 65-80 years old
- » Not professional planner
- » Retired military personnel
- » Seeking low cost with high value
- » Locations with activities for groups and couples to explore for up to a weeks stay
- » Membership to reunion platforms used to find suggested locations for meetings
- » Wants incentives to book
- » Requires a location close to military base
- » Prefers to self-contain the meetings space with guestrooms

## MEETINGS + CONVENTION

### PRIMARY GROUP MARKETS

- » Association
- » Corporate
- » Education
- » Religious
- » Government
- » Hobby
- » Military
- » Social
- » Society
- » Fraternal

### KEY SALES STRATEGIES

» Commit to the Destination International mandatory standards for destination sales services and organization reaccreditation.

» Leverage destination and convention center awareness through the leading global event venue directory [Cvent] and web planning portals [EmpowerMint]. The destination will brand itself through regional and state banner ads and the convention center will brand itself through Seattle/Tacoma preferred placement to drive opportunity from third party, independent and organization planners.

» Partnerships to increase destination awareness to leading trade associations, societies and volunteer organizations through four elements: connections, tradeshow, advertising & marketing and membership opportunities.

» Promote destination and convention center at industry event, tradeshows and conferences to generate leads, and build contacts to increase opportunities to book business.

» Increase customer “touches” with local and destination sales calls, client events, site inspections, familiarization tours, promotions, social media and interactive engagements to keep the destination and convention center at front of mind with planners.

» Engage in industry memberships to build rapport, develop strong relationships with planners, industry partners for referral opportunities and build destination and convention center awareness.

» Participate on outbound industry sponsorships to increase awareness of destination and convention center, sales team and dedication to meetings and events.

### MARKETING FOR MEETINGS + EVENTS

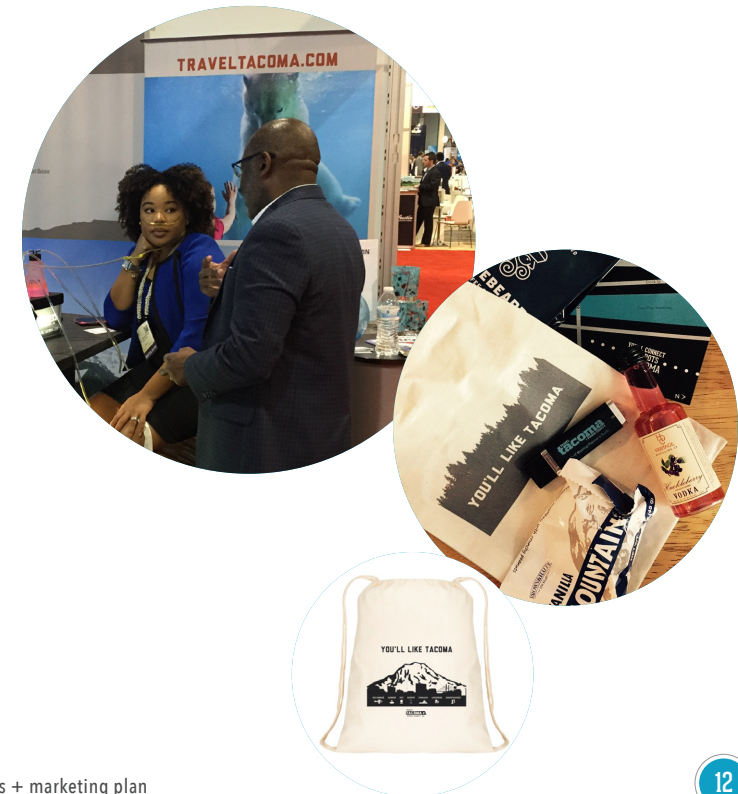
In addition to informing others of Tacoma and Pierce County and the convention center; the marketing budget is being used multi-dimensionally to gain interest in the destination, increase sales and profitability. Campaigns [online and print] will continue to be leveraged by investments in research, industry associations, familiarization tours, client events, sales calls, tradeshows, conferences, site visits, relationship development, etc. to support the scope of work and benchmarks. Here are a few highlights:

- Online Destination and Event Venue Directories
  - Cvent – Tacoma (1 Diamond Package) + Convention Center (2 Diamond Package)
  - EmpowerMint – Tacoma
- Meetings + Convention Advertising [Print/Digital/Video]
  - ASAE
  - Connect Corporate and Association (Print + Digital)
  - Cvent
- Travel Tacoma + Pierce County
- Visit Seattle Meeting Planner Guides
  - Convention Center Listing
- Other Key Market Advertising Opportunities (to be determined), etc.
  - B&E Event Resource Guide
  - Meetings Today (print + digital)
  - Meeting News NW (print + digital)
  - NW Meetings & Events (print + digital)
  - Smart Meetings (print + digital)
  - Market Tradeshows [wedding shows, military shows, etc.]
  - Facebook
  - Reunions Magazine Inc.
- Client site visits/familiarization tours/sales appointments, etc.
- Outbound client development [destination presentations/sales calls/DC +Chicago client event/etc.]

### CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS + INDUSTRY MEMBERSHIPS + SPONSORSHIP EVENTS

Commitment to the community, industry and members creates a business network designed to increase sales effectiveness. Industry memberships increase knowledge of industry issues, best practices, relationships, prospecting, referrals, etc.

- » American Society of Association Executives [ASAE] – corporate partnership
- » Air Force Association [AFA]
- » Meetings Professionals International [MPI]
- » Pierce County Chambers of Commerce
- » Reunion Friendly Network
- » Society of Government Meeting Planners [SGMP]
- » Washington and Capital Chapters of Professional Convention Management Association [PCMA]
- » Your Military Reunion Connection [YMRC]
- » Connect – corporate partnership
- » Industry sponsorships + destination promotional opportunities



## MEETINGS + CONVENTION

### TRADESHOWS/CONFERENCES/HOSTED BUYER PROGRAMS

Providing connection through education, tradeshows, conferences and more. Conventions and tradeshows provide the opportunity to meet one-on-one and explore opportunities for the PNW region.

**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES [XDP AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE ASAE]** represents more than 21,000 association executives and industry partners in nearly 50 countries around the world. These events are annual conferences with tradeshows components generating opportunities for destination exposure and business opportunities.

**CONNECT [ASSOCIATION MARKETPLACE AND CONNECT CHICAGO, PNW, CORPORATE, DIVERSITY, SPECIALTY]** This company hosts yearly marketplace conferences in their target markets that allow for one-on-one appointments and advertising in their magazines.

**WASHINGTON SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES [ANNUAL CONVENTION]** This local annual convention provides networking, education and one-on-one hosted buyer appointments.

**MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL [CASCADIA & SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER WE-CON]** Events offer innovative and relevant education, networking opportunities and business exchanges, and acts as a prominent voice for the promotion and growth of the industry.

**INTERNATIONAL MEETING EXCHANGE [IMEX AMERICA]** America's largest worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings & events on a national and international scale. These events attract thousands of buyers from the U.S. and around the world, connecting everyone with key players.

**CONNECT [CORPORATE MARKETPLACE AND CONNECT PNW]** Connect produces publications and marketing for the corporate, hobby, sports, diversity, association and religious markets.

**ASSOCIATION FORUM [HOLIDAY SHOWCASE]** One day exhibition with an audience of 1400 qualified buyers within the association market.



## LEISURE MARKET

### MARKETING - BUILD DESTINATION AWARENESS

The amount of visitor spending in Pierce County has grown steadily for the last six years. The name "Tacoma" is not the unknown it once was in outside markets. Tacoma's increased name recognition presents us with two new opportunities: to leverage Tacoma's name recognition to draw attention to nearby attractions in Pierce County, and also to reach out to larger markets to promote Tacoma to national and international markets.

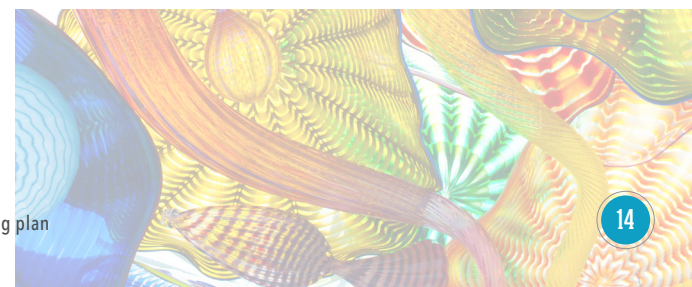
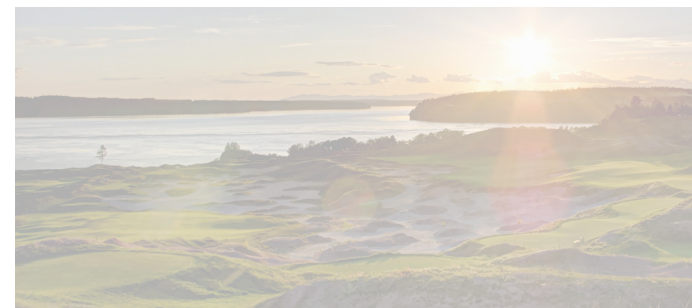
Our marketing efforts have a two-pronged approach, reaching potential travelers in the drive market (can reasonably get to our destination within a one-day drive) and our fly market (when air travel is needed). These two markets have different needs in terms of familiarization and motivation, that's why we promote different Pierce County assets to these different markets.

For the drive market, we can dive in deeper to the Pierce County experiences. We promote pure Americana experiences; museums and live entertainment as a cultural hub, regional golfing, stunning waterfront dining, and mountain adventures.

For the fly market, where there is less familiarity with our region as well as more competition, we promote themes that are unique to Pierce County: The Home Town of Glass Art and Dale Chihuly; The Collector Car Capital of the U.S.; Mount Rainier's stunning peak, and Championship Golf at Chambers Bay.

### 2018 PRIORITIES

Our two priorities for 2018 will be: First, is to continue to strengthen perceptions of Pierce County as an authentic, artistically vibrant, approachable destination through the **Northwest Unfiltered** brand position; and secondly, in anticipation of two major golf resorts in development in Pierce County, Travel Tacoma is building our marketing footprint in the golf market.







## LEISURE MARKET

### FALL CAMPAIGN

A multi-tier campaign designed to encourage a one- to two-night stays in Pierce County during the November – January shoulder season. The campaign includes a unified campaign that reaches likely visitors through digital, print and social advertising. It also includes an in-market experience.

### DESTINATION VIDEOS

To complement our new Northwest Unfiltered brand direction, in 2017 we will produce several new videos to promote on digital and broadcast media.

### DESTINATION ADVERTISING

To those with an interest in travel, we employ a combination of print and digital advertising throughout the year. We focus content on our core audiences, and pair them with experiences from our regional stand-outs. We advertise through existing Washington State visitor guides and websites, travel sites and magazines that have audiences in key feeder cities, that are more than 50 miles from our destination. We focus on the drive market (Vancouver B.C., Portland, Ore., Seattle, Wa, Tri-Cities, Spokane) and the Fly Market (San Francisco, Los Angeles, Germany, China, South Korea and the UK) and also with our Military Community, who host visiting friends and family.

### WEBSITE

The Travel Tacoma + Pierce County website has continued to be an asset for visitors. The site produces more than 84,000 referrals to local businesses each year, contributing to the \$1 billion in annual visitor spending. As the digital landscape shifts with increased competition from Google travel and event tools, we are investing in continual programming updates and consultative services by travel industry specialists to maintain and grow our site authority, and new visitor traffic.

### GOLF MARKETING

Leveraging partnerships, Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will have a presence at tour and travel shows to promote Pierce County packages to tour operators, and travel writers.

With IAGTO being held in Bend, Oregon in 2018, we are working to develop a familiarization tour for key golf tour operators, to visit our golf courses prior to the start of the conference in June. We are also looking at having a stronger presence at IAGTO with an expanded booth. We will also provide our partners the opportunity to attend Northwest Consumer tradeshow.

### EARNED MEDIA

Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will recruit travel writers by pitching tailored destination stories that fit their interest. In 2018, we will do this both through working with a professional PR agency, as well as using in-house efforts to build relationships and promote the importance of tourism in Pierce County.

### MEDIA HOSTING

Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will host travel writers from print and electronic publications that have an influence on travel decisions. We do this by working with them on itineraries, and providing them hotels, attractions and occasionally meals. We count on our partners to help minimize direct costs.

## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

### CONNECT VISITORS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES + ENCOURAGE RETURN VISITS TACOMA + PIERCE COUNTY VISITOR GUIDE

The Western Destination Marketing Association estimates that the distribution of one visitor guide equates to \$48 in visitor spending. The visitor guide is distributed through channels that target current visitors, future visitors and those likely to host visitors, predominantly in information racks in the greater Seattle and South Sound areas; these include ferry and cruise ship terminals, as well as Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Joint Base Lewis McChord and direct mail. Other methods of distribution include mailing upon request, distribution at military events and visitor information centers. 125,000 guides are distributed.

### DIRECT MARKETING (SEO)

This is where we find people who are interested in things that Pierce County offers, and get them to [traveltacoma.com](http://traveltacoma.com) where they can be exposed to local businesses and curated experiences. Destination Analysis conducted a study that shows a new visitor to a destination website is worth approximately \$36 in spending.

### VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER + TIMBR

VICs add the personal touch for those who are exploring downtown Tacoma. Travel Tacoma + Pierce County has a volunteer-staffed information center positioned in the heart of the Greater Tacoma Convention Center. In 2017 we introduced a Mobile Visitor Information Center, TIMBR. The portable "VIC on wheels" is brought to community events throughout Pierce County, promoting surrounding businesses, and to key tourism locations in Pierce County.

### SOCIAL MEDIA VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

Growing our one-to-one interactions with visitors through social media. Promoting and engaging with us online, to give recommendations to visitors, and to build a network of social media partners who can also engage with Travel Tacoma. We encourage social sharing through campaigns and social interactions.

### ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTERS TO PAST + POTENTIAL VISITORS

We collect emails through our website, Visitor Information Centers, Social media campaigns and marketing partnerships. We email seasonally with attractions and itineraries to inspire travel.





## DESTINATION ADVISORS

### RESEARCH

Travel Tacoma + Pierce County performs an advising role to local destinations by sharing our market knowledge, as well as research that helps Pierce County thrive and grow as a tourism destination.

### BRANDING THE COMMUNITY

Equipping the community to share a united voice and vision for the future of Pierce County tourism.

### TOURISM INFORMATION AND ADVISING

Keeping the tourism community, its stakeholders and elected officials abreast of tourism activity and developments. Advising cities and businesses on destination opportunities and pitfalls.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Support of events and programs that encourage tourism and help visitors get the most out of their Pierce County experience.

## NATIONAL, REGIONAL, STATE + LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

Tremendous benefit to Travel Tacoma + Pierce County and the staff comes from being actively involved members in national, regional, state and local tourism industry organizations. These partnerships help Travel Tacoma leverage valuable community resources, and bring like-interests together for collaboration.

### DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

Provides an annual international tourism convention for a global perspective on the industry, ongoing access to resources and research, tailored conferences that focus on specific aspects of DMO departments, and the only accreditation program that sets industry specific standards for DMO governance and operations.

### WASHINGTON TOURISM ALLIANCE [WTA]

Established by industry stakeholders with the mission to advocate, promote, develop and sustain the economic well-being of the Washington tourism industry. WTA provides several products to serve members and the state's tourism industry, including the official travel and tourism website for the state of Washington, [www.experiencewa.com](http://www.experiencewa.com), and the Official Washington State Visitors' Guide in partnership with the Washington Lodging Association.

### WSDMO [WA STATE DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS ASSOCIATION]

An independent, non-profit trade association advocating tourism investment and promotion as economic development. The mission of the WSDMO is to enhance the awareness and influence of the tourism industry and to serve as the single unifying voice for all of Washington State's destination marketing organizations and tourism industry.

### PIERCE COUNTY LODGING ASSOCIATION [PCLA]

A membership organization that represents Pierce County as the third largest hotel room community in the State of Washington. PCLA provides hoteliers and other industry members a regular forum to meet and discuss issues that affect the individual cities as well as the unincorporated areas of Pierce County.



TRAVEL

**TACOMA+**

PIERCE COUNTY, WA