

TOUR CAYUGA.com

in the FINGER LAKES 

2020 Marketing Plan

Introduction

The majority of the 2020 Marketing Plan has been developed based on the combined research of the Travel Market Research Study produced in 2015 by Young Strategies, Inc. and the Tourism Sentiment Index Study produced by Destination Think in 2019 for the Cayuga County CVB. We will continue to place particular emphasis on developing materials that appeal to a younger demographic; photos, video, web site, etc. promoting the creative lifestyle community found in Cayuga County, while maintaining the 'Boomer' market with traditional print lifestyle magazines and newspaper editorials and advertisements.

While this marketing plan sets a path for the future, it is also a document that must remain somewhat fluid as market conditions and opportunities develop and we craft our strategic plan for the future.

Mission/Vision/Values

Mission Statement

The Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) is Cayuga County's tourism promotion agency. We increase tourism and related revenues through promotion and research-based targeted marketing, and we improve the visitor experience by providing data and training to local hospitality industry providers. We continuously work to increase tourism and improve the visitor experience, which in turn stimulate economic growth and sustain recreational and cultural opportunities in the County.

Vision Statement

The CCCVB will be the primary catalyst for the ongoing development of a dynamic, collaborative and innovative Cayuga County tourism industry which: Enhances economic development throughout the county, Improves quality of life for its residents and Provides an unparalleled Finger Lakes visitor experience.

Marketing Goals for 2020

Content generation

In today's marketing space, content is what drives engagement, and engagement drives visitation. Content is referred to both written and photographic content. Content refers to text, video, imagery, infographics, surveys, webinars and podcasts. CCCVB's 2020-2025 strategy for content will be driven by our market personas (Appendix A) which aims to get the right content, to the right people, in the right place, at the right time. This requires understanding our potential visitor and providing the content in the right tone and from someone who thinks alike. This is where our content strategy is interwoven with our tourism ambassador program.

Women's Suffrage Centennial

2020 is the centennial of the 19th Amendment and therefore, recognition of women owned or managed businesses will be highlighted in our travel guide, on our website and promoted through public relations efforts. Through the story of the iconic Americans, focus attention on the prominent women including: Frances Seward, Harriet Tubman, and Emily Howland.

Reach out to New Markets - Fishing

As proven by the TSI research, fishing is a tourism asset in Cayuga County that is getting great sentiment. It is also a product to which we haven't dedicated many resources in marketing. With additional funding, we could strengthen our understanding of the product and outreach to market. As the NYS county with the most fresh water frontage, and home to a Bass Pro Shops, the stage is set to develop this market.

Regional Co-op Programs

The Finger Lakes is one of the 11 vacation regions of the I Love NY efforts. Based on the Oxford Economics Report as a region Finger Lakes receives 17% of the NYS traveler spending (after removing NYC and Long Island from the equation who together receive 80%). Within the 14 counties that make up the Finger Lakes tourism region, Cayuga County receives 8% of visitor spending (after removing Monroe & Onondaga from the equation who together receive 63%). It is important to be a recognized destination within the Finger Lakes visitor region in order to grow our percentage share of visitation and spending. There are many potential programs that we can be part of, it is critical that our office remain open to participation to ensure our tourism product is recognized within the region. The visitor doesn't travel to "Cayuga County" but will travel to the "Finger Lakes". In 2020, we have several programs that we will be pursuing as part of regional co-op programs.

- Brave Women Campaign – Where Brave Women Winter is a campaign started to raise awareness of women owned and operated tourism businesses. The campaign is in cooperation with Seneca and Ontario County Tourism Boards with limited participation by Visit Syracuse and Visit Rochester. The campaign will continue into a year round campaign.

- Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway Videography Project – In a joint venture with Tompkins and Seneca Counties we will be developing video assets including drone footage for scenery and product surrounding Cayuga Lake.
- CNY REDC Soft Adventure Videography – In a joint venture with Cortland, Onondaga, Oswego and Madison Counties, we’ve been awarded a Market NY grant to develop our soft adventure product. The soft adventure product includes: hiking, biking, kayaking, swimming, fishing, and others. This will greatly increase our regional collaboration and provide us with video for outreach to media and potential visitors.
- Other regional programs the CCCVB has representation in include:

○ Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council	○ Cayuga Lake Wine Trail
○ Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance	○ Lake Ontario Wine Trail
○ Lake Ontario Sportsfishing Promotional Council	○ Finger Lakes Film Trail
○ Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway	○ Seaway Trail
	○ Haunted History Trail
	○ CNY REDC Arts & Tourism Council

Core Tourism Hubs

Continue working with the three core tourism hubs identified by the Travel Market Research Study produced in 2015 by Young Strategies, Inc. and bring differentiation to the unique offers within them.

- Auburn area – the vibrant ‘creative community’ reflecting the small-town urban scene especially attractive to millennials
- Aurora – scenic with shopping, upscale luxury lodging and dining, a year-round destination
- Fair Haven – the next great harbor destination

Arts & Performing Arts

As demonstrated by the TSI study, our arts & events offerings are a differentiating factor whose product stands out from the regional product. Throughout 2020 we will strive to identify opportunities to partner with our in-county and regional product to highlight our offerings.

Increase Winter Visitation



We will strive to drive year-round visitation with a focus on shoulder and off season (especially winter) through ads and promotions, looking at partnerships with our Central NY and Finger Lakes counties to strengthen our message. The aforementioned Where Brave Women Winter campaign was designed to increase winter visitation as a regional collaborative effort. Hibernation is a Cayuga County campaign to highlight special offers and bring special focus on the product available in winter. This campaign is planned to relaunch annually.

Groups Market

To reach out to group markets and increase visitation to our tourism partners and occupancy to our hotels, we developed a new position. Claire Dunlap was hired as Group Sales and Marketing Manager at the CCCVB. The group sales goals for 2020 include updating and determining the metrics to report our progress. This will help us see where our efforts are concentrated and where there could be more attention. Secondly, to expand our contact network both closer to home in our target 6-hour radius and eventually in the international (Canada) market to diversify and expand our group contacts. Third, establish communication style with our current contacts for a solid flow of business to our partners. Lastly find a new and personal way to welcome the groups and the tour guides that sets us apart from other locations, in hopes that it will increase our word of mouth recommendations and leave visitors wanting to return before they've left.

Key marketing elements of the groups program include: collateral, sponsorships, familiarization tours/site visits, groups & meetings e-newsletters, lead generation and follow-up, as well as working with FLRTC and I Love NY when opportunities arise. Trade Shows to be attended in 2020 are: ABA (Omaha, NE) in January 2020, and TAP (Branson, MO) in June 2020.

Meetings & Events

For 2020, the goal for meeting and sales is to identify the product and develop a strategy for reaching the market. As identified in the TSI study we have a TSI score of 61 for weddings, which is equal to our competitive set. This identifies a great opportunity for growth. In 2021, collateral will be developed to promote meetings & events, as well as attending trade shows identified to for participation.

Visitor Profile

The 2015 Young Strategies report identified the Cayuga County average visitor as:

- 66.7% Female,
- 56 Average age of visitor
- 82% Having higher education
- 89% Traveling for Leisure
- \$260 Daily expenditure per person

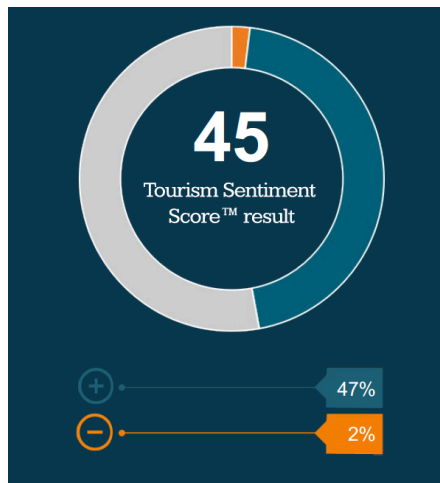
The FLTA 2018 visitor study done by Travel Market Insight identified the Finger Lake average visitor as:

- 54% Male * up from 30% in 2006
- 59 Average age of visitor
- 73% Having higher education
- 76% Traveling for Leisure
- \$215 Daily expenditure per person

Due to the similarities in the tourist profiles, the decision was taken to not repeat a similar visitor profile research in 2019 and perform a product-based research instead.

Tourism Product

Tourism Sentiment Index



The TSI (Tourism Sentiment Index) report provides a comprehensive analysis of what people are saying about Cayuga County online. The report identifies a score which is a measure of our ability to generate positive word of mouth about our tourism offer. It is an aggregate score that focuses solely on online conversations that reference or affect a potential visitor's perception of our tourism offering. Of all the conversations online being driven by Cayuga County's tourism experience or products, 47% of those conversations have been identified as destination promoters and 2% as destination detractors,

giving us a sentiment index score of 45. This identifies 51% of online tourism related conversation as informational communications without sentiment. The primary communication drivers are: nature photography, beaches and shoreline, festivals and events, restaurants, wildlife viewing, fishing, spectator sports, wineries and wine tastings, museums and galleries, and music and performance art.

Competitive Analysis

The TSI report incorporates a competitive analysis. The neighboring Finger Lakes counties were selected in order to identify our competitive advantage. The Finger Lakes is widely recognized for its wines and lakes. Looking at these two categories specifically, it is important to note that Cayuga County's report indicates that we ranked slightly higher than our competitive set in the beaches and coastline

category, which represents our water access and only slightly lower in wineries and wine tasting. This is good, indicating that we are on par with the visitor's vision of what the Finger Lakes is, and we have special product that stands out as particularly special. The competitive advantages identified include: music & performing arts, festival and events, tours, biking, and fishing. The report identifies as our potential of group opportunities: tours, wineries & wine tastings and fishing.

Content Driven Marketing Tactics

Developing a content marketing focus strategy where we provide the right message to the right audience in the right place requires the use of persona marketing. The personas included in Appendix A represent the target audiences who are interested in the tourism product we have to offer. Pairing the persona to the product to the right message is the foundation of our 2020 Marketing Plan. The personnas help to focus keyword research efforts and are used as reference when crafting copy. They can also help in the identification and prioritization of promotional activities. We will be pairing the marketing persona to a tourism ambassador and a graphic designer that can develop the right voice and message. It is important to provide for the potential visitor what they are seeking for instead of what we want them to see.

Target Geographic Markets

We will continue to emphasize the 5-hour driving market as our key geographic market. The marketing personas are designed to target the demographic of key geographic markets to develop and deliver a more focused message. Among the geographic areas targeted are: Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Pennsylvania, Scranton, and Boston.

Target Audience



While baby boomers continue to be our main visitor, we will be striving to broaden the prospective visitor to Cayuga County. Initiatives in this outreach include the Brave Women Winter campaign. By contracting a graphic designer to develop a visual that is appealing to a younger demographic we're expanding the voice of our product to incorporate a new consumer. Our seven identified marketing personas include baby boomers, millennials, LGBTQ, as well as Gen X. Utilizing targeted content management, we're able to target multiple audiences without offering everything to everyone.

Tourism Ambassadors

Throughout 2020 we will be working to identify tourism ambassadors for each of our marketing personas (Appendix A), prioritizing those that research has identified as the current most prominent tourist profile (boomers-Marianne) as well as the

one with the highest potential to increase visitation (fishing-George). The ambassador program is being designed to identify individuals within our communities to assist visitors by providing an authentic local experience and turn every visitor into a return visitor. This real, person-to-person approach works with all demographics and stays away from a salesy feel marketing, instead offering a content driven marketing approach. Ambassadors will make it possible to generate direct content for the appropriate audience; they will generate blog material for us to promote as well as being our eyes and ears directly to the visitor. This way, we'll be able to identify the visitors' needs and address issues that our destination might be facing.

Digital Marketing/Social Media

We recognize the importance of digital marketing as an efficient, cost-effective and measurable way to reach consumers. In 2020, we plan on utilizing digital marketing to launch campaigns as well as targeting the right content to the right audience. The eMarketing program includes: Monthly themed e-blasts, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest posts, YouTube account, Blogs, and Facebook campaigns. A strong eMarketing campaign depends on strong content, and it is critical that it goes hand in hand with the overall marketing campaign. Certain personas depend on strictly digital driven marketing outreach, such as Millennials.

Print

Print will continue to be an important marketing tool. It is the primary outreach tool for the baby boomer market and very significant for Gen X. Targeted print advertising will be placed in publications with a national reach, such as: USA Today, AAA, AARP Lifestyle Magazine, Food and Travel and Wine Buzz. Regional print advertising will be placed to reach individuals within the Central NY and Finger Lakes region such as: Life in the Finger Lakes, 585 Magazine, as well as the Skaneateles, Syracuse and Rochester travel guides.

Photography and Videography

An increasingly important piece to a marketing plan, we will continue to look for opportunities to update our photo and video library. Two aforementioned opportunities for 2020 are the REDC Market NY grant which will update our soft adventure assets and the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway opportunity. We will continue to utilize Crowdriff as a central resource for our user generated photo content.

Public Relations

We recognize the power of public relations to garner added exposure and reach large audiences. We plan to participate in the Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council (FLRTC) public relations program once again, partnering with I Love NY when appropriate. The FLRTC program includes: social media, promotional opportunities, media visits, editorial calendar monitoring, media lead tip sheets, media pitches and press releases. We will supplement these programs with our own in-house promotional efforts regionally.

Collateral

Travel Guide



The primary collateral for the CCCVB is our travel guide. Updated annually, the 2020 guide will have a strong focus on Harriet Tubman and the women owned businesses. It will have a magazine style, easy reading format highlighting the activities identified by the research as those of highest interest to our visitors. Where to stay and where to eat will be two highlighted sections in the guide and will have a centrally located pull out map. Many of the images used in the guide come from our Crowdriff – user generated content – library which gives the guide a more personal and engaging quality.



Rt. 90 50 Mile Garage Sale Brochure

The Rt. 90 50 Mile Garage Sale brochure is a much-requested piece that has been recently updated in collaboration with Cortland County.

Other Collateral

Other collateral developed by the CCCVB that will require updating in 2020 or 2021 include: For the Birds – guide to birdwatching in Cayuga County; Fishing in Cayuga County; and On the Water Guide. These three pieces address product that the research has demonstrated are of high interest to our visitors and are all currently outdated.

Group, Meetings & Events Collateral

The collateral for groups will be reviewed in 2020 and certain pieces such as the resource guide will have to be updated. Our current piece is outdated and incorporated several partners that are no longer operating, while we have new and exciting product that needs to be added to this piece. We plan to review meetings, events and wedding collateral in 2020 for updating in 2021.

Travel Shows

Cayuga County will participate in the New York State Travel Industry Association (NYSTIA) Show program, the Lake Ontario Sportsfishing Promotional Council (LOSPC) Show Program and the NY Welcomes You show program. In addition, we will have a presence at the New York Times Travel Show in cooperation with Canal New York.

In conjunction with New York State Travel Industry Association:

AAA Great Vacation Expo	Columbus, OH
Great American Outdoor Show	Harrisburg, PA
AAA Reading/Berks Travel Odyssey	Wyomings, PA
Toronto Golf & Travel Show	Toronto, ON
AAA Southern New England	Foxborough, MA
WNY Sport & Travel Expo	Hamburg, NY
AAA Travel Marketplace	Long Island, NY
Travel & Vacation Show	Ottawa, ON
Day Trips & Destinations	Plantsville, CT
Syracuse Nationals	Syracuse, NY
Outdoor Travel Sportsman Expo	Williamsport/Pennsdale, PA
AAA Travel 2020 Pittsburgh Travel	Pittsburgh, PA
AAA Vacation Expo	Cleveland, OH

In conjunction with Lake Ontario Sportsfishing Promotion Council:

Greater Niagara Fishing & Outdoor Expo	Niagara Falls, NY
Great American Outdoor Show	Harrisburg, PA
Alleghany Sport, Travel & Outdoor Show	Monroeville, PA
Springfield Sportsmen's Show	Springfield, MA
World Fishing & Outdoor Expo	Suffern, NY
Edison, NJ Fly Show	Edison, NJ

In conjunction with Canal New York & FLRTC:

New York Times Travel Show	New York, NY
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In conjunction with NY Welcomes You:

Boston Travel Show	Boston, MA
New York Times Travel Show	NYC, NY
Northeast RV Show	Suffern, NY
Long Island Travel Expo	Long Island, NY
Philadelphia Flower Show	Philly, PA
Get Out and Go Show	Palisades Center, NY

Dream Destinations Travel Show	Springfield, MA
Penn Station Travel Show	New York, NY
Grand Central Travel Show	New York, NY
Jones Beach Air Show	Jones Beach, NY
Rock and Ribs Festival	Sussex, NJ
The Great New York State Fair	Syracuse, NY
Hudson Valley Wine and Food Fest	Rhinebeck, NY
New York Air Show	Steward, NY
92nd Street Festival	New York, NY
Pink Party Street Festival	Hartford, CT
Ski Barn Winter Kickoff Event	Wayne, NJ
Warwick Apple Fest	Warwick, NY

Information Centers

CCCVB Travel Guides will be distributed to various welcome centers statewide and to partners throughout the county and the Finger Lakes region. Distribution of travel guides regionally is very important, as corroborated by a study in 2019 by Bentley University's Center for Marketing Technology on brochure distribution. They found that on average, 79% of visitors picked up a brochure (up from 67% in 2016).

- Empire State Plaza, Albany
- Bear Mountain Park Visitors Center, Adirondacks
- I-81 Rest Area, northbound, south of Alexandria Bay
- I-81 Rest Area, southbound, south of Watertown
- Sloatsburg I-90 Travel Plaza
- Platekill I-90 Travel Plaza
- New Baltimore I-90 Travel Plaza
- Petro Stopping Center Exit 41 I-90
- Niagara Falls USA Official Visitor Center
- Preble Visitor Center
- Allentown Lehigh Information Center in Pennsylvania
- Pembroke (I-90)
- Warners (I-90)