

2026 PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN



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MISSION

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

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.

ABOUT US

Executive Director:
Courtney Kasper
courtney@tourcayuga.com

Director of Marketing & Sales:
Hilary Fenner
hilary@tourcayuga.com

Public Relations &
Communications Manager:
Noah Howard
pr@tourcayuga.com

Marketing Assistant:
Dawn Lubaszewski
dawn@tourcayuga.com

Office Manager:
Lynne Sweet
admin@tourcayuga.com

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in the FINGER LAKES

WWW.TOURCAYUGA.COM

* STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

Strategic Connections are brief notes included throughout this PR Plan to show how each tactic and focus area supports the priorities outlined in Tour Cayuga's five-year Strategic Plan. They are intended to reinforce alignment with long-term organizational goals, and provide a simple line of sight between day-to-day PR work and the broader outcomes we are working to advance.



HISTORY & MUSEUMS

Steeped in history, Cayuga County offers sites and museums that connect visitors to the people and moments that shaped New York State and the nation. Explore stories of social progress, canal era ingenuity, and community heritage through engaging, welcoming attractions.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Highlighting the Inns of Aurora Spa, nature walks, and healthy dining options will position us well. Ongoing accessibility efforts ensure our destination is inclusive, welcoming, and enjoyable for all visitors, regardless of physical ability, with amenities designed to reduce barriers and support comfort.



OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Sterling Nature Center, our numerous parks, preserves, trail systems, and bountiful fishing will continue to position us as a prime outdoor destination, and as a proud partner of Leave No Trace, we encourage visitors to embrace their principles to help protect and sustain these natural treasures for future generations to enjoy.

DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES



CULTURE

We will be promoting the Pride of Place campaign, small businesses inspired by historic trailblazers, and communities, while highlighting local stories, entrepreneurs, and experiences that inspire lasting, meaningful visitor connection.



THE ARTS

Visitors and residents can engage with traditional, fiber, and theatrical arts in many ways, including exploring the Auburn Public Arts Trail and discovering rotating exhibits, performances, workshops, and community-driven creative events year-round.



FOOD & WINE

Agriculture is a large part of the culture of our destination. Highlighting farm-to-table, sustainable, and family-run establishments, along with seasonal flavors, local makers, and authentic rural experiences, will keep our destination on trend.



PR STRATEGIES



PROACTIVE PR

In 2026, we will broaden our reach and increase content generation and placements by expanding proactive PR strategies alongside our ongoing reactive efforts. In addition to the activities outlined above, this will include developing and distributing targeted, proactive press releases and story pitches through Muck Rack to a carefully curated list of media outlets.

STRATEGIC CONNECTION:

This strategy approach directly advances the Strategic Plan's goals to shift brand positioning and visitor perception and deepen regional and community collaborations by pairing responsive media relationship management with targeted, proactive pitching. (see strategic plan pages 15 - 18)

REACTIVE PR

Reactive PR efforts encompass a wide range of activities focused on sustaining strong relationships with media partners and responding quickly to visibility opportunities. This work includes fulfilling content collection requests from industry leaders such as Madden Media, MMGY Global, and ILNY, ensuring our stories and assets are accurately represented across campaigns and publications. We also provide timely articles to the Auburn Citizen that align with our monthly outreach goals and support consistent local visibility. Press releases remain an important tool in this work, used to highlight major organizational updates, announce new initiatives, and invite media to events that build engagement and strengthen collaboration.



PITCHING



Pitches related to Harriet Tubman or historical figure



Pitches related to the outdoors and outdoor adventure



Pitches relating to the county's food and beverage scene



Pitches related to special events and seasonal offerings

PRESS RELEASES

In 2026, alongside “wild card” press releases issued in response to timely opportunities such as awards, events, or other unexpected developments, we will also distribute planned press releases aligned with the following marketing campaigns, holidays, and key initiatives, as appropriate based on news value:



Hibernation

January, 2026



Brave Women FLX
February, 2026



Harriet
Tubman Day
March 10, 2026



Sweet Treat Trail
April, 2026



National Travel
& Tourism Week
May 3, 2026



Pride Month
June, 2026



Juneteenth

June 19, 2026



Black Business Month
August, 2026



Fall in The
Finger Lakes
September, 2026



Underground
Railroad Month
September, 2026



Go Beyond
October, 2026



Holidays in
Cayuga County
November, 2026



PLACEMENT GOALS

2025 CALCULATIONS

Our 11-month placement analysis for 2025 provides a clear overview of media activity from December 2024 through October 2025. Data for November and December 2025 is not yet available and will be incorporated in a future update. Within the period analyzed, December 2024 generated the fewest media placements, with 6 total, reflecting a traditionally quieter time for media engagement. By contrast, July produced the strongest results with 16 placements, demonstrating peak momentum and outreach success during the summer season. Overall, placements averaged 9 per month, reflecting consistent performance and a steady media presence across the timeframe reviewed.

2026 GOALS

In 2026, we intend to increase our average monthly placements as part of a broader growth strategy. During the off-season, our goal is to secure 10 placements per month through consistent outreach and strategic engagement. In peak season, we will capitalize on heightened interest and target 16 placements per month. Sustaining this pace across the year positions us to achieve an annual average of 10 placements per month, reinforcing our commitment to steady performance and meaningful results.

PEAK PLACEMENT GOALS	PLACEMENT GOALS AVERAGE
16 MONTHLY	10 MONTHLY



STRATEGIC CONNECTION:

Our placement goals support the Strategic Plan priority to shift brand positioning and visitor perception by strengthening brand storytelling and expanding year-round awareness of Cayuga County through consistent earned media outcomes. Clear monthly targets also align with the plan's emphasis on measurable performance, including "earned media mentions" as a defined metric, and help us communicate results transparently to partners and community stakeholders.

(see strategic plan pages 28 - 30)

FAM & MEDIA TRIP OVERVIEW

Each year, we deliver three core types of FAMs and media visits: frontline FAMs, single-writer visits, and group media trips. In 2026, we plan to maintain the volume of these opportunities, building on the strong results achieved in 2025. Our goals and approach for the year ahead are outlined below.



OUR LOCAL HOSTS

Educational familiarization tours for frontline staff serving visitors.

FRONTLINE FAMs (TWO)

These FAMs will happen once each spring and fall in order to boost our tourism professionals' knowledge and understanding of our county's assets.



WRITERS & CREATORS

Hosted trips for individual travel creators to visit, and share destinations.

SINGLE WRITER FAMs (TEN)

The cheapest way to host media and travel writers, single writer FAMs will occur on a near-monthly basis and should cover a variety of our county's assets.



TRAVEL NETWORKS

Communities connecting travelers for shared trips, resources, and belonging.

GROUP MEDIA TRIPS (TWO)

Like in 2025, these group trips will coincide with media events and/or major celebrations for Juneteenth and International Underground Railroad Month in September.

STRATEGIC CONNECTION:

Our 2026 FAM and media trip program supports the Strategic Plan priority to improve tourism product and experience readiness, using FAM tours to drive earned media and industry exposure. Through structured partner preparation and partner-specific guidance, we strengthen the quality and consistency of experiences showcased across single-writer, group, and frontline tours. This also aligns with the Plan's call for training and tours that build frontline and workforce familiarity with county assets and improve visitor-facing delivery. *(see strategic plan page 45)*

WEBSITE PRESSROOM

DEVELOPMENT

Drawing on best practices from other Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPAs), Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), and Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs), we have developed a dedicated media page on the Tour Cayuga website. This online pressroom serves as a centralized resource hub for journalists, featuring six core sections designed to provide the information needed to understand the destination and develop compelling story angles. The content has been curated to showcase Cayuga County's distinct experiences and key assets. To ensure ongoing accuracy and usefulness, the pressroom will be reviewed and refreshed twice each year to reflect current updates, resources, and opportunities for media professionals.

MEDIA INFORMATION AND ASSETS



- **PR Manager's Contact Information**

This will let media representatives know how to contact us and who to reach out to.

- **Destination Description**

This brief overview will give writers a taste of our destination — and should leave them wanting more

- **Photos & Videos**

Separated by category/season/etc, this will contain all the imagery we want journalists to use and its rights.

- **Story Starters & Ideas**

These should give journalists an overview of our destination's highlights and unique selling points.

- **Logos & Branding Kit**

This will house our outward-facing style guide and should include logos, fonts, color palettes, etc.

- **Awards & Accolades**

This should contain any major awards or features earned by our office, employees, and partners.

STRATEGIC CONNECTION:

The Website Pressroom advances the Strategic Plan priority to Shift brand positioning and visitor perception by strengthening brand storytelling through a centralized, easy-to-use hub of media-ready assets and story angles. By organizing core resources in one place, it also reflects the plan's emphasis on creating shared digital tools that improve visibility and reduce friction for external audiences, while supporting consistency and professionalism across our outward-facing materials. (see strategic plan pages 15, 22, & 36)

OVERVIEW

The general operating budget for public relations in 2026 is outlined in the chart to the left, providing a comprehensive overview of the financial framework for the year. While there is some flexibility in reallocating funds within specific categories to address emerging needs or opportunities, the overall budget remains relatively fixed to ensure alignment with organizational goals.



EXPENSES	AMOUNTS
MEDIA TRIPS & FAMS	\$11,00
MUCKRACK	\$8,500
IMM	\$8,000
NYSTIA,NATJA, PRSA, OWAA	\$5,300
OTHER	\$6,000
MEDIA ACTIVATIONS	\$8,000
ER/HT CONTRACT - TAP	\$60,000
TOTAL:	\$106,800



In addition to these expenses, conferences detailed below support skill development, networking, and events that advance the department's strategic objectives.

CONFERENCES	
NYSTIA	IMM
TRV&ADV SHOW	OWAA