

WILLIAMSBURG AREA DESTINATION MARKETING COMMITTEE

April 17, 2018

3:00 PM Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance

Meeting Notes

PRESIDING: Andrea Sardone, Chair

PRESENT: Karen Riordan, Phil Emerson, Rita McClenny, Walt Zaremba, Ron Kirkland, Neal Chalkley, Kevin Lembke

Not Present: Scott Foster, Ruth Larson

OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Potter, Corrina Ferguson, Bob Harris, Kristi Olsen, Jacquelyn Liebler

1. Andrea Sardone established there was a quorum calling the WADMC meeting to order and asked for a motion for the approval of [February 5, 2018 Meeting Notes](#). Ron Kirkland motioned to approve, Neal Chalkley seconded, WADMC members approved.
2. Neal Chalkley presented the [Financial Reports](#) through March 31, 2018. He stated there was a positive cash position during this financial period. As we are still adjusting to the new accounting software, the YTD revenue reported from the municipalities appeared misstated. A corrected report will be sent to the members. The balance sheet will be used to project a cash flow analysis to be presented at the June WADMC meeting.
3. Corrina presented the [Director's Report](#) which included the campaign update and a follow-up item she was asked to research – Integrated Marketing Research.

a. Public & Media Relations

Press highlights from the first quarter include results from not only this year's efforts but last year's as well. You can see the stories by clicking on the live links to TV media, print and electronic.

Desk side visits were done in Washington DC, New York City and Boston. Material for these meetings is customized based on their interest. Some of these meetings resulted in some of the first quarter stories, visits to the area or planned on producing. These markets were chosen based on being major media hubs.

The members asked for some measurements of results such as impressions could be provided for the June meeting.

b. Social & SEO

Social media efforts have continued to be a major outreach for the destination messaging focusing on geo targeting different posts. Vacation themes were messaged to further out while events were more local or regional.

Behind the scenes SEO (Search Engine Optimization) has consistently been performed on the back-end of the VisitWilliamsburg.com website to analyze and identify keyword opportunities that are in line with current search trends reaching a qualified audience in domestic & international geographies. These categories include seasonal activities, things to do, dining, accommodations, conferences, vacation planning and more.

c. Funologist 2.0

Campaign creative from 2017 has been revised and expanded based on the research and learnings. There were five personas created (Romance, Thrills, Family, Outdoor and Fun) to show the diversity of fun experiences to the right audience at the right time. A sample of the suite of ads for Thrill and Romance personas is included in the Director's Report, each targeting the Chief Vacation Officer depending on her mindset.

d. Media

This March the campaign launched in TV, print, display, streaming video and custom content through Parents.com.

e. Website Development

With the five personas developed, each has their own campaign landing page and support. The new technologies launched for VisitWilliamsburg.com (Chute & Bound 360) served up personalize and user generated content. A/B testing has been performed to determine which versions people respond to best.

f. What We Have Learned So Far

Year over year results show positive performance. We have seen huge improvements particularly with the Bound 360 software targeted versus non-targeted testing. The more we move to personalization based on where visitors are coming from / their behavior on the site will continue to drive better results.

g. What's Next

With the five different personas, the campaign is more complex than previous campaigns. Optimization has become more complicated resulting in an integrated team effort with the new technology and our agency partners.

h. Integrated Marketing Research

The members asked staff during the February meeting to research what it would take to conduct an Integrated Marketing Effectiveness Study similar to what the VTC began 2017. The study was done by the research group OmniTrak Group (formerly known as TNS) specializing in tourism research. Corrina explained the research process where people in the Visit Williamsburg target markets would be shown Visit Williamsburg advertising to determine the effectiveness, motivation and response.

The proposal for Visit Williamsburg provides the following based on earned and paid media:

- (1) Accountability based on influence to visit
- (2) Visitation numbers
- (3) Marketing Intelligence (are programs working)

If the study was conducted this year, a base line could be established to determine the effectiveness of future incremental marketing expenditures. The study would begin in



May lasting 4 months costing between \$60,000 and \$70,000. Currently there is only \$20,000 in the research budget. If the members decided to move forward, would need to identify where the incremental budget would come from. It was suggested to ask the municipalities and major attractions to partner.

Members believe the money would be well spent given you would get conversion. Some members believe the retail sales statistics should not be ignored and used as well.

Phil Emerson moved to table this discussion until the 2019 planning cycle this October. Ron Kirkland, seconded, WADMC members passed unanimously.

4. WADMC Board & Executive Meeting Schedule

Scheduling conflicts have necessitate moving established meeting dates and times. Dave Potter will research municipality meeting schedules to see if there are more convenient days and times. The members like afternoons but would prefer earlier then 4 pm allowing for addition time for discussion. The ideal schedule length was 90 minutes.

5. SB 942

Andrea suggested if the legislation passes a special meeting should be call to discuss the transition process and what will need to be done. She and Karen will determine who the participants should be and schedule a meeting accordingly.

6. With there being no further business, Andrea moved for adjournment announcing the next schedule WADMC Meeting, June 18, 4:00 PM, @ Greater Williamsburg Area Chamber & Tourism Alliance.

Respectfully submitted by;

David M. Potter