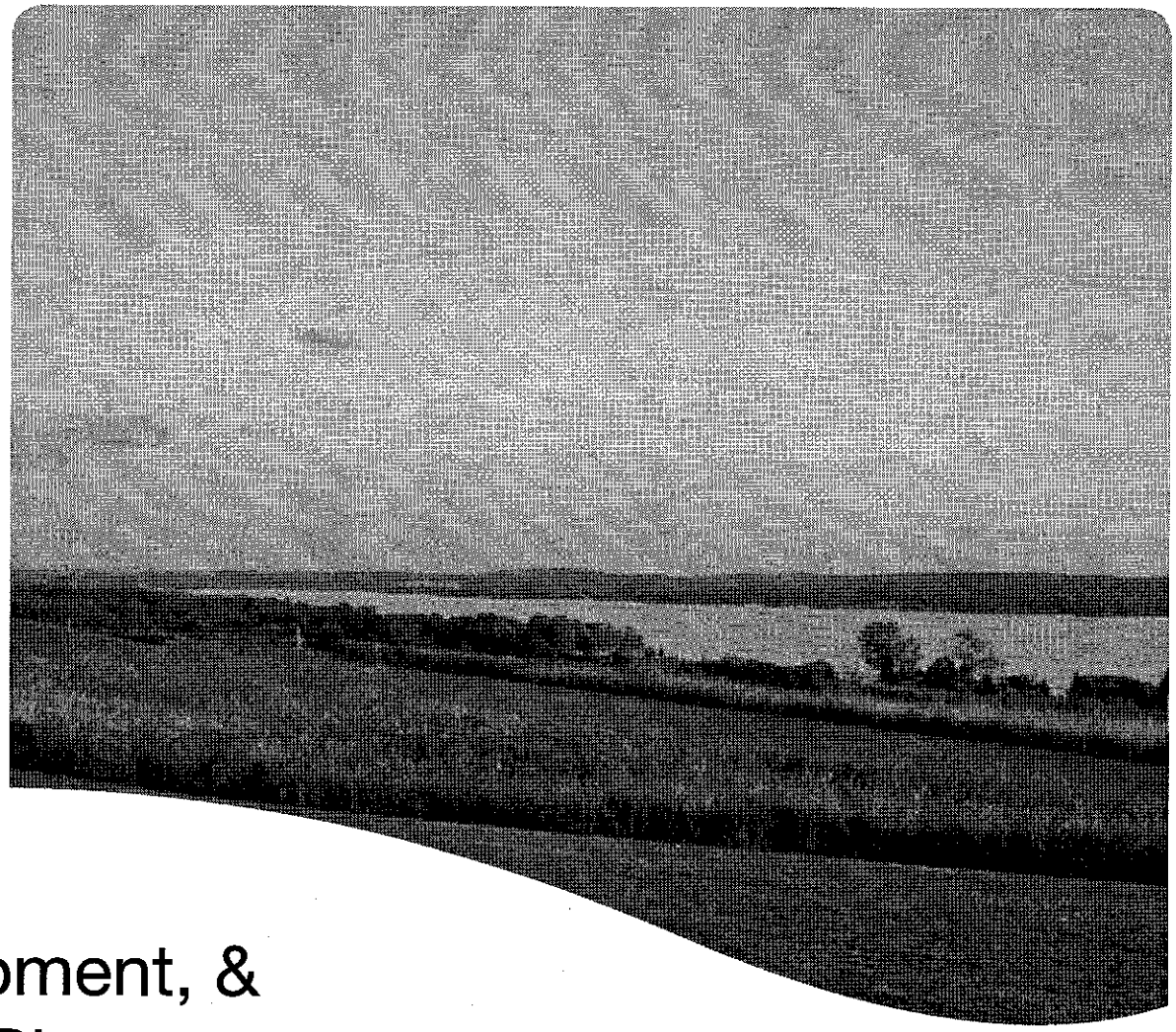
Chautauqua County
January 2009

Destination Development



Branding, Development, & Marketing Action Plan

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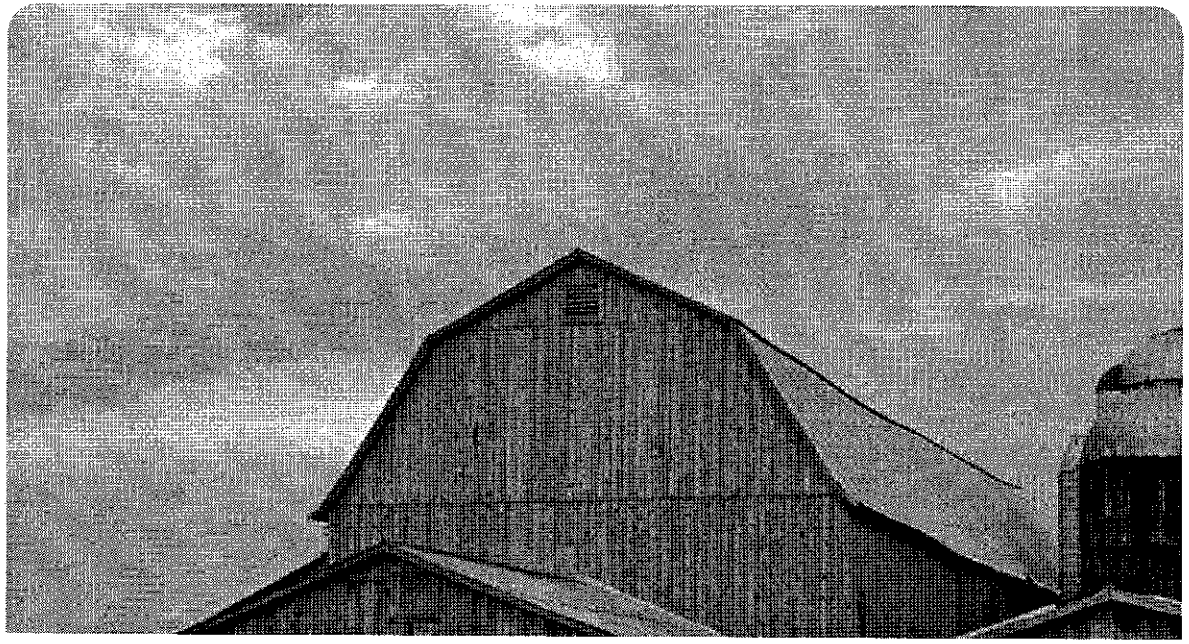


Introduction and scope of work

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

Chautauqua County is located in the southwestern corner of New York State, a region of lakes, pastoral countryside, and small communities. The nearest large cities are Erie, Pennsylvania 30 miles to the southwest and Buffalo, New York, 90 miles to the north. Lake Erie lies along the northwest edge of the county. The county is primarily rural, with an estimated population of 135,000. Jamestown, the largest community with a population of nearly 30,000, is the childhood home of Lucille Ball and the birthplace of world-renowned naturalist, Roger Tory Peterson, artist and author of the definitive guides to birds in North America.

Lake Chautauqua is the geographic centerpiece of the county and a primary recreation area in the summer months. Other water-related areas also draw visitors, including Findley Lake, Cassadaga Lakes, and the shoreline of Lake Erie. The region is the second largest grape-growing region in the U.S., second only to California. It is the home of Welch's Grape Juice and is now an expanding wine making area dubbed "America's Grape Country." The proposed "Grape Discovery Center" in Westfield will showcase exhibits about the grape and wine industry, and should draw additional visitors off the Interstate highway. The Chautauqua-Lake Erie Wine Trail borders Lake Erie for 50 miles and features several small wineries, with a few more planning to open in the coming years.

The primary draw to Chautauqua County is the Chautauqua Institution, which opened its doors in 1874. This unique institution was founded on the belief that everyone "has a right to be all that he can be – to know all that he can know." It is described as a "thriving community where visitors come to find intellectual and spiritual growth and renewal." The Institution runs a nine-week summer season – each week with a different theme – and brings in nationally renowned speakers, artists, musicians, and experts in many fields to provide lectures, concerts, art shows, and other activities. Topics range from the ethics of capitalism to everything you wanted to know about raising kids.

The county is also home to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute. The Institute houses Peterson's original paintings, an extensive naturalist library, meeting space, and a gift shop. The grounds include an interpretive walking path. For many programs the Institute partners with the Jamestown Audubon Society, which has its own nature preserve not far away.

Another major attraction is the Peek 'N Peak Resort, which has a ski area, conference center, two golf courses, and other related activities. The Amish also have a presence in the county and their hand-made goods (quilts, toys, furniture, baked goods), can be found at their homes or in a few gifts shops scattered throughout the county. Numerous summer camps dot the shores of the lakes, including a Boy Scout Camp, YMCA Camp, and Lutheran and other religious camps.

Chautauqua County is interested in developing a special identity for this colorful region that will cement the county as a unique visitor destination and attract a growing visitor market. The Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau (CCVB) retained Destination Development, Inc. (DDI) to assist them in this process.

The primary goal of this effort has been to develop a comprehensive vision or "brand" for Chautauqua County that maximizes its current assets and amenities. DDI has developed a recommended brand direction for the County and this detailed *Branding and Marketing Action Plan* that outlines the road map to accomplish this goal. The implementation of this plan will result in increased tourism spending in the County, increased overnight stays (overnight visitors spend three times that of day visitors), and a vibrant region that attracts local residents to engage in their communities.

As the title of the plan implies, it includes the brand direction – what you want to be known for; brand development – what you need to do so you "own" the brand; and marketing – how to tell the world. An action plan is a to-do list that involves the CCVB and other organizations, since it "takes a village" to implement a successful effort.

Prior to this plan development, DDI conducted an assessment of the County's marketing effectiveness and tourism product. DDI team members viewed the county through the eyes of a visitor planning a trip to the area and a first-time visitor driving into the area. Following the assessment process, DDI showcased its findings in a workshop. The workshop also

included discussion of community branding essentials to inform and educate the participants as to what branding is, the steps involved in branding a community, and how branding can benefit Chautauqua County. Following the assessment, this *Branding and Marketing Action Plan*, was initiated. The development of this plan was accomplished through the following scope of work:

Research Review
DDI reviewed and analyzed the current marketing programs of the County, the region, and the State of New York Division of Tourism's "I Love New York" campaign. We also reviewed the county's visitor events, attractions, and activities to gain a thorough understanding of the tourism assets and resources available.

Market Analysis
DDI used a variety of research sources, including the New York Division of Tourism research, Niagara University tourism research, and various demographic and segmentation sources to determine primary and secondary target markets. DDI also reviewed the state's tourism marketing efforts, regional marketing efforts, tourism trends both regionally and nationally, along with emerging tourism opportunities.

Task Identification and Direction
Using the information from the marketing and on-site assessment process, the research review, review of the marketing programs in the state and county, interviews of local stakeholders, and DDI's own experience and expertise in tourism development, DDI determined the primary "lure" for Chautauqua County. Lures are the primary draw to a region, like Disneyland is to Anaheim, while diversions are secondary activities - things that the visitor could do closer to home but will do while in the area. In Anaheim, diversions include golfing, shopping, dining, visiting museums, local events, and even going to Universal Studios and Knott's Berry Farm. We looked for various possible brand development options to see if Chautauqua County possibilities could be classified as the "best" in a particular category, or truly unique in the region, making Chautauqua County worth a special trip.

We also looked for existing resources that would create the most economical pathway to developing a tourism product that could become THE brand for Chautauqua County. Which assets have the potential to deliver the greatest return on investment? Every branding effort requires product development, so we looked for brand ideas that would leverage current assets. Each promising concept was measured against our brand "feasibility test questions" to see if it passed muster. Once a brand was selected for recommendation, DDI created graphic identities and slogans in support of the brand.

Brand Presentation
DDI presented a Brand Workshop for stakeholders including the business community, auxiliary organizations, educational institutions, local townships and cities, partnering organizations, and the press. The workshop assisted in educating stakeholders about the branding process, what it means, and how it can benefit their individual communities and the county as a whole. The workshop presented the recommended brand direction and sought input from those in attendance.

Marketing Action Plan
Telling the world about Chautauqua County's new brand direction requires a sound marketing plan. DDI examined existing promotional collateral, websites, events, public relations efforts, and other promotional efforts, and developed a series of recommendations for implementing and then marketing the brand. These include key marketing messages, good graphics, a robust website presence, public relations, collateral materials, partnerships, and advertising.

The Chautauqua Brand

THE BRAND PROMISE CONCEPT

Branding is a perception people have of you, or your product. When people mention "Chautauqua County," what's the first thing that comes to mind? What is their perception? What is the feeling they have when they hear the name of the city – whether in the nearby markets of Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland, or the larger markets along the north- and mid-Atlantic coast – Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington DC?

The branding portion of this Chautauqua County Branding & Marketing Action Plan is built around creating a unique view of Chautauqua County, illustrated on the next page.

Everything Chautauqua County and its communities do, in terms of product development, marketing, and community or downtown development, should reinforce the perception or brand you are trying to create in the minds of your residents and visitors.

Look at your websites, your marketing materials. Do they reinforce this statement? Do they say, "the best place to find learning experiences anywhere," "fun opportunities for leisure learning," "beautiful relaxing settings," "engaging activities for a variety of interests"—some of the core values behind this brand? If not, then redevelop those marketing efforts and showcase the activities, the businesses, the photographs, and other elements so that you "deliver on the promise."

The recommendations in this plan have been carefully developed to reinforce this primary brand message and include the product that is necessary to deliver on that message. It's important to note that a brand must be "earned." You never "roll-out" a brand. It's also important that you deliver on the promise. This brand promise is the perception we hope Chautauqua County will earn over the next three to five years as this plan is implemented.

THE BRAND PROMISE

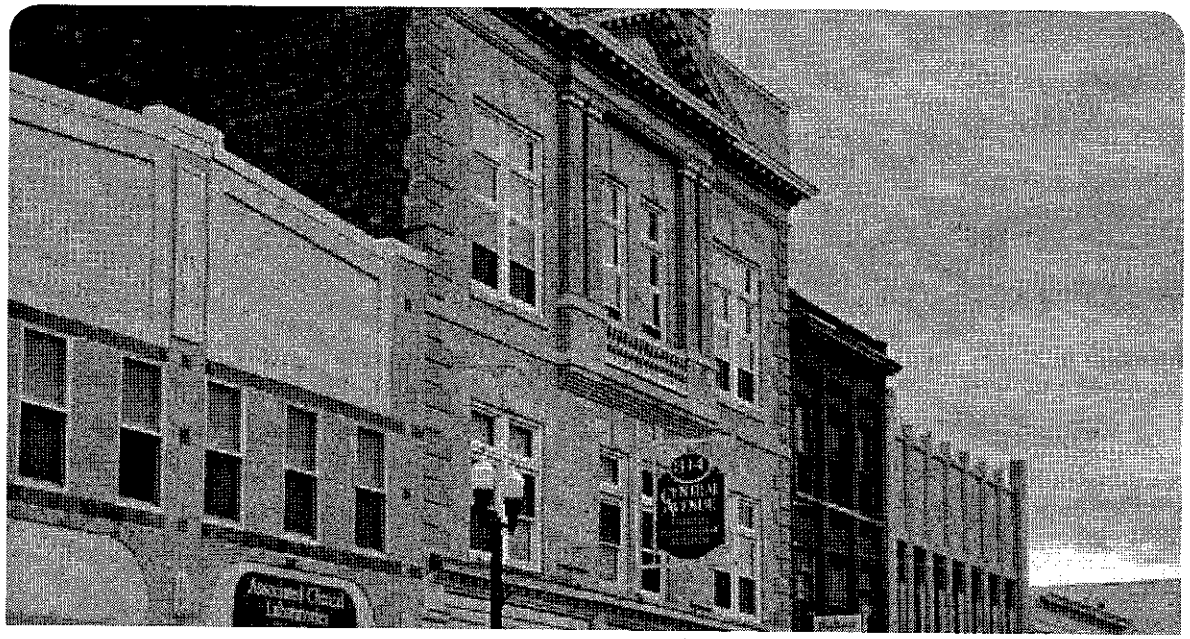
Chautauqua County expands the tradition of the Chautauqua education movement into the 21st century to become the World's Learning Center. Leisure learning opportunities for visitors and residents abound throughout the county and throughout the year. The crown jewel of the World's Learning Center is the Chautauqua Institution, the pioneer of the Chautauqua movement, where the brain feasts on a cornucopia of programs. This Victorian village is home to a nine-week summer season of lectures, arts, and music, and other educational events throughout the year.

Other opportunities for learning come in many forms, such as workshops and "camps" to discover wine-making, engage in the culinary arts, cultivate gardening skills, master the golf swing, enjoy the camaraderie of quilting, study the natural history of the region, or explore spirituality in all its forms.

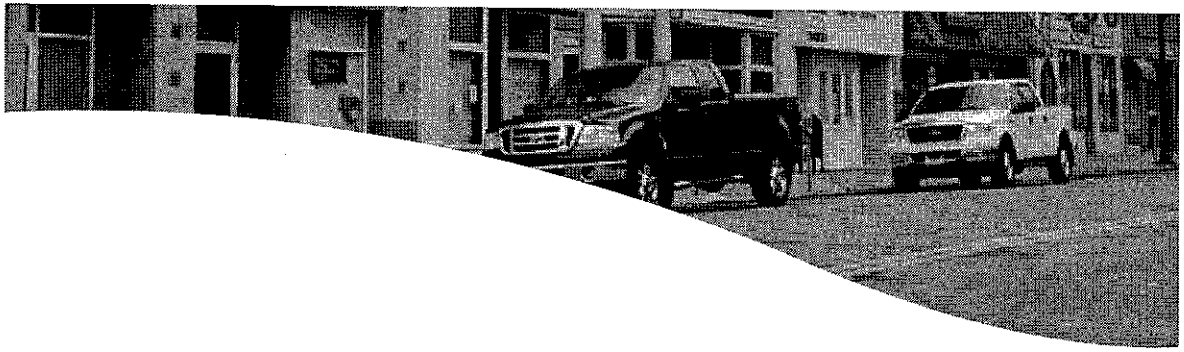
Visitors from around the region and around the world are drawn to Chautauqua County to pursue their passions, while also enjoying the variety of charming, historical villages and towns, each unique in ambiance, shopping, dining, and entertainment offerings.

One Sentence Brand Statement

Chautauqua County has emerged as The World's Learning Center, the premier destination for leisure learning opportunities in the Eastern U.S. and eventually the World.



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

Our visits to Chautauqua County and its many areas, our interviews with various stakeholders, and our research into local, regional, and state marketing efforts, allowed us to identify and summarize the specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that have an impact on the county's development related to the tourism industry. Strong consideration is given to the dominant assets of an area, which can become the foundation for a particular brand. Likewise, opportunities previously undeveloped often inspire strong branding ideas. Weaknesses are sometimes fatal to branding efforts, but many times they can be overcome. Threats represent potential situations and are generally uncontrollable by the community. However, both threats and weaknesses can often be mitigated through understanding the limitations and careful planning.

Strengths

- Chautauqua County is a beautiful, serene, and pastoral region, with great visual appeal. Lake Chautauqua is a lovely centerpiece for the county.

- Chautauqua Institution is a premier, world-renowned facility offering an adventurous range of arts, lectures, and other programs during a nine-week summer season. This facility attracts 175,000 visitors annually.

- In addition to Chautauqua Institution, there are other existing, well-established tourism products, such as Peek 'N Peak Resort, The Red Brick Farm, Bemus Point attractions, Lake Erie Wine Trail, Roger Tory Peterson Institute, Lucy/Desi attractions, Lily Dale Assembly, and much more that have the potential to be expanded and draw more visitation.

- A variety of summer and winter activities are available throughout the region, ranging from golf and hiking to skiing and snowmobiling.

- Towns and villages in the county have great architectural appeal with potential to become attractive destinations.

Weaknesses

- In several towns there is an insufficient critical mass of shopping and dining on the main streets that would appeal to visitors.

- Towns also lack critical after-6:00 p.m. activities and entertainment opportunities. Seventy percent of all consumer spending takes place after 6:00 p.m.

- Many towns lack the amenities and ambiance that would attract visitors.

- With a few exceptions, most communities and areas within the county have not developed their unique attributes or their potential to become stronger visitor destinations.

- Direct commercial air service to the county is limited and sporadic, and commercial flights on small planes into Jamestown are expensive. At this time there is only one carrier (Continental Express) providing service from Cleveland. The nearest major airport is Buffalo, NY.

Opportunities

- The drawing power of the Chautauqua Institution brings a large market to the area that with the right product and the right message, could be attracted to the county's communities and attractions outside the Institution.

- The Chautauqua Institution and related learning experiences developed in the county have the potential to attract visitors far beyond the current numbers.

- Several towns in the county have the potential to create or expand their downtowns into attractive visitor destinations. Some of these towns are close to having the critical mass of shops, restaurants, and entertainment necessary, while others will need to rearrange the business mix and attract businesses into their downtown to fit their identities.

- Two major U.S. Interstates cross through Chautauqua County providing easy highway access to the region and an opportunity to communicate with potential visitors passing through the region at visitor information centers.

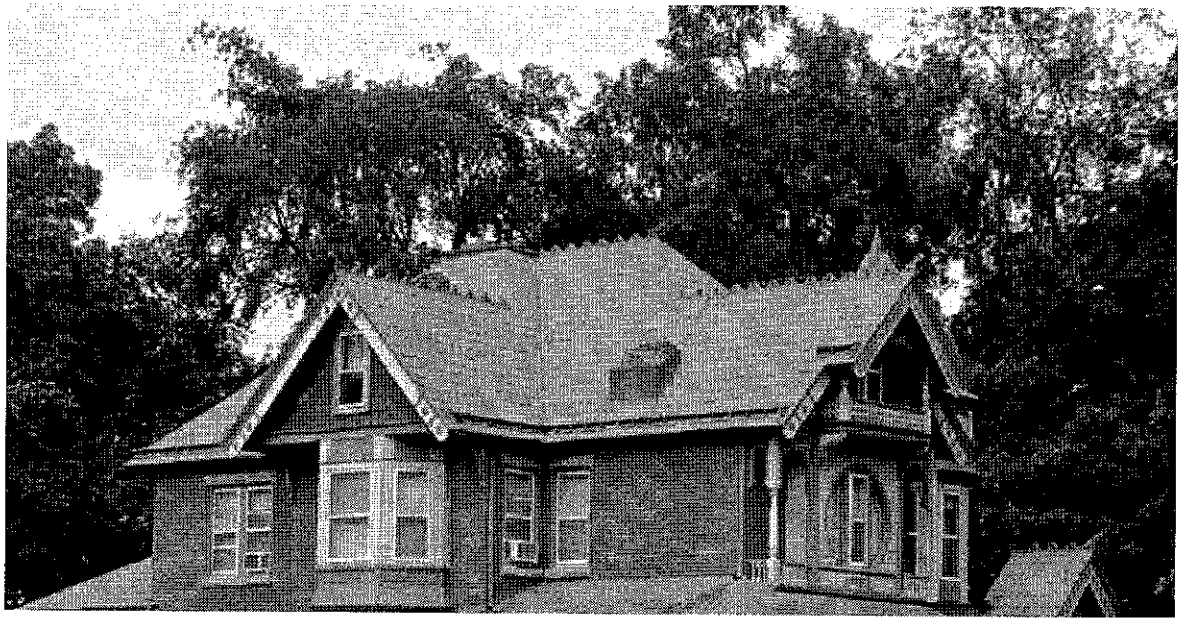
- Emerging vacation trends show that a large portion of today's travelers are interested in some type of learning experience while on vacation.

Threats

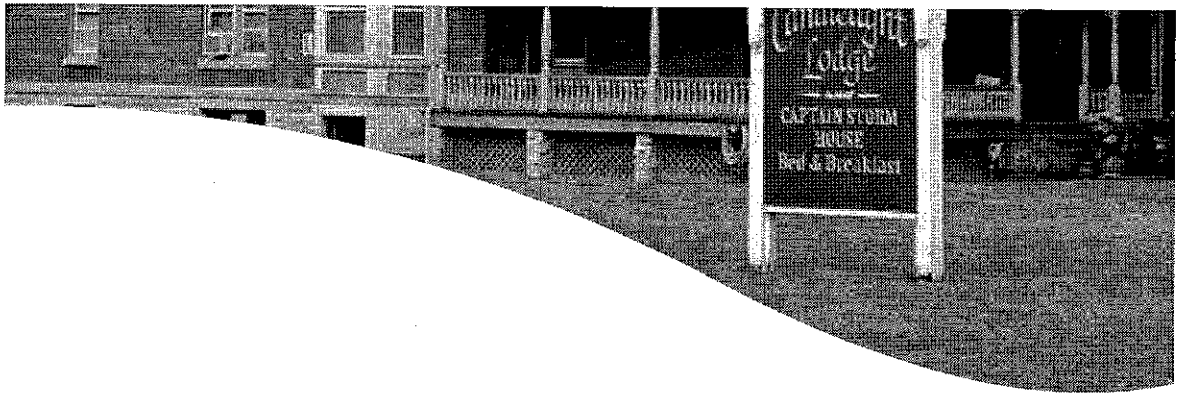
- It is unlikely that direct commercial air service will increase into the county any time soon. The trend by airlines is to decrease service to smaller markets that don't have the volume needed to feed major hubs.

- Current economic conditions and uncertainties may negatively impact longer distance travel markets for a period of several years.

- Winter travel conditions may discourage some from traveling, except those who enjoy winter sports.



Executive Summary & Brand Direction



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this plan is to provide Chautauqua County a guide for brand development and a marketing action plan. This plan outlines a specific course of interrelated actions to brand Chautauqua County as The World's Learning Center. Much more than a logo or slogan, a destination's brand is the image and feeling that it portrays. It is a perception in people's minds; the promise of an expected experience. When that promise means an active experience that is unique and fun for both local residents and visitors – such as an exceptional and unique learning experience – then the destination becomes worthy of a special trip.

If we asked residents of eastern New York, Ohio, or Pennsylvania about their impressions of Chautauqua County, they may be hard-pressed to identify what sets the County apart from other beautiful rural areas in New York such as the Finger Lakes region or the Adirondacks. All these areas have wonderful opportunities for outdoor recreation, including lakes, rivers, hiking trails, and ski resorts, and attractions such as wineries, parks, and fall colors. What makes Chautauqua County different from these other areas? Currently, Chautauqua County is trying to compete with these areas by offering basically the same things. Clearly, Chautauqua County needs to differentiate itself and develop a strong and distinct identity as an interesting place to visit.

Every branding effort requires product development. The challenge is to identify the brand-niche with the best chance of success with the least amount of investment and the fastest return. In many cases, the answer to this challenge lies in leveraging something that is already working in the region to capture and "own" a new brand identity – one not already being used by another region tapping into the same markets. In other cases, something entirely new is developed as the brand.

BRANDS CONSIDERED

The DDI team considered several brand options, keeping in mind the current assets and character of the county and the essential criteria by which successful brands are created.

Based on the assets found in Chautauqua County we considered the following brands:

- Outdoor recreation – Outdoor recreation is one of the most overused brands in tourism. However, if Chautauqua County had the most of something or was the "best" at something (i.e. the best whitewater rapids in the Northeast), then it might be worth considering a brand built around this attribute. However, all the outdoor recreation opportunities found in Chautauqua County, while very good, are similar to many areas in New York that have a stronger claim to that branded activity.

- Arts – While artists who work in various media are found throughout the county, there is not a critical mass of artists to be considered a primary lure and to generate a county-wide arts brand. However, arts and artists can be an important diversionary activity and should be supported and promoted within the eventual brand direction.

- Antiques – As with artists, antique stores are found in and near several communities. Some antique shops are more akin to second-hand stores than true antique shops. The DDI team did not feel that antiques would be a strong enough primary lure as a county-wide brand. The team did feel, however, that one or two of the towns in the county could become the antiques center of the region, with a little re-arrangement of the downtown business mix.

- Culinary/Wine – Drawing on the growing popularity of the Lake Erie wine region, "America's Grape Country"," and the development of some very nice restaurants within the county, we looked at the potential for a culinary/wine brand. Because culinary and wine are two often-used brand approaches, this would be a case where the county's culinary and wine offerings would need to be the best on the East Coast in order to capture the interest of the larger market. This brand has some potential over the long term, as the region continues to develop it wine products and fine dining opportunities grow. But, we did not feel the potential was large enough to sustain a brand.

- Golf – With several beautiful golf courses and a large golf/ski resort, we considered developing a golf brand for Chautauqua County. However, there are many areas throughout New York and the U.S. that offer world-class golfing. Again, if you are going to offer something that is available in many places, it must be the best. In addition, golf in Chautauqua County is a seasonal activity and we were looking for a brand that could transcend the seasons.

- Leisure Learning – With the presence of the Chautauqua Institution and the growing trend in leisure learning, we considered the potential for developing a brand focused on leisure learning opportunities.

TOURISM TRENDS AND EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

Understanding both the travel markets and the emerging opportunities is key to being successful as a tourism destination. Both business and leisure travel have been adversely affected by political and economic events in recent years. Yet, travel continues, and many sectors of the travel industry are growing in spite of challenging economic times. The following are a few of the key travel trends among U.S. travelers that have implications for Chautauqua County:

- Among residents of the U.S., most trips of 50 miles or more from home are by personal vehicle and taken to destinations within the United States. The average trip is 150 to 200 miles.

- The majority of long distance trips are made by travelers who have a total household income of $50,000 or more, and by travelers age 25 to 64.

- Weekend getaway travel is growing, with most trips taking place from April through October. Shoulder season getaway travel (April/May and September/October) is just as strong as summer.

- Women make the majority of travel decisions for their family, for their own travel, and for all luxury travel.

- The use of the Internet for travel planning and booking continues to grow rapidly and is playing more of a key role in the decision-making process. In 2007 for the first time more travel was purchased ONLINE in the U.S. than offline (*PhoCusWright Research*).

- Various surveys of U.S. travelers suggest that interest in outdoor recreation, national parks, and adventure activities is strong. In addition, travelers are more environmentally conscious in making travel decisions, looking for eco-friendly options.

- Interest in an educational activity or learning experience during vacations is growing. In a recent Trip Advisory survey of 3,000 U.S. travelers, nearly four in ten indicated an interest in a learning experience while on vacation, representing an increase in learning vacation interest over recent years.

The implications of these basic trends and emerging opportunities for Chautauqua County are many, but three in particular stand out. Most trips taken by travelers are by car, suggesting that a good market for the county is within a 150 to 200-mile radius of the county. The travel market is increasingly tech-savvy, suggesting Chautauqua County needs to make the most of its online opportunities. The growing interest in educational activities and learning experiences is a good fit for Chautauqua County because of the educational tourism product already available in the county. This interest in learning experiences while on vacation also suggests that markets beyond the nearby drive markets may be interested in the county, if the product is strong enough and distinct enough to stand up to competing destinations.

MARKETS FOR CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

A closer analysis of the markets for Chautauqua was conducted to better understand potential for various brand directions. DDI used ESRI's "Tapestry" LifeMode segmentation to understand the composition of residents in the nearby drive markets and the farther away drive/air markets. We call these markets the "short-haul drive" and the "long-haul air/drive" markets.

Tapestry" groups consumers into segments (and gives them a name) by their common lifestage and lifestyle characteristics in order to better understand

the travel habits, media habits, and purchasing characteristics of the market. These segments provide general guidance into the size of the market for a particular product or experience, as well as clues as to how best to reach the higher potential markets through various media.

Short-Haul Drive Markets – U.S.

The short-haul drive markets from the U.S. are defined as those markets within 150 miles of Jamestown or a two- to three-hour drive. Included in this area were Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Rochester, and the areas in-between. Households in this area total 4.4 million while population totals 11.0 million.

We have divided the market into two large groups – primary or highest potential visitors and secondary potential visitors. Characteristics of highest potential visitors from this region for Chautauqua County include:

- Educated, above-average household income levels
- Active in types of activities Chautauqua County offers
- Travel experience domestically or overseas

Based on these characteristics, the size of the primary market for Chautauqua County is approximately one-quarter of the households in this region. These households are educated, most earn well above the national average, and leisure activities fit potential activities available in Chautauqua County. This market might be interested in weekend and longer visits to the county to golf, enjoy water sports, bird-watch, and attend an educational or life-learning workshop.

SHORT-HAUL DRIVE MARKETS – U.S.- PRIMARY MARKET

Primary Market **Tapestry LifeMode**	**# of HH within 150 miles**	**Median HH Income**	**Description**
Exurbanites	159,486	$88,195	Well-educated, affluent, some empty nesters, leisure activities include travel, boating, hiking, kayaking, photography, bird-watching, golf
In Style	79,390	$72,112	Well-educated, affluent, professional couples, leisure activities include domestic travel, golf, beach, snorkeling, casino gambling
Green Acres	155,796	$63,922	Educated, above average HH income, leisure activities include home improvement, gardening, mountain biking, water sports, bird-watching, hunting
Cozy and Comfortable	342,067	$65,768	Educated, above average HH income, leisure activities include home improvement, gardening, softball, golf, casino gambling, watch sports
Prosperous Empty Nesters	182,280	$69,834	Well-educated, 55+, above average income, leisure activities include refinishing furniture, golf, power boating, attend sports events
Retirement Communities	102,316	$48,075	Educated, average HH income, leisure activities include overseas travel, bingo, gambling, canoeing, adult education courses, indoor gardening
TOTAL Primary Market HH	1,021,335		
Percent of Total HH	**23%**		

The secondary short-haul drive market consists of about one-third of all households in the 150-mile radius. This market is somewhat different from the primary market. These households do not have the same education levels as the primary market, tend to have lower average household incomes, and engage in other types of activities compared to the primary market. This market might come to Chautauqua County for a day for an overnight to engage in golf, fishing, and perhaps attend a country music festival.

SHORT-HAUL DRIVE MARKETS – U.S.- SECONDARY MARKET

Secondary Market **Tapestry LifeMode**	**# of HH within 150 miles**	**Median HH Income**	**Description**
Rustbelt Retirees	536,534	$50,977	Average education and HH income, leisure activities include golf, bingo, casino gambling, horse races
Salt of the Earth	364,417	$50,538	Average education and HH income, leisure activities include gardening, fishing, hunting, country music concerts, vacations by car
Rustbelt Traditions	308,2223	$49,579	Educated, average HH income, leisure activities include bowling, fishing, hunting, auto races, country music concerts
Midlife Junction	145,704	$47,683	Average education and HH income, leisure activities include yoga, refinishing furniture, attending country music concerts, auto races
Main Street USA	72,313	$55,144	Educated, slightly above average income, leisure time activities include bowling, skating, visit theme parks, beach, domestic vacations
TOTAL Secondary Market HH	1,427,191		
Percent of Total HH	**32%**		

Long haul drive/air markets – U.S.

Along the East Coast of the U.S. is a huge market of consumers that live primarily in cities and suburbs. DDI examined the three main urban areas on the East Coast nearest to Chautauqua County, Boston, New York, and Washington D.C., to gain a better understanding of these markets and their potential for the county.

These long-haul drive/air markets represent households that are well educated, affluent, and well traveled. They enjoy participating in outdoor activities such as golf and skiing, cultural events such as the theatre, dance performances and museums, and are interested in adult education courses. The size of this market is huge in terms of households: 3.1 million in the New York region, 1.3 million in the Boston region, and approximately 900,000 in the Washington D.C. area.

Driving to Chautauqua County from these markets ranges from six to eight hours, making a visit to the County more likely to be longer than a weekend. Air travel to Chautauqua involves flying to Buffalo, renting a car, and driving for an hour, unless one flies into Jamestown on the very limited commercial service. This market represents potential for stays of a week or longer and is a prime market for engaging learning experiences, like those offered by the Chautauqua Institution.

LONG-HAUL DRIVE MARKETS – U.S.-

LifeMode	New York Region HH	Boston Region HH	WA DC Region HH	Description
City Lights	714,251	210,553	21,555	Educated, above average income, leisure activities include foreign travel, adult education classes, movies, horse races, play chess and soccer
Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	662,440	225,279	121,179	Educated, affluent, leisure activities include domestic and overseas travel, skiing, going to the theatre and the beach
Laptops & Lattes	390,557	77,633	54,371	Highly educated, affluent, leisure activities include domestic and overseas travel, going to theatre, dance performances, concerts, museums, and taking adult education courses
Retirement Communities	272,679	122,938	52,731	Educated, average HH income, leisure activities include overseas travel, bingo, gambling, canoeing, adult education courses, indoor gardening
Connoisseur	268,715	126,673	109,189	Well-educated, affluent, leisure activities include skiing, golf, tennis, yoga, jogging, domestic and overseas travel, going to theatre and dance performances, museums

LONG-HAUL DRIVE MARKETS – U.S. (CONTINUED)-

Metro Renters	219,577	80,672	161,594	Well-educated, young, above average income, leisure activities include domestic and overseas travel, going to museums, throwing frisbees
Suburban Splendor	205,448	162,798	166,632	Well-educated, very affluent, leisure activities include, travel both overseas and domestically, visiting museums, skiing, golf, tennis, skating, bicycling, self-improvement
Top Rung	193,151	90,258	66,697	Highly-educated, wealthiest market, leisure activities include theatre, dance performances, visiting museums, yoga, tennis, snorkel
Urban Chic	154,526	133,486	46,260	Well-educated, affluent, leisure activities include running, hiking, golf, skiing
Green Acres	38,906	62,861	80,006	Educated, above average HH income, leisure activities include home improvement, gardening, mountain biking, water sports, bird-watching, hunting
Total Target HH	3,120,250	1,293,151	**880,214**	
Percent of Total HH	**35%**	**30%**	**28%**	

Canadian Market

The largest inbound market to the U.S. is Canada. Visitors from Canada generate 12.4% of all visitor spending in the U.S. New York is the most popular state for Canadians to visit in terms of overall numbers. (Florida captures the most spending due to the large number of snowbirds spending considerable time in the sunny state). Of all Canadian visitors to the U.S. half are either on day trips or one-night trips. Four in ten are on trips of three weeks or more – most likely to Florida for the winter months. Most trips are for leisure or to visit friends and family.

There is a large Canadian population in Southern Ontario within a three-hour drive of Chautauqua County. The primary population in this area is found along the shore of Lake Ontario, from The Buffalo-Niagara border to Toronto. This area is known as the "golden horseshoe" and approximately five million people reside in the region.

In general, the population in this region is well-educated, with 30% to 35% holding a bachelor's degree or higher and median household incomes above $50,000 or more. Affluent suburbs surround Toronto, with median household incomes ranging from $71,400 in Mississauga, to $92,400 in Oakville, far above average.

The State of New York's "I Love New York" campaign is focusing a large portion of its budget on the Toronto-area markets. We believe that this market represents good potential for Chautauqua County, as well, particularly the more affluent, well-educated market.

COMPETITIVE DESTINATIONS

What destinations compete for the potential visitor to Chautauqua County? If the county is competing for the short-haul drive market, there are many opportunities to draw the potential visitor away from Chautauqua County. Destinations competing for the attention of this market include places in:

- New York – Greater Niagara Region, Finger Lakes Region, Cattaraugus County, the Catskills, the Adirondacks
- Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania's Great Lakes Region, Pennsylvania Wilds
- Ohio – Northeast Ohio region

These areas all promote areas and attractions similar to those in Chautauqua, activities like hiking, biking, water sports, wine, winter sports, fishing, history, fall colors, etc. One region might be better known for something in particular, such as the Finger Lakes Region and wine. But, in general, these are regions are all promoting the same thing. Chautauqua County needs to stand out from these places with something that can only be experienced in the county or is the best place to experience that something.

For the long-haul drive/air markets the competition for the visitor is far more diverse. The long-haul markets we have identified as having potential for Chautauqua County are mostly well-educated, affluent, and well-traveled. If they want to go skiing, they will likely head off to Lake Placid, New England, or even jet off to the Rockies. If they want a water-based vacation, they have a multitude of sun and sand opportunities on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, Long Island, and Chesapeake Bay, and in Florida and the Caribbean. In order to grab the attention of this market, Chautauqua County will need to present them with a remarkable value proposition – an experience that they cannot get anywhere else.

RECOMMENDED BRAND

After multiple visits to Chautauqua County, reviewing competitive destinations, considering tourism trends and emerging opportunities, and analyzing the potential markets, the DDI team developed a brand direction for the county. This brand direction will become Chautauqua County's identity – what it will be known for. We have also developed recommendations for various communities to tie into the primary brand by identifying potential sub brands.

Primary Brand

We recommend that Chautauqua County become The World's Learning Center. In considering this brand, we tested it against specific criteria that need to be met for a successful brand. Using the following criteria, we determined that this brand would be an excellent fit for Chautauqua County:

- **Narrow focus:** Good brands always begin with a narrow focus but also have the potential to add additional features that add to the lure and the diversions that keep customers spending. Being all things to all people no longer works. This is the age of specialization, and creating a niche that is unique within the marketplace is a winning formula. This does not mean that the existing assets that bring visitors to Chautauqua County should be ignored. The more one has to offer, the better the destination. It does mean, however, that the brand becomes the single idea of what Chautauqua County is known for, particularly to the more distant markets.

- **Extensions:** Good brands begin with a narrow focus but also have the potential to add additional features that add to the lure and the diversions that keep customers spending. For example, an initial focus on providing leisure learning opportunities at existing centers or facilities can expand to the development of leisure learning packages in other parts of the county.

- **Wide appeal:** While narrow in focus, the brand should have wide appeal within the market and economic stability. Both the nearby and more distant markets for Chautauqua County are interested in leisure learning opportunities, although the types of opportunities will likely vary by market.

Because the county has a wide variety of tourism products that can be packaged as learning opportunities, it will have appeal to a wider market.

- **Uniqueness:** Our research into the East Coast market areas suggests that no other region is pursuing a leisure learning brand that will be as extensive as Chautauqua County's. Further, there is no other institution in the U.S. quite like the Chautauqua Institution, with its breadth and depth of programs, it's remarkable Victorian village setting on the shores of Lake Chautauqua, and it's history and traditions.

- **Existing assets:** Chautauqua County has a number of assets for both summer and winter leisure learning opportunities starting with the Chautauqua Institution, but also including Peek 'N Peak Resort, Bemus Point, Lake Chautauqua, Lake Erie, and the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, just to name a few. In addition, the county's diversions, such as the Wine Trail, Red Brick Farm, Lucy/Desi attractions, and many other diversionary activities will all be able to participate in the brand direction by developing leisure learning programs based around their attractions.

- **New money:** Drawing from the surrounding region, as well as more distant markets along the East Coast, this brand will introduce new money into Chautauqua County, where it will be spent by local proprietors, providing an economic multiplier effect in the local economy.

- **An environment for locals:** As the learning brand develops, more product and community development will take place that will be of interest to the local population. For example, over time communities can develop a collection of shops along their historic main streets that will appeal to both visitors and locals, particularly if evening hours are kept in the retail stores.

Sub or Niche Brands

Each community and town in Chautauqua County should work to find its own niche brand that can tie into the overall county brand and differentiate the community from other towns in the region. We have a the following suggestions for each town to consider:

- **Jamestown** – As home to the Lucy/Desi attractions, Jamestown could become known as the Comedy Capital of the Northeast. In addition to the existing festivals in celebration of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Jamestown could offer education programs such as comedy acting workshops at different times of the year, television production workshops, summer acting camps, or even a major comedy festival.

Jamestown is also the home to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute. The RTPI already sponsors a range of programs related to birding and natural history. Partnering with the Jamestown Audubon Society, the RTPI programs could be expanded to make Jamestown THE place to go from anywhere in the Northeast to learn about and study birding and natural history.

- **Fredonia** – Fredonia has beautiful Victorian architecture, a spectacular playhouse, and is home to a campus of the State University of New York. The town is a natural to fit into the learning center brand and is close in terms of offering the critical mass of retail shops and dining needed to be a destination that appeals to visitors. Using the "university town" image, Fredonia can build events and leisure learning opportunities to attract visitors. The spectacular playhouse should be used for performances, lectures, and other events that relate to learning experiences.

- **Dunkirk** – This delightful waterfront setting could be perfect for the home of water-based learning experiences. We see the potential for an open water sailing base that has sailing camps and schools. Or, it could become the scuba diving center of Lake Erie, featuring diving schools, learning to wreck dive, rescue diving, treasure diving, or any other diving activity. Dunkirk could also make great use of its waterfront park for festivals and events.

- **Bemus Point** – Bemus Point has already created a concentration of activities, events, shopping, and dining that attracts visitors from all over the county. Building on its successes, businesses at Bemus Point could expand existing offerings into additional arts events. For example, one shop in Bemus already offers classes in knitting, beading, jewelry-making, watchmaking, pasta-making and other cooking classes. What if one of these classes expanded into a festival, such as an arts and crafts festival complete

with workshops, and world-renowned artists, that had appeal to the market outside of county residents?

- **Mayville** – This charming town could become a center for everything culinary. There is a growing restaurant community offering a variety of dining experiences in a range of settings. With its culinary-related shops and restaurant, The Red Brick Farm could become a center for culinary or home decoration, or gardening events, workshops, "camps," classes, etc.

- **Westfield/Barcelona** – Westfield's downtown has "great bones," that is, beautiful Victorian architecture on its main street and nice wide sidewalks. Westfield could become a "must see" destination for visitors to the county by turning the downtown into a true destination shopping district filled with interesting shops, restaurants, and entertainment. The proposed Grape Discovery Center will attract more visitors to the region for the exhibits and education regarding the extensive wine and grape production in this area. This community lends itself well to an arts theme or antiques theme, with the retail community supporting and developing one of these themes by adding more antique shops or art galleries. The community also needs to develop the dining and entertainment that goes hand in hand with the other retail.

- **Findley Lake** – The cozy community of Findley Lake offers the visitor to the county a fun diversion with its cute collection of shops and small eateries. The lake itself is a great asset and could be used to develop "camps" and schools for non-motorized water sports, such as rowing, canoeing and kayaking.

- **Peek 'N Peak** – This great resort is already tying into the learning center brand through its ski, golf, and culinary packages, team-building course, and special events. The potential is there to use the county brand to further extend this resort's learning programs through additional golf camps, ski camps, culinary experiences, and other related programs.

- **Lakewood** – A beautiful lakefront community, Lakewood could become a small boat sailing center, where one can learn to sail on a relatively calm lake. The town doesn't yet have the critical mass to make it a stand-alone destination but with a little more development could capture the interest of more visitors.

There are other small villages and towns throughout the county not mentioned here but with potential to develop opportunities to tie into the brand. Clearly, Lily Dale Assembly on Cassadaga Lake can fit into the brand with its existing summer programs. Towns near Amish settlements could use this as inspiration to develop various arts and crafts "camps," (i.e. quilting, woodworking, weaving, etc.), and then visit Amish workshops. One of the towns, villages, or wineries along the Wine Trail could become "wine central" and offer weekend wine workshops, wine camps, wine and culinary events, etc. There are literally endless opportunities to tie into the learning center brand.

THE BRAND LOGO

What is a brand logo? It is simply a graphic device used to express the brand. Every credible book on the process of branding will affirm the fact that you never build brands or develop identities and marketing slogans or tag lines using focus groups. A focus group consists of a number of people sequestered in a single room and they discuss and look at identities and concepts as a group. When people "discuss" concepts and creative types "sell" the concept to those in the room, you end up with a watered down, generic, "all things to all people" identity and tag line. How would one explain the unfocused brand and logo to potentially millions of readers what the logo means?

This is an ineffective process, since readers, viewers, and others need to size up the perception of the logo and tag line in mere seconds. The first impression - that first glance - has to "close the sale."

It is easy for people to get hung up on graphic images and text, yet it is important to remember that logos and slogans are NOT brands. Brands are built on product, not logos and slogans. They are simply marketing tools used to support the brand. Additionally, brands must be earned. You never roll out a brand until you can deliver on the promise.

The recommended brand logo developed by DDI is shown on this page. There are many applications for the logo including placement within advertisements, the Chautauqua website, and promotional materials.

The World's Learning Center™
Chautauqua
New York

THE BRAND SLOGAN AND KEY MARKETING MESSAGES

Like logos, slogans are a shorthand way communicating the brand promise, and the slogan often accompanies the logo in marketing materials. Chautauqua County can start using the logo and slogan in the next marketing cycle, since there is a critical mass of learning opportunities already available in the county, starting with the Chautauqua Institution. The suggested slogan for Chautauqua County is:

Chautauqua County: The World's Learning Center

The key message for the brand is: Chautauqua County is the premier destination for leisure learning opportunities. The county offers the greatest variety of high quality learning experiences to be found in the Eastern U.S. and eventually the world.

The second key message is that Chautauqua County offers this vacation opportunity in a beautiful region, with many interesting destinations within the county to visit when not engaged in your primary leisure learning experience.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

The success of the new Chautauqua County brand is based on the delivery of the brand promise. With the Chautauqua Institution's program, along with other leisure learning opportunities currently available throughout the county, Chautauqua County is able to deliver on the brand promise during the summer months. In order for the county to fully deliver on the promise, product development will need to occur in support of the brand. This includes development of additional:

- Primary lures – These are the things that bring visitors from their home to the destination. In the case of Chautauqua County, the experiences must be the best of something or something that is totally unique – something the visitor cannot get closer to home. It must be compelling enough for visitors to make the trip. The "lure" in this case is the unique learning experiences in unique settings. In order for the county to build and maintain the brand, additional learning experiences will need to be developed.

- Diversions – These are the visitor experiences in the towns and villages that the consumer might find closer to home but choose to do in the destination because they are already there. For example, retail shopping, dining out, and attending movies, make good diversions during leisure education vacations. Most towns in Chautauqua County lack the necessary critical mass of diversionary activities to attract visitors for stays of more than one or two hours. This should be an area of focus for the towns in the county in the immediate future.

- Amenities – These are the things in the destination that make the experience comfortable and simple. Great hotel rooms and good dining options are amenities. Good signage and wayfinding are amenities. So are convenient public restrooms, benches, free Wi-Fi, parking, gathering places and shade trees. We recommend that each community in the county take a look at their own amenities and make plans to address areas that are lacking.

- Ambiance – This is the overall environment in which visitor experiences take place. Historic downtown buildings, public art, landscaping, flowers, and water fountains are all ambiance. We recommend that the architectural character of the county's downtowns be preserved and that any new architecture be compatible.

The other important keys to success involve packaging and programming. Packaging includes the travel elements that are included in a tourism

product, such as hotel stays, transportation to and from a site, coupon books, equipment rental, etc. Programming includes the activities, such as classes, workshops, demonstrations, meeting artists, etc. Businesses in the county that want to tie into the brand must think about how they want to "package" their learning experience and what "programming" they will include. Including the right mix of tourism product and activities in the packaging and programming can make or break the success of the experience.

Finally, this branding and marketing effort requires the cooperation of the people and organizations involved in marketing the county – from chambers to businesses and non-profits. Once the brand and slogan are adopted by the CCVB, it is important to get every organization that markets the destination to embrace the brand and present them as part of the brand. You will be far more powerful as one loud voice than a number of small individual voices. This is the entire purpose of developing a destination brand in the first place. When everyone is communicating the same message the effort becomes both powerful and fun.

Visitors don't care about organizations; they care about the visitor experience. Yes, each entity should have its own identity or "point of distinction," but when it comes to marketing to the outside world there should be a unified voice trumpeting to the people in your market areas that Chautauqua County is The World's Learning Center. Using a single tag line among all marketing organizations will create stronger brand awareness.

When people and organizations begin to work in unison, the branding and marketing effort becomes an enjoyable, rather than a competitive process, with results seen in individually at the cash register and collectively in increased tax revenues.

The next sections of this plan provide the detailed branding and marketing recommendations for Chautauqua County.

Branding Recommendations

1 ADOPT THE CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY "THE WORLD'S LEARNING CENTER" BRAND.

DESCRIPTION:
Memorize and commit to the brand promise as the guiding principle and a means of staying on track with the brand development process. With many participants involved in the development of the brand it is easy to become distracted or to focus too much on side issues. Understanding where you want to go helps keep everyone focused.

The brand promise is the *core* of this entire branding and marketing action plan. It is what you want people to think of Chautauqua County when they hear the name. Because the brand is a "promise," foremost to the effort is ensuring that the county delivers on that promise. A brand is never "rolled out," but it is earned over time. Remember, a brand is what others think about you, not what you say you are.

If we dissect the brand promise, there are two primary components in it:

1. Positioning Chautauqua County as The World's Learning Center.

2. The focus of the brand is on the leisure learning experiences offered in the county, with the Chautauqua Institution as the initial "centerpiece" of the brand experience. The brand promise states that Chautauqua County:

- Offers more opportunities to pursue leisure learning than any other area in the World. (Leisure learning or "life-learning" as it is sometimes called, is that learning the individual does because it enriches their life, makes them a better person, or gives enjoyment, not because it is a requirement of their vocation.)

- Is located in a region that is beautiful and offers a range of diversionary activities.

- Has all the amenities that provide a complete vacation experience including lovely settings, inviting towns and villages, parking, convenient public restrooms, etc.

In order to deliver on this promise and commit to the brand, the following should happen:

1. Adopt the World's Learning Center brand for Chautauqua County, including committing to the brand promise and using new logos and tag lines.

2. Promote the businesses (specifically) that deliver on the promise of the World's Learning Center – businesses that offer learning packages and experiences. These are your anchor businesses, along with exceptional eateries, quality lodging options, and other elements that "prove" Chautauqua County is the World's Learning Center. Always lead with your best products, not simply a list of everything.

3. The Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau and other entities that market the county need to all use logos, identities and font styles that are within the same style "family" so that the look is consistent. They should also coordinate their individual promotional efforts so that the combined effort drives a stake into the ground that Chautauqua County owns the World's Learning Center brand.

4. Everyone marketing the county should use third party quotes – the "two thumbs up" accolades that reinforce and substantiate the brand. Brands are what people think of you, not what you say you are. Success depends on third party endorsements.

5. You build your brand using public relations, while advertising is used to cement your ownership position. A region-wide exceptional, professional PR effort is front and center to the brand, but this must be rolled out only as the product to support it is developed. Do not sell an empty promise.

6. There MUST be activities in the county after 6:00 pm. This includes shopping until 9:00 pm, restaurants open at least until 10:00 pm and entertainment that lasts until after midnight - and not just on weekends.

Successful destinations do not close at 6:00 pm. Some areas of Chautauqua County, such as Bemus Point, are already doing a good job in this area. The key is to have several areas in the County that offer activities after 6:00 pm.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau, Brand Leadership Team

APPROXIMATE COST:
None, except in time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
None required

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Beginning in late 2008, gradually building over the next few years

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Brands are perceptions – what people think of you as a destination. But brands are built on product, while marketing is used to create awareness and prove you own the brand. Without a product to back it, the branding effort will die a quick death. Chautauqua County has a strong base of existing product to back up this brand direction today, with plenty of opportunities for the product to grow over time.

It will take the entire county to develop a strong, winning brand. Ultimately, it will require every organization getting on the same page and pulling in the same direction. Once this happens, the effort will stick in the minds of visitors and can spawn incredible brand awareness. A classic case of this happening is Las Vegas. At one point, when 48 of 50 states legalized some form of gambling, Las Vegas decided to become a family destination with something for everyone. When that became an unfulfilled promise, they finally went back to what they were known for: Sin City and the "playground for adults." This narrow focus was delivered with the most successful tag line in American history, "What happens here, stays here."

But, just like every other town, they still needed to deliver on the promise. They did that by developing a theater and selling out 740 Celine Dion shows, producing five Cirque d'Soleil shows, and creating memorable ads and promotions that solidified the brand.

It is important to note that logos and slogans are NOT brands. They are graphic images and tag lines used to support the brand. Do not get hung up on these. In everything you do: advertising, websites, brochures, guides, billboards, press releases, etc., ask yourself each time: "Does this promote the brand perception - what we want people to know of us and do we deliver on that promise?

This example illustrate how Las Vegas has narrowed the focus of their marketing efforts, to become the "playground for adults."

2 CREATE AND EMPOWER A BRAND LEADERSHIP TEAM.

DESCRIPTION:
Form a Brand Leadership Team consisting of no more than ten to twelve members. The Team should be comprised of individuals committed to "championing" the brand and making it happen. The members of this team will be the "voice of the brand," working in support of the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau's efforts in a hands-on capacity as advocates for the brand vision.

The Brand Leadership Team, or "BLT," should include key "movers and shakers" from Chautauqua County's visitor industry, property owners, and/or business owners, and others who are good communicators and committed to the brand vision. The chair of the CCVB should appoint the team members.

Business owners, local organizations, and other tourism representatives should read through this plan and then decide whether or not they feel passionately about the objectives and recommendations detailed herein. Characteristics of a good BLT member include:

- A willingness to invest time (and in the case of private sector member, a financial investment);
- An ability to take a few hits along the way;
- Good speaking abilities;
- Enthusiasm;
- A willing doer, not someone who just wants to direct.

Good BLT members are also those who have a vested interest in the success of the new branding effort. Spreading the word and implementing the new brand direction is a big job and much of this effort will rest on the shoulders of the BLT. Without champions, the branding and marketing action plan cannot succeed.

This is the most important decision of this entire program and often the most controversial.

Selected names should be given to the Chair of the CCVB and ask that he appoint them, with board approval as the Brand Leadership Team. It will be the job of the BLT to create advocacy within the county for the branding efforts of the CCVB, and to give support to the CCVB.

They will typically report to the CCVB a few times a year with progress reports and indicating what resources are necessary to progress with the work. Essentially the BLT acts as an advisory committee to the CCVB. They will help be the "voice" of the brand.

Once the BLT has been selected, they would decide among themselves, working with the CCVB, on the necessary term length for team members. The CCVB would appoint new members to the team as needed.

While we recommend that the team be limited to between ten to twelve individuals, this is not set in stone. The key is to have a small enough team that things can actually get done, since this is about implementation. There may need to be additional people on the team that bring a specific expertise to the table or represent an important interest in the county.

The CCVB will be the brand manager – watching over the use of identities, marketing messages, tag lines, design and marketing professionals, and the BLT should support these efforts by not only spreading the word about the brand but assisting the CCVB in keeping the brand "on point." This means working with local and regional organizations that want to tap into the brand and helping them understand what the brand is about and ways they can participate.

Although this is not a product development plan, the BLT may want to get involved with product development initiatives in support of the brand. This group could help businesses and communities understand how they can tie into the brand and help gain support for public investments in infrastructure that support the brand and further the tourism in the county.

But most importantly, the BLT supports the CCVB as the advocacy arm for the brand vision and direction. If it is possible to develop a larger BLT without politics and personal agendas interfering in the way of progress, then the more people on the ground the more effective the effort will be. Each person on the team should be given an assignment that best suits him or her and that they are willing to take on. If they have something personally or professionally to gain from it, then by all means put them in charge of that item.

We recommend that the Brand Leadership Team consist of:
1 CCVB elected official, such as the chair of the CCVB
1 official from the County government
1 representative from the Chambers of Commerce
1 Board person from the Chautauqua Institution
2 property owners (preferably who own property in a downtown area)
2 proprietors of branded activities
2 retail or dining proprietors
1 representative of the county's hotel industry

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:
No specific costs are associated with this recommendation

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
None needed

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
2008 forward

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:
Every branding effort requires pioneers and those who will tirelessly champion the cause. These champions should be primarily made up of people in the business community, those willing to spend time and money in bringing the plan to fruition. We surveyed 400 well-branded towns in North America and in 396 of those communities the brand was a grass roots effort. Rarely will a "top down" effort ever yield success. Why? Elected officials are voted into office to be all things to all people, yet brands are about being known for something specific. The days of "we have something for everyone" are over and politics is the killer of any branding product. In this age of specialization you simply must jettison the generic. A generic branding effort yields a watered down, mediocre, ineffective brand.

Brands are built on product, while marketing is simply the way to tell the world who you are and why you are different than everyone else. That's what makes you worth a special trip.

The CCVB with the support of the BLT will be charged with implementing the marketing recommendations in this plan and implementing this brand direction throughout the county. Together they will foster the existing relationships with regional marketing groups and the State of New York, and cultivate partnerships with the cities, businesses and property owners, educational institutions, and other organizations that can play a role in the brand development.

The CCVB and the BLT will become the voice of the brand. They will speak at Kiwanis, Rotary, and other business organization luncheons, at City Council meetings, at other organizational annual banquets, always promoting the brand.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Nothing great was ever accomplished without enthusiasm." This group of champions must "sell" the concepts in this plan while educating the community on why these recommendations are important. You will NEVER get everyone to agree, and so this group will also need to take the hits associated with developing the brand and the product to support it. This is not about winning popularity contests; it's about importing new cash into Chautauqua County and making it a desirable place to spend both time and money. And that means standing for something specific. We all want to get along, but the "group hug" mentality will get you right back to "Discover More" and other generic offerings that could fit any community virtually anywhere.

The CCVB and Brand Leadership Team members will be the essential champions who reach out to sell the brand concept to all the organizations who are so necessary to its implementation. These individuals will do the work to see that the product is developed that will bring the brand to life, fulfilling the brand promise. The concerted effort by these individuals will be the force of the entire branding effort, keeping the brand image in focus, keeping the plan on track, and overseeing the successful development of Chautauqua County's World's Learning Center brand.

3 WORK WITH ESSENTIAL ORGANIZATIONS TO ADOPT THE BRAND.

DESCRIPTION:
The most important role to be played by the Brand Leadership Team will be to bring other organizations within the county to the table to adopt the brand. Most important in this effort will be to bring in the communities and places where brand-related product is available or can be developed, such as resort areas. The BLT will need to work closely with these communities and organizations so that support is gained throughout the county and the brand can succeed.

Relationships with the following should be developed by the BLT:

- Communities and their municipal governments throughout the county
- Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce
- Chautauqua Institution
- Regional marketing organizations (i.e. "America's Grape Country")
- Downtown associations
- Main Street associations
- County and local economic development organizations
- Local resorts, attractions and hoteliers
- Higher education institutions
- Local arts organizations
- Local museums and historical societies
- Garden clubs
- Rotary, Kiwanis, and other auxiliary organizations
- Any other organizations identified as important to the branding effort

IMPLEMENTATION:
Brand Leadership Team

APPROXIMATE COST:
None needed, except time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
None needed

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
2008 forward

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:
When developing and implementing a brand for a region as large as Chautauqua County it takes the coordination of everyone involved in marketing and delivering the tourism product, including some entities who may not realize they are in the tourism business, to achieve success. It takes an entire "village" to create a successful brand, and that means everyone working together.

4 CONDUCT BRAND-BUILDING OUTREACH IN THE COUNTY

DESCRIPTION:
The planning process begins with understanding the brand promise, setting up the leadership team and bringing other organizations onboard. There are also several tools you should develop to create awareness of the process and the brand generally throughout the county.

1. Develop a PowerPoint presentation using information and graphics from the Action Plan, combined with a sense of the community and county organizations to which you will be talking. The presentation(s) would explain the purpose and strategies for plan development, with a special emphasis on how it will benefit the entire County through additional visitor spending, job income, new retail stores and restaurants, a revitalized downtowns, gathering places for communities, evening entertainment and shopping, a stronger tax base, etc. The presentations should be mostly graphics, not words, short and fast moving to retain interest and move the story along briskly. Presenting to organizations like downtown associations, Kiwanis, Rotary, historical and art societies and outdoor clubs will draw out interested individuals who can become advocates or "champions" of the brand, and doers who will volunteer their time to help make the brand a reality.

2. Develop an annual, collectible brand poster worthy of framing. This will create awareness of the branding initiative with the local citizenry. Several thousand of these posters can be printed, given away and sold. The poster should depict some element of the World's Learning Center brand and should include the year and the brand logo. These posters should be placed in the windows of retail establishments, restaurants, hotels, municipal and school buildings, county facilities, museums, etc. throughout the County. Local artists can develop the posters either by invitation or by competition. A limited printing of the posters on high quality paper, numbered and signed by the artist could be sold or auctioned off with the proceeds going to building the brand. The posters should keep to a standard size and shape, and be of enough value that they become collectible.

3. Develop a series of bookmarks that feature graphics or photography on one side and facts about a learning opportunity on the other, such as a learning "camp" or Chautauqua Institution week. These should be numbered, so they can become a collectable. Bookmarks can be available throughout the County in various towns and establishments.

4. Consider other giveaway items that will reinforce and promote the World's Learning Center brand, such as calendars, water bottles, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Brand Leadership Team, Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:
PowerPoint: in-house labor only. Poster: $5,000, Bookmarks: $5,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

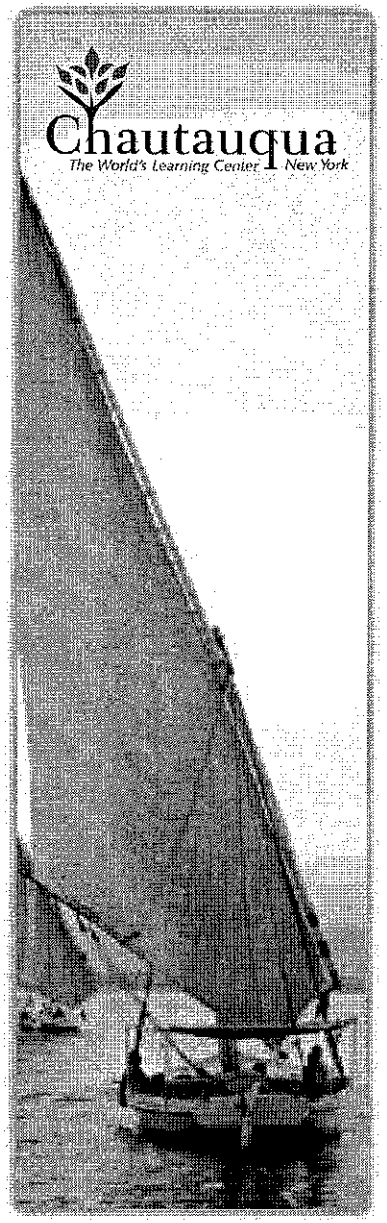
TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Annually, beginning 2009

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Chautauqua County has great potential for success with the World's Learning Center brand. Now is the time to put an action plan into place that will identify the County with this brand with both residents and visitors. It will take the coordinated efforts of businesses and organizations in the County to achieve success, and so it is critical to have the support and buy-in from these folks. These businesses and organizations all have vital roles to play in the successful positioning, branding, and marketing of the World's Learning Center brand.

See examples of outreach materials on next 2 pages.

Left: This is a sample of a Brand Poster. This can be hung around the county to promote the brand and create unity from town to town. Ideally, this poster would be changed out every year, and a professional artist would be hired to create a frame-worthy illustration. The county could even put out an open call to local artists, and hold a competition for best art that promotes the brand.

Right: These marketing bookmarks showcase an artistic photo and logo on the front, and "fun facts" about a certain activity on the back. If desired, the front of the bookmark could be a custom illustration instead of a photograph.



Learn more about *Sailing*

Q: You set off and tack towards the first buoy. What do you do when you get there?

A: broaden up. It is best whenever rounding a buoy to stay as close as possible to it (with out hitting into it).

Q: You leave the shore on a port tack avoiding the no-sail zone. You could go on a close-haul, but the wind is blowing on shore at an angle so you can what?

A: Close reach. A close reach is about 65 degrees from the wind.

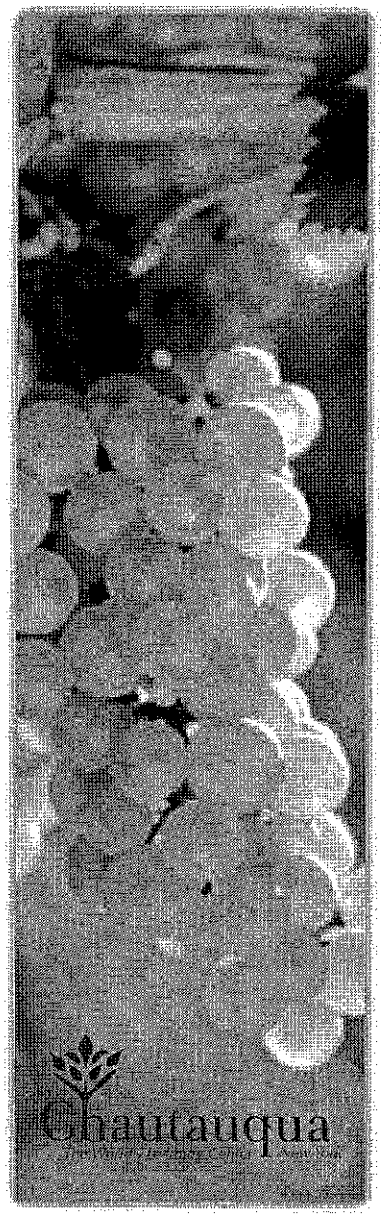
Q: You have started moving again when you approach the second buoy, how do you round the buoy?

A: Gybe. Most race courses have gybes.

Q: You have rounded the buoy and are 90 degrees from the wind. Are you sailing on a broad reach?

A: No. You are on a beam reach. This is when the sails are half out and the centre board is half down.

Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York



Learn more about *Wine*

• If you want to get a taste of "grapey" wines, try a Manischewitz. This wine is a sweet style of kosher wine from the American Concord grape. The same grape that we use to make juice and jelly.

• In 1880, California's first Commissioner of Agriculture brought cuttings from France to California. He sent his first wine from his vines to the Gran Prix in Paris where it won top honors in 1889.

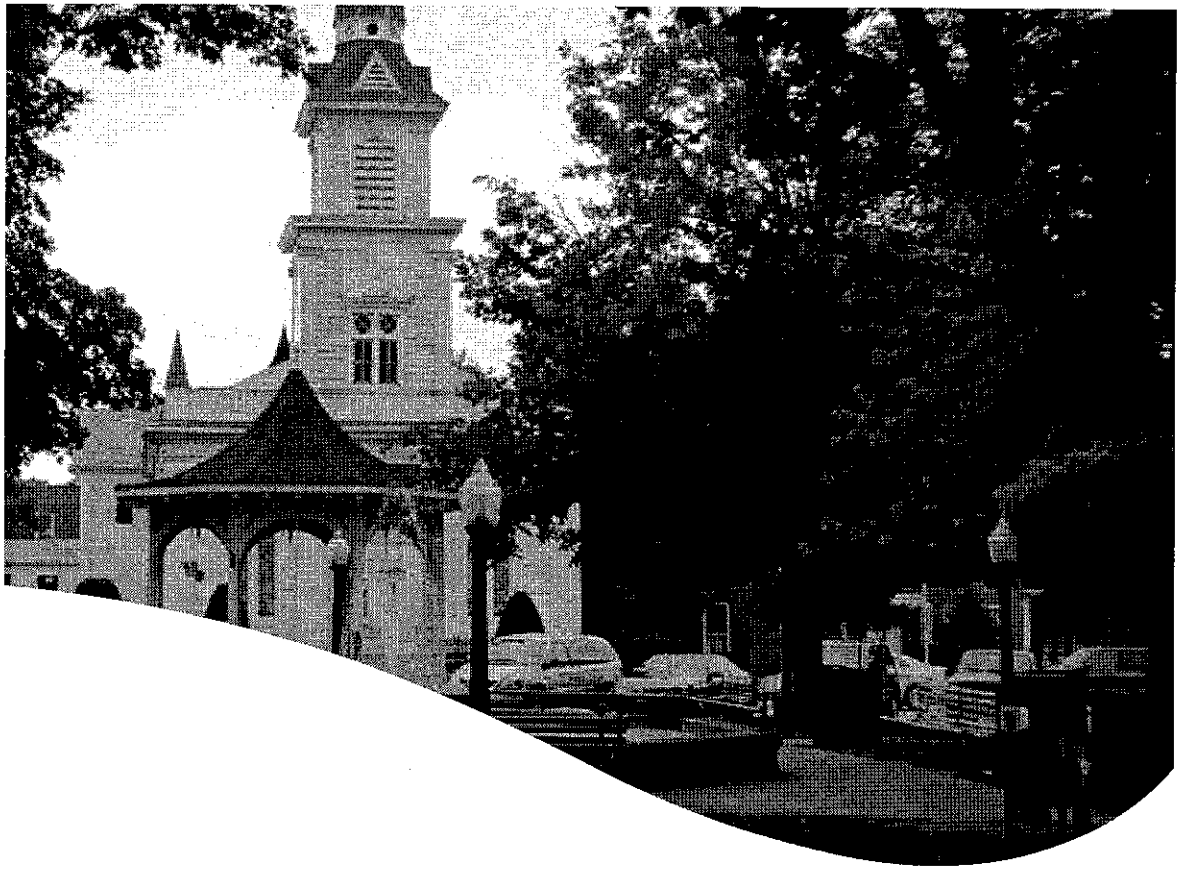
• The German Gewurztraminer, pronounced "guh-VURTS-trah-mee-ner," is similar to the White Zinfandel and chances are if you like White Zinfandel, you will enjoy a German Gewurtztraminer. It is a fragrant white wine with a bit of sweetness.

• If a dry wine is fully fermented, about 40 percent of the sugar will be converted to carbon dioxide while 60 percent will be converted to alcohol.

• Grape skins will rise to the top of the fermenting must and will form a "cap." This cap needs to be broken down and mixed back in with the must. When there is more extract forced from the skins, the wine will be a big and highly tannic wine.

Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center New York

Marketing Strategy Recommendations



INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive tourism environment, destinations face tremendous challenges standing out as appealing places to visit. Tourism marketing organizations, often working with small budgets, struggle to have a marketing presence in potential visitor markets. These organizations are continually solicited with traditional media advertising opportunities from print, broadcast, direct mail, and other media outlets. It is often a daunting task for tourism marketers to sift through the mounds of solicitations and phone calls from media representatives to determine whether a particular media opportunity is the right vehicle to reach the market with the message. It is even more difficult to determine whether the media opportunity is truly one that is effective and can deliver solid results, that is, higher awareness and interest in a destination and ultimately new visitors.

Consumers are bombarded with an average of 1,200 media messages a day. Can the brain process this much information? The simple answer is "not really". Marketers who use traditional print and broadcast media must rely on the frequency of their message to get through to consumers. But most tourism marketing organizations do not have the budget that it takes to generate the frequency of advertising through traditional media to have much, if any, impact on the market.

In order to cut through the media and message clutter, destinations lacking huge media budgets must take a different approach to marketing. First, they must specialize. This means the destination must be known for something specific. Generic messaging no longer captures the attention of the market, which is why DDI has developed a very specific brand for Chautauqua County – something that Chautauqua County can be known for throughout the U.S. and the world.

Just as generic messaging does not work anymore, neither does a 20th century approach to marketing strategies and tactics. Tourism marketing for the new century requires a clear understanding of how the potential market gathers, receives, and processes information, as well as how they make decisions. This understanding leads to reprioritizing old strategies and fully engaging in the most effective media of the future.

The following marketing recommendations are focused on the most effective strategies and actions for gaining awareness of Chautauqua's new brand. Internet and Public Relations strategies are front and center, followed by Collateral, Advertising, Sales, and Monitoring/measurement.

1 EXPAND THE USE OF THE INTERNET AS A KEY MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL

DESCRIPTION:
The overall goal of the Internet as a strategy for Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau is to use the Internet as a way to increase interest in the County as a visitor destination, convert high potential prospects, and facilitate trip planning. We recommend that the Internet become the foundation of all your marketing efforts – the framework around which everything else is built. Use of the Internet for travel information and trip booking continues to grow at a rapid pace. It is the future medium for travel marketers and the future is now.

The CCVB has long recognized the importance of the Internet. The current website, www.tourchautauqua.com, is very good, and much better than most travel websites we see. We think, however, that you should greatly expand your use of the Internet and your website to meet the information demands of today's travel market.

Specific actions to more effectively use the Internet are covered in the following areas:

1. Website Update
2. E-Newsletters/E-blasts
3. Search Engine Optimization
4. RSS

In addition, we've included a discussion of "Social Media" at the end of these recommendations.

1. Website Update
The CCVB has a good website, but we think it can even be better with some structural changes, content revisions, and additions. First and foremost, the World's Learning Center brand will need to be incorporated into the website with the brand graphics and the messaging throughout. We suggest the architecture of the site be redesigned as follows:

1) The Home Page – The first look at Chautauqua County needs large and compelling photographs. Clear links are needed to:

   a. What to do: Visitor experiences, not just passive attractions. Branded experiences – the learning opportunities, should be listed up front and separately from the diversionary activities of shopping, dining and recreation. This is the place to introduce the schedule of learning opportunities – the "course schedule."

   b. Where to eat: Focus on the best Chautauqua County has to offer.

   c. Where to stay: Start with the best hotels, write about them, then list the others.

   d. Where to shop: Start with the best shops, unique shops, provide details such as unique items for sale, and interesting displays.

   e. Getting here: Have two sections – driving to Chautauqua and flying to Chautauqua. In the driving to Chautauqua section give specific directions to the county using the freeways, along with the distance and drive times. Add driving from the East Coast cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. For air travelers to Chautauqua mention commercial air service into Jamestown as well as Buffalo, Cleveland, and Pittsburg. Include a link to maps.

   f. Photos and videos: Include both professionally-created and amateur 3-minute or shorter videos of visitors' experiences in the county, such as learning camps, area events, outdoor dining, water recreation, etc. Create a section on videos related to different learning experiences. The sponsors of these learning opportunities should jump at the chance to produce and sponsor these videos.

g. Maps, Guides & Information: The maps available on the current website include a county map, along with maps for each community and links other maps that may be of interest. This is excellent and should be kept up to date.

h. Media and Trade: As with the current website, a link to a media and travel trade area is vital to your efforts.

i. World's Learning Center Blog: The current website has a blog and we suggest this be used more regularly to focus on learning opportunities. Posts should occur at least once a week with something new happening, announcements of future events, a profile of an existing event or a Chautauqua week, and other noteworthy subjects.

2) The "What to Do" link should lead the user to a page where they can "pick your season." We suggest the seasons be divided up by two-month periods that align with the type of product available. For example, you could break up the year as follows:

- Dec/Jan: Feature holiday events, winter sports
- Feb/Mar: Winter sports and events
- Apr/May: Late winter sports (if there is still snow, spring opportunities)
- Jun/Jul: First half of summer
- Aug/Sep: Second half of summer
- Oct/Nov: Fall foliage, fall festivals

Once a user picks their season, they can "Pick Your Passion," which leads them to a variety of experiences available that time of year. Some experiences may be featured in every season, but some will only be showcased in their primary season or seasons, such as snow-based sports. Include the following categories:

- Learning opportunities – lead with learning opportunities – this is your brand. Link to various opportunities, such as various programs, workshops, "camps," clinics, etc. – anything that is a learning opportunity that fits the brand.
- The Arts – performing, visual, craftsmanship, public art
- History – museums, walking tours, landmarks, etc.
- Events – Do not include local events that would only interest residents. Include events that draw from outside the county. Each event should reinforce the brand perception and be worth a special trip.
- Entertainment - Any professional entertainment should also be listed under Events. Other entertainment that would be included here would be movies, and theatre productions, for example.
- Signature Shops – This includes the best of the retail shops, shops unique to the county and shops that carry specialty items. Link to the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce and individual community chambers for local malls, national retailers, or local favorite stores.
- Signature Dining – Include the best dining experiences in Chautauqua County only. No national chains or fast food restaurants. Link to the local chambers for these.
- Kids & Family – Include children's entertainment, educational recreation, learning camps, etc.
- Hidden Treasures – This would include unusual, off-the-beaten-path places or activities; neat little places known by the locals.

Focus on activities and provide information on learning opportunities available for these activities. Provide specific information with itineraries, don't just list activities and events.

Give details, what to do with a two, three, four, or seven-day visit, how long it takes to drive to specific areas, where to get further information. Interesting details matter.

3) In the "Where to Eat," "Where to Stay," and "Where to Shop" sections, ALWAYS promote the top-rated FIRST. If need be, have a third party determine these ratings. Do NOT just provide lists. For each, there should be an interior photo, a paragraph telling the visitor what is so special about each, and then details: pricing ($$$), hours, specialties, hotel features, signature items, unique gifts, etc.

4) "Getting Here" is one of the most important sections of the site. Show Chautauqua County in relationship to Ohio, Pennsylvania, southern Ontario, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. The primary markets for learning opportunities will come from these areas and it helps to give them the location perspective. It's fine to link Mapquest or Google maps but there should also be a regional map, much like the current map used, but with features Mapquest won't have: drive times from various cities, distances in miles, the nearest commercial airports, train or bus connections to major cities. Also include a "Road Conditions" section that is updated often so people can find trouble spots, construction areas, and seasonal considerations for driving.

5) "Photos and Videos" – Consumer expectations have gone beyond flash-driven slide shows on destination websites. Their experience with YouTube and Google video has created an expectation of cool videos covering a range of subjects about the destination. They want to see professionally produced vignettes on topics of interest. For these types of videos, be sure to include a call to action at the end or next to the window – i.e., "for more information on the activities you have just seen, click here."

They also want to see amateur videos that have greater credibility because they represent third-party assessments of

what Chautauqua County really has to offer. A combination of good amateur videos and your own professional efforts is needed. Photos are also welcome, and the photos on the current website are very good. Some viewer-produced photos should be included, with permission, of course. Creating a supply of videos and photos from which to choose can also be done through local contests, where the winner's efforts are acknowledged and featured on your website.

6) The "Maps, Guides & Information" section should include:

- Good maps showing the county and where major activities take place. The current maps are very good for this.

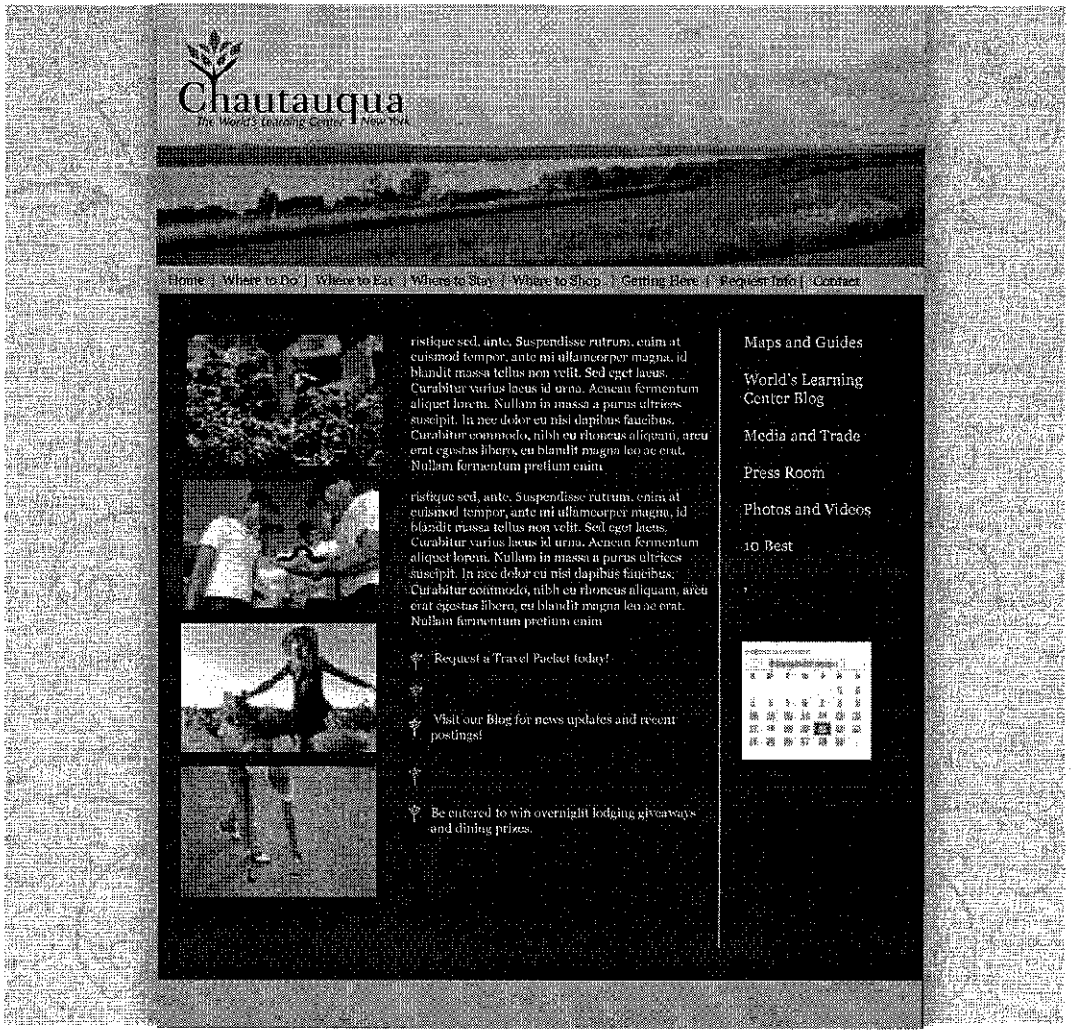
- The new "Best of Chautauqua County Guide," and "Chautauqua County Experiences Guide," printable events calendars, and any other collateral material that is developed. These should be not only viewable online but downloadable as well.
- Reciprocal links to other organizations, local communities, attractions and activity vendors, the state tourism site, Jamestown Airport, etc.
- Regional and local contact information, including locations of visitor information centers, phone numbers, and operating hours.

7) The "Media & Trade" section would be home to:

- Online Press Room – See detailed recommendation for this under Public Relations. One of the best online Press Rooms in the country can be found at www.exploreashville.com; it's a good one to emulate.
- Meeting and event planning resources
- Local media contacts and links
- Tour operators, guides, outfitters
- Resources for local partners (the business community, local organizations, regional marketing partners)

Other suggestions for the website:

- On the home page, focus on the highlights. Make a statement about the things you have that are the most unique and reinforce the brand, and things that are the best (by third party endorsement and use quotes).
- Each category should offer sample events or activities that can be experienced all or most of the time.



- Write the website copy focusing on the specifics, not the generic.
- Include "Did you know" online post-it notes.
- Wherever you can, reinforce the image that Chautauqua County is THE place to come for different learning opportunities.
- Develop podcasts (both video and voice). Let visitors choose from many that might provide examples of what specific learning opportunities are available, and events or attractions that might interest the viewer. Podcasts could be developed for a score of attractions, shops, or restaurants and would feature one to two minute segments about each of the primary businesses in the county. Refer to the Asheville, North Carolina CVB website – www.exploreashville.com. Read through this website to see some very good ideas; in particular the pressroom, the visitors guide, and the way the site portrays the city's brand image.

2. E-newsletters and E-blasts

E-newsletters and E-blasts are a great way to have frequent contact with your nearby markets, those that are likely to have a short travel decision timeline. These forms of communication are excellent to provide news, updates, new opportunities, and calendars of events. It is an inexpensive way to keep the destination top-of-mind among your market. E-blasts can be used to notify users of last-minute opportunities that are simply too good to pass up or to remind your market of a major event that they should not miss.

The current website offers an E-newsletter for anyone who wants to subscribe. As you have done, keep the E-newsletter an opt-in program. You have to be sure to give your users confidence that you are not using their name to market other things or selling their name to other entities.

The E-newsletters produced by the CCVB are excellent and provide a lot of relevant information and linkages for the use. The following suggestions will help these efforts even be more effective:

- When people opt-in to your E-newsletter do you direct them to a welcome page? The welcome message can link them to previous newsletters, promotions, special discounts, or anything else of interest. It doesn't have to be a big thing, just needs to give them a "welcome." After all, they have just expressed an interest in getting more information from you. If they are receiving your email in HTML, they can click through to your website right from within the email
- Integrate the brand and brand-related experiences into the content.
- Include the link to www.tourchautauqua.com in several places. In some newsletters the link is in several places and in others it is in one place. Also, don't forget to include a phone number in an obvious place in the email. Some impulse buyers will want to book immediately.
- Consider shorter newsletters with more frequency – monthly, if possible.
- Include more descriptive visitor experiences and add testimonials to the content.
- If possible, show more people doing things. Many photos are static and don't convey a sense of excitement.

3. Maximize search engine optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization or SEO is becoming more and more sophisticated with each passing week. Internet marketers want the best possible chance to have their websites to pop up in the first two pages of a search. Most users don't go beyond the second page of search results, so it is critical to be at the top of the search hierarchy.

SEO today goes way beyond simple key words and phrases. The way one writes content has an effect on SEO, as do the linkages your website has with other websites. Search engines use complicated algorithms that are constantly changing to assign relevance to your web pages for web searches. That is why, for example, you need to use your key words throughout your pages, along with variations, such as synonyms. The methods used by search engines to index web pages today are so sophisticated that they are considered a form of "artificial intelligence."

The three primary search engines, Google, Yahoo, and MSN, use a technique known as "spiders" to regularly "crawl" through websites indexing by key words and phrases. To be listed in directories, you need to submit your URL

to the major search engines at least once. However, to be indexed, you may want to submit your URL to them a few times. This way your site will be "crawled" more than once. Eventually, with more and more incoming links, your site will be automatically crawled and the indexes updated. That is why it is very important to keep a website up to date.

Increasing the number of linkages is critical to keeping a website moving up the hierarchy of the search engine. One way to increase linkages is to have several other websites have a link to your website. For example, a link to the CCVB could be listed on every members website in a place where it can't be missed. We found www.tourchautauqua.com on a few member websites that we checked but the link was not easy to find. We suggest offering members a slight discount on their membership by allowing the CCVB to have a link on their websites. That way, you can increase your links and hopefully increase your relevancy when a search engine crawls through your site.

In addition to making sure your site is indexed, today's Internet marketers need to know how their site is being used, how long a visitor stays on their site, and what pages are being viewed. It is also important to know whether the key words or phrases that brought the visitor to your site are also helpful in getting the visitor to take a desired action. For example, do you want visitors to sign up for the E-newsletter? If so, what are the key search words that brought the visitor to your site who actually signed up for the newsletter? Do you know?

Because SEO is a rapidly growing and changing discipline, we recommend that the CCVB engage the services of a webmaster who truly understands these issues and can recommend SEO software and strategies for composing your web pages that will help you achieve higher search engine ranks.

3. RSS

RSS is a developing technology that allows the host to format frequently updated information into a standardized format that can be "fed" to interested readers on a regular basis. It eliminates the need for the reader to bookmark and visit favorite websites regularly to find out what's new. Instead, when there is news, the RSS format feeds it directly to the reader who can then read it at their leisure. These feeds can link to the website page where the news is posted so the reader does not have to search for it.

RSS is heavily used among the more traditional news media and many people use RSS feeds to get their news without checking several news sites. In the world of travel marketing, RSS is only starting to be used by DMOs, as more consumers are learning to use RSS for feeds other than general news. For example, North Carolina, South Carolina, Michigan, and Minnesota currently have RSS feeds to subscribers who choose their feeds. When we checked, each of these states had less than 50 subscribers. However, when we checked Frommer's Travel Guide, we found they had 16,500 subscribers!

The CCVB already has an RSS feed on its website, although when we checked it several times over several days it doesn't appear to be receiving or sending news feeds. We recommend that the CCVB use RSS as another distribution method for news and updates, much like the opt-in e-newsletter and e-blasts. The service would be opt-in and users could view regularly updated information about the county's travel offerings. It may take some time for this to catch on but once the framework is in place, it is economical and easy to update information for the feed.

4. Social Media

No discussion of Internet strategies would be complete without touching on social media. The growing popularity of social media sites is extraordinary and the most popular social media sites have tens of millions of subscribers. The use of social media will be another important component of the CCVB's efforts to develop the Chautauqua brand and to drive traffic to the website. Social media can also help drive your search engine rankings.
Social media, made popular by MySpace.com, now includes hundreds of sites: some are general interest, such as Facebook.com, and some serve special interests, such as WineLifeToday or TripAdvisor. The general sites also have groups that form around special interests. Facebook, for example, has a general "Chautauqua"group of 350 members who know of or have been to the Chautauqua Institution's program. There is also an official Chautauqua Institution group on Facebook with 300 members. On their group page they post photos, description of upcoming events, and information about related sites. It's like having another website but targeted to Facebook members who have a specific interest in the Chautauqua Institution. And there is no out of pocket cost, except for the time it takes to update the information. Facebook has a number of other travel-related

groups, as well as a range of special interest groups (such as 2,400 members of the Lucille Ball fan group) – and this is just one social media site.

Developing social media strategies starts with research. Through your own social media site research develop a list of social media sites to target and join existing groups or create groups. Start with Facebook and create a brand-themed Chautauqua group. Use the group site to post photos, events, and other brand-related activities. Use this site to drive groups members to your website. Also, join other groups that have interests related to the Chautauqua brand to see what their members are discussing. It will take some time to start seeing the results of this effort, but over the long term the time spent developing social media should pay off.

APPROXIMATE COST:
Website Update/SEO/RSS: $50,000
E-newsletters and E-blasts: Staff time
SEO: Part of Website Update budget for webmaster, software
Social Media: Staff time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Website Update: 2008 begin planning; 2009 planning and implementation of update

E-newsletters: 2008 and beyond – monthly; E-blasts: 2008 and beyond – when there is something of note to alert subscribers about.

SEO: 2008 - engage webmaster, same planning timeframe as website update; ongoing

Social media: 2008 – do research and create brand-related group on Facebook. 2009-2010 – continue to expand these efforts.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:
The Internet is the single most important marketing tool for travel marketers today and certainly will be even more important in the future. Why?

It's simple: it is the most cost-effective way to reach a variety of markets throughout the world with information. The key is to have a website that visually engages the viewer, provides relevant content, and keeps them coming back for more. More consumers are taking control of the information they receive. Newspaper circulation is down, Network TV is losing market share to the cable stations. Radio is becoming more segmented. Consumers use the Internet because they can choose the content and timing of information. They will not find Chautauqua and its branded product by searching geography, but by searching activities. Chautauqua needs to pop up at the top of the list for leisure learning experiences.

Driving potential visitors to your website is the cornerstone of your overall marketing plan. Effective search engine optimization and key linkages with membership, marketing and other organizations, are proven methods to accomplish this. New methods, such as RSS and social media marketing will only grow in popularity and use over time.

2 EXPAND PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY SIGNIFICANTLY

DESCRIPTION:
Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau should expand its public relations strategy to be a significant portion of its marketing program. It is another cornerstone of the overall marketing strategy. A well thought out public relations campaign is more effective than advertising during the early stages of brand development. Public relations is also a way to get more "bang for the buck," meaning that a good overall PR strategy often more effectively reaches your target audience with a credible message. Once the brand is more established, PR serves to reinforce the brand.

A strong overall PR strategy for Chautauqua County should include:

- Development of a comprehensive website pressroom
- Development of a hard copy press kit
- Regular press contact and press relationships
- Ongoing media assistance for story writers and editors
- Encouragement of special events supporting the brand
- Coordination of efforts with member businesses, community partners
- Monitoring and reporting of press coverage (see Recommendation #6)

Website Pressroom
The website pressroom should have several pages, each of which is devoted to specific items that will make it easier for the press. These pages should be updated regularly.

1. **Public Relations contact page:** List several contacts and include their photos. The press is generally under deadline, and if they cannot reach one person instantly, they need access to another. It may be your only chance to weigh in on an article they are writing or to get free publicity for an upcoming event.

2. **Story ideas page:** Don't wait on the press, instead write up your own story ideas as "prompts" for the press to pick up on. These can be about the World's Learning Center brand, various learning "camps," specific workshops, the local scene, entertainment, events, or other visitor experiences, for example. Make sure they know where to go on the website to download photos that go with each story idea.

3. **Photo gallery page:** A picture *is* worth a thousand words, especially pictures showing people having fun engaged in a variety of activities. Providing great photography is extremely important. Don't just gather up amateur photos from all over town and post them. Think carefully about how you want to position each subject. You will need eventually to script a number of photos and hire professional photographers to go shoot them. Some photos should include models that look like people you would find in your target market. Others can be candid shots of events and visitors having fun, but shot by a professional who knows how to frame them. All of them should be available in high-resolution digital format. Present the photos online in low-resolution and then have the press register online for the high-resolution versions. This way you know who is receiving them, and they will agree to use them for editorial purposes only, assign proper credit and not sell them to be used commercially elsewhere. The same should be done for your logo graphics. Be sure to group your photos by subject so they can be researched easily.

4. **Press Kit page:** This page should contain background materials that can be inserted into any story or article:

   - Interesting facts about Chautauqua County
   - History of the county and the Chautauqua movement
   - Climate and weather
   - Six season variations information
   - Story ideas
   - News release page: Include a running log of all news released that you convert into PDF format so they can be downloaded. Be sure to show the date of the release.

5. **Full Fact Sheet page:** More extensive than the "interesting facts" in the Press Kit, this page would contain an extended list of facts about every facet of Chautauqua County, the brand as it develops, and other local subjects. Here is where you also list historical facts about the region. Each learning opportunity available to visitors should have its own coverage including information about the subject, the teacher credentials and when and where the classes are offered.

6. **Press Trip page:** Some out-of-town writers will want assistance in making arrangements to visit and write about Chautauqua County or a special subject in the county. This page allows prospective writers to request help from the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau in planning their trip, making the right connections with local stakeholders, or gaining access to particular events. They may also be looking for financial assistance or some in-kind consideration. This is the mechanism for them to make their requests.

7. **Media coverage page:** This is where Chautauqua County posts the media coverage they receive from the press. It allows the press to see what's been covered and in what manner. List the stories by year and month and, if possible, include links to the actual story source and photos.

Press Kit
The Press Kit page found in the Website Pressroom should contain all the press kit material in a downloadable form. The CCVB should have a small quantity of hard copy Press Kits on hand for visits with press representatives, to respond to press inquiries, and direct for mailings to the press list. This kit should be printed on high quality stationary and include a CD of photos for use by writers in their stories.

Regular Press Contact
Review your list of press contacts at least once a month to make sure it is up to date, particularly media that will reach your target markets. The list should be made up of key contacts from magazines, newspapers, online websites, travel newsletters, guidebooks, and blogs. These contacts should receive regular press releases and E-bulletins with news-worthy publishing. This means contact at least once every one or two months to keep the destination and its brand top of mind.

Ongoing Media Assistance
Ongoing dialog with press contacts will help you determine who is most likely to write articles on Chautauqua County. Work to identify the highly qualified magazine, newspaper, newsletter, online, and freelance journalists who can place articles in publications aimed at your target markets. Provide the most qualified with assistance in trip planning, such as cost underwriting, contacts with brand-related tourism products to be featured, and background information. In many cases it may be necessary to accompany the writer, but in other cases the writer may want to travel on their own.

The State of New York's "I Love NY" campaign also has contact with the media and sometimes will sponsor press trips. Many times writers may go to the state agency first when looking for story ideas. Therefore, be sure your contact with the state agency is frequent and that they are kept up to date on the latest developments in Chautauqua County.

Finally, work closely with your community and business partners to support and help them coordinate any special needs they may have when hosting a writer. Solicit ideas from them regularly to be included in the online pressroom and E-bulletins. And remember that the media want to write about experiences, so they want to have the experience themselves. Be sure to have at the ready a variety of learning experiences in which the media can participate so you can make suggestions when they call to plan a trip.

Special Events Supporting the Brand
One way to build early awareness of the new brand is to assist and support large special events that are in support of the brand and designed for out-of-county visitors. These events can be heavily promoted to the media and special media events can be included in the event. For example, at the Wine Festival, learning experiences can be expanded beyond what is currently available to include more workshops or "camps" to learn about making wine, harvesting grapes, pairing wine and food, etc. There can be a special media event where they can find out about learning opportunities related to the brand and the festival, meet the winemakers face-to-face, and perhaps have a short learning opportunity themselves, where they actually do something hands-on. We are not talking about simply wine tasting. We mean they get their hands dirty – or feet dirty – doing something like cooking with wine, or stomping grapes, etc.

Implementing an Overall PR Strategy
Public relations is a very labor intensive activity, but one with big payoffs. The CCVB has a limited staff and many responsibilities, which is why we recommend that a professional public relations agency with community branding and repositioning experience should be contracted. This agency

can work with the CCVB to refine the details of this strategy, such as the criteria for media to qualify for underwriting, and assist with implementation of the strategy in support of the brand.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:
2009 - $60,000
2010 - $75,000
2011 - $100,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
2008 – Contract with PR firm
2009 and beyond – Refine and implement PR strategy

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Public relations is a more credible way than advertising to generate large-scale awareness of Chautauqua County's brand and to deliver the county's message to the target audience. Remember, public relations is all about how you build brand awareness, while advertising is about maintaining that awareness. By having other people write about your destination, they spread your message for you and in the process build credibility for your throughout your marketing. The travel markets are more inclined to believe something they read in an article in a magazine, Sunday travel section, or a guidebook than they are an advertisement. And, they are more likely to act on what they read by going to the website for more information.

Public relations also provides a very good return on investment. For every dollar invested in public relations, there is typically a three-dollar return in "earned media" that is, the cost you would have had to pay for equivalent ad space.

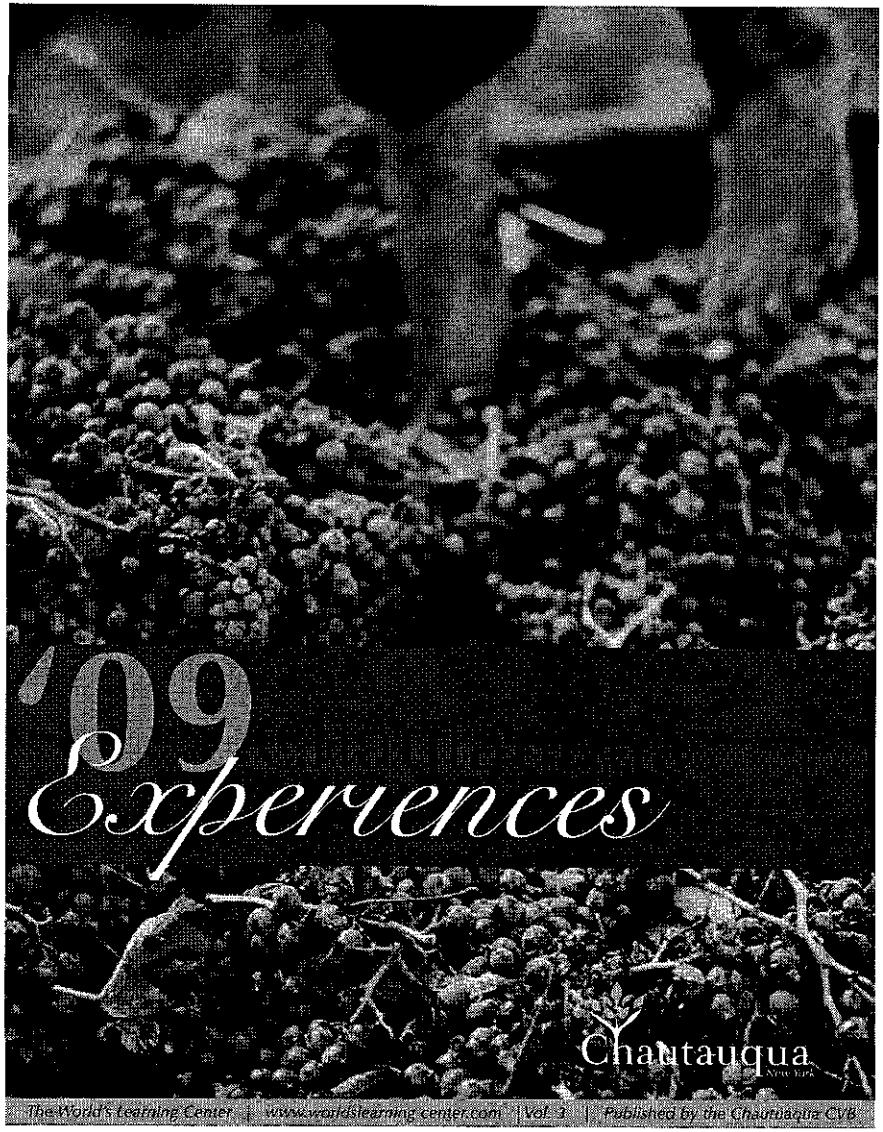
3 DEVELOP AND DISTRIBUTE BRANDED COLLATERAL MATERIALS

DESCRIPTION:
Collateral materials, such as visitor guides, brochures, rack cards and posters, are needed to reinforce the brand and provide consumers with accurate trip planning information. Although the Internet has become a major source of travel planning information for today's travelers, printed materials or "printable" materials in PDF format are still needed when the Internet may not be available, such as during a trip, and as a reference source for what to see and do while in the County.

The current county travel guide is chock full of just about everything possible to do within the county. It is great to see a travel guide that has such strong participation from businesses throughout the county. Clearly, the guide plays a role in providing visitors trip planning information and helps to link potential visitors to the county's businesses and attractions. And the CCVB does an excellent job distributing the guide. We saw it everywhere we went. In its current form, however, the travel guide performs more as a reference piece, something you would refer to once in the destination, rather than a sales tool or a "lure" piece – something that whets the appetite of the potential visitor to come experience Chautauqua County.

As you work on building the brand and brand awareness, additional types of collateral pieces are needed. These pieces are essential to developing the image of the brand and the related experiences. Your target audience is looking for detailed information about experiences – what makes Chautauqua County unique. They need to be convinced that you are worth a special trip. The current travel guide does not sell them on the *idea* of experiencing Chautauqua County, nor does it help them differentiate between the *quality* of the experiences. That is why we recommend that three new collateral pieces be developed:

1. "Chautauqua Experiences" Guide
2. "Best of Chautauqua County" Guide
3. Branded Rack Cards



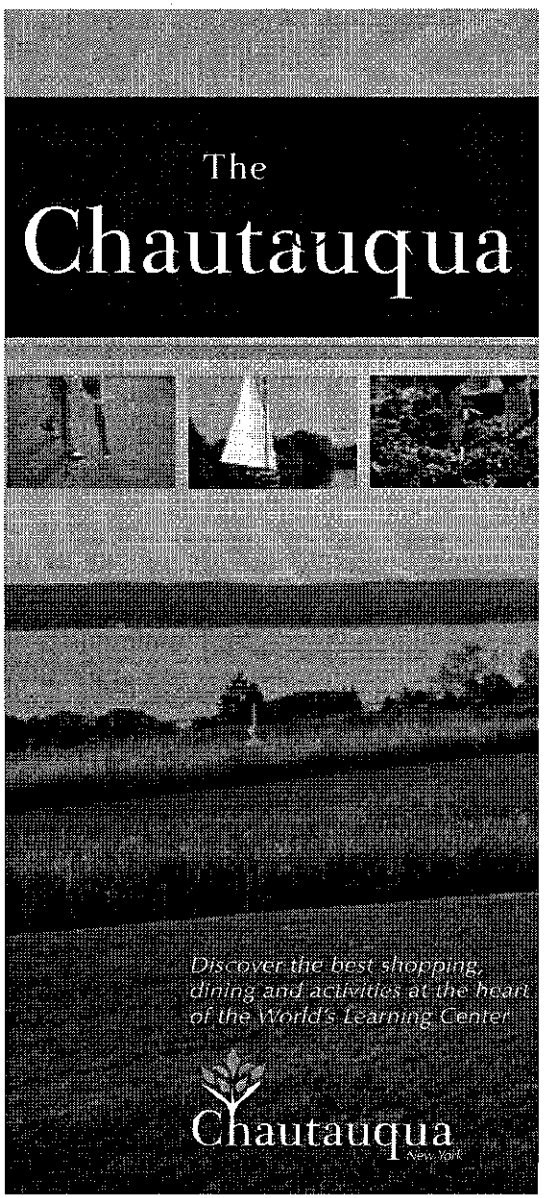
1. "Chautauqua Experiences" Guide

Create a "Chautauqua Experiences" Guide loaded with spectacular photography that will showcase the variety of learning opportunities in the region. This guide will be the primary marketing piece to lure visitors to the area. This is not a marketing piece where everything and everyone is included. Only the unique "gems" of the destination should be included. Everyone will ultimately benefit, but the purpose of the piece is to lure the visitor to get something they cannot get closer to home.

This guide should include special places and special experiences that are highlights of the area, such as a birding workshop with experts at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, or golf camp at Peek 'N Peak with a world-renowned golf pro, or wine-making seminars at the Wine Festival with a noted winemaker, and of course, the Chautauqua Institution.

This guide could be set up as a "course" schedule for learning experiences. Itineraries should be created and included in the guide that feature what is available for visitors to learn in a short visit (one to four days) or a longer visit (one week or longer) to the area. Details matter, so develop the specifics about the type of learning experience, description of a typical day in that activity, level of experience needed, level of physical activity, number of participants, cost to attend, packages available and other details specific to the experiences. Include a story or an anecdote about the areas featured, such as something historical. Describe at least 30 learning experiences that are worthy of at least a two-hour drive and an overnight stay. Twenty of these experiences should be concentrated into a season of 10 to 12 weeks, perhaps over the summer to start, so there is a "critical mass" of learning opportunities during an initial "peak" season. The other ten learning experiences can be winter oriented, such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, etc. The more you have the more powerful the brand will be.

It is extremely important that this guide be a high-quality and professional publication. It has to be an effective promotional tool that will help close the sale. The graphic look and feel should reflect the county's brand and be consistent with other marketing tools, such as the brand logo and the website. The title of the guide can be "Chautauqua Experiences," as in the example provided, or "Chautauqua Life-Learning Guide," "Chautauqua Camp Guide," "Chautauqua Learning Camps and Courses," whichever works the best for the product being marketed.



2. "Best of Chautauqua County" Guide

Develop a new marketing brochure entitled, "Best of Chautauqua County" promoting the specific businesses and attractions in Chautauqua County that offer the best that the county has to offer in

products and services a consumer would enjoy when they visit. Special attention should be given to businesses that provide visitor services and entertainment and are working in support of the World's Learning Center brand. This is the piece used to let visitors know what they can do and see in Chautauqua County after they spent the day in sailing "camp," finished a bird watching workshop, or engaged in another learning activity.

Start with the top five restaurants, the top five retail shops, the top five learning experiences, and the top five activities – all of which would be worth a special trip within the county. This guide should also lodging so that visitors can plan to stay overnight. Each participating business needs to meet certain criteria in order to be included—the brochure needs to promote the very best that Chautauqua County has to offer. They should be recognized for their uniqueness or excellence, be open at least six days a week, including weekends, and be open until at least 9:00 p.m. They should also have good curb appeal. Not every business will meet the criteria to be included in the first brochure, but the guide should encourage proprietors to improve their product enough to be included in future editions.

The "Best of Chautauqua County" Guide should feature something special or unique about each shop or restaurant. Details matter. If a restaurant has a signature menu item, describe it. If a retailer provides a learning opportunity, such as a pottery shop offering pottery-making workshops with the famous artist, or a fabric store bringing in a renowned quilter for a quilting workshop, be sure to let people know. People like specifics, and the more interesting and unusual items you can mention, the better.

The Guide should be written so that each shop or service mentioned is presented in a consistent advertorial format—not just a series of ads. Details about each shop or restaurant should be provided in a way that would make a visitor to Chautauqua County feel he or she MUST go to the area to experience these great shops and restaurants.

Use professional photography throughout the brochure to showcase each shop, restaurant, and location. Special displays should be designed and photographed, special food dishes should be staged, and in some cases, models should be used in pedestrian settings. Feature the pedestrian setting of the shopping area, flowers, banners, outdoor dining, beautification, lighting, etc.

The guide should contain several maps, including a map of the location of Chautauqua County relative to the Eastern U.S., travel times from major metro areas, a map of the county showing the location of each retail storefront and dining location, and the location of other brand-related stores throughout the area. In addition to stores and places to eat, include other convenience features such as where to park, historical landmarks, hotels and motels, public parks or gathering places, location of public restrooms, etc.

This guide should be a partnership between the CCVB and businesses, with each advertiser paying the costs for their own page. It is important that these brochures address activities, events and attractions in every season of the year. These brochures should also be both printed and available for download on the website.

Once completed, these brochures should be used to fulfill phone and mail inquiries to the CCVB. In addition, they should be distributed to regional visitor information centers, chambers of commerce, visitor information kiosks, hotels/motels, resorts, and B&Bs.

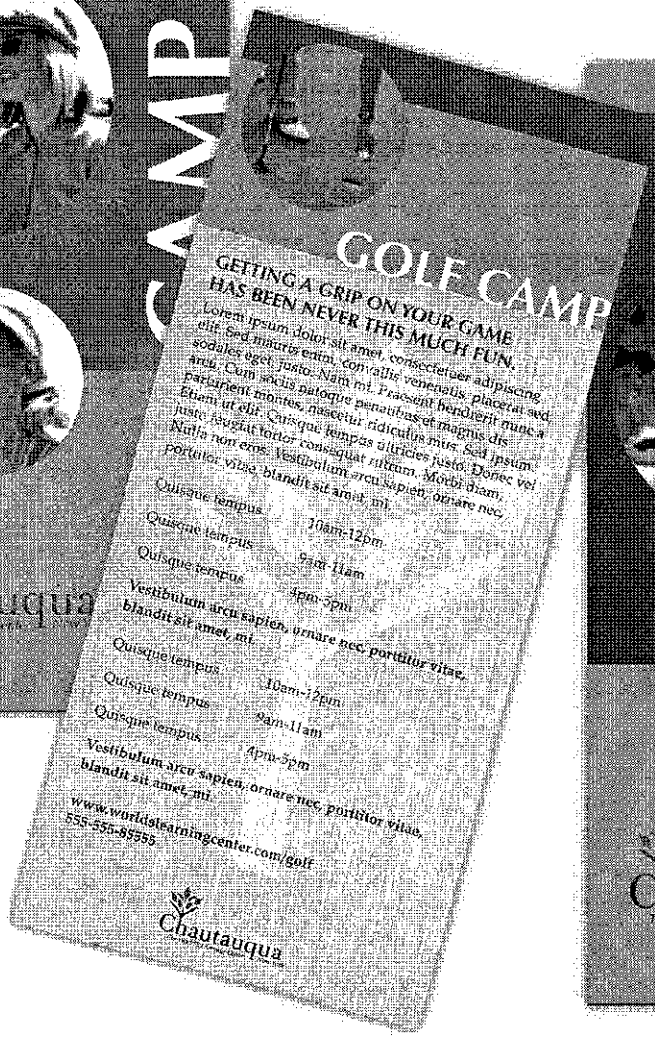
3. Branded Rack Cards

To further promote learning experiences, we recommend you develop a series of branded rack cards that feature different learning experiences. The front of the card would feature the name of the camp or learning experience, i.e. "Chautauqua Golf Camp at the Peek 'N Peak Resort," and the back would include the course description, dates, and other details. These cards could be 8* X 10" but a more useful size would be 4" X 9" to fit neatly into brochure racks throughout the county.

As with the other brochures, the development of these rack cards should be a partnership between the CCVB and the businesses that are featured on each card.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Travel Guide: CCVB
Chautauqua Experiences Guide: Cooperative venture between CCVB and

CAMP
Chautauqua


GOLF CAMP
GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME HAS BEEN NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.
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Quisque tempus 4pm-5pm
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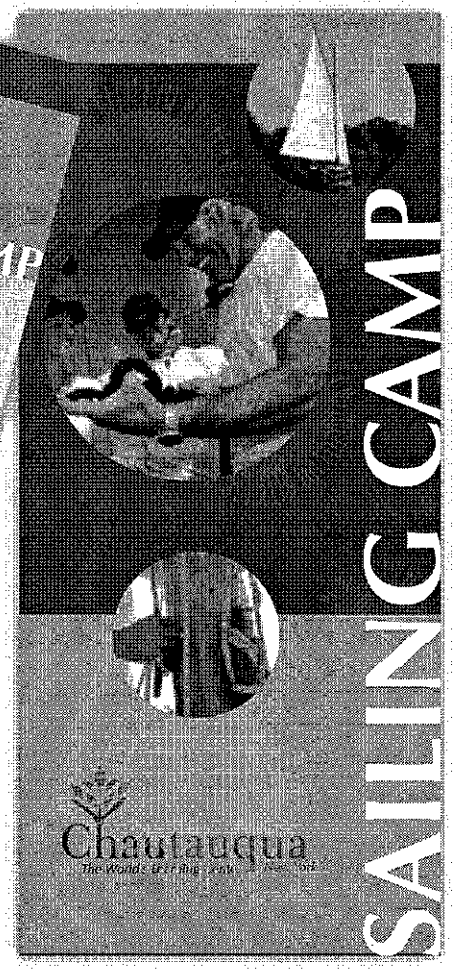
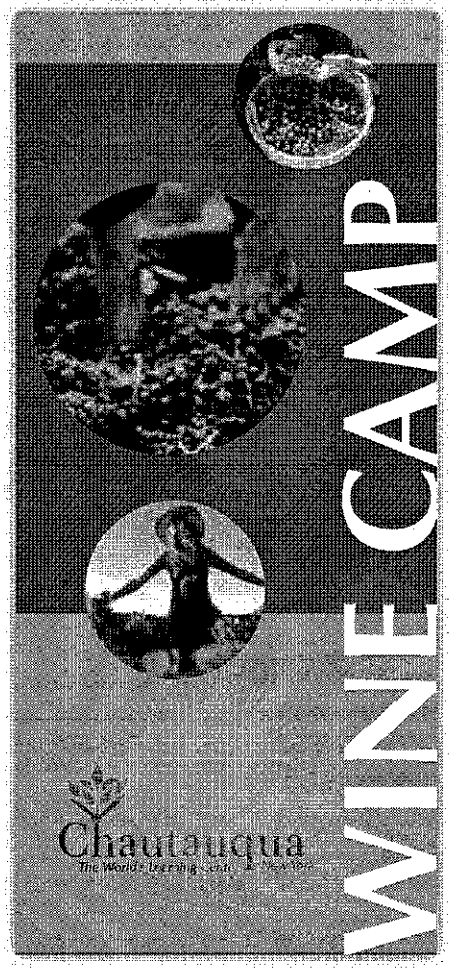
Quisque tempus 10am-12pm
Quisque tempus 9am-11am
Quisque tempus 4pm-5pm
Vestibulum arcu sapien, ornare nec, porttitor vitae, blandit sit amet, mi.
www.worldslearningcenter.com/golf
555-555-85555
Chautauqua


SAILING CAMP
Chautauqua


WINE CAMP
Chautauqua

selected sponsors of learning experiences
Best of Chautauqua Guide: Cooperative venture between the CCVB, and selected businesses and attractions
Branded Rack Cards: Cooperative venture between CCVB and selected sponsors of learning experiences

APPROXIMATE COST:
Chautauqua County Travel Guide: $120,000
Chautauqua Experiences Guide: $30,000 (CCVB portion)
Best of Chautauqua Guide: $15,000 (CCVB portion)
Branded Rack Cards: $5,000 to 15,000 (CCVB portion)
Website version management: $3,000 per year.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitor Bureau (bed tax); state grant; private businesses, such a retailers, restaurants, attractions, lodging, tour operators, etc.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Develop these brochures during 2009, for use in 2010.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:
These brochures are used as "lure" pieces, that is, the collateral material used to entice someone to visit Chautauqua County and participate in a learning experience. Gone are the days when it was sufficient to simply list all the activities, attractions, hotels, restaurants, and shops in your destination. Convenience is at the top of the list for visitors, and this includes the planning stages of their visit to Chautauqua County.

Potential visitors want to be "lured" and they also want to know the specifics of the experience while they are making their decision to visit. They need enough information to say yes to your proposition. These pieces, along with your website, are your opportunity to make a compelling case to the potential visitor as to why they should visit and what is unique about a visit to Chautauqua County that they cannot get closer to home. Again, details matter. That is why simple lists of things don't work to engage the potential visitor and help them make a decision.

4 DEVELOP TARGETED SALES ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE BRAND.

DESCRIPTION:
The CCVB should engage in a variety of sales activities that support its other branding and marketing efforts. Current sales activities include attending travel shows, and promoting to the group, meeting/conference, sport fishing and hunting markets.

All sales activities need to be focused on creating brand awareness and reinforcing the brand message. The general group tour market is most often reached through traditional tour operators, such as members of the National Tour Association (NTA) or the American Bus Association (ABA). These two associations represent most of the tour operators offering group travel in the U.S. and Canada today. Most of the travel is by motor coach with an escort/guide.

Results of a recent survey of NTA tour operator members show interesting results that have implications for Chautauqua's new brand. A few highlights:

- 64% of tour operator clients were 50+
- 52% of tour operators offer learning/educational packages
- More than half the tours were customized or for pre-formed groups; 31% of the operators offered alumni packages
- More than half the operators offered culinary and wine tasting packages.
- The most important sources of information for developing new itineraries are customer input, tour supplier websites, recommendations from other tour operators, and DMO website.

The group tour market is not a fast growing one, and some question whether the traditional motor coach tours of the past will appeal to the changing demographics of the market today and in the future. The group tour market still has potential for Chautauqua County *IF* it is targeted to selective groups. The following are recommendations for the general group tour market as well as other niche markets that we feel have strong potential for Chautauqua County.

1. General Group Tour Market – We recommend analyzing the tour operators in this market to learn who is really offering learning/educational packages, no matter the destination, and to understand their target market.

Tour operators rely heavily on past customers as a source of additional customers to fill new itineraries. They need to offer new and interesting itineraries to keep their customers interested and coming back for more. If an operator is offering learning/educational packages already, then they have a built in base of clients looking for new experiences. Create a database of these operators, learn about what they already do, create sample itineraries designed specifically for their type of client (don't just create one set of itineraries and send to every operator), particularly clients that come from preformed groups or prefer custom-designed itineraries.

Then begin the sales process. Sales activities should include one-on-one contact with targeted tour operators. After you discover how many tour operators fit your target market you will need to evaluate whether it is worth the time and expense to travel to the typical trade shows (NTA, ABA) or whether it may be better to make targeted sales calls. In addition to meetings with tour operators, other activities, such as press releases, e-blasts, e-newsletters, hosting and helping travel writers from trade publications, etc., and familiarization trips for highly qualified, high potential tour operators should be part of your activities.

It may take a year or two of regular contact, public relations, and education for high potential tour operators to catch on to what they can offer in Chautauqua County that would appeal to their clientele. Those seriously considering the Chautauqua product will want to visit and see for themselves what is available and why it is unique.

This is a market that requires an investment of time – both staff time to develop the relationships, and time for tour operators to understand and be sold on the product. The most important thing to remember is that this is a highly targeted, focused effort only to those tour operators that have the target audience that fits the brand and has the potential to offer a product that fits the brand. This may be a small group of tour operators in the beginning, but over time may grow to be a solid base of business for the county.

2. Alumni Associations – Many college and university alumni associations offer travel programs to their alumni and families. Travel programs are offered to destinations around the world and are quite often educational in nature. Many programs are organized by or include a distinguished professor as the escort. This market is a natural fit for the Chautauqua County brand and represents a strong opportunity.

As with the general group tour market, it will take a bit of work to develop the database of alumni associations and their contacts with potential to develop programs in Chautauqua County. Understanding individual college and university travel programs, who they are targeting, and what kinds of educational experiences they want to offer is key to designing programs that will be appealing to their clientele.

The type of learning experiences that would appeal to this market could range from a week at the Chautauqua Institution during its regular season, to a program created by the college or university with its own professors and experts, using the Chautauqua Institution or other appropriate location as the place to hold the program (during the Institution's off season). Diversionary activities and field trips could be built into such a program.

Developing this market is primarily a one-on-one task with individuals at the alumni association travel offices. Based on our experience, some alumni associations like to develop and arrange their own travel itineraries, others will work through a tour operator, and still others will buy a package "off-the-shelf" and reserve the entire departure date for their clients. Some tour operators specialize in alumni travel. That is why it will be important to do the research to identify the decision-makers for alumni travel at each institution.

The most important aspect of selling to these alumni travel decision makers is developing the personal relationship with them. We suggest starting with a targeted group of colleges and universities located on the East Coast that offer educational alumni travel programs. Learn about their programs on their websites, get the name of the travel arranger, and start developing a telephone relationship to learn more about their potential. Eventually, you will need to develop specific sample itineraries for them and make personal visits to sell the programs. As time and your budget allows, you can expand your efforts to other areas of the U.S. that you have identified as having high potential alumni travel programs. While the larger East Coast universities may look like tempting resources, they are also most likely to have established relationships with destinations and be more difficult to crack. There are many small and medium-sized colleges and universities in the region that offer these programs as well, and they might be more receptive.

Like the general group tour market, this market will take time to develop. Your other marketing efforts, particularly your website and public relations activities, will be essential to supporting these efforts. A strong branded website, along with good publicity, such as articles appearing in the media read by the alumni market and the travel managers, all provide product credibility.

3. Other Special Interest Groups – In addition to the alumni markets, there are a variety of other special interest groups that will have interest in the Chautauqua County learning opportunities. Elder Hostel already has programs that include Chautauqua County. The CCVB also has a list of various groups interested in experiences in the county. We suggest reviewing that list to make sure it includes the variety of groups that might be interested in the experiences that fit the brand. For example, make sure to include on this list groups that are found in both the short haul drive market as well as the longer haul markets. Also, think beyond the obvious and reach into organizations that have travel programs, such as the Field Museum of Chicago or the Smithsonian Institution. Again, like the other group markets we have identified, stay targeted to groups that fit the brand in terms of interest and market characteristics.

4. Meetings/conference/sports tournaments market – The meetings and conference market to Chautauqua County is already an active market, particularly in the spring and fall months. The new county brand should also be integrated into this market through the marketing activities of the CCVB. Current activities include membership in meeting planner organizations, a meeting planner guide, sales calls to local market areas, some support for groups and conferences. In addition, the same public relations techniques should be used in this market as are used in other markets to continue to build brand awareness and drive the market to the meeting planner pages on your website. All activities for the development of the meetings market should be monitored and measured over time for results.

5. Travel/Outdoor Shows – The CCVB is able to effectively leverage its money with grants and cooperative partnerships to have a presence at travel and outdoor shows in the short haul drive markets. We suggest continuing these shows for 2009 to assess their effectiveness. Gather names, email, and postal addresses to develop a database of people who stop by the booth and express interest in the region. This can be done through an incentive, such as a drawing for a three-day visit to someplace in the county, such as Peak 'N Peek Resort. You can use the names to further develop your subscriber base for e-newsletters and e-blasts (be sure to give them an opportunity to opt-in on the card they fill out). You should also use these names in a conversion study to see if they actually visit the county.

6. Sport Fishing/Hunting Incentives – The current marketing plan includes funding for an independent contractor to develop the sport fishing and hunting markets through attendance at travel shows, writing articles for key publications, radio interviews, and other activities. The plan also includes some money for incentives for fishing tournaments. We recommend that the bulk of this funding be moved to overall Public Relations, and that sport fishing and hunting become one of the market segments within the Public Relations activities. We also recommend that some monies be budgeted for grant support to help attract fishing tournaments to the region.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; Chautauqua-Allegeny Region (travel shows only)

APPROXIMATE COST:
Groups/Meetings/Conferences: $17,000
Travel/Outdoor Shows: $11,700 (total budget $35,000 – equal amounts from 3 partners)
Information Centers: $6,500
Fishing & Hunting Incentives: $10,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; state grant; Cattaraugus and Allegeny Counties for travel shows only

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Groups: 2008 – begin identifying brand-related tour operators and groups 2009 and beyond – develop itineraries, make contacts, sales calls, etc.
Travel/Outdoor Shows: 2008 and beyond – work with Tri-County partners to plan for and attend these shows. Information Centers: Ongoing
Fishing & Hunting Incentives: As opportunities arise.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION:
The sales effort outlined in this recommendation is important for several reasons. First, it is likely to produce the fastest, short-term results of increased visitors and visitor spending. More difficult than marketing, sales at least provides tangible, measurable results in real time.

While marketing communications is generally a one-way street, sales is a two-way conversation. It gives you the opportunity to learn about and address concerns about your product that can help make the sale. These learned factors can then be applied to your marketing communications, making them more effective.

Sales provides the most immediate assistance to businesses and organizations currently struggling with staying in business and making a profit. Sustaining these product resources while building the brand is important.

Sales is more effective than marketing with extremely narrow niche markets within the brand, where the small target market is identifiable and reachable through a limited number of contacts. The messages can be tailored directly to them and the product customized to their specific needs.

5 DEVELOP A HIGHLY STRATEGIC AND SELECTIVE ADVERTISING PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION:
Strategically and selectively placed advertising can be used to support the brand- building public relations activities by maintaining awareness of the brand and destination. Destination marketing is a fierce business and everyone is after the potential travel market. Advertising is often the largest portion of a marketer's budget because of the competitive challenges establishing a presence in the marketplace. That is why it is essential to carefully select when and how to enter the fray.

First and foremost any advertising done by the CCVB, whether advertising funded solely by county dollars or advertising funded as part of the Tri-County regional program (partially funded by state grants), should be focused on generating awareness of the brand. The second goal of any advertising program should be to generate leads.

Tri-County Cooperative Advertising Program
The New York Division of Tourism offers matching grants to Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPA). TPA's are encouraged to combine resources with other TPA's in their designated region to further the reach of the marketing dollars. With this in mind, the CCVB has combined some of its matching funds with Cattaraugus and Allegeny Counties with the intention of purchasing advertising in the State's cooperative media program.

The State's cooperative media program includes ad buys in various publications, as well as interactive elements on several Internet sites. Generally, advertising is a way to maintain your brand and because of the cost, should be used sparingly. This new media program developed by the State offers Chautauqua and its partners an opportunity to test the effectiveness of advertising its message.

The CCVB should only consider participating in this program if two key requirements are fulfilled. First, the Chautauqua brand needs to be featured. You are building brand awareness and all your activities, especially an advertising program, should be brand based. Second, the ad campaign needs to be measured by number of inquiries by source, whether generated by BRC, phone, or Internet. The CCVB must be able to measure cost per inquiry. Then, a conversion study should be implemented to determine the overall cost of attracting each visitor from each inquiry source. Don't forget to assess the expenditures of each visitor. After all, it's the visitor expenditures that matter, not the number of visitors.

If these two requirements can be met, then we suggest the Tri-County Region coop program include approximately half of the coop dollars in print advertising and the half in interactive elements. Treat 2009 as a test year to see whether any of these media opportunities are a good fit for Chautauqua and its brand. If the ad creative and interactive opportunities are done well, they may very well generate quality leads for the county.

Not all cost figures are available yet from the State to develop a final program plan. However, using the criteria we recommend, and some of the estimated costs for participation, a sample cooperative program might look like this:

- Time, Inc./American Express – At least one buy of ¼ page in the Time, Inc/American Express publishing program (with advertorial), which includes Travel & Leisure, Food & Wine, Real Simple, Health. The preferred ad buy would be for the May 2009 issue. Based on discussions with the State's advertising agency, this would be East Coast regional ad buys in these publications. Readers of these magazines fit the profile of the Chautauqua target market for the new brand. Estimated cost: $16,000.

- AAA Publications – ¼ page in AAA Motorist, ½ page in AAA Going Places, and ½ page in Home & Away – May 2009 issues. Readers of these magazines reside in the key short haul markets. Estimated cost: $35,300.

- Interactive Elements – All interactive elements should focus on lead generation and most should work on developing brand awareness. Several of the opportunities presented in the program may be good ways to get the word out about the brand, such as providing "Videos of the Week" and "Destination Spotlight/Enhanced Editorials," the Orbitz packages, and e-newsletters. It may be worthwhile to test a Travelocity integrated placement ad as budget allows. Estimated total cost: $50,000 to $60,000.

It will be very important for Chautauqua to fully evaluate participation in these programs through monitoring and measurement of the results, rather

than jump on the bandwagon just because the program makes advertising in quality media appear more affordable. If the media is not working for you or if the Chautauqua message gets lost in the process, then it doesn't matter how good a deal it is.

County Advertising
County advertising refers to media advertising that is funded only by the CCVB and not part of the cooperative marketing program described above. This is advertising that would be targeted at the short haul markets. We recommend that this budget be focused on highly targeted opportunities in support of generating brand awareness activities or for last minute travel opportunities. For example, your PR efforts might capture the interest of a newspaper's travel editor in your target market areas. You sponsor the editor to travel to Chautauqua to write a story featuring the county in the Sunday travel section of the newspaper. In order to have more punch to the story, you may want to purchase advertising in that travel section on the day the story is going to run. It could even be the beginning of a special Chautauqua travel section that appears every year.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau; Tri-County Regional Group

APPROXIMATE COST:
2009
Tri-County Regional Program: $100,000 to $110,000 total – Chautauqua County's portion - $18,500 from bed tax, $18,250, $18,250 from state grant
County Program: $30,000
2010, 2001 – TBD

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Tri-County Regional Program: CCVB (bed tax), TPA grants, Cattaraugus & Allegeny Counties.
County Program: CCVB (bed tax)

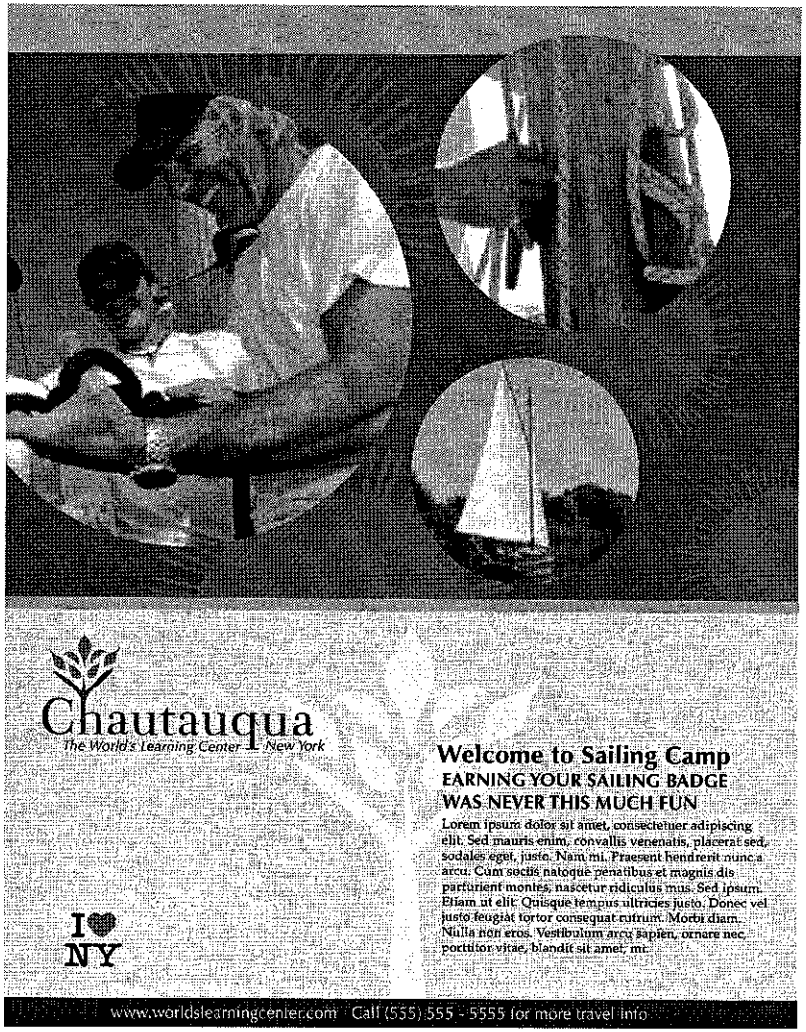
TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
2008 – Determine 2009 program
2009 – Implement and evaluate program, plan for 2010
2010 – Implement and evaluate program, plan for 2011
2011 – Implement and evaluate program

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Advertising is very expensive and should be done very carefully, especially by marketers with limited budgets. All advertising should have a clear purpose, in this case to maintain awareness of the brand and to generate leads that can be used to develop the market.

The New York Division of Tourism advertising agency, Satchi & Satchi, has proposed an interesting cooperative media program to the TPA's and Regional organizations that provides cost efficient opportunities to reach certain markets. We feel it is worthwhile to test these opportunities with the 2009 program to see if they can develop leads for Chautauqua and drive users to the website. Given the ability of the CCVB to leverage their dollars, the financial risk is small, as long as Chautauqua's brand message can be featured.

The proof is in the pudding. If the evaluations show a reasonable cost per visitor generated, then the program should be refined and continued. Always think of advertising as an opportunity to test the medium, the message or the target market.

Next 2 Pages: Advertising concepts


Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center | New York
Welcome to Sailing Camp
EARNING YOUR SAILING BADGE WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN
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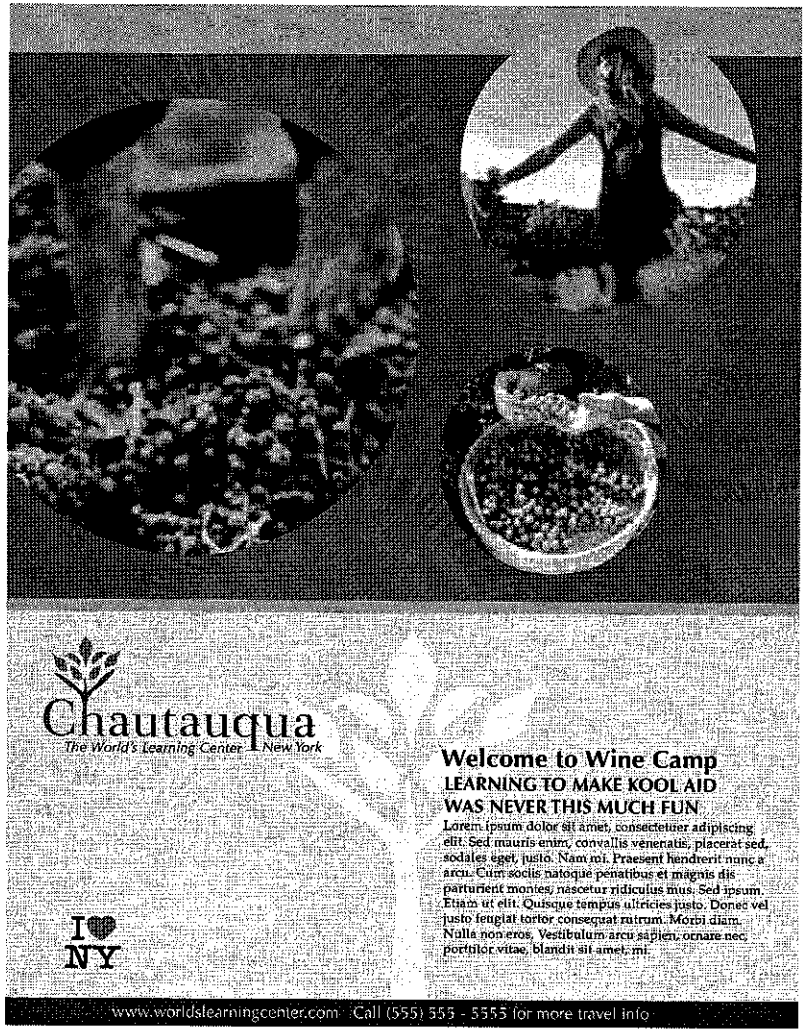
I ♥ NY
www.worldslearningcenter.com Call (555) 555 - 5555 for more travel info


Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center | New York
Welcome to Wine Camp
LEARNING TO MAKE KOOL AID WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN
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Chautauqua
The World's Learning Center ■ New York
Welcome to Golf Camp
GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.
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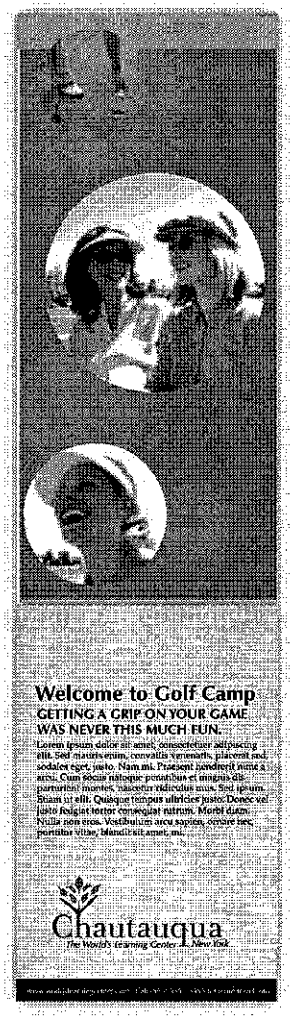

Welcome to Golf Camp
GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR GAME WAS NEVER THIS MUCH FUN.
Chautauqua

6 DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A TRACKING AND MEASUREMENT SYSTEM FOR MARKETING ACTIVITIES

DESCRIPTION:
Every marketing activity should have some type of tracking or measurement tied to it so that it is possible to make informed decisions for future marketing strategies. The following are suggested tracking and measurement activities for each area of marketing:

1. **Internet**

There are many ways to track and measure various Internet strategies. The CCVB already tracks key words on the main search engines and refines their word choices from time to time. In addition, the CCVB needs to track:

- Number of E-newsletter and E-blast opt-in subscribers.
- Number of RSS opt-in subscribers.
- Number of members to any social media group sites developed.

To fully track site statistics, we suggest investigating WebTrends, or similar service, to assess all aspects of web usage by your visitors. Website analytics include understanding the effectiveness of content and campaigns in driving visitors to your site, measuring visitor interactions with RSS feeds, and a number of other aspects of your web program. A good webmaster can assist you with the development of web analytics tools like this to help you measure site traffic and usage coming from various sources and evolve your web efforts.

2. **Public Relations**

Public relations activities can be tracked and effectiveness measured in a number of ways:

- Number of contacts developed
- Number of stories generated
- Number and range of media picking up stories
- Number of column inches, broadcast minutes generated
- Other measurements for PR as recommended by PR firm

3. **Sales**

All sales efforts should be monitored and tracked. This includes:

- Tracking tour operators, alumni, and special interest groups and product developed in Chautauqua County.
- Maintaining a database of groups visiting the county and developing an estimate of economic impact from groups.
- Tracking all visits to the travel/outdoor show booth.
- Capturing names, emails, addresses, and phone numbers if possible of visitors to travel/outdoor show booth.
- Track number of participants in sport fishing and hunting tournaments that are supported through incentives by the CCVB.

4. **Advertising**

As much as possible advertising is used to drive potential visitors to the website. All types of advertising should have a variety of metrics that are analyzed. For most media these metrics include:

- Geography and circulation or number of households covered
- Number of responses to advertising (800#, BRC, or website hits)
- Conversion rate of the responses.

In order to measure conversion rates, it is necessary to conduct a Conversion Study. Cost per response and cost per conversion per advertising opportunity can be calculated, providing return on investment information. Initially, we suggest conducting a conversion study on the Tri-County advertising program to fully understand whether purchasing media through the State of New York's cooperative marketing program is an effective way to reach the market with your message. Over time you can increase the number of sources you measure in the Conversion Study.

IMPLEMENTATION:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

APPROXIMATE COST:

Internet:	2009 - $10,000, 2010 - $15,000, 2011 - $15,000
Public Relations:	2009, 2010, 2011 - $5,000 per year
Other Metrics:	2009 - $15,000, 2010 - $20,000, 2011 - $30,000

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:
Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Internet: 2009 – Initiate and implement monitoring and tracking systems. 2010, 2011 – add tracking systems as budget allows.

Public Relations: 2009 - Initiate and implement monitoring and tracking systems. 2010, 2011 – maintain monitoring and tracking systems.

Other Metrics: 2009 – Implement Conversion Study on selected media sources, 2010, 2011 – Expand Conversion Study to include additional media sources

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Successful tourism marketing is based on information – what you know about your customers and how to reach them efficiently and effectively. In order to understand how your marketing activities are working, it is essential to monitor and track the results of your efforts. Every marketing activity should have a system of metrics that are used to provide enough information to the marketing manager to guide in the decision making process. Good information allows the marketing manager to continually refine the marketing program so that the program is working hard to help meet the goals of increasing visitors to the destination.

7 DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE COUNTY WIDE WAYFINDING SYSTEM

DESCRIPTION:
Once the "World's Learning Center" brand and logos have been adopted, a professional firm should be contracted to develop a professional Wayfinding Plan. The plan should incorporate the graphics, imagery, and colors that portray the "World's Learning Center" brand for Chautauqua County.

We recommend the development of a wayfinding system be completed in two phases as follows:

Phase One: The first phase would focus on the major highway directional signage. The tasks would include:

- A general assessment of highway wayfinding in Chautauqua County including an inventory and assessment of existing conditions.
- Research into current New York sign standards.
- Advice on a schematic wayfinding plan.
- Recommendations on sign placement and messages.
- Signage plan that included summary of existing conditions, proposed sign types, proposed location plans, proposed message schedule, and visual references to places.

Phase Two: The second phase would focus on the signage for gateways for the communities and wayfinding system for attractions, amenities, and services. Included in this phase would be:

- Design and location of gateways for the communities in the county.
- Wayfinding system for attractions, amenities, and services;
- The placement of text on each sign testing for readability at speed; fit; design.
- Signage specifications for bidding purposes, cost estimates, phasing and bid documentation.
- Decorative pole banner designs
- Coordination with State, county, and communities for setbacks, restrictions, and construction standards.
- Design and placement recommendations for visitor information kiosks

The Wayfinding Plan should stipulate the precise wording and exact location for each new sign, as well as mounting options, so it can be used to obtain fabrication and installation bids from regional sign manufacturers.

Visitor information kiosks should be designed to complement local architecture, as well as to enhance the "World's Learning Center" brand. The kiosks should provide weatherproof brochure holders for 24/7 visitor information, as well as display maps, a calendar of events, visitor attractions, local services and amenities, lodging and dining options, and cross-sell regional attractions. They should have adequate lighting and include prominent signs indicating "Visitor Information."

IMPLEMENTATION:
Brand Leadership Team, CCVB, State of New York Department of Transportation,

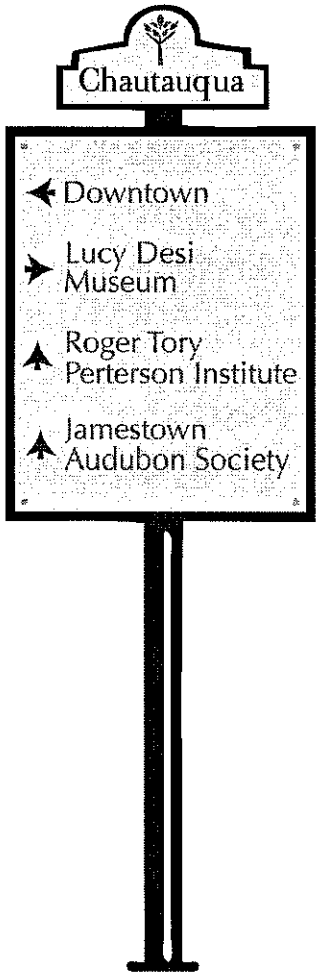
APPROXIMATE COST:
Phase One: Design Services - $60,000, Fabrication/Installation – TBD by State
Phase Two: Design Services - $75,000, Fabrication/Installation – TBD, Kiosks - $4,000 per kiosk Kiosk maintenance: TBD

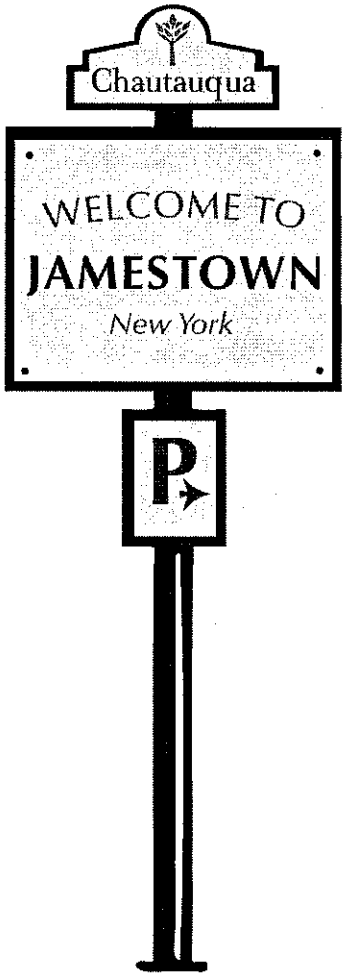
TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
Phase One – 2009/2010
Phase Two – 2009/2011
Kiosk construction – 2009

RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION:
Signage is critically important for any destination, particularly areas that are lesser known or are undergoing changes. It is even more important for areas such as Chautauqua County, which has two interstates, major state highways, and numerous small roads through open spaces.

The easier it is for visitors to find attractions and amenities, the longer they will stay, and the more they will spend. It can be difficult for the locals, who already know how to get from "point A" to "point B" to see gaps and omissions in existing signage, so it's best to use the services of a professional wayfinding firm. General highway signs are very important, which help travelers know where they are and how long it will be before reaching their destination. Gateway signs are also a key component of the plan and they need to make a powerful impression. Gateways create a sense of arrival and awareness of "place." A beautiful gateway can elevate the appeal of the community, increasing its perceived value and instilling pride in the community.

Providing plenty of well-marked visitor information kiosks make it easy for travelers to learn all that your destination has to offer. Only about 5% of travelers stop at Visitor Information Centers, so placing kiosks with visitor information near major attractions and amenities makes it easy to cross-sell activities and help travelers find more to do.





These sample wayfinding signs for Jamestown use the Chautauqua identity to tie the area together. They are simple, and use the approved colors and type.

NEXT STEPS

This Chautauqua County Branding and Marketing Action Plan is chock full of tasks to accomplish in order to fully integrate the brand into the county and the CCVB's marketing program. It will take a few years to fully implement this plan. We recommend that you roll out the marketing slowly, using 2009 as the year to conduct the necessary outreach throughout county and to develop the marketing materials. Plan to roll out the marketing for 2010. In the meantime, here are the top ten next steps for the CCVB and the Brand Leadership Team:

1. **Adopt the Chautauqua County "World's Learning Center" brand.**
2. **Create and empower the Brand Leadership Team**
3. **Lock up additional URLs that can be used to market the brand.**
4. **Coordinate with essential organizations to adopt the brand.**
5. **Develop a database of partners and key contacts.**
6. **Work with communities to come into the brand.**
7. **Work with partners to come up with 30 learning experiences, with criteria.**
8. **Conduct brand-building outreach in the county.**
9. **Integrate the brand into the Tri-County cooperative advertising program.**
10. **Create a new funding framework for the CCVB.**