Plan to Win:
TourismOhio Strategic Plan 2015–2018
2016 Update
Ohio has so much to offer visitors.

TourismOhio is charged with marketing the state to visitors. Travel and tourism provides jobs for Ohioans and is an important component of the state’s economic development mission.

Through the quality work of industry participants, agency staff and partner marketing practitioners led by TourismOhio Chief Mary Cusick, the good work of developing a visitors’ brand for the state has been done. In its infancy, the dissemination of that brand and reinforcing its values is the top priority as we look ahead.

Ohio’s financial investment in marketing to visitors is growing each year. It is our responsibility at the Development Services Agency to get the greatest value from the taxpayer dollars invested. We must find innovative and creative ways to assist Ohio businesses, institutions and interests in telling their story, to distinguish ourselves from other states, to the rest of the country and the world.

With this investment, our priorities are a return on the investment of taxpayer money through:
- More visitors
- Increased length of stay
- Increased spending per visit

Market research reinforces what I have known all my life; once you connect with Ohio, you know that whatever you are looking for, you can Find it Here.

As a native Ohioan, my story of Ohio involves emotional connections. I have fond memories of a safe and friendly place where I grew up. I received a world-class education here, having experiences and making friendships that have lasted well into my adult life. I met my wife and we are raising our children, experiencing what the state has to offer with trips to other parts of this amazing state. In recent years, we see opportunity growing.

Through relentless execution of the brand, we can make Ohio more than a household name. We can make it a warm memory of an experience that a visitor shared with the people he or she cares about. An experience may lead a visitor to decide to call Ohio home. That person may be a business owner who creates jobs and economic opportunity for others in Ohio. Opportunity. Ohio. Find it Here.™

Sincerely,

David Goodman
Director, Ohio Development Services Agency
David.Goodman@development.ohio.gov
(614) 644-0745

TourismOhio is pleased with the progress we’ve made implementing our 2015–2018 “Plan to Win” which lays the groundwork for branding Ohio in a new way that elevates our state as a travel destination of choice. We’ve completed a large percentage of our original plan which was created in conjunction with the “TourismOhio Team 100” and we’re building wonderful momentum. With this update, you’ll be able to see the enhancements to the plan and the progress that we’ve made such as the launch of our new website, new URL, and the new Ohio. Find It Here.™ brand.

TourismOhio is building on a foundation that we’ve established through “co-opetition” and collaboration that we need to continue to unify in order to amplify our shared message and goal. Ohio’s tourism industry has really come together in support of our efforts and we are so grateful for the partnerships we’ve established. Thank you to all of the industry leaders who have given us feedback and participated in sessions dedicated to improving our performance and impact. A special thank you to the TourismOhio Advisory Board for your guidance and wisdom as we enact this plan and make strides to achieve our goals. The support of Director Goodman and Governor John Kasich have made the work possible.

We look forward to continuing full-steam ahead and working with you to share our message far and wide.

For the good of Ohio,

Mary L. Cusick
Chief, TourismOhio
Mary.Cusick@development.ohio.gov
(614) 466-3704
What is TourismOhio?

Tourism is a key economic driver for Ohio. TourismOhio is a part of the Ohio Development Services Agency that is responsible for telling the story of what makes Ohio experiences unique and unforgettable.

It is an exciting time for tourism in Ohio. Thanks to the foresight of the Ohio legislature and tourism industry leadership, the funding model for marketing Ohio is now based on the growth of spending within tourism sectors. The funding depends on the increase in state sales tax from tourism segments year to year, up to $10 million. The 5-year pilot funding model extends to the end of Fiscal Year 2018 (June 2018).

According to research by Tourism Economics and Longwoods International, in 2015, tourism was a $42 billion industry (includes direct and indirect spend) and welcomed 207 million visitors, most of whom came from within a day’s drive (300–500 miles).

More than 41 million visitors stayed overnight in Ohio in 2015. Day trip visitors spent an estimated $110 per person, while overnight visitors spent an estimated $354 per person. Research from 2015 also indicates that the tourism industry supported 420,000 Ohio jobs (full-time, part-time and seasonal). This performance is record-setting and reflects the positive and consistent year-over-year growth.

There is positive momentum for Ohio tourism and a strategic plan for the organization is necessary to determine the future course for promoting Ohio’s authentic assets. With the foundation in place that clearly defines goals and objectives, TourismOhio seeks to build upon the momentum through effective marketing communications that consistently and distinctly deploy the Ohio. Find It Here.™ brand. Over time and with effective reach, the messaging will create awareness of Ohio as a destination of choice.

Vision
Ohio is a destination of choice, enriching lives through authentic travel experiences.

Mission
Aggressively position Ohio as a relevant travel destination and support Ohio’s tourism industry to drive economic prosperity throughout the state.
TourismOhio Advisory Board Members

The TourismOhio Advisory Board is charged with advising the Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency and the Chief of TourismOhio on strategies for promoting Ohio’s numerous travel destinations and experiences. Members were selected by the Governor and are experienced tourism industry leaders representing various tourism sectors. The chief of TourismOhio and the President and Chief Investment Officer for JobsOhio also have seats as ex-officio members of the Advisory Board.

TourismOhio expresses gratitude for the counsel and support provided by the following charter TourismOhio Advisory Board Members.

**John Mahaney, Jr.,** Ohio Council of Retail Merchants

**Karen Maier,** Frisch’s Restaurants

**Gregory Scheid,** Cedar Fair Entertainment Company
TourismOhio Strategic Initiatives

- Branding and Marketing Communications
  - Creativity
  - Find it here
  - Ohio
  - Ohio.org

- Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration
  - Collaboration
  - Find it here
  - Ohio
  - Ohio.org

- Financial Stability
  - Prosperity
  - Find it here
  - Ohio
  - Ohio.org

- Organizational Excellence
  - Success
  - Find it here
  - Ohio
  - Ohio.org

Measuring Success – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

By 2018:

- Increase number of Ohio visits to 234 million
- Sustain overnight visits from out-of-state travelers at 62%
- Increase overnight visits to 46 million
- Increase direct visitor spending to $40 billion
- Achieve a positive Return on Investment (ROI) for branding and marketing initiatives
- Achieve state sales tax revenue increase from tourism segments year over year
Key Performance Indicators

Number of Ohio Day & Overnight Visits
Source: Tourism Economics

Increase Number of Ohio Visits to:

- **2013 Actual**: 195 Million, +2.5%
- **2014 Actual**: 200 Million, +2.8%
- **2015 Actual**: 207 Million, +3.5%
- **2016 Estimated**: 216 Million, +4.5%
- **2017 Estimated**: 225 Million, +4.2%
- **2018 Estimated**: 234 Million, +4.0%

Number of Ohio Overnight Visits
Source: Tourism Economics

Increase Number of Overnight Visits to:

- **2013 Actual**: 38.0 Million, +0.1%
- **2014 Actual**: 39.0 Million, +2.6%
- **2015 Actual**: 40.8 Million, +4.5%
- **2016 Estimated**: 42.6 Million, +4.5%
- **2017 Estimated**: 44.1 Million, +3.5%
- **2018 Estimated**: 45.5 Million, +3.2%
Visitor Direct Spend*  
*Visitors direct spending on travel goods and services.

Increase Direct Visitor Spending to:

$40 billion

$29.9 Billion  
2013 Actual

$31.2 Billion  
2014 Actual

$32.8 Billion  
2015 Actual

$35.1 Billion  
2016 Estimated

$37.2 Billion  
2017 Estimated

$40.0 Billion  
2018 Estimated

Visit Direct Spend*  
Source: Tourism Economics

Overnight Visitors from Out-of-State  
Source: Longwoods International

Visitors from Out-of-State Stay Overnight:

3 out of 5

% of Overnight Visitors for Out-of-State Travelers:

62%  
2013 Actual

62%  
2014 Actual

64%  
2015 Actual

62%  
2016 Estimated

62%  
2017 Estimated

62%  
2018 Estimated
### Objective 1.1

**Develop a comprehensive, integrated marketing and public relations plan which advances the organization’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).**

**Tactics**
- ✓ Identify branding, creative services and media planning partners.
- ✓ Identify a strategic digital partner to build new online experience.
- ✓ Identify Ohio’s most authentic, compelling tourism experiences and create a targeted plan to tell those stories to specific audiences through TourismOhio marketing channels.
- ★ Develop a seasonal marketing and public relations strategy to take advantage of Ohio’s four seasons.
- □ Develop a strategy and tactics to activate consumers in the multicultural demographic.
- □ Expand the reach of the Ohio. Find It Here™ brand to an international audience with interests in Ohio – including the exploration of potential synergies with Brand USA/United States Travel Association and leverage relationship with Great Lakes USA (GLUSA).

### Objective 1.2

**Create and launch an authentic, dynamic brand and brand strategy for Ohio tourism.**

**Tactics**
- ★ Create a brand architecture that positions Ohio and its distinctive tourism assets.
- ★ Begin to integrate the new tourism brand into TourismOhio marketing channels.
- ✓ Launch a new consumer website.
- □ Provide retail and wholesale logo merchandise options.

### Objective 1.3

**Develop and execute a comprehensive research plan.**

**Tactics**
- ✓ Identify, consistently track and report Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure the effectiveness of specific digital experiences, marketing campaigns and public relations plans.
- ★ Inventory existing sources of tourism data and identify gaps where data is needed.

### Objective 1.4

**Expand TourismOhio Co-op opportunities for traditional and non-traditional partners to further amplify the brand.**

**Tactics**
- ✓ Expand the media channels available in the co-op.
- ✓ Provide flexibility and options for customization, targeting, and localization.
- ★ Continue to enhance co-op coverage opportunities and options to attract more partners that want to reach out-of-state visitors.
- ★ Increase outreach to expand co-op participation.
### Objective 2.1

**Lead ongoing collaborative and inclusive efforts to align all members of the tourism industry in Ohio.**

**Tactics**
- Increase industry participation with TourismOhio through improved outreach.
- Engage the TourismOhio Advisory Board and conduct regular meetings.
- Gather regular feedback from key tourism stakeholders to ensure TourismOhio is in step with industry priorities.
- Offer advice, counsel and tools for industry partners to best utilize effective marketing and public relations.

### Objective 2.2

**Enhance outreach and engagement activities with peer state agencies, economic development organizations and other potential partners in Ohio.**

**Tactics**
- Build effective relationships focusing on tourism’s economic impact as well as other programs within the Ohio Development Services Agency that enhance tourism.
- Conduct regular meetings with peer state agencies to share information, identify synergistic tactics and spark collaborative marketing and public relations opportunities.
- Pursue opportunities to include Ohio. Find It Here™ brand on marketing materials and signage of peer agencies.
- Pursue collaborative opportunities to work with the Governor’s regional liaisons and regional and state economic development organizations, such as JobsOhio and its regional partners.
- Work closely with internal, State of Ohio agencies to build on existing initiatives in order to create international awareness of Ohio as a tourist destination.
- Support and partner with Ohio History Connection and local tourism entities most impacted by World Heritage Site designations (target: 2020).
- Collaborate with Ohio’s state agency family of brands as potential TourismOhio Co-op partners and leverage the state’s overall marketing spend.

### Objective 2.3

**Identify, cultivate and activate private-sector partners to leverage support that will positively impact Ohio’s tourism industry and the state’s economy.**

**Tactics**
- Identify opportunities where private sector partners could support TourismOhio’s goals as outlined in the marketing and public relations plan.
- Conduct outreach to non-traditional partners, international companies and statewide trade associations to explore potential partnerships and amplify the Ohio. Find It Here™ brand in-state and beyond Ohio’s borders.
- Conduct specialized outreach and communications efforts for top CEOs, business leaders and other influencers in Ohio to share key metrics, the value of the Ohio. Find It Here™ brand, and the economic impact of the travel industry.
Objective 2.4  Effectively communicate with Ohio tourism stakeholders, public officials and opinion leaders about the value of tourism in Ohio.

**Tactics**
- Develop a brand rollout plan geared toward industry stakeholders.
- Survey industry on current communication tools and improve as needed.
- Publish an annual “Year in Review” for TourismOhio.
- Create a more prominent section on consumer website dedicated to TourismOhio news and information about the positive impact of the industry.
- Enhance TourismOhio information on the Development Services Agency website as well as websites of partner state agencies.
- Engage influential leaders (other agencies, corporations, influencers) to be brand champions and provide insights, talking points, and other resources about how to amplify the brand for Ohio.
- Create a signature brand presentation that industry stakeholders (especially convention and visitor bureaus) can customize and present in their regional/local markets to demonstrate the positive community and economic impact of the industry.

Objective 3.1  Leverage funding through effective strategic partnerships, collaboration and marketing in order to advance the tourism industry in Ohio and meet/exceed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

**Tactics**
- Explore opportunities for TourismOhio to go to market with additional Ohio agencies so that all entities benefit from reduced media costs and increased efficiencies.

Objective 3.2  Drive performance by achieving measurable objectives and tactics, as well as a positive Return on Investment (ROI).

**Tactics**
- Identify partners and processes to calculate TourismOhio’s success metrics.
- Create a scorecard to measure progress, goals met, and opportunities.

Objective 3.3  Explore potential new sources of funding to advance the organization’s mission.

**Tactics**
- Investigate opportunities to secure additional public and private sector partners for TourismOhio advertising merchandising and promotional vehicles.
Strategic Initiative 4: Organizational Excellence

Goal: Ensure organizational excellence through a commitment to the highest standards of operation, execution and customer service.

Objective 4.1 Create a top-tier marketing organization which features a scalable structure, innovative strategies and high-level talent.

Tactics
- Conduct assessment of current staffing and determine talent needs.
- Create a staffing plan and organize TourismOhio to effectively achieve Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Continue a culture of collaboration.
- Boost internal staff capacity to meet the increasing needs of constituents and to maximize the success of the new branding initiative.
- Provide ongoing professional development and team-building opportunities for staff.

Objective 4.2 Develop and monitor a balanced scorecard to track progress and demonstrate TourismOhio’s commitment to being a results-driven organization.

Tactics
- Determine scorecard measures, both financial and programmatic.
- Publish scorecards at least biannually.

Objective 4.3 Establish TourismOhio as a subject matter expert for integrated marketing communications and a resource for constituents, partners and stakeholders.

Tactics
- Promote expertise of TourismOhio staff as a resource.
- Partner and collaborate with state agencies to establish TourismOhio’s credibility and expertise as a marketing resource and partner - for the good of Ohio.
The “TourismOhio Team 100” first came together at the Symposium on the Future of Tourism in Ohio in June 2014. This group of visionaries includes tourism industry members, marketing experts, tourism partner organizations, peer state agencies and legislative leaders. Participation has grown significantly over the past two years, including at the most recent Ohio Tourism Summit in April 2016.

- Lori Abshire, OSU Wexner Medical Center
- Randie Adams, Cincinnati USA
- Paige Alost, Athens County Convention Visitors Bureau
- Irene Alvarez, Columbus 2020
- Nathan Arnold, Velvet Ice Cream
- Joyce Barrett, Heritage Ohio
- Kim Bauer, Portsmouth-Scioto County Visitors Bureau
- Adria Bergeron, Muskinghum Watershed Conservancy District
- Kimberly Blackwell, PMM
- Nikki Branch, PMM
- Sandra Brasington, Ohio Governor’s Office
- Hannah Brokenshire, Ohio Arts Council
- Lynn Brown, Outback Steakhouse, Columbia Station
- Tami Brown, Greater Cleveland Aquarium
- Tammy Brown, TourismOhio
- Joyce Bryant, Ad-Rack
- Katy Burrier, Cult Marketing
- Jodi Burroughs, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Hocking Hills Canopy Tours and Wild Zipline Safari at the Wilds
- Ally Bussey, Canton Stark County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Rick Cain, Longwoods International
- Julie Calvert, Cincinnati USA Convention Visitors Bureau
- Brian Cheek, Ohio History Connection
- Jarrod Clabaugh, Ohio Restaurant Association
- Lisa Colbert, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Donna Collins, Ohio Arts Council
- Philip Craig, Ohio Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus
- Mary Cusick, TourismOhio
- Patrick Czarny, Maumee Bay Resort
- Nicole DeFreitas, Jet Express/BGSU
- Mike Dovilla, Ohio House of Representatives
- Roger Dudley, Experience Columbus
- Kristy Eckert, TourismOhio
- Christy Eckstein, Ohio Grape Industries
- Bryan Edwards, Lake Erie Shores and Islands
- Jacob Evans, The Craig Group
- Michael Evans, Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
- Amir Eylon, Longwoods International
- Jason Fallon, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Jamal Feerasta, Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
- Mary Fessler, Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Pete Fingerhut, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
- Larry Fletcher, Lake Erie Shores and Islands West
- Ron Foth, Jr., Ron Foth Advertising
- Ron Foth, Sr., Ron Foth Advertising
- Ileana Frascone, Miles
- Ann Gallagher, Gallagher Consulting Group, Inc.
- Tiffany Gerber, Tuscarawas County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Joe Giessler, TourismOhio
- Jami Goldstein, Greater Columbus Arts Council
Plan to Win: TourismOhio Strategic Plan

- David Goodman, Director, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Ellen Grinsfelder, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Inn and Spa at Cedar Falls
- Cheryl Grossman, Ohio House of Representatives
- Donna Grube, Auglaize and Mercer Counties Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Deb Hackathorn, COSI
- Justin Hage, Ron Foth Advertising
- Scott Hanley, JobsOhio
- Lute Harmon, Jr., Great Lakes Publishing
- Greg Harris, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum
- Mark Hecquet, Butler County Visitors Bureau
- Geoff Hetrick, Ohio Restaurant Association
- Kyle Hickman, Cult Marketing
- King Hill, Marcus Thomas, LLC
- Shelly Hoffman, Ohio Governor’s Office
- Leslie Holbrook, Fahlgren Mortine
- Angie Homan, Cult Marketing
- Kim Hopcraft, Columbus Museum of Art
- David Hopcraft, Ohio Department of Insurance
- Melinda Huntley, Ohio Travel Association
- Philip Jenkins, Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
- Dave Johnson, Cleveland Convention Center/Global Center for Health Innovation
- Tom Johnson, Mayor of Somerset, Ohio
- Colette Jones, Destination Cleveland
- Laura Jones, JobsOhio
- Kari Kauffman, Experience Columbus
- Hannah Kelbaugh, Miles
- Tim Kern, Ron Foth Advertising
- Heather Kessler, Cincinnati RTN
- Todd Kleismit, Ohio History Connection
- Jeri Knowlton, Marietta-Washington County Convention Visitors Bureau
- Tracy Kocher, Butler County Visitors Bureau
- Geri Lombard, Hotel LeVeque
- Mary MacDonald, Ohio Craft Brewers Association
- Matthew MacLaren, Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
- James Mahon, Akron Summit Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Penny Martin, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Shasta Mast, Holmes County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau
- Bethany McCorkle, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Marty McDonald, Fahlgren Mortine
- Johanna McEntee, Ohio Museums Association
- Lauren McGinty, Ohio Department of Higher Education
- Janelle Mead, Ohio Department of Agriculture
- Todd Mesek, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum
- Tammy Meyers, L Brands
- John Minor, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Ohio
- Kim Moore, Ron Foth Advertising
- Neil Mortine, Fahlgren Mortine
- Jeremy Myers, Ohio Travel Association
- Richard Nachazel, Destination Toledo
- Rachel Near, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Maureen O’Rourke, Ohio Restaurant Association
- Gary Obermiller, Ohio State Parks
- Jamison Pack, Ohio History Connection
- Lori Panda, Ohio Proud
- Dan Peterson, Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
- Claudia Plumley, Great Lakes Publishing
- Jacquelyn Powell, Dayton Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Shannen Powell, Reputation Management Associates
- Bill Purpura, AAA Home and Away
- Karen Raymore, Hocking Hills Tourism Association
- Brian Ross, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Experience Columbus
- Aimee Rupert, TourismOhio
- Katie Sabatino, TourismOhio
- Gregory Scheid, Cedar Fair Entertainment Company
- Joshua Schmidt, Mapleside Farms
- Christopher Schutte, Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Lauren Seckel, TourismOhio
- Stephanie Sferra, Trumbull County Tourism Bureau
- Hannah Smith, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Kevin Smith, TourismOhio
- Debbie Stamper, Clinton County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Dan Sullivan, TourismOhio Advisory Board/HNS Sports
- Amy Summers, TourismOhio
- Kristi Takach, Marcus Thomas, LLC
- Lee Tasseff, Mansfield-Richland County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Jassen Tawil, Cleveland Sight Center
- Mary Taylor, Lt. Governor
- Glenda Terrell, Marcus Thomas, LLC
- Amy Tillinghast, Experience Columbus
- Lyn Tolan, Ohio Development Services Agency
- John Ulmer, Perry County Chamber of Commerce
- Alisa Vidulich, Legislative Aide (Rep. Grossman)
- Todd Walker, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Patricia Williamsen, Ohio Humanities Council
- Katie Wilson, Fahlgren Mortine
- Greg Woods, Ohio Development Services Agency
- Dan Young, TourismOhio Advisory Board/Young’s Jersey Dairy
- James Zehringer, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Carrie Zelnis, Cult Marketing
Plan to Win: TourismOhio Strategic Plan

Phase I: Stakeholder Research and Input

TourismOhio has many respected stakeholders, including members of the tourism industry. The first phase of the planning effort focused on conducting research and gathering input from these valued constituents.

2014 Symposium on the Future of Tourism in Ohio

On June 26, TourismOhio hosted the 2014 Symposium on the Future of Tourism in Ohio, a first-ever event held at Center of Science and Industry (COSI) in Columbus. The Symposium convened the “TourismOhio Team 100,” made up of about 100 industry experts, Ohio Development Services Agency leadership, key state agency partners, legislators and marketers for the good of tourism in Ohio. The event engaged TourismOhio’s key stakeholders and opinion leaders, while leveraging the power of Ohio tourism industries and elevating the economic importance of tourism to Ohio. The Symposium, supported by Governor John R. Kasich, was an opportunity to identify issues that influence and inform the TourismOhio strategic planning process. The Governor was represented by Lt. Governor Mary Taylor and Director David Goodman of the Ohio Development Services Agency during the Symposium.

Personal Interviews and Online Survey Research

Phase I also included the completion of research through personal interviews and online surveys. TourismOhio collected input from its Advisory Board via one-on-one telephone interviews. The members shared opinions on strategic vision, priority issues and future initiatives. The personal interview format allowed TourismOhio the opportunity to get in-depth intelligence from its leadership to help determine TourismOhio’s future role and positioning.

TourismOhio also conducted an online survey of a broader group of stakeholders. The online method allowed TourismOhio the ability to solicit feedback from a larger group of constituents. The survey data also provided a qualitative benchmark for the initiative.

Secondary Research

TourismOhio completed a secondary research review of state tourism organizations throughout the country.

This comparative analysis provided helpful insight into the effort.

Strategic Plan Calendar

- **2014**
  - 1: Symposium on the Future of Tourism in Ohio (June 26)
  - 2: TourismOhio drafted the strategic framework for the “Plan to Win” (July–December)
  - 3: TourismOhio Advisory Board review of “Plan to Win” and shared with tourism industry (January)
  - 4: Industry brand preview (November)

- **2015**
  - 3: TourismOhio Advisory Board review of “Plan to Win” and shared with tourism industry (January)

- **2016**
  - 5: Consumer launch of Ohio, Find It Here.™ through marketing and public relations (March)
  - 6: Ohio Tourism Summit (April 18)
  - 7: Integrated feedback, drafted plan (May–August)
  - 8: TourismOhio Advisory Board review and accept updated “Plan to Win” (September 8)
Phase II: Strategy Sessions and Plan Development

The second phase of the process was devoted to strategy sessions and the development of goals, objectives and metrics for success.

Advisory Board Strategy Session

Gallagher Consulting Group facilitated a strategic planning session for the TourismOhio Advisory Board in September 2014. During the meeting, the Advisory Board set the strategic direction for the organization by focusing on high-level governance issues such as vision, mission and strategic initiatives. The Advisory Board also reviewed and incorporated findings from Phase I into the planning.

Staff Planning Session

Using information collected during the stakeholder research phase and results from the Advisory Board session, Gallagher Consulting Group facilitated planning sessions for the staff of TourismOhio. The staff worked on refinement of the plan’s goals, developing objectives and implementation strategies. They also developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and tactics for the strategic directives provided by the Advisory Board.

Written Strategic Plan Document

Using all the input and information collected, TourismOhio created a written strategic plan document for TourismOhio for 2015-2018. The comprehensive document includes the following elements: vision, mission, strategic initiatives, goals, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), objectives and key tactics. The Advisory Board reviewed and accepted the final plan on January 22, 2015.

Phase III: Communication Rollout and Implementation

Communication Rollout of Strategic Plan

After the plan was completed, TourismOhio shared its strategic direction for 2015-2018 with its internal and external stakeholders including members of the tourism industry, public officials, state partner agencies and Ohio taxpayers. The phased rollout was designed to unify thought-leaders around the TourismOhio “Plan to Win” and inform stakeholders and the general public on progress being made to promote Ohio with additional funding provided by tourism tax revenue.

Implementation

TourismOhio will implement the strategic plan and use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor its progress to aggressively position Ohio as a relevant travel destination and support Ohio’s tourism industry to drive economic prosperity throughout the state.

Phase IV: Ongoing Evaluation and Updates

The success of this strategic plan requires that TourismOhio continuously evaluates its effectiveness and makes necessary adjustments. This plan spans from 2015-2018. TourismOhio conducted its first annual update in 2016. The process included an assessment based on its set of plan metrics as well as harnessing feedback and input from the “TourismOhio Team 100” during a statewide gathering in April 2016. TourismOhio has achieved many plan objectives during its first year of implementation.

Through a study conducted by Longwoods International, we’ve collected data to help us evaluate our performance and better understand consumer habits. We look forward to implementing an instrument to measure awareness of our brand as we continue to analyze and optimize the media campaign to amplify our brand. This update contains the addition of new objectives and tactics to further advance its strategic goals. TourismOhio will complete the next plan update in 2017.
Brandywine Falls in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in Powell

Heritage Vineyard Winery in Warsaw

Brothers Drake Meadery in Columbus

Mita’s restaurant / bar in Cincinnati

HighBall in the Short North Arts District

gratitude.

romance.

happiness.

freaky love.

joyride.

arresting conversation.

As of 12/14/16