



2019 MARKETING PLAN



WE ARE YOUR TYPE

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▪ WE ARE YOUR TYPE ▪

WHETHER YOU'RE A LEISURE LOVER, ARTS ENTHUSIAST, STORIED SOUL, FOODIE OR A MIXTURE OF IT ALL, YOUR PERFECT TYPE OF GETAWAY AWAITS IN OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI.

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▪ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ▪

The Visit Oxford staff has worked together to produce the FY19 Marketing Plan. Oxford has seen extreme growth over the last five years and with that growth, Visit Oxford has been able to expand its marketing efforts, increase partnerships with the addition of a staff member, develop a public relations plan and in FY19 add a Digital Content Manager to the Visit Oxford staff. With this growth, there is also the challenge of ensuring hotel rooms are filled year-round and not just during peak periods in the fall and spring. The Visit Oxford staff work to promote Oxford as a year-round destination through marketing and public relations efforts and work closely with hoteliers to ensure there is no overlap in sales efforts.

In FY19, Visit Oxford will continue to roll out new branding that it started in FY18 and implement it in all areas of marketing and public relations. Visit Oxford, in conjunction with the City of Oxford, will finalize a new wayfinding signage program that will enhance the visitor experience and create a cohesive signage plan throughout the City of Oxford. Visit Oxford will continue to work with partner organizations to promote Oxford throughout the year, particularly in the “off” seasons and to Oxford’s three to six hour drive market.

▪ MISSION STATEMENT ▪

To promote Oxford for the economic benefit of the community.

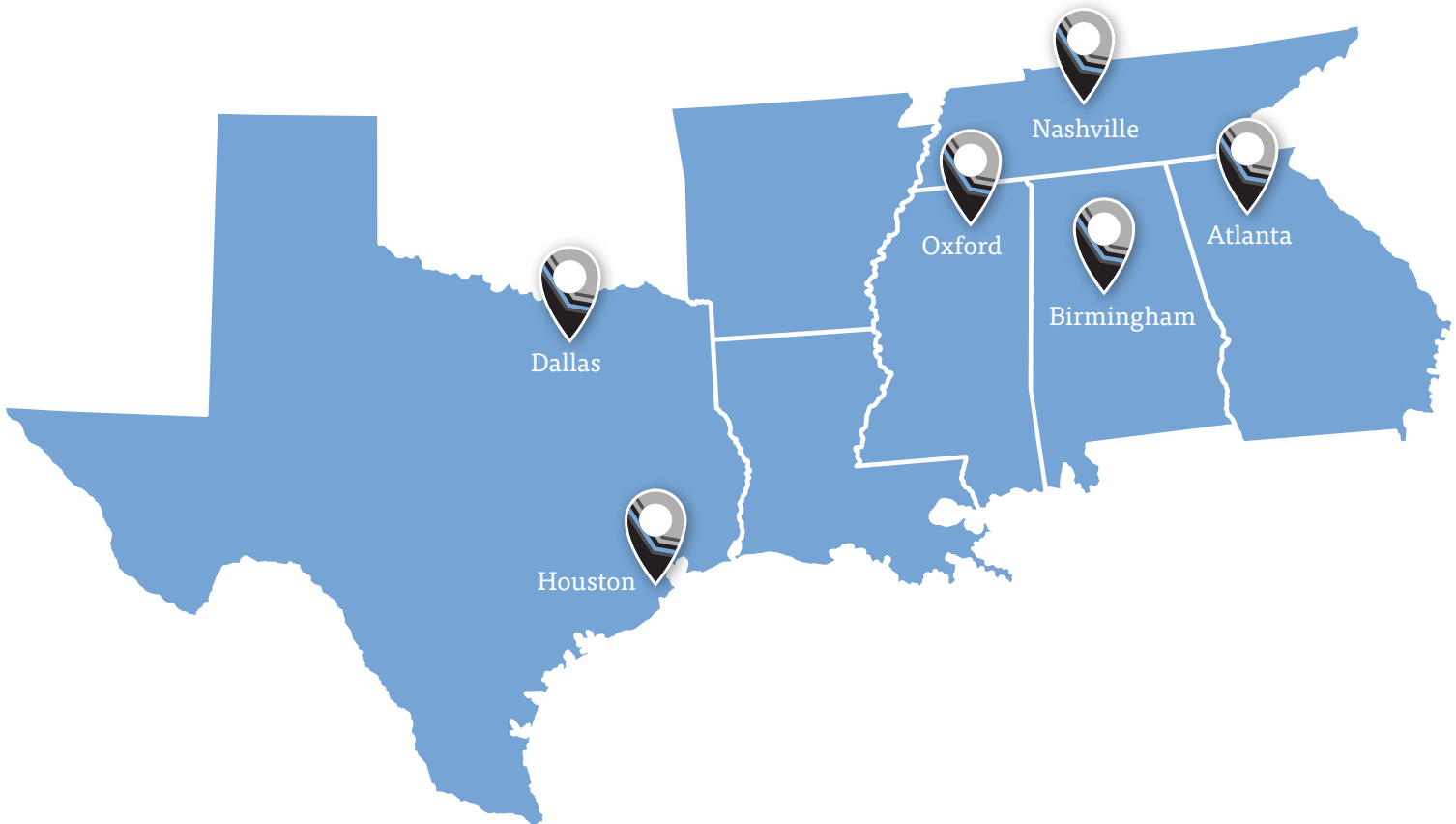
▪ PRODUCT ▪

Research indicates that our product is a wide-range of leisure, cultural, historic and recreational activities that Oxford and the University of Mississippi have to offer. Other reasons visitors are coming to Oxford include: group/conference/meeting, University-related, weddings and sports tournaments.

▪ MARKET ▪

A 2016/2017 travel market research study with Young Strategies identified through hotelier surveys and visitor profile surveys that overnight leisure travel parties consist of middle aged adults or families with children who are well educated and/or retired professionals. These visitors travel from a 3-6 hour drive radius among contiguous states, with the exception of Dallas and Houston which are top feeder markets for the University. The top ranked leisure feeder markets are:

ATLANTA | DALLAS | HOUSTON
BIRMINGHAM | NASHVILLE



GOALS

Economic Growth



BRAND
AWARENESS



MAXIMIZE
RETURN ON
INVESTMENTS



ECONOMIC GROWTH

INCREASE NUMBER OF ROOMS BEING SOLD YEAR-ROUND TO INCREASE 2% HOTEL/MOTEL REVENUE.

SALES EFFORTS

DOMESTIC LEISURE

- Remain focused on small to medium size groups and individual travelers
- Sell Oxford as a destination to group planners at various trade shows and events
- Sell Oxford at various leisure lifestyle trade shows and events
- Sales blitz to a designated region/ city in conjunction with PR efforts

INTERNATIONAL F.I.T.

- Sell Oxford as a destination to international tour operators at various trade shows
- Take advantage of co-ops with Visit MS
- Continue working with local hotels to create contracts with receptive operators
- Continue placing ads in international sales pieces/ brochures

SMERF (SPORTS, MILITARY, EDUCATION, RETIREE AND FAMILY)

- Work with local hotel sales directors to compete for conference bids for mid-week groups
- Sponsor tours or receptions to attract these groups during the week
- Continue coordination with FNC park for room blocks for sports teams
- Work with Oxford Park Commission and The University of Mississippi to showcase available sports venues with potential to host MS High School Athletic Association championships

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

- Work with Oxford Conference Center and local hotel sales directors to attract mid-week conferences and meetings, especially in the off seasons
- Continue sales efforts within MS Society of Association Executives to attract meetings to Oxford
- Coordinate sales trade shows with Oxford Conference Center to maximize return on investment
- Continue to sponsor tours and receptions to attract these groups during the week
- Work with Oxford Conference Center and hotel sales directors to co-host meeting planner familiarization tours (FAM trips)

VISITORS SERVICES

ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING:

- Build on the first impression to create a repeat visitor
- Provide promotional items to visitors; individual or group
- Maintain community calendar to promote events throughout the year
- Implementation of wayfinding signage plan

BRAND AWARENESS

FOCUS EFFORTS ON CONTINUED REBRAND IMPLEMENTATION, INCREASE DIGITAL MARKETING EFFORTS AND MORE PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE VISITATION TO OXFORD.

REBRAND

- Create a current and new look to keep potential visitors energized and engaged in Oxford as a destination for travel
- Express Oxford's place in Mississippi as an upscale destination, and continue to grow and strengthen the impression that Oxford is an authentic source of Southern culture that offers unique and progressive experiences for visitors
- Build loyalty for those who visit Oxford and spur curiosity for those who have not

ADVERTISING

- Expand digital and social media presence
- Implementation of new brand and "WE ARE YOUR TYPE" campaigns focusing on food, art, literary and well rounded "types"
- Diversify advertising efforts in different markets

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Post relevant content for visitors with visuals, article links, blog posts and bimonthly newsletter
- Create paid promotional Facebook, Twitter, Instagram ads for bus tours and larger Oxford events
- Post often to keep users engaged and familiar with Visit Oxford and its brand
- Engage with followers and other Oxford companies/partners on social media
- Respond and engage when users and followers have questions/comments
- Promote Oxford events and community partners
- Direct users and followers to the Visit Oxford website for newsletter sign up and blog posts
- Use Facebook and Twitter analytics to determine audience demographics
- Use social media analytics tools to analyze what type of content is most popular
- Continue to grow followers across all platforms

DOUBLE DECKER BUS

- Develop booking platform for customer usage
- Provide guidelines for private bookings to align a clear communication pathway
- Increase staff of tour guides with extensive historical knowledge
- Increase staff of tour bus drivers to have the opportunity to provide more tours and create additional revenue
- Create a double decker bus tour with a distinct focus on African American cultural history in Oxford

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Hoteliers - hold monthly meetings to discuss opportunities to create more awareness of availability
- University - group meetings - develop relationships with University leaders to partner with during special events or meetings held on campus as well as set up visitor table for large group attendees
- University - orientation - participate in the Parent Receptions to encourage parents to visit the Visit Oxford Visitors Center.
- Continue promotional brochures distribution for information and brand awareness
- Pop Up Oxford - collaborate with community partners involved with the Arts, along with The University of Mississippi, local retailers and restaurants to promote awareness of Oxford cultural experiences for a week long celebration in January
- Hotel Hop - event designed to increase visibility of local hoteliers along side Pop Up Oxford
- Train and educate hospitality professionals through Treat 'Em Right Share Oxford training program and certification opportunity

NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK

- Implement visitor experiences throughout the week to encourage visibility and awareness
- Provide Double Decker Bus tour to local hospitality professionals to become aware of tour information available at Visit Oxford
- Collaboration with community partners and sales and marketing professionals from hoteliers to discuss future needs
- Visit statewide Visitor's Centers to set up materials and engage with visitors entering Mississippi



MAXIMIZE RETURN ON INVESTMENTS

EXPAND OXFORD'S EXPOSURE THROUGH PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS AS WELL AS AN INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE. AN INCREASE IN PARTNERSHIPS FUNDING WILL COINCIDE WITH VISIT OXFORD'S MISSION AND ASSIST EVENTS AND CONFERENCES FINANCIALLY TO ENSURE REPEAT VISITATION, PARTICULARLY DURING OXFORD'S SLOW PERIODS.

PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS

- Continue monitoring the travel media press room for accuracy, giving journalists and photographers quick access to quality information and images
- Continue media hosting efforts with Laurie Rowe Communications, hosting 6-8 writers individually or on press trips
- Create a new itinerary focused on minority run businesses (i.e. restaurants)
- Continue to update new photo library to include more diversity
- Host travel writers and media vetted through Visit MS, international and domestic writers
- Media blitz to a designated region/ city in conjunction with sales efforts
- Work with Laurie Rowe Communications to recruit minority publications or minority focused writers to promote new itineraries

SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS

- Paid promotional ads on Facebook and Twitter to target specific audiences and locations (ex: visiting teams' cities during baseball and football)
- Promote Visit Oxford giveaways through organic and paid ads to receive audience locations for future targeting

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

- Work to increase community partner participation in Visit Oxford events
- An increase in Oxford Partnerships funding allows for more economic impact from events and partners to receive funding through the scored criteria
- Increase promotion of Summer Sunset Series to grow sponsorships and attendees to the event
- Build relationship with MS Coaches Association and MS High School Athletic Association to host high school championships to Oxford to increase hotel sales and restaurant sales

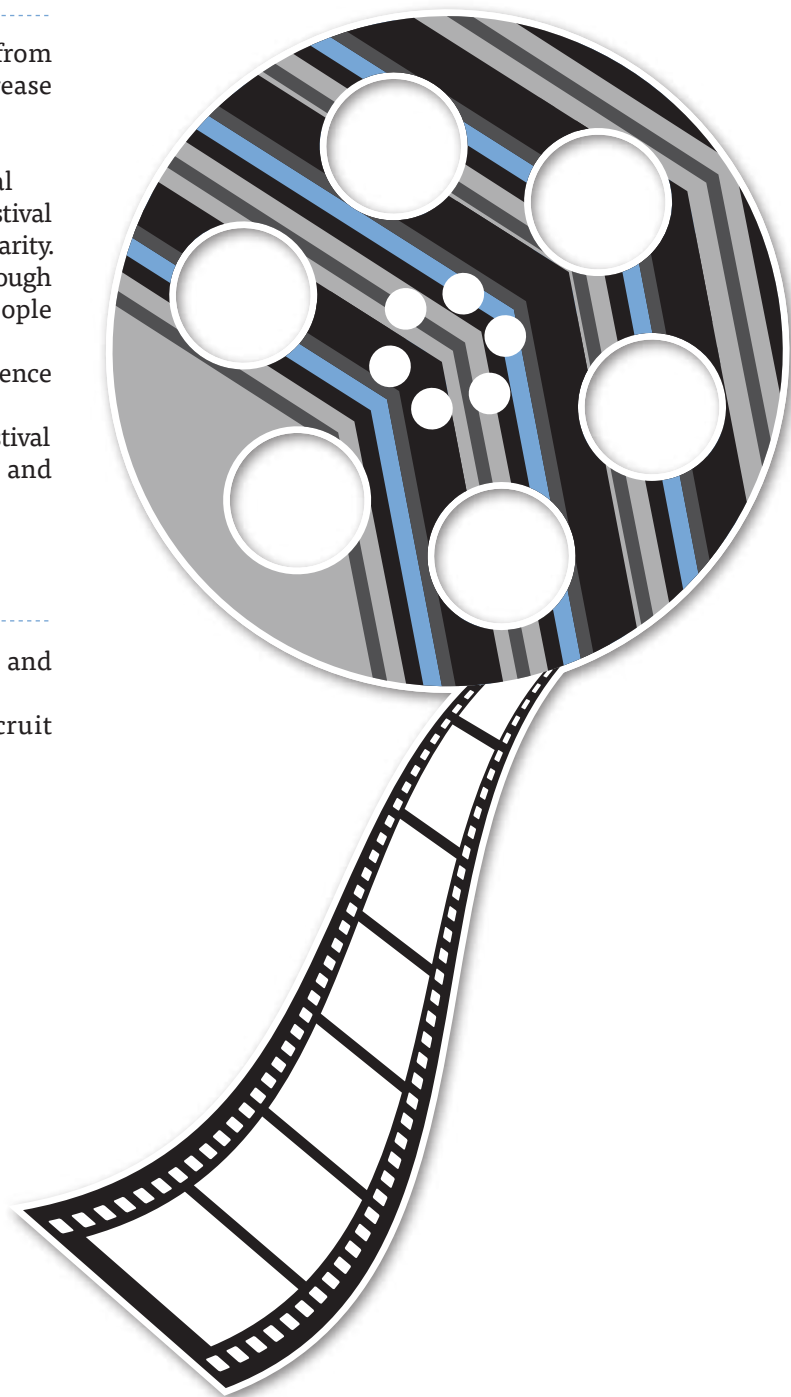
DOUBLE DECKER AND FILM COMMISSION

DOUBLE DECKER

- Double Decker Coordinator increased sponsorships from \$110,000 in FY17 to \$180,000 in FY18; continue to increase sponsorships in FY 19
- Social Media
 - Use FB, Twitter and Instagram to promote the festival
 - Post sponsorships on Facebook- these gained the festival more sponsorships than ever before due to their popularity.
 - Create a Facebook Event for the festival to be shared through followers, users and Visit Oxford (FY18 had 289.4k people reached, 9.5k people responded to the event)
 - Use social media analytics tools to track users and audience locations
 - Explore ways to create a diverse environment at the festival
 - Continue to create a music line up of diverse artists and music

FILM COMMISSION

- Continue to promote film resources (production guide and crew list) with updated Film Oxford website
- Partnership with the Mississippi Film Office to recruit potential filmmakers to Oxford
- Sponsor of the Oxford Film Festival
- Promote community films offered at different times throughout the year partnered with events and festivals



MEET THE STAFF



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*Let's
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