



TOURISM REPORT *and* 2016 MARKETING PLAN

Augusta
CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are pleased to share with you a new combined 2015 Annual Report and 2016 Marketing Plan, highlighting our accomplishments from the past year and offering a glimpse of what's in store for the Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB) in 2016.

As a destination marketing organization, it is critical to identify new and emerging opportunities to inspire visitors and local residents. This year promises to be an exceptional year for the ACVB as we continue to stay on the cutting edge of industry trends.

For more than a decade, we've been riding the baby boomer wave and have been very successful at it. Visitor spending in Augusta has increased 45 percent in the past 10 years.

In 2016, we will shift our marketing strategy to a new target audience, the millennials—the generation now between the ages of 18 and 34. Millennial travelers represent a huge opportunity for our industry as they now outnumber baby boomers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, millennials represent more than one quarter of the nation's population and account for between \$200 and \$300 billion in annual spending worldwide. These numbers are impossible to ignore.

Our customer is changing, and so must we. We are proud to introduce a new lifestyle magazine that celebrates Augusta's River Region, giving locals and guests a peek into what makes Augusta so captivating. In March, we will launch a brand new website, designed to work on any size screen, personal computer, tablet, or smartphone. And, later this year, we'll introduce a new advertising campaign.

As we switch our focus to a younger market segment, our message will still resonate with boomers. As a boomer myself, it's clear that millennials and baby boomers have more in common than we think.

The future of tourism is bright, and I have no doubt that 2016 will be an outstanding year for Augusta's tourism industry partners.



Barry E. White

PRESIDENT/CEO
AUGUSTA CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU



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VISITOR IMPACT



DINING

\$174.2

Million



LODGING

\$79.7

Million



Visitor Spending Breakdown

\$506.9

MILLION



TRANSPORTATION

\$143.8

Million



SHOPPING

\$59.1

Million



ENTERTAINMENT

\$50

Million

2015 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Employment

4,600

JOB S

Tax Relief Per Household

\$388.00

As a Result of Taxes
Generated by Tourism

State Taxes

\$19.44

MILLION

Local Taxes

\$14.33

MILLION



AUGUSTA'S BRAND STORY

At first, they came to escape the cold northern winters. Drawn to Augusta, Georgia, in the late 1800s by the mild climate, presidents, industrialists, and socialites stepped down from private railcars to winter at resort hotels dotting the landscape of the classic southern city. William Howard Taft and John Rockefeller were among the luminaries whose names graced the guest registries of properties such as the Bon Air Hotel and Partridge Inn, and heirs to the Singer Sewing Machine Company were often in residence during the winter months.

Moderate temperatures also allowed equestrians to house their horses, and polo matches became places to see and be seen by the social set, creating a culture of refinement that added to the region's appeal. Without snow to hamper outdoor activities, Augusta soon became known as the “winter golf capital of America,” representing the epitome of luxury, elegance, and Southern hospitality that stretched well into the twentieth century for this new breed of Augustans.

Augusta soon became known as the “winter golf capital of America,” representing the epitome of luxury, elegance, and Southern hospitality.

With its place well established as a resort destination, Augusta was a natural choice for the nation's most famous amateur golfer to select as the location for a golf course and club. The course opened in December of 1932, hosting its first invitational tournament in 1934. For over thirty years, the competition attracted a mostly local audience but, in 1964, television coverage drew spectators from across the globe. The event sold out, and the flower-studded beauty and grace of Augusta was displayed on a world stage, confirming its well-earned reputation for tradition, hospitality, and heritage.

As it has for over eighty years, the Masters Tournament continues to offer an opportunity to share in the celebration of excellence that has made it the world's most prestigious sporting event; and the city is proud to welcome those who arrive each April to share the time-honored traditions that mark this rite of spring.

125+ YEARS

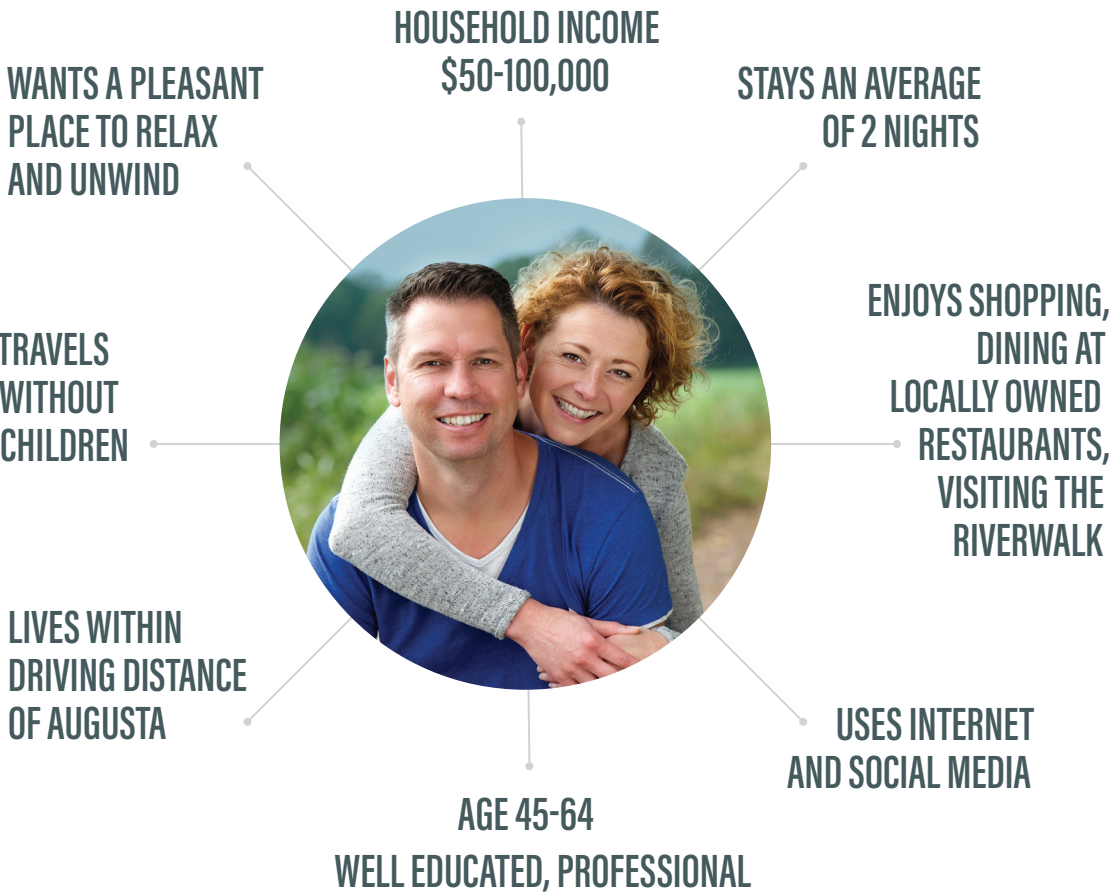
For over 125 years, hospitality has been at the heart of Augusta, and that heart beats strong amidst the ingenuity and innovation of today's prosperous and thriving community.

There are those drawn to the city's history and heritage, but alongside the banks of the Savannah River they also discover an Augusta that is alive for a new generation: one that celebrates the city's arts and culture, flourishes with its dynamic recreational opportunities, revels in the renewed appreciation of the region's storied past, and pulses with a contagious vitality that promises a bright tomorrow for the new Augustan.



VISITOR PROFILE

Who Is the Augusta Traveler?



Source: Magellan Strategy Group, 2013

TOP 5 STATES FOR VISITOR INFORMATION REQUESTS



Florida



Georgia



South Carolina



North Carolina



Texas



MARKETING

Position and promote the region as a preferred destination for leisure and meeting travel.

2016 GOALS

- + Launch a new, responsive design website
- + Continue expanding digital marketing initiatives through interactive elements and social media



- + Develop a new, cohesive advertising campaign for all markets

2016

Total Advertising Media Investment



PRINT MARKETING

Spring out loud.

Springtime in Augusta is not just a season. It's an occasion. With so many fun and exciting things to do, come on over this weekend.



Artists Row

On the First Friday of each month, Artists Row is packed with music, food, antiques and attractions. Galleries and studios debut new works, and vendors sell unique wares. 706.513.0916



The Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson

Come inside the site where President Woodrow Wilson grew up during his childhood. Hourly tours Tuesday through Saturday. 706.722.9828




Augusta Canal National Heritage Area

Let us show you the praises of the Heritage Area. Live music cruises. 706.823.0440



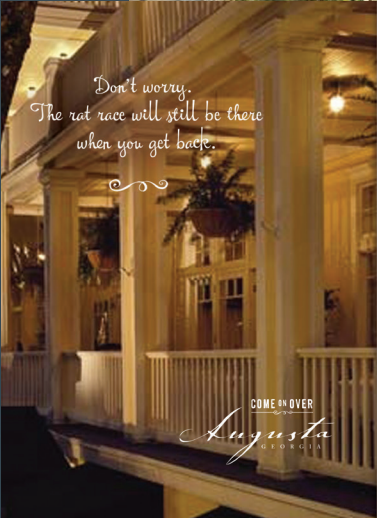
A childhood that changed a president.
As a boy, he saw the world change.



Young Woodrow "Tommy" Wilson witnessed the effects of the civil war in his hometown of Augusta. Come visit The Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson, and see where and how his childhood influenced our 28th President of the United States.

COME ON OVER
Augusta
GEORGIA
AugustaHistory.com

*Don't worry.
The rat race will still be there
when you get back.*



COME ON OVER
Augusta
GEORGIA

The Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson

President Woodrow Wilson grew up in Augusta during the Civil War. Come see where and how his childhood influenced his presidency. 706.722.9828

Augusta Canal National Heritage Area

The locals absolutely love the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area. With daily guided boat tours, and Friday evening live music cruises, you will too. 706.823.0440

Sacred Heart Garden Festival

Celebrate classic Southern gardening with a Tour of Gardens, floral and landscape exhibits, vendor market, speakers, live music, and more. April 24-26, 2015. 706.826.4700

www.SpringInAugusta.com



Print Advertising Examples

Visitor Guide Data

52,875

City Guides Distributed

Augusta
GEORGIA

COME ON OVER



City Guide

ONLINE MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA

VISITAUGUSTA.COM TOP STATES OF ORIGIN



2015

2,000+
#LoveAugusta

Over 2,000 people used the #LoveAugusta hashtag on Instagram & Twitter

2015 Website Information

Total Sessions	246,365
Session Duration	2:20
Page Views	1,031,307

2015 Social Media Information



6,236 Fans



42,719 Total Minutes Watched



2,547 Followers

TOP PAGES VISITED ONLINE

(Excluding homepage)

- 1 MOBILE EVENTS
- 2 WHERE TO DINE
- 3 ATTRACTIONS
- 4 CALENDAR
- 5 THINGS TO DO



ONLINE MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA

AUGUSTA'S PREMIER
HALF MARATHON AND 10K
February 22, 2015 Half Marathon
Prize Purse of \$4,500

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA
[Register Today](#)

Digital Advertising Examples

TOUR GEORGIA'S OLDEST PRESIDENTIAL SITE.

[LEARN MORE](#)

A PRESIDENT'S WOODROW WILSON'S EARLIEST MEMORIES OF AUGUSTA

Woodrow "Tommy" Wilson moved to Augusta with his family right after his first birthday. Growing up during the Civil War, his childhood memories helped shape him as both a man and a leader of the United States. Come on over and tour the Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson, Georgia's oldest presidential site.

[LEARN MORE](#)

GET ON DOWN TO THE SAY IT LOUD EXHIBIT.
LUCY CRAFT LANEY MUSEUM AUGUSTA, GA

James Brown influenced an entire generation and the Civil Rights Movement.

Learn how, now through the month of February, by visiting the exciting Say It Loud Exhibit at the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History in Augusta.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Augusta COME ON OVER

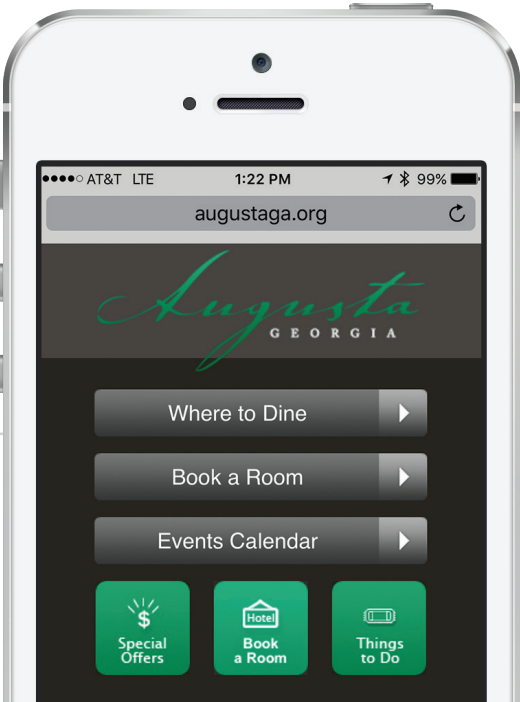
AUGUSTA'S PREMIER
HALF MARATHON AND 10K

February 22, 2015 Half Marathon
Prize Purse of \$4,500

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA [Register Today](#)

55%

55% of website visits were from a mobile device.





PUBLIC RELATIONS



NUMBER OF IMPRESSIONS

56,000,000+



TRAVEL WRITER
SITE VISITS

25



STORIES GENERATED

47



Candy Cook and her family
enjoying the canal in Augusta.



I wanted to thank you for such a fantastic trip to Augusta... you put together such an amazing itinerary and we had a great time exploring. Thank you so much for your hospitality.



—Candy Cook, Georgia Explorer and happytrailswildtales.com

GROUP SERVICES

Marketing and Group Services partnered with local attractions and hotels to host the biannual Atlanta Sales and Media Mission in Atlanta, bringing together meeting planners and travel media to learn about Augusta.

2016 GOALS

- + Group market development with focus on religious, associations, and reunions
- + Service more existing group customers/arrivals
- + Conduct a family reunion workshop to assist residents with planning

2015 TRADE SHOWS ATTENDED

Religious Conference Management Association Trade Show
Birmingham, AL

Rejuvenate Marketplace
Dallas, TX

Georgia Society of Association Executives Trade Show
Atlanta, GA

2016 TRADE SHOW SCHEDULE

EMERGE Religious Conference Management Association Trade Show
January 5-7, 2016
San Diego, CA

Connect Marketplace
August 25-27, 2016
Grapevine, TX

Rejuvenate Marketplace
October 25-27, 2016
Orlando, FL

Georgia Society of Association Executives Trade Show
November 16, 2016
Atlanta, GA

271
 Groups Serviced

2015
 Direct Visitor Spending
\$40,315,302

282,634
 Delegates Serviced

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Increase community awareness of visitor-related activities and attractions, and the value of tourism and the CVB as an economic development partner.

2015

FAM TOUR

Hosted a familiarization (FAM) tour for frontline hotel staff

2016 GOALS

- + Introduce a new tourism excellence award
- + Distribute *The New Augustan* magazine locally
- + Commission local self-perception research
- + CVB orientation for new city elected and staff officials

200+ PEOPLE ATTENDED THE ANNUAL
STATE OF TOURISM LUNCHEON



Masters of Hospitality

This service recognition program allows hotel guests to nominate hospitality staff members for providing excellent customer service. Each nominee receives a Green Jacket Masters of Hospitality pin.



93 hospitality staff nominated

112 AUGUSTA CHAMPIONS HONORED

Augusta Champions assist the ACVB in bringing meetings and events to the community. These individuals played a direct part in stimulating the economy of Augusta by influencing groups to visit the area.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Enhance the visitor experience through destination development and visitor services.

2016 GOALS

- + Create a repair and maintenance plan for the city's wayfinding sign system
- + Installation of gateway beautification on Riverwatch Parkway at I-20
- + Sustainable maintenance funding plan for beautified areas



- + Create a destination development action plan
- + Serve as liaison to the film industry
- + Relocate the Visitor Center to a more visible space with a storefront

INSTALLED 220 WAYFINDING SIGNS

The new signs welcome travelers and act as a permanent billboard, reminding visitors and residents of all there is to see and do in Augusta.

Phinizy Swamp
Nature Park
←

University
Hospital
↑

VA Medical Ctr.
←

VISITOR CENTER

VISITOR SERVICES

Visitor Center

Total Visitors	18,501
Volunteer Hours	675.74
Community Events Promoted	9

Retail Sales

Increase Over 2014	8.4%
--------------------	------

Trolley

Trolley Tours	37
Passengers	599

“

Thanks so much. I wish I had 10 of you on my crew!

”

—Jude S. Walko, Line Producer, SIREN

FILM PRODUCTIONS

ACVB worked with in 2015

SIREN

Chiller Network

GHOST ASYLUM: SIBLEY MILL

Destination America

DISAPPEARED

Investigation Discovery

Augusta was one of the first communities in the state to be certified by the Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office as a Camera Ready Community.

2015

38+ Years

of combined experience promoting Augusta as a destination for film.



FINANCE, ADMIN & GOVERNANCE

Operate as a fiscally responsible and productive team organization.

2016 GOALS

- + Update the multiyear strategic plan
- + Ensure sound board-governance standards and practices
- + Review and update employee handbook
- + Review and update bylaws

Augusta earned an endorsement of distinction by achieving Destination Marketing Accreditation Program's globally renowned accreditation. The accreditation is a marker for quality and performance in the destination marketing and management industry, and defines a Destination Management Organization as a trusted, valued community partner.

BOARD MEETINGS

January	21
February	18
March	17
April	21
May	19
June	16
July	21
August	18
September	15
October	20
November	17
December	15



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2015

DMAI

Received reaccreditation from Destination Marketing Association International.

2016 DIRECTORY

The Augusta CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross section of business and hospitality industry partners. Board meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

AUGUSTA CVB STAFF

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eddie Bussey

Chairman
State Farm Insurance

Sue Parr

Vice Chair
Augusta Metro
Chamber of Commerce

Dennis Skelley

Secretary/Treasurer
Walton Foundation
for Independence

Dayton Sherrouse

Immediate Past Chair
Augusta Canal National
Heritage Area

Bill Fennoy

Augusta Commission

Nancy Glaser

Augusta Museum
of History

Wayne Guilfoyle

Augusta Commission

Joel Hortenstine

Singh Investment Group

Diane Johnston

Augusta Regional
Airport

Velvet Perry

Perry Broadcasting
of Augusta

T. R. Reddy

Power Control Systems

Krista Wight

Frog Hollow Hospitality
Group

Randy Duteau

Ex-Officio Columbia
County Convention &
Visitors Bureau

Barry E. White

Ex-Officio Augusta
Convention & Visitors
Bureau

LEGAL COUNSEL

Scott Lewis

Fulcher Hagler

THE AUGUSTA CVB

The Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau is the city's official destination marketing organization, attracting visitors and fostering destination development to enhance the economic growth of the region.

WHAT IS THE AUGUSTA CVB?

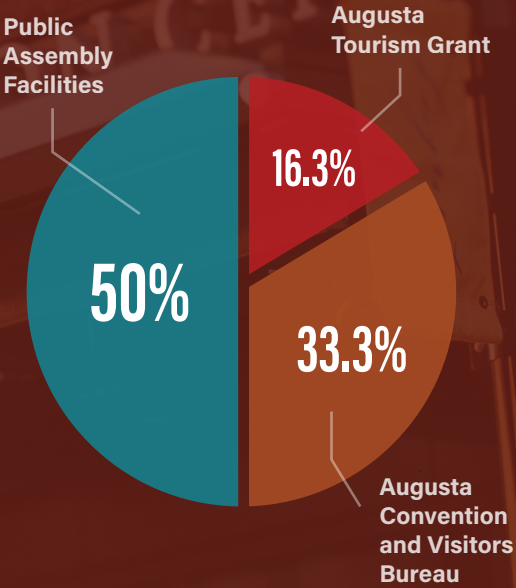
The Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau Inc. (CVB) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) corporation responsible for promoting tourism in the Augusta area. This destination marketing organization is Augusta's exclusive provider of tourism promotion services.

Our Vision is to provide authentic Augusta experiences founded on our international reputation.

Augusta's first CVB was established in 1980 as a

department of the Metro Augusta Chamber of Commerce. In 1988, the city and county created the Augusta-Richmond County Convention and Visitors Bureau as a joint entity of the two governments. On Jan. 1, 1997, Augusta CVB Inc. was created and entered into a service agreement with the city of Augusta.

The primary objective of the CVB is to look beyond daily occupancy rates of hotels and position Augusta as a destination by developing an image that will attract visitors. This is accomplished through effective strategies, aggressive advertising and public relations campaigns, sales efforts within the convention and meeting markets, and destination development. The Augusta CVB also operates the Visitor Center, which is located inside the Augusta Museum of History.



HOTEL TAX ALLOCATIONS

Primary funding is derived from a portion of a 6 percent hotel tax. The CVB receives 33.3 percent of the hotel tax, which is designated for marketing and promotions. The CVB administers a tourism grant with additional hotel tax restricted for that purpose. The CVB also receives a portion of the mixed drink tax from Augusta to operate the Visitor Center.

CLARKS HILL LAKE

EDGEFIELD COUNTY

COLUMBIA COUNTY

AIKEN COUNTY

RICHMOND COUNTY

GEORGIA

AUGUSTA'S RIVER REGION

VISITAUGUSTA.COM



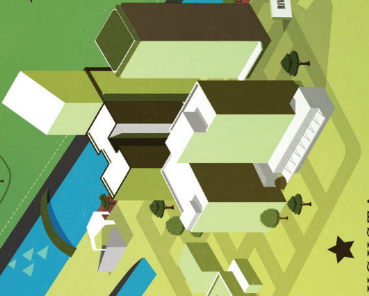
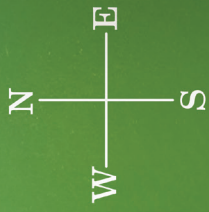
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520

20

520

20



CITRUS
IMFOLIATA

Fruitland Nurseries

ESTABLISHED
1856

AUGUSTA, GA

Augusta
CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

1450 Greene Street • Suite 110 • Augusta, GA 30901

visitaugusta.com

Catalogue
No. 1