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MISSION

In an effort to aid in the economic development of the territory, the 21st Legislature created the Department of Tourism (DOT) on May 8, 1995 and charged it with the mission of generating tourism revenue for the United States Virgin Islands.

In keeping with our mission, the Department will market the USVI using marketplace intelligence to promote the economic growth of the territory through sustainable tourism development coordinated with the industry and its stakeholders. The Department will aid in the development of programs which advance the understanding of the value of tourism to the territory. The Department of Tourism will promote the unique features of each island and develop long term strategies using the powers and duties provided by the 21st Legislature in the creation of the Department.

ORGANIZATION VISION

The Department of Tourism will position the U.S. Virgin Islands as the premier destination of choice for travel from North America, Europe and the Caribbean with a constant eye on emerging markets. In promoting the U.S. Virgin Islands as a superior vacation experience the Department will feature the islands' natural resources, attractions, activities, history, culture, cuisine and people. Our marketing strategy will enable us to increase revenue to the territory by focusing our efforts on areas with the highest potential for return on investment.

GOALS

The Department of Tourism has set the following core goals to ensure the fulfillment of its mission:

- To increase the number of domestic and international tourists to the territory
- Increase the amount of visitor expenditures on a yearly basis
- To improve community awareness of the value of tourism to our economy.
- To ensure the uniqueness of each island is represented in our marketing efforts
- To build brand equity and create growth opportunities for St. Croix and to maintain brand equity and increase growth opportunities for St. Thomas and St. John
COMMISSIONER’S MESSAGE

It is a pleasure to present the seventh marketing plan of the deJongh/Francis administration. This annual exercise provides a road map for the Department of Tourism in the implementation of our overall marketing strategy. More importantly it provides tourism partners and the community an overview of how the Department will position the destination over the next year.

If you’ve been reading this annual guide, which we sincerely hope you have, you will note a slight departure in our presentation of the FY2014 plan. We now realize the global financial meltdown of 2008 significantly and perhaps permanently changed the availability of funding; it has radically changed the consumer mind set as it pertains to travel and the internet has forever changed how people research travel and determine a vacation. The truth is there is no new norm. There is no norm period. The consumer is king and many prior travel patterns and beliefs simply no longer apply. As an example, traditionally sold out periods like Christmas, New Year’s and Easter often are more available than say March, April or June which over the last few years have seen record room rates and many sold out periods.

Our marketing plan, therefore, is a guide that helps our team to pinpoint trends and utilizes more individually targeted tactics and non-traditional marketing methodologies. As an example you may see less trade-shows and more webinars. Digital and social media strategies may replace print and some broadcast advertising. You will also note we are fine tuning our approach to engaging elements of local culture, music, food and events in our overall marketing approach.

The Caribbean is the most tourism dependent region in the world. While the region boasts of fantastic warm weather vacations, competition has increased radically over the past ten years from other warm weather locations. We contend our panoramic vistas, incredible beaches, and the diversity of product along with the fact that travelers from our core market do not require a passport to visit us all remain key attributes of our destination. We also know those elements which showcase our uniqueness and help to tell our distinctive story will make the difference in separating us from the other warm weather destinations.

Today’s travelers are greater collectors of experiences than ever before. In the U.S. Virgin Islands we have an abundance of unique experience which we intend to highlight in our FY2014 marketing strategy. Don’t be alarmed if you don’t see the level of detail outlined in the Department’s previous marketing plans - this plan is no less robust. As a matter of fact a key component of this year’s strategy involves more direct engagement with tourism partners and the community at large. Our marketing team has committed to bi-annual presentations to key tourism and business based groups. We will be implementing an aggressive public relations campaign where we will engage the community via weekly radio/TV appearances and we are stepping up community based tourism projects.

So what can you anticipate in 2014 that you haven’t seen before?

- A new tourism radio show
- A more highly integrated digital and social media campaign
- New engagement with VI artists and sports figures
- Highlighting of local events that can help to source new visitors

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• Increased focus on including Virgin Islanders who reside outside the territory as active ambassadors
• More non-traditional consumer touch points (sports, epicurean, and faith based events) to showcase our now highly effective cultural road show.
• Engaging Virgin Islanders excelling in the areas of sports and entertainment as spokespersons on behalf of the destination.
• Identifying new customers amongst the growing ethnic markets to include the fastest growing populations in the United States (Hispanic Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans)
• Using our diverse history to reach out to French, Jewish and Scandinavian travelers. The impending celebration of our 100th Anniversary of Transfer Day serves as a catalyst in this arena.
• Highly visible campaign to incentivize travel professionals
• Increased focus on the meetings & incentive market
• Greater focus on programs which sensitize our young people to tourism overall, careers and how they can make a difference in our tourism future.

To incorporate several new elements to our strategy while simultaneously maintaining several of the tried and true tactics is tall order. However when our marketing team met several weeks ago we were energized knowing that successfully implementing many of these concepts will impact not just the number of visitors we can attract to our shores but visitors who will leave having collected experiences that will make them our ambassadors and keep them returning year after year.

We look forward to continued collaboration and we remain committed to our mantra that for this or any plan to be successful we must remain mindful that “Tourism is all of us.”

Beverly Nicholson Doty
MARKET SEGMENTATION

While developing the strategy for 2014, the Department reviewed data collected over the last year by the USVI Bureau of Economic Research regarding visitors to the destination. The results are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP DOMESTIC MARKETS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>53,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>36,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>36,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>34,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>30,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>30,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>28,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>24,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>23,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>20,715</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>24,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe (Unlisted)</td>
<td>1,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>1,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>439</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP REGIONAL ARRIVALS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USVI</td>
<td>50,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>19,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean Islands(UNLISTED)</td>
<td>1,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Virgin Islands</td>
<td>5,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>532</td>
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</tbody>
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Our goal is always to allow our marketing funds to work as efficiently as possible. We intend to focus our efforts on these subsets of the wider population as they are prospects that are most likely to travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands for business or pleasure. Our research, along with input from our partners will allow us to develop strategies to ensure the highest return of our marketing and sales expenditures.
SALES AND MARKETING

Tourism revenues provide significant economic benefits for the U.S. Virgin Islands economy. As such, the Department of Tourism efforts are focused on enhancing local economic development by marketing our islands as a tourist destination both domestically and internationally in hopes of generating revenues and jobs.

The travel industry has evolved. Travelers have access to information at the touch of a button. The USVI is no longer in competition with only those in the region, but warm weather destinations around the world. Thus we are forced to remain on the cutting edge as it relates to how we cut through the “clutter” and communicate with the traveling public about the U.S. Virgin Islands.

To accomplish this, the USVI Department of Tourism provides a truly integrated marketing effort. The functions and services of each of our interrelated program areas – advertising, public relations, sales and product development – support the Department’s overall mission.

During Fiscal Year 2014 the Department intends to employ several new tactics to cut through the “clutter” and to increase consumer and trade excitement about U.S. Virgin Islands. These plans include:

- an aggressive travel agent incentive program designed to not only increase sales but also gain the territory increased publicity
- more frequent, smaller in market events using a new, untapped way of branding the destination. The new VI branded elements will be designed to gain the territory publicity and will be outfitted to serve multiple purposes throughout the year
- packages that promote greater inter island travel

Advertising, Sales and Public Relations

Our advertising campaign is designed to promote the U.S. Virgin Islands as a premier travel destination by engaging potential visitors through a variety of national/international advertising. The plan includes integration of a multimedia strategy in print, television, with a focus on digital marketing opportunities, in recognition of the key role of the internet in the decision making process of the consumer. Leveraging mobile and social media opportunities to extend the brand message and encourage viral activities will take on greater priority in FY14. The department intends to capitalize on the digital space - effectively. The DOT will be investing resources to ensure all its digital and social media channels are coordinated for maximum benefit for the destination.

Our public relations strategy involves the proactive outreach to the media as well as the travel trade industry throughout the US and international markets including, Canada, Scandinavia, Italy, the Caribbean, and South America. Through in-market events, press trips, familiarization tours, and social media campaigns, public relations provides first- hand promotion of the USVI travel product, and creates cooperative opportunities for our travel industry partners. Public
relations also markets directly to consumers using social media and promotional methods, further supporting our advertising efforts.

The sales strategy will focus on proactively promoting the diverse activities and experiences offered in the U.S. Virgin Islands to both the consumer and the travel trade. Sales calls, sales blitzes, reservation center trainings, along with trade and consumer shows are some of the efforts that will be employed by the USVI sales force.

**National Advertising**

**Cultural Trends - Measures of Success are Changing**

Consumers are balancing “having” with “being” – placing more and more value in experience. The work/life balance that Millennials are seeking comes with a drive to maximize involvement in passionate interests. Personal fulfillment and experiences are displacing traditional marks of success—and with that comes opportunity. 70% of Millennials wish for immersive and fun experiences when they travel. 68% wish for an interactive and hands-on experience.

**Drivers**

- Cross-cultural exchange driving interest in new and different experiences
- New age movement, influence of global spirituality (e.g. yoga) creating rise in quest for “balance”
- Self-Realization movements
- Realization that success is incremental. It is a result of incremental efforts taken throughout a lifetime
- Social networks are creating new measures of social currency and platforms for consumer “celebrity”
  - Money is a means to an end. Experiences are displacing traditional marks of success and with that comes opportunities.

**Social Currency**

Peer-to-Peer networks are generating sharable forms of interpersonal currency, creating more ways for the USVI to add value

**Manifestations**

- Social currency counters like “Klout” are measuring influence within social networks and enabling consumers to share that notoriety

**Industry Trends**

**Peer Powered Travel:**

As the peer-to-peer marketplace expands in size and scope—moving beyond goods to a wide
range of services—it will increasingly upend the hospitality, tourism and transportation industries.

Drivers:

- Distrust in institutions - people are sharing just about everything, from carpooling duties to their living rooms. This informal social media–fueled sharing economy has readied us for more formalized peer-to-peer marketplaces.
- Craving authenticity - this movement is being driven by an interest in supporting local communities and artisans, and knowing more about the people behind the things we buy. It’s a shift away from the mass-market efficiency, ease and low-cost mindset that has dominated the past couple of decades. Life came in a more packaged form—everything from food to your vacation. Increasingly, people want to experience unique "gems" while traveling.

Hyper-Personalized Travel:

Consumers are coming to expect highly personalized services, and the travel industry is starting to respond by fine-tuning offerings around individual customers.

Drivers:

- Predictive personalization- brands of all stripes will increasingly be able to predict customer behavior, needs or wants—and tailor offers and communications very precisely. Companies will leverage the massive amount of data now available to them from sources including app usage, loyalty cards, web-browsing trails and especially social media. Analysts are beginning to tackle unstructured data streams—Facebook posts, videos, etc.— adding ever more information about the habits and preferences of consumers.
- Consumers living publicly- today’s wealth of social media postings result not only in massive quantities of data companies can analyze but a quality of personal data that was unthinkable just a decade ago.
- Me-centric consumers - with information at their fingertips and an array of social media platforms where complaints can be broadcast, today’s consumers are at the center of their world—they call the shots and their expectations are sky-high. Consumers have grown accustomed to customization: seeing personalized suggestions on Netflix, hearing the music they like on Pandora, etc.
- Impatience with web tools- it would seem the World Wide Web would make travel planning easier, but many of today’s travelers have grown weary of scrolling through dozens of user reviews, consulting myriad sources for suggestions and otherwise seeing time slip away as they research what to do and where to go next.

Media Strategy Overview

There will be a broad reaching media plan that resonates with affluent travelers. This will help build and maintain awareness of the USVI as a premier Caribbean destination in a competitive environment. There will also be an overlay of support focusing on niche target segments proven to be strong revenue producers for the territory. These will include:
• Bridal/Romance
• Dive
• Yachting/Boating/Sailing
• Sports Enthusiasts (i.e.; golf, triathlons, swim)
• Families
• African Americans
• Asian Americans
• Hispanic Americans

From a timing standpoint, national media will run throughout the year (budget permitting) in order to:

• Align with seasonality of the destination
• Support key events and/or promotions (local market media support)

There will also be support included for St. Croix in order to boost travel to this specific island.

• When possible, leverage sports personalities (i.e.; Kevin Krigger, Tim Duncan) through media relationships
• Film opportunities

Target Segments

The FY14 paid media program will primarily focus on General Travelers (Adults 25-54) with higher skewing household incomes ($75M+) as the broader target audience. This target is inherently inclusive of several key segments to the USVI, clustered into psychographic and demographically similar “Personas,”

*Please note: volume is based on syndicated research (MRI Doublebase 2012)*

Families (33.5MM)

Families tend to stay within comfort zones for their annual vacations (within a certain region, with particular hotel brands, etc). The mother of the family is the key decision maker but will receive input from the children. While they use the vacation to help educate everyone about the world around them, the goal is to bond the family unit. As such, they use all available resources to spend quality time together and plan the hassle-free itineraries that are recommended by friends and family. Under the premise of “family” and “family time,” she collects ideas for future activities with her family online. Feeling responsible for the outcome of the trip, she will use accessible technology as a tool to help ensure the satisfaction and enjoyment of all family members. Browsing both on tablets and her PC, she uses the internet to research and plan the trip. Families are practical and efficient travelers whose final decisions are based on value rather than price.
Cultural & Heritage Seekers (30MM)

Culture and Heritage Seekers are looking for tools that enable them to explore the world through an introspective and immersive approach. Not as dependent on financial budgets as the rest of their peer group, they constantly look for experiences that differentiate them from their peers. These individuals are smart and active users of all media who particularly pay attention to and post on review sites.

Sea, Sun & Sand (77MM)

Sea, Sand and Sun Travelers are looking for a stress-free vacation that will allow them to de-tech and relax. Constantly on their devices at home and away, they will plan the majority of their activities online and limit their access to the internet during their vacation, using only to build their social currency amongst friends and family. Dedicating a limited amount of time at home to planning their vacation, they are likely to search for media channels that streamline their available options. Recommendations from their networks and travel agents are useful and important drivers to influencing their decisions on island and help reassure these travelers of the best possible options.

Nature Seekers (56MM)

Nature Seekers consider themselves to be leaders in their peer groups and like to influence the decisions of their friends and family. Their social currency is built by sharing new and interesting experiences and information with people in their networks both through their smart phones and PCs. Early adapters of technology, they are very connected to all their networks and use their tablets and mobile phones to research interesting/necessary information. As ambitious about their professional careers as they are in traveling to as many places as possible, they are price-conscious but willing to pay a premium for memorable and unique experiences. Ambidextrous with technology, they are heavy consumers of content and research interesting topics on a variety of sites.

Last Minute (18.9MM)

Last Minute Travelers are particular about the destinations they choose as their last minute vacation. Their biggest barrier being time, this group is very focused on planning a concentrated itinerary that will expose them to the spirit of the destination. Whether it is a trip dedicated to relaxing or one that is based around an immersive experience, they will plan the vacation at home in advance to ensure they get the most out of their vacation. This audience is willing to hear about vacation opportunities through various channels or a travel deal. The final decision will be made after considering the opinions of their friends and family. This gesture is reciprocated once they have experienced the destination and are able to present their newfound opinions to their network.

Wedding Planner (2.9MM)

Planning for the best wedding on their budget and time, Wedding Planners/Brides are looking for opportunities to affirm they are making the best possible decision and are willing to pay a premium to secure those opportunities. Their decisions for wedding destinations are based
upon activities and accommodations that will deliver immersive and authentic experiences. As such, the internet is a useful resource for this audience, providing links to services, galleries and content that inspires and reassures them of what a destination has to offer.

**Trade/Event Planners (2.7MM)**

Trade segments such as meeting and incentive planners, travel agents, etc. will continue to play an important role in driving business to the USVI. The DOT will leverage media opportunities in alignment with business-to-business channels designed to reach decision-makers in film, MICE, traditional travel agents and cruise industries, respectively.

Travelers within the segments noted above are not mutually exclusive and may overlap across multiple personas. However, seasonality, context, stage in decision-making, and targeting variables will allow paid media placements to appropriately message to the mindset of the intended segment.

**Media Trends**

Latest research demonstrates that there are 5 stages of travel:

1. Dreaming
2. Planning
3. Booking
4. The Experience
5. Sharing

*Source: Google 2012*

In order to leverage this traveler journey, a mix of media channels and platforms will be implemented to capture consumers during these different stages. It is also important to interact with travelers across devices and screens to zero-in on the right touch point for each person.

Based on research and proven results for the USVI, more digital media support will be incorporated into the media plan. In 2014, travel marketers are projected to increase their digital advertising spend by 17% (vs. 2013).

*Source: eMarketer June 2013*

**Media Channels**

**Video**

- Extend the USVI message to multiple screens to follow consumer behavior and media consumption trends. People are finding ways to extend the viewing hours in their day – largely due to developments in mobile and streaming technology.

*Source: Nielsen – “Free to Move Between Screens” – March 2013*

✓ Traditional TV
✓ Online Video
✓ Addressable TV

Print

• Larger travel titles
• Publications geared toward specific lifestyles or hobbies

Display

• Two-pronged approach: Awareness and Direct Response
  ✓ Continuous message to maintain (and build) awareness of the destination
  ✓ Drive consumers/travelers to USVI.com
  ✓ Increase overnight bookings

Mobile

Incorporate mobile advertising to support the launch of the new mobile site

• Mobile travel sales are forecasted to grow from $13.6 billion dollars this year (10% of all digital travel sales) to $48.8 billion in 2017 (29% of all digital travel sales)

Source: KPCB, eMarketer, May 2013

Radio and Newspaper

• Will be used to support local market promotions to provide immediacy, “hyper-targetability,” and to drive consumers to take action

Paid Search

The paid search strategy will be designed to meet specific goals, whether they are specific cost-per-click (CPC), cost-per-action (CPA) or Brand Awareness. As part of a full marketing plan, paid search brings efficiency to the delivery of our online goals. The USVI is interested in driving cost-efficient traffic to the site, as well as retaining those visitors for as long as possible to provide them the most relevant information and to encourage them to book a trip to the USVI.

The majority of segments important to the DOT will also be supported by a paid search effort: Bridal/Romance, Family, Dive, Yachting, Military, Cruise Consumer, Sports, Intra Caribbean, Seasonal Promotions and Shopping. However, much of the search strategy is to focus on the destination as a whole. Paid search will support primarily consumer efforts; however it will include keywords to support the MICE market. The DOT will continue to have a presence over multiple engines. The flighting will capitalize on the presence of other media in the market.

Primary Search Efforts:
Paid Search recommends a CPA basis effort. Using tags that are currently in place on the USVI site, the following actions will be tracked:
✓ Book a Trip
✓ Things to Do
✓ Where to Stay
✓ Plan Your Event

Utilizing the USVI tags will help gain further insight into the USVI online user behavior. This information will provide what users are doing on the site, what is driving conversions, and ultimately determine additional KPIs to enhance the current campaign(s).

B2B/Trade Media
- Casino
  ✓ Use targeted print and digital opportunities to reach casino operators and investors to promote St Croix as a destination of choice for development
- MICE
  ✓ Meeting and incentive planners and travel agents continue to be an important resource for the destination. Targeted print and digital opportunities will be the primary channels to reach them. This media will also help support the DOT’s plan to have a presence at relevant trade shows.
- Film
  ✓ Attract directors of movies and commercials to the USVI. Showcase the diversity of locations available and emphasize St. Croix whenever possible to boost revenue growth specific to this island.
- Cruise/Airline
  ✓ To develop/increase cruise calls and airline service to the territory
  ✓ Continue to build awareness of the USVI’s key attributes with the cruise and airline decision-makers through print and digital opportunities.

Social Media Marketing (advertising and public relations tactics)

As technology and social media evolves, travelers increasingly seek opinions, inspiration and advice from friends and family in the digital space. In 2014, social media strategy recognizes a tremendous opportunity to leverage relationships with those influencers and create advocates for the U.S. Virgin Islands through collaboration, partnership and personalization by sharing user-generated content to social media properties. The social media strategy for U.S. Virgin Islands encompasses a multi-faceted role, one that occupies a spectrum ranging from increased awareness and visibility to generating interest and bookings. Social media will be used to build relationships with consumers through social media that ultimately translates into brand engagement, trip bookings and advocacy. The destination’s messaging will be coordinated across its various channels with specific goals in mind:

- to increase visitors and their expenditures
- to influence travel decisions
- to develop loyalty to the destination
- to gain knowledge of what consumers want from their vacation destination
Objectives
- Increase transparency, putting a human face on the brand and showcasing differentiated value
- Enable the USVI to participate in and add value to the online culture
- Generate earned conversations on social media properties
- Build and maintain an army of brand advocates
- Forge strong relationships with online influencers and communities of interest
- Deepen and diversify access points to the brand for new and existing travelers
- Maximize marketing efforts by leveraging 2013 objectives
- Drive traffic to branding online content and sites (www.visitUSVI.com)

The U.S. Virgin Islands’ online presence encompasses 6 social properties: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Google+ and Pinterest. In 2014, social media strategy will leverage existing presences and efficiencies to optimize across channels and current investments.

Facebook
- Leverage as community hub for audience relationships
- Foster deep, ongoing relationships with Web users
- Create and maintain community of advocates
- Issue and fulfill calls-to-action
- Promote campaigns, products, content and brand news
- Create and curate a steady stream of compelling content

Twitter
- Insert USVI into popular, trending conversations
- Put a human face and voice on the brand
- Forge relationships with online influencers
- Field and route customer service questions and complaints
- Promote campaigns, products, content and brand news

YouTube
- Central location for housing and distribution of video content
- Create an ever-growing library of compelling content
- Provide a behind-the-scenes look at what makes the USVI interesting and unique
- Create and maintain relationships with influential content creators

Instagram
- Offer the brand’s perspective on the world using user-generated and brand imagery
- Tell the story through visual, ongoing, episodic content
- Behind-the-scenes access for fans and customers

Google+
- Increase SEO through regularly updated content and engagement
- Foster organic search opportunity
- Showcase brand-related messaging in traveler and photography communities
**Pinterest**
- Appeal to content collectors through authentic imagery
- Encourage engagement through contests and promotions
- Foster spirit of collaboration with travelers to promote advocacy

**Caribbean Marketing**

The Caribbean market remains largely untapped for the Territory. The US Virgin Islands currently benefits from regional visitors who arrive to attend small meetings and conventions, shop, visit the University of the Virgin Islands, seek medical care or short vacation stays.

Intra-Caribbean travel has largely been constrained by the rising costs of regional fares and taxes, making the cost of regional travel more expensive than a trip to Miami or New York for example.

However, with routes being picked up by airlines filling the void left abandoned following the departure of American Eagle, the Department of Tourism intends to capitalize on some of these opportunities.

Priority markets include Antigua, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Kitts and Trinidad.

Strategies include introducing regional travel agents to the Territory's offerings, and embarking on "reverse-familiarization" trips where local hoteliers and suppliers visit travel agents in the region. The Department will also explore tapping into the maritime market in neighboring Puerto Rico.

**Diaspora Marketing**

US Virgin Islanders living abroad are valuable assets in efforts to boost tourism. While standard advertising and PR initiatives reach a broad swath of target populations, Virgin Islanders in the Diaspora can take those messages, boil them down, personalize and re-disseminate them to local friends and associates. Travelers are much more likely to visit a destination where they know a local - overseas Virgin Islanders are the next best thing. In addition to acting as unofficial "ambassadors," like travel agents, they arm visitors with useful information and with the names of islanders who add to the feeling of belonging. The Department of Tourism will continue to engage Virgin Islanders and Caribbean nationals abroad through receptions, round tables, event sponsorships, and highlight the creative genius of our people through the new portal [www.usviambassadors.com](http://www.usviambassadors.com). We plan to feature on the website authentic Virgin Islands music, recipes, a calendar of events both in the Territory and stateside, feature stories on Virgin Islanders on the move, a chat module for connecting Virgin Islanders around the world, and a downloadable sales kit.
Faith-Based Marketing

Faith tourism has enormous possibilities because of the variety of religions in North America, Latin America and the insular Caribbean. According to surveys, in the US there are more than 330,000 religious congregations, and 80 percent of Americans identify themselves with a particular faith. Similarly, more than three quarters of the world’s people share at least a minimal level of adherence to a religion or form of spirituality. If one congregation a week visited the US Virgin Islands, it would take decades to cover a fraction of the potential of the market which experts value at $18 billion per annum. The Department of Tourism will continue to promote the allure of our destination to the faith traveler through advertising, media relations, meetings with the clergy, and trade shows.

Health & Wellness / Medical Tourism

The US Virgin Islands will continue to seek opportunities in the area of health and wellness tourism. The DOT believes this exploding sector of the industry is a perfect match for the USVI. Many of today's travelers view their vacations as a time to improve health, happiness, productivity and personal enrichment. Our islands offer not only beauty and the opportunity for relaxation, but plenty that can enrich the traveler experience.

The USVI may also be able to benefit from the "medical" side of this sector. Our hospitals offer many services that are not readily available in other parts of the region. The DOT will be working hand in hand with the local hospitals to encourage inbound medical travel. The DOT will be continuing its relationship with the Medical Tourism Association which can provide guidance and ensure the USVI is in line with best practices as we attempt to grow this sector.

National Public Relations:

Public relations activities are a vital element of the Department’s FY2014 integrated marketing plan. Editorial coverage offers an important, yet cost-effective, communication tool to share the U.S. Virgin Islands' branded messages, as well as its abundance and diversity of unique tourism experiences, with targeted consumers. This will ensure the destination remains top of mind as potential travelers shape their vacation plans and ultimately choose the U.S. Virgin Islands.

As the economic outlook for the United States slowly improves, the Territory has an opportunity to grow arrivals and on-island spend by leveraging pent up demand for travel. As vacationers continue to search for authentic experiences, our islands of St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas offer the exoticism of a Caribbean getaway paired with the ease of access and comfort of domestic travel within the United States. The “No passports required by U.S. citizens” position remains a distinguishing factor for the U.S. Virgin Islands amongst our Caribbean competitive set.

Tailored branded messages will be pitched to both mainstream media and outlets that reach key niche and special interest markets. These include African American, Bridal/Romance, Culinary, Cruise Travel, Dive, Family, Intra-Caribbean, Luxury, MICE, Sports and Yachting/Sailing. Where possible, USVI “home grown” talent – chefs, sports stars, entrepreneurs, celebrities – will be put forward for interview opportunities to enrich earned media coverage.
Proven results-oriented traditional public relations tactics will be used to generate earned media in print, broadcast and online outlets. This will be achieved through email pitching of story ideas, individual and group press trips, media events and one-on-one editorial meetings.

Increased emphasis will be placed on the generation of earned media within digital social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Social media elements will be integrated into traditional public relations tactics as well as new digital-only engagement opportunities explored with bloggers and online opinion leaders. These efforts will contribute to the Department’s ongoing efforts to increase its presence on social media platforms which now plays an important role in how consumers choose where they travel and what they do upon arrival.

Earned media activities will integrate with the Department of Tourism’s focus on saturating key stateside markets with either non-stop air service or easy flight connections to the Territory. The placement of DOT brand messages in traditional and new media will complement advertising, travel trade engagement and direct-to-consumer marketing efforts. Third-party endorsement of the destination secured through editorial coverage in broadcast, online, print and social media outlets becomes a powerful sales tool that can be used in travel trade (tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents, airlines), and MICE trade (meeting planners, incentive tour planners) education initiatives. Airlift and flight capacity to the Territory will also be monitored to uncover new opportunities to support with available resources.

To broaden the Department’s earned media efforts, strategic marketing partnerships with likeminded brands will be explored, extending the reach of destination messaging to new strategic audiences within priority markets and segments. Partnerships with media outlets, sporting teams, dive products/shops and dynamic consumer brands offer an additional avenue to promote bookable offers and break through the clutter within the U.S. market.

All activities will be evaluated to ensure that every earned media investment achieves a maximum return, weighed against the Department’s 3:1 benchmark. Should a challenge arise that could damage the U.S. Virgin Islands brand and/or affect tourism arrivals, crisis communications protocol will be followed to minimize any negative impact on the USVI tourism industry.

An ongoing communications campaign will be implemented to engage media within the U.S. Virgin Islands on the Department’s ongoing marketing activities. These editorial decision makers and content contributors to the Territory’s media offer an important channel to keep the local community informed on the significant role the department plays in supporting the tourism industry and the economic benefit it brings to the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Beyond local media relations, regular outreach will be made by the Department to engage our tourism stakeholders, our youth and the community. The public’s embrace of the tourism industry continues to be key to the success of the Department’s marketing efforts and the sustainability of the industry moving forward.

USVI in-market activities will continue to be a key part of the DOT's marketing strategy. To date our events have been successful. However we believe there always room for improvement.
Through lessons learned during prior events, from partner feedback and by utilizing new avenues for promotions now available to us, we plan to take these events to a new level in FY2014 with the development of a mobile U.S. Virgin Islands marketing experience. Budget permitting, we plan to execute the following:

**DOT MARKET MISSIONS**

**Focus Markets:**

- **South Florida**
  - January 2014
  - Media appointments
  - Consumer promotion

- **Chicago, IL; Orlando, FL**
  - Spring 2014
  - Media Appointments
  - Media/Trade Events Logistics
  - Consumer Promotion

- **New York City**
  - April 2014
  - Media Appointments
  - Media Event
  - Consumer Promotion

Additional markets for consideration: Boston, Los Angeles

**MEDIA VISITS**

Press hospitality will continue to be a primary driver of large feature coverage that showcases the USVI experience. During FY14, our media outreach will include the following:

- **30 - 40 Traditional or New Media Visits**
  (6 groups of 5 – 6 media and/or Individual)

  Proposed group press trip:
  - Meet me on St. Croix
  - Dive the USVI
  - Sailing the USVI: St Thomas Rolex Regatta
  - USVI’s Culinary Heritage: St. Croix Food & Wine Experience Culinary Futures (Cooking and Family)
  - Destination Weddings
  - Imbibe the USVI:
  - 4 Five-Day Group Press Trips

  Ongoing

  November 18 – 22, 2013
  February 2014
  March 2014
  April 2014
  June/July 2014
  August 2014

  Ongoing
IN-STUDIO BROADCAST OPPORTUNITIES:
Secure four in-studio broadcast opportunities
Pitch, secure and escort USVI talent to appear in-studio on national US network or basic cable television shows.

ONSITE BROADCAST VISITS:
Secure 3 - 4 on-location broadcast opportunities
Pitch and secure crews from strategic national television programs to film on-location in the US Virgin Islands.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS/PROMOTIONS - these partnerships continue to prove effective for generating broad exposure and awareness for the destination, while producing strong and measurable ROI. During FY2013, the primary focus for strategic partnerships shifted from mass market brands to niche brands that directly reach those travelers most likely to visit the destination. We plan to continue this strategy during FY2014. We will continue to pursue strategic partnerships to include retail relationships and joint promotions with branded products, but also partnerships with well-known brands in key stateside feeder markets. To accomplish this goal, the team will execute the following activities:

3 – 5 Marketing partnerships/promotion:
- Culinary with a focus on supporting the St. Croix Food & Wine Experience
- Dive niche
- Bridal niche
- 1 – 2 other non-traditional partners that may include major sports teams, specialty food and drink outlets

In addition to the public relations tactics we have been employing for many years, the DOT plan to embark upon the following during FY2014:

Leveraging Signature Sporting Events

The U.S. Virgin Islands’ signature sport tournaments and race events in game fishing, open-water swimming, running, triathlon and sailing attract ‘passion travelers’ to the Territory. Their love for their chosen sport is strong and they will travel to pursue it, quite often regardless of price point. They will travel great distances to participate in events such as the St. Croix Triathlon, St John’s 8 Tuff Miles or St. Thomas’ Atlantic Blue Marlin Tournament.

A product development opportunity exists to entice these passion travelers to train in the U.S. Virgin Islands as well as participate in sporting events. In FY2014, a campaign to increase sports tourism to the Territory will be developed to engage the members fishing, running, triathlon and sailing clubs. An earned media campaign will also be implemented to niche media outlets and online authorities within the targeted interest areas to increase awareness of the Territory’s sporting events, relevant infrastructure and appealing tourist experiences.
**Bridal Market Database Marketing**

To strengthen the U.S. Virgin Islands’ position in the competitive destination weddings market, the Department will initiate a database marketing program to capitalize on leads generated and stored from consumer bridal show attendance. A series of tailored emails will be distributed to consumers captured in the DOT’s database leading up, during and post their wedding and honeymoon. The end goal is to maintain long-term engagement with USVI brides, grooms and honeymooners to stimulate repeat visits by couples.

**Dive Marketing**

The U.S. Virgin Islands offers diving enthusiasts of all ability levels the opportunity to experience five different types of dive sites in one destination: pier, reef, shipwreck, shore and wall. The Department will explore an enhanced marketing campaign in FY2014 to leverage this unique positioning to grow the broader Territory’s dive tourist market. Activities will include marketing and merchandizing opportunities with dive gear brands and retail outlets, partnership opportunities with national dive associations and clubs, in-market events targeting dive enthusiasts and an earned media campaign which will incorporate a dive-themed press trip.

**Cruise Ship Public Relations Familiarization trip** - on almost a daily basis, cruise liners visit the USVI. We intend to partner with the public relations representatives of the various cruise ship companies to spread the word about the U.S. Virgin Islands and the various activities available to those visiting our shores. This effort will be kicked off with familiarization trips for these PR contacts.
SALES

National Sales

The U.S Virgin Islands Department of Tourism has developed an aggressive sales strategy for both domestic and international markets. As part of the plan to keep the USVI top of mind as the leading warm weather destination of choice for leisure and business travel, a mix of the following will be implemented: sales calls; regional sales blitzes; trade show participation; the training of sellers of travel and membership in key organizations.

During FY2014 the USVI sales team will continue to build upon past successes and expand their reach into the marketplace. This will include seeking opportunities to further engage the luxury, bridal, dive, intra-Caribbean and cruise markets and exploring new ways of collecting data to assist the Department’s efforts. Educating and incentivizing agents will remain a priority with the sales team concentrating on new and exciting ways to do so.

Niche Markets

Luxury Market

The Department has been quite proactive in establishing a relationship with Virtuoso, one of the leading luxury networks. Virtuoso’s access to the luxury travel agent is far reaching and during FY2014 the DOT plans to strengthen this partnership and seek more opportunities to engage these agents. Of particular interest will be increasing the number of webinars conducted to Virtuoso travel agents, advertising opportunities within their various publications, hosting Virtuoso FAMS, as well as connecting with their South American travel agents.

To better show the luxury travel agent how the US Virgin Islands can accommodate their clients, the Department will host a luxury travel agent FAM (open to all of our trade partners selling to the luxury segment) showcasing features and amenities on all three islands such as the destination’s high end properties health and wellness activities, yachting, various epicurean experiences, and shopping, all which are appealing to the luxury traveler.

Bridal Market

The wedding and honeymoon market has always been one of the most consistent markets for the USVI. The sales team is seeing this niche market grow among travel agencies with more and more agents booking not just honeymoons, but destination weddings. In order for the USVI to remain competitive and garner a greater market share, during FY2014 the DOT will engage both wedding planners and travel agents who specialize in honeymoons and destination weddings. The best way to help the travel agent sell the destination is to allow them an opportunity to see it up close. To that end, during FY 2014, the Department will host a FAM targeting the bridal market. Some highlights of the FAM will be
a mock wedding, site inspections at unique wedding and reception venues, and visits to all three principal US Virgin Islands.

**MICE**

Groups have become increasingly important in the USVI target market mix. Great strides were made during FY2013 and plans are to increase the outreach in FY2014. The sales team will continue to engage meeting planners through tradeshows, educational opportunities, sales calls and smaller group events.

The Department successfully hosted a MICE familiarization trip in FY 2013 and plans to duplicate that success with a MICE FAM specific for the island of St. Croix in FY2014. The sales team in conjunction with the destination's public relations firm will work on qualifying planners for the event. The St. Croix MICE FAM slated for November 2014, will include hotel site inspections, tours, and dining at local restaurants to showcase how St. Croix can service all of the meeting planners client's needs and expectations.

**Dive Market**

The U.S. Virgin Islands has a fantastic dive product. We boast a variety of sites and types of dives available with varying levels of difficulty. The sales team will continue to engage divers at tradeshows and special events. There will also meet with dive shops, dive clubs, dive wholesalers and representatives from dive trade organizations such as PADI. Team will be armed with a presentation tailored for this group focusing on issues such as dive sites, marine life, reef conditions, safety and individual dive operators, as well as ancillary activities, dive oriented properties and more general information on visiting the USVI.

**Intra-Caribbean**

The USVI sits in the Caribbean basin - a stone's throw away from many other destinations brimming with potential visitors for the USVI. Unfortunately air service, among other things, has not made island hopping within the region very easy. However now with increased regional service from our airline partners, there lies the opportunity to welcome more Caribbean visitors to our shores. In addition to DOT outreach to travel agents within the region, the mainland sales team will be hosting destination specific events at during FY2014. The team, along with airline representatives, will visit Boston, Chicago, and Dallas to help educate travel agents on how to book their service as well as the routes available into both St. Thomas and St. Croix from other Caribbean islands.
Cruise

As cruising explodes globally, it will be important for the US Virgin Islands to not only hold on to the current number of calls, but see that number grow - especially in St. Croix. With that in mind, the sales team will educate agents regarding the benefits of booking itineraries for their clients that include a call in the U.S. Virgin Islands. With more and more travel agencies moving from the traditional brick and mortar model to the virtual model, it’s more important than ever for the sales team to employ various methods to ensure that these agents are being reached. The DOT has membership in a variety of agent associations enabling our team to speak directly to cruise agents and to provide them with the tools and education necessary to close the sale on cruises that include the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Travel agent rewards program

Education and incentives remain important tools to gain travel agent business. During FY2014 the Department plans to revamp its travel agent specialist program to include a rewards program that recognizes agents consistently selling the destination. In addition to our rewards program, the DOT will engage in a large scale agent incentive program designed to both increase agent sales and garner a large amount of publicity for the destination.

TRADE SHOWS

The Department of Tourism is pleased to provide the FY2014 Trade Show Schedule.

The DOT participation in trade shows strengthens the industry presence of the destination and reaches key influencers that book business to the USVI. During these events, the DOT maximizes media opportunities by distributing press materials, coordinating desk side appointments with media attending the show, and off-site interviews in the surrounding market(s).

In order to ensure maximum exposure for our private sector partners, while adhering to the Department’s budget, we have outlined the following policy for participation in DOT-sponsored industry events. Some major changes have been made to the show selections based on the Department’s commitment to ensure all of the DOT’s initiatives are aligned with our overall ROI marketing strategy.

To maximize the benefits of our participation, a trade show participation policy has been developed and is outlined below. The policy outlines the different levels of participation available to our partners based on the type of trade show or event.

STANDARD PARTICIPATION (DOMESTIC): One Representative from each Hotel & Tourism Association

The majority of shows on the FY2014 schedule will fall into this category. The DOT will purchase standard trade show booths at most shows and will invite each hotel association (USVI Hotel & Tourism Association (St. Thomas/St. John) and the St. Croix Hotel & Tourism Association) to each have one individual present at the show. These two individuals will represent the association membership. There will be no cost to the associations for participation at the DOT booth;
however in those cases where additional cost is incurred for registration, the individual associations will cover the registration cost for their representatives. Please note: the individual association will cover all travel-related expenses for its representative. Additionally, all costs for shipping and/or the cost of receiving delivery of shipped HTA material at the booth will be the responsibility of the individual associations.

**SPECIAL EVENT PARTICIPATION (DOMESTIC): All interested parties**
This applies primarily to events for which the audience consists of media, travel agents, tour operators, consumers and airline representatives. Every attempt will be made at these events to allow our association and individual partners to attend, have 2-3 minutes to present their product and/or either a shared or individual area in which to present their material. Generally, these events will be cocktail receptions that include a presentation by a DOT representative. These events are open to all tourism-related businesses interested in attending, including, but not limited to, members of the Hotel & Tourism Associations, Chambers of Commerce and Charter Yacht League. There is no cost for participating. However, individuals will be responsible for coordinating their own personal travel and paying all travel-related expenses. Participants will be required to donate a prize from their respective business and provide a certificate/letter describing said prize to be given at the event. The DOT will attempt to arrange sales calls the day before and/or after these events to provide additional value especially for the partners traveling from the USVI to participate. When this is not possible, we encourage you to make your own arrangements to maximize your time in-market.

**STANDARD PARTICIPATION (INTERNATIONAL): All interested parties**
As the DOT participates in a limited number of International Trade Shows, we want to ensure maximum involvement to the extent that it is financially feasible. In most cases, the DOT will purchase booth space that can accommodate all partner participants who may want to attend these shows. At present, these shows will remain open to any tourism-related business at no cost. However, the DOT reserves the right to revisit this position if partner participation becomes extensive and causes the reevaluation of the booth size needed for the event. Individuals are responsible for coordinating and covering their personal travel costs, shipping/delivery and miscellaneous expenses in connection with the show.

**TOUR OPERATOR TRAINING PROGRAMS: Hotel participation**
The DOT will coordinate and cover the cost of Food & Beverage functions for tour operator training programs with key operators. Participation in these training events will be open to all hotels that are in the specific operator’s program. (This optional attendance is only available if a specific hotel property participates in the program of the operator we are visiting). Individuals are responsible for coordinating and covering their personal travel costs.

**MEETINGS & INCENTIVE MARKET TRADE SHOWS[ Motivation Show (ITME) & IncentiveWorks (formerly Canadian Meeting & Incentive Show - CMITS)]: Qualifying Hotels and Destination Management Companies**
The Department will provide participation in both of these shows to HTA and its individual members at a predetermined cost for each show. All attempts will be made to maintain the current ratio for which the collective private sector cost has been less than 20% of the total show booth space rental and decorating cost.
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM-ONLY EVENTS

There are some shows on the schedule which are noted DOT only. Where DOT only is noted, partners cannot be accommodated. These shows generally fall in one of the following categories:

1. One-on-one meeting shows such as CHTA Marketplace (where the DOT will have two or more representatives at the destination booth).
2. Shows at which due to limited booth size, we cannot accommodate more than the DOT staff and a tour operator booking partner in the space purchased. (Examples are the New York Times or LA Times shows).
3. Shows where the DOT is partnering with another agency or organization (such as Cruise Shipping Miami).

It is the intention of the DOT that this clear outline will provide for a mutually productive and continued successful partnership in FY2014. Please understand that the attached schedule is subject to change based on market conditions. Every attempt will be made to provide ample notice of changes to the schedule.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event/Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Regional Office</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Partner Participation</th>
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<td>IMEX America</td>
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<td>Adventures in Travel Expo</td>
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<td>Santa Clara, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTSA Kansas City/St. Louis/Des Moines</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Kansas City/St. Louis/Des Moines</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Pow Wow</td>
<td>4/5-9/14</td>
<td>MIA/STT</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruise 3 Sixty</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>MIA/STT</td>
<td>Ft. Lauderdale, FL</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoGo Learning Showcase</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC Global Interact Conference</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Cartagena, Columbia</td>
<td>Meeting Planners</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May-14</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AARP</td>
<td>5/8-10/2014</td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>Consumers</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Impressions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Impressions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Impressions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Long Island, NY</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTSA Cincinnatti/Cleveland/Columbus</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Cincinnatti/Cleveland/Columbus</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAYTRIPS &amp; DESTINATIONS</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>Cromwell, CT</td>
<td>Consumers</td>
<td>No</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jun-14</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Scuba Show</td>
<td>6/7-8/2014</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Long Beach, CA</td>
<td>Dive Consumer</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Impressions</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Brooklyn, NY</td>
<td>Trade</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Jul-14</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO SHOWS SCHEDULED</td>
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N/A
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aug-14</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>FunJet Product Show</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>St. Louis, MO</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FunJet Product Show</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Milwaukee, WI</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FunJet Product Show</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FunJet Product Show</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sep-14</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple Vacations Product Launch</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AARP</td>
<td>9/4-6/14</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td>Consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic Vacations</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT University</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>Travel Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC Bridal Show</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Consumer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Market Development

During fiscal year 2014, the department will continue its efforts in the Scandinavian, Italian, Canadian and Caribbean markets while continuing to explore Brazil. During this fiscal year, the department will

- Maintain representation in Canada, Denmark, Italy along with Puerto Rico*
- Host at least one in-market event in each area.
- Maintain a presence at key trade shows in each market.
- Host one travel agent/tour operator FAM Trip and one Media Trip from each market.

In addition to the above, the DOT will continue to take advantage of our ability to be included in efforts made by Brand USA. As they move in to the next phase of their promotion of the USA, the USVI will be continue to be included in their efforts due to the DOTs aggressive position that the territories must be equally represented in this program.

FILM PROMOTION

In an effort to secure location shoots and productions for the territory, over the last several years the Department of Tourism has engaged in proactive marketing efforts aimed at the television, print and feature film industry. This strategy must include the highlighting of the inherent value of USVI locations over conventional, “hard” incentives, which may be offered by competitors. To date we have been able to meet with success with this approach.

The film marketing strategy is designed to spur on-island spend that benefits the local economy, as well as projects that favorably depict the destination to potential visitors. The Department’s film marketing efforts have resulted in a significant influx of projects, on-island spend and by extension, jobs. In addition the destination is able to leverage secured productions to increase on-location projects and/or caché of travel to the USVI.

There continues to be tremendous potential to develop a vibrant film industry that will not only generate significant exposure for the islands, but also provide a consistent livelihood for the industry’s support services and new career opportunities for U.S. Virgin Islands youth. The DOT recognizes the significant economic opportunities for film activity in St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas. The Department will continue to promote the USVI as a premier location for feature films, music videos, TV programs, commercials, photo shoots and other film activity. To further enhance our plan for FY 2014, the DOT plans to:

- Secure 10 – 12 appointments with influencers: i.e. commercial producers, ad agencies, creatives; filmmakers, television, music and digital producers and location managers
- Launch and promote mobile phone App, FilmUSVI: in-palm-of-your-hand
• Generate at least a 5% increase in the value of earned media exposure as a result of on-location productions

• Increase the Film Office's industry presence and maintain a steady economic impact for the USVI through on-location film, commercial, print advertising and TV production

FILM EVENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFM – American Film Market</strong></td>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td>Nov. 6-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The business of independent motion picture production and distribution - a truly collaborative process - reaches its peak every year at the American Film Market. Over 8,000 industry leaders converge in Santa Monica for eight days of deal-making, screenings, seminars, networking and parties. Participants come from over 70 countries and include acquisition and development executives, agents, attorneys, directors, distributors, festival directors, financiers, film commissioners, producers, writers, the world’s press all those who provide services to the motion picture industry.</td>
<td>Nov. 6-13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advertise/brand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attend – 1 person</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sundance Film Festival</strong></td>
<td>Park City, Utah</td>
<td>Jan. 16-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park City, Utah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touted as the “most important event in Independent Film,”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sundance Film</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Festival is certainly America’s preeminent event of its genre and a world leader. Sundance attracts “a hotly-hunted, but generally inaccessible, group of over 45,000+ highly influential brand and cultural rulers of the creative class and we hold their excited focus for 10 days.”</td>
<td>Jan. 16-26</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Studio Sponsorship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exhibit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Filmmaker Reception</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Attend – 2 persons</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) Market</strong></td>
<td>Miami, Florida</td>
<td>Jan. 27-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami, Florida</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leading trade association for TV producers, NATPE comprises key influencers, developers and show runners. NATPE Market and Conference is the global content marketplace</td>
<td>Jan. 27-29</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Attend – 1 person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Network/Observe for future participation
- Advertise/brand

**Commercial Production & Location Managers Tours**  
I.e.:  
New York, New York  
Miami, Fl.  
Charlotte, NC  
Chicago  
Atlanta  
Richmond  
- Meet with influencers  
- Host event with an Ad Club

**NY Ad Club events**  
TBD – tactics include membership  
- 2 attendees  
- Sponsorship/network event

**Host National Addy Awards判 in USVI**  
TBD – tactics include membership  
- 50 key influencers from ad business  
- Sponsor event/activities in territory

**Advertising Conference Tactic**  
Identify appropriate trade conference of 1,000 + advertising executives, agencies, clients and suppliers. Showcase FilmUSVI.com  
- Advertise  
- 1 attendee

**AFCI Locations Expo**  
Los Angeles, California  
Marquee event of the film office trade association. Locations brings together hundreds of global production VIPs from filmmakers and location managers to industry veterans to media to film commissioners, while showcasing an unbeatable display of incentives, production locations, and business and support services.  
- Hyper-target Reception  
- Attend – 2 persons  
- Advertise/Exhibit

**PGA’s Produced By Conference**  
Los Angeles, California  
Concentrated gathering that reaches across the film, television
and new media, Produced By Conference is an educational forum and key networking opportunity attracting more than 2,000 influential filmmakers.
- Exhibit/sponsor
- Attend – (2)
- Advertise/Brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cannes Intl. film Festival/Marche du Film</th>
<th>May 14-25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannes, France</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The world’s preeminent Film Festival.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And the Festival de Cannes has placed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>an emphasis on its Marché du Film as a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>way of promoting the economic nature of</td>
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<tr>
<td>cinema. It is the world’s leading</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>market, serving to add dynamism to the</td>
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<tr>
<td>global film industry. It forms an</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>integral part of the Festival in the</td>
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<tr>
<td>sense that it also facilitates</td>
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<tr>
<td>networking and provides professionals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>with the services and tools they need</td>
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<tr>
<td>in order to exchange information, hold</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>negotiations and uncover new</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Attend|
- Advertise/Exhibit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIFF – Toronto Intl film Festival</th>
<th>Early Sept.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto, Canada</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TIFF is considered the second</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>largest film festival in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>world. It attracts several</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thousand filmmakers and industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>influencers offering platforms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to network and schmooze.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Attend|
- Advertise/Exhibit|
- Sponsor studio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP)</th>
<th>TBD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Founded in 1972, AICP is the preeminent trade group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of TV commercial production companies and producers,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>representing exclusively the interests of</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>professionals that specialize in producing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>commercials on various media - film, video, digital</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- for advertisers and agencies. AICP members account</td>
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<tr>
<td>for 85 percent of all domestic commercials aired</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>nationally, whether produced for traditional broadcast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>channels or non-traditional use.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Tactics in development include Hyper-target Reception |
- Attend – 2 persons|
- Advertise/Exhibit|
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Word of mouth continues to be a primary source of garnering new business. In today's technological world, consumers have the ability to provide positive feedback, voice complaints, give opinions and share experiences in the blink of an eye - which can greatly impact the destination. Therefore product development remains extremely important in the effort to retain customers and influence new ones to travel to the destination. With this knowledge and an ardent commitment to raising the service standards in the territory we will continue to enhance the USVI product in a variety of ways.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In an effort to develop a well educated workforce the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism helped to establish the University of the Virgin Islands hospitality and tourism degree program more than four years ago. Since that time however, student enrollment has not met expectations. In an effort to boost enrollment, the DOT proposes to help develop a joint marketing and promotion outline for the University. This will include developing a specific brand for the hospitality program and advertising for print, broadcast and digital. The DOT’s main focus will be to increase enrollment of local students, but we will target persons beyond our shores as well.

The Department of Tourism has already established a strong internship program during the summer. During FY2014 the DOT aims to extend this program year round and open to junior semester students in both districts enrolled in the hospitality degree program at the University. This plan would include students completing a minimum of two days per week working with the department or one of its industry partners to fulfill the requirements for graduation.

Customer Service Training
Understanding the importance of customer service training, the Department has made a commitment to continue its free customer service training for those in our community. On a quarterly basis, the Department will offer training in both districts. In an effort to have the training be as effective as possible, programs will be tailored to address issues faced by front line employees and managers.

Customer Service Pledge Program
As a part of our commitment to customer service, the Department will continue to promote its Customer Service Pledge Program. As a part of the drive to have USVI residents pledge to offer superior customer service, the DOT will send out bi-monthly customer service tips to our growing database of pledge takers as well as share “Wow” stories to help provide ongoing motivation. Notices will also be sent out to pledge takers to inform them of training opportunities.

Small Hotels and Business Development Conference
The 5th installment of this annual conference will expand to include not only small hotels but businesses development in the destination. Conference attendees will learn the latest social
media trends, about managing online reputations, airlift and geo-tourism. The DOT provides this conference free of charge to provide marketing and technical support to the territory’s small hotels and businesses in hopes of improving the product and enhancing their profitability.

**Hospitality at Local Air & Sea Ports, Welcome Centers**

Over the last three years the Department of Tourism has worked to enhance the welcome experience at the airports on St. Croix and St. Thomas. Improvements have included a welcome booth serving complimentary rum and greeters who welcome arriving passengers and provide general information. During FY 2014 the Department intends to improve upon signage to enhance the overall appearance of both properties and provide a more modern contemporary look found at larger facilities. The Department of tourism will print large 6 x 12 posters reflecting our branding and hang from the ceiling of the airports.

Along with the Department’s branding ads, the DOT would like to showcase more local history, arts and culture at our ports. Art is an integral part of the overall design of many of the world’s leading airports. In an effort to enhance the visitor experience at the Henry E. Rohlsen and Cyril E. King Airports and support local artists and cultural institutions, the art program “Ports Alive” has been introduced. The expectation will be to educate, stir and entertain all who visit the USVI airports. Museums, cultural institutions, art organizations as well as individual artists will be afforded opportunities to exhibit their collections of wares, artifacts and original artwork at the airports.

The program will include permanent installations as well as a rotating, three month exhibition and community art feature. This program represents just a sample of the cultural richness and diversity of arts that can be found throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Department manages six welcome centers and visitors bureaus across the territory. These hospitality zones will receive new posters and decorations to reflect the current branding of the destination. Images that reflect the various experiences available in the USVI will be selected to be reproduced as large posters to reinforce messaging. Additionally, in collaboration with the National Park Service, the Department will also feature NPS’s informational posters regarding activities, history and culture available on the islands.

Each year the DOT attempts to improve upon the cruise passenger experience. This is especially critical for the St. Croix market. Each cruiser has a very limited window of opportunity to enjoy their time in port. We believe providing a convenient double-sided rack card with ideas for land or water based activities including shopping and local dining options would be helpful. The design of the hand out must be geared to the cruise passenger and reflect the current DOT origami/Mocko Jumbie design. We recognize there are several publications in the territory that we can partner with to disseminate this rack card – with the recommendation being that it be included as an insert.
Schools And Our Youth

The Department of Tourism continues to support school programs and youth initiatives, which focus on tourism awareness. As the Territory prepares to host the Caribbean Tourism Organization's State of the Industry conference in Fall 2014, the Department intends to launch a comprehensive program to prepare students for the Youth Congress, which forms part of the regional parley.

This outreach to our youth will include a "Junior Ambassadors Program" which builds on our summer internship programs by embedding our brightest young students in official Department of Tourism-produced events, in-market and otherwise.

We also intend to issue an RFP for the design of Tourism Development Program for Schools and Clubs.

Communication with Stakeholders

The Department has made a point of keeping the public updated on what we do on behalf of the people of the USVI. During FY2014 we plan to increase our outreach to keep the public even better informed. Radio programs, television appearances, meeting with community groups will all scheduled in an effort to provide regular marketing updates, solicit participation, suggestions and discuss opportunities.

Industry Newsletter

The Department’s monthly communication to its tourism industry stakeholders will continue to evolve in FY2014. The newsletter was redesigned in early 2013 to better align with online reading habits of its audience and to integrate content hosted on USVIMarketing.com. Planned enhancements to be implemented this year will include the addition of digital video and continued efforts to streamline written content. Newsletter sections will include DOT Update, USVI in the Media (earned media placements secured by DOT), Small Hotels Spotlight, What’s New in the USVI, Industry Spotlight (profile on local tourism industry member) and the Customer Service Corner.
CRUISE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Since 2007 the Department has placed special emphasis on growing the overall cruise market with additional focus on the return of cruise ships to St. Croix. This segment continues to be a major contributor to visitor arrivals to the territory. A sustained effort to enhance communication with the leadership of the cruise industry is an ongoing endeavor. Building the overall cruise industry to the Virgin Islands both in passenger arrivals and passenger spend is crucial to our long term success.

An added emphasis will be made in FY2014 by the Department to strengthen relationships with cruise lines that call on the U.S. Virgin Islands. Forging stronger ties will grow usage of the Territory’s ports by the Caribbean cruise industry and increase tourist arrivals to St Croix, St. Thomas and St. John. A public relations campaign will be directed towards in-house communications staff and associated agency/marketing representatives to increase their knowledge of shore excursion experiences available in the Territory. This will be achieved through regular sharing of information and engagement electronically, increased number one-on-one briefing meetings, cruise industry conference attendance as well as the implementation of a familiarization tour of influential individuals.

To complement these activities, a dedicated cruise earned media campaign will be implemented to increase coverage of the Territory in industry and consumer outlets read by cruise line communication specialists. This will include cruise industry trade publications such as Cruise Industry News, media outlets that reach the end cruiser such as CruiseCritic.com, Porthole Magazine as well as online cruise opinion leaders Linda Coffman (Cruise Diva), Mikey Faust and John Healds.

AIRLINE GROWTH STRATEGY

The availability of stable and affordable air service is an important element in sustaining a viable tourism product. The Department of Tourism will concentrate on maintaining all existing flights and building new service from key markets both domestically and internationally. During FY 2014 the DOT will:

1. Continue to establish new and increased airlift from key source markets
2. Develop opportunities for accessing international flights via St. Maartin (KLM/AirFrance) Puerto Rico (Avianca & Contour)
3. Solidify continued charter service from Denmark
PACKAGES AND SEASONAL PROMOTIONS

Although the Department of Tourism is well aware its destination wide promotions continue to be a vital contributor to the industry’s success during slow economic periods, during FY2014, the DOT may not be in a position to support mass market promotions. Given the current funding levels, the DOT will continue to support niche market specific promotions used to garner publicity for the destination as well as additional room nights. These promotions will be supported through a variety of public relations vehicles, traditional and online advertising and sales efforts. Promotions we do put in place will be designed to encourage inter-island travel. As a destination that consists of several islands - each with their own personality - the marketing of island hopping experiences is a natural fit.

Many of the promotions we have put in place over the last several years have included USVI certificates - affording the visitor opportunities to explore and experience the USVI beyond their hotel rooms. This program will continue during FY2014. The opportunity to dine in the destination’s restaurants, experience our diverse attractions and activities, and splurge in our many retail establishments enhances the visitor experience. It also gives added visibility to our local businesses and spreads business throughout many segments of our tourism industry.