

## TOURISM VANCOUVER ISLAND'S FY17 MARKETING PLAN

### Executive Summary

The intent of Tourism Vancouver Island's FY17 Marketing Plan is to focus on supporting and strengthening Destination BC's brand and key strategies by investing the majority of marketing dollars in destination awareness and increasing desire to travel to the Vancouver Island region. While there are still opportunities for stakeholder investment and participation in some of the most significant projects, the primary objective is to encourage Community DMOs to align their marketing plans with the provincial brand and the regional strategy through creating co-operative opportunities for their stakeholders directly.

Tourism Vancouver Island will focus exclusively on the Alberta and British Columbia markets, where there is the greatest opportunity to strengthen our message, influence consumers and move them along the path to purchase. The Vancouver Island region has high recognition and desirability in both markets; therefore, Tourism Vancouver Island can capitalize on previous successes by maintaining a prominent profile.

Tourism Vancouver Island will also invest considerably more dollars in digital media than in previous years in order to build upon our social and online presence. Traditional media, including print and broadcast, will still be utilized to aid in reaching the widest range of our target audience.

Total budget assigned to the discretionary marketing program is \$310,671, which will be further leveraged by \$200,000 of stakeholder investment. Tourism Vancouver Island is confident in our ability to have significant and positive impact in the marketplace and believes the marketing plan that follows supports the overarching goals and objectives of Destination BC and meets the needs of consumers and stakeholders alike.

### Situation Analysis

Based on Destination BC taking the lead in key long-haul markets and where we recognize that Tourism Victoria invests heavily in the Seattle market, Tourism Vancouver Island's focus of efforts will be in Alberta and British Columbia.

With the dollar reaching its lowest point in 11 years, primarily due to dropping oil prices globally, many Canadians are choosing to travel closer to home rather than seeking destinations south of the border. As a result of both this and an unusually hot and dry Spring and Summer, 2015 has proven to be a banner year for many tourism stakeholders in the Vancouver Island region.

Following Destination BC's lead of investing in Alberta, Tourism Vancouver Island will have a considerable focus on this market. The Vancouver Island region has 7% of market share among Albertans travelling overnight in BC<sup>1</sup> and Tourism Vancouver Island's marketing efforts, particularly with the "Go Vancouver Island"

	<p>campaign, have contributed to an increase in the number of Alberta residents thinking of Vancouver Island as a place to visit for an overnight leisure trip (68% in 2014, up from 58% in 2013). Similarly, 80% of Alberta residents who think of Vancouver Island as a place to visit for an overnight leisure trip rate it as a desirable destination (also 80% in 2013).<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Tourism Vancouver Island is also committed to maintaining its presence in the BC marketplace, given the 24% market share among British Columbians travelling overnight within the province.<sup>3</sup> Similar to the research findings in Alberta, a strong and consistent presence over many years in BC has contributed to an increase in the number of BC residents who think of Vancouver Island as a place to visit for an overnight leisure trip (73% in 2014 compared to 69% in 2013). A full 90% of those same residents rate Vancouver Island as a desirable destination (up from 89% in 2013).<sup>4</sup></p>
<p><b>Objectives And Targets</b></p>	<p>Tourism Vancouver Island’s objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the primary markets of BC and Alberta’s consumer awareness and desire to travel to the Vancouver Island region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Omnibus surveys of BC and Alberta residents</li> <li>• Establish baseline Net Promoter Score for the Vancouver Island region</li> <li>• Establish baseline performance metrics of Go Vancouver Island campaign through conversion study</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To increase visitors length of stay, daily expenditures and repeat visitation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Destination BC’s efforts to move consumers through the path to purchase</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategies</b></p>	<p>Tourism Vancouver Island’s marketing plan will support Destination BC’s strategies to Captivate, Advocate and Generate and work within the “Wild at Heart” brand. The long-established “Everyone needs a little Island time” tagline will continue to be incorporated into all strategies to promote the diversity of opportunities throughout the entire Vancouver Island region.</p> <p>A mix of media, with a significantly higher focus on digital media than in previous years, will be utilized to create emotional connections with BC, unleash traveler advocacy and create lead generation for industry. This will include collecting and curating content, that is aligned with Destination BC’s content calendar, to be provided to Destination BC as well as re-purposed for our own channels.</p> <p>Tourism Vancouver Island will also explore all available social media channels in order to identify those that will be the most effective and efficient means of achieving the key strategies.</p>

	<p>The focus of effort on each of Destination BC’s strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Captivate:</b> 42%</li> <li>• <b>Advocate:</b> 36%</li> <li>• <b>Generate:</b> 22%</li> </ul>
<p><b>Positioning and Messaging</b></p>	<p>Positioning: Everyone needs a little Island time</p> <p>Iconic Touring &amp; Exploring experiences: marine experiences, wildlife viewing, wine &amp; culinary, kayaking, salt water fishing, island hopping, surfing, storm watching, gardens</p>
<p><b>Target Audience (Geographic Markets and Audience Segments)</b></p>	<p>Markets and Audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1: Alberta (60%)</li> <li>• Tier 2: British Columbia (40%)</li> </ul> <p>EQ Segments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberta: Free Spirits, Cultural Explorers</li> <li>• British Columbia: Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers</li> </ul> <p>Demographic: 45+, affluent, frequent travelers without children</p>
<p><b>Provincial Alignment</b></p>	<p>Tourism Vancouver Island’s marketing plan supports Destination BC’s by aligning with the three key marketing strategies to Captivate, Advocate and Generate. Considerable effort will be put into all three strategies, which will strengthen awareness of the Vancouver Island region and British Columbia’s brand among our key short-haul markets.</p> <p>Tourism Vancouver Island, a licensee in Destination Canada’s EQ program since 2013, will continue to incorporate it into all marketing programs, specifically targeting Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers and Free Spirits. Of equal importance is supporting and ensuring alignment with Destination BC’s new brand in all program areas and significant efforts have already been made to work closely with Destination BC’s team in this regard.</p> <p>The plan as presented also represents a shift in focus to include significantly higher investment in digital media. While traditional media remains important and continues to play a role, Tourism Vancouver Island recognizes the opportunity to increase brand awareness and support Destination BC’s marketing strategies by re-focusing budget to consumers seeking information from non-traditional sources.</p> <p>Tourism Vancouver Island will also encourage Community DMOs, particularly</p>

	<p>those utilizing Open Pool dollars, to align their marketing plans with the provincial brand and amplify their messages through ours and Destination BC’s. The intent is to support the CDMOs to work with Tourism Vancouver Island by negotiating favourable media rates when implementing our tactics that can be taken advantage of by the individual CDMOs in executing their plans.</p>
<p><b>Performance Measures (Metrics)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase the primary markets of BC and Alberta’s consumer awareness and desire to travel to the Vancouver Island region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of BC &amp; Alberta residents, measuring awareness, satisfaction, desire and intent to travel to the Vancouver Island region.</li> <li>• Net Promoter Score</li> <li>• Conversion study on Go Vancouver Island campaign</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To increase visitors length of stay, daily expenditures and repeat visitation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The marketing programs identified in this plan will move consumers through the path to purchase and encourage advocacy, which will have positive impact on the path to purchase for future visitors.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing Budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Total promotional marketing budget:</u> \$510,671</li> <li>• <u>DBC funded marketing expenses:</u> \$310,671</li> <li>• <u>DBC leveraging:</u> 61%</li> <li>• <u>Stakeholder investment:</u> \$200,000</li> <li>• <u>Stakeholder leveraging:</u> 39%</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outline of Tactical Elements of the Marketing Plan</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touring &amp; Exploring Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>DBC Strategies Achieved:</u> Captivate, Advocate, Generate</li> <li>• <u>Description:</u> Approximately 40 page guide with blend of destination awareness and stakeholder advertising. Content will focus on vertical experiences (i.e.: wine &amp; culinary experiences for the Touring &amp; Exploring visitor) that the Touring &amp; Exploring consumer also participate in rather than geographic regions.</li> <li>• <u>Target geo-market:</u> Alberta &amp; BC</li> <li>• <u>Audience:</u> 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits</li> <li>• <u>Rationale:</u> The current Vancouver Island Vacation Guide is used as a reference guide while travelling in BC (79% of respondents) as well as a guide to help plan attractions and/or activities while in BC (82% of respondents).<sup>5</sup> The Touring &amp; Exploring Guide will be a much smaller publication than the Vacation Guide but will continue to provide useful information to visitors when deciding on the activities they will participate in while travelling in the region.</li> <li>• <u>Call to action:</u> Touring &amp; Exploring Microsite (VancouverIsland.travel; see below); #exploreBC</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Touring & Exploring Maps
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Captivate, Advocate, Generate
  - Description: Maps focused on vertical experiences that are also of interest to the Touring & Exploring consumer (i.e.: golf, wine & culinary) that will be inserted into the Touring & Exploring Guide
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Touring & Exploring consumers are also interested in participating in/visiting niche activities and attractions. The Touring & Exploring Maps will provide a low-cost co-op opportunity for stakeholders offering those products and services to reach interested consumers
  - Call to action: Touring & Exploring Microsite (VancouverIsland.travel; see below); #exploreBC
  
- Touring & Exploring Microsite
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Captivate, Advocate, Generate
  - Description: Development of a microsite that will be the central call to action for all tactics
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Robust website with information about touring & exploring attractions, activities, accommodations, etc. for the entire Vancouver Island region is needed to support all activities.
  - Call to action: VancouverIsland.travel, which currently enjoys in excess of 400,000 unique visitors each year, 85% of which is organic traffic.
  
- Go Vancouver Island
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Captivate, Advocate
  - Description: Multi-media campaign (with 52% of budget allocated to digital media such as online display, paid search and social media) aimed at increasing awareness of the Vancouver Island region and moving consumers along the path to purchase
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Tourism Vancouver Island has seen great success with its Go Vancouver Island campaign over the past five years. With a shift in strategic and tactical focus, that success can be built upon to strengthen support for the BC brand and awareness of the destination.
  - Call to action: VancouverIsland.travel; #exploreBC

- Island Moments – E-newsletters
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Captivate, Generate
  - Description: Monthly consumer e-newsletter, currently with approximately 20,000 subscribers
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Provide timely and relevant information on Vancouver Island directly to interested and engaged consumers.
  - Call to action: Stakeholder websites
  
- Island Moments – Stakeholder Takeovers
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Generate
  - Description: Opportunity for stakeholders to takeover an incremental issue of Island Moments with messaging on their product and/or community.
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Provide low-cost marketing opportunity for stakeholders to reach interested and engaged consumers and generate business.
  - Call to action: Stakeholder website
  
- Monthly Specials
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Generate
  - Description: Monthly travel deals offered by stakeholders
  - Target geo-market: BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Provide low-cost marketing opportunity for stakeholders to reach consumers looking for last-minute travel deals and generate business.
  - Call to action: Stakeholder websites
  
- Facebook Boosts
  - DBC Strategies Achieved: Generate
  - Description: Amplification of stakeholder posts through Tourism Vancouver Island’s Facebook page
  - Target geo-market: Alberta & BC
  - Audience: 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits
  - Rationale: Provide low-cost marketing opportunity for stakeholders to reach consumers looking for last-minute travel deals and generate business.
  - Call to action: Stakeholder websites and/or social media channels

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brochure Distribution Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>DBC Strategies Achieved:</u> Generate</li> <li>• <u>Description:</u> Direct mail fulfillment of consumer inquiries for information on activities, attractions and accommodations throughout the Vancouver Island region</li> <li>• <u>Target geo-market:</u> Alberta &amp; BC</li> <li>• <u>Audience:</u> 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers</li> <li>• <u>Rationale:</u> Tourism Vancouver Island receives in excess of 6,000 consumer inquiries each year requesting stakeholder brochures and guides. This program will continue to meet the needs of consumers while generating business for stakeholders.</li> <li>• <u>Call to action:</u> VancouverIsland.travel</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• DAMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>DBC Strategies Achieved:</u> Captivate, Generate</li> <li>• <u>Description:</u> Continuation of Tourism Vancouver Island’s partnership with three CDMOs for storage, management and distribution of all digital assets (images, b-roll and editorial)</li> <li>• <u>Target geo-market:</u> Alberta &amp; BC</li> <li>• <u>Audience:</u> 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits</li> <li>• <u>Rationale:</u> Tourism Vancouver Island and its partners have a vast array of digital assets; an efficient means of housing and distributing those assets is required to meet the needs of end-users.</li> <li>• <u>Call to action:</u> barberstock.com/TVI</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• Image Acquisition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>DBC Strategies Achieved:</u> Captivate</li> <li>• <u>Description:</u> Acquisition of images for use across all tactics</li> <li>• <u>Target geo-market:</u> Alberta &amp; BC</li> <li>• <u>Audience:</u> 45+, affluent couples, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, Free Spirits</li> <li>• <u>Rationale:</u> Build upon collection of imagery that supports Destination BC’s brand as well as reflects target EQ traveler types</li> <li>• <u>Call to action:</u> NA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Marketing Calendar</b>	See FY17 Marketing Activity Calendar.xls document attached.

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Destination BC’s Alberta Tourism Market Profile, October 2014

<sup>2</sup> Tourism Vancouver Island’s BC, Alberta & Washington State Residents Survey, December 2014

<sup>3</sup> Destination BC's British Columbia Tourism Market Profile, October 2014

<sup>4</sup> Tourism Vancouver Island's BC, Alberta & Washington State Residents Survey, December 2014

<sup>5</sup> Destination BC's Publications Review – Consumer Survey, April 2014