



Marketing  
&  
Communications Plan  
FY2017



Nacogdoches  
TEXAS  STARTS HERE

# A Message From The Chairman

## DEAR STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS,

As we are all aware, Nacogdoches abounds in beauty and is deeply rooted in history and heritage. Nestled among the tall pine trees, the Garden Capital of Texas explodes with color every spring and fall season. People come to explore our eclectic town with its historic sights, thriving arts and culture scene, locally owned shops and beautiful gardens. Nacogdoches' outdoor and recreational activities, Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA), annual events, festivals, live music, brick streets, charming downtown and our true Southern hospitality make Nacogdoches the real Texas experience.

Using our reputation as "the oldest town in Texas" as a major marketing approach, the Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) has developed a number of strategic initiatives that we will continue to capitalize on and deliver to our audience. Our plan of action is outlined in our FY2017 marketing plan.

### *To our stakeholders, we pledge to:*

- Remain flexible enough to make changes as market conditions may dictate.
- Track, measure and communicate the results with local stakeholders of branding efforts through performance indicators and measures.
- Continually research emerging trends to evolve our existing marketing methods.

*We encourage you to look through the plan regularly. Learn what the CVB is doing to attract visitors to our region and learn how you can get involved. Here are a few ways you might consider engaging with the CVB:*

- Make sure your listings are up to date on our website at [www.visitnacogdoches.org](http://www.visitnacogdoches.org). For assistance, contact Sherri Skeeters at 936.564.7351 or [sherri@visitnacogdoches.org](mailto:sherri@visitnacogdoches.org).
- Use our Partner Portal to upload events and deals to our website. This information will be used for CVB social media channels, e-newsletters and e-blasts.
- Participate in sales familiarization tours and trade shows by contacting Joanna Temple at 936.564.7351 or [sales@visitnacogdoches.org](mailto:sales@visitnacogdoches.org).
- Follow us and join the conversations on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Sign up to receive our e-newsletter and event e-blasts.
- Share news about your business with our sales/marketing team who regularly reaches out to media across Texas and neighboring states. Send news to [sherri@visitnacogdoches.org](mailto:sherri@visitnacogdoches.org).

Our CVB team looks forward to a continuation of strong partnership growth. Here's to a great upcoming year for tourism and hospitality in Nacogdoches.



Mark Barringer  
Chairman of the Board of Directors



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# Introduction

## OVERVIEW

The Nacogdoches CVB was created on October 15, 1996 and is charged with administering and disbursing 72.5% of the proceeds of the hotel occupancy tax (HOT) funds collected in the City of Nacogdoches.

## MISSION

The Nacogdoches CVB shall encourage, enhance and promote tourism-related business and promote the city as a tourist and meeting destination throughout the state, regionally, nationally and internationally.

## PURPOSE

To consistently research ways to promote Nacogdoches to new and prospective visitors and give our loyal repeat visitors a reason to return.

## STAFF

The Nacogdoches CVB employs four full-time staff members and one part-time staff member, as well as SFA interns who assist the different departments in accomplishing their individual missions. The Visitor Center, overseen by one full-time staff member, has a strong and knowledgeable group of volunteers who assist in operating the Visitor Center seven days a week in a cost-effective manner to serve our visitors.

## BOARD

The board structure consists of seven community individuals. Members currently serving are:

***Mark Barringer, Chairman***

Chair, Department of History  
Stephen F. Austin State University

***John McLaren, Vice-Chair***

General Manager  
Fredonia Hotel

***Kati Kennedy, Treasurer***

Owner  
The Liberty Bell Restaurant & Wine Bar

***Rick Still***

Owner  
Still Financial Group

***Shirley Luna***

Director, Marketing Communications  
Stephen F. Austin State University

***Tracie Lasater***

Executive Director  
Millard's Crossing Historic Village

***Kelly Daniel***

Membership and Marketing  
Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce



# BOARD COMMITTEES

In order to increase community involvement and awareness of the goals of the CVB, the following committees have been designated:

**Finance/Research** – the board member serving as treasurer would lead this committee, which would assist in setting long-term financial goals for the organization and assist in the creation of policies to ensure adherence to the budget and achievement of goals. The committee would monitor return on investment of advertising dollars and seek advisement on technology/equipment purchases.

**Leisure** – assist in the development of itineraries targeted to specific leisure travelers based on time of visit such as weekday/weekend, seasonal travel, or affinity (e.g., girls' weekend, gardening, brewery/wine tasting, or yoga events).

**Conventions/Meetings** – serve as a resource to representatives planning large meetings and events. Offer guidance regarding coordination of services; seek out Nacogdoches businesses that participate in trade events that could be enticed to bring their event to Nacogdoches.

**Sports** – work with local sports organizers to increase the number of athletic tournaments and/or teams hosted in Nacogdoches.

**Annual Events/Festivals** – serve as a resource to organizers of Nacogdoches events that have a proven record of success to increase overall attendance and length of stay; encourage the development of additional events.

**Board Training /Development** – assist in providing development and continuing education activities for open meetings/open records, Robert's Rules of Order; onboarding for new members and recognition of outgoing members.

The board member designated to chair each committee shall appoint community partners as its members. Members will assist in identifying opportunities and achieving goals set forth in the 2017 marketing plan. The number of members and the manner in which the committee is operated should be at the discretion of the committee chair.



# Nacogdoches CVB: FY2017 Plan

## VISITOR CENTER

To be the point of convergence and principle source of information for visitors and residents seeking information about Nacogdoches' tourism attractions and activities, the Visitor Center will:

## OBJECTIVES

- Enhance services by continual education provided to volunteers for optimum visitor satisfaction, enhancement of technology and improved data collection.
- Update information and services for Visitor Center guests to help ensure return visits, new visits and extended stays.
- Use proposed print, digital and social media initiatives to build brand awareness and drive more visits to the Visitor Center in FY2017.
- Provide new inventory of T-shirts, baseball caps, postcards and other sundry items to sell building a consistent brand identification.
- Continue to sell books that help promote the destination.
- Provide electronic visitor sign-in to increase capture of valuable new data for future marketing efforts and visitor tracking.
- Periodically update existing displays to enhance visitor experience.
- Provide outdoor brochure rack in front of the CVB to display visitor information when Visitor Center is closed.

## MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Captured data from the electronic visitor sign-in will be more efficient and allow the following:

- 95% improvement in data collection
- 10% increase in visitors to the Visitor Center
- 25% increase in new merchandise sales promoted through e-blasts and e-newsletters
- 50% increase in new emails will directly increase our database for marketing communications:
  - o Satisfaction surveys and identifying areas of improvement
  - o E-newsletters, e-blasts and social media
- Benchmarks - reviewed Monthly with appropriate board committee (Addendum B)



# MARKETING SEGMENT: LEISURE

## OBJECTIVES

- Launch integrated marketing campaign that attracts target niche markets.
- Expand awareness of Nacogdoches as a vibrant travel destination through consistent public relation initiatives: press releases, news articles, e-newsletters, social media and video.
- Focus on the three-to-five-hour drive market throughout the year: Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, Shreveport and other viable markets.
- Establish and maintain media relations to leverage added-value benefits when possible.
- Encourage residents to choose Nacogdoches for personal leisure time activities and invite their friends and family to visit.

## STRATEGIES

### *ADVERTISING*

- Utilize CVB's advertising agency to develop creative and secure placement for print, digital and social media campaigns intended to drive traffic to the website.
- Focus primary messaging on Nacogdoches strengths: historic significance, beauty, gardens, entertainment and relaxed personality.
- Offer cooperative advertising to local stakeholders to maximize efforts and leverage tourism dollars.
- Participate in regional brochures produced by CVB's travel partners.
- Place ads in publications designed for the leisure traveler.

### *PRINT AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING*

- Produce the 2017 Visitors Guide, an all-in-one premier tourism magazine. The guide will serve as the primary fulfillment piece for visitor inquiries, distributed at the Visitor Center, local hotels, Texas Travel Information Centers/regional chambers of commerce and CVBs, and trade shows and to group planners.
- Produce leisure itineraries built around seasons, themes, events, holidays, etc. (Addendum A)
- Launch website that unifies the needs of leisure and business visitors considering Nacogdoches as a travel and meetings destination.
- Identify community microsites that links to the [www.visitnacogdoches.org](http://www.visitnacogdoches.org) website.



# MARKETING SEGMENT: LEISURE

## *INTERACTIVE*

- Create a series of emails for new leisure visitors to the site. Produce monthly e-newsletters for all leisure sign-ups.
- Expand presence on top social networks: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Develop quarterly social media campaigns to promote local events.
- Attend community events to post live updates.
- Boost frequency of social media giveaways and contests to create awareness and build engagement.
- Retain social media consultant for CVB's interactive marketing plan.

## *PUBLIC RELATIONS*

- Attend and exhibit at the Texas State Fair (Texas Forest Trail Region/Texas Heritage Trails booth) September 30-October 23, 2016 and at the Red River Revel Arts & Music Festival - Shreveport (North East Texas Tourism Council's booth) October 1-8, 2016.
- Serve on North East Texas Tourism Council Executive Committee.
- Distribute to state and regional media, including travel journalists, frequent press releases promoting Nacogdoches as a destination.
- Host spring familiarization tour with several travel journalists in conjunction with opening of the Fredonia Hotel.
- Pitch individual writers on stories that support advertising messages and new tourism products (winery, brewery, distillery, etc.)
- Cooperate with industry partners on other media-hosting opportunities as they become available.

## **MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

- 20% increase in website traffic on a monthly and annual basis
- 20% increase in e-newsletter recipients
- 20% increase in visitor inquiries requesting information about Nacogdoches
- 50% increase in social media fans, shares and engagement
- 3% increase in click through rates
- Significant increase in trackable earned media value on social media campaigns - report quarterly
- Significant increase in trackable earned media value from news articles and features initiated by CVB press releases - report on quarterly
- Benchmarks - reviewed monthly with appropriate board committee (Addendum B)



# SALES AND MARKETING SEGMENT: CONVENTIONS/MEETINGS

## OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness of Nacogdoches as a prime destination for meetings in order to increase the total number of visitors and economic impact to the city.
- Implement initiatives that dispel outdated perceptions of the region and provide accurate information that impact our ability to attract meetings.
- Leverage partnerships with third-party planners and key community businesses to secure marketing sponsorships to further expose the destination to potential meeting customers.
- Highlight the Fredonia Hotel as full service, an ideal location for meetings and conventions.

## STRATEGIES

### SALES

- Attend meetings and shows on a local and state basis with key industry organizations.
- Conduct continual research using historical meeting data to build potential client lists in the meeting market.
- Purchase re-tooled database (TxMet) specifically populated with conventions and meeting customer profiles allowing sales to target appropriately sized meetings for Nacogdoches.
- Initiate site visit trips of potential meeting planners.
- Grow local support to help generate interest and bring regional events to Nacogdoches.
  - SFA faculty and associations
  - Board members
  - Local businesses



# SALES AND MARKETING SEGMENT: CONVENTIONS/MEETINGS

## **ADVERTISING**

- Support the sales team with targeted advertising, interactive and publishing tools showcasing Nacogdoches as a charming and accommodating meeting destination.
  - Texas Monthly
  - SFA Today
  - Sawdust
- Evolve our message to include new dining and entertainment venues that appeal to meeting planners.
- Target meeting planners within specific three-to-five-hour drive range including neighboring Louisiana.
- Use partnership with key hoteliers to align with meeting planners.
- Secure advertising positions in meeting and convention publications and specific trade-show directories.
  - TSAE's Connect Texas

## **INTERACTIVE**

- Actively market to convention sales pre- and/or post-show e-blasts and digital invites to meeting planners.
- Facilitate use of social media consultant to outline CVB convention campaign.
- Produce quarterly sales e-newsletter for sales database.
- Support sales team efforts through interactive marketing elements - social media and e-blasts.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- Host spring familiarization tour with several meeting planners in conjunction with opening of the Fredonia Hotel and other local hoteliers.
- Distribute press releases to convention publications promoting Nacogdoches as a meeting destination.
- Participate at TSAE's Connect Texas in Galveston - November 15-17, 2016, and Southwest Showcase in Austin - January 26, 2017.
- Leverage advertising partnerships for added-value editorial in trade publications.
- Attend hotel and attraction openings/renovations in order to promote progress on an as-needed basis to trade press.



# SALES AND MARKETING SEGMENT: CONVENTIONS/MEETINGS

## *PRINT AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING*

- Develop a digital convention and meeting planner guide available to download from website.
- Develop sales collateral piece highlighting regional tourism assets for both digital and print.
- Produce itineraries built around seasons, themes, events, holidays, etc. (Addendum A)

## *Measure of Success*

- 20% increase in new convention inquiries
- 10% increase in new convention business
- Increase in site visits to Nacogdoches
- Benchmarks - reviewed monthly with appropriate board committee (Addendum B)



# SALES AND MARKETING SEGMENT: GROUP TOUR

## OBJECTIVES

- Position Nacogdoches as a prime destination for the group tour market.
- Continue integration of brand identity in all marketing efforts.
- Grow group tour business to Nacogdoches.

## STRATEGIES

### *SALES*

- Pursue bus tour operators seeking overnight stays and itineraries.
  - South Central Motorcoach Association
  - Bank Travel Clubs
  - Family Reunions
  - Church Groups
- Work closely with key attractions (Millard's Crossing, historical associations, retail partners, etc.) to maximize opportunities.
- Offer transportation and event hosting for incoming groups.

### *ADVERTISING*

- Provide marketing support to groups coming to our area.

### *INTERACTIVE*

- Integrate digital marketing and social media efforts to group tour segment.

### *TRADE SHOWS*

- Attend the South Central Motorcoach Association (SCMA) 2017 regional meeting in Arlington, Texas – July 29-August 2.



# SALES AND MARKETING SEGMENT:

## GROUP TOUR

### *PRINT AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING*

- Produce promotional mailer inviting regional group leaders to Nacogdoches.
- Produce itineraries built around seasons, themes, events, holidays, etc. (Addendum A)

### *PUBLIC RELATIONS*

- Utilize targeted trade to promote Nacogdoches as a desired group tour destination through press releases.
- Invite group tour publication editors on familiarization tour/site visit.

### *Measure of Success*

- 20% increase in new group inquiries
- 10% increase in new group business
- Increase in site visits to Nacogdoches
- Benchmarks - reviewed monthly with appropriate board committee (Addendum B)



# SPORTS TOURISM

## OBJECTIVES

- Market Nacogdoches as the East Texas destination for amateur sporting events.
- Increase the visibility of the Nacogdoches Sports Advisory Council and its mission/success with the local community.

## STRATEGIES

- Target emphasis on regional sporting event opportunities.
- Complete facility audit and identify new local and regional facilities for market growth opportunities.
- Collegiate strategy to include SFA bids and other conference events.
- Engage in a five-year strategic planning process for the Nacogdoches Sports Advisory Council.
- Develop a “scorecard” to measure results of hosted events.
- Develop sales efforts to include personal sales calls, networking and bid presentations.
- Market the region as a sports-event destination through the CVB’s e-newsletter, website and social media.
- Continue to strengthen relationships with local associations, SFA and the Nacogdoches Parks & Recreation Department.

## MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- 10% increase in new sporting event inquiries
- 5% increase in new sporting event business
- Increase in site visits to Nacogdoches
- Benchmarks - reviewed bi-monthly with Sports Advisory Council and appropriate board committee (Addendum B)

# Addendum A

## PACKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Nacogdoches CVB's committees, hotels, bed & breakfasts (B&Bs) and other unique lodging partners are excited about developing packages for weekends, weekdays and special events. The development of those packages will include accommodations, participating retail and eatery coupons, special ticket offers and event merchandise. Discussions have included, but are not limited to the following:

- \$99 Monday through Thursday stays at area B&Bs and other unique lodging.
- Free sports tickets, food coupons and special hotel rates for visiting parents during Parent's Day, Orientation, Move-in Weekend, etc.
- Special VIP film festival merchandise when reservations are made at host hotel (Holiday Inn).
- Bus accommodations for Houston Junior Forum. Hotel pickup and delivery (Hampton Inn) to downtown eatery (Shelley's Bakery Café and Liberty Bell), shopping, tours, and Holiday in the Pines.
- Securing horse and buggy (Hondo Stables) for downtown holiday season, the Fredonia Hotel and historical tours.
- Offering bike accommodations for rent (CVB). Partner with the bike shop for upkeep and maintenance. Paint the bikes purple as part of the "Paint the town purple" campaign.

### ***Romance:***

Valentine's Day (couples) – Naca Valley Vineyard, Pine Creek Country Inn, The Nest, Mobile Massage, Fredonia Hotel (Future), breakfast, dinner, etc.

Wine Swirl (couples) – overnight accommodations at Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn, etc., with dinner accommodations and driver (think Uber). Wine and chocolates provided by hotels.

### ***Adventure:***

Four-wheeling, mountain biking, water sports, kayaking, indoor archery/gun range and walking trails

### ***Ecotourism:***

Farm tours (blueberry, Daylily, etc), Garden Capital of Texas/garden tours, Azalea Trail

### ***Culinary/Libation:***

Tours, tastings and classes

### ***Events:***

Celebrations, sporting events and concerts

***Other packages:*** Shopping/Antiquing, History & Heritage



# NACOGDOCHES COUNTY

## EXPOSITION & CIVIC CENTER PARTNERSHIP

In preparing for FY2017, the CVB and some of its key community partners have agreed upon the following in our efforts to support one another in promoting Nacogdoches as a destination market.

Based upon a recent and very successful collaboration, the CVB and Nacogdoches County Exposition & Civic Center have committed to work closely together to grow tourism as it pertains to incoming meetings, conventions and special events scheduled at the Expo & Civic Center. Both entities are focused on increasing tourism to maximize the economic impact of Nacogdoches County. In order to do so, both parties have agreed to the following:

- Expo to include CVB in planning stages of event(s) with promoter(s) in order to create host hotel(s) and offer group room blocks at the best possible rate.
- Expo to refer CVB to promoter to handle hotel accommodations and offer group room blocks at the best possible rate.
- Expo to utilize CVB to capture room pick up for all of their events, including the events that are currently on the books that the CVB did not necessarily coordinate with the Expo and hotels prior to our current arrangement.
- Expo will promote local businesses and events not held at or associated with the Expo as part of our partnership.
- CVB to promote the Expo events on its social media accounts, in the hotels and on calendar of events.
- CVB to assist the Expo and its promoters on-site if/when needed at Expo events.
- CVB to assist the Expo with volunteers on-site if/when needed at Expo events.
- CVB to provide Expo with economic impact report for each partnered event.
- Our mutual understanding is to work together on upcoming events so that it becomes our standard procedure.
- Procedures will be developed and approved by both CVB and Expo staff.



# STEPHEN F. AUSTIN

## STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

The CVB and specific departments within the university have begun working together to better service the needs of incoming groups. The focus for FY2017 will be a continuation of promoting the CVB as a resource to secure room accommodations and plan activities for spouses and families.

### ALUMNI ASSOCIATION:

- Is currently requesting the CVB handle all of its reunion classes, fraternal organizations, and alumni group room blocks at area hotels.
- The CVB and the Alumni Association are now positioned to provide buses for visiting conventions and groups. Arrangements are being made through the Alumni Office and bus charges will be paid by the individual groups requesting transportation.
- The CVB will be participating in three Business Network opportunities held in The Woodlands during FY2017 in an effort to attract alumni to host business/industry meetings in Nacogdoches.
- The CVB will advertise in the 2017 Sawdust, Spring & Fall issues.

### SFA UNIVERSITY MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS:

- SFA Today, a daily online publication will be announcing CVB meeting services twice per Fall and Spring Semesters.
- SFA Today will include CVB event information as it becomes available and appropriate for student and faculty distribution.
- SFA Marketing is included in our email marketing and media announcements.
- SFA Marketing will continue to work with the CVB to create overnight incentives for visiting parents and family members during Showcase Saturday(s), Summer Orientations, Move-in Weekend, Parent's Day, and other special calendar dates.
- SFA Marketing will continue to work with the CVB in securing the SFA campus as a facility for incoming groups.

### HOSPITALITY DEPARTMENT:

- Continues to be a valuable source of interns.
- CVB has requested volunteers from the hospitality department for upcoming events.
- CVB has been invited to be a special guest speaker in the classroom.
- Valuable resource for research and projects.

### ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT:

- Is planning on partnering with the Fredonia Hotel once accommodations open.
- The CVB has been tapped as a resource for information on things to do and see, places to stay and dining options.

### BUSINESS DEPARTMENT:

- An ongoing resource for research projects.
- Continues to be a valuable source of interns.
- Has agreed to work with the CVB to further develop and attract sports tournaments by exploring potential options with its sports business students.
- Will partner with the CVB for any upcoming associations seeking room accommodations for out-of-town guests.



# Addendum B

## TIMELINE

FY2017	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
<b>Launch New Website</b>		X										
<b>Visitor Center</b>												
Implement electronic sign-in		X										
Implement visitor satisfaction surveys			X									
New inventory of sundry items (T-shirts, caps, etc)				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Update existing displays				X			X			X		
Outdoor brochure rack to display visitor information		X										
<b>Marketing segment: Leisure</b>												
Advertising (print and digital)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Offer co-op advertising to local stakeholders		X										
Exhibit at Red River Revel in Shreveport (NETTC booth)		X										
Exhibit at Texas State Fair (Texas Heritage Trails booth)		X										
Produce 2017 Visitors Guide (magazine)							X					
Produce themed/seasonal itineraries		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Produce monthly e-newsletters		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Quarterly social media campaigns				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Distribute frequent press releases		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Host familiarization tour (in conjunction with opening of Fredonia Hotel)							X					
<b>Sales and marketing segment: Conventions/Meetings</b>												
Produce Meeting Planner Guide		X										
Attend TSAE's Connect Texas		X										
Attend Southwest Showcase				X								
Attend SFA Alumni Business Networking events (The Woodlands)				X				X				
Advertising (print and digital)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Quarterly sales e-newsletters			X	X		X			X			X
Ongoing sales initiatives		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Host familiarization tour (in conjunction with opening of Fredonia Hotel)							X					
Produce themed/seasonal itineraries		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Sales and marketing segment: Group Tour</b>												
Produce themed/seasonal itineraries		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Attend South Central Motorcoach Association Marketplace					X					X		
Produce promotional mailers to group leaders				X				X				
Invite group tour publication editors on familiarization tour/site visit							X					
<b>Sports Tourism</b>												
Complete facility audit/identify market growth opportunities			X									
Nacogdoches Sports Advisory Council meetings		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Board Committee Meetings</b>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

