

Travel Tacoma + Pierce County 2016 Board of Directors

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	Shon Sylvia	Director Recreation & Community Service	Metro Parks of Tacoma	4702 S. 19th St.	Tacoma WA 98405	253.305.1072	<a href="mailto:shons@tacomaparks.com">shons@tacomaparks.com</a>
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	Dean Burke	Executive Director	South Sound Sports Commission	310 N. Meridian, #205	Tacoma, WA 98402	253.284.3259	<a href="mailto:deanb@tacomasports.org">deanb@tacomasports.org</a>
	Steve James	Director	Daffodil Festival	1938 Pacific Ave	Puyallup WA 98371	(253) 383-2739	<a href="mailto:daffodilfestival@gmail.com">daffodilfestival@gmail.com</a>
	Pat Nagle	Owner	Harmon Pub & Brewery	5790 Soundview Dr., Ste. 201	Tacoma, WA 98402	206.696.4687	<a href="mailto:patnagle@gmail.com">patnagle@gmail.com</a>
	Al Abbott	Owner	Carrot Stick Marketing	PO Box 112064	Tacoma, WA 98411	(253) 324-1587	<a href="mailto:lifestyle.tacoma@gmail.com">lifestyle.tacoma@gmail.com</a>
	Roshawn Yates	Owner/Operator	Lifestyles Valet, Shuttle & Craft Tours	1904 S. Jefferson Ave.	Tacoma, WA 98402	253-572-2821	<a href="mailto:swisspub1904office@yahoo.com">swisspub1904office@yahoo.com</a>
	Carole Ann McQuadd	Co Owner	The Swiss				

**Internal Revenue Service**

**Department of the Treasury**

**P. O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201**

**Date June 7, 2002**

**Person to Contact:**  
Michelle Jones 31-07675  
Customer Service Specialist  
**Toll Free Telephone Number:**  
8:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. EST  
877-829-5500  
**Fax Number:**  
513-263-3756  
**Federal Identification Number:**  
91-1465947

**Tacoma-Pierce County Visitor &  
Convention Bureau  
PO Box 1754  
Tacoma WA 98401-1754**

**Dear Sir or Madam:**

This is in response to your request for affirmation of your organization's exempt status.

In January 1991 we issued a determination letter that recognized your organization as exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code. That letter is still in effect.

All exempt organizations (unless specifically excluded) are liable for taxes under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (social security taxes) on remuneration of \$100 or more paid to each employee during a calendar year. Your organization is also liable for tax under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act for each employee to whom it pays \$50 or more during a calendar quarter if, during the current or preceding calendar year, it had one or more employees at any time in each of 20 calendar weeks or it paid wages of \$1,500 or more in any calendar quarter.

If your organization's character, method of operation, or purposes change, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on the organization's exempt status. Also, your organization should inform us of all changes in its name or address.

Your organization is required to file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, if its gross receipts each year are normally more than \$25,000. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the organization's annual accounting period. The law imposes a penalty of \$20 a day, up to a maximum of \$10,000 when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay.

Because your organization is not an organization described in section 170(c) of the Code, donors may not deduct contributions made to your organization. You should advise your contributors to that effect.

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Tacoma-Pierce County Visitor & Convention Bureau  
91-1465947

Your organization is not required to file federal income tax returns unless it is subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Internal Revenue Code. If your organization is subject to this tax, it must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your organization's activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in Code section 513.

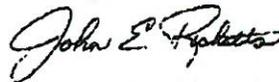
The law requires you to make your organization's annual return available for public inspection without charge for three years after the due date of the return. You are also required to make available for public inspection a copy of your organization's exemption application, any supporting documents and the exemption letter to any individual who requests such documents in person or in writing. You can charge only a reasonable fee for reproduction and actual postage costs for the copied materials. The law does not require you to provide copies of public inspection documents that are widely available, such as by posting them on the Internet (World Wide Web). You may be liable for a penalty of \$20 a day for each day you do not make these documents available for public inspection (up to a maximum of \$10,000 in the case of an annual return).

As this letter could help resolve any questions about your organization's exempt status, you should keep it with the organization's permanent records.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

This letter affirms the exempt status of your organization.

Sincerely,



John E. Ricketts, Director, TE/GE  
Customer Account Services

**AMENDED AND RESTATED  
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF**

**TACOMA REGIONAL CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAU**

I, THE UNDERSIGNED PERSON, acting as the incorporator of a corporation under the provision of the Washington Non-Profit Corporation Act (Revised Code of Washington 24.03) adopt the following Articles of Incorporation for such corporation.

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

The name of the corporation ("Corporation") shall be Tacoma Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau.

**ARTICLE II**

**Duration**

The period of duration of the Corporation shall be perpetual.

**ARTICLE III**

**Purpose**

The purpose for which the Corporation is organized is:

1. To promote tourism in Pierce County, Washington.
2. To engage in any lawful activity which is necessary or incidental to the above state purposes and which is intended by the Corporation, directly or indirectly, to promote the interests of the Corporation.
3. To engage in any activity not contrary to the laws of the State of Washington and to exercise all of the powers, rights and privileges conferred by existing and future laws of the State of Washington upon a corporation formed under the Washington Non-Profit Corporation Act.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Members**

That the Corporation shall have no members.

**ARTICLE V**

**Registered Agent**

The address of the registered agent and office of the Corporation shall be Bannish Brown, 1119 Pacific Avenue, Suite 1400, Tacoma, WA 98402.

**ARTICLE VII**

**Directors**

The number of the directors of the Corporation and the manner in which such directors are to be elected shall be as set forth in the Corporation's bylaws. The board of directors consists of twenty-four (24) individuals. The names and addresses of the current directors are:

- (1) Monique Trudnowski  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (2) Dan O'Leary  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (3) Ralph Pease  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (4) Laurie Beck  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (5) Kim Bedier  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (6) Trudy Cofchin  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (7) Denise Dyer  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (8) Jeremy Foust  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402

- (9) Kathy Franklin  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (10) Mike Gommi  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (11) Stan Kott  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (12) Evan Marques  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (13) Bill McDonald  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (14) Carmen Palmer  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (15) Laurel Potter  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (16) Joanne Selden  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (17) Skip Smith  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (18) Stephanie Walsh  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (19) Anna Sullivan  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (20) Kathy McGoldrick  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402

- (21) Matt Allen  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (22) Shon Sylvia  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- (23) Mark Horace  
1119 Pacific Ave #1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402

The term of the initial directors shall expire as set forth in the Corporation's bylaws.

#### ARTICLE VIII

##### Incorporator

The name and address of the incorporator of the Corporation is as follows:

Bennish Brown, President/CEO  
1119 Pacific Avenue, Suite 1400  
Tacoma, WA 98402

#### ARTICLE IX

##### Limitation of Liability for Directors

No director of the Corporation shall be personally liable to the Corporation for monetary damages for his or her conduct as a director, when such conduct takes place on or after the date this Article becomes effective, except for (i) acts or omissions that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law by the director, or (ii) conduct involving any transaction from which the director will personally receive a benefit in money, property, or services to which the director is not legally entitled. If, after this Article becomes effective, the Washington Non-profit Corporation Act is amended or superseded to authorize corporate action further eliminating or limiting the personal liability of directors, then the liability of a director of the Corporation shall be deemed eliminated or limited to the fullest extent permitted by the Washington Non-profit Corporation Act, as so amended or superseded. Any amendment to or repeal of this Article shall not adversely affect any right or protection of a director of the Corporation for or with respect to any acts or omissions of such director occurring prior to such amendment or repeal. This provision shall not eliminate or limit the liability of a director for any act or omission occurring prior to the date this Article becomes effective.

ARTICLE X

Indemnification

The Corporation shall indemnify to the fullest extent permitted by Washington law, as may amended or superseded, any person who has been made, or has threatened to be made, a party to any action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, investigative, or otherwise (including an action, suit or proceeding by or in the right of the Corporation), by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer or incorporator of the Corporation, or fiduciary within the meaning of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 with respect to an employee benefit plan of the Corporation, if any, or serves or served at the request of the Corporation as a director, or as an officer, or as a fiduciary of an employee benefit plan, of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise. In addition, the Corporation shall pay for reimburse any expenses incurred by such persons who are parties to such proceedings, in advance of the final disposition of such proceedings, to the full extent permitted by Washington law, as amended or superseded.

ARTICLE XI

Dissolution

Upon the winding up and dissolution of the corporation, the assets of the Corporation shall be distributed pursuant to RCW 24.03.225 and in accordance with the following: any assets remaining after payment of, or provisions for payment of, all debts and liabilities of the corporation, shall be distributed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies or organizations engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the Corporation, as selected by the directors.

ARTICLE XII

Effective Date

These Articles shall become effective upon filing.

DATED this 30th day of July 2014.

  
Bennish Brown, President/CEO

**TRAVEL**

**TACOMA +**

**PIERCE COUNTY, WA**

2016 Sales +  
Marketing Plan

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## STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT OUR TOP PRIORITIES

**PRIORITIES:** Financial and organizational stability; Board relations; community relations; partnership development; collaboration; alternative revenue generation

### EXECUTIVE + ADMINISTRATIVE

- President + CEO
- Partner Relations Manager
- Finance + Benefits
- Business Development Manager [Partnerships]

\*Product Development recommendations will be evaluated and assessed by the Leadership Team.

**PRIORITIES:** Destination Marketing and Branding - increase awareness of Tacoma + Pierce County and help visitors connect emotionally to our brand; packaging; leisure visitor information; collaboration

### MARKETING

- Vice President
- Marketing Manager
- Communications Manager
- Visitor Experience Manger
- Visitor Experience Coordinator
- Contract: Public Relations/Media Relations Services
- Contract: Website development

**PRIORITIES:** Generate economic impact through sales activities that provide a consistent return on investment for funders by delivering revenue and room nights; stakeholder relationships; collaboration

### SALES + SERVICING

- Vice President
- Senior Convention Sales Manager
- Senior Convention Sales Manager
- Convention Center Sales Manager - Short Term
- Regional Sales Manager
- Regional Sales Manager
- Administrative Assistant

## ABOUT THE BRAND

### Destination brand

Our brand is who we are. It's not a logo. It's not a slogan. It's the total sum of words, images and associations that form the customer's perception and helps us distinguish our destination from other cities. It is our story that is told. It is our story that is lived. It is our story that inspires.

### Brand promise [what customers can expect]

Pierce County inspires transformation. It is a place to fearlessly explore a fusion of natural beauty and an accessible art culture. Experiencing this place leaves those who come different from when they came. Perspectives changed. Challenges accomplished. Stories created.

### Brand standouts

Our iconic images: Glass Art, Collector Vehicles and Mount Rainier National Park.

## OUR VALUES AND CORE FUNCTIONS

### Core values:

#### **Visitor First**

We will always consider the primary reason we exist – to be a resource and voice for the visitor.

#### **Accountability**

We hold ourselves accountable to each other and our community.

#### **Collaboration**

We actively collaborate with our strongest resources — each other, our community and our destination.

#### **Creativity**

We strive to be creative dreamers who are not satisfied with following the crowd, and will have fun as we work outside the box.

#### **Innovation**

We don't accept the status quo but look to what will come, or what *can* come next.

### Core functions:

**Destination Awareness** – Promote the region and generate interest and awareness for Tacoma + Pierce County as a destination through branded messages to targeted audiences.

**Familiarization Tours** – The best way to have top-influencers connected and enthusiastic about our destination is to have them experience it first hand. That's why we bring media, meeting planners and tour operators to Tacoma + Pierce County to touch, see and taste all this destination has to offer.

**Direct Marketing** – Direct marketing helps turn casual interest in the destination into a booked trip. This is done through Search Engine Marketing and Social Media Marketing. The Travel Tacoma + Pierce County website provides comprehensive information for customers and is the core driver in our direct marketing efforts.

**Visitor Information** – Influence visitor spending, regional visitor distribution and lengthen stays by providing visitors with reservation services, recommendations, visitor guides, brochures and maps of the region.

**Convention Center Sales** – Proactively sell the Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center as a location for meetings, conventions and tradeshows to generate revenue, room nights and increased economic impact throughout the community. Goals will be achieved through advertising and marketing, proactively prospecting, tradeshow participation, industry memberships, networking, site visits, hosting client events, community relationships and partnering with other CVBs.

**Regional Sales** – Proactively sell Pierce County as a destination for meetings and events, and to generate leads for members and book business in the region. Through proactive sales calls, tradeshow participation, industry networking, client site visits and FAM tours, the sales team connects key decision makers with partnering businesses.

## LONG TERM STRATEGY

### SALES

#### Core Functions

The Sales team is responsible for securing meetings and events [local, regional, state and national conventions, conferences, tradeshows, and other event business] for Tacoma + Pierce County. The Sales team reaches out to a wide variety of markets to support our range of unique meeting facilities, Convention Center, hotels and attractions throughout cities in Pierce County [Tacoma, Mount Rainier, Puyallup, Fife, Lakewood, Gig Harbor and Sumner]. The sales team is dedicated to improving destination awareness, delivering room nights and increasing economic impact throughout Tacoma + Pierce County.

#### 2016 Benchmarks

Estimated Future Convention Center Revenue [Rental + Food & Beverage Revenue] – \$2,600,000

Estimated Booked Meetings + Events, Non Convention Center [no room nights] – 15

Estimated Booked Room Nights – 19,000

Estimated Economic Impact – *Estimated Impact for Booked Business*

Convention Center Compression STR – *Share STR Reporting Data*

Customer Service/Planner Surveys – *85% of all surveys are rated Good or Excellent*

Group Sales Results (Regional - Convention Center)	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual
Booked Room Nights	10,778	19,610	24,914	22,710

Booked Meetings & Events	13	13	7	23
Convention Center Revenue	0	1,358,712	1,676,439	2,899,350
Estimated Economic Impact	3,350,464	9,175,963	12,200,725	30,199,531

Note: 2013 and beyond goals are reflective of convention center sales beginning on April 1, 2013. Results and goals are combined destination and convention center sales. Booked meetings & events have no room nights and are booked throughout Pierce County. 2015 revenue goals are increased due to short term market being added to the destination and convention center City of Tacoma contract.

### Primary Markets

Association	Corporate	Education	Fraternal
Government	Hobby	Military	Religious
Social	Society		

### Key Strategies

- Commit to the Destination Marketing Association International’s mandatory standards for destination sales services and organization reaccreditation.
- Leverage destination and convention center awareness through the leading global event venue directory [CVENT] and web planning portals [EmpowerMint]. The destination will brand itself through regional and state banner ads and the convention center will brand itself through Seattle/Tacoma preferred placement to drive opportunity from 3<sup>rd</sup> party, independent and organization planners.
- Commit to the Meet in Washington State - ASAE Corporate Partnership to increase destination awareness, collective marketing through online and print ads, showcase destination and partners at ASAE tradeshows, etc.
- Promote destination and convention center at industry event, tradeshows and conferences to generate leads, and build contacts to increase opportunities to book business.
- Increase customer “touches” with local and destination sales calls, client events, site inspections, familiarization tours, promotions, social media and interactive engagements to keep the destination and convention center at front of mind with planners.
- Engage in industry memberships and attend regularly to build rapport, develop strong relationships with planners, industry partners for referral opportunities and build destination and convention center awareness.
- Commit to destination summits and attending community events to build stronger relationships with industry partners to ensure positive results during all stages of sales and events; and increase referral opportunities.
- Participate on outbound industry sponsorships to increase awareness of destination and convention center, sales team and dedication to meetings and events.

## SALES PROGRAMS

Marketing

Budget: \$142,668

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

In addition to informing others of Tacoma + Pierce County and the convention center; the marketing budget is being used multi-dimensionally to gain interest in the destination, increase sales and profitability. Campaigns [online and print] will continue to be leveraged by investments in research, industry associations, familiarization tours, client events, sales calls, tradeshow, conferences, site visits, relationship development, etc. to support the scope of work and benchmarks. Here are a few highlights:

- CVENT + EmpowerMint Destination and Event Venue Directories [Online]
- Meetings + Convention Magazine Ads [Print/Online]
- Travel Tacoma + Pierce County Meeting Planner Guide
- Event Sponsorships
- Market Tradeshow [Wedding Shows, Military Shows, etc.]
- Client Site Visits/Familiarization Tours/Sales Appointments, etc.
- Outbound Client Development [Sales Calls/DC Client Event/etc.]

#### Industry Partnerships

Budget: \$29,000

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in all estimates.*

**Meet in Washington State** MIWS is a partnership comprised of Visit Seattle, Visit Bellevue, Visit Spokane, Tulalip Resort and Travel Tacoma that collectively invests as a Corporate Sponsor with the American Society of Association Executives. This corporate sponsorship allows representatives from each location to be marketed with preferential rights through print, online, tradeshow and conferences to more than 10,000 members. This partnership increases Washington State + Pierce County + Tacoma recognition.

#### Industry Memberships + Sponsorship Events

Budget: \$14,750

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

Commitment to the community, industry and members creates a business network designed to increase sales effectiveness. Industry memberships increases knowledge of industry issues, best practices, relationships, prospecting, referrals, etc.

- Air Force Association [AFA]
- Meetings Professionals International [MPI]
- Pierce County Chambers of Commerce
- Reunion Friendly
- Society of Government Meeting Planners [SGMP]
- Washington and Capital Chapters of Professional Convention Management Association [PCMA]
- Washington Chapter of American Society of Association Executives [WSAE]
- Your Military Reunion Connection [YMRC]

#### Tradeshow/Conferences

Budget: \$74,575

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

### Third Party Procurement

**ConferenceDirect [Annual Partner Meeting and Tradeshow]** Acting as a single point of contact for planning events; ConferenceDirect is one of the world's leading event management and hospitality services firms. With 325 associates and representing over 8,700 events annually; the Annual Partner Meeting and tradeshow provides the opportunity to meet one-on-one and discuss business opportunities with over 300 associates who are responsible for booking and representing thousands of organizations.

**Cvent [Connect]** Cvent provides the most extensive event management and venue sourcing technology to planners and suppliers. Providing connection through education, tradeshows, conferences and more. Meeting and tradeshow provides the opportunity to meet one-one-one and explore opportunities for the PNW region.

### Association

**American Society of Association Executives [Springtime Expo, Annual Conference and Leadership Summit]** ASAE represents more than 21,000 association executives and industry partners representing 10,000 organizations; members manage leading trade associations, individual membership societies and voluntary organizations across the United States and in nearly 50 countries around the world. These events are annual conferences with tradeshow components.

**Professional Convention Management Association [Convening Leaders]** PCMA is defined by its more than 6,000 meetings industry membership. Leaders from every aspect of the industry join PCMA from trade shows, associations, corporations, suppliers, independent planners, students and faculty members. PCMA is a source for education, professional resources and advocacy for the meeting, convention and exhibition industry. Convening Leaders is an annual conference focused on industry education and networking.

### Corporate

**Meeting Professionals International [World Education Congress, Cascadia and IMEX]** MPI has more than 20,000 members, representing 86 countries, from 71 clubs and chapters. MPI provides members, chapters and the global meeting and event community with innovative and relevant education, networking opportunities and business exchanges, and acts as a prominent voice for the promotion and growth of the industry. These events have hosted buyer programs and industry education.

**IMEX [IMEX America]** IMEX offers America's largest worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings & events on a national and international scale. These events attract thousands of buyers from the U.S. and around the world, connecting everyone with key players, generating innovative ideas and driving business with the force of global opportunities. This event has a hosted buyer program and industry education.

### Diversity

**Connect [Diversity, Collaborate and Connect]** Connect produces publications and marketing for the corporate, hobby, sports, diversity, association and religious markets. The company hosts yearly

marketplace conferences in their target markets that allow for one-on-one appointments and advertising in their magazines.

#### Military

**Your Military Reunion Connection** Your Military Reunion Connection [YRMC] is an association for military reunion planners. This association provides education for planners through conferences that also feature a familiarization tour. During the conferences they offer one-on-one appointments to destinations and suppliers.

**Reunion Friendly Network** Reunion Friendly Network ConfAMs are a great way for Planners and the Hospitality Industry to connect face to face. Events are held across the country provide an excellent opportunity to learn about a specific destination and reunion planning in general. The website also has listings for destinations.

#### Education

Budget: \$20 750

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

- Governor's Tourism Conference
- Professional Convention Management Association/Meeting Professionals International – Annual Industry Summit
- Simpleview (Database Management)
- DMA West
- Professional Sales Training (Fred Pryor Seminars, etc.)
- Team + Staff Development

## MARKETING

#### Core functions

The Marketing team is responsible for brand and direct marketing efforts; visitor information and management of the visitor information centers; corporate communications; and media relations.

#### Primary Audience

Leisure

#### 2015 Benchmarks

New website visitors – 43,250\* to be revised based on a full year of new website performance [June 2016]

Influenced articles – 120

Social media activity – 52 relevant activities on social platforms

Marketing results	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Actual
New website visitors	57,241	47,404	42,127	112,708
Published articles/*Influenced articles	199	219	203	199*

### Key strategies

Our approach to the marketing mix for 2015 will be three-tiered:

- Expose people to the destination [Brand Marketing]
- Once the destination is discovered, help potential visitors turn their interest into a planned trip [Direct Marketing]
- Equip visitors with the tools they need to have the best possible experience while here and encourage visitors to return [Visitor Information]

## MARKETING PROGRAMS

### Build destination awareness

Budget: \$271,656

To most people– even within driving distance of Pierce County, this area is an unknown. We need to do something bold to put Pierce County on the mental map of the traveling public. As a small non-profit, we don't have the Nike Budget to get our destination exposed nationally. Therefore, we are starting smaller tactical campaigns that will have an impact on a specific audience.

**Geographically-targeted campaign** – an aggressive campaign designed to encourage a one- to two-night stay in Pierce County, targeted at those who live and work in a metropolitan area.

**Website presence** – continue to refine and improve [traveltacoma.com](http://traveltacoma.com), to adapt and adjust to current SEO and website trends, and traveler expectations.

**Advertising at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport** – Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will recruit a partner to join us in placing destination advertising at the airport.

**Tour + Travel** – Leveraging partnerships, Travel Tacoma will have a presence at selected tour and travel shows to promote Pierce County packages to tour operators, and travel writers.

**Destination advertising** to those with an interest in Northwest Travel: Full/ or Half Page Ads in Western Journey Magazine, Alaska Airlines Inflight Magazine, and the Washington State Visitor Guide.

**Destination videos** – Produce destination videos that showcase Tacoma + Pierce County. Promote the videos and the new website through web and television.

**Earned media** – Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will recruit travel writers by pitching tailored destination stories that fit their interest. In 2016 we will do this both through working with a professional PR agency, as well as using in-house efforts to build relationships and promote the importance of tourism in Pierce County.

**Media hosting** – Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will host travel writers from print and electronic publications that we believe have an influence on travel decisions. We do this by working with them on

itineraries, and providing them hotels, attractions, and occasionally meals. We count on our partners to help us minimize costs.

**Search engine marketing through Google, Yahoo and Bing** – Find people who are searching for what Pierce County has to offer, and direct them to our website.

**Social media** – Advertising on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter – Find people who are interested in things that Pierce County offers, and build a relationship with them through social media.

**Tacoma + Pierce County Visitor Guide** – Marketing International estimates that the distribution of one visitor guide equates to \$48 in visitor spending. The visitor guide is distributed through several channels, predominantly in information racks in the greater Seattle and South-sound areas, these include ferry and cruise ship terminals, as well as Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Other methods of distribution include mailing upon request, and distribution at visitor information centers. All together, 125,000 guides will be distributed.

*Strengthen connections with visitors*

*Budget: \$40,330*

**TripAdvisor pages** – TripAdvisor is the #1 site for destination information for potential travelers. Currently our destination is not represented well. By investing in sponsored pages, we can give the best possible impression of Tacoma + Pierce County to those who are looking for destination information.

**Visitor Information Centers** – VICs add the personal touch for those who are exploring downtown Tacoma. Travel Tacoma + Pierce County has a volunteer-staffed information center positioned in the heart of the Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center. Starting fall 2014, Travel Tacoma also has a site at the Washington State History Museum that is staffed during the Third Thursday Art Walk. Our priority in 2015 will be building awareness of the centers.

**Social media visitor engagement** – Growing our one-to-one interactions with visitors through social media. Promoting and engaging with the #Ask253 hashtag, to give recommendations to visitors, and to build a network of social media partners who can also engage with #Ask253.

**Electronic newsletters to past and potential visitors** – We collect emails through our website, Visitor Information Centers, and marketing efforts.

*Become recognized leaders in the tourism industry*

*Budget: \$16,350*

**Benchmarking** – To get where we're going, we need to first see where we are. Travel Tacoma + Pierce County will invest in research to discover who our competitors are and how we stack up against them.

**External research** – If we know what our audience is looking for, and how they make their travel decisions, we will be able to make smarter marketing decisions. We will work with nSight Travel to be able to do a deep data-dive into how travelers plan their trips, and what tools they are using to plan their trips.

**In-house research** – Travel Tacoma + Pierce County is uniquely positioned to collect visitor information. Travel Tacoma will collect key information that can benefit our marketing and sales efforts, as well as those of our partners.

**Educating the community** about what Travel Tacoma + Pierce County is doing to deliver tourism.

**Business collateral** – Professional, branded business materials.

**Electronic newsletter to past and current boardmembers, hospitality industry professionals, and elected officials.**

**Entering work into award competitions** - We are proud of the work we do at Travel Tacoma + Pierce County, and feel like it is competitive for regional and national award.

**Building in flexibility for community partnership** – Because most of our budget is planned out a year ahead, we don't have much flexibility to respond to requests to help with co-op advertising. This year, we are reserving a small pool of advertising funds to enhance partner marketing efforts when it is a benefit to the destination.

Education

Budget: \$8,510

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

- Industry Conferences
- Professional associations and training

#### **PARTNERSHIP WITH VISIT RAINIER**

Budget: \$150,000

In collaboration with Visit Rainier, Travel Tacoma is launching a campaign to raise awareness of Mt. Rainier National Park during the 2016 National Park Service Centennial. The campaign will target L.A. and San Francisco, nationally; and Germany, the UK, China and South Korea internationally.

## NATIONAL, REGIONAL, STATE + LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

Membership, Accreditation and Professional Development

Budget: \$10,330

*\*Travel, Ancillary and Operational Expenses not included in estimates.*

Tremendous benefit to Travel Tacoma + Pierce County and the staff comes from being actively involved members in national, regional, state and local tourism industry organizations.

- **DMAI [Destination Marketing Association International]** – provides an annual international tourism convention for a global perspective on the industry, ongoing access to resources and research, tailored conferences that focus on specific aspects of DMO departments, and the only accreditation program that sets industry specific standards for DMO governance and operations.
- **DMA West [formerly WACVB]** - a regional professional association serving more than 140 member bureaus in the West. Benefits include an annual convention, access to industry resources and research, participating at education programs and use of services to assist in marketing our destination and managing our organization.
- **Washington Tourism Alliance [WTA]** - established by industry stakeholders with the mission to advocate, promote, develop and sustain the economic well-being of the Washington tourism industry. WTA provides several products to serve members and the state's tourism industry, including the official travel and tourism website for the state of Washington, [www.experiencewa.com](http://www.experiencewa.com), and the Official Washington State Visitors' Guide in partnership with the Washington Lodging Association.
- **WSDMO [Washington State Destination Marketing Organizations Association]** - an independent, non-profit trade association advocating tourism investment and promotion as economic development. The mission of the WSDMO is to enhance the awareness and influence of the tourism industry and to serve as the single unifying voice for all of Washington State's destination marketing organizations and tourism industry.
- **Pierce County Lodging Association [PCLA]** – a membership organization that represents Pierce County as the third largest hotel room community in the State of Washington. PCLA provides hoteliers and other industry members a regular forum to meet and discuss issues that affect the individual cities as well as the unincorporated areas of Pierce County.

