



2011 MARKETING PLAN

Introduction/Background

The Baton Rouge Area Convention and Visitors Bureau's (BRACVB) mission is to increase visitation to and awareness of the Baton Rouge Area thereby enhancing economic impact. BRACVB strives long-term to be a nationally recognized premier destination providing an unmatched Louisiana experience to all visitors.

Purpose:

As the official marketing entity charged with promoting Baton Rouge as a premier leisure and meetings destination, Visit Baton Rouge leads an integrated marketing effort for the city, its partners and stakeholders via strategic marketing, sales and cooperative initiatives.

Situation Analysis:

2010 proved to be a solid year for Baton Rouge travel. Hotel occupancy and ADR remained positive despite a lingering recession and the tragic oil spill in the gulf. Baton Rouge's first Bayou Country Superfest proved successful with 51,000 attendees with over one-third coming from outside Louisiana.

The Baton Rouge Area Convention & Visitors Bureau will approach 2011 with cautious optimism as the recession continues to affect travel sectors.

In the business and group travel sector, companies and their clients are cutting budgets. The "AIG effect" has intensified the "boondoggle image" that is unfortunately now attached to meetings and events that take place at luxury venues.

Leisure travel has been affected as well, particularly by the high unemployment rate, as well as the lack of consumer confidence in the economy's recovery and the declining housing market. Consumers are either cutting back on travel, staying closer to home or just not traveling at all. Leisure travelers are also savvier, going to different resources to find the best price for their stay. As a result, online travel agents and social media have become the "go to" source for the best deals and referrals.

While consumers do feel that taking a vacation is a "birthright," they are spending less money on amenities like food, and booking shorter stays as they continue to adjust their household finances post-recession. It is important to recognize that all signs point to the fact that American consumers still don't feel that the recession has ended and most likely will continue to operate in a bargain-hunting mode.

As Baton Rouge Area Convention & Visitors Bureau/Visit Baton Rouge plans for 2011, ongoing insights into consumer attitudes, spending habits and travel trends will guide our marketing strategies and tactics.

»» Goals/Objectives/Audience

2011 Marketing Objectives:

- Increase visitation to the Baton Rouge area by creating awareness of the city as a leisure travel, meeting, film, media and special events destination
- Increase public awareness and value of BRACVB and the hospitality industry
- Establish BRACVB as the expert source of visitor information to all target publics

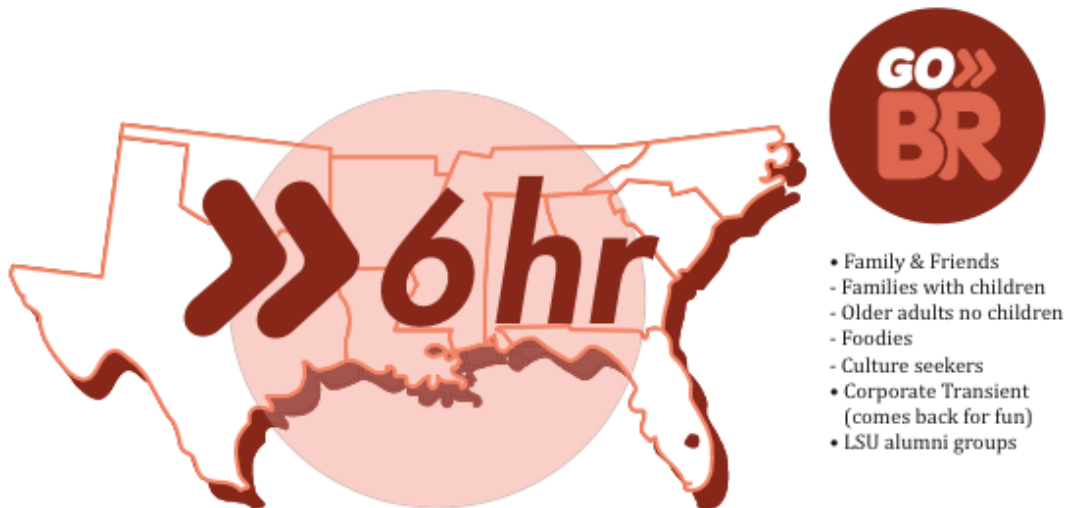
2011 Business Objectives:

- Increase overall hotel and motel occupancy
- Maintain or increase group leads generated
- Increase overall visitation to Baton Rouge

Key Audiences:

Leisure Travelers

The typical leisure audience tends to come from a 6-hour drive market.



Meeting Planners

- Group Travel
- Meetings & Conventions
- Sports

Other

- Film Industry Executives and Producers
- Travel Media
- Community Stakeholders

» Strategic Priorities

2011 Overarching Strategic Focus Across All Audiences:

The landscape in which we market has changed with the onset of social media. The consumer is now the new media and everything is a channel. The digital environment wherein consumers can share, influence and rally behind a brand 24/7 warrants that our continued marketing efforts must focus on a richer online experience for travelers. As a result, the following will be priorities for all marketing efforts:

- Enhanced content
- Integration across all channels
- Measurement



Content

Enriched content will work toward building a connection with travel audiences and provide for an experiential guide to Baton Rouge. With improved content comes greater search engine optimization, improved traffic to the Visit Baton Rouge website and resulting visitation to Baton Rouge. Content can include:

- Video
- Photos
- Wikipedia
- Blog
- Emails
- Podcasts

Integration

Continued integration among all marketing disciplines and departments will ensure Visit Baton Rouge messaging is intersecting with key targets when and where they are most willing to receive our messaging. 2011 marketing will focus on a full contact approach.

Measurement

Measuring the success of Visit Baton Rouge marketing efforts remains a critical component of the 2011 marketing plan and while some traditional media vehicles such as print and outdoor can be difficult to track, Visit Baton Rouge will aim to assign firm metrics across all efforts as relevant to specific audience goals and objectives and their corresponding tactics. 2011 marketing efforts will prioritize that all vehicles wherever appropriate carry a firm call-to-action that can be attributed to measurement including:

- Increased traffic to VisitBatonRouge.com
- Growth of subscriber database
- Social media engagement
- Increased group leads
- Inquiries at welcome centers, 800 LA ROUGE
- Spikes in event attendance and overnight stays
- Sweepstakes and promotional entries
- Overall occupancy and ADR

» Leisure Communications & Marketing

LEISURE

Increase visitation to Baton Rouge by creating awareness of Baton Rouge as a leisure travel destination.

STRATEGIES:

- Position Baton Rouge as an emerging city with new and exciting offerings for a variety of audiences
- Look to 6-hour drive market insights to promote Baton Rouge events and “key draws”
- Evangelize locals to encourage increased visitation - Recognize that a significant portion of Baton Rouge visitors come to visit family and friends
- Establish Visit Baton Rouge as the expert source for visitor information
- Increased growth of marketing database via digital marketing including: email marketing, social media, contests and promotions, QR codes, etc.
- Improved search engine marketing and optimization to get Baton Rouge on the radar of potential visitors

TACTICS:

Consumer Print Advertising

- Build awareness of Baton Rouge as a travel destination and highlight key events via half and full page, 4-color print ads.
- The consumer print plan is categorized as:
 - Leisure and consumer publications
 - Regional publications
 - Local publications
- Publications were chosen based on relevant editorial for Baton Rouge, which includes: travel, cuisine, entertainment, football, shopping, etc.
- The Louisiana Travel & Promotion Association placements will also include consumer & leisure publications that will enhance the overall media plan.

Consumer Outdoor Advertising

- Digital and vinyl outdoor bulletins on I-10 and I-12 serve as a reminder medium for boosting local pride and awareness among Baton Rougians, as well as drive markets coming in and out of Baton Rouge.

Interactive Media

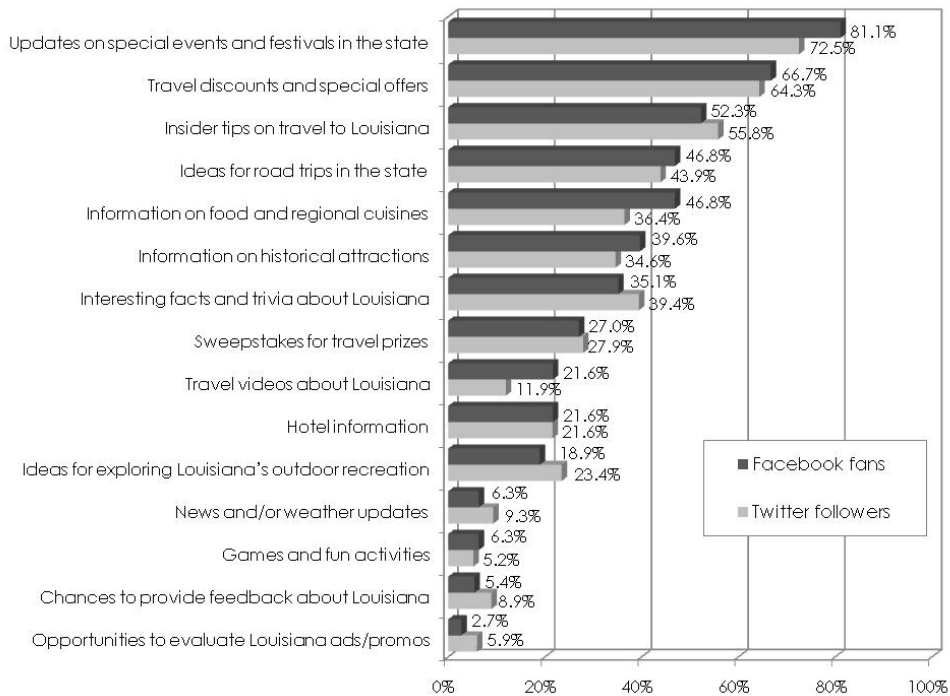
- Interactive banner and rich media vehicles focus on drive markets and highlight Baton Rouge “draws” and signature events throughout 2011, and additionally drive visitation to Visit Baton Rouge.com
- Gannett Newspaper Websites will provide banner placement opportunities across top newspaper websites in Alexandria, Lafayette, and Monroe

- Nola.com will reach the New Orleans market, as well as additional drive markets as it is currently the number one ranked newspaper website in the country. Presence for Visit Baton Rouge will include geo-targeted video banner, flash & dynamic ads
- 225.com and 2theadvocate.com will promote local awareness and pride for Baton Rouge and key events, as well as reach those looking to visit Baton Rouge
- Undertone Networks: Serves to build awareness and promote Baton Rouge events via a national ad network recommended to provide geo-targeted, regional rich media to consumers interested in travel, entertainment, news, shopping, etc.
 - Rich media and banner ads on this network will further drive engagement by allowing consumers to “Like on Facebook”, “Share” and “Retweet”, watch a video, download a guide, enter sweepstakes, etc.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing for Visit Baton Rouge will integrate inbound marketing, email marketing and social media to support leisure audience objectives of garnering brand awareness and interest in Baton Rouge visitation. Digital marketing additionally drives traffic to the Visit Baton Rouge website and is a significant tool in growing the Visit Baton Rouge database.

Content deemed relevant and important to Louisiana Travelers



Inbound Marketing

- Create great content. Great content is defined as useful, interesting, thought-provoking, entertaining, something that no one else has and solves a problem.
- Optimize content for Search Engines (SEO)
- Promote content in:
 - Social Media channels
 - Email marketing

Email Marketing

Email marketing paired with traditional and social media can be a valuable tool in generating interest in what Baton Rouge has to offer. Primary focus of the 2011 email marketing program will include:

- Growing overall database of subscribers
- Increasing engagement – open, click-thru and referral rates
- Enhancing relationships with old and new visitors
- Encouraging loyalty and repeat business
- Acquiring new visitors
- Convincing old visitors to return
- Promotion of events
- Evangelizing ex-patriots such as LSU Alumni Groups

Email tactics include:

- Consistent design templates and maintain consistent user actions
- Maintain current list of subscribers
- Expand subscriber base with organic list growth
 - Acquire opt-ins through forward, sign-up and social media sharing features in all emails
 - Integrate all of BRACVB's interactive marketing outlets by posting emails on blog, social media and website
- Deliver monthly content that subscribers deem relevant and important
 - Supplement featured event/topic with content and/or specials most frequently accessed and requested
 - Analyze topics of interest from subscriber profiles
 - Analyze previous email deployments to see which content areas garnered most click-thrus (learn as you go)
 - Structured to provide "teaser text" forcing readers to visit website
- Automated "Getting to Know You" email to continually refine existing database profiles and to increase subscriber list among leads generated from other sources

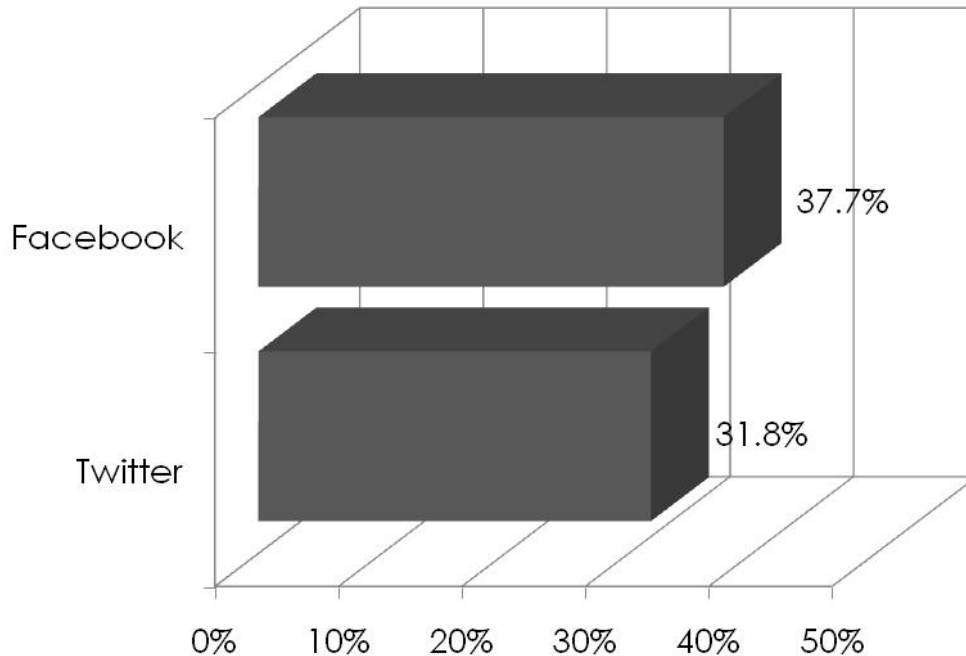
Social Media

Travelers use online resources to learn about travel destinations, service providers, and pricing options to inform and make their purchases. They generate their own content and exchange information via blogs, social networks, Twitter, and other modes of interactive social media. Two-thirds of the world's Internet population visit a social network or blogging site and the sector now accounts for almost 20% of all Internet time.

In addition, travel writers continue to emphasize online social media in their research. For these reasons, social media remains an important component of the overall marketing strategy for Visit Baton Rouge. Primary focus for 2011 will include:

- Listen and Analyze – Who, Where, Why, What for identification of:
 - Influencers
 - Source
 - Tone and impact of conversation
 - Positive and negative sentiment

Social Media Content Influenced Decision To Take Trip To Louisiana



- Develop rich social media content across Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia, blog, etc.
 - For optimal search engine optimization, all video and photos tagged properly with anchor text and descriptive title, tags, keywords
 - Publish to multiple channels at once
 - License content to Creative Commons

- Build Flickr gallery that better identifies content relevant to followers and fans
 - Build robust Wikipedia page that drives traffic to Visit Baton Rouge via organic search
- RedStick Blog supports marketing efforts with content relevant to Baton Rouge travelers. RedStick Blog posts consider:
 - Demographics
 - Lifestyle preferences
 - Interests
 - Motivations
- Engage local blogging community to create a Baton Rouge blogosphere
- Search Engine Marketing via Google and Yahoo – integration of all digital marketing will enhance SEM efforts in 2011
 - Strategic key word selection and enhanced web landing pages will drive traffic to Visit Baton Rouge website and increase continued browsing among other areas of the site
- Search Engine Marketing via Facebook – advertising via Facebook to promote local events, generate awareness of Baton Rouge and direct traffic to Visit Baton Rouge website and fan page.
 - Geo-targeted advertising and behavioral targeting allows Visit Baton Rouge to pinpoint audiences in drive markets that are fans of LSU football, food & wine, music, travel, LSU alumni and more.

» Meetings Communications & Marketing

MEETINGS

Position Baton Rouge as a signature meetings and convention destination; thereby encouraging new leads and events booked in Baton Rouge.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote Baton Rouge as an emerging city with new and exciting offerings for a variety of groups.
- Draw on innovative meeting experiences and locales, custom itineraries, turnkey planning and abundant “downtime options”
- Explore more focused opportunities to lay foundation for one-on-one relationships with “ideal” planners
- Explore opportunities to refocus meeting marketing dollars with new efforts utilizing digital and unique direct mail
- Continue to build partnerships with city, state and other organizations to ensure Baton Rouge is host city to blockbuster events
- Maintain BRACVB’s role as the official tourism marketing arm of Baton Rouge

TACTICS:

Meetings Print Advertising

- Meetings Print Advertising will build awareness of Baton Rouge as a signature event destination with emphasis on corporate meeting planners, SMERF audience, small market meeting planners and group tour operators/planners via half page 4/C print ads.
- The Louisiana Travel & Promotion Association placements will also include meetings and group insertions that will enhance the overall media plan.

Interactive Media

- Interactive banner and rich media vehicles focus on core meeting audiences and provide added value to the meetings print via e-blasts, banner ads and listings on the following sites:
 - Meetings South e-blasts and Showcase
 - RejuvenateMeetings.com
 - ConnectYour Meeting.com
 - MeetingMentorMag.com

Small Meetings & Group Innovative Campaign

- Utilize both digital and direct mail efforts to target the most qualified small meetings planners and group planners to encourage bookings in Baton Rouge.
 - Teaser email to qualify and entice interested planners to join database

- Meetings microsite tells the story of why Baton Rouge is a unique meeting destination
- “Clutter Buster” or innovative mailer – makes an impression and acts as a conversation starter for group sales.
 - Portrays Baton Rouge status as iconic
 - Multi-faceted idea with longevity and flexibility
 - Compliments the brand personality
 - Becomes part of a collectible series
 - Potential for cooperative revenue

Meetings Email Marketing

- Select key meeting trade shows (FEA, Connect , Rejuvenate) to get on the meeting planner’s radar
- Develop pre and post emails specific to each show:
 - PRE: Emails highlighting Baton Rouge as meeting/tour destination and incentivize to book appointment
 - POST: Email follow-up to convert leads to bookings



Public Relations

(As division of Communications and Marketing)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Develop and implement ongoing public relations locally, regionally and nationally to generate positive perception of Baton Rouge thereby driving visitation.

STRATEGIES:

- Position Baton Rouge as an emerging city with new and exciting offerings for a variety of audiences.
- Promote BRACVB as the subject matter expert on tourism to travel writers, freelance writers, photographers, reporters and editors
- Highlight interesting and relevant news angles for Baton Rouge
- Create relationships with local, regional and national media and travel writers

TACTICS:

- Host regular media events to engage local and regional community
- Develop and distribute targeted Baton Rouge story pitches
- Participate in and host travel writer groups
- Maintain a state-of-the art media section within Visit Baton Rouge website

Destination Sales

SALES

Identify and prequalify appropriate target groups for the Baton Rouge area and build relationships with meeting planners and tourism partners.

STRATEGIES:

- Strengthen perception of Baton Rouge as an ideal meeting destination
- Enhance Baton Rouge as a destination through partnerships, memberships and associations

TACTICS:

Trade Shows

- Participate in the following industry trade shows to reach the targeted meeting planner audiences:
 - Religious Planners
 - Religious
 - Religious Conference Managers Association (RCMA) Annual Tradeshow
 - Rejuvenate Marketplace
 - Association Planners
 - Louisiana Society of Association Executives (LSAE)
 - Professional Conference Managers Association (PCMA)
 - Association of Conference Operators and Managers (ACOM)
 - American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
 - Council of Engineering and Science Society Executives (CESSE)
 - Destination Showcase
 - Reunion Planners
 - Reunion Network Shows
 - Other SMERF Planners:
 - Connect Marketplace
 - National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners
 - University-based Planners
 - Professional Fraternity Executives Association
 - Group Travel Planners
 - American Bus Association
 - Bank Travel Network
 - Travel South
 - Travel Alliance Partnership
 - South Central Motorcoach Association
 - Student Youth Travel Association

Familiarization Tours

- Host specialty Familiarization tours and client events for the following markets:
 - Multi-cultural market
 - Military market
 - Group Travel
 - University market

Partnerships

- Continued capitalization on partnerships within the industry, state and other CVBs.
 - Create cooperative marketing opportunities
 - Continue and expand the Seein' Red hospitality education program

Destination Services

SERVICES

Ensures all Baton Rouge area travelers and convention delegates have a positive and enriched visitor experience.

STRATEGIES:

- Highlight key Baton Rouge attributes in all interactions
- Position Baton Rouge visitor center and registration staff as experts on all that Baton Rouge has to offer
- Engage and evaluate new opportunities to enhance visitor experience
- Provide visitors and delegates with guides, brochures and other interesting Baton Rouge information

TACTICS:

- Expand destination services to encourage return visitation
- Empower front line visitor center and registration staff with resources and training to best inform our visitors
- Participate on local boards and convention committees
- Manage collateral and promotional inventories and distribution

Projects and Special Events

PROJECTS

Implements special projects and promotions and takes a lead role in film and entertainment projects as they relate to BRACVB.

STRATEGIES:

- Highlight opportunities to showcase Baton Rouge via signature events and productions
- Position Baton Rouge as an leading city for film and entertainment

TACTICS:

- Pursue and confirm signature events
- Continue partnership with Baton Rouge Film Commission and area industry suppliers to promote and maintain film, television and video game trade relationships.
 - Develop walking and driving tour of movie and television productions shot in and around the area
 - Grow vendor discount program into a citywide branding opportunity
 - Conduct site tours and film scouts with industry executive and producers
 - Attend American Film Institute
 - Advertise in film publications
 - Work in cooperation with Louisiana Entertainment and other government entities to keep informed on legislative issues involving the industry

Local Public Outreach & Awareness

LOCAL

Increases public awareness and value of the BRACVB and hospitality industry.

STRATEGIES:

- Conduct regular communication with stakeholders and local media
- Increase awareness among stakeholders and community
- Encourage responsible destination development

TACTICS:

- Host local client events and specialty meetings
- Maintain membership and leadership in industry organizations
- Create cooperative marketing endeavors among industry partners
- Continually inform local and regional media of events, activities and accomplishments
- Conduct public awareness campaigns to educate community on special events/projects throughout Baton Rouge
- Disseminate monthly newsletter – “The Current”

Staff Roster

Paul J. Arrigo, CDME

President & CEO
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Renée Areng, CDME

Executive Vice-President of Sales & Marketing
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Philipa Blair

Director of Destination Services
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Geraldine Bordelon, CMP

Director of Destination Sales
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Sid Jackson

Controller
225/382-3581

Lauralyn Maranto

Vice-President of Administration & Human Resources
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Theresa Overby

Director of Communications
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Stacy B. Simon

Director of Projects
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Karron Alford, Sales Manager
Carla Bergeron, Information Specialist
Kristen Maurel, Projects & Design Specialist
Fatima Gautier, Executive Assistant
Katie Guasco, Senior Sales Manager, Tourism Development
Vincent Jean Pierre, Courier
Julie Koontz, Destination Services Manager
Lori Lasseigne, Administrative Assistant
Regina A. Porter, Senior Sales Manager
Jennye Snider, Senior Sales Manager
Gary Traylor, Courier
Christina Zito, Communications Coordinator

Support Staff

Nathalee Accomando, Lead Visitor Information Counselor
Frances Bennett, Registration Hostess
Charles Bennett, Registration Host
Charles Blaylock, Visitor Information Counselor
Garrett Boni, Visitor Information Counselor
Ruth Gillen, Visitor Information Counselor
Janell Hernandez, Visitor Information Counselor
Nick Lawless, Visitor Information Counselor
MaryBeth Manriquez, Registration Hostess
Bobbie Ned, Registration Host
Donna Rolligio, Registration Hostess
Beryl Smith, Registration Hostess
Leslie Tassin, Visitor Information Counselor
Andy Sceroler, Visitor Information Counselor
Mary Sceroler, Visitor Information Counselor

Partners

Baton Rouge Area Sports Foundation
Jerry Stovall, President & CEO
Kristen Chighizola, Director of Events Management
Eric Engemann, Coordinator of Indoor Sports/Sports Meetings

Baton Rouge Film Commission
Amy Mitchell, Executive Director
Katie Harvey, Project Manager

BOARD ROSTER 2011

CLAUDE F. REYNAUD, JR., Chairman

Represents: Downtown Development District

OTIS WASHINGTON, Vice Chairman

Represents: Mayor-President

ANDY BLOUIN, Secretary/Treasurer

Represents: Louisiana Restaurant Association - Baton Rouge Chapter

LEONARD WYATT, Immediate Past Chairman

Represents: Chamber of Commerce

MARK DRENNAN

Represents: Arts Council

JACK CHAPMAN

Represents: Baton Rouge Lodging Association

CHERRI KIESCHNICK

Represents: Baton Rouge Lodging Association

JEFF HOLEMAN

Represents: Foundation for Historical Louisiana

MAURY DRUMMOND

Represents: Metro Council

DENISE MARCELLE

Represents: Metro Council

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Destinations Sales	<p>6-10 Assn of Conv Operations Mgrs. Las Vega, NV</p> <p>8-11 Professional Conf. Mgrs. Assn., Las Vegas, NV</p> <p>8-12 American Bus Association, Philadelphia, PA</p> <p>25-28 Religious Conference Managers Association, Tampa, FL</p> <p>19-21 Louisiana Society of Association Executives Annual Conference, Lafayette, LA</p>	<p>6-8 Bank Travel, Baton Rouge</p> <p>23-25 Destination Showcase, DC</p>			<p>TBD Nat. Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals</p> <p>3-6 Collaborate Marketplace, Houston, TX</p>	<p>2-5 Reunion Network, Washington DC</p> <p>19-23 Travel Alliance Partners, Louisville, KY</p>
Leisure/ Consumer Promotions						
Industry Meetings & Educational Seminars	<p>26-28 LA Travel Promotion Assn. Baton Rouge</p>				<p>?? National Tourism Awareness Week</p> <p>?? Tourism Awareness Day, Baton Rouge, LA</p>	
Fam Trips & Special Promotions	<p>Washington Mardi Gras??</p>		<p>Sales Call - Birmingham, AL</p>	<p>TBD Military Fam</p> <p>Louisiana State University Sales Calls</p>	<p>April 29 - May 1 Mutli-Cultural Fam</p> <p>28-29 Bayou Country Superfest Fam</p>	

	July	August	September	October	November	December
Destination Sales		9-12 American Society of Association Executives, Los Angeles, CA 19-23 SYTA New York, NY 25-28 Connectt Marketplace, Chicago, IL	8-10 Professional Fraternity Assn, San Maeto, CA 25-28 Southcentral Motorcoach, Fort Worth, TX	TBD - USSSA (Sports show) TBD Louisiana Society of Association Executives Fall Leadership Conf	8-11 Rejuvenate, San Jose, CA 9-12 Reunion Network, Jacksonville, FL	
Leisure/ Consumer Promotions						
Industry Meetings & Educational Seminars	24-29 Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College, Dahlonega, GA 20-22 Destination Marketing Association International, Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA					
Fam Trips & Special Promotions				Louisiana State University Sales Calls	Southern University Sales Calls	

