

Blackstone River Valley, Rhode Island

Marketing Plan 2017

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
Blackstone Valley Visitor Center
175 Main Street
Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 02860

TourBlackstone.com
BlackstoneValleyTourismCouncil.com

Serving the communities of:
Pawtucket, Central Falls, Woonsocket, Cumberland, Lincoln,
Smithfield, North Smithfield, Burrillville and Glocester

Message from the President and Director of Marketing

While the Blackstone Valley was dealing with a reduction in funds from two major closed hotels and a reduction in room taxes, the state promotional program was being reorganized. The RI legislature then returned to a funding formula that was changed by that body in 2015. We are managing the changes and working to keep our Blackstone River Valley “ship afloat”.

While we are challenged with world, national and state events we are even more challenged to build the brand of the Blackstone River Valley by continuing our 30 years of work to introduce the visitor to the post - Birthplace of Economic Freedom and Industrialization in our country.

A great opportunity for the Blackstone Valley is the advent of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. Our nation’s 402’nd National Park will forever change the way our Valley is perceived in the birthing of our country.

Working collaboratively with our national and state offices of tourism, our regional tourism partners in Rhode Island and in New England, our cities and towns, our local businesses, our attractions and event builders is our most efficient way to develop tourism in our Valley.

Below are ways you can participate in our efforts to promote the Blackstone Valley as a premiere destination.

- Participate in our Blackstone Valley Visitor Center brochure distribution program in Lincoln and Pawtucket
- Consider participating in our Valley-wide Brochure Distribution program
- Attend Tourism Learning Laboratories and Workshops
- Attend our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction
- Upload your events on our Blackstone Valley Tourism Calendar
- Attend our Blackstone Valley Network Meetings

Market Segment: Leisure

Objectives

- Build upon Blackstone Valley and specifically Pawtucket as the center of brewing and making of beer, whiskey and mash in Rhode Island
- Expound upon the authenticity of the Blackstone Valley Experience
- Continue our integrated marketing campaign that attracts adult travelers and families
- Expand awareness of the Blackstone River Valley to appropriate audiences within a 3 hour radius in CT, MA and RI
- Work to create a positive image of the Blackstone River Valley communities
- Work with the National Park Service to promote leisure activities in our National Park
- Create more interest in our culinary peculiarities
- Expand Blackstone Culinaria

Strategies and Tactics

- Maintain a full-time position of Marketing Director
- Maintain a part-time position of Public Relations Director
- Maintain a Program Director to assist in developing new programs of visitor interest
- Integrate brand identity in all marketing efforts
- Continue to partner with the State Office of Tourism on opportunities to promote Blackstone Valley
- Update TourBlackstone.com to insure that it is up to state-of-the art standards
- Insure all Visitor Attractions are supported in their activities
- Maintain Visitor Center operations at our Pawtucket and Lincoln Visitor Centers
- Create innovative programs to draw Visitors to the Valley
- Insure that all Visitor Attractions are supported in the activities
- Insure our Public Relations program is aggressive
- Insure that our Event Calendar is complete and updated
- Increase leisure visitor sign-ups on our Blog and e-marketing
- Identify appropriate Story Ideas that promote the Blackstone Valley
- Participate in Travel Write hosting as much as possible
- Strengthen Earned Media relationships with local traditional print and broadcast media in RI and Bristol County MA
- Appeal to the growth of Social Media users
- Showcase more videos and images of the Blackstone Valley and share comments as appropriate
- Promote the visitor opportunities of all attractions with a tactical focus on Twin River and its developing hotel

- Focus attention on the Pawtucket Red Sox as they work to re-grow their markets
- Tie in Healthy Community objectives to work closely with the state's work in this area
- Continue the partnerships with the National Heritage Corridor Inc, the Pawtucket Foundation Inc and the Northern RI Chamber of Commerce
- Assist in the Doors Open event

Market Segment: Group Tours

Objectives

- Position Blackstone Valley as a cultural, recreational, historical, natural and gaming destination
- Integrate brand identity in all marketing efforts
- Expand awareness of the Blackstone River Valley to appropriate audiences within a 3 hour radius in CT, MA and RI
- Work to create a positive image of the Blackstone River Valley communities
- Work with the National Park Service to receive groups
- Expand Group Tourism efforts nationally

Strategies and Tactics

- Maintain a full-time position for Group Tour Development
- Work closely with all attractions to maximize opportunities domestically and internationally
- Attend American Bus Association Trade Show
- Attend Discover New England Trade Show
- Utilize targeted trade publications to promote Blackstone Valley as a desired group tour destination for student groups and senior groups
- Integrate digital marketing and social media efforts into group tour segment when appropriate
- Promote Chicken Family Style dining as a Blackstone Valley original group tour experience

Market Segment: International

Objectives

- Implement an integrated plan to market Blackstone Valley to the international visitor in order to incrementally increase travel. Target markets are: Japan, UK, Canada, China and Taiwan

Strategies

- Participate with Brand USA and the RI State-office of tourism on co-op programs to drive international travel to the Blackstone Valley
- Collaborate with RI's regional tourism organizations and Blackstone Valley private sector attractions where appropriate
- Use the resources of Bryant University to leverage international tourism outreach
- Continue working on our Amber Valley Blackstone Valley Twinning