

TOUR
CAYUGA
in the FINGER LAKES

A group of five people are standing in a grassy field. On the left, a man in a grey t-shirt and a dark cap is talking to another man in a grey t-shirt and sunglasses who is leaning on a wooden structure. To the right, three women are standing and looking towards the men. The background is filled with lush green trees under a blue sky with light clouds.

**2025
Marketing
Plan**



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Executive Summary



Mission

The Cayuga County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) is Cayuga County's tourism promotion agency. We increase tourism and related revenues through promotion and research based targeted marketing, and we improve the visitor experience by providing data and training to local hospitality industry providers. We continuously work to increase tourism and improve the visitor experience, which in turn stimulate economic growth and sustain recreational and cultural opportunities in the County.

Vision

The CCCVB will be the primary catalyst for the ongoing development of a dynamic, collaborative and innovative Cayuga County tourism industry which: Enhances economic development throughout the county, improves quality of life for its residents and provides an unparalleled Finger Lakes visitor experience.

About Us

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The 2025 marketing plan for Tour Cayuga aims to elevate the destination's visibility, engagement, and conversion by embracing a more journey-specific strategy that focuses on the traveler's decision-making process. Moving beyond traditional demographic-based personas, our goal is to understand and engage with visitors at each stage of their journey, delivering personalized experiences that inspire, guide, and convert them into loyal advocates.

Executive Summary

As we transition from a persona-based approach to a journey-specific strategy, Tour Cayuga is poised to deliver more targeted, relevant, and engaging experiences for travelers. This focus on understanding the traveler's journey will not only drive increased visitation and economic impact but also strengthen the destination's brand loyalty and market position in a competitive tourism landscape.



Strategic Focus

Our marketing strategy in 2025 will focus on aligning our efforts with the key stages of the traveler's journey—Awareness, Consideration, Decision, Experience, and Post-Experience. By leveraging data-driven insights and understanding traveler behavior, we aim to deliver the right message at the right time, enhancing engagement, and increasing visitation to the region.

Key Objectives:

- Increase Year-Over-Year Visitation by 10% through targeted campaigns that drive greater awareness and interest in the destination.
- Enhance Digital Engagement by 20% by focusing on content that speaks directly to travelers at different stages of their planning process.
- Grow Brand Awareness in Key Markets by 25% by leveraging digital advertising, influencer partnerships, and targeted media outreach.
- Strengthen Local Partnerships with businesses and attractions to create compelling packages and cross-promotional opportunities.

SWOT

Strengths

- Speaking to the Black traveler.
- Commitment to supporting our residents & communities.
- Research and thought leadership.

Weakness

- Speaking to wider, yet more niche audiences.
- More consistent voice and overarching message.
- Niche campaigns

Opportunity

- Expanding focus to sustainability and accessibility.
- Address shifting demands.
- Sustainable and health and wellness travel.

Threats

- Overwhelming community buy-in.
- Tompkins county with LGBTQ+ market.

Goals & Objectives

SMART Goal: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

Impact Multiplier

This is captured by using the following formula:

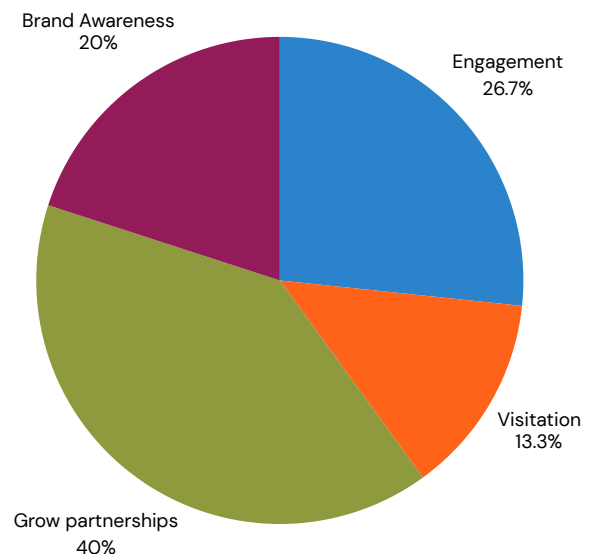
$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Growth of Awareness} \\ &+ \\ &\text{Leadership Wins} \\ &+ \\ &\text{Influence on Future Guidance} \\ &= \\ &\text{Impact} \end{aligned}$$

- Growth of Awareness - The sum of paid and earned media impressions.
- Leadership Wins - The output of thought leadership development by members of the executive team.
- Influence on Future Guidance - These are wins in the form of shifting perceptions, programs, and attitudes across industry and regional partners.

OKR Goals

Objective & Key Results

- Increase year-over-year visitation by 10%.
- Boost engagement on digital channels by 20%.
- Enhance brand awareness in target markets by 15%.
- Grow partnerships with local businesses by 30%.



Target Audience Strategy

Traditionally, destination marketing has centered on creating detailed personas based on demographic information like age, gender, income level, and interests. These personas were helpful in segmenting audiences and tailoring messages to different groups. However, while personas provide a snapshot of who our visitors are, they don't always capture how and when travelers make decisions or what motivates them at each step of their journey.

To create a more relevant and engaging experience, we are shifting our focus from simply targeting static personas to understanding the dynamic visitor journey. This journey-specific strategy allows us to look beyond who the traveler is and focus on their path to discovering, planning, booking, and experiencing a trip.

Segmentation: Detailed breakdown of audience segments.

Journey Mapping: Outline the visitor journey from awareness to booking to post-visit engagement.

Target Audience Strategy

To create a more relevant and engaging experience, we are shifting our focus from static personas to understanding the dynamic visitor journey. This journey-centric approach prioritizes the process travelers go through—discovering, planning, booking, and experiencing their trips—over simply defining their identity. By aligning our efforts with their motivations and actions at each step, we can deliver more timely, personalized, and impactful interactions that resonate with travelers when it matters most to help deliver a better ROI.

In short, this strategy enables us to move beyond targeting based on who visitors are and instead focus on their behaviors, needs, and decision-making processes throughout the travel experience.

Key Differences

Grouping people with shared interests vs. age, income, etc.

Experiences that influence the traveler decisions

Allows for adaptation and evolution in marketing vs. static personas

Feeding information at the right time for the phase the traveler is in.

Demographics vs Traveler behavior

Demographics	Traveler Behavior
Gender	Annual trip frequency
Age	Past destinations
Marital Status	Business travel
Household Income	Preferred lodging
Location	Search method
Job Title	Transportation
Children/Family make up	

Brand Positioning & Messaging: Core Brand Values

At Tour Cayuga, we believe that where you go matters—make it count. Nestled in the heart of the Finger Lakes, we are dedicated to creating a destination that celebrates the people, places, history, and experiences that make our region unique. As champions of diversity, sustainability, and innovation, we empower our partners and shape the future of tourism with care and purpose. Together, we invite visitors to explore, connect, and make meaningful memories in a place that feels like home.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):

- We embrace the rich diversity of our region and strive to foster an inclusive environment where every visitor and partner feels valued, respected, and represented. Our actions reflect a dedication to equitable opportunities for all.

Creating a Welcoming Destination:

- Tour Cayuga is dedicated to making the Finger Lakes a destination where everyone feels at home. By celebrating local culture, natural beauty, and unique experiences, we ensure a warm and inviting atmosphere for visitors from all walks of life.

Empowering Our Partners:

- We are more than a resource—we are a collaborator and champion for our local partners. By providing tools, guidance, and opportunities, we empower businesses and communities to thrive and grow together.

Thought Leadership in Tourism:

- As innovators and influencers in the tourism industry, we are committed to staying ahead of trends and sharing best practices. Tour Cayuga leads by example, driving sustainable growth and shaping the future of tourism in the Finger Lakes and beyond.

Sustainability and Stewardship:

- Preserving the Finger Lakes' natural beauty and cultural heritage is at the heart of everything we do. We promote responsible tourism practices that protect the environment and benefit the local community for generations to come.

Excellence in Service:

- Our team is committed to exceeding expectations through genuine care, creative solutions, and a passion for showcasing the best of Cayuga County and the Finger Lakes region.

Brand Positioning & Messaging: Core Brand Values

Cayuga County

Experiences	People
On the land	Our residents
On the water	Our historical figures
Events	Our communities
Places	History
Craft beverages	Sites
Lodging	Locations
Restaurants	Events
Attractions	

Marketing Strategy & Tactics

Where you go matters—make it count.

Our annual marketing plan follows the customer journey, guiding visitors through inspiration, planning, experience, and sharing phases. We emphasize people, places, history, and experiences while leveraging digital, print, and partnerships to create meaningful connections and drive tourism.

• Digital Marketing:

- Inspiration: Engage audiences with visually rich social media campaigns, targeted display ads, and storytelling content that highlights the Finger Lakes' unique people, history, and natural beauty.
- Planning: Optimize the Tour Cayuga website as a comprehensive resource featuring itineraries, event calendars, and partner highlights. Use email campaigns to nurture interest and deliver personalized trip suggestions.
- Experience: Leverage geotargeting and mobile-friendly tools to provide on-the-go recommendations, dining options, and activity guides to enhance visitors' time in the region.
- Sharing: Encourage user-generated content with social contests and branded hashtags, amplifying authentic experiences to inspire future travelers.

• Print Marketing:

- Inspiration & Planning: Distribute high-quality travel guides, brochures, and maps that emphasize the region's cultural and natural attractions. Highlight partners through curated lists and feature stories that make planning seamless.
- Experience: Provide printed itineraries and walking tours to enhance visitor exploration and enrich their understanding of local history and heritage.

Marketing Strategy & Tactics

• Partnership Marketing:

- Collaboration: Work with local businesses, cultural institutions, and event organizers to co-create campaigns that spotlight their unique offerings and elevate the region collectively.
- Amplification: Partner with regional and national tourism boards, influencers, and travel publications to extend the reach of Tour Cayuga's message.
- Sustainability & DEI: Collaborate on initiatives that promote inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and community enrichment, reinforcing Tour Cayuga's leadership in thoughtful tourism.



Eat. Drink. Play. Stay.

ExploresFingerLakes.com

Key areas of focus:

Seasonality:

Tailor campaigns to showcase year-round appeal, from vibrant fall foliage to summer lake adventures.

Engagement:

Use a mix of storytelling and actionable content to create an emotional connection while providing practical resources.

Measurement:

Track success with KPIs like website traffic, partner referrals, social engagement, and visitor satisfaction, refining tactics based on performance insights.

Budget

E-MARKETING - \$73K

- E-communications
 - Partners, visitors, niche
- Social media
 - boost and paid ads

ADVERTISING - \$201K

CAMPAIGNS

- Sweet Treat Trail
- Hibernation
- Brave Women
- Go Beyond
- Other

COLLATERAL

- Printing
- Design
- Distribution
- Information centers
- Mailing

DIGITAL SOFTWARE

- Wander Maps
- Crowdriff
- ITI Digital

TOTAL BUDGET:

\$274,000



Visitor Journey

Visitor Journey

		Awareness	Consideration	Decision	Visit	Post-Visit
Customer Actions/Interest		Social Media	Retargeting	Promotions	Website account profile	Retargeting
Outdoors		Social Media, Google	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Food & Wine		Social Media, Google, Print	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Culture & History		Social Media, Google, Print	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Health & Wellness		Social Media, Google	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Accessible travel		Social Media, Google, Print	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Sustainable travel		Social Media, Google	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting
Black travel		Social Media, Google, Print	Retargeting	CTR, bookings, partner sales	Website account profile	Retargeting

Strategy

Strategy

Marketing Channels	Channel Plans	Budget	Timeline	Measure of Success
Meta (Facebook & Instagram)	Paid ads for niche campaigns. Boosts for in-house campaigns.	\$100-300 per run	Number of days x geolocation	CTR, profile views & Completion rates
Google Display	Go Beyond, Hibercation, Sweet Treat Trail	Campaign dependant	Geolocation	CTR & video completion
Dynamic ads	Hibercation, Sweet Treat Trail,	Campaign dependant	Market reach	Impressions & CTR

Content calendar

	Month											
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Brave Women	Blue	Blue	Blue									
Hibercation	Green	Green	Green									
Make it count	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
Cayuga Cuisine			Olive	Olive	Olive	Olive	Olive	Olive				
Leave no trace	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink
Sweet Treat Trail					Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	
Pride of Place									Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green
Parks Challenge						Light Red	Light Red	Light Red	Light Red			
Erie Canal bicentennial	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink
Go Beyond	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
Health & Wellness	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange