



2012 Annual Report

North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development is to unify and lead the state in developing North Carolina as a major destination for leisure travel, group tours, meetings and conventions, sports events and film production.

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2012 NC Travel and Tourism Board

Listed here is the Board for the year 2012 as required for the 2012 Annual Report. For information on the current board, please go to www.nccommerce.com/tourism/about-us/travel-tourism-board.

Josh Bass
Currituck Chamber of Commerce
Appointed By: House Speaker

Sabrina Bengel
City of New Bern
Appointed By: Senate President Pro Tempore

Rolf Blizzard, Chairman
Turnpike Properties
Appointed By: NC Travel & Tourism Coalition

Donna Carpenter
Cabarrus CVB
Appointed By: DMANC

Chris Cavanaugh
Magellan Strategy Group
Appointed By: Governor

Robert "Randy" Cobb
Abercrombie Oil Co., Inc.
Appointed By: NC Petroleum Marketers Assn.

Secretary J. Keith Crisco
NC Department of Commerce
Appointed By: NC Dept. of Commerce

Teresa Damiano
Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority
Appointed By: Senate President Pro Tempore

S. Lewis Ebert
NC Chamber
Appointed By: NC Chamber

Denny Edwards
Greater Raleigh CVB
Appointed By: DMANC

Rep. Phillip Haire
North Carolina House of Representatives
Appointed By: House Speaker

Rep. Susi Hamilton
North Carolina House of Representatives
Appointed By: House Speaker

Sen. Ralph Hise
North Carolina Senate
Appointed By: Senate President Pro Tempore

Kimberly "Kim" Hufham
Wilmington and Beaches Convention & Visitors Bureau
Appointed By: NCTIA

Chris Humphrey
Allstate Insurance / ERA Humphrey Realty Group
Appointed By: Senate President Pro Tempore

Vimal Kolappa
East Coast Hospitality, LLC
Appointed By: Governor

John Randal "Randy" Kolls
Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club
Appointed By: NCRLA

Lynn Lewis
Washington Tourism Development Authority
Appointed By: NCTIA

Lynn Minges
NC Department of Commerce
Appointed By: NC Dept. of Commerce

Robert M. O'Halloran
East Carolina University
Appointed By: NCRLA

Davin Olsen
Gale Force Sports & Entertainment/Carolina Hurricanes
Appointed By: House Speaker

Sen. Jean Preston
North Carolina Senate
Appointed By: Senate President Pro Tempore

Joan H. Pulley
Carteret County Chamber of Commerce
Appointed By: House Speaker

James "Jamie" Reibel
Sargasso Travels, Inc., Phideaux Fishing
Appointed By: NCWU

Leonard Rigsbee
Cap-N-Squid Boatworks
Appointed By: NCWU

Susan Spangler
The Greensboro Carousel
Appointed By: Governor

Steve Thanhauser
The Angus Barn
Appointed By: NCRLA

Paula Wilber
The Biltmore Company
Appointed By: NCRLA

Mitzi York
Brunswick County Tourism Development Authority
Appointed By: DMANC

2012 NC Film Council

Chair: Bob Seligson, *Raleigh*

Vice-Chair: E.A. Tod Thorne, *Charlotte*

Mayor William Bell, *Durham*

Timothy M. Bourne, *Wilmington*

Tricia A. Cotham, *Raleigh*

John Wesley Davis, *Winston-Salem*

Mark de Castrique, *Charlotte*

Terri E. Dollar, *Raleigh*

Eugene W. Ellison, *Asheville*

Craig Fincannon, *Wilmington*

Monty Hagler, *High Point*

Stephen Hill, *Kinston*

Cress Horne, *Marshville*

Marcie D. Kelso, *Matthews*

Daniel F. McComas, *Wilmington*

Michael McGaha, *Hampstead*

James M. O'Brien III, *Raleigh*

Dale Pollock, *Winston-Salem*

Jason Rosin, *Wilmington*

Zeb Smathers, *Canton*

Herman A. Stone, *Charlotte*

Kelly R. Tenney, *Castle Hayne*

Bill Vassar, *Wilmington*

Dale Williams, *Wilmington*

Robert E. Zaytoun, *Raleigh*

2012: The Year in Review

North Carolina's tourism industry outpaced the national growth rate and achieved record performance in 2012, with visitor spending increasing in each of the state's 100 counties and resulting in an all-time high \$19.4 billion in direct spending. Spending by travelers directly supported 193,610 jobs with a payroll of \$4.39 billion and generated \$1.549 billion in state and local tax revenues for reinvestment in communities all across North Carolina.

Partnerships with destinations, attractions, lodging and dining properties and associations statewide remain key to North Carolina's success. Despite a marketing budget ranking 27th among the 50 states, effective collaboration within the tourism industry contributed to North Carolina maintaining its position as the nation's sixth most-visited state.

Program Highlights for 2012

Total domestic travel employment increased 1.8 percent, better than the 1.0 percent of total nonfarm job growth and the 1.3 percent of total private job growth in North Carolina.

On average, visitors in North Carolina spent \$53 million and contributed \$4.2 million in state and local taxes every day. As a result, the tax burden for all North Carolina households was reduced by \$423.

While continuing to showcase the state's renowned scenic beauty and vibrant cities, the Division's "Deeper Connections" message strategy provided the platform for sharing more stories about the distinctive places and experiences that make North Carolina home.

The all-new Project 543 blog that launched in late summer of 2012 has proven to be an effective complement to the tourism brand campaign. With "543" representing the approximate mileage from Murphy to Manteo, there is always a new story to share to celebrate the breadth, depth and character of North Carolina's celebrated beauty. Project 543 helped the Division grow its social media community by 25 percent in 2012.

The Division cost-effectively enhanced its efforts to reach travelers increasingly planning travel online by shifting more of its investment to digital advertising.

The VisitNC.com family of websites attracted 4.47 million user sessions and provided more than 1.2 million downstream referrals to North Carolina industry partner websites.

Proactive public relations efforts expanded the Division's outreach to key audiences with a program that generated an advertising equivalency of more than \$9.7 million and a domestic audience of 582 million. International PR initiatives, largely as a result of leveraging the popularity of *The Hunger Games*, reached an audience of one billion and provided an additional \$4.66 million in exposure.

Cooperative marketing programs with NC travel industry partners and effective partnerships with in-state media associations resulted in an estimated \$6 million in incremental direct investment, in-kind support and brand exposure for North Carolina and VisitNC.com within and outside the state.

The Film Office continued to leverage the state's 25 percent tax credit for film, television and commercial production in its marketing to produce record results. Collaborative efforts with partners statewide led to more than \$376 million in direct spending and nearly 20,000 jobs created, including 4,100 well-paying crew positions for the state's highly skilled work force. Among the many 2012 highlights was the filming of *Iron Man 3* and *Homeland* season two.

The Division's partnership with the North Carolina Sports Association and NC Amateur Sports continued to pay dividends with the state's success in attracting sporting events to small and large communities.

Tourism development outreach in small communities was strengthened through several initiatives including the ongoing partnership with the NC Department of Transportation and NC Department of Cultural Resources in the popular North Carolina Civil War Trails program, an expanded schedule for the Division's Tourism Resource Assistance Center program and three regional Mid-Year Marketing Update sessions.

The Division continued its collaboration with East Carolina University's Center for Sustainable Tourism and the Office of Economic Development to promote environmental and social responsibility throughout the state's tourism industry, including use of a staff member to help strengthen the state's leadership position in sustainability.

Please review the balance of this Annual Report for more details on the Division's 2012 program of work and accomplishments. The Division remains committed to its collaboration with partners statewide to ensure North Carolina's continued growth and success as a preferred travel, film and sports destination and positive economic force for the entire state.

2012 Results

Visitor Spending

In 2012, visitors to North Carolina spent a record \$19.4 billion in the state, an increase of 5 percent from 2011.

Domestic visitor spending directly supported 193,610 jobs for North Carolina residents and the tourism industry directly contributed \$4.39 billion to the state's payroll in 2012.

Traveler spending generated \$2.9 billion in tax receipts (\$1.4 billion in federal taxes, \$970 million in state tax revenue and \$579 million in local tax revenue).

Local and state tax revenues, as a direct result of visitor spending, save each North Carolina household approximately \$423 per year.

All 100 North Carolina counties experienced growth in visitor spending in 2012.

Mecklenburg County received more than \$4.4 billion in domestic travelers' expenditures, top in the state. Wake County ranked second with nearly \$1.8 billion, followed by Guilford County with nearly \$1.2 billion.

Currituck and New Hanover counties had the largest percentage increases at 8.1 percent and 8.0 percent respectively. Macon County followed with a 7.6 percent increase, followed by Union (+7.3 percent), Warren (+7.0 percent) and Mecklenburg (+7.0 percent) counties.

Mecklenburg County directly employs the most tourism employees with more than 45,000 and has the largest payroll at \$1.4 billion. Wake (19,710), Guilford (12,190) and Dare (11,590) counties each have more than 10,000 direct tourism employees.

The same counties that led growth in visitor spending also had the largest increases in direct tourism employment from 2011 to 2012. They were Currituck (+5.4 percent), New Hanover (+5.0 percent), Macon (+4.6 percent), Union (+4.5 percent), Warren (+4.3 percent) and Mecklenburg (+4.3 percent) counties.

Source: U.S. Travel Association

2012 Travel Volume

North Carolina person-trip volume was 45.4 million in 2012. North Carolina ranked No. 6 in total domestic person-trip volume. Domestic person-trip market share was 4.0 percent (4.3 percent for overnight visitors).

Source: TNS Travels America

2012 Total State Rankings by Volume

1. California
2. Florida
3. Texas
4. New York
5. Pennsylvania
- 6. North Carolina**
7. Georgia
8. Illinois

9. Ohio
10. Tennessee

Source: TNS Travels America

Average Trip Spending

North Carolina overnight visitor parties spent approximately \$540 per trip in 2012. Out-of-state visitors spent significantly more than resident visitors traveling within the state (\$648 vs. \$343).

U.S. travelers on average spent \$664 per trip in 2012.

Source: TNS Travels America

Average Overnight Trip Duration

The average length of stay of North Carolina visitors was 3 nights in 2012. Resident visitors stayed an average of 2.2 nights, while out-of-state visitors stayed an average of 3.4 nights.

U.S. travelers stayed an average of 3.3 nights per trip in 2012.

Source: TNS Travels America

NC's Top States of Origin for Overnight Visitors

- NC 36%
- VA 8%
- GA 7%
- SC 7%
- FL 7%
- NY 4%
- TN 3%
- PA 3%
- OH 3%
- NJ 3%
- MD 2%
- TX 2%

Source: TNS Travels America

NC's Top Activities for Overnight Visitors

Visiting relatives	31.6%
Shopping	20.5%
Beach	17.7%
Visiting friends	17.2%
Rural sightseeing	13.8%
Fine dining	13.2%
Historic sites / churches	8.7%
State / national parks	8.3%
Urban sightseeing	7.5%
Wildlife viewing	6.1%
Museums	6.0%
Hiking / backpacking	4.4%
Nightclubs / dancing	4.3%
Old homes / mansions	3.9%
Fishing (fresh or saltwater)	3.9%
Gardens	3.8%
Art galleries	3.4%
Casino / gaming	3.3%
Special events / festivals	3.3%
Nature travel / ecotouring	3.3%
Wine tasting / winery tours	2.8%
Golf	2.7%
Zoos	2.6%
Biking	2.3%
Camping	2.2%
Symphony / opera / concert / musical theater	1.8%
Bird watching	1.7%
Theme Parks	1.7%
Whitewater rafting / kayaking / canoeing	1.7%
Youth / amateur / collegiate sporting events	1.5%
Theater / drama	1.5%
Caverns	1.0%

Source: TNS Travels America

NC Division of Tourism Budget Overview

The North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development was funded by appropriations from the General Assembly. Expenditures included:

Media Purchase & Production	\$4,200,000
Personnel & Administration	2,250,000
Welcome Centers	1,812,000
Interactive	1,800,000
International Marketing	655,000
Inquiry/Fulfillment	245,000
Film	340,000
Public Relations	400,000
Domestic Sales Promotion	300,000
Industry Relations	70,000
Research	200,000
Printing/Production	100,000
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Total	\$12,372,000

Projected State Tourism Office Budgets: 2012-13

According to the U.S. Travel Association of America, North Carolina, with a budget of approximately \$10.5 million, ranked 27th in projected state tourism office budgets in 2012-13.

Rank	State	Estimated 2012-13 Budget	Percent Change
1	Hawaii	\$ 74,971,500	-9.6
2	Florida	63,500,000	+17.6
3	New York	60,000,000	+215.8
4	Illinois	55,383,700	-0.6
5	California	50,000,000	-18.7
6	Texas	37,225,768	+5.1
7	Michigan	27,440,000	0.0
8	Virginia	17,550,832	+1.2
9	Alaska	17,050,000	+16.0
10	Arkansas	15,130,582	+7.7
11	Wisconsin	14,859,560	+2.8
12	Nevada	17,785,469	+19.4
13	Colorado	14,749,000	+9.4
14	Utah	14,391,534	+20.3
15	South Carolina	13,639,479	+41.5
16	Louisiana	13,170,068	+10.9
17	Arizona	12,851,743	+126.4
18	Wyoming	12,553,336	+13.3
19	Montana	12,257,490	-31.9
20	South Dakota	12,200,000	+2.2
21	Oregon	12,040,778	+0.3
22	Tennessee	11,681,300	-5.4
23	Missouri	11,638,643	-4.0
24	Alabama	11,560,000	+27.2
25	Massachusetts	10,907,109	+57.8
26	Oklahoma	10,657,286	+3.6
27	North Carolina	10,447,277	-2.3
28	Maryland	10,379,470	+9.2

Advertising

Print

Print advertising garnered more than 23,041,645 million impressions for the Division, with placements in more than 20 different publications. Top-performing publications included *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Southern Living*, *Garden & Gun*, *New York Times Magazine* and *O, The Oprah Magazine*.

Interactive

A search engine marketing program was reestablished in July 2011 with conversion in mind. While overall site traffic remains important, ultimately the Division wants users to interact with the site. Examples of those activities include ordering a Travel Guide, downloading a virtual partner brochure and moving downstream to partners' sites from VisitNC.com. As the campaign progressed, optimizations were made to improve conversion by lowering the cost per activity. The setup and optimization helped achieve high-level performance. In 2012, the paid search campaign generated 188,338 clicks to VisitNC.com, 50,583 activities and a \$3.30 cost per activity. Custom eBlasts using subscriber lists from preferred media outlets such as Budget Travel, Travel Spike, The Knot, Dunhill Travel and Shermans Travel support monthly sweepstakes. The Division also ran eBlast programs in the fall and summer to help drive seasonal traffic to VisitNC.com. All paid emails collectively drove 162,797 visitors to VisitNC.com throughout 2012.

Digital

As the core audience's behaviors have increasingly shifted more toward researching and booking travel online, digital advertising has played an ever-increasing role in North Carolina's communication mix. The primary objectives have continued to be driving cost-efficient and qualified traffic to VisitNC.com and quantifying travel intent through robust tracking of specific user activities: generating downstream traffic to partner sites, requesting a Travel Guide, opting in to an email subscription, participating in a sweepstakes, downloading a virtual brochure, downloading itineraries and viewing special offers.

Display efforts were rooted in a strategic, multipronged approach that extended the Division's brand presence and continued to drive learnings across the board. Fall and spring brand campaigns supported the traditionally highlighted seasons across a hybrid of targeted-reach vehicles and travel-endemic publishers, such as Adara Media, Ad.com / AOL, Pandora, TravelSpike, Weather.com, Quantcast, Rocket Fuel and SouthernLiving.com. Furthermore, top publishers from past campaigns – TripAdvisor and Casale Media – were leveraged to introduce a first-ever Annual Brand initiative that provided North Carolina with a significant digital presence throughout the entire year. In addition, a new digital cooperative program allowed North Carolina partners to collaborate with the Division and extend collective reach across a strategic mix of online publishers.

Cooperative Programs

The Division negotiated favorable rates with leading travel, lifestyle and special interest publications to provide partners with cost-effective opportunities to broaden the reach of their own advertising efforts. Thirty-one partners were showcased in magazine insertions in:

- *Better Homes and Gardens*
- *Family Circle*
- *Good Housekeeping*
- *Food & Wine / Travel + Leisure*
- *Southern Living*
- *Garden & Gun*
- *O, The Oprah Magazine*
- *Outside Magazine*

Golf Marketing

With more than 550 golf courses statewide, North Carolina is a leading destination for golf travel. The microsite Golf.VisitNC.com was merged into VisitNC.com as a featured journey to provide golf enthusiasts the full advantage of the complementary travel planning content on the main site. Partnerships with the Brunswick Islands, Currituck Outer Banks, the Pinehurst/Southern Pines/Aberdeen Area CVBs, the Pinehurst Resort and Rumbling Bald Resort added greatly to the program's overall reach and impact. With the goal of driving golf enthusiasts to VisitNC.com, a 2012 spring program consisting of online display and eBlast support ran across Golf.com, PGA.com, PGATour.com and Yahoo! Golf. The subscriber base for the monthly golf newsletter grew to 17,445 and five golf-related sweepstakes generated a total of 35,873 entries.

VisitNC.com

Overview

As the state's official travel website, VisitNC.com hosted 4,147,962 user sessions, a 14.04 percent increase from 2011. VisitNC.com generated a total of 2,242,424 key performance indicator actions in 2012.

Key 2012 VisitNC.com Performance Indicators

- 175,317 site visitors participating in **sweepstakes**
- 41,265 **Travel Guides** ordered from website
- 74,824 downloads of **virtual brochures**
- 71,462 downloads of **itineraries**
- 90,127 new subscriptions to **eNewsletters**
- 179,543 site **searches** performed
- 96,757 clicks to view online **Travel Publications**
- 1,269,951 clicks to **partner websites**

Electronic Communications

Relationships with visitors and prospective visitors are enhanced and strengthened through a number of electronic opt-in initiatives promoting destinations, attractions, new experiences, upcoming events and special offers that make a trip to North Carolina more attractive. In an effort to maximize efficiency, the Division proactively performed a reengagement campaign in 2012 to identify inactive subscribers in its database. While the subscriber base declined as a result for 2012 from 2011, the subscribers remaining were those most interested in travel to North Carolina. By the end of the year, there were a total of 199,514 subscribers and engagement metrics that reflected the intended improvement.

Display (Banner) Advertising

71 participating partners
159 display ads
12,771,723 total impressions
67,199 clicks to partner sites
0.53 percent click-through rate

Virtual Brochures

79 virtual brochures
74,824 downloads

Featured Event Listings

54 participating partners
189 total featured events
234,034 views of featured events
29,794 clicks to partner sites

Sweepstakes

14 participating partners/17 sweepstakes
175,317 total entries (homepage and golf sweepstakes included)

Most Popular Homepage Sweepstakes:

1. Wrightsville Beach in January (17,635 entries)
2. High Country Host in October (16,805 entries)
3. Carolina Beach in June (16,016 entries)

Most Popular Golf Sweepstakes:

1. Rumbling Bald in September/October (11,254 entries)
2. Pinehurst Resort in March/April (7,069 entries)
3. Brunswick in July/August (6,698 entries)

International

Complementing VisitNC.com, five custom microsites appeal to prospective travelers in the markets that continue to be top international priorities for the Division.

UK.VisitNC.com

23,322 visits

39,214 page views

1.68 average number of page views per visit

0:56 minutes, average visit duration

Microsite complemented by 26,357 additional visits directly to VisitNC.com from U.K. travelers

DE.VisitNC.com

16,969 visits

37,292 page views

2.2 average number of page views per visit

1:56 minutes, average visit duration

Microsite complemented by 7,895 additional visits directly to VisitNC.com from German travelers

JP.VisitNC.com

14,708 visits

27,486 page views

1.87 average number of page views per visit

1:14 minutes, average visit duration

Microsite complemented by 3,156 additional visits directly to VisitNC.com from Japanese travelers

MX.VisitNC.com

20,572 visits

43,512 page views

2.12 average number of page views per visit

1:46 minutes, average visit duration

Microsite complemented by 3,002 additional visits directly to VisitNC.com from Mexican travelers

QC.VisitNC.com

11,728 visits

24,227 page views

2.07 average number of page views per visit

1:33 minutes, average visit duration

Microsite complemented by 59,153 additional visits directly to VisitNC.com from Canadian travelers

Search Engine Marketing

VisitNC.com

17,204,278 total impressions

188,338 total clicks

\$0.90 average cost-per-click

\$3.34 average cost-per-KPI

VisitNCWine.com*

195,352 visits in 2012

3.63 average page views per visit

4:00 average time spent on site

148,888 clicks to partner sites in 2012

** Reflects only partial year results due to the transition of the North Carolina Wine & Grape Council from Commerce to Agriculture in FY 2012-13.*

Media.VisitNC.com

33,615 visits in 2012

1.73 average page views per visit

1:04 average time spent on site

SportsNC.com

13,398 visits in 2012

1.54 average page views per visit

0:38 average time spent on site

NCFilm.com

95,275 visits in 2012

3.12 average number of page views per visit

2:12 average visit duration

Database and Web Management

- Working in collaboration with hundreds of partners statewide, provided timely maintenance and technical support for VisitNC.com's Extranet database of nearly 16,000 lodging, dining and attraction listings.
- Created and distributed a consistent program of eNewsletters, advisories and informational mailings.
- Incorporated more social networking efforts into the ongoing marketing program including Pinterest, Instagram and the introduction of Project 543. A new blog initiative showcasing the rich diversity of the state from Murphy to Manteo, Project 543 inspires

travel by sharing the beauty, character and stories of unique spots all across North Carolina.

Public Relations

- In 2012, the Division hosted visits from more than 50 journalists from around the globe and assisted hundreds of travel writers and reporters on stories involving travel to North Carolina.
- Distributed a dozen press releases with very successful pick-up.
- This work led to hundreds of articles, blog posts and broadcasts on North Carolina, reaching an audience of 582 million people nationally and more than a billion internationally.
- Hosted group media tours of the state for both German and U.K. travel writers.

Other Highlights:

New York Media Mission

The Division hosted a very successful media reception in New York, NY on the evening of January 29. Teaming with 40 partners from across the state, the Division hosted nearly 100 media guests, showcasing the best of North Carolina. This year's event marked the Division's sixth annual NY mission and included more journalists and partners than ever before. The event was themed "NC Snapshots" and featured top chefs, artisans and brewers from all three regions of the state. Using the hashtag #NCsnapshots, partners, guests and NC fans contributed to Instagram and Twitter during the event. Division staff and partners met with key travel and lifestyle producers, writers and editors from many high-profile publications including *Bon Appétit*, *CBS This Morning*, *Food and Wine*, *Men's Journal*, *Real Simple*, *Saveur*, *Southern Living* and *Travel + Leisure*.

Atlanta Media Mission

In February the Division, along with 15 partners from across the state, hosted a dinner for 18 journalists in Atlanta. The evening event included an overview of what was new in the state plus important updates from each of the partners. The partners and media participated in a progressive dinner in which the partners swapped tables (and journalists) during each of the courses allowing the partners maximum face time while keeping the media guests engaged throughout the evening. Media outlets represented at the event included: *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *The Economist*, *Southern Living*, *Points North*, *travelgirl* and more.

U.K. Media Tour

A group of journalists from the United Kingdom toured North Carolina's "Hunger Games experience" in September, hosted by the Division and several partners. The writers represented British publications including *The People*, *Candis* magazine, the *Eastern Daily Press*, *Norwich Evening News*, *Let's Talk* and *First News*. The group visited notable locations beginning in Hildebran, the site of "District 12," and ending in Charlotte, the site of "Panem." The tour featured a number of businesses that became favorites of the film's cast, including the Hotel Indigo and Lexington Avenue Brewery in Asheville; Rocky's Grill & Soda Shop in Brevard; Pleasant City Wood Fired Grille in Shelby; and Amelie's French bakery in Charlotte. The group also had a guided tour of DuPont State Forest, Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park and the U.S. National Whitewater Center in Charlotte. Industry partners that helped to host the writers included the Asheville CVB, Burke County TDA, Rutherford County TDA, Transylvania County TDA, Uptown Shelby and Visit Charlotte.

German-Swiss Media Tour

Four writers from Germany and Switzerland visited the Coast and Piedmont in October, hosted by the Division and several industry partners. On assignment for newspapers in Frankfurt and Dusseldorf and luxury lifestyle magazines, the writers visited a spectrum of attractions from New Bern, Wilmington and the Crystal Coast, to Pinehurst, Greensboro and Lexington. Their North Carolina experiences included history at Tryon Palace, movie locations in Wilmington, the wonders of Cape Lookout National Seashore, a spa indulgence at Pinehurst, the recent past at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum and a pit-side view of Lexington Barbecue. The writers' reports on signature sights, scenes, wine and cuisine were published in outlets with a combined circulation of 675,000 subscribers.

In-State Marketing Initiatives

While out-of-state visitors tend to stay longer and spend more when visiting the state, North Carolinians are also a point of focus within the Division's program. Residents typically comprise approximately one-third of annual visitation, and partnerships with the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters, the North Carolina Press Foundation and UNC-TV remain key to the Division's ability to cost-effectively reach more than nine million prospective travelers in the state's own backyard.

North Carolina Association of Broadcasters

Member television and radio stations aired 42,548 spots representing a value of \$2,076,717.

North Carolina Press Foundation

One hundred twelve papers published 1,183 ads representing a value of \$964,553.

UNC-TV

UNC-TV's award-winning team produced 52 weekly episodes of its popular show *North Carolina Weekend* during the past year. Each episode was broadcast statewide three times weekly with a potential audience of more than 13.4 million citizens of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and income levels in North Carolina and portions of Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. The average rating for *North Carolina Weekend* in the Triangle area is 0.8 or 0.6 of a ratings point above the PBS prime time average rating of 1.3. The series featured more than 260 destinations, attractions and events across the state.

Each of these valued in-state media partners also provided additional exposure online for the state's messaging and VisitNC.com.

Visitor Services

North Carolina's nine Welcome Centers hosted 7,303,369 visitors in 2012. A breakout of the number of visitors by Welcome Center location is below:

2012 Welcome Center Estimated Visitors	
I-95 S	1,142,175
I-95 N	1,597,953
I-85 S	704,280
I-85 N	630,105
I-77 S	323,602
I-77 N	992,430
I-40 W	967,736
I-26 W	288,097
I-26 E	656,991
Total:	7,303,369

The I-95 North Welcome Center continues to be the most visited, hosting 1,597,953 travelers in 2012.

Welcome Centers registered 11,902 visitors from other countries, including 7,429 from Canada.

In 2012, Welcome Centers booked more than 18,000 room nights, representing total revenue of more than \$1.6 million at an average rate of \$85.34 per room night.

Inquiry/Call Center

In 2012, the Division of Tourism received 4.5 million inquiries and mailed 222,010 *NC Travel Guides* to potential visitors.

2012 Inquiries

Reader Service	63,544
1-800-VisitNC Calls	20,317
Web Inquiries	4,473,077
Total	4,556,938

Publications

The Official 2013 North Carolina Travel Guide

The result of work throughout 2012, the Division worked with Journal Communications to produce the *Official 2013 North Carolina Travel Guide* to serve as the Division's primary fulfillment piece for potential visitors to and within the state. A new photocentric design and state-of-the-art digital options brought natural, man-made and historic attractions to life in a handbook unique among state travel guidebooks. Completely advertiser supported, the *Travel Guide* was produced at no cost to North Carolina's taxpayers with support in excess of \$1.1 million from 120 partners.

Two covers were available on the guide, which included more than 800 attractions, nearly 4,000 accommodations and travel resources in every county. One cover photo featured mountain kayaking in recognition of the Nantahala Gorge as the site of the 2013 International Canoe Federation's World Freestyle Kayaking Championships, and the other showcased Asheville's grand Grove Park Inn, celebrating its 100th anniversary. The digital edition, available for Android and iOS, toggled between these two stunning images. Some 120 partners supported the 186-page *Travel Guide*, which was distributed in North Carolina Welcome Centers, through VisitNC.com and 1-800-VISITNC, and by partners across the state and throughout the country.

Readers of the guide's print and online editions found abundant information presented in a design unlike that of any other state travel guide. The *Travel Guide* featured beautiful, large photographs and brief copy blocks on a variety of topics of interest to visitors, including outdoor recreation, food, music, resorts and the Civil War. The pages were modeled after upscale consumer catalogs such as *Williams-Sonoma*, *Pottery Barn* and *Restoration Hardware* to appeal to North Carolina visitors. The print version directed readers to online extras, and the online edition linked directly to videos and related content.

NewsLink

E-mailed weekly to almost 5,650 subscribers, this electronic publication is designed to provide information to the tourism industry. The mailing list also included legislators, economic developers and media. In 2012, *NewsLink* covered 964 stories within the 52 weekly and seven "Special Edition" issues, providing timely information on tourism-related research, statewide and international trends, media leads, updates on conferences and events plus other items of interest to those in the tourism field.

There is no subscription charge for this e-newsletter and it is available to anyone with a valid email address and is only sent to those who have requested to receive the newsletter.

Domestic Marketing

American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace, January 2012, Grapevine, Texas

ABA Marketplace is one of the premier industry events for the group travel industry, allowing Buyers and Sellers to meet face-to-face in pre-scheduled appointments. In addition to the quality appointments, Marketplace offers professional education seminars and numerous networking opportunities. At the 2012 Marketplace, the Division:

- Teamed with Visit Charlotte and other NC partners to host the Marketplace final night's event for all delegates.
- Teamed with 25 in-state partners to host 78 tour operators for dinner.
- Conducted 28 appointments with tour operators during the week, promoting group travel throughout the state.

Travel South Showcase, February 2012, Louisville, KY

This showcase is a regional appointment-style marketplace focused on increasing travel to and within the southern states. The showcase offers the most targeted opportunity for tour operators / wholesalers and travel service providers to meet face to face with southern travel suppliers. The Division utilized showcase opportunities to:

- Team with 20 travel industry partners and conducted strategic, business development meetings with more than 300 tour operators from more than 30 states plus Canada
- Brief domestic and international media and tour operators, focusing on what's new with the state's tourism products and on North Carolina's position as a travel destination market leader.

Familiarization Tours

Annual Blue Ridge Parkway FAM Tour: Partnered with Virginia and Tennessee to host a seven-day tour of the Blue Ridge Parkway with 26 AAA and CAA representatives from the United States and Canada. Spent three days with group in Cherokee, Asheville and the High Country.

Outer Banks FAM Tour: Partnered with Outer Banks Visitors Bureau and Currituck County CVB to host a three-day tour of the Outer Banks with 49 AAA East Central Pennsylvania group leaders.

Sales Mission

Twelve partners participated in sales calls to Pennsylvania and Ohio, visiting tour operators and AAA Auto Club offices. Traveled via executive motorcoach, inviting clients on to the coach to meet with partners in more authentic, personalized atmosphere, calling it "Office on Wheels."

International Marketing

International Web Traffic

Traffic to VisitNC.com from around the world continues to increase.

2012	UK	Germany	Japan	Quebec	Mexico
January	1,362	1,537	1,232	978	1,406
February	1,414	1,454	1,437	945	1,353
March	1,363	2,653	1,142	1,167	1,604
April	1,499	1,441	1,224	1,127	1,672
May	1,310	1,085	1,305	826	1,515
June	3,344	1,019	1,073	1,078	1,944
July	3,551	1,356	1,378	1,284	2,405
August	2,830	1,371	1,360	1,057	1,975
September	1,804	1,277	1,191	838	1,651
October	1,631	1,446	1,376	995	1,925
November	1,575	1,218	1,098	770	1,642
December	1,639	1,112	892	663	1,480
Total	23,322	16,969	14,708	11,728	20,572

UK: www.uk.visitnc.com
Germany: www.de.visitnc.com
Japan: www.jp.visitnc.com
Quebec: www.qc.visitnc.com
Mexico: www.mx.visitnc.com

Canada

Canada provides North Carolina's highest number of international visitors. Ease of access via highways and direct air service contributed to growth in the market.

In 2012, overnight visitation from Canada was 454,700, up 5.2 percent from 2011. More than 56 percent of overnight visitors came from the province of Ontario and 28 percent came from Quebec.

Canadian visitors spent more than \$141 million in 2012, with overnight visitors spending 95 percent of the total spending. 77 percent of Canadian visitors come for vacations/leisure or to visit family and friends. The average length of stay per visitor party is 3.5 nights.

Canadian Sales & Marketing Accomplishments

- Continued the cooperative marketing plan with Total Vacations that feature Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Raleigh and the Outer Banks.
- Exhibited at OMCA, held in Niagara Falls, and U.S. Travel's International Pow Wow in Los Angeles.

Cooperative Marketing & Advertising Opportunities

CAA: Hosted a series of webinars to drive visitors to the state targeting all three regions.

Total Vacations: With the continuing success of the partnership since 2010, the passenger bookings have increased annually. In 2010, 89 passengers booked NC with approximately 228 requests. In 2011, 1,194 passengers booked with over 3,000 requests. In 2012, 1,811 passengers booked with approximately 4,250 requests, a 40 percent increase over 2011. Continuation of participation with Total Vacations included:

- Inclusion in the main brochure with a two-page spread
- Twelve exclusive eBlasts sent to more than 24,000 agents
- Three exclusive consumer eBlasts sent to a database of 1.4 million people
- Two monthly promotions with incentives to book travel to North Carolina
- Participation at three Ontario product launches

Consumer e-Newsletters: The Canadian office worked with the Division to promote the monthly sweepstakes to a large Canadian database.

Sales Missions

Sales missions were held in two cities (Toronto and Montreal) in February. Inviting industry partners to the event allowed them to participate in trainings during the day and to meet one-on-one with operators to discuss the product and build relationships. Both events were a success, including a reception with Canadian media that allowed for additional coverage to the state. The event was themed around barbecue and Southern hospitality, and between both cities, there were 28 trade attendees.

Canadian Public Relations Results

- Six journalists visited the state
- Coverage generated included 38 million circulation resulting in value of \$531,322

Overseas Visitors

In 2012, North Carolina attracted more than 387,000 overseas visitors to rank 17th in the nation, according to a report released by the International Trade Administration and Office of Travel and Tourism Industries in the U.S. Department of Commerce.

North Carolina was the third most popular southeastern state in the analysis, which uses in-flight surveys given to international passengers flying into the United States (excluding Canada and Mexico) to determine the destinations of the visitors.

Overseas⁽¹⁾ Visitors To Select U.S. States and Territories: 2011-2012

2012 Rank	Destination (State/Territory)	2011 Market Share	2011 Visitation (000)	2012 Market Share	2012 Visitation (000)	Volume Change (%)
1	New York	34.1	9,508	31.3	9,315	-2%
2	Florida	20.4	5,688	22.1	6,577	16%
3	California	22.0	6,134	20.2	6,012	-2%
4	Hawaiian Islands	8.2	2,286	9.5	2,827	24%
5	Nevada	10.3	2,872	9.3	2,768	-4%
6	Illinois	4.5	1,255	4.7	1,399	11%
6	Guam	4.4	1,227	4.7	1,399	14%
8	Massachusetts	5.1	1,422	4.5	1,339	-6%
8	Texas	4.6	1,283	4.5	1,339	4%
10	Pennsylvania	3.3	920	3.2	952	4%
11	New Jersey	3.5	976	2.9	863	-12%
12	Arizona	3.1	864	2.7	804	-7%
13	Georgia	2.4	669	2.5	744	11%
14	Utah	1.8	502	1.6	476	-5%
15	Colorado	1.6	446	1.5	446	0%
15	Washington	1.8	502	1.5	446	-11%
17	North Carolina	1.2	335	1.3	387	16%
17	Virginia	1.3	362	1.3	387	7%
19	Ohio	1.0	279	1.2	357	28%
20	Maryland	1.2	335	1.0	298	-11%
20	Louisiana	**	**	1.0	298	n.a.
22	Connecticut	1.1	307	0.9	268	-13%

** - Estimates not shown due to sample size of fewer than 400. | n.a.- Estimate not available.
Overseas excludes Canada and Mexico.

Only destinations having a sample size of 400 or more are displayed. For more information concerning this statistical policy, please contact the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries.

This table shows only a portion of the 37 travel characteristics data reported on international arrivals to the United States. Additional information may be obtained for a fee. To learn more, please visit: <http://tinnet.ita.doc.gov/research/programs/ifs/index.html>.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries. Release Date: August 2013

U.K. and Ireland

- Still the No. 1 overseas market with 87,000 visitors, up 7 percent over 2011.
- These visitors spent \$34.8 million, a 5 percent increase from 2011.
- Supporting two daily non-stop flights to the state.

Sales & Marketing Accomplishments

Sainsbury's U.K. Superstore

The Division, in partnership with Sainsbury's, executed an integrated consumer marketing campaign through spring/summer 2012 to build consumer awareness and drive bookings to North Carolina and the Outer Banks. The campaign included a media partnership with *Sainsbury's Magazine* and subscribers, DM to partner databases (271K) and an online display campaign (1.51 million impressions). The target audience covered ages 30-55+, ABC1 South / South East with medium to long haul propensity to travel. Sainsbury's is the third-largest supermarket chain in the U.K. (since 2009), and places an emphasis on a higher quality grocery offering compared to its other large rivals. It currently operates 1,012 hypermarkets, supermarkets and convenience stores. This is split down as 572 supermarkets and 440 convenience stores. It also operates Sainsbury Bank, which sells financial services. Sainsbury Bank is a joint venture with Lloyds Banking Group and Sainsbury's Online internet shopping services and has a property portfolio worth £8.6 billion (as of March 2007).

Summary Results:

- Total reach: 2,136,515
- Print reach: 355,515
- Online reach: 1.51 million (impressions)
- DM reach: 271,000
- E-zine results: 9,076 readers and 28,746 page views
- Total campaign value: \$26,450

Campaign Activity:

- *Sainsbury's Magazine*: Magazine covering articles on food, wine, health, beauty, home, gardens, travel and celebrity interviews
 - Target Audience: Customers of Sainsbury's supermarkets: ABC1
 - Full-page advertorial with contents page flag
 - Circulation 335,515 (Source: ABC)
 - Emailing to opt-in subscribers / 21K
- Direct Mail
 - Target Audience: Sainsbury's consumer profile
 - Core demographics: 30-55+, ABC1 South / South East / Propensity to travel medium to long haul.
 - 250,000 consumer mailing
 - Open rate 11.8% / 29,500
 - Click through rate 19% / 5,605
- Online Display & CPC
 - Online display campaign targeting U.K. consumer websites promoting North Carolina holiday content and offers
 - Websites and network activity selected to appeal to North Carolina target markets and niche interests such as activity enthusiasts, gastronomy, etc.
 - Site selections included Site Specific, Google Display Network, Premium Network and Travel Premium
 - 1.51 million impressions:

- Google display network: 1.28 million impressions (behavioral targeting against key search terms)
 - Premium network activity: 71K impressions (behavioral targeting against key search terms)
 - Travel Premium
 - Trip Advisor: 100K impressions
 - Travel Supermarket: 100K impressions
 - Targeting North Carolina pages and competitor states
- E-zine: Two e-zines were produced in 2012. The e-zine generates good coverage on North Carolina and also incorporates the entire state in one campaign. There are 30,000 North Carolina-specific consumer subscribers, a number that is growing annually.
 - The first e-zine had a food theme tying in the different recipes from around the state.
 - CVBs were asked to contact iconic restaurants in their remit to request recipes and promote their restaurants.
 - Readership of the e-zine included 17,000 unique users.
 - Traffic was driven through the www.uk.visitnc.co.uk website and tour operator special offers were promoted in the e-zine.
 - The second e-zine was tied into a bigger Sainsbury's campaign and the Outer Banks.
 - Included six dedicated pages for the Outer Banks promoting the region.
 - The reach was 2.1 million with readership being almost 10,000 and more than 29,000 page views.
 - Tour operators offering special packages to the Outer Banks.

101 Holidays

Aiming to do more online traffic with tour operators, the Division partnered with 101 Holidays and America As You Like It to drive traffic to North Carolina booking pages in 2012.

The program included 101 USA Holidays as well as access to the 101 Blog for special offers and other posts, at least three links from key high-traffic landing pages and an invitation to the annual 101 Members Forum with top-notch guest speakers. Members were also included in external online articles.

101 Holidays now operates four websites that provide travel inspiration to more than three million people per year. The flagship site, 101 Holidays, was named by *The Times* as one of the 10 Best New Travel Websites, and by *The Independent* as 18th Best Travel Website in the World.

101 Holidays sends more than 1.2 million consumer leads per year to members – i.e., America As You Like It as a North Carolina call to action. North Carolina launched with 101 USA Holidays promoting the state and directing traffic to a booking page.

Travelbag Co-op Promotion

The summer 2012 edition of *Travelbag Escape* magazine was mailed to 100,000 of *Travelbag's* highest spending and most loyal clients in June. A dedicated four-page North Carolina spread was included in the summer 2012 edition of *Escape*. With a shelf life of five months, the feature would help give the campaign longevity.

Travelbag's North Carolina digital newsletter provided visitors with an interactive guide, offering the customer an in-depth, virtual experience. Incorporating video, evocative imagery, inspiring copy and exclusive offers, the newsletter was sent to the database of 600,000 people, and achieved an open rate of 22 percent.

Branded email banners were featured in all of *Travelbag's* weekly e-newsletters in April 2012 (four in total). This presence helped drive almost 1,200 clients to the North Carolina digimag, where clients could read more about the region and click through to dedicated offers on the microsite. The Visit North Carolina microsite welcomed more than 5,500 clients over the campaign period and helped generate a 400 percent increase in room nights booked.

Sales Mission (May 2012)

A multi-city sales mission took place covering Scotland, England and Ireland. The idea was to focus on key NC tour operators covering all catchment areas from around the U.K. and Ireland. The week started in Glasgow, Scotland, moving onto London, U.K., and finished off in Dublin, Ireland. A mixture of training, product meetings, new business meetings and existing partner meetings took place.

U.K. Public Relations Results:

- Hosted a total of eight journalists in 2012
- Distributed 12 news releases
- A series of print and online articles were included in popular outlets such as *The Daily Mirror* and *The Irish Sunday Independent* reaching an audience of 517 million valued at \$2.1 million.

German-Speaking Europe

Sales & Marketing Accomplishments

The Hunger Games Promotion with FTI and StudioCanal

Together with partners, the Division arranged a promotion to hype the movie and generate travel to the state. This included 500 window posters and 52,000 flyers to promote *Hunger Games* in 500 FTI travel agencies and consumer shows in Hamburg, Munich and Berlin. In addition, the German webpage included a raffle, which was promoted through FTI B2B, B2C newsletter, NC Facebook page and the official German Facebook page from the *Hunger Games*.

WTS participated in the German premiere of the movie in Berlin.

Promotion in numbers:

- 500 FTI travel agencies
- 500 window posters
- 52,000 flyers
- 10,000 contacts FTI B2B newsletter
- 165,000 contacts FTI B2C newsletter
- 6,534 contacts WTS newsletter
- 55 contacts WTS Trade newsletter
- 199 NC Facebook users
- 4,500 FTI Facebook Users
- 150,000 Die Tribute von Panem Facebook users
- 100 travel agents invited by FTI for movie airing at the Mathaeser cinema in Munich (March 25, 2012)
- 40 trade partners throughout Germany received two free cinema tickets
- 1,463 raffle participants
- 15 winners with prizes ranging from NC trips, cinema tickets, books and official merchandise

E-newsletter

The North Carolina e-newsletter was sent four times in 2012 (April, June, September and November) to approximately 9,000 registered users.

Sales Mission

The German Sales Mission in November included travel to Frankfurt, Hamburg and Vienna. Along with partners from Visit Charlotte, the Division staff met with travel trade and conducted sales training with several tour operators and media. Participants attended the *Amerika Journal* consumer event, *Amerika Tage*, in Hamburg.

Trade & Consumer Shows

- VUSA Consumer Show Stuttgart – September 2012
- VUSA Consumer Show Hamburg – September 2012
- VUSA Travel Agent Show Frankfurt – October 2012
- VUSA Seminar Vienna – February 2012
- VUSA Seminar Zurich – February 2012
- CMT Stuttgart – January 2012
- Touristik und Caravaning – Leipzig – November 2012
- Reisen Hamburg – February 2012
- F.R.E.E Munich – February 2012

Tour Operator Co-ops

Joint marketing was conducted with several tour operators throughout 2012, including FTI and Meier's Weltreisen in Germany, Amerikareisen in Austria and Knecht Reisen in Switzerland. These marketing co-ops were directed to both travel agents and directly to consumers.

Facebook

The Division has a German Facebook page that highlights attractions, adventures and Project 543 and has a following of nearly 500 in 2012.

German Public Relations Results:

- Hosted six journalists on visits to North Carolina
- Distributed 12 press releases to 1,200 media outlets
- Total coverage included a circulation of 3.6 billion valued at \$2 million

Other International News

- New non-stop flights from US Airways Charlotte hub:
 - Seasonal flight service to Dublin was reinstated for 2012 and beyond
 - Sao Paulo flight began in fall
- The Division hosted a double North Carolina booth at the U.S. Travel Association's International Pow Wow in Los Angeles, April 21-25. Industry partners from Charlotte, the Outer Banks, Asheville and the Biltmore joined the state with more than 40 trade and media appointments.
- The Division and its partners took part in the inaugural Travel South International Showcase in Atlanta from November 26-28 to meet with international tour operators and media to increase interest in international visitation to North Carolina. The group met with 80 tour operators from 17 countries along six continents.

Tourism Development

The Tourism Development Manager continued to be involved in various initiatives to preserve and promote the various genres of traditional and heritage music across the state. Small towns are an important part of the North Carolina landscape.

The Division is actively involved in ongoing programming either independently or in conjunction with partners such as the NC Rural Center, Commerce's Division of Community Assistance, Department of Cultural Resources and other community organizations to foster revitalization that would make the communities more attractive to residents and visitors.

- The Division set goals for the Tourism Development Program and improved the delivery of information for the program on the Department of Commerce website. The effort is designed to make local communities more aware of resources within the Division as well as other opportunities for product development.
- Made presentations on Cultural Heritage Tourism Development and ways to work with the Division to partners throughout NC.
- Represented the Division during the African American Heritage Commission planning meeting at Department of Cultural Resources.
- Continued to work with TDAs and CVBs to assist with strategic planning for tourism development in their areas, research potential resources and partnership opportunities.

Tourism Resource Assistance Center (TRAC)

The Tourism Resource Assistance Center (TRAC) brings the Division's program managers to local communities to discuss the nuts and bolts of working with the Division. Sessions in Jacksonville, Edenton, the Outer Banks and Fayetteville drew between 30 and 50 attendees each.

North Carolina Civil War Trails; Civil War 150th

The Division of Tourism, in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, utilized funding from a \$1.1 million federal transportation enhancements grant to develop, design, fabricate and install interpretive markers at campaign sites and corridors of the Civil War. The trail expanded to 236 sites in 79 counties at the end of 2012 with a goal to install more in the future.

- Visitors downloaded more than 12,000 Civil War Trails maps from www.VisitNC.com and www.civilwartraveler.com.
- Planning continued on marketing activities surrounding the 150th Commemoration of the Civil War (2011-2015), using the marketing universals of the Civil War Trails program of all five states (NC, VA, MD, TN, WV).
- Work with the NC Civil War Tourism Council and inform communities, programs and sites of the opportunities related to the council such as "Watch Fire" annual publication and grants program.
- Reprinting the Civil War Trails guide along with adding new sites into the program and guide.

Community Partnerships

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area (BRNHA)

Created by congressional legislation, the BRNHA is supported through a partnership with the Division to assist in coordinating planning for the 25 counties in the designated region. The Division continued to assist in the implementation of the county initiatives outlined in each county's heritage plan, and has an active role in assisting the BRNHA in developing, facilitating and guiding communities along the Blue Ridge Parkway for themes such as agriculture, arts and culture, traditional music, history/heritage and natural resources. New efforts with the Appalachian Regional Commission Tourism Council included a culinary guide of restaurants, agritourism farms, farmers' markets, wineries and distilleries, and heritage sites within the region. The guide will be inserted into the Special Edition of *American Heritage Magazine*, and overruns will be provided to the states for additional distribution.

The Division also continued to be actively engaged in the development of outdoor recreational/ecotourism/agritourism opportunities in the regions across the state. Farms, waterways, hiking and biking trails, greenways and open spaces are important features in a community that improve and promote quality of life and link people with their natural and cultural heritage. The partnership includes assistance in researching resources for communities, working with communities interested in TDA development (two new counties developing a TDA program), marketing initiatives, heritage trails development and product development plans. The Division also assisted the NC Folklife Institute Board of Directors in developing programs and events while assisting folklorists in promoting their products and services.

National Heritage Area Designation

- Continued work with National Park Service on the feasibility study of the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution National Heritage Corridor proposal.
- Worked with Northeastern, Eastern and Southeastern Economic Development Regions on a proposal to designate the state's 40 eastern-most counties as a National Heritage Area.
- Worked with TDAs and sites to develop itineraries, heritage trails and events outlined in the feasibility study.

Heritage Trails Development

- Assisted in developing partners for "Plank Road" project within the counties of Cumberland, Harnett and Moore to focus on African American Culture & Heritage.
- Assisted in the revamping of the Blue Ridge Music Trail, partnering with NC Arts Council, Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and other communities in the region. The guidebook is available for distribution.
- Worked with Department of Cultural Resources in the development of the African American Music Trail in the counties of Onslow, Lenoir, Craven, Pitt, Edgecombe, Wilson, Wayne and Greene. Guidebook is available for distribution.
- Worked with Textile Heritage Corridor group to preserve and promote Textile Mill Heritage areas.
- Worked with Daniel Boone Heritage Trail Committee.
- Worked with African American Heritage Commission in the development of "Freedom Roads" heritage trail.

Certified Retirement Community Program

The North Carolina Department of Commerce operates a community development program for communities that are positioning for retiree attraction as an economic and community development strategy. The N.C. General Assembly, during the 2008 short session, recognized the inherent panoply of quality living that the state offers and established the N.C. Certified Retirement Community Program (**S.B. 1627**) as a vehicle to designate communities that offer this unprecedented quality of living that is sought by the mature community.

To gain certification, a local government must submit an application for consideration. Initial evaluation of the community and technical assistance is provided by Commerce's Community Development Division. Once a community has completed the certification process, the Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development will help market and promote the community. The designation has a five-year life, after which communities will need to consider recertification at the sunset of the five-year period.

- Division now administers applications and promotes communities into the program.
- Tourism Development Manager has made presentations to local Commissions, City Managers, City Councils, and Boards of Aldermen about the program and benefits.
- Promotion of certified communities and areas of NC during the AARP "Life@50+" Convention; Ideal Living Regional Expo.
- Certified communities:
 1. Lumberton (pilot program)
 2. Asheboro (2012)
 3. Sanford (2012)
 4. Marion (2012)

Industry Relations

Governor's Conference on Tourism in Concord (March 11-13)

Gov. Bev Perdue spoke to more than 500 attendees at the Winner's Circle Luncheon at the Embassy Suites in Concord. The Division's annual conference featured dynamic, educational programming and valuable networking opportunities and drew a near-record crowd focused on the theme of "Setting the Pace." In addition to her speech, Perdue presented the 2012 Winner's Circle Awards to five distinguished North Carolinians for their contributions to the growth and success of the tourism industry in the state.

Tourism Day in Raleigh (May 16)

Gov. Perdue proclaimed May 16 as North Carolina Tourism Day, marking the travel industry's record impact on the North Carolina economy with more than \$18 billion in direct visitor spending. For the first time, the governor announced that state tax receipts as a result of visitor spending topped \$1 billion in 2011 and have increased more than 50 percent in the last 10 years.

The Division joined the N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition, the N.C. Travel Industry Association, and other industry partners in Raleigh to emphasize the economic benefits of tourism throughout the day hosting a legislative breakfast, meeting with legislative representatives and closing with a legislative reception at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences. The U.S. Travel Association Vote Travel Bus was at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte as well to mark National Tourism Week, and North Carolina's nine Welcome Centers hosted their own events May 3-17 to thank travelers to the state.

Regional Mid-Year Marketing Updates (September 2012)

The Division went on the road again for its Mid-Year Marketing Update, offering several forums to make it easier for industry partners to participate and contribute to the Division's planning efforts. MYMU brings together leaders from all sectors of North Carolina's travel industry to highlight recent performance trends, provide updates on the Division's current marketing programs and co-op initiatives, and gain insight from partners to help fuel the Division's strategic planning for FY 2013-14. Events were held within all three regions of the state including Asheville, Greenville and Raleigh throughout the month of September.

Sports Development

The Division continued to enhance SportsNC.com website, promoting North Carolina's appeal as an attractive destination for sporting events of all kinds and provides sports-event rights holders and planners an easy connection to NCSA's 36-member destinations and organizations. As a presenting sponsor, SportsNC coordinated and led a cooperative effort with 34 sports sales directors and managers from North Carolina communities to market the state as a premier sporting event destination at Travel, Events and Management in Sports (TEAMS) Annual Conference. Efforts also included providing contact information for sports organizations, motorsports teams and professional sports teams in North Carolina, and attending quarterly North Carolina Sports Association quarterly meetings, giving updates on Division activities.

North Carolina Film Office (NCFO)

The state Film Office and regional film commissions promoted filmmaking in North Carolina at the annual Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations tradeshow. The NCFO also participated in the Producers Guild of America (PGA) Produced By Conference at Sony Motion Picture Studios in Los Angeles, California. The NCFO participated at the Sundance Film Festival and promoted NC film with both a media lounge that we teamed with celebs.com and reception with directors and producers.

2012 Production Highlights:

- 910 active projects
- 345 new projects
- 45 projects shot in North Carolina
- \$376,007,114 direct spend by productions
- 4,122 production days
- 19,830 jobs created
 - 4,137 crew
 - 1,504 talent
 - 14,189 extras

Highlights of film projects during 2012 include:

- *Iron Man 3* – Wilmington Region
- *The Conjuring* – Wilmington Region
- *We're The Millers* – Wilmington Region
- *Banshee* – Charlotte Region
- *Revolution* – Wilmington Region
- *You Are Here* – Piedmont Triad Region
- *Homeland Season 2* – Charlotte Region
- *Safe Haven* – Wilmington Region