



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

HARFORD county
Love *it!*

DAVID R. CRAIG, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

JAMES C. RICHARDSON, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WINIFRED J. ROCHE, TOURISM MANAGER



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Mission Statement

**To improve the economy and
quality of life of Harford
County by increasing visitor
expenditures in local
businesses.**

Winifred Roche, Tourism and Marketing Manager
Harford County Office of Tourism
220 S. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014
410-638-3327, Fax: 410-879-8043
wjroche@harfordcountymd.gov
www.harfordmd.com



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

2010 Impact of Tourism in Harford County, MD at a Glance

- An estimated 974,975 people visited Harford County in 2010
- \$8,786,770 in Visitor Sales Tax was collected in FY 2010
- Visitor expenditures: 2009 362 million dollars
2008 389 million dollars
2007 387 million dollars

2010 figures will be available in 2011 from source: Global Insights Study on Maryland Counties.

- Lodging revenue totaled \$40,986,625 - see lodging performance summary pg 5.
- 70,249 Visitors went to www.harfordmd.com
- Over 18,000 visitors used electronic kiosks to find information on local businesses.
- 50,000 Visitors' Guides were distributed to travel consumers.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

2010 Harford County Visitation Statistics

Total Visits	2010	974,785 (based on annual survey of local attractions)
	2009	1,009,105
	2008	953,312

Total Attraction Visitors: (Source: Reported to Office of Tourism as of December 31st 2010)

Ripken Stadium	348,758	Rocks State Park	73,463	Fiore Winery	7,987
Ladew Topiary Gardens	31,000	Skipjack Martha Lewis	4,000	Equestrian Center	65,903
Steppingstone Museum	8,165	Susquehanna State Park	113,224	Susquehanna Lockhouse Museum	3,379
Concord Point Lighthouse	10,000	Decoy Museum	19,000	HdG Maritime Museum	2,725
Anita Leight Estuary Center	14,776	Eden Mill Nature Center	17,361	Lantern Queen	5,789
				Cedar Lane Sports Complex	52,855

Total Major Event Attendance 2010:

	Month	Attendance
Independence Day-HdG	July	50,000
Harford County Farm Fair	July/August	47,600
Darlington Apple Festival	Oct	30,000
Soroptimist Arts Show, HdG	Aug	30,000
Seafood Festival	Aug	29,000
Bel Air Arts Festival	Sept.	21,000
MD BBQ Bash	Aug	25,000
Bel Air Independence Day Celebration	July	4,000
Decoy & Wildlife Festival, HdG	May	3,432
My Lady's Manor Steeplechase Races and Champagne Reception	April	3,500



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

2010 Lodging Performance Summary

- Lodging revenue totaled \$40,986,625 increasing 4.0% from 2009
- Harford County's Room Supply consisted of 2,725 overnight rooms
- Room demand increased 7.8% from 2009.
- The average occupancy rate was 58.0%, increasing 2.9% from 2009.
- The average daily rate was 74.68 in 2010 from 77.36 in 2009, decreasing -3.5%.

(Note: These Smith Travel Research figures are through December 2010)

Occupancy (%)	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	60.5	56.4	58.0
Last Year	64.5	60.5	56.4
Percent Change	-6.2	-6.8	2.9

ADR	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	78.67	77.36	74.68
Last Year	77.54	78.67	77.36
Percent Change	1.5	-1.7	-3.5

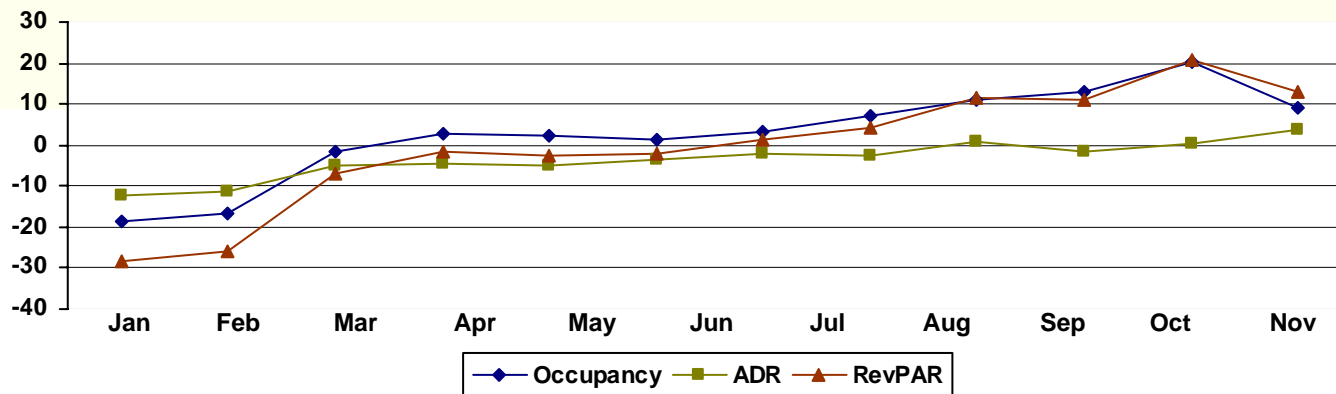
RevPAR	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	47.59	43.62	43.34
Last Year	50.00	47.59	43.62
Percent Change	-4.8	-8.3	-0.6

Supply	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	838,526	903,106	945,715
Last Year	800,510	838,526	903,106
Percent Change	4.7	7.7	4.7

Demand	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	507,266	509,284	548,845
Last Year	516,229	507,266	509,284
Percent Change	-1.7	0.4	7.8

Revenue	Year To Date		
	2008	2009	2010
This Year	39,907,820	39,395,829	40,986,625
Last Year	40,027,359	39,907,820	39,395,829
Percent Change	-0.3	-1.3	4.0

Monthly Percent Change



Source: Smith Travel Research Star Report



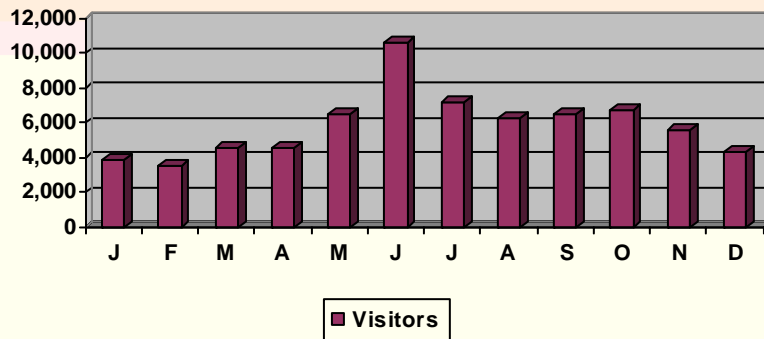
2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Tourism Website Activity and E-marketing Stats

2010 TOURISM WEBSITE ACTIVITY

Tourism Website (Total Visitors)	2010
TOTAL VISITORS	70,249
DAILY AVERAGE	193
MOST VISITED FEATURES	CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2010 MONTHLY TOURISM WEBSITE ACTIVITY



Website Visitor Comparison 2007-2010	
Year	Visitors
2007	117,763
2008	118,135
2009	83,954
2010	70,249

2010 Kiosk Activity

Location	Hits	Ses- sions	Ads	Cou- pons Printed	Listings Printed	Maps Viewed
CHESAPEAKE HOUSE	40,440	4,772	2,823	185	0	5,897
HOLLYWOOD CASINO	26,688	2,536	1,605	156	6	3,939
DOWNTOWN HDG	24,873	2,270	2,256	20	124	661
HOMEWOOD SUITES	21,049	1,526	1,096	23	200	824
HILTON GARDEN INN	16,743	2,018	1,628	48	103	705
LAQUINTA	15,671	1,203	977	32	206	632
BEST WESTERN EDGEWOOD	13,667	1,340	851	27	127	504
DOWNTOWN BEL AIR	11,474	1,263	1,200	73	214	552
AMTRAK ABERDEEN	12,004	1,152	1,133	60	218	554
BEST WESTERN EDGEWOOD	17,118	1,777	2,094	82	151	984
SPRINGHILL SUITES - RIVERSIDE	2,368	382	116	7	11	111
TOTAL ACTIVITY	184,977	18,462	13,685	631	1,209	14,379

Harford Golf Website Stats	2010
TOTAL VISITORS	3,692

Electronic Newsletter Stats	2010
TOTAL MONTHLY SUBSCRIBERS	15,601

www.harfordmd.com



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Office of Tourism Highlights 2010

1. Coordinated a successful Restaurant Week June 10-16 with 40 participants increasing business by 10-15% that week.
2. Coordinated Tourism Day in Annapolis. Harford Tourism stakeholders joined over 150 others in our state capital to raise awareness of tourism's economic impact.
3. Tourism Manager Wini Roche received Tourism Advocate 2010 award at Maryland Tourism Council Annual Conference
4. Electronic newsletter, *E-xperience Harford* and *Where's Wini?* Video Blog series reaches over 16,000 subscribers monthly.
5. Coordinated and chaired Taste of Harford—over 400 people attended, resulting in \$40,000 raised for local children's charities.
6. Garnered over \$100,000 in free publicity for Harford County through positive press coverage.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Destination Profile and Market Analysis

Location:

The attractions in Harford County are located within a day's drive of 65 million people; just a short driving distance of DE, PA, VA and mid-way between Baltimore and Philadelphia within an hours drive from either and 2 hours from DC. It is traversed by US I-95 and other major roadways including US 40 and US 1. The County is also accessible by (recreational) boat particularly in the Havre de Grace and Joppa areas. Rail service is available in Aberdeen and Edgewood.

Local Economy:

To be located within a day's drive of our country's major population centers presents a great economic development opportunity for tourism in the region. Coupled with the recent announcement of thousands of new jobs moving to Aberdeen Proving Ground area, the role of tourism is more critical than ever as we welcome new families to this area. Additionally, tourism dollars help to expand the tax base so that additional services can be afforded to these potential new residents.

Facilities:

Lodging/Rooms: Approximately 2,725 standard rooms

Sporting Facilities: Ripken Stadium 5,000 seats, 6 Public Golf Courses, Figure Skating & Hockey Complex and Cedar Lane Sports Complex—13 fields

Museums & Historic Sites: 20

Boat Slips: 718 slips (443 private, 275 public)

Strengths:

- Easy access to and from Interstate 95
- Close proximity to Chesapeake Bay/Susquehanna River
- Close proximity to major consumer markets such as Baltimore, Washington D.C., Philadelphia
- Quality Attractions/Sporting Facilities
- Over 2,725 overnight rooms within 15 minutes of major attractions
- World-renowned sports facilities & golf courses, museums, historic sites and distinctive natural features
- Hundreds of special events annually that attract over 300,000 people

Weaknesses:

- Limited funding-no dedicated revenue stream
- Limited staffing
- Strong regional competition w/ more funding & staff
- Needs improved coordination with other area destinations



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

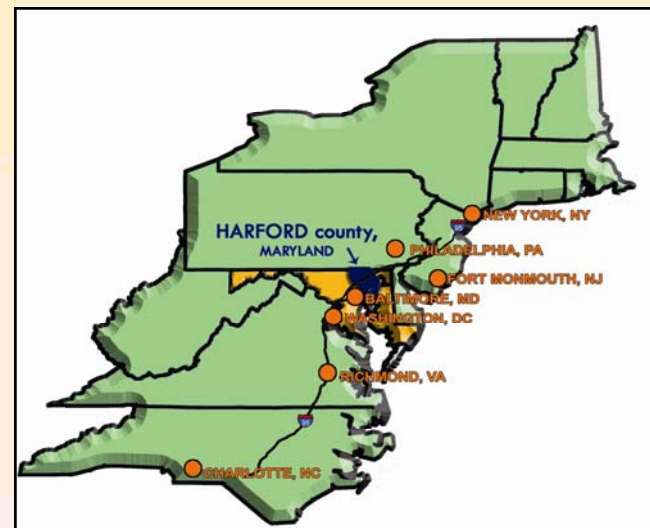
Destination Profile and Market Analysis

Primary Markets:

The Baltimore area, Greater Harford County and Maryland at large. Harford County is within a 30 minute drive to Maryland's top destination: Baltimore. With over 7.7 million person trips the average Baltimore visitor travels in pairs and stays an average of 1.8 nights. Their average trip expenditure is \$275 dollars. Their top 5 activities include: dining, city/urban sightseeing, entertainment, shopping, museum/art exhibits.

Secondary Markets:

The secondary market for Harford County is that which covers a 500 mile radius (from where the visitor is likely to stay overnight) including but not limited to Washington, D.C., New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.



Travel Decision Maker/Target Audience Definition:

Historically, women are the travel decision-makers—if not the final decision-makers—as they generally determine which destinations are in the consideration set. Therefore, our media placement is largely generally targeted to women, 25-64, Household Income (HHI) \$75K+, well educated and working in managerial and professional occupations. They have made a trip of more than one day's duration within the United States in the past 12 months, which includes business, vacations, weekend travel and short trips.

The average travel party size is 2.2 persons in Maryland, approximately 30 percent of those trips are taken with children. The media purchased for the spring/summer 2008 campaign targeted women both with and without children, in order to reach a wider pool of prospective travelers. (Source: The MD Office of Tourism Development Marketing Plan)

Sports travel is a growing tourism area for Harford County. With acclaimed sporting facilities and events, and renowned figures such as the Ripkens and Kimmie Meissner, sports has put Harford in the national spotlight. Harford is also ideally positioned because of its' easy access and central location to major markets. The new Cedar Lane Sports Complex projects filling over 10,000 hotel room nights in 2010 through various soccer and lacrosse events.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Maryland Visitor Statistics

For calendar year 2009, D.K. Shifflet & Associates reports:

TOTAL Visitors	29.6 Million
Leisure:	22.07 Million
Business:	7 Million
Overnight	14.15 Million
Day Trip	14.92 Million

- ⇒ Tourism Expenditures were 14.3 B in 2009
- ⇒ 1 out of every 14 Workers owes his/her job to tourism
- ⇒ Every 233 visitors creates a new job in MD

About the Maryland Visitor

- The average travel party: 2 / avg trip length is 1.6 / avg dollars spent in state per trip \$250.
- The top four tourist activities in Maryland are dining, shopping, sightseeing, and entertainment.
- The top three marketing areas of origin are: Washington, D.C. (30.3%), Baltimore (19.6%), Philadelphia, (9.1%)

Baltimore Stats - Maryland's Top Destination


TOTAL Visitors 7.7 Million/avg trip length 2.1/avg dollars spent \$275



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Top 5 Priority Destination Marketing Strategies for 2011

1. Redesign harfordmd.com, boost search optimization and social networking marketing strategies.
2. Offer unique reasons to visit website such as *Where's Wini?* Video Blog series, games and contests.
3. Increase exposure to key markets through coordinating FAM (familiarization tours) to media and group tour contacts.
4. Emphasize more special events promotions and value driven offers in electronic and social media outlets
5. Continue sports marketing initiative to promote new and existing Harford County sporting facilities.



ww?

HARFORD county
Love it!

Subscribe to E-xperience Harford and follow the **Where's Wini?** video blog as she explores Harford County! Enter our online contest by suggesting where Wini should visit next! Details at www.harfordmd.com



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

State & Regional Initiatives

Goal:

Promote Harford County attractions through regional branding and product development initiatives.

Objective:

Build upon existing and create new regional partnerships that enhance Harford County's marketing reach and visitor appeal.

- War of 1812 (Star Spangled 200 Commemoration/Star Spangled Banner trail—Work cooperatively with Cecil County Tourism, Havre de Grace Tourism, LSHG and other partners to develop new product (War of 1812) and marketing themes in cooperation with State and Federal Initiatives
- Greater Baltimore—Continue to build partnerships with VisitBaltimore and Baltimore Tourism Association



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Electronic Marketing

Goal:

Convert more prospects to visitors via the tourism website

Objective:

Enhance Website: www.harfordmd.com for optimum interactivity and destination promotion.

Strategies:

- Continue to enhance an e-mail marketing campaign management system and build database subscribers
- Apply advanced technologies to improve tourism website experience such as video blogging and dynamic packaging—continue *Where's Wini?* Video Blog Series
- Expand electronic kiosk system for greater return at local businesses
- Increase website accessibility in all media campaigns and electronic communications
- Drive more website traffic via online advertising, networking and search optimization
- Push videos and other County promos through partner websites and other online outlets.



of



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Group Leisure and Corporate Travel Marketing

Goal:

Increase group leisure and corporate travel business in Harford County.

Objective:

Increase group travel activity in Harford County lodging facilities and attractions by 5%

Strategies:

- Target meeting planners through affiliation with OTD Meeting and Convention Task Force
- Compile group tour destination profile and information packet for tour operators
- Develop/enhance group travel contact database
- Follow up from all OTD represented shows
- Attend Key Trade Shows
 - ◆ American Bus Association Marketplace—January 2011
 - ◆ Pennsylvania Bus Association, Harrisburg—March 2011
- Hold Post ABA Familiarization Tour
- Get involved with Baltimore Tourism Association (BTA)



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Other Advertising and Promotion

Goal:

Develop an advertising program that heightens awareness of Harford County's attractions and delivers a strong call to action designed to encourage consumers in selected target markets to respond directly to Harford County's marketing message.

Objectives:

1. Increase website visits by 5%
2. Increase visitor expenditures in local tourism business sector by 5%

Strategies:

- Continue advertising co-operative program with local attractions and businesses.
- Continue more event oriented and call-to-action promotions to drive web activity and visits.
- Explore outsourcing advertising creative services to increase office efficiency
- Place print ads in geographic target markets with other MD Destinations in support of MD Office of Tourism's goals.
- Integrate regional themes into destination branding.
- Promote local events that are likely to increase visitor expenditures and match target markets.
- Market the County's attractions at major events that bring in out-of town visitors
- Integrate more agri-tourism themes in advertising.
- Continue to use Love It! Logo and tags in all forms of promotion.
- Work with local industry to identify additional revenue streams for destination marketing.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

In-Bound Marketing

Goal:

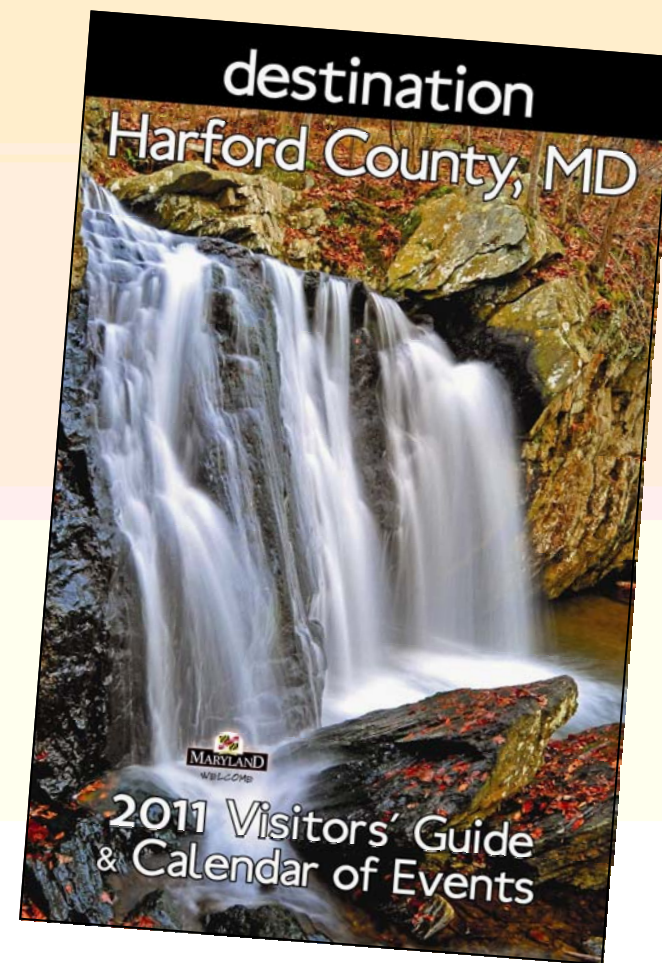
To improve and provide an orientation to the visitors' experience once in Harford County

Objective:

Provide convenient opportunities to access visitor information

Strategies:

- Expand placement of electronic information kiosks in key visitor locations throughout the county
- Improve annual Visitors' Guide and Calendar of Events with more participation from local suppliers
- Support local visitor centers/projects with technical assistance and current county information
- Expand County's presence in I-95 welcome centers
- Continue to grow bulk and local distribution list for Visitors' Guide.
- Continue Visitors' Guide distribution to local hotels and attractions.
- Inform front line hospitality employees on coming attractions and events.
- Use brochure distribution service to make Visitors' Guide more accessible in key drive markets such as Baltimore.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Public Relations

Goal #1:

Attract third party editorial coverage of Harford County or its attractions as a travel destination

Objective:

Obtain FREE editorial coverage in 2011 that will have an advertising value of \$100,000

Strategies:

- Service the needs of travel editorial professionals in the media
- Partner with MD Office of Tourism (OTD) to generate positive publicity for Harford County and the State of Maryland.
- Pitch “What’s new” and timely features to travel editors.
- Write themed press releases
- Update and build existing media contact database
- Feature press releases on OTD’s media resource area and Harford County web site
- Host media FAM Tour
- Implement PR campaign for major seasonal events
- Continue affiliation with Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA)



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Public Relations

Goal #2:

Facilitate communication, new alliances and small business growth within the greater Harford County tourism industry

Objective:

Facilitate improved communication to and among Harford County Tourism industry stakeholders

Strategies:

- Expand Tourism Advisory Board to foster growth of local tourism industry
- Continue to build database of local stakeholders; key industry contacts
- Practice program-related promotion via newsletter, local media relations
- Regularly attend or convene meetings of various stakeholder groups to exchange information and ideas.
- Speak to clubs and organizations about the value of tourism in Harford County
- Offer professional development and networking opportunities to Tourism Partners
- Educate local and state elected officials about the economic impact of Tourism on a local and state level.



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Small Business Promotion

Goal:

Increase visitor expenditures at local businesses

Objective:

Heighten media exposure for local businesses through special events and campaigns

Strategies:

- Implement County-wide restaurant week—June 2011
- Offer more advertising opportunities for local businesses at www.harfordmd.com
- Continue annual Holiday Shop Local campaign



2011 Tourism Marketing Plan

Tracking & Research

Goal:

Demonstrate the economic benefits of investing in a destination marketing program

Objective:

To track, quantify and assess economic impact of destination marketing activities

Strategies:

- Continue to build e-mail contact database
- Participate in Global Insights 3 year Maryland County impact study
- Subscribe to Smith Research STAR Report to track lodging trends in County
- Gather and study existing data
- Monitor industry trends
- Survey area attractions and events annually
- Track all advertising and trade show leads

