

Virginia
is for Lovers™

REV IT

UP!

An exercise to
help you maximize
your tourism
potential.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE VIRGINIA TOURISM CORPORATION

REV IT UP !

Communities have two choices for tourism. They can ...

1. Do very little and have the tourists come to their area for an experience and hope all goes well.

Or ...

2. Develop a plan for sustainable tourism that will improve their community for tourists and residents.

We call this document the VTC **REV IT UP!** workbook. It is designed to get you thinking about your community or business, what you can offer tourists, and how you differ from your competitors.

The exercises in this program were developed from advertising agencies as well as George Washington University's Graduate School of Tourism. Together, they should provide you with a fun yet interesting review of your community or business and how to start positioning in the competitive tourism arena.

This booklet is broken into SIX easy sections:

1. **Brain Storming Exercises** – brings out what first comes to mind when you think of your community
2. **Inventory Assessment** - review of what your area has to offer tourists
3. **Visitor Profile** – who is coming to do what and why?
4. **Competitive Profile** – identifies 3 strong competitors going after your tourists
5. **The 2 Day Challenge** – can you develop an itinerary that will have tourists picking your destination over the competition?
6. **The Team** – list the movers and shakers in your community who are willing to start planning for tourists

Together, the **REV IT UP** workbook is designed as a first step, to look at what your community or business offers tourists in its current state. This is Step One. Have Fun. **REV IT UP!**

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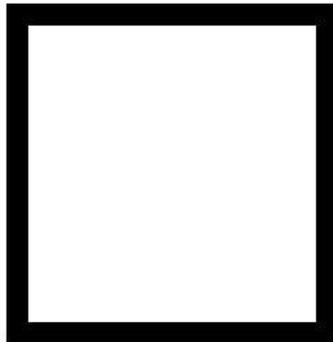
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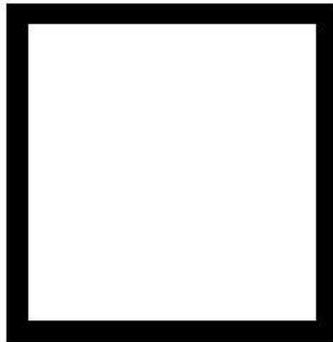


**Your
= Destination**

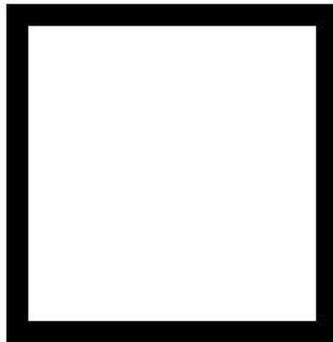
Don't get bogged down in details!
Just be honest and pick the attributes that
reflect your community or business the best.



—



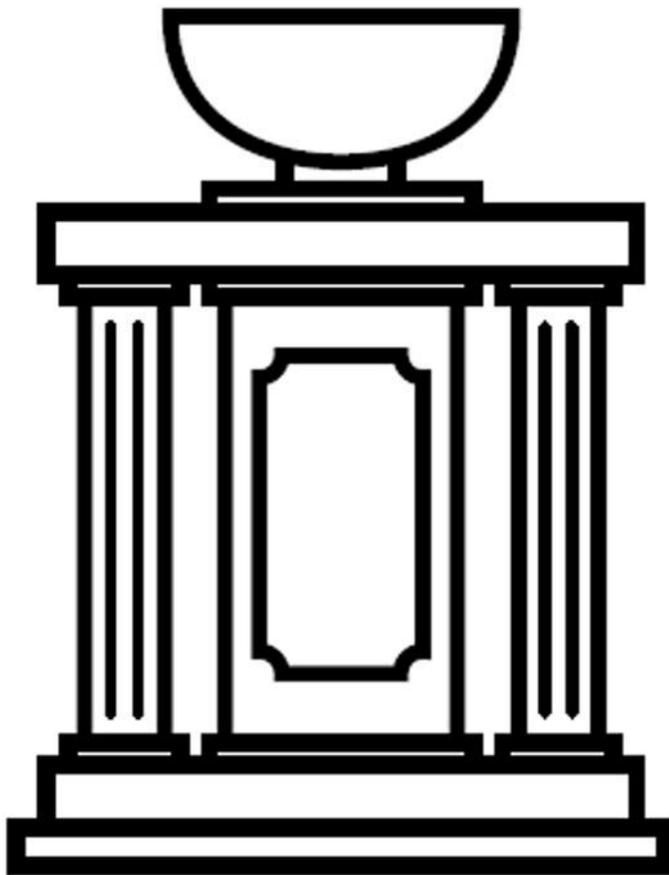
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Create a Vanity Plate that
BEST describes your destination?





You are going to win a trophy for your destination.
What is it for? Finish the drawing.



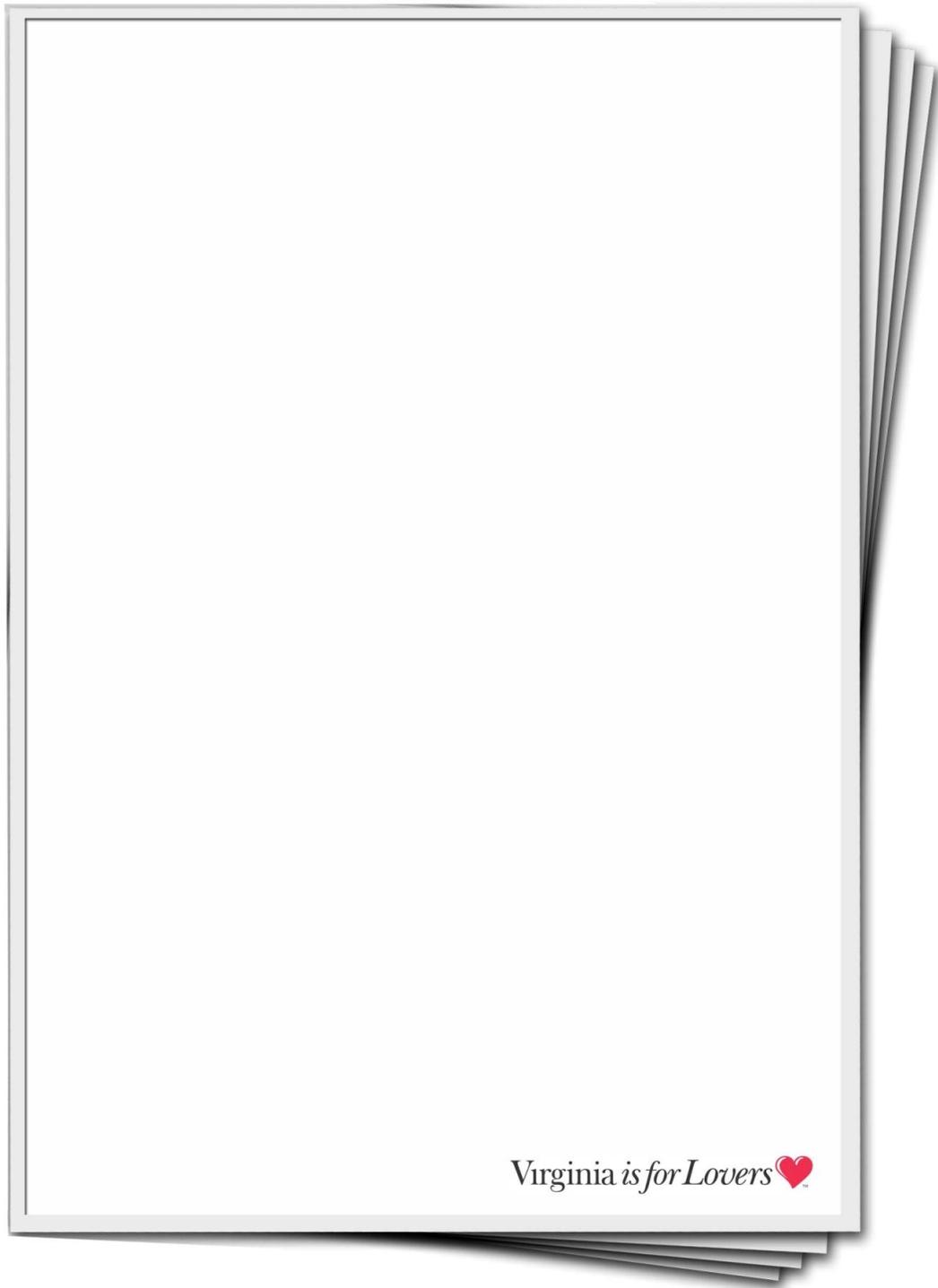
Write ***an invitation*** to your destination using the following words as they appear.

best

Virginia

Wow!





Virginia *is for Lovers* 

You have been given the cover of the 2011
Virginia is for Lovers Travel Guide.
What one image will you chose to represent you?
****NO Cheating by using multiple images!***



ONLY YOU!

What is UNIQUE about your area?

Definition of UNIQUE:

Function: *adjective*

Etymology: French, from Latin *unicus*, from *unus* one

Sole being the only one

Unequaled being without a like or equal

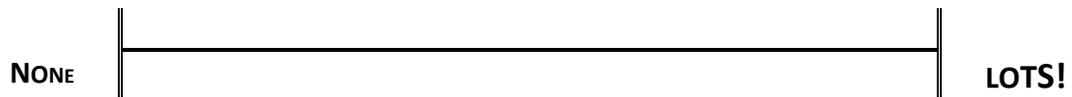
Peculiar or Unusual distinctively characteristic



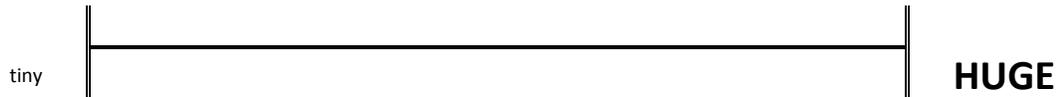
THE **UNIQUE** TEST

What is the **STRENGTH** of Your Uniqueness?

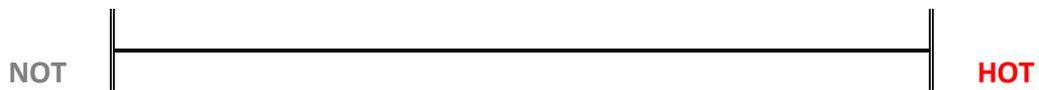
Mark an X on the bars below indicating the strength of your destination's unique attributes.



Are there similar products & experiences to yours within 250 miles?



How **BIG** a driver are your unique attributes or experiences?



How relevant is what you have to offer?
Does it mirror what visitors want today?

The **UNIQUE** test:

- ◆ How many other destinations have this same unique factor within 250 miles?
- ◆ What makes your destination different?
- ◆ Is this still your **UNIQUE** attribute? ... if not, try again on page 8



NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

Describe what is unique about the natural attractions in the area. Try to be specific and avoid general attraction descriptions such as ‘our natural beauty or ‘the state park’.

Note: The last column asks you to choose potential market draw. This means the type of visitation an attraction may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.

NATURAL ATTRACTION	DESCRIBE LOCATION	EASE OF ACCESS	POTENTIAL USES	MARKET DRAW
NAME BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE FROM CENTRAL POINT	EASY – up to 1 hr walk MODERATE– hills; 1-2 hrs DIFFICULT– steep; 2+ hrs	GENERAL RECREATION, EVENTS, SPECIALTY- ACTIVITIES & SITES	DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY
		EASY		DAY TRIP
		MODERATE		WEEKENDER
		DIFFICULT		LONG STAY

* Are there any RED FLAGS or 800 lbs. GORILLAS currently challenging any of these attractions?



RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Describe what is unique about potential recreational activities in the area. Avoid general activity descriptions such as ‘hiking’ or ‘camping’.

Note: The last column asks you to choose potential market draw. This means the type of visitation an attraction may draw and may be modified based on major markets in the destination.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	DESCRIBE BEST AREA FOR ACTIVITY	LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	DESCRIBE STATUS OR CONDITION	MARKET DRAW
NAME BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE FROM CENTRAL POINT	EASY – up to 1 hr walk MODERATE– hills; 1-2 hrs DIFFICULT– steep; 2+ hrs	NEWLY OPENED, UNDER RENOVATION WITH LIMITED ACCESS	DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
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		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY
		EASY MODERATE DIFFICULT		DAY TRIP WEEKENDER LONG STAY

* Are there any RED FLAGS or 800 lbs. GORILLAS currently challenging any of these attractions?



BEST OF ...

List your TOP 4 assets!

For each of your attractions in the columns below, refer to the list in the left-hand column and rate each item 1 – 5, five being the most positive rating. Then add up the ratings for each attraction and total them.

LIST YOUR ASSETS	ATTRACTION #1	ATTRACTION #2	ATTRACTION #3	ATTRACTION #4
Scenic Value				
Environmental Value				
Cultural Value				
Historical Value				
Recreational Value				
Community Participation (uses & activities)				
Operation Growth & Maintenance				
Access (ease of entry/usage)				
Accessibility (health & disability)				
Product Development				

TOTALS				



TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS

How easy is it to get to your attractions and experiences?

Use this worksheet to list the roads and transportation infrastructure and services in the area that can be used to access the destination and major attractions from popular and tourism centers. Include planned infrastructure as well.

	LOCATIONS SERVED	RELIABILITY & SAFETY	GENERAL CONDITIONS
	DISTANCE FROM MAIN VISITOR AREAS AND CONNECTIVITY	CURRENT/NEW TECHNOLOGIES, AMPLE STAFF AND SECURITY, NEARBY HEALTH SERVICES	CLEANLINESS, COMFORT, CURRENT/NEW AMENITIES & CUSTOMER SERVICE
Highways			
Secondary Roads			
Airports / Airlines			
Car Rental			
Inbound Tour Operators			
Taxi Services			
Bus Service/Terminals			
Train Service/Terminals			
River or Sea Ports/Ferries			
Bicycles			
Motorcycle Rental			

KEY questions

- ◆ What modes of transportation are used the most by visitors?
- ◆ Do different modes of transportation connect easily for travelers, such as airport, taxi, highway, buses?
- ◆ Is the signage for localities, lodging, dining, attractions and outdoor areas easy to see and frequent?
- ◆ Are there visitor centers where local information can be distributed?



YOUR SURROUNDINGS

The quality of the physical environment is critical to the tourist. Having both an esthetically pleasing (i.e. beautiful) and healthy environment will make a significant difference to the level of satisfaction a tourist experiences during a vacation. Consider and rate the following factors:

	PERCEIVED CONDITION	COMMENTS / STATUS
Sense of Arrival		
Air quality		
Noise levels		
Road Traffic		
Solid waste management/trash		
Condition of homes and buildings		
Clean water sources/rivers		
Health risks		
Natural landscape		
Health of major natural resources (beaches, rivers, lakes, etc.)		
Sewage and waste water management		



YOUR TARGET VISITOR

A — Who is presently coming to your area?

- Where do they live?
- What percentage of them have children?
- What do they like to do?
- What lifestyle to they lead?
- What is important to them?

B — Who do you want coming to your area?

- Where do they live?
- What percentage of them have children?
- What do they like to do?
- What lifestyle to they lead?
- What is important to them?

1. Do **A** & **B** match?
2. Does your tourism inventory support your visitors wants and needs?
3. Where do you need improvement to be more appealing to your target audience?



SHOW US THE **COMPETITION!**

Who are your TOP 3 Competitors going after the same target with similar products?

	WHO	WHAT	WHY
1.			
2.			
3.			

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES
Competitor 1			
Competitor 2			
Competitor 3			

** Is there an opportunity for a Niche Market?*



THE ITINERARY TEST

Based on your previous work, develop a 2-Day Itinerary that will be attractive to your target audience. Is it better than what your competition can offer?

DAY ONE

DAY TWO



THE TEAM

Who are your most effective allies? Who in your community or business will help you GET THE JOB DONE? You need support, you need ambassadors and you need partners who are well connected, believe in your common goal and will help you MAKE IT HAPPEN!

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

- **Includes:** mayors, council members, boards of supervisors, treasurers
- Serve as conduits for citizens
- Likely source for funding
- Need to understand the need to have the mechanisms in place for the locality to capitalize on tourism's tax structure

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- **Includes:** administration, zoning and planning officials, economic development, public works, parks and zoning
- **Don't forget** police, fire fighters, EMTs and other life-saving representatives
- Integral in planning and development issues
- Can address the infrastructure capacities and limits

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- **Includes:** chamber of commerce, civic organizations, historical society, festivals, museums, arts organizations, attractions, guilds.
- Most likely the largest and most diverse group
- Important in identifying partners
- Acknowledge competition and territorialism
- Grassroots supports
- Can serve as the principal advocates for tourism
- Generates enthusiasm for projects

EXISTING INDUSTRY

- **Includes:** hospitality services including hoteliers, bed & breakfast, attractions, restaurants, outfitters, retail and specialty shops
- May have workforce development input
- Issue regarding community appearance of their infrastructure

EXISTING BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- **Includes:** banking, real estate, professional services
- Workforce demands
- Service sector issues
- Potential for new business
- Potential for competition
- Buy-in on tax issues

INDIVIDUALS

- Concerns over congestion and crime
- Can be your hospitality ambassadors
- Friends and family aspect
- Retirees
- Input through public hearings, focus groups, neighborhood associates

PUBLIC LANDS

- **Includes:** local and state parks, wetlands, trails, outdoor guides, outfitters, sportsmen, Nature Conservancy, Friend groups
- Concerns on environmental impacts
- Partners (interpreters and guides)
- Likely attractions

MEDIA

- **Includes:** newspaper, radio, television, out-of-home
- **MOST Important is online including** private web sites, local, state and federally-owned travel websites, privately-owned travel web sites (Trip Advisor, Yahoo!, Orbitz, Priceline) search engines and optimization (Google, MSN, Bing) and blogs and social networks (FaceBook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)

EDUCATION

- **Includes:** administrators, teachers, student groups
- **Public & Private** universities, colleges, trade schools, high schools, middle & grade schools

IMPORTANT SOCIAL GROUPS

- Minority groups
- Ethnic groups
- Religious groups
- Youth groups

