



LTAC Annual Report
Project: Destination Bainbridge 2018
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association (BILA)

Summary of the activities undertaken through the BILA Scope of Work

In 2017, the Bainbridge Island Lodging Association introduced a new approach to promoting overnight stays on our Island. It includes: 1) a new trip-planning website with an island-wide availability calendar, itineraries for tourists, and links to events and activities on the island; 2) the revival of blogging as a marketing tool; and, 3) partnerships with Bainbridge Island lodging establishments working collaboratively with local wineries, tours and classes to promote tourism during the shoulder and off season.

In 2018 we added marketing activities and expanded our partnerships in the community. The actions included in our work plan for 2018 were extensive and are laid out in the attached **Exhibit A**. BILA had a successful year in completing our work plan activities. Incomplete activities are highlighted in the attachment and discussed in the next section.

Discussion of BILA Project Objectives

BILA spent its 2018 calendar year working toward four objectives. Exhibit A in the attachments is helpful in reviewing BILA's achievements in 2018. Additionally we are providing the following observations.

OBJECTIVE A. Manage and enhance www.DestinationBainbridge.com — which is BILA's trip planning and lodging website. Augment the site with new content. Expand applications of calendar synchronization.

The new website www.DestinationBainbridge.com was launched in August of 2017. It provides important enhancements over the old lodging website by adding a **complete directory** of the Island's overnight lodging and by creating the only place on the Internet or anywhere else to see a full list of all Bainbridge Island accommodations.

Listings on the new website were provided, again in 2018, at no charge to Island properties, with the only prerequisite being that the facility is licensed by the City of Bainbridge Island. Listings provide direct links to the booking services that individual lodging owners choose. Sixty lodging properties were listed at the end of 2017 and **73 properties are signed up at the end of 2018**. The number of listings by year-end is a 22% increase over the previous year.

Website Domain, Hosting and Updates: In 2018 routine management and update of the new website was undertaken by our website manager and host: Logan Marketing. BILA subcontracted with Jeff Logan for regular maintenance including domain registrations, hosting, and the addition of new properties, restaurants and attractions. By

the end of 2018, Logan Marketing had completed the design of a new shopping page and a new member-only page. We are negotiating with another Island firm to implement them. We expect to launch these in the first half of 2019.

Partner to Enhance Listings of Businesses and Restaurants. In 2018 BILA increased coordination with the Bainbridge Island Downtown Association and the Chamber of Commerce. Together with Visit Bainbridge staff, our Marketing Consultant and other tourism groups assembled a **new Bainbridge Island Tourism Collaborative (BITC)**. The Collaborative has been established to work together and assure better coordination. Unfortunately the group didn't come together early enough to allow the collection of information about local businesses — with the result that planned changes to our restaurant listings and adding businesses to our shopping page had to be postponed.

Calendar Synchronization. BILA's website includes an automated and up-to-date availability calendar so potential travelers can identify accommodations that are open during their preferred travel dates. The calendar was designed to provide automatic synchronization with other booking calendars used by Island lodging owners. Going in to 2018 we made it a priority to develop a fix for the calendar so that it would serve larger Island properties. This was achieved by an Island-based software contractor (Train Now). We are currently negotiating to import the fix to our calendar and provide calendar synchronization to the hotels on Bainbridge Island. This should be completed by the end of the first quarter in 2019. The software patch proved to be more costly than anticipated pushing BILA slightly over the budget for website expenditures.

OBJECTIVE B. Continue to promote overnight tourism through a package of marketing activities. Utilize blogs, trip itineraries, and Internet marketing to attract visitors. Reproduce the most popular itineraries in rack cards for multiple promotional uses.

The Lodging Association's Internet promotions expanded significantly in 2018 focusing on our website content and social media to promote local events, activities and businesses.

Blogging. During 2018, **eighteen blogs** were produced and published. This was a large increase over 2017 and greatly exceeded our plans to produce one each month. The 2018 Blogs reflect our commitment to promote Island events and activities. As you can see in their titles the blogs were built around partnerships with local non-profits and local businesses AND they were used to promote our overnight packages. They included: [Upcoming Exhibits at BIMA](#), [Entertainment Venues on Bainbridge](#), [Visit Bainbridge's Local Distillery](#), [New Restaurants on Bainbridge Island](#), [Winter Lodging Promotion and Island Holiday Events](#), [Holiday Artisan Shopping Guide 2018](#), [Discover the History of Bainbridge Island](#), [Plan for Wine of the Rock on Bainbridge Island](#), [Local Dining at Hey Day Farm](#), [How to See Bainbridge Island Without a Car](#), [2018 Oktoberfest on Bainbridge Island](#), [Transportation: Getting To and Around Bainbridge Island](#), [The Best Beaches on Bainbridge Island](#), [Bainbridge Island Fourth of July Celebrations](#), [Wine & Cheese ... make it a weekend!](#), [Bainbridge In Bloom](#), [Glamping on Bainbridge Island](#), [Wine on the Rock weekend package](#), [It's a sweet time to stay on Bainbridge Island](#). All of the blogs are found at the "Blog" tab on DestinationBainbridge.com.

Overnight Travel Itineraries. In 2018, BILA also expanded website content by expanding our series of itineraries for overnight stays on Bainbridge Island. Each itinerary describes two days of activities for targeted niche audiences. In 2017 we developed itineraries for Foodies, Couples, and Families. In 2018 we added three new itineraries for [Art Lovers](#), [History Lovers](#) and [Garden Enthusiasts](#) — with ideas about where to visit, eat and shop, as well as the activities they might participate in. We also include, on the website, a map showing local attractions, and a map of Bainbridge parks and trails. These are under the “Travel Planners” tab.

Overnight Itinerary Rack Cards. These rack cards have been designed using a Bainbridge Island graphic designer and incorporating a map based locator. There are 4 cards ready to print and these will be distributed the first quarter of 2019. We will be launching several more in the next few months. The cards highlight itineraries that encourage two or more consecutive overnight stays. We plan to have rack cards available in time for our spring/summer visitors so that they can utilize them to pursue their special interests and also plan for fall, winter and spring overnight trips.

Internet and Social Media Promotion. BILA had a strong Internet presence this year. We spent \$4,600 on Google ad placement. Those ads put our website in the top searches for Bainbridge Island lodging, hotels, inns, and vacation rentals. Additional Adwords targeted overnight packages and Island events.

We partnered with other Island marketing groups and individuals to take advantage of Internet and Social Media Promotion. BIDA, the Wine Alliance of Bainbridge Island (WABI), Bloedel Reserve, Visit Kitsap Peninsula (VKP) and North Kitsap Tourism Alliance (NKTA) have all played a big part in these partnerships. We relied primarily on Facebook and Google Ads for our own marketing, while our partners were able to include us in their print, radio and social media advertising as well.

Website promotion clearly paid off in 2018. Website visits increased to 19,000 individual visitors — who undertook 23,000 sessions on our site. Significantly, 8650 visitors followed links to individual lodging sites where they could book reservations.

OBJECTIVE C: Provide workshops and additional trainings to lodging owners and prospective owners, to ensure high quality lodging and satisfied overnight visitors.

An important part of BILA’s mission is to assist lodging owners to provide high-quality and attractive accommodations. This is a tourism strategy: to improve visitor satisfaction.

Familiarization and Training Workshops. We then provided hands-on training to members about using our website and maintaining their own listings, and we reviewed strategies and available budgets for both 2017 and 2018.

Distribute maps, brochures & posters to Lodging. We were able to distribute maps, brochures & posters to Lodging owners at our meetings and by request. Currently we are trying to find an efficient way for members to request and receive these materials in the future including a digital download area for lodging owners on our website.

Welcome to Bainbridge Island Handbook. Our Welcome to Bainbridge Island Handbook has been completed and will be printed soon for those members who are

paying dues and securing a higher levels of marketing from BILA. A digital version will be available to all licensed lodging owners to print and place in their rooms. We will launch this with updates to the website by mid-year.

OBJECTIVE D: Enhance the Lodging Association's partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, the Island Downtown Association, and Visit Kitsap Peninsula to promote overnight accommodations in tandem with multi-day tours, classes, performances and events.

Overnight Packages. This year BILA staff worked diligently to establish off-season overnight packages. We successfully offered overnight wine packages in partnership with the Winery Alliance. We introduced an Island-wide February Fudge Month in partnership with **Bon Bon Candy Store**. BILA also offered discount shopping coupons to overnight guests during the Holiday promotions.

We anticipated working more closely with BIDA and the Chamber on additional overnight packages that would feature restaurants and/or experiences with local businesses. However, we did not secure enough interest. Because of the time involved in putting together these packages, without the involvement of other tourism groups, we turned our attention to continuing to provide free or discounted passes to local tourism attractions. Bloedel Reserve, BPA, and KIDI-MU were generous in providing these to our overnight guests — and we hear gracious thanks from the guests that take advantage of those programs. Unless we can secure stronger working partnerships with other tourism organizations, we are unlikely to offer business oriented overnight packages in the future.

Visit Kitsap Peninsula (VKP). As we did in 2017, the Lodging Association partnered with Visit Kitsap Peninsula, a regional tourism organization. VKP again provided professional marketing, promotions, advertising, and public relations assistance. BILA subcontracted with VKP for \$5,000 in marketing services and collateral. In return, VKP provided \$10,000 of in-kind services including listing Island lodging on the regional www.VisitKitsap.com website. For the coming year KPV sought and secured a separate lodging tax award.

Social Media Campaign. BILA continued to promote the new website with Google Ads to bring tourists to the site and expand out presence on search engines. And we used social media advertising, including Facebook and Google Advertising to promote overnight packages. Facebook Ads this year have reached 20,000 people with year and a 25% increase in facebook member views and participation.

BIDA's Walkabout Guide and Holiday Brochure. This past year the Lodging Association supported the development and production of BIDA's WalkAbout Guide with the purchase of advertising space on the guide. The large ad was designed to promote future overnight stays on our Island. BILA also purchased a large ad in the Holiday Guide and provided funds for prizes for Girls Night Out.

Measuring Specific Results

BILA's impact on room-nights, overnight tourists, lodging taxes, lodging revenues and expenditures in the local economy were estimated in our LTAC application. The table

below repeats our original expectations for 2018 and more recent estimates of lodging taxes for previous years.

	Lodging Taxes Generated	Lodging Revenues Generated	Revenue Spent in Local Economy	Estimate Count of Room Nights	Estimated Count of Overnight Tourists	Change From Previous Year
2015	\$175,796	\$8,789,800	\$35,159,200	39,066	85,945	
2016	\$215,228	\$10,761,400	\$43,045,600	47,828	105,223	22%
2017	\$240,000	\$12,000,000	\$48,000,000	53,333	117,333	12%
10% Increase: BILA Website	\$24,000	\$1,200,000	\$4,800,000	5,333	11,733	5%
3% Increase: Marketing	\$7,200	\$360,000	\$1,440,000	1,600	3,520	3%
2018 Estimated	\$254,250	\$12,712,500	\$50,850,000	56,500	124,300	6%

Our Island's lodging tax receipts have been far greater than either COBI or BILA anticipated for recent years. The surge in tax revenues is understandable given the increased number of vacation rentals on the Island, increased occupancies, and an increase in the number of rentals actually paying taxes.

BILA projected approximately 7,000 additional room nights in 2018 resulting from our activities. The limited participation in overnight packages reduced our impact. However, website visits throughout the year have been consistently strong. Website visits approximated 19,000 individual visitors. Our new tracking system suggests that about 8,650 visitors went to individual members booking systems for additional information and to make reservations. Trip Advisor, one of the largest online websites, estimates a conversion rate of 10%. Since our website visitors are using our availability calendar to book accommodations we assume a 30% conversion rate. Given that estimate, an average occupancy of 2.2 people and an average stay of 2.5 days we believe BILA's activities have resulted in 5,700 **overnight visitors and 12,500 room nights**.

Involvement of any partners including unexpected cooperative relationships

BILA's 2018 project emphasized collaboration with a large number of partners.

First, BILA established partnerships that involves all licensed accommodations on Bainbridge Island. Currently 73 properties are listed on our website.

Second, our proposal was undertaken in partnership with local tourism experts. Logan Marketing provided website design services for BILA. Kelly Shannon provided contract marketing activities. Local experts also provided assistance and oversight on advertising and on social media.

Third, BILA partnered with local businesses and tourist attractions — and featured them on our website, in new visitor itineraries and blogs. Among those which BILA included are restaurants, parks, wineries, museums, and art studios.

Fourth, BILA continued to partner to in bringing visitors to Island tours and events. Partnerships were repeated for another year with the Island Wine Alliance, BIDA and the Chamber of Commerce. As noted we encountered problems enlisting businesses to engage in overnight packaging but redirected funds to BIDA's holiday promotion and Girl's Night Out.

Fifth, BILA initiated a new and unplanned partnership with **Paint Out Winslow**. The annual "plein air" painting event was transferred to a different administrator this past year — the Winslow Art Center. Hearing plans to move towards a multi-day event in 2019, we provided support, social media marketing, prizes and administrative assistance for the 2018 event.

Finally, Visit Kitsap Peninsula (VKP), a regional tourism organization, partnered with BILA and provided professional marketing, promotions, advertising, and public relations.

Analysis of Project Budget

BILA's detailed 2018 budget and actual expenditures are presented in the attached Exhibit B. The summary table below highlights small variations from our budget plan.

Project Budget Line Items	LTAC Budget	Actual Expenditures	Percent Expended
New Trip Planning Website	\$8,000	\$9,520	119.0%
Revive Marketing & Promotional Tools	\$10,000	\$10,368	103.7%
Promote Quality Lodging	\$5,000	\$4,296	85.9%
Partnership Activities	\$27,000	\$25,816	95.6%
Project Total Expenses	\$50,000	\$50,000	100.0%

Good faith estimates of actual attendance generated by the scope of work

Our estimates of actual impact during 2018 are described above.

Methodologies used to arrive at the good faith estimate

Our methodology is based on website visits and estimated conversion rates.

**Exhibit A. 2018 Work Plan Activities
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association**

Work Plan Activities	Summary
BILA's Trip Planning Website	
Domain, hosting, updates	Completed with Jeff Logan Marketing
Partner to enhance listings of business/attractions	Partially complete – Shopping Page and updated Restaurant Listings delayed
Calendar synchronization	Completed under contract with TrainNow
Marketing Activities	
Blogging	Exceeded goal with 18 Blogs
Overnight Travel Itineraries	Completed with 3 New Itineraries
Overnight Itinerary Rack Cards	Partially completed with Three Rack Cards
Internet and Social Media Promotion	Completed
Promote quality lodging services	
Familiarization and Training Workshops	Held 2 Meetings & Extensive One-on-One Training
Distribute maps, brochures & posters to lodging	Complete
Welcome to Bainbridge Island Handbook	Book Content & Design Complete
Partnerships	
Overnight Packages	Completed Overnight Wine Packages February Fudge Promotions Holiday Shopping Coupons Packages
Visit Kitsap	Completed
Social Media Campaign	Completed
BIDA's Walkabout Guide and Holiday Brochure	Completed Walkabout Guide and Holiday Brochure

**Exhibit B. 2018 Adopted Budget and Actual Expenditures
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association**

Project Budget Detail	LTAC Adopted Budget	Actual Expenditures
New Website	\$ 8,000	\$9,520
Domain, hosting, updates	\$3,000	\$3,100
Partner to enhance listings of business & attractions	\$2,500	\$1,500
Calendar synchronization	\$2,500	\$4,920
Promote Bainbridge Island	\$10,000	\$10,368
Blogging	\$ 1,000	\$1,800
Overnight Travel Itineraries	\$ 1,500	\$750
Overnight Itinerary Rack Cards	\$ 3,500	\$3,200
Internet and Social Media Promotion	\$4,000	\$4,618
Island's Overnight Lodging	\$ 5,000	\$4,296
Familiarization and Training Workshops	\$ 1,000	\$1,796
Distribute maps, brochures & posters to lodging	\$ 500	\$500
Welcome to Bainbridge Island Handbook	\$ 3,500	\$2,000
Partnerships	\$27,000	\$25,816
Overnight Packages	\$ 4,000	\$4,366
Visit Kitsap	\$ 5,000	\$5,000
Social Media Campaign	\$5,000	\$3,300
BIDA's Walkabout Guide and Holiday Brochure	\$12,000	\$13,150
TOTAL	\$50,000	\$50,000