



LTAC Annual Report for 2017 Bainbridge Island Lodging Association

Summary of the activities undertaken in the BILA scope of Work

In 2017, BILA introduced a new approach to promoting overnight stays on our Island. It included: 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) a B2B partnership of Bainbridge Island lodging establishments working collaboratively with local wineries, tours and classes to promote tourism during the shoulder and off season through special lodging/event packages.

The activities included in our work plan are quite extensive and laid out in the attached Exhibit A. BILA had a highly successful year in completing our work plan activities. Incomplete activities are highlighted in **Exhibit A** and discussed in the next section

Discussion of BILA Project Objectives

Exhibit A in the attachments is helpful in reviewing BILA's achievements in 2017. Additionally we are providing the following observations.

OBJECTIVE A. Enhance the current lodging website, transitioning to a comprehensive trip-planning website.

1. 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 all licensed overnight lodging and by creating the only place on the Internet or anywhere else to see a full list of all Bainbridge Island accommodations. A screenshot from the new website, showing the new directory, is attached in **Exhibit B**.

Listings on the new website were provided this year, at no charge, to all Island lodging, 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 signed up for the website and additional listings are added as new properties are identified. A new Members Brochure, inviting new properties to join us, has been produced and will be made available at the COBI business licensing desk this year — as a strategy to identify new lodging businesses.

2. Significantly BILAs new 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 provides automatic synchronization with other booking calendars used by Island lodging owners. **Exhibit C** shows a screen shot of this calendar. In 2018 we will continue to develop methods for updates for the few owners who maintain an incompatible reservation system.

3. Our contractor also developed search and sorting capabilities so that guests can find lodging that meets their specific needs and preferences. For example, guests can

search by general categories including lodging type (B&B, Inn, Hotel, Vacation Rental or Room) and 20 different amenities (such as hot tubs, views, ADA, and pet-friendly).

4. Our new website kicked off a new marketing identity for BILA. We now promote the Island under the branding of “Destination Bainbridge” with a trip planning site that offers a wide range of information, services, and incentives for overnight visitors.

BILA promoted the new website with aggressive Internet advertising during the last four months of 2017. We also secured agreement from Visit Kitsap Peninsula (VKP) to list all Island accommodations on their site as part of their partnership in this proposal.

We have been able to engage the commitment of one of the two Island-based tourism organizations. The Downtown Association has agreed to provide links to our website, and with our 2018 lodging tax dollars, we have committed to purchase advertising in BIDA's publications. We have not been successful in engaging the Chamber of Commerce to discuss collaboration, a mechanism to jointly list lodging properties, or to replace their availability system which serves only Best Western.

OBJECTIVE B: Revive successful promotional efforts suspended in 2016 — including blogging, fresh content for the website, and weekly calendars for overnight tourists.

Internet efforts to promote local events, activities and businesses can also promote overnight lodging — particularly when they are on the same website. BILA initiated some of these website traffic strategies in 2017. Of particular note is that we developed a listing and map of every restaurant on the Island. This provides direct assistance to overnight guests and also supports the restaurant industry.

In 2017, BILA successfully expanded website content by introducing new narrative and by creating a series of itineraries for overnight stays on Bainbridge Island. Each itinerary describes two days of activities for targeted niche audiences — including families, couples and foodies — with ideas about where to eat and shop, as well as the activities they might participate in. We also added a map showing local attractions, and a map of Bainbridge parks and trails. These are under the “Travel Planners” tab on the website.

Additionally, eight blogs were produced and published. They included: Chilly Hilly in February, Wine on the Rock in March, Best Beaches in July, Parks and Trails in August, Let's Talk Wine in September, our Priscilla Queen of the Desert Overnight Package in October, the Fall Wine on the Rock Getaway in November, and a Shopping Guide for the Bainbridge Holiday Studios in mid-November. All are found at the “Blog” tab on DestinationBainbridge.com.

The challenges and delays in launching our new website also led us to reduce the development of itineraries and additional blogs but these work tasks were substantially complete. Though we wanted to produce a weekly calendar we were forced to indefinitely postpone that concept. We learned this year that coordinating such a calendar is both difficult and labor intensive. Several calendars are prepared each year by different groups but none are comprehensive nor are they good at highlighting activities for overnight guests. We have concluded that producing a tourism calendar will require more collaboration with other tourism groups. In the interim we refer guests to the Chamber's interactive calendar.

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.

We kicked off 2017 with the belief that we could hold quarterly meetings with our members and provide a training element at each of them. Because the website launch was held up we focused on just two member meetings. The first was held at a winery — to emphasize our partnership with the Winery Alliance. It included a training session on promoting individual lodging properties with three presentations: the importance of your website, the use of photographs, and promotional tips for lodging entrepreneurs. The second meeting was held at BARN, another partner. It included a tour of the BARN facility and a short presentation by the Executive Director. 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.

One element of our work plan was put on hold. We had identified an interest in developing a formal list of local services for guests. This was accomplished for restaurants, attractions and activities. The addition of spa's, massage therapy, and transportation services were delayed until 2018.

OBJECTIVE D: Implement a new approach to promotion by partnering with Island attractions and businesses. This B2B approach will include expanded listings and promotions on the lodging website and travel packages aimed at matching overnight stays with multi-day tours, classes, and events being undertaken by our partners.

Our goal, for 2017, was to offer appealing travel packages advertised on social media. We wanted to test the potential payoff from aggressive efforts to promote overnight accommodations in tandem with advertising for multi-day tours, classes and events — created, for example, by our partner organizations BARN and the Wine Alliance. We expected to be able to offer 18 different packages.

In fact, we were only able to offer five formal overnight packages. These included three wine packages and a package that featured the BPA performance of "Priscilla Queen of the Desert." Additionally, we provided guests with KidiMu discounts, admission to Bloedel Reserve, and free tickets for BPA performances.

We learned a lot, in 2017, about the attraction of overnight "Stay and Play" packages that bundle overnight lodging with meals, performances, and recreation. Lodging owners are fairly comfortable offering discounts or purchasing Island goods for guests — as part of an overnight package deal. A hesitation among restaurants and businesses to include discount coupons was a surprise to us. In contrast, attractions like Bloedel Reserve, BPA, and KidiMu enthusiastically provided full price admission or discounts for performances, concerts, visits, and classes.

Our experience suggests that we need assistance to recruit restaurants and business participation. Consequently BILA has invited the Downtown Association and the Chamber of Commerce to actively participate, in 2018, in defining and promoting new stay and play bundles.

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

	Lodging Taxes Generated	Lodging Revenues Generated	Spent in Local Economy	Estimated Room Nights	Estimated Overnight Tourists	Change / Previous Year
2015	\$157,473	\$3,936,825	\$15,747,300	24,605	54,131	23%
2016	160,000	\$4,000,000	\$16,000,000	25,000	11,364	2%
5% Increase from new website	\$8,000	\$200,000	\$800,000	1,250	2,750	5%
Increase from overnight packages	\$5,280	\$132,000	\$528,000	800	1,760	3%
Increase from other trends	\$166,720	\$4,168,000	\$16,672,000	25,223	55,490	4%
Projected 2017	\$180,000	\$4,500,000	\$18,000,000	27,273	60,000	13%
2016 Actual	\$200,000	\$5,000,000	\$20,000,000	31,250	68,750	27%
2017 Estimated	\$220,000	\$5,500,000	\$22,000,000	34,375	75,625	10%

above repeats our original expectations and more recent estimates of lodging taxes and revenues in the bottom two rows.

It appears that our Island's lodging tax receipts were far greater than either COBI or BILA anticipated for both 2016 and 2017. 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 a significant impact of approximately 2,000 additional room nights in 2017 resulting from our activities. The delayed implementation of our website and limited participation in overnight packages reduced our impact. However, website visits the last four months of the year have been high. Website visits increased by 61% over the previous year with 2,500 more visitors to the site. Our new tracking system suggests that about 3,100 people went to individual members booking systems — to make reservations.

Involvement of any partners including unexpected cooperative relationships

BILA's 2017 project emphasized collaboration with a large number of partners.

First, BILA pursued a new partnership that involves all licensed accommodations on Bainbridge Island. Every lodging owner/manager was invited to join our website with a free listing of their accommodation(s), with an automated calendar and highlights of their location, type of lodging and amenities. By the end of 2017 sixty accommodations were listed on www.DestinationBainbridge.com.

Second, our proposal was undertaken in partnership with local tourism experts. Jeff Logan, Inc. 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 established new partners in a B2B coalition to bring visitors to the Island, primarily in the shoulder and off-seasons, to participate in tours and events. Overnight travel packages were developed with the Island Wine Alliance and BPA. As noted we encountered problems enlisting businesses to engage in overnight packaging but that has led to a stronger partnership with the Downtown Association. Additionally the partnership with BARN failed to produce any overnight packages.

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

Analysis of Project Budget

BILA's detailed 2017 budget and actual expenditures are presented in the attached Exhibit E. The summary table below highlights small variations discussed above.

Project Budget Line Items	LTAC Budget	Actual Expenditures	Percent Expended
New Trip Planning Website	\$19,500	\$20,132	103.2%
Revive Marketing & Promotional Tools	\$6,100	\$6,770	111.0%
Promote Quality Lodging	\$2,400	\$4,135	172.3%
B2B Partnership Activities	\$20,000	\$17,035	85.2%
Project Total Expenses	\$48,000	\$47,073	100.2%

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

Since the launch of the new website visitors increased significantly. Google Adwords actually brought 1,107 users to our website that went on to a member's own website. Including all site visitors 3,182 individuals left the site and went to the website of properties listed on destinationbainbridge.com. Trip Advisor, one of the largest online websites, estimates a conversion rate of 10%. Our trip planning site likely triples this since the visitors Island destination is already decided. This would result in at least 1,000 room nights in just the 4th quarter.

Methodologies used to arrive at the good faith estimate

BILA's projected that we would increase overnight bookings by about 2,400 nights in 2017. We believe that we were 50% effective due to delays in our work program.

In the preceding table we assumed an occupancy of 2.2 visitors per booking. This is, admittedly, an educated guess based on similar trip planning sites.

Exhibit A. 2017 Work Plan Activities Bainbridge Island Lodging Association

Work Plan Activities

Summary

Work Plan Activities	Summary
New Trip Planning Website	
New brochure for lodging owners	Completed
Mailings, advertising, followup with lodging owners	Completed
Contract software for directory, calendar, & search	Completed with Jeff Logan
Develop calendar synchronization	Completed with Jeff Logan
Expand access to directory: link with tourism sites	Complete with VKP and BIDA
Duplicate directory and imbed in tourism sites	Initiated requests but incomplete
Contract Jeff Logan: upgrade site name & design	Completed
Google placement ads & social media marketing	Completed
VKP in-kind membership trade	Complete and Ongoing
Revive Marketing Tools to promote Island travel	
Blogging — 18 blogs	Completed 8 blogs
Itineraries — 5 two-day packages	Completed 3 itineraries supported by 3 maps
Fresh content for website	Completed
Weekly Event Calendar — 12 issues	Incomplete but pursuing better calendar coordination
Cooperative Marketing with VKP	Complete
Promote quality lodging services	
Quarterly Training & Networking	Held 2 Meetings & Extensive One-on-One Training
Resource Lists for local guest services	Complete for restaurants and attractions
B2B Partnerships	
Update website: restaurants & attractions	Completed
Maintain and add links and imbedded lodging lists	Links Complete
Develop and negotiate travel packages	Completed Overnight Wine Packages
Contract for local design services	Completed
Contract with VKP: radio, print, and digital ads	Completed
Social Media Advertising	Completed
Campaign development and management	Completed
New Island Getaway Newsletter (12 issues)	Rolled into blogs and Facebook posts

Exhibit B. New Lodging Directory at www.DestinationBainbridge.com
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association

The screenshot displays the Destination Bainbridge website interface. At the top, the logo "DESTINATION BAINBRIDGE" is visible on the left, and navigation links for "Home", "Find Lodging", and "Availability" are on the right. A notification banner at the top right indicates that some updates could not be installed automatically and suggests upgrading to macOS High Sierra. Below the navigation, a heading reads "Find Hotels, Inns, B&B's and Vacation Rentals on Bainbridge Island". A "Sort By" dropdown menu is set to "Alphabetic". The main content area features a grid of six lodging listings, each with a representative image, a title, address, and contact information. The listings are: Sunkissed Beach Bungalow, Best Western Bainbridge, Luxury on South Beach, The Pierce Estate, Rising Moon Beach House, and Rich Passage Getaway. The bottom of the page shows the beginning of a third row of listings.

DESTINATION BAINBRIDGE

Home - Find Lodging - Availability

Some updates could not be installed automatically.

Upgrade to macOS High Sierra
Enjoy the latest technologies and refinements to your favorite apps.

Find Hotels, Inns, B&B's and Vacation Rentals on Bainbridge Island

Sort By: Alphabetic

- Sunkissed Beach Bungalow**
4750 Crystal Springs Drive NE
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
View expanded listing
Website
- Best Western Bainbridge**
350 NE High School Road
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
Local: 206 855-9666
Toll Free: 866-396-9666
View expanded listing
Website
- Luxury on South Beach**
South Beach
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
View expanded listing
Website
- The Pierce Estate**
14484 Sunrise Dr NE
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
View expanded listing
Website
- Rising Moon Beach House**
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
Local: (206) 201-3614
View expanded listing
Website
- Rich Passage Getaway**
3085 Point White Drive NE
Bainbridge Island WA 98110
View expanded listing
Website

Exhibit C. New Availability Calendar @ www.DestinationBainbridge.com
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association

2018-01-16 Random

SEARCH Hotel Name

■ Available ■ Unavailable



The Eagle Harbor Inn

291 Madison Ave. S

206-861-1111

**Exhibit D. 2017 Budget and Actual Expenditure
Bainbridge Island Lodging Association**

	LTAC Budgeted Revenues			LTAC Funded Expenditures	
	Website Contracts	Marketing Contracts	Total Request	Actual Expenses	Budget Spent
New Trip Planning Website					
Brochure for lodging owners		\$1,250		\$2,500	
Mailings, advertising, followup with lodging owners		\$1,800		\$3,747	
Contract software for directory, calendar, & search	\$3,750	\$500		\$4,795	
Develop calendar synchronization		\$500		\$2,047	
Expand access to directory: link with tourism sites	\$400	\$1,800		\$1,000	
Duplicate directory and imbed in tourism sites	\$600				
Contract Jeff Logan: upgrade site name & design	\$3,000	\$1,900		\$4,900	
Google placement ads & social media marketing	\$3,000	\$1,000		\$1,143	
Subtotal	\$10,750	\$8,750	\$19,500	\$20,132	103.2%
Revive Marketing Tools to promote Island travel					
Blogging — 18 blogs		\$1,800		\$1,950	
Itineraries — 5 two-day packages		\$2,500		\$3,500	
Weekly Event Calendar — 12 issues		\$1,800		\$400	
Cooperative Marketing with VKP				\$820	
Subtotal		\$6,100	\$6,100	\$6,770	111.0%
Promote quality lodging services					
Administration				\$618	
Quarterly Training & Networking		\$1,600		\$1,269	
Resource Lists for local guest services		\$800			
Insurance				\$1,213	
Collateral				\$1,035	
Subtotal		\$2,400	\$2,400	\$4,135	172.3%
B2B Partnerships					
Update website: restaurants & attractions		\$1,200		\$3,065	
Maintain and add links and imbedded lodging lists	\$300	\$1,200			
Develop and negotiate travel packages		\$3,300		\$5,540	
Contract for local design services		\$500			
Contract with VKP: radio, print, and digital ads		\$5,000		\$5,000	
Social Media Advertising	\$3,000			\$430	
Campaign development and management		\$2,500		\$3,000	
New Island Getaway Newsletter (12 issues)		\$3,000			
Subtotal	\$3,300	\$16,700	\$20,000	\$17,035	85.2%
Project Totals	\$14,050	\$33,950	\$48,000	\$48,073	100.2%