

# BERMUDA

TOURISM AUTHORITY



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## 2017 Year in Review



The past two years of growth for the Bermuda tourism industry show a clear comeback for this important economic sector. This is especially true in 2017, a record-breaking year for tourism.

From here forward, the Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA) is focused on guiding Bermuda's tourism stakeholders towards constructing a strong future on what is now a solidly built foundation. The public and private stakeholders in Bermuda's tourism industry, working collaboratively, will prove critical to where we go from here.

Fortunately, the Bermuda tourism industry enjoyed many successes in 2017, as detailed in this report. But those successes were never meant to be an end in themselves. They were, and are, an important step in an arduous journey to restore Bermuda's prominence as one of the world's premier visitor destinations.

This report is also available as a live interactive document. To view the videos and presentations contained herein visit: <http://annualreport.bermudatourism.com/2017/>

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## Chairman's Letter

Dear Stakeholders,

The past two years of growth for the Bermuda tourism industry show a clear trend of resurgence for this important economic sector.

Thanks to the partnership of a wide array of stakeholders, the Bermuda Tourism Authority has guided industry performance to monthly year-over-year growth for 23 of the past 24 months in leisure air arrivals. The anomaly is September 2017, attributed to an exceptionally active Atlantic Hurricane Season.

More importantly, the island's tourism industry experienced eight consecutive quarters of year-over-year growth in leisure air visitor spending. Cruise visitor spending saw modest gains. However, a steadily improving air visitor spending number is more important to the industry's development because air visitors spend, on average, at least ten times more than cruise passengers when they visit Bermuda.

The total estimated amount directly injected into the island's economy by visitors in 2017 is \$431 million, which represents a sizeable 20 percent increase over the previous year. Meantime, the total amount of visitors in 2017 reached 692,947, the highest number in recorded history when air and cruise arrivals are added together.

Every key performance indicator finished pointing up at the end of 2017 when compared to the year before:

Air leisure spending up	Cruise spending up	Leisure air arrivals up	Hotel occupancy up
22.5%	7.6%	11%	9.2%

Furthermore, the number of visitors under 45 years of age continues to power the comeback. About 83 percent of the growth in leisure air arrivals in 2017 is from visitors under the age of 45.

The number of visitors who chose vacation rentals when they travelled to Bermuda surged 133 percent in 2017 versus 2016, according to Airbnb data shared with the Bermuda Tourism Authority. With all vacation rentals factored into the equation, 10 percent of total visitors chose to stay in vacation rentals last year.

In the meantime, year-end hotel occupancy passed the 60 percent mark for the first time since 2007. The hotel sector island-wide experienced a strong growth year with occupancy climbing 9 percent to 63 percent for the year. While the Bermuda hotel sector as a whole requires further growth to reach sustainable profitability levels, the performance in 2017 was the best in a decade.

On the revenue side, performance was even more impressive for local hotels with revenue per available room going up 19.5 percent and the average daily rate moving 9 percent higher. The 35th America's Cup in 2017 played a critical role in driving demand and higher visitor spending for the hotel sector, not only in May and June but throughout much of the year.

In 2017, I was proud to have accepted the Chairmanship baton from our former leader David Dodwell just as Bermuda tourism was in full stride toward a remarkable comeback. With an exceptionally focused Board of Directors and an incredibly talented team of professionals at the Bermuda Tourism Authority, I am confident we are well positioned to reach our goal of reclaimed prominence in the world of travel.

Sincerely,

Paul Telford  
Chairman of the Board



“The 35th America's Cup in 2017 played a critical role in driving demand and higher visitor spending for the hotel sector, not only in May and June but throughout much of the year.”



## CEO's Letter



Dear Stakeholder,

As Bermuda heads into 2018, the health of its tourism industry is significantly improved – particularly when compared to the situation just two years ago.

- In 2017, leisure air visitor spending was up 51 percent *when compared to 2015*
- In 2017, leisure air visitor arrivals were up 30 percent *when compared to 2015*

Additionally, and very importantly, Bermuda enjoys higher consumer awareness – perhaps the highest in a generation. That awareness has resulted in greater interest, evidenced through, among other things, visits to the GoToBermuda.com website. Putting on the 35th America's Cup undoubtedly played a sizeable role in putting Bermuda top of mind. This was helpful not only because the island's people successfully hosted the event, but because the event was leveraged to generate media buzz far beyond the world of sailing.

For example, Bermuda was on the "best list" of scores of mainstream and travel trade publications at the start of 2017. Additionally, Bermuda's refreshed brand, which rolled out in 2016, resonated with the Bermuda Tourism Authority's target audiences and that showed up in the 2017 performance – exhibited by the strong growth from younger visitors.

For 2018, the Bermuda Tourism Authority's goal is to ensure many of these growth-enabling trends are maintained without the advantage of an America's Cup event to impact in-year demand. The legacy impact is real, although we have work to do to convert higher interest into actual visitors. Furthermore, thanks to a more robust visitor events calendar, a greater selection of high quality experiences on-island and improved airlift, it's expected the elevated numbers of younger air visitors, increased spending and higher arrival volumes achieved in 2017 can be matched in 2018.

This will not be an easy feat, however.

One of the challenges to matching last year's performance will be the availability of hotel inventory in the first quarter of 2018. Six local properties have a large portion – or indeed its full hotel inventory – off line for renovations. It represents about 12 percent of the country's total hotel capacity in the first quarter. This is a blessing and a curse. The good news is that the property upgrades are exactly what the industry needs; our product will undoubtedly be more attractive to travellers post-refurbishment (GenCom for example is investing \$25 million in its property at Rosewood Bermuda). The bad news is that the reduction in inventory makes it more difficult to keep pace with 2017.

Overall, growing hotel inventory has been a struggle for Bermuda over the past few decades and the Bermuda Tourism Authority expects to see tangible evidence of a turnaround in this area in 2018. By New Year's Day in 2018, Azura, Caroline Bay and the St. George's Resort all had shovels in the ground, and in some cases, structures taking shape. When their work is completed, Bermuda will have 240 more hotel rooms to join up with a growing vacation rental inventory which surged more than 90 percent in 2017.

Above all else, the track record over the past three years for the Bermuda tourism industry is the greatest reason for an optimistic 2018 outlook. The progress has been tremendous. Bermuda's tourism industry has been on a path for growth since 2015 after decades of decline; the America's Cup helped to accelerate the growth trajectory. In 2018, if Bermuda is able to keep pace with the landmark year in 2017, she will maintain the industry's glide path to resurgence.

Sincerely,

Kevin Dallas  
CEO, Bermuda Tourism Authority

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Above all else, the track record over the past three years for the Bermuda tourism industry is the greatest reason for an optimistic 2018 outlook.



“The BTA has been successful with its data-driven approach to managing tourism. It’s impressive for me, being a managing director of a large resort. It’s great to see a scientific and well-thought-out approach to managing tourism.”

Paul Telford, Chairman, BTA Board

### Overview

The work of the Research & Business Intelligence (R&BI) division forms an integral foundation for the Bermuda Tourism Authority, as the research conducted and data collected helps formulate the strategic decisions made by all of its divisions. The division works hand-in-hand with all departments of the BTA to evaluate and monitor initiatives and activities, ensuring that each division remains on track to fulfilling expectations for all industry stakeholders.


A number of new initiatives were launched by the BTA during the course of 2017, which required the assistance of the Research & Business Intelligence team. The most notable of these have been detailed below.

### Highlights

The Superyacht Economic Impact and Legacy Study, produced by Superyacht Intelligence, was launched during the first half of the year. The study provided an overview of superyacht fleets and their sailing patterns as well as perceptions of Bermuda as a superyacht destination. The study also included case studies on three locations that have attempted to develop themselves as superyacht destinations. The case studies include Auckland, Costa Smeralda and Virgin Gorda. Through the study, the Research & Business Intelligence division was able to create an estimated economic impact of superyachts on the island.

## Definition of a Superyacht

- A superyacht is defined as any leisure vessel of 30 meters (98ft) and above
- Superyachts typically measured in meters, 1 meter = 3.2 feet
- Worldwide fleet of 5,062 superyachts, increase of 60% since 2007
- Sailing yachts make up 20% of total, motor yachts 80%



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An employee survey was developed for the National Service Standards Programme (NSSP) to gather internal feedback, and a system was put in place to monitor the online reputation of Bermuda businesses on TripAdvisor, Google and Facebook. Once the data was collected, R&BI assisted in developing measurements for the National Service Standards Certification (NSSC) process.

In order for the Sales & Marketing Division to optimise advertising placement and spend, the R&BI Division implemented and tested an **attribution programme** to track consumers from digital advertisement exposure, or interaction with social/website/search engine searches/email marketing, through to their arrival on island and integrate that information with data from landing cards. This intelligence will help determine which channels are the most effective with which geographic markets and customer types. The measurement of the attribution was completed by the end of the year and will be ongoing.

At the start of the year, the division launched the **Estimated Economic Impact Calculator** project, an online tool developed by Tourism Economics, which will integrate with the CRM to estimate the value of events and groups to the local economy and return on investment (ROI). The project was completed by the third quarter, when training began and the Calculator was brought online.



The R&BI division subscribed to VisaVue Travel Reporting in 2017, which will allow the BTA to receive credit card spending data on visitors. This data will be used to validate expenditure estimates collected in exit surveys as well as identify areas of opportunity.

During the third quarter, the division updated Bermuda's vacation rental inventory and subscribed to a data service that will provide the BTA with occupancy, rate and revenue information on vacation rental properties in Bermuda.

As part of regular duties of the division, team members conducted stakeholder outreach with H.M. Customs on their integral role in gathering visitor data, which is used to make strategic marketing and product development decisions. This was followed by the testing and building of a prototype online visitor arrival form that will be made available pre-arrival in order to streamline the data collection during entry.

Towards the end of 2017, the division finalised the US Leisure Visitor Targets after a full analysis of current visitor profiles and potential in target markets. Five core segments were developed that will be used for Sales & Marketing as well as Product Development initiatives. The five US Leisure Visitor Targets for Bermuda are:

1. Adventure Seekers
2. Experience Enthusiasts
3. Active Families
4. Golden Boomers
5. Elite Jetsetters

### Research & Data Collection

Conducting research and analysing data are ongoing processes for the R&BI division. During 2017, some of the surveys, research and assessments conducted and reports provided were:

- Conducted a Quality Index Assessment of Bermuda's experiences in April and November, using peer review data and benchmarking against competitive destinations.
- Assisted the America's Cup Economic, Environmental and Social Impact study by providing data and measurements on tourism-related areas.
- Completed research on Bermuda's weather and seasons, including "real feel" temperatures by month.

During the course of the year, the R&BI Division executed several online surveys on topics including:

- Group site visit feedback survey
- Visitor brochure request follow-up surveys
- Restaurant Weeks People's Choice Award
- Internal Operations Feedback

Furthermore, the R&BI team monitored and provided analysis on the following:

- Air service to Bermuda:
  - o Monthly reports on capacity, load factors and route performance
  - o Existing and potential new routes
  - o Future schedules for projections and use by staff, partners and stakeholders
- Future demand projections
- Local perception of the BTA and the Tourism Industry to assist with stakeholder and public outreach strategies

### Performance Metrics

As part of the R&BI division's regular remit, the team reports monthly and quarterly on tourism Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including air, cruise, yacht arrivals, air service, visitor expenditure, visitor satisfaction, hotel performance and future projections. etc.. in addition to providing corporate objective status reports to staff and the Board of Directors.

R&BI developed and implemented monthly corporate objective status reports for staff and the Board of Directors which has enabled the team to keep focused on the growth objectives of the BTA.



“Bermuda now attracts a visitor who is younger and more adventurous. These new, experiential travellers who are now discovering Bermuda are very similar in that they want to see, taste and experience everything Bermuda has to offer. Our team is drilling down on the kinds of desirable Bermuda experiences the island can offer to inspire those travellers.”

Pat Phillip-Fairn, Chief Product & Experiences Development Officer, BTA

### Overview

The Product & Experiences division plays a vital role in pulling together all of the elements that, combined, create a successful destination, delivering on Bermuda’s promise of exceptional products, services and experiences throughout the year.

What has been proven in 2017 is that the end product of hard work is most certainly success – as can be seen from the year’s results of our Cultural, Sports Tourism, and Cruise Ship strategies. But there is also the recognition that Bermuda and the BTA cannot rest on their laurels as we continue our remit to look ahead and use every opportunity to build on those successes with the objective of making Bermuda an attractive, sustainable destination for visitors.

What follows are highlights in brief of 2017, as well as indications of various initiatives that the Product & Experiences team is working on for the year, and years, ahead.

### Experiences Investment

#### The Experience Investment Programme

The Experience Investment Programme is a vehicle for entrepreneurs who need assistance getting their idea off the ground or who need help fostering growth for their existing idea.

The BTA’s Experience Investment Applications Process generated 61 applications from entrepreneurs looking to boost the local tourism product in 2017. A total of 40 proposals were approved for support. In all, \$826,500 was confirmed for investment for the successful applications, which took place from January – December 2017, as can be found on the [BTA corporate website](#).

The fourth round of the Process for experiences and events set for 2018 began with two Investment Workshops on 31 August and 1 September. The workshops were designed to help potential applicants better align their experience submissions with the expectations and needs of the travellers Bermuda is currently targeting and BTA objectives for tourism development. A total of 55 entrepreneurs attended the workshops prior to the opening of the applications portal. A cross-divisional team within the BTA evaluated the submissions. Overall, the process drew a total of 71 applications, of which 55 were determined to align well with the overall tourism strategy for 2018. This was the highest percentage of approvals for either funding or marketing support to date, reflecting the increasing quality of applications since this process began. The total funding allocated for 2018 is \$838,000.

Newly supported experiences include a water transport mobile app known as *WaterRide Transport*, which won cash investment for its innovative approach as a water shuttle. Culinary experiences *Sip & Savour Bermuda Food*





*Tours* and *Wild Herbs N Plants of Bermuda* were also successful, receiving marketing support to make their offerings better-known to visitors.

Approximately 70 percent of the investment for 2018 will go to experiences characterised as sports and adventure, while the remaining 30 percent is in the arts and culture realm. Success in attracting younger, more experiential travellers over the past two years has made the demand for adventure-related experiences higher. About one-third of the total funding for 2018, approximately \$275,000, is allocated to newly-supported experiences.

Some traditional favourites successfully went through the investment process once again, including *Ariel Re Bermuda Sevens*, *Bermuda Triple Challenge* and *Harbour Nights*. Bermuda's post-America's Cup legacy is also evident with seven sailing events on the list, including the return of the *Newport Bermuda Race*. The list of approved experiences for 2018 is available on the **BTA corporate website**.



## Highlights

Below are some of the highlights of the 2017 sports, events and cultural experiences, many of which drove more first-time visitors and younger demographics than in previous years.

The **Devil's Isle Challenge** attracted over 50 overseas Stand Up Paddle boarding (SUP) athletes to compete and circumnavigate the island on paddleboards. This included several professional athletes and America's Cup skipper Jimmy Spithill, which helped increase media exposure for the event.

The **Continental Cup Triathlon** regional event took place from 1-9 April 2017 for the first time in Bermuda, and attracted over 100 triathletes from the US, Canada, Central America and Caribbean region. The Bermuda event attracted a quality field of professional athletes, who provided positive feedback on the experience and which was regarded as a precursor to World Triathlon Bermuda 2018.

During Bermuda's unique annual **Cup Match** cricket festival and renowned cultural event, the BTA hosted and entertained approximately 400 visitors at the Cup Match Visitor Stand. Certified Tourism Ambassadors (CTAs) were on-site as part of this festive Bermudian experience and, in addition to explaining the intricacies of the game, they introduced visitors to a series of local personalities, while touring guests around the field, food stands and vendor booths.

**Winnow**, a new travel app developed by Bermudian entrepreneurs, was officially launched in July 2017. The app is designed to connect visitors with more unusual, authentic experiences while interacting with locals in personalised itineraries and settings. These range from unique culinary and cultural tours, private, behind-the-scenes lessons and off-the-beaten-path adventures. Featuring a series of local operators and providers, this app provides visitors with truly immersive offerings that they are able to easily book online.

**King of the Rock** represents the only international lacrosse tournament held in Bermuda, a category of potential growth identified in the BTA's sports tourism strategy. The tournament, which took place from 1-4 September, attracted a total of 75 individuals and generated coverage in *Inside Lacrosse*, the sport's top magazine.

Success in attracting younger, more experiential travellers over the past two years has made the demand for adventure-related experiences higher.





The **Bermuda Triple Crown Billfish Championship** is a premier game fishing event, which attracted 40 yachts – up 30 percent from 2016 – with significantly more first-time visitors. Also incorporating the Bermuda Billfish Release Cup, the event attracted the world’s best anglers to compete in both tournaments, comprising a group of over 250 participants and accompanying supporters.



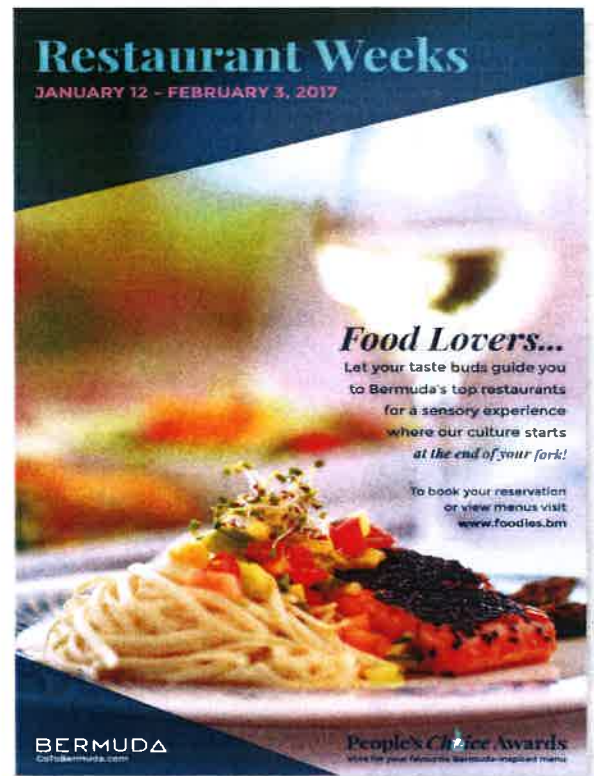
European Champions, **Saracens Rugby Club** conducted their preseason Training Camp in Bermuda from 7-11 August 2017. Overall, there were over 200 visitors related to the camp, including 65 players and coaches from Saracens, and an additional 30 players and coaches from the USA Islanders rugby team. The USA Islanders played a match with Saracens, billed as the Atlantic Rugby Cup. The wider group included 60 college-level players from the US, who participated in the inaugural URugby Collegiate All-Star Cup, as well as Saracens Board members and a TV production crew. The Saracens visit also attracted significant media coverage in the UK, such as the Daily Mail, Telegraph online, and on social media.

### Cultural & Leisure Highlights

The Product & Experiences team is committed to supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs in their endeavours to bring new and grow existing cultural and leisure events and experiences to our visitors. Some of the successes of the year have been highlighted below.

**Restaurant Weeks 2017** ran from 12 January to 3 February and featured 50 participating restaurants offering special prix fixe menus, the largest number since the event’s inception. The introduction of new lunch menu offerings helped to attract new participants and broadened the range of restaurants featured. With the focus placed on elevating and promoting Bermuda’s food culture, more restaurants featured Bermuda-inspired dishes on their menus than before. Overall, nearly half of the participating restaurants surveyed reported an increase in traffic and sales, and almost all participants indicated that they would keep a Bermuda-inspired dish on their menu.

On 5 March 2017, the BTA hosted its first **Rediscover the Rail Trail** event, which focused on reimagining the trail as a tourism asset for entrepreneurs and adventure seekers. With a range of health and wellness activities taking place at Shelly Bay and on the trails in the east end of the island, visitors – including a group of invited adventure travel planners from overseas – and locals participated in this ultimate trail experience. The event generated over 200 registered participants and demonstrated how re-purposing an under-utilised asset can create new business opportunities and offerings that people can experience year-round. The second Rail Trail event took place on 22 October in the west end of the island. One Communications and Ironshore partnered with the BTA on the event and, in addition to train trolley tours on the trail, Caroline Bay hosted a special excursion and tour of the Ritz-Carlton Reserve hotel development site. Fort Scaur, Heydon Trust, Hog Bay Park and Ledgelets Cottage Colony were also open for special tours. A mountain bike tour and a fishing off-the-rocks experience were also available for participants.





# Rediscover The Rail Trail

WALK | BIKE | TRAIN

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2017

10AM - 5PM

Have a day of discovery in the west end along Bermuda's spectacular Rail Trail, exploring Bermuda's heritage and culture with a series of tours, excursions and experiences. After exploration on the Rail Trail, come for an annual autumn festival at Somerset Cricket Club.

[www.bermudatourism.com/bermuda-rail-trail-tours](http://www.bermudatourism.com/bermuda-rail-trail-tours)

**SCAFURRING** **BIKING** **HIKING** **OUR FORTS** **OUR CHURCHES** **OUR ARCHITECTURE** **FOOD CULTURE**

**One Culture Fest**  
Somerset Cricket Club  
10am

**HERNDON CULTURE**  
Herndon House • Herndon Lane  
Herndon House • Herndon Lane

**MOUNTAIN BIKE TOUR**  
Herndon House • Herndon Lane  
Herndon House • Herndon Lane  
Put up with Lord Herndon on an adrenaline tour of the central Rail Trail with a mountain bike. There are some hills on the trail from Oldshore to Herndon.

**FREE TOUR-GUIDED TRAIN**  
A free tour-guided train departs at 11:00 am at the top of every hour. Stops at Hog Bay Park and Herndon House. It will go north to Oldshore.

**HEYDON TRUST TOUR**  
Heydon Trust • Heydon Trust  
Heydon Trust • Heydon Trust  
Experience the history of Heydon Trust with a unique history and tour.

**FISH OFF-THE-ROCKS**  
Fish off the rocks • Fish off the rocks  
Fish off the rocks • Fish off the rocks  
Get a taste with the help of one of the most expert fishers in the west end.

**IRONSHORE REFRESHMENT STATION**

**FORT SCAUR HERITAGE & NATURE TOUR**  
Fort Scaur • Fort Scaur  
Fort Scaur • Fort Scaur  
Learn about the history of Fort Scaur and the island's unique cycle of nature between November and April.

**LEDGELETS COTTAGE COLONY TOUR**  
Ledgelets Cottage Colony • Ledgelets Cottage Colony  
Ledgelets Cottage Colony • Ledgelets Cottage Colony  
Learn about the history of Ledgelets Cottage Colony and the island's unique cycle of nature between November and April.

**HOG BAY PARK**  
Hog Bay Park • Hog Bay Park  
Hog Bay Park • Hog Bay Park  
A park with a beautiful view of the island and a park with a beautiful view of the island.

**TRAIN TROLLEY TOUR OF CAROLINE BAY**  
Train Trolley • Train Trolley  
Train Trolley • Train Trolley  
Get behind the scenes and see the inner side of a trolley on the Rail Trail. Depart from the Herndon House.

**One** **BERMUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY**

#RailTrailBDA

**Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts** has been going strong for over 40 years. In 2017 the Festival attracted 300 visitors to see world-class performances over the two months that it takes place in January and February. The event supports the BTA's strategic objective to position Bermuda as an arts and culture destination from November – April.

**Bermuda Heroes Weekend (BHW)** was held from 16-19 June 2017, and this year's carnival celebration was another resounding success based on visitor feedback. Final visitor numbers reached 686, while monitoring throughout the weekend showed more participants at each of the scheduled events, more spectators lining the streets of the parade and more revellers out for the raft-up celebration than before. The images and footage shared on social media, websites and blogs by visiting artists, journalists and guests provided Bermuda with heightened exposure on various channels targeting a younger demographic. Feedback on this year's event indicates BHW's continual product enhancement has made Bermuda a must-go destination among carnival enthusiasts and adventure seekers.



The **Food Truck Festival** took place on 5 November for the second consecutive year, with more space, more vendors and healthier food choice options. Over a dozen food trucks and pop-up vendors participated in the event. Emphasis was placed on Bermuda dishes being featured alongside traditional food truck favourites, like fish sandwiches, hot dogs, snowballs and homemade lemonade. A line-up of local live entertainment was also a key feature.

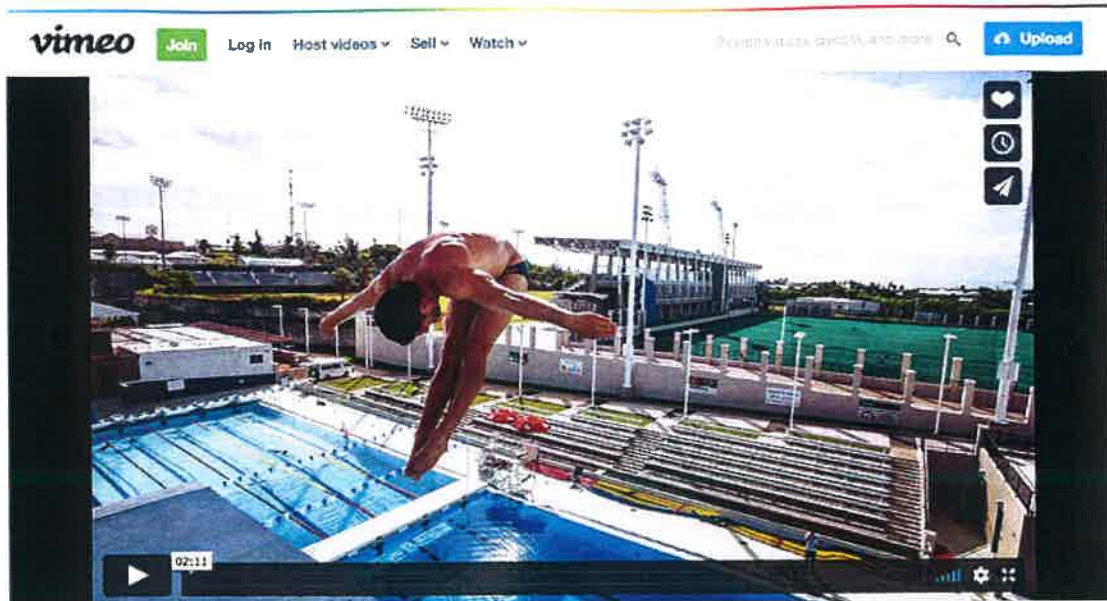


### Sports Tourism Highlights

The Product & Experiences division believes sports tourism is a key strategy to attracting visitors to Bermuda. As part of this strategy, the BTA has partnered with a number of entities and organisations to bring athletes, their support staff and families to Bermuda for training and competition. Some of the highlights from 2017 are shown below.

#### National Sports Centre

A heightened momentum with impressive results were achieved from the BTA's partnership with the National Sports Centre (NSC). For the first time, a professional soccer team was welcomed to train at the facility, as the New York Cosmos visited for their spring training camp and played an exhibition match against a Bermuda National Select team. Enquiries regarding preseason training camps have increased and we have attracted new tournaments under the overall strategy, with high quality first-time visitors.



Some of the teams and events that made use of the NSC during the year included:

**Ariel Re Bermuda Rugby 7s.** This group comprised a total of 220 athletes and support staff, from 17–18 March. The tournament once again exceeded visitor targets and was very successful, both in terms of feedback from participants and for extending promotion of Bermuda as a destination for collegiate-level rugby training and competition.

**New York Cosmos Soccer Team.** A total of 35 athletes and support staff used the facilities for training from 16–20 March. In addition, the BTA leveraged the visit and relationship via an agreement with the Cosmos organisation that saw Bermuda branding and signage featured at the team’s home ground for their 2017 season.

**Fairleigh Dickinson University (Lacrosse)** brought a total of 22 athletes and support staff, from 16–20 February, to train at the Centre.

**The Bermuda Triangle Cup** attracted 65 overseas athletes accompanied by their parents for a youth football tournament and camp from 13–17 April 2017.

On 1 July, 125 Olympians and World Championship-level athletes from track and field competed in the **2nd Annual Invitational Area Permit Meet** at the National Sports Centre.

Looking ahead to 2018, several sports camps have already been confirmed for training at NSC, including:

**Western Ontario University**, which will bring 70 track and field athletes to Bermuda for preseason training in January 2018. This will be our first track and field training camp under our partnership with the National Sports Centre and the BTA’s sports tourism strategy.

**New England Lacrosse** will experience a preseason camp in August 2018 at the National Sports Centre and the BTA will organise tours and a fishing off-the-rocks experience. They will also be scouting local talent and conducting clinics for athletes locally.

### **America’s Cup**

With the 35th America’s Cup (AC35) coming to fruition in Bermuda in May and June 2017, focus was also placed on local activities, events and engagement related to AC.



A Local Business Opportunity Committee was established by America's Cup Bermuda (ACBDA) at the start of the year to develop and promote opportunities around AC to local entrepreneurs and businesses. The BTA provided input and representation to the Committee and, as part of this commitment, hosted two **Celebration Zone** events in Hamilton (8 and 22 June) and one in St. George's (14 June). The Celebration Zones were created in the format of street festivals celebrating local culture with Bermuda-inspired merchandise, food and live entertainment. A total of 27 vendors participated at each of the three Celebration Zone events during times the AC Village was closed.

Work was also undertaken by the Product & Experiences division to design curated experiences specifically for the superyacht visitors anticipated during AC. Discussions were held with BWA (the superyacht concierge company for AC) to refine the experiences, which primarily promoted authentic Bermuda-inspired offerings.



As part of the BTA's participation in the America's Cup, the Product & Experiences division supported the **Superyacht and J Class Regattas** that took place during the event. This included hosting networking and social events and facilitating high-end experiences for superyacht owners and guests. A total of 20 teams participated in the event, organised by Boat International Media, attracting some of the world's most experienced sailors to compete.



### Sailing Strategy

In line with the BTA's objectives to develop the superyacht market, the Product & Experiences team, together with the Research & Business Intelligence division, conducted feedback sessions with J Class and superyacht captains subsequent to their participation in the Regattas held during AC. The sessions provided highly insightful information about their Bermuda experience and how well the island delivered services as a sailing destination. The feedback was



“Many of the superyacht owners that we spoke to over America’s Cup had never been to Bermuda before on their yachts”. Mr. Christensen said, “they think it is an idyllic place for sailing, especially in the shoulder months as most yachts are on their way to, or returning from, the Mediterranean or East Coast for the season.”

Craig Christensen,  
President and  
CEO of Morgan’s Point Ltd.

overwhelmingly positive; issues mentioned primarily focused on Bermuda’s ability to provide full marine services (repair and refit). The information will help inform our strategy to grow superyacht business for Bermuda’s tourism sector.

Furthermore, as part of assessing the scale of the superyacht business opportunity, specific information-gathering meetings took place during the third quarter with local marina operators, other logistics service providers and various related stakeholders to discuss AC35 operational results, improvements and future plans for developing yachting tourism. The results of these deliberations will add to the feedback the BTA received in the aforementioned superyacht and J Class focus group sessions. Planning has also begun for the next phase of outreach to various Government ministries, to build further engagement and seek input on the superyacht opportunity.

Some of the highlights from the sailing calendar in 2017 were:

**Tabor Sailing Training Camp** – In conjunction with the Royal Hamilton Amateur Dinghy Club (RHADC), Bermuda successfully piloted its first sailing training camp under the BTA’s sports tourism strategy. The Dinghy Club planned to expand the programme and attract schools from across the US East Coast region, based on the availability of boats for a training fleet on-island.

**Marion to Bermuda** – Also under the auspices of the RHADC, this bi-annual event attracted over 50 visiting yachts from 9-15 June. This level of participation resulted in over 1,500 visitors from the event for Bermuda. For this edition, the organisers introduced the M2M2B Rally (Maine to Marion to Bermuda) to extend the opportunity to additional participants, enhancing the event and achieving significant response.

**Antigua to Bermuda Race** – In conjunction with the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, and in association with Antigua Sailing Week, the inaugural Antigua Bermuda Race took place from 9-17 May. The event was very successful, attracting 22 visiting yachts and over 300 visitors, an impressive result for a first-time regatta. There was also extensive coverage throughout key sailing media. In addition, over half the visiting yachts remained in Bermuda for a month after the race to view AC racing, extending the economic impact from the event.



**Sailing Calendar 2018**

Discussions took place throughout 2017 and are ongoing with various classes to confirm Bermuda as a host location for additional regattas over the next three years. These include the TP52, M32, NACRA14 classes and talks with World Sailing regarding championship events. A variety of regattas are already confirmed for the 2018 sailing season, which is now expanded from March – July:

MARCH - APRIL	APRIL - MAY	MAY	JUNE	JULY
<b>Moth World Championship</b> (21 March – 1 April)	<b>Bermuda International Invitational Race Week</b> (28 April – 4 May)	<b>Atlantic Rally for Cruisers</b> (5-16 May)  <b>Antigua Bermuda Race</b> (9 – 17 May)	<b>Annapolis Bermuda Ocean Race</b> (8-16 June)  <b>Newport Bermuda Race</b> (15-23 June)	<b>Atlantic Anniversary Regatta</b> Bermuda to Hamburg (8 July)

**Golf Strategy**

The year saw a number of successful golf tournament events, which introduced format changes in an effort to enhance the overall experience from the standpoint of tournament play, and new social elements reflecting local culture and entertainment, including:

In March, the **Grey Goose World Par 3** brought a total of 100 visitors, including 76 competitors, from Canada, USA, Great Britain, Ireland, Wales, Spain, Germany and Sweden, making it a truly global event.

Also in March, the **Ladies Pro-Am Golf Tournament** marked its 20th anniversary, bringing approximately 50 players and first-time visitors, including LPGA golf professionals and lady amateurs.

In December, the **64th Goodwill Tournament** attracted 20 teams, or a total of 80 players, while the Goslings Invitational welcomed 45 participants.



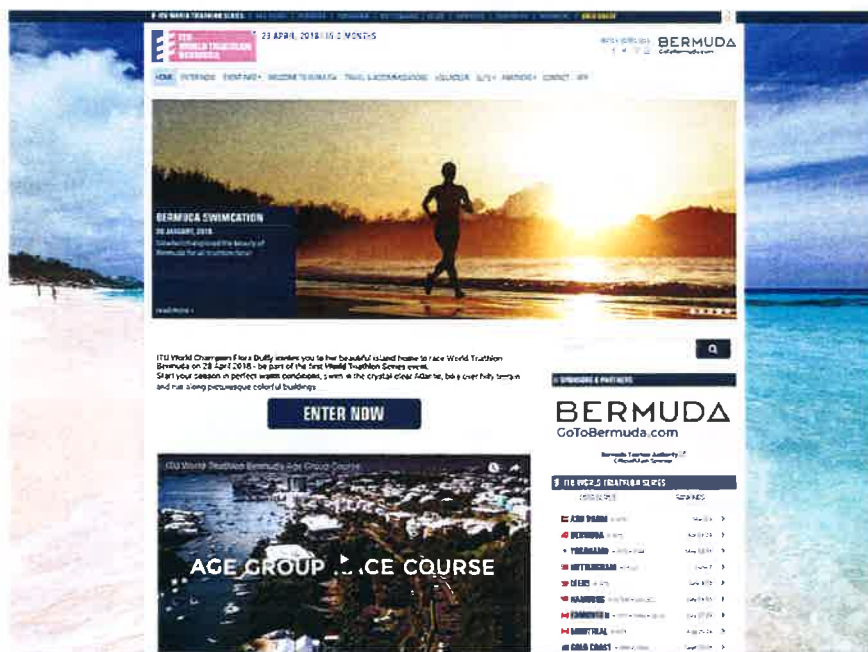
## World Triathlon Series

Planning and work assignments for the **World Triathlon Series (WTS) 2018** event began in earnest at the beginning of the year.

In addition to working with the Bermuda Triathlon Association and other local stakeholders on planning and execution of the **World Triathlon Bermuda** event, Upsolut Sports was confirmed as the international technical race management partner. Upsolut specialises in the development, hosting and organisation of elite and mass participation endurance sport events and is also a partner of the ITU (International Triathlon Union), managing the ITU World Triathlon Series. An initial site visit took place with representatives from Upsolut in April, after which operational meetings were held with key local stakeholders, including Corporation of Hamilton, various Government departments, and the Bermuda Police Service.

The first direct live promotion to athletes took place at the WTS event in Leeds, UK on 11-12 June, and by the end of the third quarter, on-site activations had been conducted at selected World Triathlon Series events and major triathlons in key cities, such as New York Triathlon, WTS Montreal, US National Triathlon Championships, and ITU Grand Final Rotterdam. These activations promoted WTS Bermuda directly to athletes and confirmed relationships with key National Federations as partners in marketing the event to their members, including the US Triathlon Association, British Triathlon Federation and Triathlon Canada.

By September, the WTS Bermuda website and back-end registration partner were activated, enabling athletes to commence registration, and pre-event promotions began overseas.



In October, the Experiences division of the International Triathlon Union (ITU) conducted a technical site visit. They inspected the proposed race route as well as the planned supporting infrastructure and services for executing the event in April 2018. Representatives from Upsolut were also here for the site visit and for technical meetings with BTA, the Bermuda Triathlon Association and local authorities.

On 21 November, the BTA held a press conference with Bermuda's own Flora Duffy, the current WTS World Champion, to unveil the WTS Bermuda 2018 Elite and Age Group race courses. Some of the course highlights include Hamilton Harbour, Front Street, and a gruelling Corkscrew Hill climb, while spectators will be able to take advantage of public and VIP viewing decks on Front Street.



## Cruise Ship Strategy

Senior leadership from the BTA attended the annual Seatrade Cruise Global Conference from 13-16 March and Seatrade Europe from 6-8 September to conduct meetings with key cruise line executives. Building on Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Line regular calls and renewed commitment to Bermuda, the BTA team sought to strengthen existing partnerships and discuss future improvements and additional calls to Hamilton and St. George's. We also met with representatives from other brands, including Carnival Corporation, AIDA, Disney Cruise Line, Celebrity Cruises and Silversea, as well as various port authority personnel.

In May, the BTA announced that Disney Cruise Line will sail to Bermuda for the first time in 2018. There will be a total of five calls from New York by their ship, Disney Magic, in October. This new partnership is part of the BTA's diversification strategy in regard to cruise business. It will also present the opportunity to partner with Disney on product development and port experiences. Senior representatives from the cruise line's Port Adventures division conducted a site visit from 16-18 October 2017. The visit included an information session for local product and experience operators to introduce them to the Disney team and provide a briefing on how the company works with destination tour operators.

The schedule of 16 dedicated cruise ship calls to St. George's for 2017, versus four calls in 2016, began in April. The calls by high-end brands Regent Seven Seas and Oceania were negotiated as part of Bermuda's overall partnership with parent company Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings. This result is part of the BTA's ongoing strategy to secure expanded small-ship service to the East End.



**Disney Magic Is Coming...**

First cruise call to Bermuda - October 2018  
That's one year for tourism stakeholders to conjure up unique Bermuda experiences  
Disney customers will crave! Don't miss a special shore excursion briefing direct from Disney representatives

Wednesday October 18, 2017  
8am - 9am | Gardenia Room, Fairmont Southampton

Position yourself to seize this exciting new opportunity in Bermuda tourism.

**Register now**

Disney Magic 2018 Calls: Oct 6 | Oct 15 | Oct 21 | Oct 28 | Oct 31  
Each call includes two full days in Bermuda

**BERMUDA**  
TOURISM AUTHORITY

## Cultural Tourism Initiatives, St. George's & St. David's (Hub 1)

On 20 March 2017, the Product & Experiences team attended a place-making workshop at City Hall, discussing how to transform public spaces into high-traffic sites that locals and visitors can enjoy. A separate BTA session followed to determine possible applications to Bermuda's tourism hubs, with a particular focus on Hub 1. The team subsequently completed a place evaluation exercise in St. George's with the Corporation of St. George's and key East End stakeholders. Work on actionable recommendations is in progress to help transform key Hub 1 locations, such as Water Street, King's Square and Ordnance Island.

During the second quarter, the BTA partnered with Hub 1 museums, tour guides, artisans and attractions to launch a pilot 'Meet the Artists' initiative. The pilot leveraged an existing range of assets within the Hub that organically position the East End as an arts district. An initial eight local artists and artisans are participating in this pilot programme. Visitors are provided with behind-the-scenes access to the artists, their stories and inspirations for their work. Additional new events and offerings that continue to build on the Hub's cultural vitality include Cocktails and Cannons and the Family Forts Festival - both at Fort St. Catherine - and various historic tours.

## Credit Card Acceptance - Bermuda Taxis

In June, the Product & Experiences division announced that 60 additional taxi operators would begin accepting credit cards under the BTA's continued strategy to enhance overall visitor experience and entrepreneurial opportunities. This development was achieved in conjunction with Butterfield Bank, local card terminal provider Spectropay, and MasterCard, which is enabling "tap-and-go" technology for payment systems.

## Wi-Fi Initiative

By the beginning of April 2017, installation of free Wi-Fi targeting visitors under the BTA's Wi-Fi initiative was completed at four hotspots around the island:

- Hamilton Ferry Terminal
- Dockyard Visitor Information Centre
- Hamilton Bus Terminal
- Penno's Wharf

Through this initiative, the BTA has been able to provide a platform that meets visitors' expectations for such services, provides mobile access to real-time visitor information, and captures important visitor contact information to support future marketing efforts. To date, over 30,000 individuals have logged on to the Wi-Fi platform, with approximately 25 percent of users requesting further marketing information on Bermuda, on-island activities and special offers.

22

BTA partnered with Hub 1 museums, tour guides, artisans and attractions to launch a pilot, 'Meet the Artists' initiative. The pilot leveraged an existing range of assets within the Hub that organically position the East End as an arts district.



## Completed Events & Experiences

The roll out of BTA-supported experiences continued successfully through the year, covering arts and culture as well as sporting events. These events generated a total of 4,783 visitors and 16,668 room nights for the year.

SPORTS & ADVENTURE	DATE	MONTH	YEAR
Bermuda Hockey Classic*	3-8	May	2017
Bermuda Marathon Weekend	13-15	January	2017
Second Annual Devil's Isle Challenge (Plastic Tides)	3-8	May	2017
Bermuda Squash Challenge*	16-18	November	2017
5 Star Running Retreat	8-11	January	2017
Athletics Area Permit Meet	27	May	2017
Bermuda Fly Fishing Invitational	23-27	May	2017
Bermuda Pilot Gig Club		October	2018
Bermuda Rugby 7's	17-18	March	2017
Bermuda Triangle Cup	13-15	April	2017
Bermuda Triple Challenge	17-19	March	2017
Bermuda International Match Series*			All Year
Legends of Squash*	17-21	April	2017
International Women's Keelboat Regatta*	13-19	August	2017
Marion to Bermuda Race	9	June	2017
Spring Training Camp – Tabor*	10-16	March	2017
Round the Sound 2017	5-8	October	2017
Divas Half Marathon*		October	2017
20th Annual BSA Ladies Pro-Am Golf Classic	10-16	March	2017
Continental Cup Triathlon*	7-9	April	2017
Bermuda Golf Classic/Pro Sports Championship		March/September	2017 (M)
IslandKaddy Group Ltd.*			All Year (M)
Sea Moped Coral Reef Adventure (pending approval)*		Seasonal	
First Division Maritime (pending approval)*			All Year
Bermy Bike Tours (pending approval)*			All Year
Tarzan Boat (pending approval)*		Seasonal	
Winnow*			All Year
ARTS & CULTURE			
St. George's Historical Re-enactments			All Year
Town Crier Competition	18-23	April	2017
Hub 1 Tourism Plan			All Year
BHW 2017	16-19	June	2017
Harbour Nights 2017		Seasonal	
Plein Air	11-18	November	2017
Bermuda Festival of Performing Arts		January – March	
City Food Festival	12-18	November	2017 (M)
Bermuda Fashion Festival	16-22	October	2017 (M)
Party People Ent/Off Level Bermuda*			All Year (M)
Bermuda National Trust	2	December	2016 (M)
Broadway in Bermuda – The Colour Purple Reprise*		February (M)	
Bermuda Beach Arts Festival 2017	25	March	2017 (M)

\* Denotes new experience

(M) Marketing support



“Everything we do is driven by Bermuda’s brand promise.

‘To the adventure seekers, explorers, romantics and originals among us: Bermuda is set apart by its location and way of life; It’s where people, cultures and a one-of-a-kind mystique swirl together, connecting you to a place far from your everyday life.’

Victoria Isley, Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, BTA

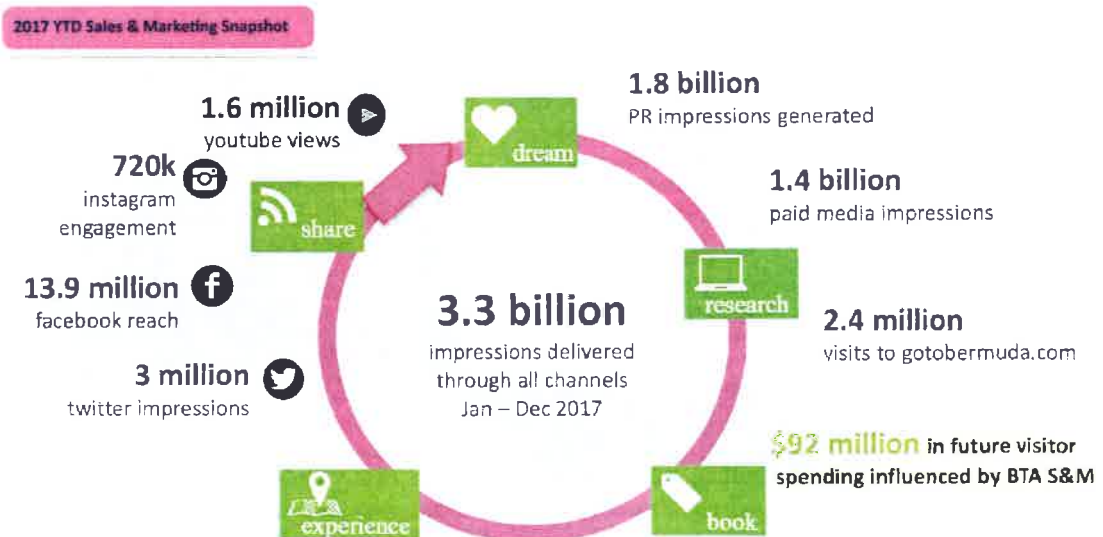
### Overview

The Sales & Marketing division consistently strives to find and use the most cost effective and efficient means to deliver Bermuda’s brand message to the identified markets, enticing and inspiring them to travel to Bermuda. Efforts are focused in geographical areas with the most return on investment, where airlift exists and with specific visitor targets. The Sales & Marketing team is responsible for reaching out to industry and media partners to create interest and provide support in activities targeting travellers.

In 2017, the Sales & Marketing division worked effectively with the other divisions at the Bermuda Tourism Authority to raise awareness and promote Bermuda as a year-round destination, and to actively work to increase hotel occupancy and tourism revenue. This report provides some of the highlights of the successful work that took place during the year.

### Highlights

The Sales & Marketing team worked diligently through a number of media platforms to reach target markets, with highly successful results, as shown here.



“  
The BTA and its communications agency partner, Turner, won a Public Relations Platinum Award for outstanding press coverage on its adventure offerings.

**The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) - Award Winning Recognition for the Bermuda Brand**

On 21 February, the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) presented the 60th Annual Adrian Awards at the New York Marriott Marquis. Dating back to 1956, the Adrian Awards recognise marketing achievements in hospitality. In 2017, Award winners were selected by industry and media experts from more than 1,200 entries, for three main categories: advertising, digital marketing and public relations. Gold Award winners across these three categories were recognised during the Adrian Awards Dinner Reception, which was co-sponsored by HSMAI and Google. Platinum winners were selected from the standout Gold Award winners.

The BTA and its communications agency partner, Turner, won a Public Relations Platinum Award for outstanding press coverage on its adventure offerings, which was subsequently awarded the Best of Show distinction for the “Bermuda: Finding an Island’s Adventurous Side” campaign. This Best of Show Award is the highest honour in each of the three award categories.



In addition, the BTA won an Adrian Gold Award for its brand “Out Here, Where You Belong” and Silver for its “Out Here” print advertising, alongside its partner MMGY Global. Gold Award winners’ submissions were shown on digital displays at the Dinner Reception and featured during the Gala stage presentations.

“The honorees in this year’s competition displayed innovation, creativity, and demonstrated measurable results and return on investment that were noted by this year’s judges as being exceptional,” said Fran Brasseur, HSMAI Executive Vice President.

Ms. Victoria Isley, BTA Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, was also honoured as one of the “Top 25 Extraordinary Minds in Hospitality Sales, Marketing and Revenue Optimisation” for 2016, having been selected by an HSMAI committee of senior executives from the travel industry.

**America’s Cup**

The BTA’s investment as an America’s Cup sponsor garnered nearly \$26.5 million in media value, just in boat and course branding alone.

**EVENT SPONSORSHIP EVALUATION - BY SOURCE**



### Media & Client Engagement in Bermuda

During the America's Cup in May and June, the Sales & Marketing team hosted almost 100 clients, including members of the Event Advisory Board, media, travel trade, event planners and their guests, using the opportunity to showcase Bermuda's unique attributes for events, meetings and leisure travel.

25-29 May	<i>UK Media and Trade</i>
9-13 June	<i>Hotel Investment and Industry Executives</i>
13-16 June	<i>Social and Sports Planners</i>
16-20 June	<i>Corporate &amp; Incentive Planners and Media</i>
20-23 June	<i>Association Planners and Media</i>
23-27 June	<i>Event Advisory Board and Media</i>

### America's Cup Event Village

The Sales & Marketing team created a welcoming, immersive experience at the America's Cup Event Village that celebrated the mystique and sailing heritage of Bermuda, evoked pride in Bermudians and a feeling of belonging in visitors, and encouraged all to explore, experience, and spend in Bermuda. The experience included a colouring book wall, a Bermuda insider locations map, an interactive quiz app, a temporary tattoo station and a photo activation booth. The statistics recorded for the experience were:

10,461,652 / 7,672,898 / 33,504  
 IMPRESSIONS / REACH / INTERACTIONS



### Travel + Leisure Viewing Party in NYC

On the weekend of 17-18 June 2017, *Travel + Leisure* and the Bermuda Tourism Authority presented a two-day Live Pop-Up Screening of the 35th America's Cup races for tourists and locals in New York City. The live screening pop up was held in the Hudson Eats marketplace at Brookfield Place and featured nine large screens stationed strategically throughout the venue, with the races broadcast from 1-3pm each day with almost every seat taken by an engaged audience. A Bermuda promotional reel was looped before and after the screening, while Brand ambassadors greeted guests and handed out Bermuda-branded event postcards and sunglass straps, and branded Bermuda coasters and napkins were placed around the venue. The event was promoted on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram handles of Brookfield Place as well as on its website.



Travel + Leisure  
Viewing Party in NYC

## Sales & Business Development



### World Sailing Conference Secured for 2019

The BTA was one of the sponsors of World Sailing's Annual Conference, held from 4-12 November in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. World Sailing is the global governing body for the sport of sailing and, building on the legacy of hosting the 35th America's Cup, the BTA bid to host the 2019 Conference. Delegates approved Bermuda's bid by a membership vote on 12 November, 2017.

The World Sailing Annual Conference is the central meeting point where the strategy of sailing is reviewed, discussed and celebrated. A series of events take place during the seven-day schedule, including the World Sailing Awards and the eSailing World Championships.

"World Sailing's Annual Conference is the single most important meeting of sailing's key stakeholders," said Chief Executive Officer Andy Hunt. "Key decision makers from World Sailing member nations, International Class Associations, boat builders and event organisers attend the conference to shape the future of the sport. More than 500 delegates attended the most recent edition of the Annual Conference in Mexico and we are thrilled to bring a similar audience to Bermuda in just under two years."

Kevin Dallas, BTA CEO, added, "We are proud to win this one for Bermuda – transitioning from hosting the world's most prestigious sailing race to hosting the sport's esteemed governing body. While everyone here at the Bermuda Tourism Authority was elated to learn the America's Cup contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the Bermuda economy, our focus is on the next frontier – pursuing and converting new business opportunities if they're a good fit for the island."

### The Coterie Retreat Secured for 2018

Following a site visit to Bermuda with event organisers in July 2017, the BTA confirmed that *Munaluchi Magazine's* Coterie Retreat will be held in Bermuda in December 2018. *Munaluchi* is a magazine that has been inspiring brides of colour for the past four years in print, digital and on their heavily trafficked website. The three-day annual retreat will provide the opportunity to showcase Bermuda to more than 100 wedding and event professionals that cater to the fast-growing multicultural market. During the Retreat, participants are brought together to enjoy some much-needed downtime while experiencing a range of keynote presentations from wedding industry greats, hands-on workshops, breakout seminars and curated networking events.



Instagram

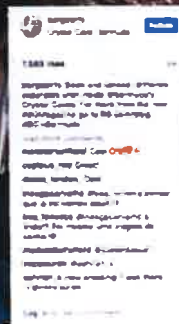
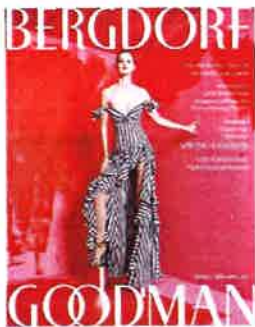


## Integrated Partnerships & Promotions

### Bergdorf Goodman of New York City

As part of the BTA's integrated partnership with Bergdorf Goodman, the Sales & Marketing team organised a number of fashion shoots on-location in Bermuda for *BG Magazine*:

- 28-page photo feature including three pages of editorial, using fashion stylist Shiona Turini as the magazine's guide and model for the Spring 2017 issue of BG magazine, reaching a circulation of 200,000
- 18-page men's feature for the *Goodman's Guide*, with a circulation in excess of 160,000
- Social media dedicated campaign over Bergdorf's social channels and a Bermuda-inspired travel video reaching 4 million
- In-store event in BG restaurant featuring the cuisine of Chef DeShields from Cambridge Beaches Resort & Spa for 100 influencers on 22 February
- Collaborated with Bergdorf Goodman window designers for a Bermuda-inspired window display located at Fifth Avenue in New York City from 23 February – 10 March

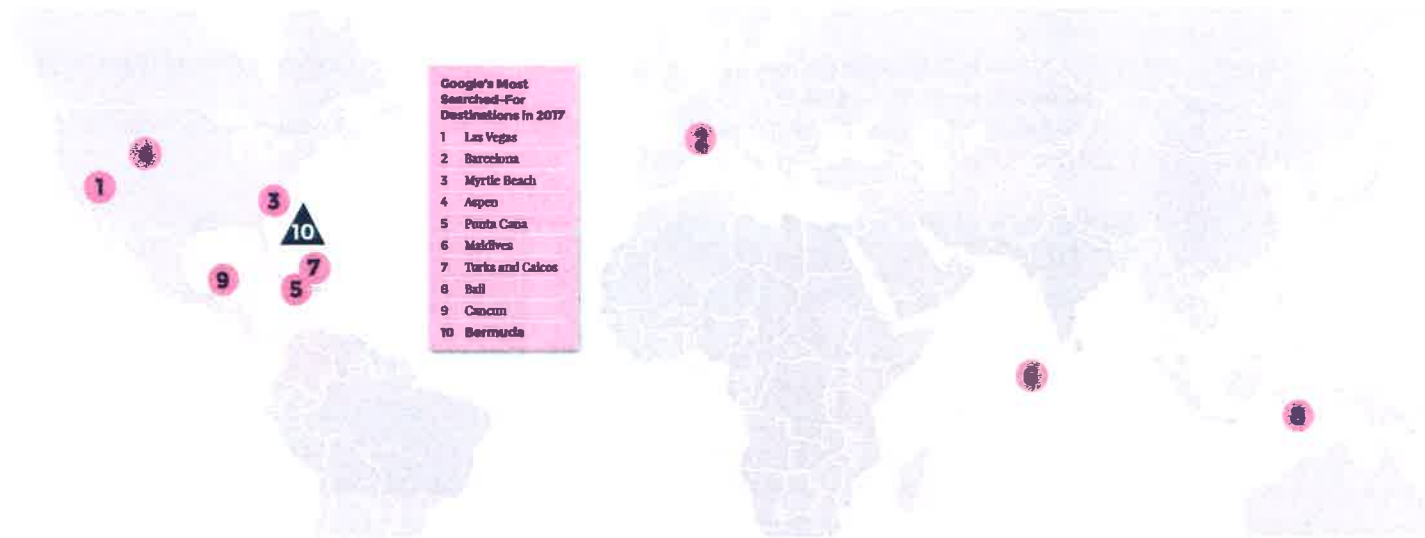


## Google Destinations

Bermuda was one of the world's top ten searched travel destinations on Google in 2017, coming tenth on the list, according to *Travel + Leisure Magazine*, who published an article on the results. The rest of the top ten list was made up of a range of popular vacation destinations, with Las Vegas at the top and other beach destinations including Turks and Caicos, Cancun, the Maldives and Bali.

Breaking into the Google destination searches Top Ten List is another sign that the level of exposure for and interest in Bermuda reached epic proportions in 2017. The Sales & Marketing division informed participants at the BTA Annual Tourism Summit in November that it is focused on enhancing the island's digital footprint to better engage consumers and convert them into Bermuda visitors.

The division is working closely with local tourism businesses to claim and manage their Google My Business Accounts by holding webinars and presentations, in the hope that this effort will improve Bermuda's digital presence and capture the imaginations of the next generation of travellers.



## Media Relations

### Best Places Accolades

Two of the publications in which Bermuda scored highly as a best place to vacation were in *Travel + Leisure* and *Ebony* magazines.



### 50 Best Places to Travel in 2017

#### Bermuda

After being hit hard by the financial crisis, Bermuda is shaking itself out of stagnation and attracting a new generation of travellers. In 2017, the island won a bid to host the 35th America's Cup, the high-profile international sailing race, which takes place this June. The promise of a flood of wealthy visitors—and a loosening of restrictions

### EBONY

#### Top 5 Places to Travel in 2017

Bermuda



Bermuda is a paradise, period. Known for its pristine, sun-drenched beaches, upscale residential luxury, and extremes of either hot or cold, locals who feel here like family that strung up and back accessibility to the East Coast, Bermuda is becoming the most visited island in Europe. But there's more to Bermuda than its pristine beaches. To spend all day in the sun, Bermuda has lots to offer. Explore its neighborhoods by Segway, take a jet ski, sunbathe on the beach, discover underwater caves, museums and art galleries, do like a local at Art Mels and explore your reflexes at Urban Centre. Once you're done exploring and hanging with locals, head to Cambridge Beaches Resort and Spa for a traditional Bermuda feel and Rosewood Tucker's Point for a tranquil, sophisticated experience.

“Bermuda has incredible storytellers who speak with passion and love for their country, which is resonating with consumers. We are grateful to have these ingredients and use them to set Bermuda apart and break away from the sea of sameness in the travel industry.”

Victoria Isley,  
BTA Chief Sales and Marketing Officer.

In *Travel + Leisure* “50 Best Places to Travel in 2017” article by Paola Singer, the magazine spoke of Bermuda attracting a new generation of travellers, the upcoming America's Cup and the overhaul of the Hamilton Princess & Beach Club, as well as the coming building of the new St. Regis and Ariel Sands resorts.

Danielle T. Pointdujour, *Ebony Magazine's* travel columnist, went beyond the usual attributes of Bermuda's climate, hospitality and accessibility from the east coast of the United States in her “Top 5 Places to Travel in 2017” feature. She pointed out the more unusual activities and experiences, like exploring shipwrecks on jetski safaris, eating like a local at Art Mels and enjoying the sophistication of staying at Cambridge Beaches Resort or Rosewood Tucker's Point.



**CNN Travel**

In July, Dr. Philippe Rouja, Custodian of Historic Wrecks for the Bermuda Department of Environment and Natural Resources, joined Alexander Rosen of CNN Travel in a television feature about his role in combining scientific research with local knowledge of Bermuda's maritime history to conserve Bermuda's shipwrecks and the surrounding environment. The feature included footage of their scuba dive to the Caraquet wreck the processes that Dr. Rouja follows to capture images and data for his work.



**GQ - Inside Cup Match, the Wildest Most Fun Island Party You've Never Heard Of**

In August, *GQ magazine* published a feature about Bermuda's Cup Match holiday, explaining its origins and the celebration of Emancipation Day and Somers' Day. The article was awash with photos depicting the fun, fashion and food for which Cup Match is famous and, of course, cricket. The feature painted a delightful picture of the two-day event, encouraging future travellers to come and experience Cup Match for themselves.



**The Today Show**

In the lead up to the start of the America's Cup, NBC's Today Show co-hosts, Kathie Lee Gifford and Hoda Kotb, brought their morning show to Bermuda, broadcasting live from the Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club on 18 May. A second taped show aired the next day, on 19 May. The co-hosts showcased Bermuda's beauty and culture, as well as the preparations taking place for the America's Cup, and included a segment with actor Michael Douglas. The Today Show is the top-rated US morning television programme among the valued 25 to 54-year-old demographic, and the 10am one-hour show typically attracts approximately 2.5 million daily viewers, according to ratings agency Nielsen. The BTA partnered with the Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club and JetBlue Vacations, as well as public relations agency Turner, to secure the opportunity.



**BBC Travel Show**

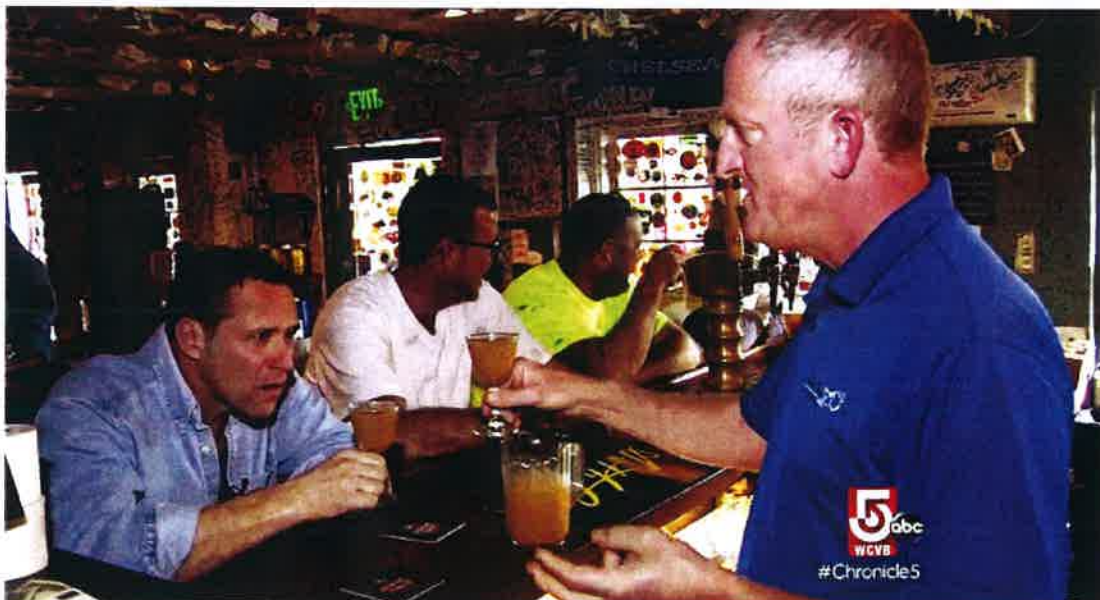
The BTA partnered with the Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club for an extended press trip from 20-26 May and provided assistance in arranging the various site visits and experiences for two Bermuda episodes. For the first episode, which aired on 17 June, host Ade Adepitan joined the crowds enjoying the America's Cup competition and spoke to Sir Ben Ainslie of Britain's Land Rover BAR team about concerns of the oceans being polluted by plastic, as well as to scientists about developing robots to combat invasive lionfish in Bermuda's waters. In the second episode, which aired on 15 July, Ade Adepitan focused on Bermuda's shipwrecks as he explored the island with Adventure Tour Guide Jamie Harvey, Crystal Schultz from BUEI and Custodian of Historic Shipwrecks, Dr. Philippe Rouja. A compilation of the two episodes was later aired in October.



**WCVB Boston TV Show**

In February, WCVB Boston's Chronical reporter, Ted Reinstein, travelled to Bermuda to showcase some of the island's attractions, places, people and other popular features in the lead up to the America's Cup event.

In June, the programme aired host Anthony Everett's trip to Bermuda for its official preview of the Sail Boston 2017 event. The programme focused mainly on the Tall Ships as they would be continuing to Boston after Bermuda, and gave a glimpse of the America's Cup, both of which took place in Bermuda in June.



## Strategic, Limited Retail Sales

In 2017, BTA worked with hotel and airline partners to coordinate two targeted retail sale periods to build incremental demand for Bermuda. The Pink Sale ran in January and targeted the US, Canada and the UK. The Splash Sale ran in August and September and targeted Canada and the US. Both sales were highly successful, as can be seen in the following performance charts.

### Pink Sale Performance

KEY METRICS	2017 YTD	2016 ACTUAL	% Δ GROWTH FROM 2016	2015 ACTUAL	% Δ GROWTH FROM 2015
Website Sessions	234,427	171,857	36%	199,739	-14%
Pink Sale Page Sessions	180,345	146,824	23%	132,172	11%
Exit Link Clicks (to hotel partners)	N/A	N/A	N/A	11,552	90%
Total Reservations	6,594	4,428	49%	1,667	166%
Room Nights	30,608	19,900	54%	6,895	189%
Direct Visitor Spending	\$14.6 million	\$8.8 million	60%	\$4.2 million	115%
ROI	24-1	14-1		16-1	

### Splash Sale Performance

KEY METRICS	2017 YTD	2016 ACTUAL	% Δ GROWTH FROM 2016
Website Sessions	244,879	284,235	-14%
Splash Sale Page Sessions	141,069	130,265	8%
Exit Link Clicks (to hotel partners)	59,391	34,542	72%
Total Reservations	2,400	2,339	3%
Room Nights	10,874	10,414	4%
Direct Visitor Spending	\$7 million	\$6 million	15%
ROI	20-1	19-1	

## Bermuda Summer Fridays

In 2016 the BTA partnered with Uber to educate New Yorkers about Bermuda Summer Fridays. That marketing activation was widely praised for its innovation, so in 2017 the BTA partnered with JetBlue Vacations, *The New Yorker* and *Condé Nast Traveler* to spread the word about #BermudaSummerFridays.

### 'Bermuda Calling' JetBlue Vacations activation



The BTA and JetBlue Vacations worked together to help New Yorkers maximise their Summer Fridays by giving them the chance to win a weekend getaway to Bermuda. The ‘Bermuda Calling’ programme debuted on Broadway in New York City on 27 and 28 July by surprising unsuspecting New Yorkers who answered newly installed phones that had been built into a storefront in a highly trafficked area. Ringing sporadically throughout the day, those who answered the call were pleasantly surprised with a selection of prizes from JetBlue Vacations, ranging from a \$500 promotional discount or a vacation for two travellers, complete with air and hotel.

**The New Yorker “Wouldn’t you rather” sweepstakes**

The popular *New Yorker* magazine also partnered with the BTA for a Bermuda Summer Fridays sweepstakes. Readers were invited to describe how they would spend a Summer Friday in Bermuda in six words or less on Twitter in order to be entered into the sweepstakes, which comprised round-trip flights to Bermuda for two people, including three nights stay in a hotel. The *New Yorker* included a two-page colouring book spread, with Bermuda illustrations. The magazine recorded 10,000 sweepstakes entries.



**Condé Nast Traveler Rooftop Cocktail Party**

As part of an integrated media buy, the BTA and *Condé Nast Traveler* (CNT) hosted an exciting cocktail event at the SIXTY Soho Hotel to lure the fashionable set to Bermuda for Summer Fridays, incorporating a modern take on the island’s iconic fashion and environment. Sarah Meikle, fashion director for CNT, and Shiona Turini, a well-known Bermudian fashion stylist, helped to co-host the event, while Damon DeGraff, a Bermudian DJ and stylish tastemaker among New York and Bermuda’s social set, provided the music. Invitees were encouraged to come dressed in Bermuda chic apparel, whilst cocktails and canapes reflective of sophisticated Bermudian cuisine were served.



Verifone Media created artwork for Taxi tops promoting #BermudaSummerFridays



## Social Media

Bermuda Tourism Authority social channels all grew in the number of followers as well as reach:

**f** Facebook followers grew 5% to a total of 347,222

**t** Twitter followers grew 25% to a total of 25,713

**i** Instagram followers grew 40% to a total of 42,161

## Top Performing Post in each channel



**f** 10,000 Reactions (Likes, Hearts, Shock/Surprise, Smiles)  
361 Shares  
232 Comments



**t** 79 Retweets  
378 Likes  
10 Comments



**i** 3,276 Likes  
127 Comments



“The timing is right to engage entrepreneurs beyond the hotel sector because they see the impressive growth in tourism. With these new incentives (under the Tourism Investment Act), they are in a strong position to consider joining the tourism economy or perhaps even expand their current tourism businesses.”

Andy Burrows, Chief Investment Officer, BTA

**Overview**

Tourism investment is a major focus at the Bermuda Tourism Authority. The role of the Investment division is to enhance investment in the tourism industry through improving the investment environment, attracting investment in tourism and managing investor relations.

The division continued its mandate of developing an investment environment for domestic and international investors and operators in Bermuda. Focus remains on working with the Bermuda Government to introduce revised legislation to attract foreign direct investment, and review and modernise legislation that currently hampers investment in tourism-related industries. The outreach to both local and international investors and operators, as well as infrastructure service providers, remained a core activity and focus throughout 2017.



“Since the National Tourism Plan in 2012 the need to improve our tourism product has been a priority. Now, by way of the Tourism Investment Act, we have a mechanism to coordinate the improvements the island needs and our visitors want.”

Andy Burrows  
Chief Investment Officer,  
BTA

As part of the regular remit of this division, the Investment team attended numerous investment and development conferences to raise awareness of impending changes to Bermuda’s investment environment. In addition, quarterly meetings were held with local hotel owners and operators to assess local operating conditions.

## Highlights

During the course of the year, the Investment division carried out a number of engagements and were involved in several projects, which have been highlighted below.

At the start of the year, the team introduced and accompanied a local hotel investor to meet with a major hotel brand, and thereafter continued to work with the investor on a hotel development plan.

In the first quarter, the division accompanied the Bermuda Gaming Commission to a major gaming conference and met with potential casino operators and owners.

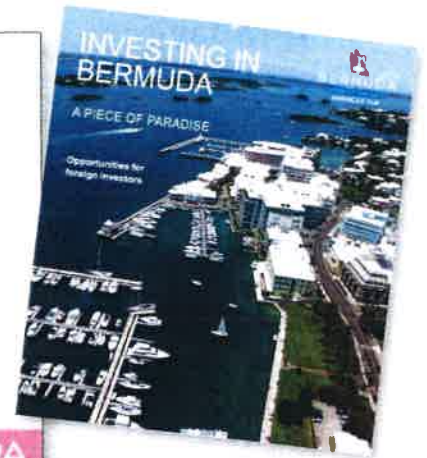
The Investment division also worked with America's Cup Bermuda (ACBDA) to create a portfolio of opportunities that was presented to potential local investors. Portions of the portfolio will be added to the Tourism Investor Handbook.

In the fall of 2017, Bermuda's Parliament passed the **Tourism Investment Act 2017**, which provides a range of incentives designed to stimulate investment across the island's tourism infrastructure. Hotel development and refurbishment is a major focus of the legislation, but restaurant owners and tourism attraction owners also stand to benefit from these new incentives.

How the Act benefits Bermudians:

## Objectives

- Stimulate tourism investment activity
- Create jobs
- Make incentives typically geared to foreign investors accessible to Bermudians
- Standardise the incentives available for tourism investment
- Lessen the need to create new legislation with each tourism investment project



BERMUDA

The BTA hosted the highly successful **7th Caribbean Hotel Investment and Operators Summit (CHICOS)** from 9-10 November at the Hamilton Princess Hotel & Beach Club, which was attended by almost 300 executives from all major hotels brands, developers, equity and financial advisors, including bankers. The summit has proven itself as the premier hospitality conference in the region, where attendees gather to discuss the markets and potential of the Caribbean region.

“Bermuda will benefit from being host nation for CHICOS, as various hotel industry leaders and investors will attend the conference. Additionally, CHICOS will work with the Government to showcase Bermuda's development sites for hotel projects.”

Parris Jordan, Chairman of the CHICOS Conference





“Businesses are excited about pursuing National Service Standards certification because they know it will be a powerful motivation force for their staff and a valuable marketing tool for their business. For visitors, the certification acts to assure them that they can expect a consistent standard of quality service.”

Karla Lacey, Chief Operations Officer, BTA

**Overview**

Behind the scenes, the Operations division ensures that the Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA), as a business, runs smoothly and efficiently, with human resources, finance, information technology, real estate management, governance, legal and contracting within its mandate. Out front, the On-island Communications team works in the public eye to inform Bermuda’s residents of the work that the BTA is doing, building awareness of events and tourism-related news, and instilling pride with the tourism appreciation programme.

In all areas, 2017 was a busy year for this division, as the Operations team continued to build on the solid foundations created and relationships established to look ever forward on ways to garner and sustain local residents’ buy in with the tourism product.

**Human Resources**

As at 31 December 2017, the Bermuda Tourism Authority had 39 employees in the Bermuda and New York offices. This includes 36 full-time permanent and three full-time fixed-term contracts. The breakdown of the divisions is as follows:



As in 2016, two summer interns were hired in 2017. One of the interns was in her second year at the University of Nevada studying Hospitality and was a graduate of the START programme under the Bermuda Hospitality Institute, while the other was in his third year at the University of Stirling in the U.K. studying Business Management and Marketing. The latter had spent many summers working at Crystal Caves.

This was the third consecutive year the BTA provided summer employment for college students.

**Engagement**

The BTA solidified its commitment to increase employee engagement by adding it to the Corporate Goals for 2017. Starting in March 2017, monthly “Pulse Surveys” were disseminated to assist in tracking the success of, and improv-





Team building!

ing the effectiveness of, organisational initiatives, programmes and goals as they relate to and align with achieved results, employee perceptions and expectations, and supporting and maintaining the organisation’s unique culture.

To drive engagement across the entire BTA team, a Social Committee was formed in May to include members of both the Bermuda and the New York teams. Subsequently, the Committee coordinated several events for 2017.

Additionally, in the third quarter, the annual BTA Team Strategy Meeting was held at the Hamilton Princess & Beach Club. Three days of collaborative meetings engaged the entire team on numerous topics related to 2018 business planning, and the deployment and promotion of tourism services in the future.

The meetings saw the entire team collaborate on numerous topics that were identified as being important to the team through the monthly Pulse Surveys. Conversations were held in open forum and round table discussions and the results of these have been compiled and will be used to assist in the development of strategy for 2018.

#### *Social Committee*

The Social Committee was instrumental in a few events in the last quarter. These included: team wellness challenges for Bermuda and New York, a wedding shower, Cup Match celebrations in Bermuda and New York and the coordination of team building events for the BTA Team Strategy meeting.

### **Training & Standards**

#### **National Service Standard Introduced**

Following the identification of the five service principles and the intake of pilot participants at the end of 2016, the BTA continued to grow the National Service Standards Programme (NSSP) and participant list. In 2017, the BTA welcomed more than two dozen organisations into the NSSP.

In order to gain certification, participating businesses had to demonstrate mastery of five principles of service on a consistent basis and have 70 percent of customer facing staff complete the Certified Tourism Ambassador programme. Mystery shoppers visited the businesses more than once to ensure standards were being met.



Having met all requirements, the following businesses gained certification in 2017:

- Tobacco Bay
- Lili Bermuda (Front Street, Hamilton)
- Bermuda Fun Golf
- 27 Century Boutique
- Alexandra Mosher Studios
- Bermuda Transit
- Chopstix Fusion
- Dolphin Quest
- Flanagan’s Irish Pub
- The Bermuda Perfumery (St. George’s)

These organisations add to the already diverse group participating in the Programme, representing many sectors in Bermuda’s tourism industry. The Programme has been further enhanced by the BTA’s introduction of a sustainable training model that allows businesses pursuing certification to close service delivery gaps that stand in their way.

Certified businesses have access to an official certification seal to inform consumers that they uphold high service standards. The seal can be used online, in the business entry window, or anyplace the business does its marketing.

In the third quarter, the inclusion of governmental regulations surrounding the various tourism sectors were included to ensure businesses are operating within the confines of the set laws. One example: businesses must certify that they are up-to-date on any mandatory taxes or payments. The introduction of these additional standards serves to safeguard the integrity of the certification and assists in driving the sector to ever strive for raising the bar.

A web-based portal facilitates all aspects of the National Service Standards Certification process, from initial expression of interest to online training registration, as well as customer feedback and mystery shops. Details can be found at [www.service.bm](http://www.service.bm).





With the continued expansion of the NSSP, the need for a well-trained, diverse group of mystery shoppers must be fulfilled. Modifications to the reporting requirements were made to ensure the process and execution of this element of the programme fully aligns with the standards set by the NSSP. Only Certified Tourism Ambassadors (CTAs) are eligible to be a mystery shopper.

The BTA is looking forward to the future of this programme and the benefits it provides for the tourism industry and the island's visitors. Industry stakeholders and partners have expressed immense support for the NSSP, which will ensure the destination meets and exceeds customer expectations.

**Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA)**

Tying in with the America's Cup, throughout the month of June a 'super group' of CTAs were trained for deployment through the BTA's social media campaign #AskBermuda. While there were limited opportunities to use the group, the model will be replicated for big events.

**Renewals & Promotion**

At the end of 2017 there were 782 Certified Tourism Ambassadors in Bermuda. CTA outreach and engagement included:

- Two CTA exclusive information sessions at the Bermuda Underwater Exploration Institute in March. Nearly 100 CTAs attended the sessions to learn first-hand about the BTA's focus for 2017, to view the latest marketing campaign, and to hear the latest on summer activities, including the America's Cup
- Group Cliff Jump in August
- Human Triangle in August
- Water Experiences at Blue Hole Water Sports in August
- Twizy Drive in the Town of St. George's in August

The finale was a CTA reception that took place at Tobacco Bay in September, during which a new CTA promotional video debuted. The purpose of the video was two-fold: to drive new CTA recruitment efforts and to retain current CTAs during the 2017 recertification process. The BTA social media posting of this promotional video reached 20,209 people, garnering 14,355 views.

By the end of 2017, Standards & Training were in the process of transitioning management of the CTA programme from the Bermuda Hospitality Institute (BHI) to the BTA. The BHI has, since the start of the programme, been responsible for its day-to-day administration, marketing and promotion. Bringing the programme under the BTA's Standards & Training function allows greater alignment with the NSSP, and also offers greater opportunities and dedicated resources to ensure its growth in the future.

“We're pleased the management at Lili Bermuda has now been through the process twice - initially for staff in St. George at the Bermuda Perfumery and now the team at the Lili Bermuda Boutique in Hamilton have also been certified. This tells us Bermudian businesses recognise the value of National Service Standards and understand that superior customer service gives them an edge, while helping to set Bermuda apart from its competitors.”

Karla Lacey,  
Chief Operations Officer,  
BTA



## Public & Stakeholder Relations

### Vacation Rental Property Presentations

In April, the BTA held a series of town-hall style meetings to share information on the Bermuda vacation rental market. Presented in partnership with Airbnb, more than 200 people attended the four sessions aimed at those considering entering the sector and those already offering vacation rentals.

To keep this sector engaged, additional materials and correspondence shared after the sessions focused on:

#### Performance Data

Included in first quarter data for the first time were statistics on the number of visitors who chose to stay in vacation rentals. The data showed the local vacation rental industry was up 76 percent in the first quarter of 2017 when compared to the first quarter a year earlier. And, equally important, the local hotel industry was up sharply as well. The market also increased in both sectors during the second quarter. This data is now included in all quarterly reports.

#### Information Session Presentations

During the information sessions in April, three presentations were offered: One from the BTA on the nature of the vacation rental opportunity and two from Airbnb – one for existing vacation rental property owners and another for those looking to get into the business. All three presentations are now available on the BTA's website for review.

#### FAQs

Airbnb provided responses to questions raised at the sessions in support of its Memorandum of Understanding with the Bermuda Tourism Authority. The company created a helpful Frequently Asked Questions document, which is now available on the BTA website.

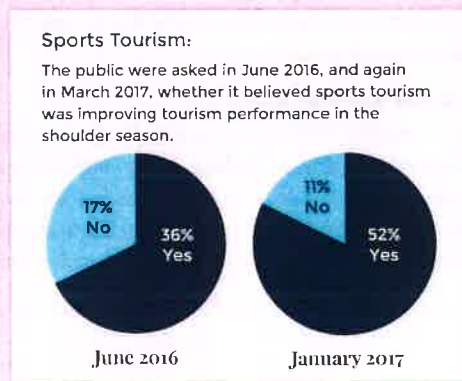


Vacation Rental Property presentations held in a series of town-hall style meetings



### Public Opinion

Following telephone polls that were taken in January and June 2017, with the following comparative results, effective storytelling, public relations and stakeholder engagement are thought to play a key role in changing public opinion in a way that has shown a huge shift toward a more positive public perception of the BTA.



## Beach Economy

The Beach Economy Vision aims to create jobs for Bermudians, increase visitor spending and improve the overall beach experience for locals and visitors alike. In 2017, while there was a lot of activity, results were mixed.

By the end of 2017, the Beach Economy Vision launched in 2016 continued to see incremental progress toward full realisation. Importantly, the beach economy was cited as one of five key priorities of the BTA that, despite the winner of July's General Election, would be carried forward as critical to the tourism industry. Fortunately, the commitment by the former government to alter legislation was executed by the new government in its first legislative term. The change in legislation permits the relevant Minister to diversify and balance the seats on the National Parks Commission, which has oversight of public beaches, with an equal number of conservationists and economic thinkers who also care about protecting the environment. In 2018, appointments to the Commission are expected to include representation from the BTA and other economic growth organisations to ensure visitors and entrepreneurs will have a voice in the future decision making of Bermuda's parks and beaches.

Meantime, increased economic activity and an enhanced experience at Clearwater Beach is in the cards with the Beach Boys operation at Tobacco Bay slated to expand to St. David's, and Gombey's at Clearwater Beach continuing its concessions service for beach goers.

With the enhanced operations at Clearwater Beach and the well-established operations at Tobacco Bay and Horsehoe Bay, only Shelly Bay and John Smith's Bay are still to be addressed from the list of public beaches in the Beach Economy Vision. The BTA's Beach Economy Working Group aims to make progress on those two beaches in 2018.



## Bermuda Business Development Agency

Research & Business Intelligence and Public & Stakeholder Relations hosted a session for the Bermuda Development Agency (BDA) business development managers, walking them through the BTA's organisational structure, key objectives and budget. The goal was to foster a stronger working relationship between the organisations at the middle management level. Later in the year, in the fourth quarter, the same group reconvened to discuss the inner workings of the Tourism Investment Act.

## Rediscover the Rail Trail Event

Although the weather on the day of the first Rediscover the Rail Trail event (east end) in March was wholly uncooperative, the buzz created around Rediscover the Rail Trail was sufficient to accomplish the objectives, at least partially:

- Reimagine the Rail Trail as a modern-day tourism asset with cultural relevance
- Rediscover its benefits as a health and wellness experience
- Redefine the Rail Trail as a year-round adventure for visitors and locals

The second Rediscover the Rail Trail event (west end) was held in October, which was highly successful.



### The Today Show

As absolutely wonderful, inspiring and beneficial the Today Show programmes were for Bermuda, the lack of black entrepreneurs or storytellers in the two hours of programming created a negative stir among sectors of the local public. As anticipated, some of the public feedback suggested it was something the Bermuda Tourism Authority should have been able to control or prevent.



In response, the BTA acknowledged those concerns and hailed those black Bermudians who represented Bermuda well on TODAY, including countless others behind the camera. The BTA also confirmed it consistently puts forward diverse representations of Bermuda for editorial decision makers and reiterated that the BTA always strives for authenticity in tourism advertising and marketing because who Bermuda is sets the island apart from competitors. The TODAY Show highlighted the culture, cuisine and history of Bermuda in two hour-long broadcast segments airing 18 May and 19 May, 2017. The total estimated viewership was 4 million, a total media value of \$2.96 million. Ultimately the two-day broadcast was a victory for the island's tourism economy.

### JetBlue Expanded Service

The On-island Communications team coordinated the BTA and Bermuda Government participation in the launch activities supporting JetBlue's expanded service. The successful launch resulted in significant media coverage, including journalists from Bermuda and abroad. The BTA received the following thank you e-mails from JetBlue:

*Hello BTA Team,*

*We want to send our biggest appreciations for everything you did to make our events so special this week. From the support in Boston and New York, to the reception upon landing, evening event at The Dock, press trip and Today Show inclusion -- you really know how to roll out the blue carpet for JetBlue!*

*It was such a treat to work together and you were all incredible to work with.*

*We look forward to seeing everyone and working together again soon -- let us know if you need anything from JetBlue!*

*Thanks again,  
The JetBlue Team  
Danielle Sanders  
Manager, Corporate Communications  
JetBlue*

*Hello Team BTA!*

*I second Danielle's words. It was so wonderful to work with each of you. I don't know that we've ever had an event run so smoothly, and that's thanks to your professionalism. Of course, Bermuda is such a stunning destination, which only contributed to the great experience.*

*I hope that we get to work together again soon, and I'm also wishing you all the best with the America's Cup.*

*Best regards,  
Elizabeth Ninomiya  
Manager, Corporate Communications  
Latin America & Caribbean*

Continuing with the effort to support the BTA's marketing partnership with JetBlue here in the local market, the BTA coordinated a social media contest to give away a flight on JetBlue to an attendee at the Rugby Classic. The objective was to educate the public on JetBlue's first winter season of expanded year-round service to/from Boston and New York City. A 'Step and Repeat' was set up in the Members' Tent and anyone who posed for a picture was eligible to win the prize. All the photos were posted on our corporate Facebook page.



**Asset Bank Training for Local Media/Partners**

To expose communications and media partners to the updated look and feel that is better aligned with Bermuda's new brand image, learning sessions on BTA's image asset bank was held for partners in the Government's Department of Communication & Information, as well as Bermemes and bermuda.com.

**America's Cup**

Both prior to and during the America's Cup event, the BTA supported on-island communication outreach, particularly with local stakeholders.

Before the America's Cup, the BTA worked with ACEA and ACBDA to hold an information session to educate stakeholders on the full, combined events calendar for the 35th America's Cup. The BTA took on the role of explaining to the public the events of May/June in one presentation, as there were numerous disparate entities working on events, i.e. City of Hamilton, Corporation of St. George, Tall Ships, ACEA, BHW Ltd., etc.

Immediately following the information session, the BTA put on its second America's Cup prep rally at Victoria Park. Sponsors/Partners of the America's Cup were invited to send their employees, while representatives from ACBDA, BTA, ACEA and the Premier held speaking roles at the event.

Preparing and overseeing much of the BTA CEO's media engagements during the America's Cup was a heavy lift given the level of attention surrounding the event. This included local media, but also the Financial Times, Chronicle (Boston TV) and a reception for visiting journalists, in cooperation with Goslings.



Finally, with the help of Turn the Tide on Plastic, Mustafa Ingham's mother, Mandy, XL Catlin and the BTA publicly shared their support of Mustafa in his journey to become a Volvo Ocean Race Sailor. As Mustafa was a member of Team BDA in the Red Bull Youth America's Cup, this sponsorship provided an opportunity to demonstrate a social legacy benefit of the 35th America's Cup.

### Superyacht Research

The BTA hosted two superyacht information sessions during the America's Cup calendar to educate stakeholders on the superyacht research that was being conducted. It was a distinct communications advantage to have these presentations take place while so many superyachts were in the jurisdiction. The objective of the presentation and media coverage around this issue was to articulate a vision for Bermuda in superyacht tourism as a legacy benefit of the 35th America's Cup.

The thrust of the BTA recommendations for superyacht tourism is to:

- Focus on attracting superyachts with guests/owners on board to increase tourism spending; market Bermuda experiences that align with superyacht audience desires
- Create new legislation that will allow visiting superyachts to charter to guests, while protecting the interests of Bermudians already in the yacht charter business
- Establish sailing events that draw superyacht visitors
- Consider the refit and repair industry that will inspire longer superyacht stays – industry should be owned/operated by Bermudians

A formal legislative position was prepared to share with political leaders immediately following the General Election. Meanwhile, a superyacht working group was formed to advance efforts in this area.

### Summer Events

As awareness of summer events during the America's Cup had been flagged as a concern by the BTA Product & Experiences team, the Operations team addressed the issue using the following measures:

1. **East End Summer Video Series** – A communications plan and budget were written to support the creation of a biweekly video series to educate visitors and locals about events happening in the east end. During the summer the videos were placed on the ZBM evening news, Bernews and on radio news at BBC and VSB, as well as on social media, where they received an exceptionally high number of views. The series was brought back in December to highlight St. George events during the holiday season.
2. **Events Online** – All video traffic was pushed to [gotobermuda.com](http://gotobermuda.com) for more information about summer events in Bermuda. The On-island Communications team reconciled the scripts with what was available online and forwarded missing information to the social media team members in New York, so visitors and locals were better informed.
3. **Bonfires & BBQ** – There was particular concern about attendance for the final instalment of this event and a fast turnaround media plan was developed, which included promoting a Bonfires & BBQ video that was produced by the City of Hamilton. The video was boosted on social media and ran during the live television coverage of the Red Bull Youth America's Cup. In the end, the final Bonfires & BBQ had the best attendance numbers of the summer and participating businesses acknowledged the improvements over the previous instalments.

### Fly Boarding

The BTA partnered with Savvy Entertainment and the City of Hamilton for the first-ever international flyboard competition. The overall goal was to connect visitors with this unique and brand-aligned adventure experience that is available on-island from at least one excursion provider. The partnership provided access to rich content that was archived and immediately posted on consumer and corporate social media channels.



## General Election

Prior to the July General Election, the BTA released a statement laying out the five tourism priorities most important to the continued growth and economic development of the industry: (1) Tourism Investment Act; (2) vacation rentals; (3) beach economy; (4) film commission; (5) superyachts. Releasing the statement before the election supported the BTA's commitment to a bipartisan stance - i.e. irrespective of the political party governing Bermuda, the priorities for the country's tourism industry remained the same.

## Brand Awareness

As part of introducing the community to the Bermuda brand, the BTA hosted a Brand Night at *Sea Breeze* on the Elbow Beach Terrace in October. The venue was chosen because its one of the few places to have outdoor live entertainment and food & beverage service after Labour Day. It was important to embrace year-round outdoor events as part of the celebration of the brand. The space was decked out with elements of the Bermuda brand similar to the way event decor is conducted overseas by the marketing team. The event was well attended and allowed the BTA to promote brand awareness through representation of local tastemakers on site and the resulting media coverage.



## Tourism Appreciation

### #LoveMyBermuda

The BTA continued the grass roots campaign #LoveMyBermuda throughout the year, interacting with various groups in the community to engage and include Bermuda's residents in the tourism product. Photos and videos were captured at each of the events and turned into either a 30-second or 60-second clip shown on social media, ZBM News and/or in Bermuda's movie theatres. Some of the outreach and events during the year have been highlighted below.

At the start of the year, the older demographic was targeted. Seniors were approached and, unprompted, asked to speak on why they love Bermuda. The results were turned into a 60-second video clip.

In addition to the interviews that took place on the street, the #LoveMyBermuda Johnny Barnes mascot continued his monthly roundabout appearances at Crow Lane to wave at morning commuters with three different student groups - on 2 January with PHC's youth football team, on 6 February with CedarBridge Academy, and on 6 March with the Boy Scouts & Brownies. These events were captured on camera as stills and video before being turned into a 60-second advertisement on rotation in local theatres and news stations. The call to action prompted a group of school students to create individual artwork at the end of the year that answered their own question, "Why is Bermuda so special?"

For the second consecutive year, the BTA sponsored the Pembroke Hamilton Club's (PHC) Good Friday event and promoted #LoveMyBermuda through giveaways and interactive activities. Video and images from the event were edited with #LoveMyBermuda footage captured in June at the Crow Lane roundabout, alongside the Johnny Barnes Mascot. The result was a 60-second video that aired twice weekly during the news throughout the month of June.



The BTA, in collaboration with the Bermuda Hospitality Institute, promoted #LoveMyBermuda in conversations during the Certified Tourism Ambassador appreciation week. The BTA offered a number of free experiences to engage CTAs and grow their industry knowledge of new and existing products and experiences on island. Footage of both images and video from the event were placed on social media.

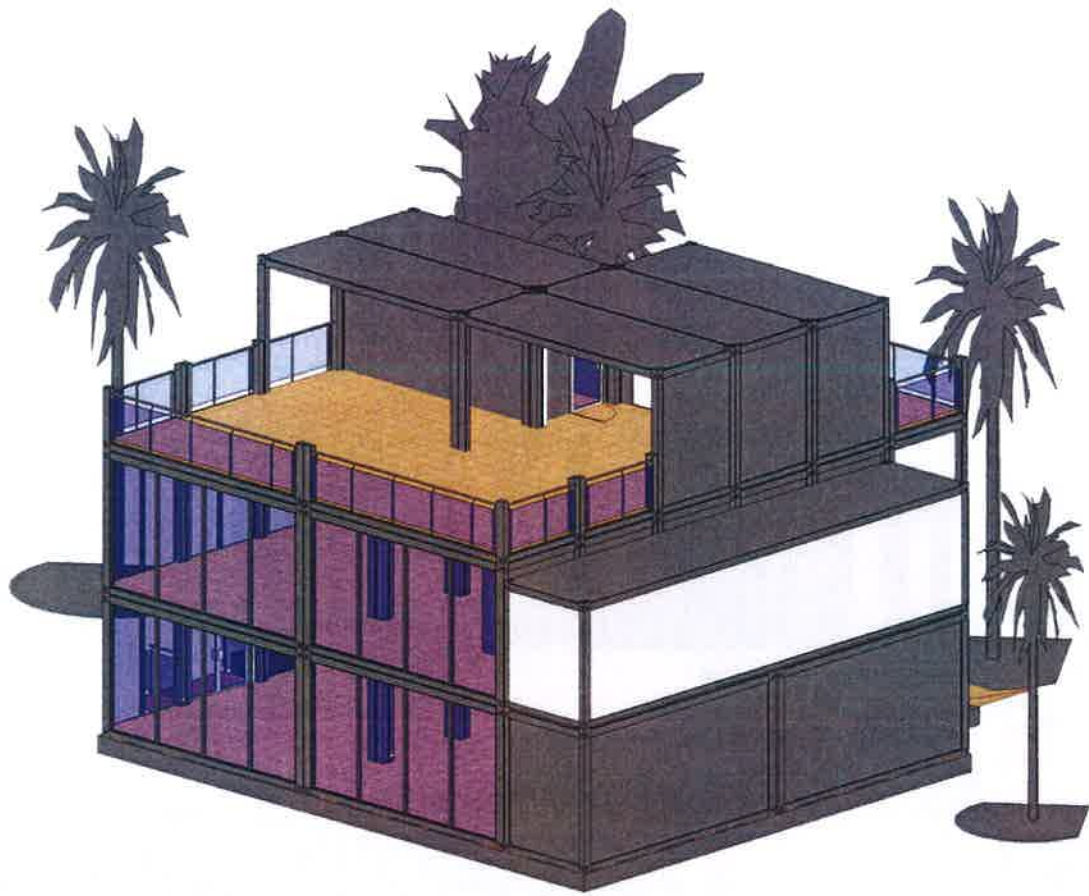


### Visitor Services

In 2017, the BTA formed a wholly owned subsidiary, Bermuda Visitor Services Centre Ltd. (BVSC), to manage the operation of the organisation's Visitor Services Centres in Bermuda.

At the beginning of July, the BTA took possession of the Artemis Hospitality Pavilion used by the team during AC35. The building will be repurposed as a Visitor Services Centre on Front Street in Hamilton. The structure consists of 33 stackable container units that were disassembled and stored on Cross Island in the former BAR warehouse. Simultaneously, lease negotiations began with the Corporation of Hamilton on the waterside location and a planning application was finalised for submission. By year end, planning permission had been approved and an early second quarter 2018 opening date established.

As always, the BTA's visitor services goal is to provide travellers with the information they're looking for. This project will accomplish that, but we also want to surprise and delight them with discoveries they never could have imagined.





## Board of Directors



**Paul Telford** (Chairman)  
Managing Director at the Rosewood  
Tucker's Point Resort in Bermuda



**Phil Barnett**  
Director and President of the  
Island Restaurant Group



**Sophia Greaves**  
Director, Conyers Dill & Pearman Limited



**Peter Everson**  
President of PE Consultants Ltd.



**Jessica Mello**  
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**Earl (Butch) Graves Jr.**  
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**Allison Towlson**  
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