



**ATLANTIC CITY**  
CONVENTION & VISITORS AUTHORITY

[DOATLANTICCITY.COM](http://DOATLANTICCITY.COM)

## **2011 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Welcome from the President**

Throughout 2011 change established itself as a constant in Atlantic City, and the past and present collided thanks to the “Boardwalk Empire” phenomenon.

Change was evident in the economy that impacted tourism in general, which Atlantic City’s hoteliers, restaurants and attractions met with cooperative packaging. Participation in Atlantic City Restaurant Week met a new high as restaurants saw it as a way to entice new customers with value-priced meals. The ACCVA promoted free and low-cost activities.

Change was also evident as the Atlantic City Alliance took shape and planning began for the Atlantic City Tourism District, prodding a reevaluation of Atlantic City’s offerings.

Major changes in the casino landscape included sale of Trump Marina to Landry’s, Inc., which immediately began to re-brand the property into a Golden Nugget, with \$150 million in renovations throughout.

Revel Entertainment also provided substantial news and marketing value for Atlantic City with the resumption of construction, changing the skyline and promising to draw visitors to its spring 2012 grand opening.

The city’s list of restaurants also saw substantial changes in 2011, with several of Landry’s well-known restaurant brands taking hold at Golden Nugget, Caesars Entertainment forming a new alliance with B.R. Guest brands and an expansion of local independent eateries.

Interest in Prohibition-era Atlantic City, spurred by the popularity of the HBO “Boardwalk Empire” series, provided several tourism opportunities for tour operators, restaurants and bars, and even served as a catalyst for a casino to adopt a Roaring Twenties theme.

Atlantic City continued to grow as a center for entertainment and special events, as seen in the success of the first annual Atlantic City Boardwalk Rodeo and the annual Atlantic City Airshow, which drew a record attendance of approximately 800,000 spectators. The 2011 Atlantic City Marathon rebounded from near-obscure to more than 3,000 runners

under new management and expansion to a full weekend of special Marathon-related events. While fewer A-list entertainers hit the concert trail in 2011, many of those who did played to packed houses at Boardwalk Hall and other Atlantic City venues.

The convention aspect of Atlantic City also continues to contribute to the city's future success, contributing solidly to the high room occupancy rates. Advance bookings for future years are on pace for impressive increases.

Overall, 2011 served as a stepping stone to future growth throughout all of Atlantic City's business sectors, and we look forward to increases in tourism, jobs and revenue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Vasser". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "V".

Jeff Vasser

## **2011 Annual Report Tourism Marketing**

The Tourism marketing Department had a very active 2011 keeping tour operators, travel agents, group leaders, Canadian travel agents and other tourism minded businesses informed and up to date about all activities in Atlantic City. Additionally, the department enhanced International tour operator and FIT interest as well as to continue to oversee film and sports marketing and marketing partnership activities.

On January 8-11, 2011 the ACCVA hosted a Pre-ABA Marketplace FAM Tour. There were 17 tour operators who opted for our tour, which was the highest attended out of six tours. The tour gave them an appreciation for all that Atlantic City has to offer, they toured the attractions, dined at several of our partner restaurants, shopped till they dropped at the Walk, The Pier Shops and the Quarter, relaxed at Qua Spa, tried their luck in the casinos, visited Renault Winery and Smithville and strolled the Boardwalk. As a result of the FAM one tour operator from Canada booked their entire series in Atlantic City.

As one of the most viable and significant marketing efforts for the Domestic Group market, the ACCVA and 28 of our marketing partners hosted an evening event during the American Bus Association's annual meeting. Themed "A Day and Night in Atlantic City," it was held at Adventure Aquarium and was a huge success. The Aquarium did a wonderful job partnering with us to make this a truly memorable event. More than 2,000 people attended, making it the most-attended event, and even a snow storm didn't curtail attendance. It featured six Atlantic City restaurants set up as a restaurant gala, shopping game shows, spa chair massages, palm readers, Boardwalk games, food and prizes, plus a casino floor filled with gaming tables and slot machines. Numerous people visited our booth the next day to thank us for the event and to say that Atlantic City is definitely in the forefront of everyone's mind -- suppliers and operators alike.

International Tourism has grown in popularity and Atlantic City is on radar for visitors from the UK, Ireland and Canada. Since many international visitors visit Philadelphia, it is natural that they also visit Atlantic City. Therefore, the ACCVA in cooperation with the Philadelphia CVB have secured representation for the UK and Ireland markets through The Greg Evan's Consultancy. We share Greg Evans with Philadelphia and Valley Forge CVBs, leveraging additional marketing dollars through cooperative marketing.

The ACCVA along with the Philadelphia CVB hosted a group of 17 tour operators from the UK and Ireland. We pre-qualified the tour operators during World Travel Market 2010 for the Lady GaGa concert at Boardwalk Hall in February, and treated them to an action-packed two days, including a City tour, restaurants, welcome receptions and, of course, shopping.

Additional activities:

- Attended 20 domestic travel shows.
- Hosted four domestic familiarization trips (FAMs).
- Attended four AAA shows and hosted six site trips.
- Attended three international trade shows.
- Assisted with 25 film projects.
- Hosted the A10 Men's College Basketball Championships and ECAC Men's Hockey at Boardwalk Hall.
- Exhibited at the GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual & Transgender) EXPO in New York City, which is the largest show for this market with more than 18,000 attendees.

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## Convention Development

Convention sales activities in 2011 began to see a renewed interest in Atlantic City as economic conditions eased after backlash from the “AIG Effect.” While convention and meeting planners retooled their events for cost efficiencies, exhibitors recognized the value in focusing on face-to-face selling, and delegates viewed Atlantic City as a top choice to visit for both business and after-conference fun.

The Atlantic City Convention Center hosted 105 meetings, trade shows and public shows throughout the year, and an additional 75 shows were held at the city’s individual properties, a number largely unchanged from 2010. However, the value of those conventions increased substantially, with a 37% increase in total number of delegates and a 15% increase in room nights, bringing a 25% increase in delegate spending:

- 446,820 delegates visited Atlantic City for shows at the Convention Center and individual properties.
- Delegates used 132,429 room nights.
- Delegate spending reached approximately \$171.7 million.

Additionally, the Restaurant Cart used at major events in the Atlantic City Convention Center booked 4,186 reservations at Marketing Partner members’ restaurants for delegates.

Looking to the future, our long-lead sales efforts continue to yield positive results, with future bookings increasing and several new trade shows to be announced in 2012.

# Marketing Partner Program

The ACCVA's Marketing Partnership program continues to provide a valuable service by providing low-cost marketing options for members. Many small businesses, attractions, restaurants and other businesses utilized our market reach throughout the year as an addition to their own growth strategies.

Membership in the Marketing Partnership program maintained a 95% retention rate but did see a decline of .3% in membership. After analyzing cancellations we found that several businesses closed. This is a reflection of the difficult economic times.

Our activities on their behalf in 2011 included:

- Compiled and sent 12 monthly Destination Marketing Update newsletters to partners. The primary function of the DMU is to keep partners abreast of ACCVA activity taken to promote the destination.
- Compiled and posted 12 Monthly Partner Mailings, which include tourism leads, convention development updates and partner forms.
- Hosted four ACCVA Partner Mixers at four different partner properties. The Holiday Mixer continued the tradition of a charitable component where partners can bring items such as new clothes, toiletry items, baby items, etc., for donation to Covenant House. This organization helps homeless youth ages 16 to 21.
- Hosted two ACCVA Marketing Partner Orientations to help Partners understand the programs we provide and utilize them to their benefit. We remodeled the program into a "speed dating" style where partners and staff have an opportunity to meet each other and truly discuss and learn about individual departments and how to leverage membership with the ACCVA.
- Hosted the fourth Atlantic City Restaurant Week (ACRW) in which 75 Atlantic County restaurants participated. The event increased attendance in restaurants and hotels in some cases more than 50%.
- Continued the tradition of working with the Boys & Girls Club for ACRW by hosting etiquette classes. A local etiquette expert and the host for the local TV show "Better Living with Adrienne" provided a basic dining etiquette class and then we took them to dinner at a restaurant who was participating in ACRW, where they were able to practice what they learned. The program was highlighted on the local news, on the "Better Living with Adrienne" show and in the local newspaper.
- The ACRW also hosted a "Taste of Restaurant Week Charity Kick-Off." Fifteen ACRW restaurant participants gave tastings of restaurant week menu items at a charity benefit. Tickets were sold for \$25 each and four local charities benefited from the proceeds.
- We partnered with the Greater Atlantic City Chamber and hosted a Member/Partner Seminar where members were invited to learn how to better utilize their memberships with several organizations. The ACCVA discussed social media marketing, the Chamber talked about the array of benefits to chamber membership and utilizing those benefits. The Executive Director of the Small Business Development Center spoke about the ABCs of business.

Sixty-five member/partners attended and were pleased with the knowledge they gained during the seminar.

- We conducted a Marketing Partner Survey to see if there were ways to improve the Marketing Partnership program. The results were positive for ACCVA staff.
- The ACCVA has a Marketing Partner extra-net Web site for partners to update their publication listings, add special offers, collect sales leads and update profile information. We continue to train marketing partners so they will use this tool to benefit their individual businesses.
- The ACCVA partnered with the Greater Atlantic City Concierge Association (GACCA). The president of the ACCVA spoke at a GACCA about what the ACCVA does for the community and local businesses. We forward all press releases to members of the GACCA and they are very appreciative to have the information to pass on to visitors.
- The ACCVA Foundation (ACCVAF) continues the relationship with the GACCA by agreeing to distribute scholarships to students in local colleges who are majoring in Hospitality. Year to date we have distributed 17 scholarships over four years. The scholarships are awarded during the annual Atlantic City Host Awards which honors hospitality workers. We also continue to work with the GACCA on an annual fundraiser, “At The Shore Wine Tasting Art Show,” to benefit the ACCVAF/GACCA scholarship. The show also gives exposure to local artists who do not have many opportunities to showcase their work.
- The ACCVA partnered with HBO/Boardwalk Empire to create \$19.20 menus and Boardwalk Empire-themed drinks as a special promotion. More than 25 restaurants participated and we promoted this on the Web site and with press releases. HBO also highlighted the event on their Web site.
- For National Tourism Week we helped our Partner launch a Roaring 20s tour. We invited media, members of the Concierge Association and Marketing Partners on the 3-hour tour. Participants were able to get a taste of what things were like during prohibition and see some of the places the original “Nucky” hung out. News coverage on TV and in several print and online media resulted.

## **GREEN INITIATIVES - 2011**

### **ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER & BOARDWALK HALL**

Prepared on 1/27/12 by J. Mitrocsak, Regional Director of Operations

#### CURRENT GREENING EFFORTS

##### 1. Energy Conservation:

- The Energy S.O.P. is updated twice a year in order to reduce electrical, thermal and water consumption.
- Reduced Electricity and Heating usage by 2% and cooling by 7% at ACCC. Reduced Electricity at BWH by 15%, a record low since the building renovation.
- Solar Photovoltaic Panels: We have produced 30% of electrical consumption this year, a record high. We hit a peak month of production in July 2011. The total production since we installed the system is the equivalent to avoiding:

15,069,898 lbs. CO2  
662 homes electricity for 1 year

##### 2. Demand Response:

- Enrolled both buildings in the demand respond program to curtail electricity usage during peak periods. We will receive payments totaling approximately \$ 50,000 per year.
- Green Roots Plaques – As part of the Program, we received plaques for both buildings that state 20 trees will be planted by the Arbor Day Foundation in the Plumas National Forest in Quincy, California.

##### 3. EPA Building Competition:

The ACCC was Finalist Contestant for the EPA Energy Star National Building Competition based on energy usage and conservation measures.

##### 4. Event Venue Benchmarking

Participated in a benchmarking study to gather and share industry performance and best practices relative to sustainability.

##### 5. Recycling: Year-to-date

Paper, cardboard: 69,480 lbs.

Glass, Plastic, Aluminum, Bottles & Cans, Shrink Wrap: 5.42 tons

Miscellaneous Metals, Iron and Steel: 34,629 lbs.

Lamps, Batteries and Ballasts.

Recyclable replacement cartridges on soap dispensers.

Printer cartridges

Cooking oil: 906.5 gallons

Electronic equipment including Printers, Computers, Monitors, Copiers – 8,220 lbs.

Radios - 18

Pallets  
CAT 5 and extension cords

#### 6. Operations Green Products:

Hand vacuums, floor mats, toilet paper, EPA brown paper towels, coreless jumbo tissue, hand towels, air fresheners and foam soap, office paper and printer cartridges.  
Eliminating disposable cups in the office. Reducing paper use in the office by using recycled paper for notepads and using the computer for calendar functions, etc.  
Concrete areas are powerwashed versus the use of chemicals.

#### Food Service Green Products:

Introduced a “Green” line of disposable products ranging from compostable cutlery kits and plates to eco-friendly coffee cups and stirrers.

### CURRENT PROJECTS

- Lighting Audit & Remaining Retrofits – did a mockup with occupancy sensors and more energy efficient fixtures and lamps.
- Rail Terminal Under Platform Lighting Retrofit – retrofitting T12 to T8 fixtures.
- Replaced indoor astrovision with new digital TV.

### FUTURE PROJECTS

- Went out to bid for a solar 1.2 Megawatt system at Boardwalk Hall. This would do approximately 30% of the total electrical consumption at the Boardwalk Hall.
- Wind turbine: System could produce approximately 16% of annual electrical consumption. Feasibility studies and surveying have been performed. Review financing options.
- Replace ACCC outdoor marquee display.
- Replace Truss lighting at BW Hall with LED lighting.
- Water conservation projects such as the waterless urinals.

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### **Media Relations**

The Media Relations department, along with PR agency Lou Hammond & Associates, continued an aggressive campaign in 2011 to create positive impressions about Atlantic City and keep the city's offerings at front of mind awareness among editors, writers, broadcasters and bloggers.

In addition to providing compelling content for ACCVA publications and Web site, press releases, e-marketing post cards and newsletters, feature stories and advertorials, the staff maintained a media outreach program, hosted media for individual visits and familiarization tours ("fams"), assisted Marketing Partners and meeting planners with media outreach and supported local special events with media support.

In 2011, we hosted six media fams, bringing 38 media and their guests for group visits to show off the city. Additionally, we hosted and arranged visits for 22 writers, from publications as diverse as *Out Magazine*, *New York Post*, *Black Luxury Travel*, *Men's Health*, *Metro*, *Vacation Agent* and more.

The numbers add up. Trackable results include:

- 1,201 articles
- 166.1 million print circulation
- 146.3 million online circulation
- \$1.87 million advertising value

## **2011 Annual Report**

### **Visitor Services**

Our Visitor Service counselors are walking encyclopedias when it comes to Atlantic City, and serve as a valuable resource for visitors, providing information and advice on everything from where to dine on fresh seafood with a view, to where to stay on a budget or for a luxury getaway, how to get to the Marina District and where to buy a pair of flip flops.

They are able to respond to complaints and compliments with equal grace. They answer questions and help people online, over the phone, through snail mail and in person, at the visitor information centers on the Boardwalk and the Atlantic City Expressway.

In 2011, the helped visitors have a great time by:

- Greeting more than 131,000 visitors in person at the visitor centers,
- Booking more than 1,000 room nights for them, with an economic impact of more than \$589,000,
- Answering 8,613 phone inquiries,
- Responding to more than 61,000 visitor inquiries by email.