Destination Miami
A Strategic Plan to Guide the Future of Greater Miami and the Beaches’ Travel & Tourism Industry

GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Official Destination Sales & Marketing Organization for Greater Miami and the Beaches.
Greater Miami and the Beaches continues to enjoy record numbers of domestic and international visitors and expenditures. In order to ensure our continued success, the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) embarked on a process to develop a 2013-2017 Strategic Plan for our Travel and Tourism Industry.
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ABOUT THE PLAN

The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) is proud to have embarked on a strategic planning process that is comprehensive in scope and inclusive in design. This is not a marketing plan; rather, it is a roadmap for identifying and taking action on the critical issues that will drive the Travel and Tourism Industry forward for the next five years.

The Strategic Plan process began with an RFP (Request for Proposals) and the formation of a Screening Committee to select a highly qualified consulting firm with extensive experience that would assist the GMCVB in developing a plan through stakeholder facilitation and community feedback. Through this process, Miami-based Ernst & Young/MMGY Global was selected as the consulting firm to develop this plan. MMGY Global is a large integrated travel marketing firm that conducted the consumer interviews and surveys. Ernst & Young was also the consulting firm that developed the GMCVB’s 2002/2003 Strategic Plan.

The GMCVB wishes to express its sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to developing this plan — the culmination of more than a year’s work including input from elected officials, industry stakeholders, and a broad-based community.

Destination Miami: Strategic Plan — The Future of Greater Miami and the Beaches’ Travel & Tourism Industry 2013-2017 identifies a series of key recommendations, goals and objectives; and ways to effectively accomplish them to ensure that Travel and Tourism — Greater Miami’s #1 Industry — continues to thrive. The GMCVB is committed to leading the effort in the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Working with the GMCVB and its partners, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global supplemented the market research and analysis compiled by the GMCVB research team. Utilizing the supplemented research, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global updated its understanding of the current size, industry distribution and growth potential of the current Travel and Tourism Industry of Greater Miami and the Beaches, in addition to identifying new opportunities to highlight Greater Miami’s assets and mitigate the impact of its liabilities on the recommended strategies to accelerate future growth.

METHODOLOGY, PROCESS AND WORK PLAN

The following sections summarize the research methodology and approach:

Methodology and Process

Ernst & Young/MMGY Global utilized a three-pronged methodology to complete the analysis and develop recommendations for Destination Miami — the GMCVB’s Strategic Plan that will be implemented over the next several years. As depicted on the following page, the methodology included: a) the direct participation of elected officials, industry stakeholders, as well as engaged citizens from across Greater Miami and the Beaches and members of the GMCVB; b) multiple primary demand surveys with potential visitors (both domestic and international), meeting planners and tour operators; and c) the analysis of identified comparable destinations across a series of attributes critical for destination success. The results of the three tasks, in addition to research on leading practices among popular global destinations, were then utilized to identify common themes that highlight the opportunity for Greater Miami as a destination to build on its strengths and mitigate competitive disadvantages; these form the basis of the Strategic Plan recommendations.
**Stakeholder Interviews and Town Halls**

Ernst & Young/MMGY Global formally interviewed more than 40 local public and private sector Travel and Tourism Industry stakeholders representing tourism and business associations, private operators, regional/national development companies, government officials and agencies, as well as informally polled our industry network throughout the process. The discussions focused on overall perceptions of, trends in, and outlook for the Greater Miami travel and tourism market, its infrastructure and assets/challenges. Additional stakeholder feedback was received via personal interviews conducted by the GMCVB’s President/CEO and Executive Vice President/CMO with many elected officials over the course of several weeks. In addition to the individual stakeholder interviews, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global, in partnership with the GMCVB, facilitated five open forum discussions (town hall meetings) across Miami-Dade County that solicited similar feedback and input on the Travel and Tourism Industry from the general public and stakeholders who were unable to participate in the one-on-one interview process. Furthermore, stakeholders and the general public were encouraged to provide feedback on the [DestinationMiami.org](http://DestinationMiami.org) website.

These activities allowed Ernst & Young/MMGY Global to assess the current state and evolution of travel and tourism within Greater Miami as it relates to the visitor demand profile, as well as market strengths and weaknesses. Key themes echoed in interviews and meetings assisted in the identification and development of strategies and recommendations that have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan.
Historic Overtown’s Purvis Young Murals
Quantitative and Qualitative Research
Ernst & Young/MMGY Global conducted primary research with pre-qualified consumers from the U.S., Brazil, Germany, Russia and Canada. The research explored consumers’ awareness of and familiarity with, interest in, preference for, and intentions toward visiting Greater Miami. The primary research also provided an assessment of market potential (domestic and international) and tested the relative perceptions and appeal of Greater Miami versus a defined set of competing destinations.

Ernst & Young/MMGY Global also interviewed meeting planners in order to understand their level of awareness of, familiarity with, and relative appeal of Greater Miami, and to understand their thoughts about Greater Miami as a location for city-wide conventions versus the boutique group business market. Finally, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global interviewed international tour operators to understand the above, as well as determine their future intentions to develop and sell travel programs to Greater Miami.

Analysis of Comparable Destinations
In order to create an effective framework for assessing opportunities and challenges relative to competing destinations, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global compared Greater Miami’s existing travel and tourism resources and attributes to selected competitive domestic leisure and convention destinations. The competing domestic destinations were selected based upon the results of visitor surveys and stakeholder interviews. The analysis considered quantitative aspects such as price points, existing supply, available ranking indicators and visitor data, as well as qualitative measures including perceived quality of accommodations, diversity, value, service levels and attributes of the existing product gained from our survey research. Ernst & Young/MMGY Global analyzed each destination’s ability to demonstrate a competitive advantage relative to a combination of attributes considered critical for success in achieving and maintaining world-class status.

Development of Recommendations
To develop the recommendations that should guide the GMCVB in its execution of its Strategic Plan, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global identified five major Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that embody the definition of a competitive, first-class, global destination. Collectively, these five CSFs establish the framework and profile for a destination’s successful product delivery and positioning. Utilizing the three-pronged approach noted above, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global measured each competing destination’s performance based on the CSFs, and subsequently identified the competitive strengths and weaknesses of Greater Miami’s Travel and Tourism Industry. Based upon these competitive strengths and weaknesses, key strategic recommendations were developed and incorporated in the GMCVB’s Strategic Plan to guide the prioritization of efforts and resources in the current five-year plan, in addition to several other important recommendations.
Work Plan
The overall research methodology and approach was implemented by Ernst & Young/MMGY Global via the two-phased set of tasks outlined in the initial work plan as depicted above.

Task I — Ernst & Young/MMGY Global worked with the GMCVB and its partners to analyze the market research and analysis for Greater Miami as compiled by the GMCVB research team. The objective was for Ernst & Young/MMGY Global to have a solid understanding of the current size, industry distribution and growth potential of the current Travel and Tourism Industry of Greater Miami, in addition to identifying new opportunities.

Task II — Ernst & Young/MMGY Global compared the region’s existing travel and tourism resources to selected competitive leisure and convention destinations. Greater Miami’s travel and tourism resources were assessed relative to their ability to adapt to market trends and dynamics affecting the Travel and Tourism Industry. This analysis enabled an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the overall Greater Miami travel and tourism experience in the context of its assets (competitive advantages) and liabilities (investment opportunities).

Task III — Ernst & Young/MMGY Global led and facilitated major input and presentation sessions, including the project briefing, two update sessions, and five town hall sessions with the Greater Miami community.

Task IV — Although Greater Miami is a unique destination within the state of Florida and the United States, the best practices from the Travel and Tourism Industry strategic plans of other successful destinations at both the state and national levels were considered and incorporated, as appropriate, into the recommendations contained within this report.

Task V — Utilizing the information collected and assessed while conducting the previous steps, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global developed targeted strategies and recommendations for the Greater Miami and the Beaches’ Strategic Plan.

Tasks VI and VII — Ernst & Young/MMGY Global’s research, analysis, and recommendations were utilized to develop an executive summary report, full report and presentation.
ANALYSIS
A Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat (SWOT) analysis was developed as a framework to organize Greater Miami’s assets and liabilities into categories that represent competitive advantages (strengths or opportunities) or disadvantages (weaknesses or threats) on the overall Greater Miami Travel and Tourism Industry. The SWOT analysis forms the basis by which recommendations for the five-year Strategic Plan are developed. The purpose of the SWOT analysis is not to identify all SWOT components, but to focus on the key assets and liabilities as noted in analyses and interviews.

Strengths
Represent those aspects for which Greater Miami is at a distinct advantage relative to other major global tourism destinations. Although strengths demonstrate advantages, they should be monitored and constantly improved to maintain a leadership position.

> Year-round Destination
Greater Miami possesses significant travel and tourism demand year round as indicated by occupancy performance provided by Smith Travel Research (STR) and the CSFs analysis.

> VIP/Celebrity Appeal
The benefit of Greater Miami being a “hotbed” for celebrities and other VIPs is that it keeps Greater Miami relevant to fashion and entertainment press and in the news for upscale and luxury travelers.

> Low Taxes on Visitors
Greater Miami benefits from relatively low sales and bed taxes, both of which can limit a visitor’s spending power.

> Lack of Direct Competitors
Given Greater Miami’s unique travel and tourism product of an urban resort experience, it does not have fully comparable direct domestic competitors that compete in all attributes.
South Beach is the Anchor
South Beach is the “anchor” for Greater Miami’s market image, having immediate recognition as a one-of-a-kind destination with a broad international appeal. The phrase “going to SoBe” has become a ubiquitous, contemporary term for heading to Greater Miami regardless of one’s specific destination within Greater Miami and the Beaches.

Crime Rate Comparable to National Average
Despite perceptions, Greater Miami’s crime rate is consistent with other major cities within the U.S.

Age/Condition of Hotel Inventory
Between the period from 2005-2012 Greater Miami added and/or renovated multiple hotels and hotel rooms, the majority of which are within the upper-upscale and luxury segments.

Variety of Lodging Inventory
Greater Miami possesses a good variety of lodging products, ranging from youth hostels to luxury hotels, and has excellent inventory distribution of upscale to luxury hotels, which is necessary to be a world-class destination.

Unique Architecture and Supply of Boutique Hotels
The boutique hotels, especially those located in historic Art Deco and Miami Modern (MiMo) buildings, provide an experience that is unique to Greater Miami.

Variety of Attraction Types
Greater Miami possesses a significant variety of attractions and amenities for visitors, including historic, cultural, natural and recreational attractions.

International Influence
The distinctive culture in Greater Miami has been developed through a melting pot of numerous international influences.
“The distinctive culture in Greater Miami and the Beaches has been developed through a melting pot of numerous international influences.”

**Airport Renovations**
Miami International Airport (MIA) recently completed renovation and expansion activities that, from a physical perspective, greatly enhance the capabilities of the airport and its ease of use.

**Cruise Port**
Greater Miami benefits from not only having a high number of cruise passengers utilizing PortMiami as their embarkation point, but it is also utilized by multiple cruise lines year-round.

**Weaknesses**
Represent those aspects for which Greater Miami is at a distinct disadvantage relative to other major global tourism destinations. Weaknesses represent fundamental deficiencies within a market that are both curable and non-curable.

**Condition of the Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC)**
Greater Miami’s convention center has not been renovated since the 1990s, while competing destinations [and many others] have been renovated or expanded during this time period. Further, when combined with the lack of large hotels attached to or near the convention center, Greater Miami is in a position of significant weakness relative to other destinations.

**Taxi Cab Conditions**
Stakeholders and visitors commented on the inferior taxi cab experience (i.e., physical product and service) in Greater Miami relative to other global destinations.

**Service Quality**
Quantitative measures, in addition to MMGY Global surveys, responses from stakeholder interviews and commentary from town hall sessions, indicate that Greater Miami has subpar service levels when compared to the other profiled destinations. The lack of a skilled workforce and a customer service-oriented culture in Greater Miami may limit the growth of the Travel and Tourism Industry within Greater Miami.

**Airport Way-finding and Customer Service Concerns**
Despite recent renovations, way-finding difficulties and customer service missteps continue to impact the airport and generate a negative first impression of Greater Miami and the overall perception of the airport.
> Public Way-finding and Ease of Use for Public Transportation
Despite having excellent walkability, way-finding and the ease of use of public transportation continue to be significant weaknesses for Greater Miami.

> Traffic Congestion
Traffic congestion continues to be a weakness for Greater Miami.

**Opportunities**
Represent those aspects for which Greater Miami does not possess a current distinct advantage relative to major global tourism destinations, but has the ability to modify/adapt select opportunities to develop an additional strength.

> Multiple Demand Segments
Given the variety of lodging accommodations and attractions/amenities, in addition the many price points of both restaurants and shopping centers, Greater Miami is capable of targeting visitors from several demand segments. Opportunities to further enhance the visitor’s experience may be derived from creating tailored approaches to each market segment.

> Year-round Destination
Differences in visitor profiles over the course of a year may provide opportunities for targeted marketing and advertising to further strengthen the year-round appeal of Greater Miami.

> Commitment from Community Leadership
There are many stakeholders in Greater Miami’s private and public sectors who have a genuine interest in taking the necessary steps in order to further develop Greater Miami as an international tourism destination.

> Further Evolve Messaging
As Greater Miami continues to develop new and interesting submarkets and corresponding demand generators, there is the opportunity to utilize these experiences in the messaging that Greater Miami has more to offer than South Beach parties/sun and beach.

**Historic Little Haiti’s Caribbean Marketplace**
Multi-segment Marketing
Despite perceptions to the contrary (that Greater Miami is expensive for hotel stays), analysis of the Average Daily Rate (ADR) gap between upper- and lower-priced Greater Miami hotels indicates that Greater Miami possesses an opportunity to effectively market to potential visitors within varying price points.

Nightlife and Retail
Greater Miami and the Beaches, and especially South Beach, is a world-renowned nightlife destination. Greater Miami is also increasingly becoming a major luxury retail destination with the development of the Miami Design District and introduction of luxury retailers at other existing and upcoming shopping nodes.

Marketing/Promotion of Natural and Cultural Offerings
Responses from stakeholder interviews and commentary from town hall sessions indicate that Greater Miami and the Beaches needs to increase the awareness of cultural attractions (e.g., neighborhoods, performance and visual art facilities, national parks, events and festivals) to visitors and local residents.

Leading Cruise Port
Greater Miami is a leading cruise port globally and has further opportunities to enhance its performance through the addition of new cruise lines operating out of PortMiami and continued renovation/ expansion activities.

Increase Awareness of Public Transportation
Greater Miami’s public transportation does allow for residents and visitors to get to most, if not all, places within Miami-Dade County. However, the public transportation is not considered user-friendly, especially for visitors who are unfamiliar with the multiple transportation types (e.g., MetroRail, MetroMover, MetroBus, trolleys, South Beach Local).

Threats
Represent those aspects for which Greater Miami does not possess a current distinct disadvantage relative to major global tourism destinations, but failure to adequately address the threat may result in the threat turning into a weakness.

Perception of Safety
Due to the presentation of Greater Miami by the entertainment industry as an unsafe destination, many potential visitors, especially domestic, perceive Greater Miami to be unsafe despite crime statistics to the contrary.

Friendliness
According to MMGY Global’s consumer research surveys, few domestic respondents associated Greater Miami with friendliness, while international respondents associated Greater Miami (along with all U.S. destinations) as being friendly more so than international destinations. With domestic visitors accounting for half of Greater Miami’s visitation and international visitors associating friendliness with the entire U.S., the friendliness of Greater Miami remains a significant threat that must be mitigated.
Miami Beach’s Historic Art Deco District
**Lack of Third-party Rated Top Restaurants**
Although Greater Miami has made significant improvements in the culinary scene over the past several years, the presence of poor service limits the ability of Greater Miami’s top restaurants to be ranked on par with destinations around the country.

**Limited Awareness of Tours/Attractions Outside Sun and Beach**
Despite Greater Miami having increased the number of tours and attractions over the past several years, guide books and general awareness about Greater Miami continue to focus on sun and beach activities.

**Aging Infrastructure**
Greater Miami’s infrastructure (e.g., bridges, sewers, flood control) is in significant need of repair. Greater Miami is perhaps one major infrastructure failure away from making national, and potentially international, news regarding an insufficient infrastructure. Such negative publicity may scare away potential demand and thwart other growth initiatives.

**Lack of Viable County-wide Public Transportation**
Greater Miami’s public transportation is a patchwork of buses, trains, bicycles and trolleys, and although these transportation options cover a large portion of Greater Miami, their interconnectivity is limited which makes it hard for visitors to navigate Greater Miami.

**Safety of Pedestrians**
Although Greater Miami is noted to be a walkable city, comments from stakeholders and newspaper articles indicate that the safety of pedestrians in Greater Miami is frequently in jeopardy.

**SUMMARY OF KEY STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based upon a consolidation of the findings and observations obtained utilizing the outlined methodology, process, and work plan, Ernst & Young/MMGY Global identified key recommendations (plus several additional recommendations) that should be implemented by the GMCVB and relevant stakeholders to further strengthen Greater Miami’s overall market appeal, develop its potential for future growth, and overcome weaknesses and threats in the course of implementing its Strategic Plan. The recommendations include a combination of activities that may be directly implemented by the GMCVB, a partnership of key stakeholders and the GMCVB, and/or solely by key stakeholders (i.e., the GMCVB would act in an advocate role to monitor and support the completion of these recommended activities). These key recommendations include:

**Strongly advocate for the timely renovation and redevelopment of the Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC) and adjacent lodging facility**
Significant press, in addition to commentary from stakeholder interviews, town hall participants, and especially MMGY Global’s interviews with meeting planners, point toward a profound need for the redevelopment of the Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC) and the addition of an adjacent lodging facility. As revealed in the survey of meeting planners, the MBCC’s current product offering does not meet current demands and is inhibiting the ability of Greater Miami to capture additional convention and trade show business.
The GMCVB should advocate for the expedited redevelopment of the MBCC and can further bolster its position by providing frequent updates to key stakeholders (and the public) on what meeting planners are saying about the MBCC, the revenue (including tax revenue) that is being lost to competing destinations because of the lack of an expanded/updated meeting/convention facility, and the lack of an adjacent convention center hotel. Through active engagement and providing factual data and commentary from market feedback as a result of the research herein, the GMCVB should seek to influence efficient action on the part of Miami Beach governmental officials.

Spearhead research into the development of improved taxi cab standards and development of a for-hire town car/limousine system

The taxi cab experience in Greater Miami is not on par with world-class destinations, and is perceived as one of the worst taxi cab systems in the U.S. Commentary from stakeholder interviews and town hall participants indicated the problems are a combination of physical (e.g., age/condition of the taxi cab, lack of credit card payment option) and service (e.g., driver friendliness and professionalism). Further, it was noted that MIA and key tourist centers do not provide access to on-the-spot, for-hire limousine service.

Recommended specific action items include:

» It is recommended that the GMCVB, along with Miami’s Taxicab Advisory Group, research and develop taxi cab quality standards for Greater Miami. Subsequently, it is encouraged that the Taxicab Advisory Group, or a newly formed commission or organization, actively enforce the rules and quality standards developed.

» It is recommended that the GMCVB, along with key stakeholders, ensure that passengers are aware of their rights — Passenger’s Bill of Rights — while in a Greater Miami taxi cab.

» As Greater Miami and the Beaches works to improve overall taxi cab standards, the GMCVB is encouraged to begin advocating and planning with relevant stakeholders the development of a for-hire town car/limousine system.

Develop new programs and initiatives to enhance the overall service culture and service product within Greater Miami

Greater Miami does not possess a strong universal customer service culture. The GMCVB has implemented service programs in the past (with the “Miami Begins with Me” program being the latest) with varying levels of success. Given the highly transient nature of Greater Miami’s Travel and Tourism Industry employees, the GMCVB needs to expand and recommit to “Miami Begins with Me,” or a similar program, to elevate the overall quality of service delivery to visitors, and maintain the program over the long term.

Recommended specific action items include:

» The GMCVB should consider the creation of a “Service Ambassador” role responsible for establishing a framework for service improvement (baseline measurement system to monitor progress), and providing training to local businesses including restaurants, hotels, and retail establishments. A resulting training program could provide certificates and encourage local businesses to request/require their employees and potential applicants to pass the course.
The GMCVB should coordinate with Miami-Dade County Public Schools to influence the curriculum related to increasing the awareness of travel and tourism’s impact on the community and related employment/career development opportunities, including classroom learning and shadowing/internship programs. Further, the GMCVB should continue to work with MIA leadership to expand the MIA volunteer ambassador program. Although there currently is an ambassador program in place at MIA, it is not as highly visible as similar ambassador programs in other leading U.S. airports.

The GMCVB should consider developing a mystery shopper program that provides rankings for participating restaurants that would be displayed like current Zagat ratings or health ratings in some cities. The program could also be utilized to assist restaurant operators improve service levels by identifying consistent shortcomings. In time, the program may be expanded beyond restaurants. The program could be used to highlight exceptional service through greater promotion or placement in initiatives such as the Miami Spice Restaurant Program.

Similar to the GMCVB’s Concierge of the Year award, the GMCVB should expand the awards offered to include awards/recognition for excellent customer service across multiple industries and/or job positions. Awards may be determined through employer submissions and a mystery shopper program.

Continue and strengthen focus towards a combination of broad international marketing and targeted domestic diversity marketing

Given Greater Miami’s geographic location, air access, cosmopolitan ambiance, and positive image outside the U.S., Greater Miami should spread the development of inbound international tourism. Further, with the continued growth of ethnic/minority populations in the U.S., population segments that have traditionally contributed to the culture/image of Greater Miami’s diverse submarkets, Greater Miami’s domestic marketing strategy should place greater emphasis on the cultivation of domestic diversity markets (e.g., African American, LGBT, Hispanic).
Recommendations relative to international travel and tourism include:

- The primary consumer research conducted as part of this engagement revealed that Greater Miami’s appeal as a vacation destination is actually higher among international than domestic prospects. This augurs well for the future growth of inbound international arrivals, given the extensive network of international connections to MIA. It also suggests that the GMCVB should increase its financial and resource commitment to the cultivation of the potential inherent in international markets, as Greater Miami is well positioned to usurp New York as the primary inbound gateway for international travelers to the U.S. The cultivation of this effort will require a more significant commitment to reaching these prospects through in-market advertising and promotion, plus the crafting of communications (both offline and online) in visitors’ native languages.

Recommendations relative to domestic travel and tourism include:

- The primary research also revealed that Greater Miami’s appeal among domestic leisure travelers is highest within the diversity markets [African Americans, Hispanics and members of the LGBT community]. Given that these markets now represent an estimated one-third of total demand for domestic travel services and that Greater Miami can deliver the product experiences sought by these prospects, it is recommend that the GMCVB place greater emphasis on the cultivation of these vertical markets and actively pursue the market position as the “premier domestic destination” that caters to these groups. Further, it is recommended that the GMCVB work with key stakeholders and community representatives to monitor and ensure consistency of product development and marketing efforts. The GMCVB can better serve the Greater Miami market’s ability to cater to specific target profiles and international markets by highlighting those communities/submarkets that are most aligned with their interests.

Recommendations relative to enhancing the Cultural and Heritage Tourism Experience:

- A fully developed Cultural and Heritage Tourism program represents an opportunity to generate incremental room nights and extend the length of stay of our visitors while showcasing Greater Miami’s heritage neighborhoods.

- Expand marketing efforts to attract the local residents and generate awareness about the events/festivals that take place in Greater Miami’s heritage neighborhoods [examples: Big Night in Little Haiti, The Overtown Music Project celebrating the cultural heritage of Historic Overtown, and Viernes Culturales in Little Havana].

- Continue to integrate and showcase heritage neighborhoods in existing GMCVB Miami Temptations Programs such as Miami Spice, Miami Museum Month, Miami Attractions Month, Miami Live Month, etc.

- Further support expansion of transportation options to explore the heritage neighborhoods.

- Further educate the local small-business owners in Greater Miami’s heritage neighborhoods on the importance of the Travel and Tourism Industry and the best ways to market to them.

- Continue to focus on the heritage aspect of Greater Miami, since the cultural element/component has been established over the last several years through the increasing presence of museums and events such as Art Basel Miami Beach.
>> Provide additional visual imagery of cultural/heritage elements on the GMCVB website. Of note, the new GMCVB website prominently showcases neighborhoods including key points of interest and photo galleries.

>> Continue to market to visitors and meeting planners prior to their arrival (including delegates attending meetings and conventions) to increase awareness of cultural/heritage activities.

Enhance the GMCVB’s online marketing presence and capabilities

During Ernst & Young/MMGY Global’s research, it was apparent that DMOs are focused on dramatically expanding online marketing platforms, and the GMCVB must stay competitive. Commentary from stakeholder and tour operator interviews reaffirmed the observations by Ernst & Young/MMGY Global. As the use of the Internet and reliance on mobile devices becomes more ingrained within society, especially the younger generation, it is paramount that a global tourist destination maintains an active and innovative online presence to remain competitive. Specific needs identified during the analysis include:

>> The GMCVB is currently working to significantly expand its online presence, especially with consumers, and it is recommended that they continue the development of, internally or through third-party vendors, an expanded interactive online marketing platform that incorporates traditional websites, mobile applications, and social media.

>> The current website should allow consumers to directly book hotels or provide access to online booking engines [e.g., Hotels.com, Expedia.com].

>> The GMCVB is in the process of creating multiple translations of the GMCVB website so that it may be viewed in several languages. This is a priority activity since approximately 50% of Miami’s visitors are international. It is recommended that the GMCVB further enhance the language [or geographical region] selection to reorder site content based upon the consumer research presented in this report or through additional consumer marketing studies.

>> It is recommended that the GMCVB further develop a user-generated content section [e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TripAdvisor] where current visitors or future visitors can post messages and pictures about their experiences in Greater Miami.

“The GMCVB is in the process of creating multiple translations of the GMCVB website so that it may be viewed in several languages.”
CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

To ensure the success of Greater Miami and the Beaches’ Travel and Tourism Industry, the key recommendations outlined in this plan, as well as other short-, mid- and long-term recommendations, were closely considered by the GMCVB in the development of the Sales & Marketing Plan for 2013/2014. These additional recommendations can be found in the full report at DestinationMiami.org.

This plan is the culmination of more than a year’s work, with participation from hundreds of stakeholders who were involved in making the strategic planning process a success, in order to strengthen the future of the Travel and Tourism Industry in Greater Miami and the Beaches.

The development of Destination Miami: Strategic Plan — The Future of Greater Miami and the Beaches’ Travel & Tourism Industry 2013-2017 has concluded, and it is time to put the plan into action. The GMCVB is committed to leading the efforts in its implementation, and is confident that with our stakeholders’ commitment to the long-term success of our Travel and Tourism Industry, we will keep the plan moving forward.
Tourism is Everybody’s Business...
As a nearly $22 billion industry that generated close to $200 million in tourist related taxes and supported more than 100,000 jobs in 2012, Travel and Tourism remains the #1 Industry in Greater Miami and the Beaches.