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## Easy: An Integrated Marketing Communications Program for the City of New Orleans

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“Easy” An Integrated Marketing Communications Program for the city of New Orleans

Lee Honors College Thesis  
By: Brett Rogers  
April 2008

## Executive Summary

This following is an integrated marketing communications program for the city of New Orleans entitled “Easy.” The paper outlines the history of the marketing of New Orleans, as well as the city’s current goals. A detailed summary of the current market is provided with detailed demographics and beliefs held, as well as the segmentation variables that will be used within the “Easy” campaign to define the targeted audiences. The PRIZM NE segmentation system is used to better define the target markets of the campaign. Broadly defined, the two targeted segments of the campaign are:

1. Younger families with children who are still minors.
2. College and business professionals.

The next section of the paper details the competitive environment that the city of New Orleans competes within and contrasts New Orleans with its main competitors (Las Vegas, New York, Chicago, and Nashville, among others).

The main objective of the “Easy” IMC program is to increase tourism to the city of New Orleans, namely to bring tourism levels back to pre-hurricane Katrina levels. The campaign will express the benefits of coming to New Orleans to the targeted segments and direct them to visit the campaign website ([easy-nola.com](http://easy-nola.com)) to research, plan, and book their own trip to the city. The objective of the campaign is to position New Orleans as an easy destination choice for both segments given the specific benefits received by each if a trip to the city is made.

The last section of the program details all of the media channels used and the creative executions for each. Detailed descriptions of several billboards, magazine ads, radio spots, and an organizational chart of the campaign website are provided. All executions are tied together with the “Easy” tagline and benefits of the city and website

# Situation Analysis

## **History (New Orleans Marketing)**

### *Pre-Katrina*

Following the World War II years, city officials and locals of importance and influence in New Orleans began creating strategies to increase tourist traffic to enhance the economic prosperity of the city. Over the decades, tourism has been applied as the main method of increasing the flow of tax dollars in the city, since manufacturing jobs in the area have been declining since the 1960's (Gotham 5). The various efforts of the tourism strategy have included the building of the Superdome, the convention center, new office towers in the business district, a major theme park (Six Flags), and numerous museums (Gotham 7).

New Orleans has also historically staged some mega-events over the years to attract tourists, many occurring on an annual basis including the Jazz and Heritage Festival and Carnival (Mardi Gras) season featuring parades and other special events. Other events the city has played host to in the past include the Superbowl (9 of 42 to date) (SuperNFL), the 1984 World's Fair, Sugar Bowl games for NCAA football, and host of the NCAA basketball tournament (Gotham 7). These events and attractions, coupled with the city's historically increasing tourism rate over the decades have spurred the increase in the number of hotel rooms (4,750 in 1960 to 34,000 in 2000) and room occupancy over the years (Gotham 7). Coming with this territory of increased tourists is cash being invested in the area, causing New Orleans to rise on the list as one of the most visited cities in the United States.

The convention market in New Orleans has been a historical draw of tourists and businesspeople for over 40 years. The city served as host to 764 conventions in 1976 with that number more than quadrupling by 1999 with 3,260 conventions being held there that year alone (Gotham 7). Aside from conventions and special events, the French Quarter and other areas of interest near the city center have served and still serve as the main reason tourists visit the “Big Easy” every year.

### *Post-Katrina*

Many of the marketing efforts following the devastation of hurricane Katrina (landfall August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005) have been focused around the rebuilding, rejuvenation, and new reasons to visit and fall back in love with the city of New Orleans. Many efforts stress that the city hasn’t changed, with one ad even poking some fun at recent history noting that “Soul is Waterproof” (Parpis 2). Others strategies have also stressed the resilience of the city with one agency creating a timeline from 1618 to present and noting that New Orleans had been completely destroyed seven or eight times, including having burnt down twice (Parpis 1). Both perspectives promote the same idea, that a culture cannot be exterminated, and New Orleans has a culture that is stronger than most other cities in the nation. In my eyes, the culture of New Orleans is the main reason that the current campaigns are succeeding, the traditions and unity of the city seem stronger than ever, and is also responsible for keeping a world-class, unique American destination on the tourist radar so shortly after such a major disaster and surely for years to come.

### **Goals**

The overall goal of the city of New Orleans is to increase tourism through the “Easy” campaign. The short-term goal of the city is to raise awareness about the

rejuvenation of New Orleans and to increase tourism, with the long-term goal being to bring tourism levels back to pre-Katrina levels and then exceed those levels. The short and long-term goal of the campaign is to drive potential tourists to the campaign website, in turn, increasing tourism to the city by providing desirable New Orleans attraction information and links to trip planning tools.

### **Market Analysis**

For the years 2000-2004 the average annual number of visitors to New Orleans was 8.66 million, with tourist numbers topping out in 2004 with 10.1 million (New Orleans CVB). Tourism to the area was on an upward trend in the years leading up to Katrina, reflecting the increasing popularity of the city as a destination. With only 3.7 million visitors in 2006, (the year after Katrina) many feel optimistic that tourism numbers should increase at a steady rate from this low point (Parpis 2). The potential market for tourists in New Orleans could be positioned around 10 million people or slightly more, as this was the highest level of tourism the city ever experienced (happening in 2004). Hurricane Katrina devastated this trend of high tourism levels, leaving much more ground and markets to be covered by upcoming campaigns and efforts of the city. Only about 450,000 international tourists traveled to the entire state of Louisiana in 2004 represented mainly by Canada (32.7%), France (31.7%), and the United Kingdom (23.1%) (Visitor Profile 1). The potential numbers for tourists in New Orleans are bound by the availability of lodging, transportation, and space for tourists and their belongings, holding the city to a capacity of about 68,000 tourists at a time (assuming double occupancy in all hotel rooms).

The level of tourism on a per person basis in the New Orleans area is subjected to seasonal swings in numbers. Annual events throughout the year such as Mardi Gras, the

Jazz and Heritage Festival, and crawfish season cause there to be an inevitable influx of tourists during these times. The summer months tend to be a low point for New Orleans tourism, and considering the average high temperatures (around 90 degrees Fahrenheit) this seems rational.

### **Segmentation Analysis**

The market for tourists in New Orleans can be segmented on numerous fronts, but the main focus for the “Easy” campaign will be on three areas in particular. The first area of segmentation will be based on demographics with a focus on age groups and income levels. The second area of segmentation will be the geographic location where the potential tourist resides. The third segmentation variable that will be taken into consideration will be the behavior attributed to/benefit sought by the targeted segments of the campaign. There is a wide range of activities and culture to be experienced in New Orleans, so it will be important to identify what the most important aspects are that would interest each segment the most or cause the most beneficial reaction/interaction. All of these segmentation variable areas will be classified with the aid of the PRIZM NE Segmentation System. This system will allow the grouping and definition of particular segments with their common traits and characteristics. This segmentation strategy will affect the content of various aspects of the campaign depending on the segment, but there will also be overlapping sections of the campaign that will feature a broad appeal that will be appropriate for both segments (similar to a Venn diagram).

### **Customer Analysis**

#### *Characteristics*

Currently, the most frequent age group that visits New Orleans is the 35-49 year old segment, comprising 35.4% of all tourists in 2004. This group is followed by the

second place 25-34 year old segment which represented 26.1% of all tourists in 2004. The majority of visitors (51%) had a household income of between \$50,000 and \$74,000 with another large portion (32.9%) having a household income of between \$75,000 and \$99,000 (Visitor Profile 3).

Approximately 18.9% of visitors to New Orleans were African-American in 2004, making it the number one destination for African-Americans in the United States (New Orleans CVB). New Orleans also has a very high proportion of African-Americans serving as the majority of its population base at around 67% according to the 2000 Census. This has historically allowed the city to portray many African-Americans in all of their media efforts attempting to increase tourism. This representation, along with local culture and location, probably serve as the main reasons the city serves as a popular destination among African-Americans without regard for their age group, income range, or other demographic variables.

### *Information Search*

When tourists in New Orleans were asked what primary sources of information they used to make their decision to visit the area, almost half (46.5%) stated that they had either been there before or just knew that they would enjoy a trip there. A smaller segment (27.7%) of tourists relied on the Internet as their primary means of learning about New Orleans, while 24.2% relied on recommendations from friends and 15% relied on information provided by their employer (Visitor Profile 1, 2).

As far as secondary sources are concerned, 38.2% of visitors did use the Internet as a source for at least some information needed for their trip. Of all visitors using the Internet, 84.2% made reservations for flight and hotel stays online. 25.3% of visitors admitted to using at least some advice from a travel agent when planning their trip to the

New Orleans area in 2004. Business travelers tended to use the services of travel agents more frequently than those traveling for pleasure alone. 25.3% of visitors also noted that they had recently heard or seen an advertisement for New Orleans prior to their visit (Visitor Profile 2).

### *Beliefs and Attitudes*

When tourists were asked in 2004 what their attitude was towards New Orleans when planning their trip, 92.7% gave it a rating of 5 and 7.1% gave it a rating of 4 on a scale of 1 to 5 with one serving as the least positive response and five as the most positive. 99.9% of tourist respondents in 2004 indicated that they found the people of New Orleans and its establishments to be either friendly or very friendly, a number that speaks for itself. Another encouraging number is the percentage of people who considered New Orleans to be a safe or somewhat safe destination at 99.9% (Visitor Profile 2, 3).

In all, the percent of tourists that reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their trip to New Orleans was a resounding 99.8% in 2004. A large majority of the visitor's reason for not being very satisfied with their trip to New Orleans was related to the weather they experienced during their trip. The vast majority of visitors (97.8%) also reported that they were likely or very likely to return to New Orleans in the near future, with most respondents reasoning that they wanted to see more of what the city has to offer (Visitor Profile 3).

As far as expectations are concerned, the city of New Orleans tended to exceed tourist's expectations when it came to several of the areas tourists feel are the most important to a successful vacation. Listed below are some examples of expectations from the 2004 visitor survey and their classification as far as satisfaction (4, 5):

<b>Respondents' Perception that New Orleans is/has:</b>	<b>Response</b>
An exciting destination	Exceeded expectations
A popular destination	Exceeded expectations
A unique destination	Exceeded expectations
A family friendly atmosphere	Highly exceeded expectations
A lot of entertainment	Exceeded expectations
Respect for African-American values	Exceeded expectations
Sports and recreation available	Exceeded expectations
Family friendly people	Exceeded expectations
A clean destination	Falls short on expectations

### **Competitive Environment**

The competition for tourism in the United States is intense. Almost every state is able to boast something unique and worthy of visiting. With all of these domestic vacation options available, making a destination choice that pleases everyone in attendance is sometimes easier said than done. Several factors give vacation destinations positive points as well as those that take them away including: weather, activities, shopping, dining, nightlife, and culture, almost all of which New Orleans scores fairly well on. Strengths of New Orleans include its location during the colder months of the year. When much of the country is frigid during the winter months, the citizens and tourists of New Orleans are enjoying some of the mildest temperatures in the nation. This weather advantage definitely gives New Orleans a boost for those who are attracted to warmth. Areas of the north are also typically pretty chilly during Mardi Gras season, adding a benefit to the festival for potential tourists considering making the trip for the

event. Areas competing with New Orleans on this aspect include states of the southeast and southwest, as well as Texas.

New Orleans also boasts an array of activities that would suit many, but not all pallets. Museums, jazz festivals, professional sporting events, Mardi Gras, casinos, and a world class aquarium and zoo are among the hundreds of activities one could choose to participate in while visiting New Orleans. Las Vegas, New York, Chicago, and several other smaller U.S. cities would be able to compete with some of the activities that New Orleans has to offer, but there are some activities that are definitely exclusive to the area.

Not many U.S. cities can compete with New Orleans' influence and exhibition of music, which consists of mainly jazz. Nashville probably comes closer than any other city, but has different musical offerings than that of New Orleans. In this realm of competition, New Orleans stands atop its position as the Jazz capital of the United States. Other cities that compete with the activities offered by New Orleans include most major metropolitan areas, but these lack the exclusive events such as Jazz Fest and Mardi Gras.

Most major U.S. cities are able to compete with New Orleans on the aspect of shopping, as far as the general term is considered. When considering the entire array of specialty spices, CDs, knick knacks, and other souvenirs that can be purchased in the area however, it is hard to think of a city with similar offerings. One can shop almost anywhere they please, but one can only find truly unique "Big Easy" merchandise in the location of the same name.

The dining experience in New Orleans is unmatched by any other city in the nation. Other cities may offer equally or more satisfying dining experiences, depending on the travelers' tastes, but there is no substitute for the food and presentation in the New Orleans area. Celebrity chef owned and operated restaurants in the French Quarter and

surrounding areas include the establishments of Paul Prudhomme and Emeril Lagasse. Cities that compete with New Orleans for tourists seeking a world class and truly unique dining experience include New York, Las Vegas, and Chicago.

The nightlife in New Orleans (and daytime action for that matter) is another area of tourism where the city is world renowned. With bars in the French Quarter that actually never close, the legality of drinking in the streets, and areas of the city whose overall focus is on partying during certain times of the year, New Orleans is among the elite party cities of the nation. Las Vegas definitely offers a rival experience that pushes the limits of partying probably even farther, but aside from Sin City no other city in the nation offers a nightlife experience that is quite as focused as that of New Orleans.

The culture of New Orleans is one that is embraced by locals and is also one that most tourists have a hard time not embracing as well. Southern hospitality, jazz, and a rich and storied history, all amid the backdrop of a vital port city that is so important to the U.S economy make New Orleans emit a personality that is truly something special. Many cities in New England have culture that could undoubtedly be considered deeper and equally important, but all have their individual appeal and importance that cannot go unnoticed. Cities across the nation, especially ones on the shoreline are able to compete with New Orleans in the realm of culture, but none are similar or as unique as that offered by the “Crescent City”.

All of the above aspects of the competitive environment are currently affecting the level of tourism in New Orleans, as well as the knowledge the public has about the city’s offerings in these areas. The “Easy” campaign will address each of these competitive issues and make sure the targeted audiences understand where New Orleans stands as a world class destination on many fronts.

## Marketing Objectives

The objective of the “Easy” campaign is to increase tourism and awareness of New Orleans. The most objective measure of the “Easy” campaign is to bring the number of tourists to New Orleans back to 10 million per year, a number it had reached only once in recent history. Other success measures of the “Easy” campaign are to drive the targeted potential tourists to the campaign website, by intriguing them with persuasive and inspiring advertising. The idea is that once visitors are intrigued enough to visit the website, they will explore the site and look at all of the attractions, hotels, and festivals that the city has, and find something they deem worthy enough to visit the city for. All of the links a potential tourist would need will be featured on the site so that they can plan and book their trip and then count the days until they leave. Measurement of site traffic will serve as a success measure of the campaign as well as click throughs to sites allowing tourists to plan and book their vacation. Another important success measure will be the percentage tourism change for the city of New Orleans. Hopefully the campaign will prove to be very successful and will be selected as a long term means of communication to the many target audiences for communicating all that New Orleans has to offer.

## Strategy Statement

### **Competitive Advantage**

The city of New Orleans is so different in so many distinctive ways, it should be easy to differentiate it from most other cities in the nation. New Orleans can compete on the basis of dining, offering some of the best and most unique food in the world. Some of the more unique offerings of the area include authentic gumbo, po-boys, crawfish, fresh

oysters, giant shrimp, blue crab, jambalaya, red beans and rice and more Cajun cuisine than anywhere else in the south. With celebrity restaurants lining the streets and other local dining establishments that simply cannot be missed, the role of food will definitely play an important role in the campaign.

The jazz scene of New Orleans is legendary, along with some of the names it has produced over the years including King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, and Louis Armstrong. One would find it impossible to walk through the French Quarter at any time and not experience some of the best live jazz the nation has to offer. Many aspiring artists play non-stop in the streets for tips, and give the area a buzz unlike any other. Music festivals, jazz influence, and other live music opportunities for tourists will serve as an essential element of the campaign and any complete trip to the area. Tourists seeking this experience of New Orleans will find it almost everywhere they go, giving the city a distinct competitive advantage in this area.

New Orleans can also compete as one of the hardest partying cities in the nation. Bars, pubs, and clubs are open 24/7/365 in the French Quarter and drinking on the streets is legal. The only other city in the nation that can match these attributes is Las Vegas, which offers a completely different nightlife experience from that of New Orleans. The French Quarter also boasts several famous drinks that originated in the area such as the “Hand Grenade” and the “Hurricane” that are well known throughout drinking culture. Naturally, Mardi Gras is another local event that sets the city’s party scene apart from most others in the country.

New Orleans can also compete as a center for culture and history amidst the background of a booming port city. With tons of museums and family friendly attractions standing side by side with some of the nation’s oldest and most interesting buildings and

establishments, some would consider the city to be like one giant field trip. The current metro attractions of the city include the NFL's Saints football team and the NBA's Hornets basketball team.

It is rational to believe that if a potential tourist is attempting to make a vacation destination choice on the basis of these aspects, New Orleans would rise to the top of their list, considering its distinct competitive advantage in each these areas.

### **SWOT Analysis of New Orleans**

#### *Strengths*

- Annual festivals attracting tourists (Mardi Gras and Jazz Fest). No other domestic city can compete with New Orleans for *these* audiences during the same time period (typically February-March and early May).
- Convention capacity and desirability as a convention destination.
- Current success of professional sports franchises (attracts more people downtown to enjoy the surrounding areas and spend money).
- Mild climate during winter months.
- Unique dining, jazz, nightlife, history, and culture.
- Ability to position itself as a high-value destination on a dollar for dollar basis with its availability of entertaining free and affordable attractions.

#### *Weaknesses*

- Public's current perception of the city (aftermath of Hurricane Katrina).
- Public's perception of the city as not being as clean as is possible (Visitor Profile 5).

#### *Opportunities*

- Opportunity to rebuild city's reputation.

- Opportunity to use publicity in many positive ways.
- Opportunity to rebuild and repair parts of the city to be better and more attractive than they were before the hurricane.
- Celebrity acknowledgment and endorsement of the city as a great place to live and visit reaches wide segments.

### *Threats*

- Increasing cost of gasoline prices.
- Possibility of another hurricane.

### **Target Audience**

Traditional target markets for past New Orleans marketing efforts have covered the entire demographic spectrum. Campaigns have targeted young singles, families, and retired couples, regardless of race, sex, income, or other demographic variables. This shows that New Orleans may try to reach mass audiences because they do not feel segmenting their potential tourist base is a good idea. It could also imply that the city may target certain segments at certain times, knowing that their expenditures on one segment are lasting if tourists visit the city and favorable impressions are made, because very little will be needed to provoke potential repeat visitors to come back to New Orleans if they view the city in a positive light. This second viewpoint looks at the target audiences for New Orleans as cyclical and attempts to target each of them *after* all other target markets have been the center of marketing efforts.

The two targeted audiences for the “Easy” campaign are younger families with children who are still minors and college and business professionals. The narrow targeted audience for the family segment is one in which both parents are professionals, that have young children and have a hard time getting away from their jobs. The age range for this

portion of the target audience will be approximately 35-54. The income range targeted in this segment will consist of those households making between \$55,000 and \$95,000. The geographic regions to be advertised in to reach this target market will include most major metropolitan areas of the United States with an additional focus on Louisiana and its surrounding southeastern states (description of states in “Place” section on page 22). The PRIZM NE segments that fit well with this target audience include “Upward Bound”, “Kids and Cul-de-Sacs”, and “Fast-Track Families” (detailed definitions in appendix A) (PRIZM). The area of the campaign that will be targeted towards this segment will stress all of the family friendly activities New Orleans has to offer, as well as the opportunities to let loose and relax while in town since this segment would find these activities of the city to be the most appealing.

The targeted segment for the college and business professionals is one in which the targeted people are looking to get away and experience something new, fun, and unique. The age range for this portion of the target audience will be approximately 25-34. The income range targeted in this segment will vary between \$40,000 to around \$75,000. The geographic regions to be advertised in to reach this target market will be the same as the other segment, focusing on major metropolitan areas with an additional focus on the southeast. The PRIZM NE segments that fit well with this target audience include “Young Influentials”, “Up-and-Comers”, and “Boomtown Singles” (detailed definitions in Appendix A) (PRIZM). This part of the campaign targeted towards the college and business professionals will focus on opportunities to let loose and relax, centering around seasonal activities such as Jazz Fest, Mardi Gras, and crawfish season. Affordability and availability of free attractions will be stressed throughout the campaign to both segments, forming the basis for some of the dual reach of the campaign advertisement spots.

## **Positioning**

### *Current Positioning*

Both of the targeted segments of the campaign are aware of New Orleans, but are probably not aware of all of the attractions available in and around the city aside from Mardi Gras and some other generalities. I believe that the current positioning of New Orleans in consumers minds is still widely reliant on the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. Most news coverage and information that comes from the region is about activities or stories relating to the historic 2005 hurricane, and there is quite a lot of coverage. This may not be considered the best brand of publicity a city could receive, even though much of the news focuses on the progress being made, most stories typically note that there is a lot of work to be done in certain areas. The publicity of the area may not change for several years, although it is bound to continue improving, barring another disaster. This is one of the reasons that the current positioning of New Orleans in tourists minds will be hard to change, and could be impossible in the short-term. In response to this firm positioning, the “Easy” campaign will not look to mask the reality of the past and current situation in the area, but instead focus on what New Orleans does have to offer tourists, which is almost all of what it had prior to Katrina, as well as some offerings that are new as a result of the hurricane such as volunteer work and tours of devastated areas to view the unreal power the storm possessed.

The current campaigns of the city tend to take a similar approach to the positioning of the New Orleans brand that the “Easy” campaign is choosing. Neither campaign looks to mask the reality of what happened to the area, but instead focuses on what the area still has to offer that tourists will love. One campaign focuses on all the things there are about New Orleans that tourists can still fall in love with. This campaign

titled “Fall in Love with New Orleans All over Again” featured numerous local and national celebrities including John Goodman and Emeril Lagasse (Parpis 2). The foundation behind the spots was to exhibit what New Orleans still has to offer, and that it was just as fun, exciting, and unique as before the hurricane. The spots also imply that if the hurricane did do anything positive for the area, it is that it gave tourists a reason to come back and experience the new and improved New Orleans. This campaign also applied a certain amount of pressure on potential tourists since influential celebrities were encouraging them to “come on back” and “fall in love all over again”, clearly expressing the fact that the area needs their business and is ready to make its move back to the forefront of the American tourism scene.

The most recent print and outdoor campaign currently in use by the city takes a more traditional approach to New Orleans advertising, in that it hardly acknowledges the hurricane, but instead focuses on the aspects of New Orleans that have never changed, and according to the campaign, never will. The campaign is titled “Forever New Orleans” and uses many spots to stress the personality of the city by focusing on its people and the way potential tourists would feel if they were to make the trip. Reliance on relationships, tradition, and clever word play is integrated throughout the efforts. One spot has the print “Unlimited Carry On” clearly making a reference to airline baggage, but showing a picture of Mardi Gras tourists laughing it up. In the corner of the ad is the “Forever New Orleans” symbol and phrase, as is the case with each spot. Another ad features the print “Our Funk will get you out of Yours.” The spot features a presumed local having a ball with a drum and some creative paint (New Orleans CVB and Parpis 1). The idea behind this campaign is that New Orleans can position itself based on its culture and people, rather than on material attractions that can be changed or replaced.

### *Ideal Positioning*

New Orleans would be best positioned in the minds of the younger families with children segment and the college and business professionals segment as a vacation destination choice that is “Easy” to make as the result of the various benefits that are realized when a trip to the city is made and because of the useful information and planning tools the campaign website provides. The benefits will serve as the elements communicated within the campaign that will reinforce the “Easy” positioning to both segments based on benefits that are mutual for both target audiences, as well as those that apply to the “Easy” positioning for only one of the targeted segments.

The “Easy” campaign is looking to communicate the wide variety of cultural, metropolitan and educational activities available while visiting New Orleans, as well as the ease of travel and affordability of a visit to the city. The campaign will attempt to position the city as an easy destination selection based on several elements. Ease of planning, booking, and enjoying a trip to New Orleans will all be stressed throughout the campaign to hopefully position New Orleans as the right, easy, and satisfying vacation destination choice among other domestic options. Elements addressed within the positioning will include jazz, dining, history, and people.

### **Campaign Premise**

The major focus of the “Easy” campaign is to communicate how easy and relaxing planning and experiencing every aspect of a trip to New Orleans can be. The campaign is also about informing the potential traveler of what awaits them in New Orleans and how easy, affordable and fulfilling a trip there can be. The platform for the campaign will focus on how easy it is to find and experience the best of what New

Orleans has to offer, which in many cases, (jazz, food, nightlife, etc...) is among some of the best available in the world.

### *Evidence for Premise*

With attractions that are open year round and festivals that last for weeks at a time, there is always plenty of time to get things done in New Orleans. The city has the nickname "Big Easy" for a reason. No one seems to be in too much of a rush while in New Orleans, knowing that if it doesn't get done today, there's always tomorrow. Deadlines aren't typically popular among locals or tourists, as many like to float along and increase their chances of finding an experience that is truly unique. Planning a trip to New Orleans can be finished almost as quickly as it begins. As long as you find a convenient flight or mode of transportation and lodging that fits your style, you can pack your bags and figure out the rest when you get there. Mardi Gras parades are free to the public, Jazz Fest tickets can be purchased at the gate, other attractions are open daily, and the city is yours to explore at any time you see fit. With all of this freedom in one's schedule, stress is practically unheard of.

As mentioned earlier, almost anyone can afford a trip to New Orleans since some of the best and most popular attractions are free or of very little monetary cost. A ticket for a day at the Jazz Fest can be purchased for as little as \$30, giving someone an entire day of great music, food, shopping, and culture (Jazz Fest). Mardi Gras parades are free, last for weeks, and tons of free merchandise is thrown during the spectacles. The Audubon Zoo and Aquarium of the Americas are another set of world class attractions with small price tags considering the experience. Adults can gain entrance to the zoo for \$12.50 with children gaining access for \$7.50. The aquarium offers affordable rates as well with adult tickets running \$17.50 and children costing \$10.50 (Audubon).

The “garden district” near downtown New Orleans is another free attraction with more history and fantastic food than most visitors could ever stomach. Visitors could easily spend days taking in the beauty and delicious fanfare to be had in this area of the city. Cathedrals and museums line the streets in New Orleans, giving any history buff enough action to make their heads swell. And if a tourist is feeling up on their luck, they can hop the nearest street car on Canal Street and head for the Harrah’s casino to try their luck at the city’s biggest casino, right in the French Quarter. Speaking of the French Quarter, lets not forget all of the legendary jazz and drinks that can be soaked up at *any* time of *any* day down in the Quarter.

### **Tone of Campaign**

The tone for the voice of the campaign is one that embraces the tone of New Orleans itself. The campaign will be based around practical information that peaks the interest of the traveler wondering if they would find enough satisfaction in their own trip to New Orleans. Once a potential traveler is persuaded to visit the campaign’s website, they will find and be linked to all of the information they would need to make an informed vacation decision based on all that New Orleans has to offer. Local flavor, slang, attractions, and attitudes will pepper the campaign. I believe letting the campaign take an angle that lets the city, culture, and attractions of New Orleans speak for themselves only makes sense. Attempting to change the natural flavor of the city would seem almost criminal given its unique appeal. Humor, facts, and relevance will be added to the campaign to make it have more of an impact and hopefully add a lasting effect that drives the interest of those who are being targeted.

## **Potential Future International Campaign**

New Orleans also has to compete with numerous destinations that international travelers find appealing. International tourists that make the trip to New Orleans typically also visit Atlanta (26%), New York (17.3%), Orlando (15.4%), Nashville (15.4%), San Francisco (8.7%, and Memphis (6.7%) (Visitor Profile 1). Some pretty tough competition when considering all that each of those cities has to offer. I believe if a campaign were to be created aimed at international tourists that it would be most beneficial to focus on the festivals of New Orleans so that the foreign travelers were given a reason to stay longer in New Orleans and skip the other cities or spend less time there. This large segment of potential tourists could serve as the basis for an extension of the “Easy” campaign or a completely different integrated marketing communications plan.

## **Marketing Mix**

### **Price**

The average cost of a trip to New Orleans for each person during 2004 was \$196 dollars per day (Visitor Profile 6). This number includes expenditures for food, lodging, transportation and entertainment. This is extremely affordable considering the high costs of almost any means of travel as well as the relatively high costs of lodging. The “Easy” campaign will communicate the reality that there is a side of New Orleans that satisfies almost every person with any budget. With tons of free and extremely affordable options for entertainment in New Orleans, cash can be stretched over longer periods of time during a pleasure or business trip.

The campaign will definitely position New Orleans on a price scale as a destination that offers great value, instead of positioning itself as exclusive or somewhere

that tourists can only afford to go once in a great while. The idea is that it is “Easy” to have an enjoyable vacation in New Orleans on any budget, which obviously doesn’t restrict the city to anyone in terms of budget.

### **Place**

The “Easy” campaign will be a national campaign executed in many metropolitan areas throughout the United States with an additional focus on the southeast. The top states providing tourism to the New Orleans area include Louisiana outside of the New Orleans metropolitan area (15.9%), Texas (15.5%), Mississippi (8.8%), Florida (8.1%), Alabama (7.7%), Tennessee (6.8%), and Georgia (6.5%) (Visitor Profile 1). These states will feature a larger proportion of “Easy” campaign executions since residents already hold a favorable position towards New Orleans, many have already visited the city, and will probably be more easily persuaded to visit the city.

Radio ads will primarily be run in the southeast in addition to print and outdoor spots. Print and outdoor will be the most commonly used media for advertising in the other geographic regions of the U.S besides the southeast. Both push and pull strategies will be used in all markets to entice potential tourists to visit the campaign website and plan a trip to the New Orleans area. Push tactics will be used in the sense that special offers will be available that can only be taken advantage of through the “Easy” campaign website. Pull tactics will also be used to the end that potential users will be stimulated to visit the site and plan their trip based on the information, activities, and prices they are provided with.

## Creative Executions / Promotion

The name of the campaign I am creating for the city of New Orleans is called “Easy”. The campaign will consist of an integrated marketing communications project including radio, outdoor, print, and interactive media. All advertisements within the campaign will be tied together with the central idea and benefit of New Orleans being “easy” as a destination choice for several different reasons. The campaign will direct targeted tourists to a website where they will be further enlightened about everything the city has to offer and be given numerous opportunities to plan a trip of their own or become informed about the costs of doing so.

The campaign website will guarantee links and special offers that offer best available deals related to traveling and interacting with the city of New Orleans.

### **Tagline/Theme**

The tagline of the campaign I have created is “Easy”. This tagline also doubles as a theme since the point of the campaign is to communicate how “Easy” planning, booking, and experiencing a pleasant and fulfilling trip to New Orleans can be. Detailed below are the descriptions of the creative executions and the media that will be used in the campaign to reach the targeted potential tourists in the selected geographic areas.

### **Outdoor**

Billboards will be the most extensively used medium for the “Easy” campaign. Billboards’ ability to communicate convincing and attention grabbing images that correlate with the one word tagline of the campaign make them the best suited medium to communicate the campaign’s message. Descriptions of the billboards to be used in the “Easy” campaign are detailed below:

1.) Visual: Picnic table mounded with fresh crawfish.

Text: “Enjoying the harvest...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

2.) Visual: Canal Street in the French Quarter.

Text: “One stop shopping, dining, jazzing, rejuvenating...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

3.) Visual: Historic Garden District

Text: “History meets elegance...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

4.) Visual: Drew Brees (Saints quarterback) using laptop computer at Easy.com

Text: “One stop vacation planning...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

5.) Visual: Mardi Gras float and parade spectators.

Text: “Cabin fever antidote...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

### **Print – Magazine**

For the purpose of communicating the benefits and elements of the “Easy” campaign, magazine advertisements will prove to be equally as appealing as outdoor placements. Two magazines that are read by the target audiences and could be used as vehicles for the campaign include Better Homes and Gardens and ESPN the Magazine (MRI+). Several examples of magazine ads to be used in the campaign are detailed below:

1.) Visual: Local playing trumpet in beautiful area of French Quarter.

Text: “Affordable Escape...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

2.) Visual: Paul Prudhomme standing by his restaurant (K-Paul’s Louisiana Kitchen) in the French Quarter, smiling with open arms.

Text: “Feel (and taste) the love...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

3.) Visual: Jazz and Heritage festival concert and crowd.

Text: “Be-bop-scat-ta-tattily-to, and all that Jazz...Easy” “Easy-nola.com” in lower right hand corner.

### **Radio Commercial**

Two 30-second radio commercials will be created for the “Easy” campaign. One will target the young families with children segment with the other targeting the college and business professionals segment. Each commercial is detailed below:

#### *30 Second Radio Commercial for the Family Segment*

SFX: Port sounds (seagulls, cargo ships)

Announcer: Decided on a destination for this year’s family vacation? Why not try somewhere relaxing, where you can unwind, enjoy a new atmosphere, and find activities the whole family will enjoy.

SFX: Rhythmic jazz music

Announcer: New Orleans Louisiana is the “easy” choice. World class dining, educational activities, and a culture that puts everyone at ease can be found in the “Big Easy”.

Announcer: And now, planning your trip to New Orleans is easier than ever. Visit easy-nola.com for all of the information on activities, festivals, dining, lodging, and transportation you’ll need to plan your trip; all backed by the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau guaranteeing the best prices available.

SFX: Upbeat jazz music

Announcer: So come on down to New Orleans. Try something new. Try something fun. Try something “easy”. Visit [easy-nola.com](http://easy-nola.com) today to plan your family’s most successful vacation.

*30 Second Radio Commercial for the Young College and Business Professionals Segment*

SFX: Driving sounds (horns honking, cars passing)

Announcer: The same drive home, the same car, and the same radio station; Why not try something new, something “easy”?

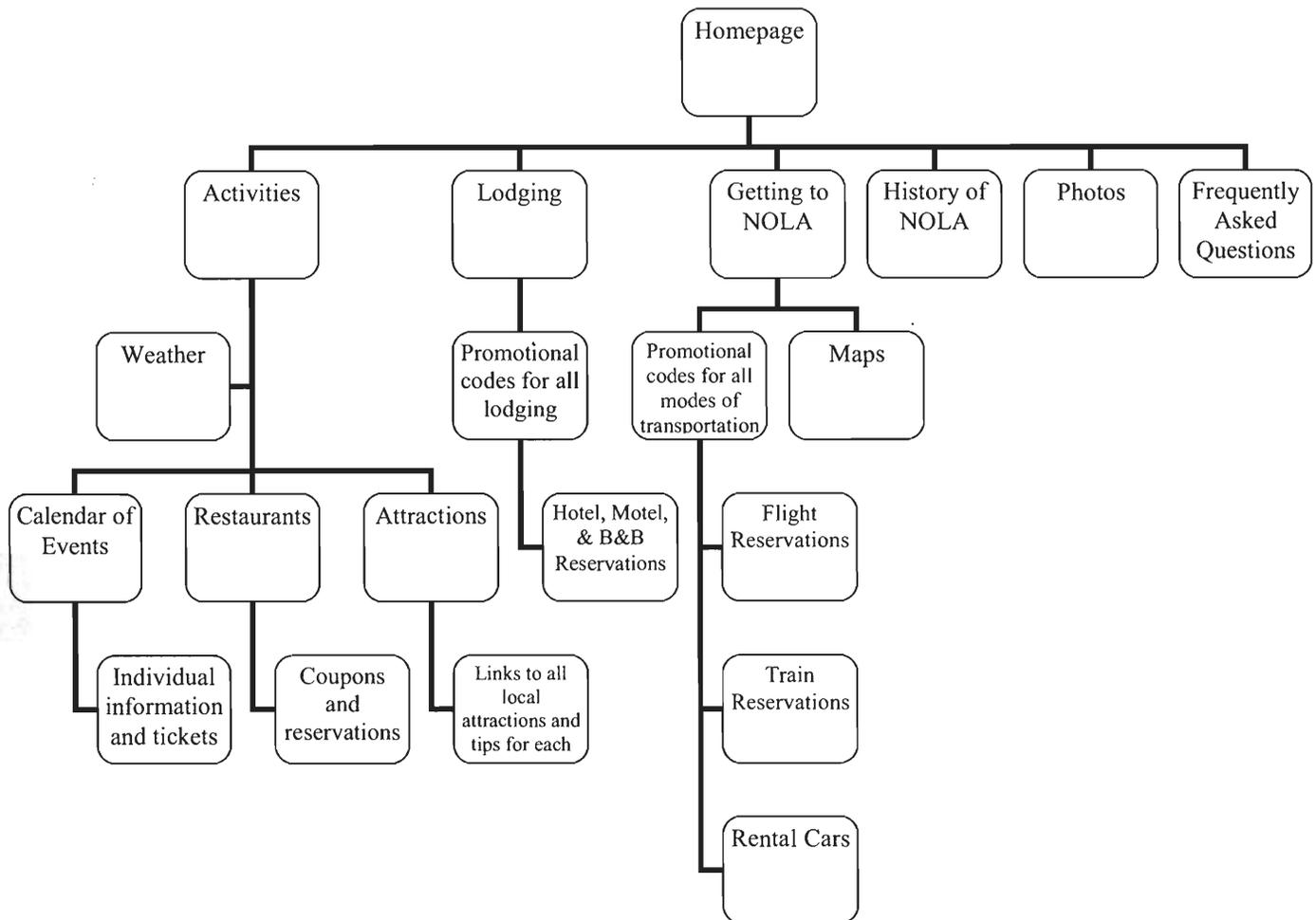
SFX: Upbeat jazz music

Announcer: Make the “easy” choice to attend New Orleans’ 2008 Jazz and Heritage Festival the last weekend in April and first weekend in May! Both weekends are going to feature some of the biggest names in the music industry from Santana to Burning Spear, O.A.R. to Jimmy Buffett, as well as more brass bands and local ensembles than any other jazz fest in the nation.

Announcer: Don’t miss the action at what is sure to be one of the most exciting Jazz Festivals in recent history. And now buying tickets and finding transportation and lodging information is easier than ever! Visit [easy-nola.com](http://easy-nola.com) for all the information you’ll need to plan your trip to this year’s Jazz Fest. Don’t miss the food, don’t miss the music, and don’t miss the fun! Make the “easy” choice and visit [easy-nola.com](http://easy-nola.com) for information and a full schedule of performers.

## Campaign Website

The promise of the campaign is to provide one of the most informative and enjoyable experiences one could have when learning about and planning a trip to New Orleans. The first stage of the perceptual process will take place when potential tourists are exposed and engage themselves with the campaign. Once the targeted person is influenced to visit the campaign website they will be given all of the opportunities and links to become properly informed and prepared to plan a trip to the New Orleans area. An organizational chart is detailed below that explains the layout of easy-nola.com:



The campaign website promises to provide seasonal information, photos, information on potential activities, weather, and much more including all of the links necessary to

actually book a trip to New Orleans. The site will also feature discounts exclusive to the site and campaign if agreements are able to be reached between the campaign and possible participating companies and partners.

The campaign website is the most important aspect of the campaign. All of the other creative executions drive potential tourists to the website, and without a site that keeps visitors interested with useful information the campaign would be unsuccessful. Easy-nola.com will feature everything a potential tourist will need to research, plan, and book their vacation to New Orleans.

## Appendix A

### PRIZM NE Segments for the professionals with young children segment:

#### *“Upward Bound”*

“More than any other segment, Upward Bound appears to be the home of those legendary Soccer Moms and Dads. In these small satellite cities, upscale families boast dual incomes, college degrees, and new split-levels and colonials. Residents of Upward Bound tend to be kid-obsessed, with heavy purchases of computers, action figures, dolls, board games, bicycles, and camping equipment.”

Median Household Income: \$81,446

#### *“Kids and Cul-de-Sacs”*

“Upper-middle class, suburban, married couples with children--that's the skinny on Kids & Cul-de-Sacs, an enviable lifestyle of large families in recently built subdivisions. With a high rate of Hispanic and Asian Americans, this segment is a refuge for college-educated, white-collar professionals with administrative jobs and upper-middle-class incomes. Their nexus of education, affluence, and children translates into large outlays for child-centered products and services.”

Median Household Income: \$70,490

#### *“Fast-Track Families”*

“With their upscale incomes, numerous children, and spacious homes, Fast-Track Families are in their prime acquisition years. These middle-aged parents have the disposable income and educated sensibility to want the best for their children. They buy the latest technology with impunity: new computers, DVD players, home theater systems,

and video games. They take advantage of their rustic locales by camping, boating, and fishing.”

Median Household Income: \$75,814

PRIZM NE Segments for the college and business professionals segment:

*“Young Influentials”*

“Once known as the home of the nation's yuppies, Young Influentials reflects the fading glow of acquisitive yuppiedom. Today, the segment is a common address for younger, middle-class singles and couples who are more preoccupied with balancing work and leisure pursuits. Having recently left college dorms, they now live in apartment complexes surrounded by ball fields, health clubs, and casual-dining restaurants.”

Median Household Income: \$47,976

*“Up-and-Comers”*

“Up-and-Comers is a stopover for younger, midscale singles before they marry, have families, and establish more deskbound lifestyles. Found in second-tier cities, these mobile twentysomethings include a disproportionate number of recent college graduates who are into athletic activities, the latest technology, and nightlife entertainment.”

Median Household Income: \$49,143

*“Boomtown Singles”*

“Affordable housing, abundant entry-level jobs, and a thriving singles scene--all have given rise to the Boomtown Singles segment in fast-growing satellite cities. Younger,

single, and working-class, these residents pursue active lifestyles amid sprawling apartment complexes, bars, convenience stores, and laundromats.”

Median Household Income: \$38,910

(PRIZM)

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