ABA Finance Department – Executive Summary

Revenue, excluding investment income, totaled $5,170,000 through 3 months ending March 31, 2019, up $287,000 from $4,884,000 through the same period in 2018. Membership, Publications and Other Revenues are all similar to the prior year, with Marketplace being the reason for the increase in revenue year over year. Marketplace revenue in 2019 is $270,000 above 2018, primarily due to Sponsorship Passthroughs which is explained in further detail in the Finance and Budget report. Sponsorship Passthroughs are booked as revenue and expense, and therefore have a neutral effect on the bottom line.

Expenses through the first 3 months of 2019 are $2,573,000, an increase of $180,000 over the prior year. As with revenue, expenses are up year over year due primarily to Marketplace Sponsorship Passthroughs which are booked as a revenue item in addition to an expense. The excess of revenue above expenses through the first 3 months of 2019 is $2,597,000 compared to $2,491,000 in the prior year, an increase of $106,000, or 4%.

Current assets at March 31, 2019, consisting of cash, accounts receivable, prepaid expenses and investments total $6,637,000 compared to $6,339,000 last year at this time, representing an increase of approximately $300,000, or 4.5%. In April 2019, prior to the Spring Board Meeting, ABA transferred $100,000 from its operating account to its reserve account per the decision to build up the investment reserves. This is the 8th consecutive year ABA has contributed $100,000 to the reserve fund in its effort to replenish the funds used to purchase its office condominium. The balance within ABA’s reserve account at March 31, 2019, currently being managed by Goldman Sachs, is $4,999,209, an increase of $284,730 over the reserve balance at March 31, 2018. ABA, along with the ABA Foundation, changed investment advisors during 2018, and moved its reserve funds from TD Private Client Wealth Group in November 2018 to Goldman Sachs. The balance at the time the reserve funds were transferred from TD to Goldman Sachs was $4,809,809. The annualized return on the reserve funds from inception with Goldman Sachs is 3.66%, while the return for the 1st quarter ended March 31, 2019, is 7.08%.
2019 Spring Board Report
Meetings, Events, and Education Department
Submitted by Lynn Brewer

2019 Marketplace

Strategic Plan Successes
- Marketplace Chairman Kim Grzywacz created personalized videos every two weeks that we used across our social media channels.
- 30 new Buyer companies took appointments for the full week.
- Offered complimentary meeting space to for user groups, which attracted new operators to Marketplace.
- BISC and BusMarc seminars were rebranded and included in the overall education offerings. Seven education tracks were offered: Technology, Professional Development, Sales & Marketing, Motorcoach Safety, Motorcoach Innovations, Motorcoach Regulatory & Compliance and Motorcoach Maintenance & Repair.
- Offered CEO Symposium as an exclusive operator education program.
- Increased Education Bite offerings on the Marketplace Networking Floor.
- The Business Floor was upgraded and offered more room to prepare for appointments in a relaxed atmosphere.
- The Marketplace App launched in December and included real-time personal information, including delegate appointment schedules. New this year, the App included education and event surveys. We utilized Survey Monkey to complete Buyer Options surveys for their onsite booth needs which include the choice of table and chairs and the option to order electricity.

2020 Marketplace

Strategic Goals:
- Creating targeted “road maps” and customized messages for individual membership segments which include daily schedule suggestions.
- Utilizing ABA Board members and Marketplace Advisory Committee and subcommittee members for testimonials and promotional videos.
- Utilizing Marketplace Advisory Committee and subcommittee members to target motorcoach and tour operators who are currently not attending.
- Creating program to provide bus manufacturers with materials to help encourage their vendors to exhibit.
- Revising the sponsorship program and assessing all sponsorships, benefits and pricing. New sales materials and benefits sheets have been created and the sponsorship program is being outsourced.
In support of ABA’s Strategic Plan Objective for Government Affairs & Policy, the Government Affairs and Policy Division (GAP) continued to aggressively engage in both legislative and regulatory matters, pursuing its 2018-2020 ABA Strategic Plan targets.

In terms of legislative activities, since the last board report, GAP, along with ABA consultants has aggressively engaged in advocating on three ABA objectives through the FY 2020 appropriations process: 1. Withholding funding for FMCSA to implement the 2015 L&I rule, as a matter of continuing the pressure for finalization of a revised rule; 2. Securing an increased level of funding for the Intercity Bus Security Grant program; and 3. Stopping the implementation of the National Park Service’s April 2018 fee increase changes. In pursuit of these objectives, GAP and team have held over 100 meetings on Capitol Hill, and organized a successful ABA leadership day of meetings in March. In addition to these legislative objectives, GAP has already remained engaged on the developments concerning surface transportation and/or infrastructure legislation. Although hearings are occurring in both the House and Senate, and discussion are being held at the leadership levels, including discussions between Congress and the White House, there appears as yet no agreement on how to address the funding issue. Nonetheless, GAP is conducting outreach to both the House and Senate offices to advocate for ABA transportation objectives, including protection of the partial fuel tax refund and modifications to the 2015 FAST Act tolling/HOV provisions to facilitate compliance.

On the regulatory/administrative side, GAP has conducted several meetings with USDOT officials in support of various ABA concerns. In terms of FMCSA, GAP has continued to press FMCSA to finalize the L&I revised rule; move forward on both the California meal & rest break petition and the San Francisco International Airport petition; arranged to have the FMCSA Administrator attend the May ABA Board of Directors meeting. We learned as well, FMCSA plans to publish several formally filed ABA petitions for comment, petitions that were held over from the last Administration. Also, GAP conducted two open conference calls with ABA membership, in support of responding to several FMCSA notices for comment and will be preparing comments to file in this matter. As to NHTSA, GAP, along with R. Schweitzer, met with the Chief Counsel on behalf of the Entertainer Motorcoach Council, to press for action on a petition for an exemption from the seatbelt rule; and also touched on the structural integrity rollover rule. The GAP staff also participated in several meetings with the National Park Service to press for modifications to their April 2018 fee changes.

The GAP staff also proceeded with preparations for both the Summer 2019 BISC and BusMARC meetings, as well as the Winter 2020 BISC meeting in Omaha. We also supported several
state/regional association initiatives, including the new BUS4NYC, and attended the Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association meeting in March, in Bethlehem, PA.

Finally, the BusPAC account balance currently stands at $249,151.36, and the 2019 fundraising goal remains $100,000 coupled with a 100% participation rate by eligible ABA Board members. Also, through the support of BusPAC Chairman Peter Picknelly, BusPAC will be hosting a fundraising event for Representative Richard Neal (D-MA), Chairman of the House Ways & Means Committee on the second morning of the Board meeting, May 2.
ABA Communications & Marketing Board of Directors Report

Melanie Hinton/Spring 2019

Introduction:

The start of 2019 was an exciting time for the Communications/Marketing team. We started the year in Louisville trying new marketing tools for Marketplace on social media that is now guiding us to promote ABA’s Marketplace 2020, which will showcase the first Busworld Academy North America event. We have also been focused on promoting the Government Affairs Team’s work on the National Park fees issue and other priorities. We spent the first month of the year working with our association and business colleagues to bring an end to the government shutdown.

Regarding membership outreach, we have innovated our outreach to new members and delivered our first electronic Annual Report at the end of March.

Plans are already underway for promoting 2020 Marketplace and Busworld Academy in Omaha.

Strategic Plan Benchmarks and ABA Communications/Marketing Activities

Advocacy Comms: Drive legislative and regulatory oversight framework at all government levels to eliminate obstacles and promote the success of our industry.

Update:

- ABA Communications has worked with the GAP team on bringing media attention to a number of issues include the National Park Service Fees and CUAs hike (see Media Hits below), as well as work with influential Capitol Hill news organizations such as the The Hill, Politico and Bloomberg Government to cover ABA’s legislative activities and on transportation issue statements.

- ABA Communications has worked with a number of trade press this year to put a spotlight on ABA’s leadership in a number of issues affecting the industry such as the government shutdown, Intercity Bus Security Grants and NPS fees. Update: ABA put out a statement commending the Trump Administration for recognizing the role buses play n a multi-modal world; ABA also signed on with other associations to take a stand against the US tariff war; the closing of the Mexican Border; and supportive of NY Bus Coalition fighting congestion pricing.

- ABA’s continued #WorkingForYou and #ABAEverwhere posts continue to grow and show ABA members that ABA is leading on issue affecting their business. UPDATE: ABA has been active on sharing the GAP team’s work with Congressional leaders, including showcasing ABA’s success with Congressional Dear Colleague Letters on the NPS fees issue as well as the Intercity Bus Security Grant Program funding. We have focused this year on targeting influencers on Capitol Hill through social media mentions and tags.

- ABA Communications team has been actively working with the GAP team to draw member attention ABA’s work on top priority issues such as: Canadian Carbon Tax, NPS fees, Lease & Interchange, Infrastructure, and Motorcoach Security Grants through member alerts, videos, surveys and articles in ABA publications and social media.
ABA Communications team has been working closely with FMCSA to write regular columns in Destinations magazine. Also, the team spent a day with FMCSA Administrator Ray Martinez doing Level 1 inspection around the tidal basin in Washington, DC. You can read about the experience, here.

Membership: Continue overall membership growth with focus on all segments of the motorcoach, tour and travel industry.

Update:

ABA Communications has worked with the Membership Department on new member onboarding outreach which includes a digital New Member Kit; an Onboarding Webinar and timely ABA activity emails focused on engaging new members.

Utilizing the new database and Informz, ABA Communications has created marketing automation campaigns to help recruit new members as well as stay in contact and “care for” new members throughout their first year. UPDATE: ABA can now track members when they open their emails as well as when they visit buses.org and therefore use that information to further personalize information to members and give them exactly what they are interested in.

Revamped and developed collateral to promote ABA programs and benefits.

ABA Communications has been working closely with Membership team to change the buses.org website to make it more member and potential member friendly. More welcoming.

Regularly and consistently promote what ABA offers its membership. Highlights of programs and services, include:

- Advocacy - #ABAWorkingForYou
- Crisis Communications Assistance
- Marketplace
- Discount Partnerships
- Networking: Councils, Meetings, Webinars
- Education: Marketplace Education, Webinars, Council Meetings, CTIS, Entry Level Driver Training, John Kennedy on Demand
- ABA Foundation Scholarships and Research
- Member Promotion: ABA Publications, Member Blogs, Promotional Social Media Pieces, Member Spotlight, Consumer-focused Promotion

To enhance our Customer Service: In August, ABA launched a live chat opportunity for members and visitors to buses.org who need help finding information on ABA, Marketplace or need to update their membership information. UPDATE: Since its inception more than 600 people have
used the live chat option and we have responded to more than 1500 inquiries.

- ABA’s participation in the FMCSA’s Our Roads, Our Responsibility campaign, as well as our partnership with Busing on the Lookout program, continues to raise the profile of ABA not only in the industry but also with government leaders. ABA has taken a lead role in partnerships that deal with our industry and is often the only motorcoach association involved. **UPDATE:** ABA secured Greyhound Bus Driver Keith Cummings from Chicago to participate in OROS’s Voices of Safety video campaign. Keith and buses will be first video launched in this campaign. ABA has also been active in promoting OROS safety materials.

- ABA Director of Communication presented to the Charleston CVB Travel Council in March and came back with five new ABA members.

- ABA Comms helped Membership draft communications for membership recruitment for shows ABA has attended (Heartland/TravelSouth/DestinationNewEngland) or cities ABA President has visited, such as Omaha.

- New membership ads for allied association publications.

**Annual Meeting & Marketplace:** Deliver the leading marketplace for member buying/selling.

**Update:**

- ABA Communications is working closely with Meetings Department to utilize host city and Marketplace Chairman to make compelling social media and email content to share with members. We have utilized our #MarketplaceMondays on social media to highlight either Louisville as the host city or an aspect of the event. Marketplace Chair Kim Grzywacz developed regular videos promoting deadlines and highlights for Marketplace. **UPDATE:** For the 2019 Marketplace, pre-show we went around the host city and created sponsor spotlight videos to promote sponsors throughout the week. The following is collection of social media activity around the show:
  
  o We gained 363 new followers on social media from January 20-February 7, also during this time:
    
    - ABA social media interaction with followers on Instagram: 31 conversations and ABA mentioned 57 times in Instagram stories and 42 Instagram posts.
    - ABA had 1237 profile visits on Instagram during Marketplace week vs less than 20 on a normal week
    - ABA mentioned 105 times on Facebook
    - ABA mentioned 29 times on LinkedIn
ABA hosted a Twitter Wall during Marketplace with the following results (from January 22 to January 30:
  - ABA was mentioned over 700 times
  - 685,954 total unique reach
  - 1.2 million absolute reach

- With the social media success from #ABALouisville, for 2020 ABA will be building on with new videos from Omaha CVB as well as 2020 Chairman Luke Busskohl. We will also be using hashtags: #ABAOmaha and #OMGomaha

- We have secured testimonies from a number of Marketplace Advisory Committee members

- ABA MARCOMMS working with Meetings Department developed an appealing Marketplace microsite to promote the event to outside our membership industry professionals. This launched in January 2019 promoting Omaha 2020.

- We will continue using speakers as program ambassadors and ask for them to do videos promoting their education session as well as the event. Update: We will be utilizing Marketplace and Busworld speakers throughout the year for 2020. Many MKPL speakers are also writing article for ABA’s publications.

- Developed advertising collateral for trade publications as well as for ABA publications and social media to promote programs and special events during Marketplace

ABA Foundation: Support the work of the ABA Foundation

Update:

- ABA Communications developed Scholarships in a Box set of printed materials and sent to all ABA members to help promote Foundation Scholarships to their employees.

- ABA Communications continues to promote the Foundation and its activities on social media with #FoundationFridays as well as in ABA’s publications.

- ABA Communications & Marketing have taken Scholarship winner testimonials and are utilizing these stories to promote not only donations to the Fund A Future campaign but also to encourage others to apply.

- Utilize ABA and ABA Foundation leadership in blog and video posts throughout the year to help raise awareness of the ABA Foundation scholarships and fundraising. UPDATE: Launched John Percy and Brenda Borwege videos calling for donated Auction items in November.

- ABA Communications continues to work with Dunham & Associates to release the quarterly motorcoach sales survey. UPDATE: ABA sent out three press releases on the surveys.
ABA Communications took over the communications for the annual Motorcoach Census survey and sent printed and electronic surveys to members and non-members. Created homepage and webpage access to Survey. ABA worked with UMA to have them promote the Census to their members. As of this report (Jan. 4) we have had 229 completed survey returned. This is more than the last Census.

ABA Comms reached out to universities with travel and tourism programs to promote available ABA scholarships for non-members.

Created #WOWWednesdays to promote big ticket auction items.

Launched Percy’s Purse Raffle to promote the purse raffle that will benefit scholarships during Marketplace. Sent emails and promoted on social.

Sent near weekly Foundation Friday emails to promote the scholarship, auctions and ABA Foundation research.

Peter taped a video to announce the launch of the 2018-2019 Scholarship season on Dec. 6.

Publishing, Communications and Social Media: Communicate the value ABA contributes to the industry and its members.

Update:
Media Engagement:
So far in 2019, ABA has sent out 15 press releases and statements regarding Marketplace and the ABA Foundation, industry initiatives, happenings within the government affecting the industry, including the government shutdown.

Media Hits:
In 2018, we ABA leadership for several interviews and op-eds including: articles in Travel Weekly and Group Travel on NPS fees; Peter wrote an op-ed for Group Travel on the Supreme Court upholding the Trump Administration’s Travel Ban; Peter worked with Travel Weekly on an article on Infrastructure. Peter appeared regularly on Road Dog Radio.

Social Media Activities
So far in 2019, ABA has been mentioned 316 times in news articles that covered Marketplace 2019, Marketplace award winners, coverage of ABA statements on the government shutdown as well as other government issues affecting the industry. ABA was also interviewed on the bus shortage and trends in the industry for 2019. We have recently signed up with Meltwater to help us better track our reach in the media. We plan to continue to cover Marketplace 2020, with exciting announcements about what is to come.

We continue to see our social media channels grow:

Facebook: 5,320 in Jan. to 5,579 (as of April 11)
Twitter: 4,256 in Jan. to 4,330 (as of April 11)
LinkedIn: 3,589 in Jan. to 3,607 (as of April 11)
Instagram: 984 in Jan. to 1,154 (as of April 11)

To put in context our competitors’ social media numbers are:

**United Motorcoach Association**
Facebook: 2,276 as of April 11  
Twitter: 1,407 as of April 11

**National Tour Association**
Facebook: 5,036 as of April 11  
Twitter: 10,522 as of April 11

**Publications**

On Jan. 7, ABA launched a new The Insider with new partner, INLoop. The Insider utilizes AI technology and enable members to choose the news they want to read regarding their part of the industry and that is all they will see – in addition to ABA News – with this new publication. This is another example of ABA personalizing the member’s experience with ABA. Since January, three ads have been sold in the new Insider.

In the first quarter of 2019, three ads have been sold in the Tour Stop.

In April, Destinations magazine launched the 2019 call for nominations for its Best of the Best Sept/Oct issue.

**Crisis Communication**

ABA continues its campaign to educate our bus and tour operator members about ABA’s Crisis Communications member benefit. ABA Communications also helped members prepare crisis communications plans as well as deal with customer service communications issues.

Polynesian Adventure Tours (2/18)

ABA also provided “other” communications assistance to members, whether it was to help them create a crisis communications, deal with difficult customer service situations or working with members to create positive media:

EPN Travel – Crisis Communications prep plan  
First Class Charter – Crisis Communications prep plan  
Innovative Coaches - Crisis Communications prep plan
Report Summary

Membership by The Numbers
(Count comparison April 2018 vs 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Category</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Associations</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
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<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Operator</td>
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<td>859</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tour Operator</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>386</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Industry</td>
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<td>1,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3,415</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Retention Rate**: 91%
- **New Members (since Jan. 2019)**: 68
- **New Procedures**: Capture, track, and monitor prospects in the sales pipeline.
- **Trade Show Best Practices**: Get attendee list in advance and offer/pre-schedule one-on-one meeting.
- **Tradeshows exhibited**: UMA Expo, Heartland Showcase, Travel South Showcase, and International LCT Conference.
- **Membership Campaigns**:
  - West Coast Prospects: CA, CO, NV, OR, UT and WA
  - NTA members
  - Other leads acquired through Facebook, LinkedIn, Metro Magazine, ABA staff, & member referrals
  - 2019 ABA Marketplace nonmember motorcoach operators
- **Newly Implemented Programs**:
  - Member Spotlight article on our publications, Q&A format interview with a member
  - Membership Certificate distributed to members so they can display their ABA membership proudly at their place of business
- **Membership Committee**: Looking into a diverse group of members (bus operators, tour operators, travel industry and associates) to serve on a committee.
- **Reestablishing ABA on the Road**: regional meetings with prospects in conjunction with an industry event. A great platform to meet prospects that may not be able to travel to the east coast.
- **Membership Brochure**: new membership brochure to help communicate the value of ABA, grow membership, and clearly stand out from the competition.
- **Onboarding Webinar**: onboard new members, function as a recruitment tool, as well as inform current/new employees of a member company.
- **Partnerships**:
  - **Perillo Travel VR**: Leveraging from our strategic partners and create further collaboration. Peter Pantuso & Lia Zegeye paid a visit to Perillo Travel VR HQ, to discuss other opportunities.
Opportunities in Canada: we have secured a speaking engagement with a Bienvenue Canada, a Quebec based travel show, to help expose ABA to the Canadian audience.

Affinity Program:
- The Award Zone: working to implement driver rewards program designed to help bus companies add driver incentive programs.
- Data Reporting Program: to help hotels and DMO’s make a data driven decision. By showing how they stack up compare to the competition and measure their monthly & YTD performance.

Supporting the Industry: through sponsorships at Circle Wisconsin Midwest Marketplace, Discover New England, Travel Alliance Partners, & Receptive Tour Operators Summit, etc.

2019-2020 Renewals: to bus & tour operators and reminder emails/calls are scheduled for the travel and associate members.

Database
- Identified and completed merging 500 duplicate member accounts found in the database.
- Continue to update mailing addresses and other contact information

SAFER checks: Continue to check the status of 717 bus operator members to make sure they meet ABA’s membership standards.

Lunch & Learn: free database webinar sessions shared with ABA staff to help expand current knowledge of the database, and improve efficiency.