



2015 - 2016
MARKETING PLAN



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Marketing Plan

Goals

The purpose of the 2015-2016 Visit San Luis Obispo County (VSLOC) Marketing Plan is to provide strategic and tactical direction for the County to achieve the following stated goals:

- Increase awareness for San Luis Obispo County as a destination
 - Conduct in-depth consumer demographic and share-of-wallet research, in addition to feeder market awareness research, to gain a more descriptive understanding of the San Luis Obispo County visitor and the perception of those yet to travel to the destination
 - Increase general awareness of San Luis Obispo County as a brand of prime consideration among key targeted audiences
 - Connect the dots for the consumer on the breadth of offerings in San Luis Obispo County
 - Enhance the County's brand image to foster destination loyalty, increase repeat visits, encourage social endorsement and extend exposure by attracting media attention and partnership opportunities
 - Explore, expand and develop new or underperforming sales and distribution channels
 - Develop travel trade initiatives, including enhanced fulfillment tools
 - Enhance website engagement, functionality and clicks to booking
 - Support new air carrier relationships to open vacation product exposure
- Increase demand for overnight stays within the County, either through increased visitation or increased length-of-stay
 - Increase Transient Occupancy Tax revenues by 7% or more
 - Increase occupancy across all lodging categories by an aggregate of 3% as measured by STR reporting
 - Increase traffic to VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com by 20% annually
- Direct visits, as a % of total visits, will increase significantly
- Organic search visits, as a % of total visits, will see an offsetting decline
- Increase unique visitors to VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com by 10%
- Increase engagement/average time on site by 5%

Strategy

In order to achieve our stated goals for County stakeholders, including community DMOs and lodging constituents, we will employ a multi-channel strategy to position San Luis Obispo County in the decision set of considered destinations for persons ready to enjoy vacation opportunities like those available in San Luis Obispo County. Guided by available and to-be-commissioned research along with stakeholder-provided insights, we will concentrate marketing funds on those most likely and most able to visit. We will do so during the times of year when increased visitation is most needed and will yield the most significant increases.



Media exposure will feature new brand/image words, pictures and video, and will be delivered across a palette of traditional and non-traditional media. Sophisticated placements will be highly targeted geographically, behaviorally and contextually. Complementing the brand/image campaign messaging will be coincident and familial tactical co-op campaigns, featuring opportunities for County stakeholders to participate – with affordable positions available across a spectrum of key traditional and digital placements, framed by compelling County images and descriptive content.

At the same time, a focused public relations plan will further extend the voice of VSLOC through feature stories, event publicity and content generation by vetted and target appropriate bloggers and media outlets. The public relations team will also supplement agency initiatives to engage external media and other partners to deliver County-inclusive promotions and marketing partnerships.

The powerful strategic combination of brand/image media, tactical co-op media, public relations and non-traditional exposure will dynamically expand the reach and frequency of the VSLOC story, and position the County firmly on the path to delivering its goals.

Tactics

On the pages to follow is a detailed breakdown of the individual elements that make up the synergistic body-of-work that comprises the VSLOC marketing plan. Every included element is broken down and is a strong contributor on its own. When all elements are working together under the carefully-conceived overarching plan, they become even stronger than the sum of their individual parts, reinforcing, enhancing and strengthening each other to drive results.

Create Unity Among Stakeholders

Unification among stakeholders is anchored by the creation of an advisory marketing committee comprised of seasoned destination experts and marketing professionals from selected County DMOs, lodging establishments and marketing agencies. Through monthly meetings attended by partner Catalyst Marketing Company, this committee will help advise VSLOC and the agency on:

- Reducing tourism marketing duplication efforts across the County
- Creating and adopting a countywide icon to represent the County for the purpose of:
 - a) Reinforcing the County's location
 - b) Connecting the dots for the consumer on the breadth of offerings in the County
 - c) Unifying the personality of the County
 - d) Unifying the County's diverse stakeholders under a common theme
 - e) Extending the County's brand reach via proud inclusion of the icon in all stakeholder advertising/collateral/signage
- Encouraging marketing between partners and VSLOC to maximize effectiveness
- Providing cooperative advertising opportunities for partners participating in VSLOC-anchored marketing initiatives
- Tackling key strategic marketing initiatives in the areas of sponsorship, promotions, partnership programs, research and other processes focused on growing destination marketing for San Luis Obispo County
- Doing for our constituents what they cannot do for themselves



Develop and Launch An Overarching Brand

Research shows there is a lack of collective awareness in key feeder markets for the diverse destinations that make up San Luis Obispo County. A clear solution for mitigating that serious issue will be the development and deployment of an all-encompassing brand strategy and message. This creative execution will allow each destination and attraction within the County to shine as metaphoric facets on the “diamond” that is San Luis Obispo County. It will allow the County to stand tall and visible among its more recognized neighbors, and also anchor cooperative ads in which DMOs and other County partners may participate. Goals include:

- Bringing together all destinations and attractions within the County under a true and defensible theme, connecting the dots for the consumer who, to date, may have had no clear idea of the County’s makeup
- Providing seasonally integrated tactical marketing initiatives that will drive target audiences to VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com, and sub URLs, for the purposes of booking overnight stays, generating longer stays, encouraging business/meetings bookings and considering impulse or spontaneous travel to the County for vacations and getaways

To create differentiation in the mind of potential visitors, we will use a refined “branding process” that identifies the key drivers or motivations in the purchase-decision sequence to help identify and clarify what is important to potential travelers and what will/would make a difference in their decision-making process.

According to the 2012 Strategic Marketing Group (SMG) Visitor Survey and Catalyst initial stakeholder interviews, key points of differentiation that resonate with its target audiences are that the County is authentic, unpretentious, real California with culinary, cultural and coastal assets that make it unique and unforgettable when compared to any other California destination. San Luis Obispo County offers unique and indelible experiences from the iconic castle on the hill and scenic grandeur of the Pacific Ocean with its expansive beaches to the County’s world-class wineries, inventive and diverse cuisine, cultural activities and adventures and relaxation that will intrigue and appeal to any age bracket.

Quite simply, San Luis Obispo County is everything people love about California, in its purest form. These distinguishing characteristics will be used to create a brand message that will attract more visitors while clearly defining the destination to target audiences. Once implemented, audiences will understand why San Luis Obispo County is so worthy of their consideration.



The Initial Campaign

The initial brand-with-co-op campaign will be crafted to feature action-directed iconic photography that highlights the diversity of activities in San Luis Obispo County. Using clever attention grabbing headlines, each ad will focus on two extremes that are easily available to visitors and can be experienced in the same day. The ads will invite the viewer to fill in all the various levels in between the two extremes as they plan their adventure. Whether a visitor is in the mood for a quiet, relaxed overnight getaway or something more extended and extreme, San Luis Obispo County will be shown to have it all. Each part of the marketing campaign is presented in a way that brings out the County's casual, authentic and unpretentious character.



Media Approach

Strategy

In order to deliver on the marketing plan's overall goals and stated deliverables, the agency will employ the following key media-buying strategies:

- Utilize radio reach and frequency to build broad level awareness in larger markets and keep San Luis Obispo County top of mind
- Focus on a combination of :30 spots and radio traffic
- Establish a solid presence in larger-reach publications including consumer travel magazines and targeted print market publications to broaden awareness and support using co-op advertising
- Leverage multiple forms of digital media to reach and engage travel enthusiasts most likely to enjoy travel to San Luis Obispo County when they are a) actively investigating travel opportunities; b) browsing the internet; or c) using an app
- Direct link to VSLOC site to nudge them through to the booking process
- Investigate high-level impression opportunities to build reach and support co-op
- Establish a flexible media plan in the event El Niño hits San Luis Obispo County harder than expected

Target Audience

Profiling target audiences will provide clear strategic direction and allow for more efficient media buying and planning. By understanding who the target consumer(s) are, what their media habits entail and what motivates them, we will be more effective in attracting them for additional overnight stays and generating new visitors into the County.

There are a number of factors that can be used to profile the target audiences for San Luis Obispo County including:

- **Demographic**
- **Geographic**
- **Psychographic**






Demographic Targeting

Results of the 2012 SMG Visitor Survey noted that the target audience of those who have visited San Luis Obispo County in the last two years can be identified with these characteristics that are contrasted to all of the survey respondents who were travelers:

- Skews slightly male
- Higher household income (44% HHI \$100k+)
- Over 40 years of age (75% 40 and older)
- 40% have children at home

Using the latest Scarborough data, visitors who have stayed overnight or longer in San Luis Obispo County within the past 12 months were identified. This was done in both the larger Designated Market Area (DMA) markets of San Francisco and Los Angeles as well as the Central Valley DMA markets (Fresno and Bakersfield). According to Scarborough, the demographics of the San Luis Obispo County overnight visitor are depicted in the chart.

			
Demographics	San Francisco	Los Angeles	Central Valley
Traveler who has stayed overnight in the last 12 months in:			
Scarborough Parameters	San Luis Obispo	Central Coast	San Luis Obispo
Age	56.4% 35-64 (106)	59.5% 35-64 (116)	59.4% (123)
Gender	54.6% Female (107)	60.2% Male (123)	54% Female (108)
Married	58% (113)	62.8% (122)	59.4% (118)
College Grad+	54.8% (143)	49.1% (193)	25.7% (185)
HHI \$75k+	70.3% (140)	67.5% (193)	32.8% (147)
HHI \$100k+	52.4% (146)	45.3% (201)	21.8% (199)

(parenthesis indicates index) Index = average - Quantity higher than 100 indicates the percent that audience is more likely to behave in that manner than the target audience. 116 index means SLO County target is 16% more likely to perform in that manner

For the most part, the demographics are similar to traditional travel audiences. However, there are distinct differences between the unique DMAs. Those living within the larger DMAs are older, have a higher household income and are more educated.

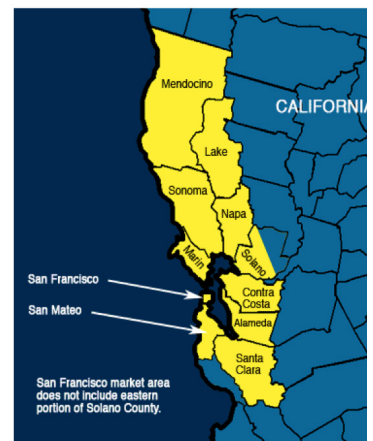
When applying demographic and behavioral targeting to each medium, the DMAs will be treated independently to ensure these unique differences are leveraged.

Geographic Targeting

The top three target markets for San Luis Obispo County are San Francisco-Bay Area, Los Angeles and the Central Valley. All were identified in the 2012 SMG Visitor Survey as well as in the Catalyst initial stakeholder interviews. Each of these markets has similarities and nuances that will be taken into consideration when focusing on the appropriate media to reach overnight travelers. All markets primarily visit the area for pleasure and vacation. Some geographical location distinctions per market according to the 2012 SMG Visitor Survey include:

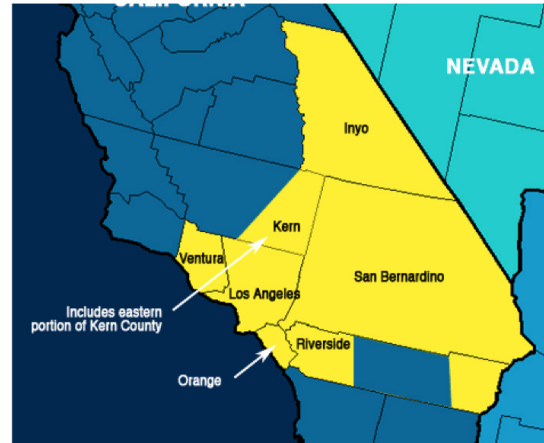
San Francisco

- More likely to visit San Luis Obispo County than the Central Valley and Los Angeles
- More likely to visit during the fall
- More likely to visit a major city, primarily San Luis Obispo
- More likely to visit Hearst Castle
- Prefers to sightsee and experience fine dining as top two activities
- Also enjoys shopping and wine tasting



Los Angeles/Orange County DMA

- More likely to visit San Luis Obispo for a specific event
- More likely to visit during the summer months
- Least likely to have visited the San Luis Obispo County area
- Lowest awareness of San Luis Obispo County
 - Knows where it is located
 - Not strong consideration when selecting destination
- Prefers to sightsee and shop as top two activities
- Also enjoys fine dining and wine tasting

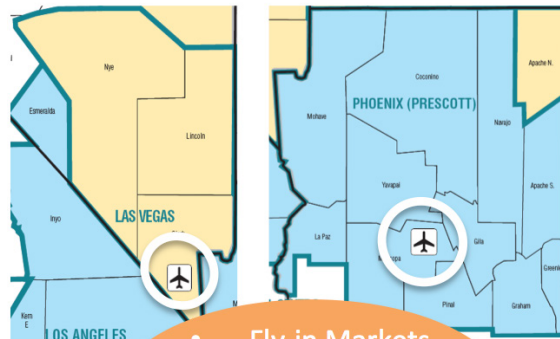


Central Valley

- More likely to visit beaches, primarily Pismo Beach and Morro Bay
- More likely to have already traveled to San Luis Obispo County
- Highest awareness of San Luis Obispo County and its offerings
- Most likely to make multiple trips to the area
- Most likely to visit during the summer months
- Prefers sightseeing and shopping as top two activities
- Also enjoys fine dining, wine tasting and hiking

Secondary Markets

- Las Vegas and Phoenix both index favorably as secondary feeder markets
- Both enjoy convenient air lift into the region
- Fly market visitors tend to have extended length-of-stay
 - These DMAs will be included in digital campaign targeting



- Fly-in Markets
- Digital – Select Elements



Psychographic Targeting

Psychographic segmentation uses peoples’ lifestyle, social standing, activities, interests and opinions to target a market segment. Using segmentation science allows us to predict consumers’ potential interest in travel to San Luis Obispo County based on a contextual look at their buying behavior. This not only allows us to target persons most likely to visit, but it provides potential visitors with information they are likely to welcome based on their demonstrated preferences.

Media Habits of San Luis Obispo County Visitors

The chart below illustrates the key differences in the media habits of the audiences that will be targeted in the County’s media plan. Data is derived from Scarborough research.

Media	SF DMA	LA DMA	Central Valley DMA
Television	23% are heavy TV users	26% are heavy users	30% are heavy users
	54% are light users	54% are light users	41% are light users
	2.5 hours/day spent viewing	3.1 hours/day spent viewing	4.0 hours/day spent viewing
	65% cable users	45% cable users	38% cable users
Radio	50% are heavy users	44% are heavy users	42% are heavy users
	1.7 hours/day listening	1.9 hours/day listening	2.1 hours/day listening
Newspaper	52% are heavy users	42% are heavy users	54% are heavy users
	43% read 0 issues/week	61% read 0 issues/week	49% read 0 issues/week
Internet Search	94% used search in last month	98% used search in last month	89% used search in last month
	75% used to find hotel	75% used to find hotel	75% used to find hotel
Mobile	87% own smartphone	79% own smartphone	89% own smartphone
	82% use phone for Internet	83% use phone for Internet	65% use phone for Internet
	46% use app for reservations	61% use app for reservations	51% use app for reservations



Media Tactics

Radio

- Run on two of the top stations within each market with a full :30 message
 - Run 2-4 week flights per month to maximize budget
 - Negotiate bonus billboards and added value promotions
- Supplement schedule utilizing radio traffic to complement the top rated station buys
 - Establish stronger overall presence in these primary markets
 - Run 7 weeks of radio traffic in each market to enhance the :30 primary market radio buys
 - Leverage value added promotional opportunities to extend campaign presence and increase radio efficiency

Print

- Large-circulation regional editions of national publications to elevate the VSLOC message and create stronger value for co-op advertising
- Consumer publications to reach the broadest audience
 - Allows DMOs and constituents to partner in reaching leisure travelers they cannot afford on their own
 - Ensure chosen publications contain travel editorial as a main focus
- Leverage local market newspaper to extend reach and focus message to concentrated leisure travel
 - Take advantage of shorter lead times to build awareness and extend immediate co-op offers
 - Run in Sunday travel section to blend message and editorial

Digital

- Utilize Search Engine Marketing (SEM) in all markets to reach and engage travel enthusiasts most likely to enjoy travel to San Luis Obispo County when they are
 - a) Actively searching travel opportunities
 - b) Searching the internet
 - c) Searching using an app
- Follow print strategy in focusing on sites and elements that delivered a broader audience versus niche
 - Broader audience allows for higher awareness of VSLOC message
 - Niche can be added at a future date or behaviorally if needed
- Focus on targeted elements that ensure reach to leisure travelers within our key markets and demographics
 - Focus on sites that reach frequent travelers and contain a high level of travel content
 - Leverage higher click-through rate of mobile to reach audiences that frequently book travel via cellphones and tablets
 - Breakthrough clutter by leveraging television creative via pre-roll
- Create a high level of overall impressions to provide quality digital opportunities for co-op partners
- Utilize retargeting to nurture engagement and push site visitors to take action and entice conversion



Co-op

A broad-reaching co-op media plan will allow County stakeholders to present tactical, shoulder season messages to targeted consumers, framed by complementary brand messaging about the beauty and other core attributes of the County. This will not only help stakeholder messages demand page or screen attention, but will provide DMOs and other County stakeholders with substantial economies compared to non-co-op placements. Opportunities are varied and include:

- Major magazine co-op as part of full page, 4-color ads in *Sunset SoCal*, *Sunset NorCal*, *Westways*, *VIA* and *AARP*
- Key market newspaper ½ page 4-color ads in *Los Angeles Times*, *Orange County Register*, *Bay Area News Group*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Fresno Bee*, and *Bakersfield Californian*

-
- Network digital banner advertising across both mobile and desktop platforms

- Monthly impression packages offered to co-op partners:

o 500,000	\$2,394	\$4.80 CPM
o 250,000	\$1,247	\$5.00 CPM
o 100,000	\$559	\$5.60 CPM

- Purchased packages will increase overall digital impressions and augment overall digital media spend
- Number of partners is unlimited
- Package offering:
 - o Development of banner ad (1/3 VSLOC, 2/3 co-op partner)
 - o Impressions to run across larger network buy
 - Behavioral targeted to leisure traveler
 - Demographic and geographic targeted



All partner ad placements will be placed through Catalyst Marketing Company to provide tracking on overall campaign results.



Other

Weekend Sherpa

- Establish strong presence with outdoor enthusiasts in SF and LA areas
- Weekend Sherpa speaks to enthusiasts who love to take trips and plan outdoor adventures
- Leverage custom advertorial opportunities
 - Content focus established by VSLOC
 - Written by Weekend Sherpa writers to provide continuity
 - Page links can send readers to various pages of VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com
- Weekend Sherpa to offer “The Ultimate San Luis Obispo County Getaway”
 - Weekend Sherpa writers to visit SLO County and experience getaway firsthand
 - Writers will cover experience in special editorial issue of Weekend Sherpa
 - Special photo album created which will be shared via social media
 - Experience to be discussed on KFOG radio
 - Weekend Sherpa to pay all travel expenses

Niche Market Contingency

- A small contingency budget has been held for niche market support
- Niche market would need to follow overall strategy of elevating the County as a whole
- Potential niche markets considered:
 - Pet-Friendly
 - Mountain Biking
 - Hiking
 - Wine
 - Beach
 - Dining

Crisis Management Contingency

In order to establish flexibility with the media plan in the event El Niño hits San Luis Obispo County harder than expected:

- Media is looking to book Q4 only at this time
- Avoid sell-out period around holidays
- Q1 media to be planned by month to provide necessary flexibility
- TV and radio dollars can be shifted to online
- Avoid two week cancellation requirements
- Print has longer lead-times, can move local newspaper placements

Social Media

Social media will play a key role in the advancement of the VSLOC brand and tactical goals of increasing awareness of San Luis Obispo County, driving traffic to VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com, driving demand and bookings for overnight stays, and cultivating relationships and loyalties with visitors to increase share of wallet.



Goals

- Grow Social Media followers and engagement:
 - Facebook 20%
 - Instagram 10%
 - Twitter 10%
 - Pinterest 15%
 - YouTube 100%
- Showcase a specific area in San Luis Obispo County each week that followers may not have known about, highlighting the unique destinations throughout the county and giving each DMO additional visibility
- Utilize weekly promotions to increase engagement and grow consumer database
- Place paid Facebook ads and boost Facebook posts to support the existing VSLOC social media content increasing the effectiveness of the social media efforts and creating preference for VSLOC
- Showcase the diverse landscape of San Luis Obispo County while adopting a tone of “explore the undiscovered” and encouraging fans to “discover” and “explore” all there is to do within the region

Strategy

In order to create awareness of each VSLOC active social media channel, a cross-pollination strategy will be utilized ultimately resulting in multi-channel followers for increased engagement through the following key strategies:

- All paid social media will target San Francisco, Los Angeles and Fresno DMAs
 - San Francisco market will target Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda and Solano Counties
 - Los Angeles market will target Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura Counties
 - Fresno DMA ads will target Fresno, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, Kings, Tulare and Kern Counties
 - (According to Scarborough data all counties listed above are the strongest for drawing San Luis Obispo County visitation)
- Target audience will be 30+ years of age and have a yearly HHI of \$75K+ (\$50K+ for the Central Valley market)
- Multiple Facebook ads will be created, testing the effectiveness of the creative and messaging along the way
- Utilize cross-pollination across all channels to increase the VSLOC social footprint to ensure reach of the full spectrum of demographics utilizing social media
- Facebook Ads will target the following behaviors:

Targeted Behaviors
All Frequent Travelers
Personal Travelers (US)
Family Vacations
Leisure Travelers
Intender- Any Destination
Intender- Beach



Measurements

VSLOC will utilize a comprehensive social media reporting approach to determine its effectiveness. Measurements will include:

- Social media metrics that will be provided each month across all social media channels
- Detailed reporting of Facebook ad creative or Call To Action (CTA) and how it is performing with target audiences will be provided monthly to determine future creative and messaging
- After three months, an evaluation of the VSLOC paid campaigns will be conducted to ensure they are performing at optimum levels. This level will be used to create a benchmark for future social marketing campaigns. Should paid campaigns perform beyond expectation, dollars can be reallocated into new markets to expand social media reach (i.e. Las Vegas and Phoenix)

Tactics

In order to effectively execute the social media plan the following tactics will be put in place:

- Paid Facebook ads and boosted posts will support the existing VSLOC social media content to increase the effectiveness of the social media efforts and create preference for VSLOC. The ideal traveler will be targeted utilizing Facebook's advanced advertising features. All campaigns will be monitored to ensure they are performing as expected
- Utilizing weekly promotions, each social media channel will be leveraged as a portal to enter the promotions, i.e. "Like and provide your information" to enter on Facebook, "Mention a friend" to enter on Instagram, "Retweet this post" to enter on Twitter. Weekly promotions will be rotated so that each channel receives the same amount of exposure. Announcements of where to enter the monthly promotions will be conveyed on each social channel. For example, if the monthly promotion is executed on Twitter, then we would promote the contest on Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram

The following are the potential reach in each market on social media:

- San Francisco – 430,000 people
- Los Angeles – 630,000 people
- Central Valley – 93,000 people
- Las Vegas – 195,000 people*
- Phoenix – 260,000 people*
- Total Potential Reach – 1,608,000 people

*Incremental expanded reach in Las Vegas & Phoenix predicated on adding redirected budget dollars to social media budget



Public Relations

San Luis Obispo County boasts a wide variety of year-round activities, attractions and things to do. It is a destination like no other, providing access to gorgeous beaches, scenic wine country and stunning geography, not to mention fantastic dining options, terrific sight-seeing, fun events and shopping. Put simply, San Luis Obispo County offers something for everyone.

It is this impressive breadth of attributes that a public relations program should be built upon. The ideal PR campaign will increase awareness for VSLOC at regional, state and national levels with emphasis on the area's vast activities and appeal. Utilizing a comprehensive media relations program designed to inform and educate a consistent flow of press releases towards targeted media will generate far-reaching coverage across a variety of media outlets.

Goals

The goals of the PR plan include:

- Research, develop and maintain a master media editorial calendar list from which Catalyst will monitor editorial calendars in an attempt to ensure that San Luis Obispo County is not left out of any relevant planned stories
- Catalyst will develop, and keep updated, a press kit for VSLOC. The press kit will be a soft copy from which hard copies can be printed as needed (i.e. – for events, meetings, etc.). Otherwise, the media typically prefer electronic copies
- Develop a news pipeline of press releases to be distributed throughout the year, focused on telling the San Luis Obispo County story, leading to increased awareness and additional demand
- Host 2-4 individual media visits per quarter; or 6-8 media per organized group visit
- Conduct 1-2 per regional market desk-side briefings per quarter
- Create a Tourism Forum allowing media that does not have the budget to travel to destinations, but whose editorial guidelines prohibit them from accepting paid travel, and exception to travel as an event speaker
- Consistently reply to media inquiries received through the Visit San Luis Obispo County website, HARO and other media lead sources
- Submit story requests and content ideas through the Visit California Website
- Respond to Visit California media FAM trip leads and requests
- With the assistance of Catalyst, develop and maintain an internal media tracking sheet
- Attend and pitch San Luis Obispo County at media briefing events in partnership with Visit California
- Create and maintain a Digital Asset Management system to house all media assets for public relations requests



Strategy

Catalyst will utilize a comprehensive approach to get stories placed and raise awareness for San Luis Obispo County. In order to deliver on the PR plan's goals, the agency will employ the following key PR strategies:

- Promote San Luis Obispo County as the ideal year-round destination for a variety of audiences including, but not limited to:
 - Families
 - Sports/outdoor enthusiasts
 - Food/wine enthusiasts
 - Couples/empty-nesters
- Showcase the wide range of attractions and activities in and around San Luis Obispo County in new and interesting ways:
 - Highlight unique local personalities and businesses through media interviews and social media (craft/microbreweries, restaurants, hotels/motels, vacation rentals, B&Bs, RV Parks, etc.)
 - Spotlight focus on the area's main attractions as well as some of the area's lesser-known activities to drive interest among targeted media (i.e. wine, hiking, running, cycling, etc.)
- Develop specialized travel itineraries that appeal to specific audiences designed to drive interest among identified media segments
- Establish/increase meaningful partnerships that complement visitation to San Luis Obispo County and media coverage of the destination
- Develop creative story ideas that can either be crafted into compelling releases, or pitched by phone/e-mail to targeted media to entice them to visit the destination and/or write a story
- Target national tier-one travel media and digital influencers to visit San Luis Obispo County for speaking engagements through the sponsorship of a travel forum allowing them to stay in the destination and experience the County

Monitoring/Measurement

Catalyst will monitor the editorial content of media sources on a continuing basis as a tool to identify mentions of specific references related to San Luis Obispo County (i.e., names/brands associated in promoting the destination such as cities, specific businesses, key individuals/spokespeople, targeted events, attractions, etc.), track the success of news releases, benchmark performance, manage brand reputation, gather industry intelligence, and identify new opportunities.

Catalyst will track all activity and results, to be delivered at the end of every month. Reporting will include details on specific media outreach efforts accompanied by a status and next steps. Media results will include publication name article details, a web link, if available, and a hard copy. Sources used include: NUVI, Meltwater News, as well as Google News Alerts.

Catalyst measures and reports media results in three ways:

- **Mentions** – a number that showcases how many times VSLOC has been mentioned in a given time period, and useful for figuring out that your PR is working
- **Audiences** – one of the most reliable audience measures is website traffic, which provides a sense for how many people are finding VSLOC by any means online
- **Impressions** – also known as circulation, or the total number of readers/listeners/viewers from any given coverage resulting from PR



Press Release Deliverables: One per month average

- 6-8 stories that could be developed into press releases, pitches, etc.
- 2-3 national stories per quarter
- 1-2 regional stories per quarter

Media Familiarization Trips Deliverables: 2-4 individual media visits per quarter; or 6-8 media per organized group visit

Desk-Side Briefings Deliverables: 1-2 per market per quarter

Tactics

Catalyst will develop a news pipeline of press releases to be distributed throughout the year, always distributed directly to media by Catalyst, and in some cases where the news value of the press is greater, through a newswire service such as PR Newswire, as already contracted directly by VSLOC. The list may consist of seasonal occurrences and other news and information of interest to visitors and media alike. Planned press release themes throughout the year could include:

- Development of 6-8 key stories that can be transformed into press releases, pitches, etc.
 - Pitch 2-3 national stories (*Condé Nast Traveler, USA Today, etc.*) per quarter
 - Pitch 1-2 regional stories (*Los Angeles Magazine, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, 7X7, etc.*) per quarter
- **January/February** – Restaurant Month/Winter Getaway, Valentine’s/Romantic Getaway (featured hotel/activity packages)
- **March/April** – Easter Events/Spring Getaway (featured events, activities and hotel packages)
- **May/June** – Planning the Perfect Family Vacation (beaches, biking, hiking and other family activities); What’s New in San Luis Obispo County (wineries, breweries, other businesses, etc.)
- **July/August** – Sunset SAVOR The Central Coast
- **September/October** – Hidden Secrets of the Central Coast Wine Country (highlight seasonal events/wineries surrounding harvest/crush)
- **November/December** – Holiday Magic in San Luis Obispo County

Media Familiarization Trips – One of the best ways to influence coverage for SLOC is to have media visit the area firsthand to experience a range of activities, accommodations and attractions relevant to their readership. Catalyst would identify and qualify media to visit the destination, either individually or as a group, and develop an itinerary designed to expose them to local attractions and accommodations consistent with their stated interests.

Visit California Media Events – Visit San Luis Obispo County will work closely with the state marketing organization to support regional, national and international press events in markets like Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Texas and Canada.

Desk-Side Briefings – Another way of exposing San Luis Obispo County to travel writers is to take the show to them, especially if they’re not willing or able to travel to the area. Whether leveraging planned travel or as a stand-alone event, we would book meetings with targeted travel writers in specific markets, allowing the opportunity for some quality time with those in a position to write about San Luis Obispo County.



Tourism Forum – Today’s travel media face a dilemma: they do not have budgets to travel to destinations, and their editorial guidelines prohibit them from accepting paid travel. One exception allows travel writers to participate in events as speakers and/or panelists, in which they can accept paid travel as part of the event. To attract national tier-one travel writers to San Luis Obispo County, most of whom reside in New York (*Travel + Leisure, Condé Nast, etc.*), we propose sponsoring a travel forum. The event would be open to a broad range of people in the travel/tourism industry, and could generate revenue in the form of registration fees and sponsorships. Most importantly, we would have a captive audience of travel writers staying in and experiencing the destination.

Reporting – Catalyst will track all activity and results, to be delivered at the end of every month. The report will include details on specific media outreach efforts accompanied by a status and next steps. Media results will include publication name and article details, along with a web link.

Travel Trade

An aggressive new Travel Trade program is currently under development. The program will focus on increasing awareness and general demand for San Luis Obispo County across all travel provider channels including tour operators, receptive operators, meeting and conference planners, retail agents, travel networks, OTAs and wholesaler companies. Included are the planned development of compelling vertical market electronic and printed collateral.

Meeting and Conference

The San Luis Obispo County Meeting and Conference segment has seen an upward trend in recent years. It is home to wide variety of meeting facilities that remain highly unknown to the Meeting & Conference planning community outside the County. In order to effectively access this business segment, Visit San Luis Obispo County (VSLOC) needs to educate and inform meeting planners of the benefits of holding meetings in San Luis Obispo County. VSLOC will participate in tradeshow, utilize association memberships to their fullest and conduct sales missions into regional markets, expanding to areas not yet touched.

Goals

- Conduct meeting space audit to determine countywide inventory and assets
- Develop meeting space materials, hard and soft copy, for use by meeting planners
- Participate in regional tradeshow and sales missions to gain exposure and grow segment
- Develop and cultivate relationships through regional association memberships
- Produce 100+ new leads annually
- Procure 10+ familiarization tips annually
- Prospect 25+ new meeting and conference planners a week

Strategy

By developing and cultivating VSLOC’s regional association memberships VSLOC will prospect and market to their databases. Using California Society of Association Executives (CalSAE) as an example, we will participate in their tradeshow, follow up post tradeshow, prospect membership directory, utilize educational sessions and sponsor events to grow the meeting and conference segment. VSLOC will secure and maintain memberships with CalSAE, MPI International (Northern California and Southern California) and HSMIAI (Bay Area, Los Angeles, Orange County.)



Regional market presence is a top priority and has the greatest effect on reaching and developing relationships with key meeting planners. VSLOC will conduct multiple sales missions into feeder markets: Bay Area, Sacramento, Central Valley, Los Angeles and Orange County. During the sales missions, VSLOC will utilize association memberships (CalSAE & MPI) to host lunches, sponsor events and showcase the destination. VSLOC will begin by targeting meeting and conferences business in the areas of Incentive, Agricultural, Religious, Tech Industry and Association.

With the passage of the TMD and access to funding that has not previously been available, VSLOC will deepen regional Tradeshow participation in order to penetrate the market.

Tactics

Tradeshow attendance including an independent and co-op partner presence, combined with constant follow-up will assist VSLOC in growing this segment. In 2015/2016 Visit San Luis Obispo County will attend:

- CalSAE Seasonal Spectacular – December 2015
- Smart Meetings North California – January 2016
- MPI Northern California Expo – February 2016

In future years, VSLOC will also consider the following Meeting and Conference shows:

- IMEX America
- World Ag Expo
- Cvent Connect
- Going on Faith
- BGTA

VSLOC will develop a spreadsheet that includes the County's meeting space inventory and assets. With these assets known, VSLOC will produce meeting space collateral to be utilized on the website, at tradeshows and on sales missions.

Measurements

VSLOC will initially manually track all efforts for trade shows, sales missions, association memberships, leads, FAM trips and prospecting through a spreadsheet reporting form with monthly, quarterly and annual roll-up.

In the future, a more robust reporting system, tied to a new established CRM, will be developed.



Tour and Travel

Visit San Luis Obispo County's mission for the tour and travel market is to raise domestic and international awareness of the County as a destination, noting that it is not just a stopover between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The County holds a wide variety of destinations, activities and lodging partners to fill multiple day itineraries. Selling our Coastal, Cultural, Culinary pillars, mixed with the path less traveled ideologies, will give San Luis Obispo County an identity that it has not previously held.

Goals

- Produce 150+ leads annually
- Procure 10+ familiarization trips annually
- Participate in Tour and Travel tradeshow
- Strengthen relationship with Visit California, participating in international co-op sales missions
- Produce 500-1000 new room nights in the County. The main focus of these new room nights will be off-peak season November – March; and weekdays, out of summer.

Strategy

Sales missions will be a top priority for this segment. Utilizing our partnership with Visit California to capitalize on international sales missions, many of which we have not had the ability to attend in the past, we will begin to grow this market segment. We will co-op on sales missions into China, Mexico and Canada. Sales missions will facilitate face-to-face meetings with international product managers that often do not have the opportunity to visit the County directly. We will utilize our membership with National Tour Association to prospect and devise sales missions to domestic operators (Los Angeles, Bay Area, Sacramento, Phoenix and Las Vegas) and international receptive operators (through Visit California).

Tradeshow participation has long been the staple sales effort. These efforts will continue with the new ability to couple the tradeshow with a marketing presence during shows, pre and post trips. VSLOC will review sponsorships/marketing ideas; tradeshow directory ads, banners located on tradeshow floors, sponsor lunches and educational sessions for the shows they attend. Pre and post tradeshow, VSLOC will look to have marketing presence in tradeshow email blasts and collateral. Each show will follow a strict sales cycle strategy: attend, qualify, follow-up and generate leads.

Tactics

In 2016, VSLOC will attend:

- NTA – February 2016
- Go West Summit – February 2016
- IPW – June 2016

VSLOC will continue to build its relationship with Visit California by participating in two international co-op sales missions and hosting FAM trips into the County.



Measurements

VSLOC will initially manually track all efforts for trade shows, sales missions, association memberships, leads, FAM trips and room nights through a spreadsheet reporting form with monthly, quarterly and annual roll-up.

In the future, a more robust reporting system, tied to a new established CRM, will be developed.

SMERFE

Being an affordable and relatively easy to travel to destination, San Luis Obispo County has long been known as a great location for the SMERFE market. Traditionally, the top feeder market for these segments has been Central Valley, California. In recent years, the County has seen growth of interest from other areas in California and neighboring states. VSLOC will focus its attention on the feeder markets of San Francisco/Bay Area, Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego. Out-of-state focus will be on Arizona and Nevada.

Goals

- Produce 100+ leads annually
- Participate in SMERFE & Consumer based tradeshow
- Add 300+ new emails to direct marketing list
- Run 4+ email campaigns annually

Strategy

VSLOC will participate in consumer shows that fit the County's assets and pillars. The strategy in attending these tradeshow is to maintain and raise consumer awareness that San Luis Obispo County is a top destination while obtaining customer emails.

Tactics

In 2016, VSLOC will attend:

- San Francisco Adventure Travel Show – March 2016
- Wedding shows located in Los Angeles and Bay Area (TBA)
- Pomona Car Show – June 2015

There will be a call to action during these tradeshow to drive traffic to the VSLOC website. Customer emails will also be collected during shows.

Measurements

VSLOC will participate in four consumer trade shows that fit our destination. Attendance at these tradeshow will produce 300+ new email address leads to be included into the 4+ email marketing campaigns that VSLOC will run during need periods. These efforts will ultimately generate 100+ leads for our partners. VSLOC will track these efforts through follow-up with partners and leads. VSLOC will create a lead capture spreadsheet that will be reported monthly, quarterly and annually.



Tactical Calendar

Trade Shows											
January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
NTA - 31st - 5th Atlanta		*SF Adventure 3/5-6			IPW 18-25* New Orleans		Going on Faith 8/19-11 CA		IMEX* 10/18-20		CalSAE* TBA
Smart Meetings SF - 6th	MPINCC* 10th - SF			San Jose - CC		Cvent - TBA	GBT* 16-20	Collaborate Market 8/25-27		Smart Meeting TBA	
		World AG 9-11 CA Tulare									
		GoWest 22-25 AK									
Sales Missions & Training											
Visit CA Mexico 18-21				Visit CA China 10-15				Visit CA Aus/NZ			
MPI North Sac		Sacramento		MPI Bay Area*				MPI LA	Sacramento		
		Industry Educational Symposium				Industry Educational Symposium				Industry Educational Symposium	Industry Educational Symposium
Prospecting/Follow Up											
CalSAE Follow Up				NTA Follow Up						IPA Follow Up	



Partnerships & Promotions

Catalyst will seek to identify and engage external partners to feature San Luis Obispo County in their marketing or promotional messages in order to extend the VSLOC brand message through partners' media channels, and also elevate the County brand by association.

Marketing partnerships are developed to unlock a market's full potential by bundling specific competencies or resources from two or more companies. We will achieve true success through our marketing partnerships by creating "win-win-win" situations, where the County and our partners along with customers/visitors receive something of value, with both companies recognizing the following objectives:

- Building up brand, image, and traffic by implementing joint or exchange communication
- Gaining access to new markets and customers by addressing the partners' customers
- Increasing customer loyalty by addressing customers with value-added offerings
- Reducing market costs by bundling or exchanging marketing measures

In collaboration with VSLOC leadership, Catalyst has developed a number of potential partnerships. These include:

- Clif Bar
- Enterprise
- Chevron
- REI
- Save Mart
- Albertsons
- Ralphs
- Vons
- Subaru
- Jeep
- Chevrolet
- Ford
- Hidden Valley Ranch
- Levi's
- San Francisco Giants
- Coca-Cola
- New Balance
- CamelBak

Other potential partnership ideas are being explored.



BevMo (Beverages & More liquor retailer)

- There is potential to do a promo on San Luis Obispo County wines
- Consumers who make a qualifying purchase of wines from San Luis Obispo County would be entered to win a vacation in the County

Meritage Wine

- Get wineries from all over the County to contribute wines to create a unique blend that is truly the “taste and toast of San Luis Obispo County.”
- Potential to drive discovery through wine retailers and rating organizations like *Wine Spectator*
- Include hang-tags on bottles with offers from stakeholders from the region

San Luis Obispo County Photo Shoots

- Patagonia
- Raiderettes calendar
- 49ers Gold Rush calendar



Monitoring & Reporting

VSLOC's destination marketing efforts will be monitored continuously.

Key Measurements

1. **(TOT) Transient Occupancy Tax** – Monthly tracking and fiscal year-to-year charting
2. **Lodging Statistics** (via STR Reports) – VSLOC hotel booking metrics as reported/collected by STR showing week over week, month over month and year over year by percentage growth. Tracking metrics from STR include:
 - a) Occupancy
 - b) ADR – Average daily rate
 - c) RevPAR – Revenue per available room
3. **Website Analytics** – Reporting of critical monthly and annual website metrics with year over year comparison
 - a) Unique visitation
 - b) Bounce rates
 - c) Length of time on site
 - d) Page visits
 - e) Traffic source overview – lists all organic and paid sources of web traffic
 - f) Visits by state and DMA
 - g) Mobile traffic and device source/type
 - h) Top keyword search AdWords. Include CPC cost with conversion (if applicable)
 - i) Booking engine report
4. **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**
 - a) Monthly unique visitors that click thru to booking engine
 - b) Monthly email address sign-ups (by month) for database growth tracking
 - c) Mailing address for database growth tracking
 - d) E-newsletter sign-ups
5. **Social Media** – Analytics tracking followers, sharing, conversations, influencers, etc. for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, YouTube and Pinterest
6. **Monthly Reports** – Digital advertising tracking
7. **Guides** – Visitor guide request tracking by source (month and year)
8. **Events Calendar** – VSLOC events used for comparison against media buys, weather and traffic reports
9. **Public Relations** – Gallery of posted stories and articles about VSLOC, published as result of submissions and earned media. Organized and searchable by publisher: *Outdoor, VIA, TripAdvisor, Travel+Leisure*, etc.
10. **Airline Arrivals** – From San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport – tracking fly-in visitors

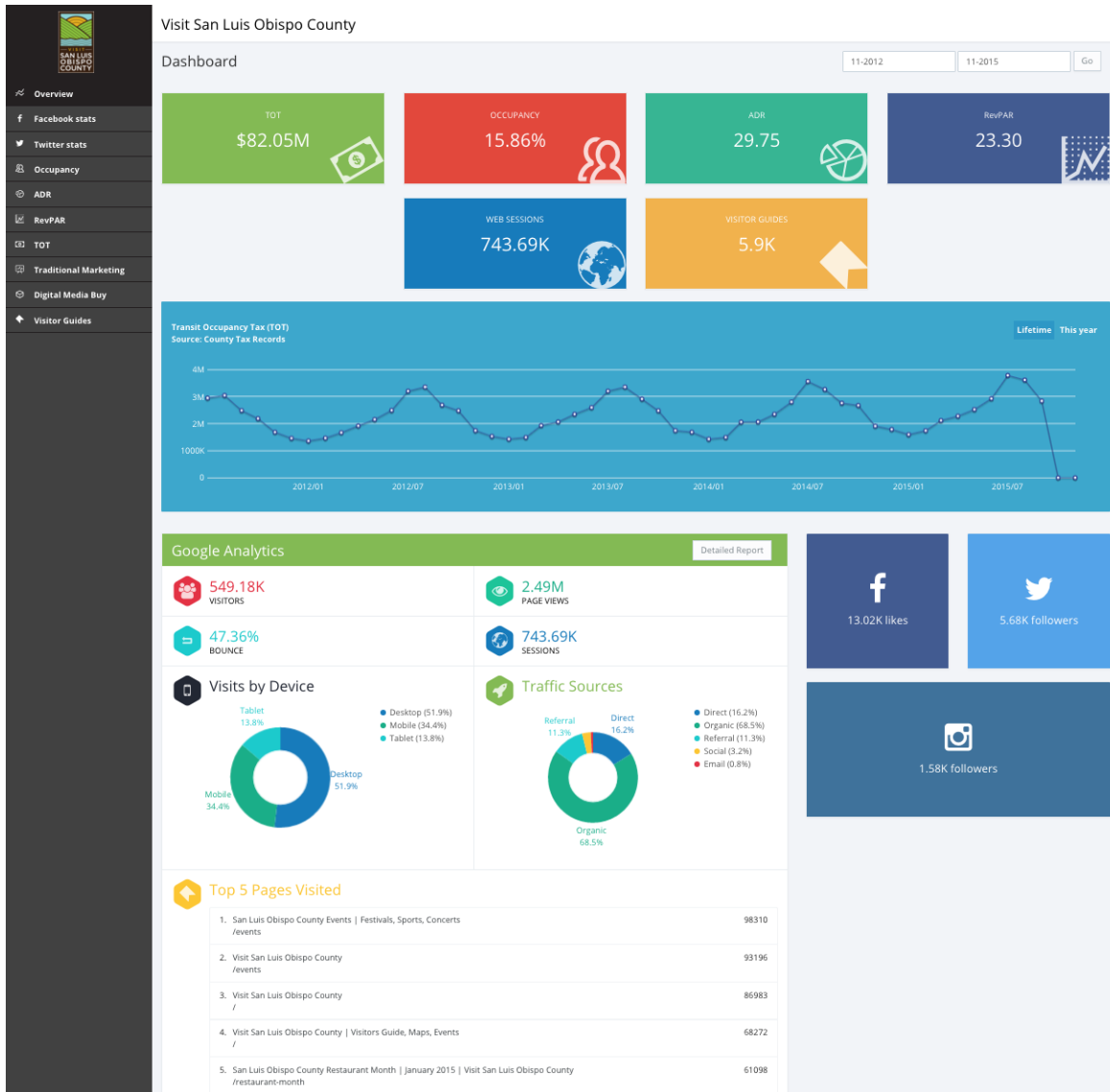


The "Dashboard"

Catalyst will be building a cloud-based monitoring dashboard for Visit San Luis Obispo County that will track these measurement points as well as others that will be identified by the VSLOC management.

This will allow VSLOC to track all the key metrics for evaluating progress and growth in both digital and traditional media. Latest "at a glance" stats will be available securely 24/7 to VSLOC leadership.

A snapshot of the VSLOC Dashboard reporting tool is shown below.



Research

In spring 2016, VSLOC will conduct multiple research projects to serve as a foundation for future branding and marketing efforts.

Goals

- Complete a statistically reliable demographic and psychographic profile of current visitors and their share-of-wallet spend in San Luis Obispo County
- Complete a Brand/Destination Awareness Study in feeder markets of San Francisco (DMA) and Los Angeles (DMA) to understand why potential visitors choose or don't choose San Luis Obispo County as a destination

Strategy

- Select and hire an experienced tourism research company to conduct demographic, share-of-wallet and awareness research studies for San Luis Obispo County to deliver key findings for future branding and marketing efforts

Tactics

- Issue Research RFP
- Select and hire an experienced tourism research company
- Conduct demographic, share-of-wallet and awareness research projects during Q2 2016

Measurements

- Successfully completed studies will reveal key findings that will assist VSLOC in the development of a long-term branding strategy



Media Budget

		VISIT SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY - 2016-2016 MEDIA BUDGET SUMMARY																																																									
		2015												2016																																													
		November				December				January				February				March			April			May			June			TOTAL																													
		26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL
Radio	San Francisco					\$16,958	\$21,845	\$16,618	\$10,901	\$10,838																																																\$93,776	
	Los Angeles									\$2,890	\$11,458	\$19,724	\$19,724	\$8,568	\$17,196	\$17,196	\$13,987	\$5,419																																				\$116,161					
RADIO TOTAL		\$38,803				\$54,974				\$62,365				\$53,797				\$0			\$0			\$0			\$0			\$209,937																													
Magazines	Westways																																																	\$15,680									
	Via																																													\$11,375													
	Sunset-Southern California																	\$12,000	\$12,000																											\$24,000													
	Sunset-Northern California																	\$12,000	\$12,000																											\$24,000													
	AARP-California																																													\$17,163													
	MAGAZINE TOTAL		\$0				\$0				\$0				\$41,163				\$51,055			\$0			\$0			\$92,218																															
Newspaper	Orange County Register																																																	\$10,500									
	Los Angeles Times																																																	\$23,625									
	San Francisco Chronicle																																																	\$6,194									
	BANG-Bay Area News Group																																																	\$11,814									
	Fresno Bee																																													\$2,400													
	Los Angeles Times																																																	\$3,260									
	NEWSPAPER TOTAL		\$0				\$0				\$17,743				\$20,840				\$19,210			\$0			\$0			\$57,793																															
Online	Nettra-SEM					\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,750	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500																																	\$59,250									
	Nettra-Search Retargeting					\$2,125	\$2,125	\$2,125	\$2,125	\$2,125	\$2,125	\$2,125	\$1,063	\$1,063	\$1,063	\$1,063	\$1,063																																	\$12,751									
	Weekend Sherpa					\$11,515																																												\$40,000									
	Quantcast-Look-a-like					\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500																																					\$42,500									
	ATS-Mobile-GeoFencing					\$5,750	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000			\$5,000	\$2,500																																			\$28,250									
	McClatchy-White List News					\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$1,913																																			\$22,951									
	McClatchy-Mobile RON					\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$3,825	\$1,913	\$1,913																																			\$22,951									
	McClatchy-Topic Targeting Food & Wine					\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$956	\$956																																			\$11,475									
	McClatchy-Topic Targeting Travel					\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$956	\$956																																			\$11,475									
	McClatchy-White List Travel, Wine, VR, B&B, RV					\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$5,745	\$2,872	\$2,872																																			\$34,470									
	McClatchy-Monster Network					\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913																																					\$11,475									
	McClatchy-YouTube					\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$1,913	\$956	\$956																																			\$11,475									
	TripAdvisor-Annual Sponsorship					\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667	\$2,667																																			\$21,335									
	SpotXChange-Pre-Roll Video					\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$4,000	\$4,000																																				\$30,000									
	Niche Contingency																																																	\$25,702									
	Sunset - Insider Guide Sponsorship																																																	\$10,800									
	Sunset - Newsletters																																																	\$4,000									
Visit California Newsletters																																																	\$4,400										
Sunset.com 300x250 Banners																																																	\$20,800										
ONLINE TOTAL		\$66,102				\$53,837				\$53,837				\$68,082				\$57,330			\$26,796			\$19,555			\$14,820			\$426,060																													
Social	Facebook					\$3,250	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250																													\$18,000									
	SOCIAL MEDIA TOTAL		\$3,250				\$2,000				\$2,000				\$2,000				\$2,000			\$2,250			\$2,250			\$2,250			\$18,000																												
GRAND TOTAL		\$108,154				\$110,810				\$135,944				\$185,881				\$129,595			\$29,046			\$21,805			\$17,070			\$804,008																													
Pre-roll elements		Pre-roll launch date to be 48 hours after spot is delivered to site																																																									
																														FISCAL APPROVED BUDGET	\$ 804,008																												
																														Difference	\$0																												





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