

North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
October 7, 2010

BACKGROUND

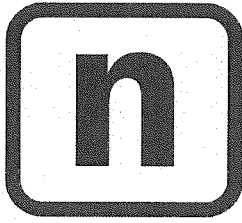
Staff and agencies have developed the FY 2010/11 Consumer Advertising Annual Planning Outline for presentation and discussion with the committee. Staff presented an outline to the Marketing Committee in June with a draft presented in July. Committee input was incorporated into the document which was again presented for final review and approval to the committee at its September meeting.

ACTION BY COMMITTEE

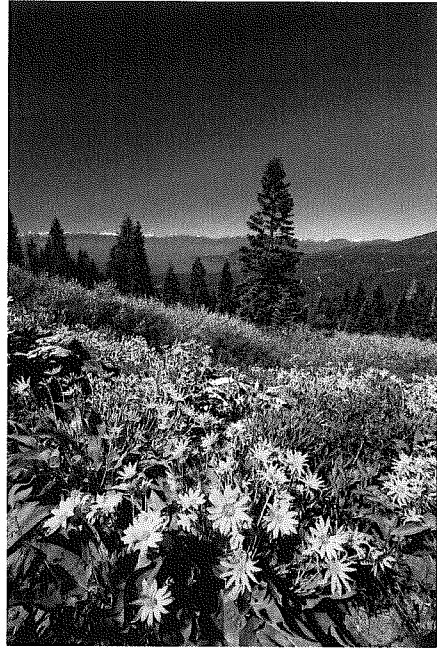
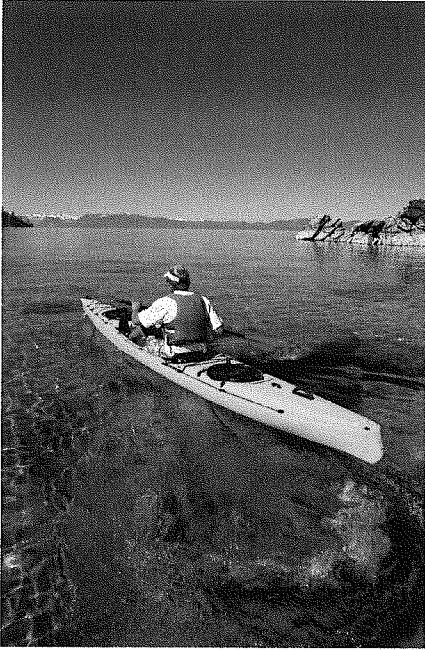
M/S/C (Parson/Dudley) (10/0) to approve Final FY 2010/11 Marketing Strategy

SITUATION

Staff and agency will present the document for review and consideration for Board approval.



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North Lake Tahoe FY 2010-11 Marketing Strategy

The strategies outlined in this document are intended to provide direction and are not rigid or inflexible. The document does not represent a specific set of marketing strategies and action plans that cannot be changed during the year period.

North Lake Tahoe FY 2010-11 Marketing Strategy

Table of Contents

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Table of Contents	3
Executive Summary	4
Plan Context	5
Overall Marketing Strategies	8
North Lake Tahoe Marketing Coop	9
Specific Tactic by Function/Department	10
Advertising/Promotions	10
Conference Sales	14
Leisure Travel & Sales	16
Special Projects	20
Website & Social Media	23
Social Marketing/Media	24
Public Relations	27
Board Level Marketing Dashboard Indicators	30
Marketing Performance Reporting	31
Media Flow Charts	Attachment A
Bought/Owned/Earned Charts	Attachment B

Executive Summary

The NLTRA's mission is to promote tourism and benefit business. Through its contract with Placer County, NLTRA is charged with providing a full spectrum of management activities for tourism marketing and visitor services for businesses of the North Lake Tahoe area. These responsibilities are assigned to the NLTRA's Tourism Division and are generally consistent with those of the destination marketing organizations in other resort communities.

The purpose of the FY 2010-11 Marketing Strategy is to provide a practical roadmap for the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's tourism efforts. This plan uses as its base the *1994 Tourism Master Plan*, the *North Lake Tahoe Tourism and Community Investment Master Plan* (July 2004) and the current *Three Year Marketing Strategy 2007 – 2009*.

There were a number of accomplishments associated with the strategies set forth in the 2007-2009 document, which was adopted by the NLTRA Board of Directors. This Executive Summary provides an overview of the accomplishments and outcomes of the 2007-09 Three Year Marketing Strategy. These accomplishments and outcomes were taken into consideration in the process of developing the strategies for FY 2010-11 Marketing Strategy.

Cooperatively Promote Tourism Based on Shared Objectives

- Continued and expanded the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative efforts
- Participated in several regional marketing cooperatives designed to promote the region, leverage budget resources, and increase awareness to the destination traveler. These programs included Sierra Ski Marketing Council, Regional Marketing Committee, North Lake Tahoe Wedding and Honeymoon Association, Placer-Lake Tahoe Film Office, California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) Winter Snow Campaign
- Leveraged budget resources to maximize marketing efforts
- Worked with area Community Business Associations to develop programs to enhance the North Lake Tahoe experience

Conduct Brand Development

- Evolved the NLT brand campaign with the introduction of the "N North Lake Tahoe" creative execution
- Refined the www.GoTahoeNorth.com website to further align with the brand

Conduct Market Research

- Continued utilization and expansion of the Mountain Travel Research Project.
- Developed a series of research projects in the Northern California/Bay Area and Southern California markets.

Maintain a Balance in Expending Resources between Markets

- Through its annual Marketing Plans, the NLTRA made adjustments, as appropriate and consistent with opportunities, to maintain the balance of marketing expenditures between the traditional drive market of Northern

California and destination markets. Guiding this balance was the need to ensure top of mind awareness in the drive market with the NLTRA's mission to develop and sustain new destination markets, focusing on those with relatively easy air access to Reno/Tahoe and a propensity to travel to our destination.

Develop and Sustain New Destination Markets

- Continued development of programs in the Los Angeles and San Diego markets promoting the region as a viable alternative to other traditional vacation destinations
- Worked with regional partners and CTTC to coordinate and support international representation in the U.K. and Germany. The NLTRA also developed a representation program in Mexico

Develop Programs to Support Off-Peak Visitation

- Continued support of the Fabulous Fall Festival as an umbrella festival to market and promote special events throughout the region during fall
- Continued to produce and further develop the Autumn Food & Wine Festival; encouraging and assisting in the promotion of new events in the community, organized and sponsored by other organizations, but marketed as part of the festival
- Developed and promoted the North Lake Tahoe regional as an adventure race destination during the fall season
- Continually communicated with our consumer database on a monthly basis throughout the entire year, promoting various off-peak activities and events

Contingency Planning

- Developed programs using various trigger campaigns such as snow fall, last minute opportunities and demand periods

Plan Context

For more than 30 years, the Tahoe North Visitors and Convention Bureau (TNVCB) has been the primary destination marketing organization for eastern Placer County and the greater North Lake Tahoe region. As documented in the 2004 *North Lake Tahoe Tourism and Community Investment Master Plan*, a proven definition of a destination marketing organization (DMO) is one whose function is *"to cooperatively promote tourism based on shared objectives among and between participating member businesses and constituents which are more effectively and efficiently accomplished collectively than independently."*

In 1995, the TNVCB became the Tourism Division of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA). The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association's adopted mission statement directs the organization to promote tourism and benefit business. Through its contract with Placer County, the NLTRA is charged with providing a *"full spectrum of management activities for tourism marketing and visitor services for businesses of the North Lake Tahoe area."* These responsibilities are assigned to the NLTRA's Tourism Division and are generally consistent with those of destination marketing organizations in other resort communities.

North Lake Tahoe's Tourism Economy

As documented in *The Economic Significance of Travel to the North Lake Tahoe Area* (Dean Runyan Associates, August 2009), visitor spending grew to \$361 million in 2008, a 2.2% increase from over the 2003-2008 period. Additionally the bulk of the regions employment and earnings are generated through visitor spending made in lodging accommodations, food services and recreations. Without this positive flow of revenues, the citizens of North Lake Tahoe would be challenged to provide for themselves in a manner consistent with an otherwise vibrant tourism economy. Likewise, without tourism based revenues, Placer County and local governmental agencies in the North Lake Tahoe area would find it increasingly difficult to fund vital public services. Clearly, tourism and the income and revenue it generates must be sustained and grown to ensure regional prosperity and health. Sustaining and growing the economic engine of tourism must and can be accomplished in a responsible manner, consistent with environmental and community values.

Approach and Methodology

The NLTRA takes a three step approach to the development of marketing directions, strategies and plans. The first step is to establish a vision and overall direction. The 2004 Master Plan continues to be the guiding document for these efforts. Second, consistent with Master Plan marketing recommendations, the NLTRA needs successful long-term tourism development strategies. Such strategies were first outlined in the previous *Three Year Marketing Strategy, 2005-2007*, were updated in the *Three Year Marketing Strategy, 2007-2009* and further refined in the organizations 6 month seasonal planning strategies. This *FY 2010-11 Marketing Strategy* builds on the success of the previous plans while considering new and emerging strategies.

Specific Marketing Relationship to Transportation and Infrastructure Projects

Over the past years, the Tourism Division has worked closely with the NLTRA's transportation and infrastructure development function to advocate for and promote the implementation of vital improvements. One of the most important of these, implemented in of November, 2006, is the North Lake Tahoe Express. This shuttle service provides daily connections between the Reno/Tahoe International Airport and the North Lake Tahoe-Truckee "Resort Triangle". Within the Resort Triangle, the level of transit service provided continues to improve incrementally, providing a positive alternative for those arriving by automobile, and a seamless transit opportunity for visitors choosing to leave their auto behind. Additional sections of new bicycle trail have been constructed, along with new recreational facilities on the north shore of Lake Tahoe. Projects such as the Maritime Museum and the Olympic Heritage Celebration and planned Winter Sports Heritage Museum are additional projects consistent with the Master Plan and the NLTRA's annual Integrated Infrastructure and Transportation Development Work Plan. As part of this Marketing Strategy, the Tourism Division will continue to advocate for transportation and infrastructure improvements which are essential to help grow and sustain North Lake Tahoe's tourism-based economy.

Process of Developing NLTRA's Marketing Strategies and Plans

At the core of the process of developing marketing strategies and plans are the NLTRA's Marketing Committee, Board of Directors, marketing partners, and the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative (NLTRMC) between the NLTRA and the Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau (INCBVB). Important roles are also played by the Chamber of Commerce Advisory Committee, which continues to be charged with development and implementation of the NLTRA's Community Marketing Program. All committee and Board meetings are open to the public, with input by any and all interested parties encouraged. Cooperative marketing projects and programs are shaped in collaboration with specific partners for each cooperative effort. Additionally, in developing marketing strategies and plans, the NLTRA uses market research, competitive analysis and market trends, and data from its adopted Marketing Performance Reporting Document.

Tourism Division Mission

Specifically, the mission of the NLTRA Tourism Division is *"to promote North Lake Tahoe as a travel destination with the purpose of increasing travel spending within the region, including year-round occupancy and length of stay, generating additional Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenues, sales tax revenues, and maximizing the exposure and promotion of North Lake Tahoe on a regional, national and international level."*

Overall Marketing Strategies

Cooperatively Promote Tourism Based on Shared Objectives

Cooperatively promote tourism based on shared objectives among and between regional partners, participating member businesses and constituents, which are more effectively and efficiently accomplished collectively than independently.

Conduct Brand Development

Develop and implement a clear, concise and differentiated North Lake Tahoe brand to be communicated in all of aspects of marketing and promotional efforts.

Conduct Market Research

Conduct area wide research on vacation product, consumer buying habits and guest travel patterns. Develop an area wide business forecasting/occupancy tool. Develop research to gauge and measure advertising, product awareness and consumer intent to travel.

Attract New Visitors to the Region while Maintaining Existing Markets

The NLTRA will continue to play a leadership role in the development of new destination markets by expanding and sustaining its destination marketing efforts. The NLTRA will also continue to develop new emerging and niche markets with the greatest potential for success. The current niche markets are Southern California with a specific focus on Los Angeles and San Diego. Los Angeles is selected since it has the largest number of daily direct flights to the Reno market. San Diego has been selected as it is not overly saturated with competing destination marketing efforts. The residences also closely match our target market. Efforts will also be placed on maintaining and defending our existing, core markets such as the Northern California Drive Market.

Develop Programs to Expand Peak Periods

The NLTRA will play a key role in the development of programs designed to expand the peak visitation period. This effort will be applied across the entire fiscal year with the objective to broaden the attractive travel period for our consumers. As an example, efforts will be made to extend weekend stays, to expand the summer season to begin earlier and last longer, to promote winter mid-week availability. The four target periods for 2010-2011 are as follows

Late August-September, 2010

January, 2011

Late February-March, 2011 (post presidents/ski week through spring skiing)

June, 2011

Contingency Planning

The NLTRA will exercise its best efforts to maintain sufficient annual flexibility so that it can develop and implement contingency marketing plans to address the impacts of weather-related, economic, or other "sudden" changes in tourism market conditions.

Develop and Track an Expanded Set of Marketing Indicators

The NLTRA has developed and will continue to track an expanded set of marketing performance indicators to gauge the success of marketing programs, including indicators that help measure Return on Investment (ROI) (Marketing Performance Reporting Document).

North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative

A core program to this strategy is the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative (NLTMC), established in October, 2006 and reaffirmed in 2009. Founding partners in this cooperative are the NLTRA and the Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau (IVCBVB). The NLTMC is designed to promote the entire North Lake Tahoe region under one campaign umbrella. Marketing funds from both organizations are directed to a single marketing effort, which includes Marketing and Advertising, Conference Sales, Leisure Sales, Public Relations and Web Development program. The goal of the NLTMC is to promote the North Lake Tahoe brand and further establish the unique identity of our region. This cooperative effort is planned and executed to set North Lake Tahoe apart from our competitors, create recognition and awareness for the destination and to encourage and capture visitor travel.

Additionally the cooperative continues to seek out new member organization with similar destination marketing orientation to further expand its membership.

Specific Tactics by Function/Department

Advertising and Direct Promotion

The Advertising and Direct Promotions plan is designed to support the overall goals and objectives of the NLTRA Tourism Division, in partnership with the NLTMC. The objective of consumer direct marketing is to communicate the most compelling and impactful message to the most appropriate audience, at the most opportune time, using the most effective advertising vehicle. The NLTRA's and NLTMC advertising message must communicate the competitive advantages, consumer benefits and unique personality of the North Lake Tahoe region to a variety of target audiences in several geographic markets. We need to maintain a balance between budgetary constraints and the number of selected target audience and markets to still achieve a measureable impact with our efforts. In addition to these various target audiences, new communications technology is also changing the landscape of advertising, making some traditional communication vehicles virtually obsolete. Changes in consumer behavior will continue to define how and where we communicate to our target audiences.

Cooperatively Promote Tourism Based on Shared Objectives

The NLTRA will continue to aggressively promote tourism based on shared objectives among and between partners. This includes leveraging resources with local and regional partners, developing and executing coordinated marketing partnerships and programs in support of the destination, and working in association with specific Community Marketing Partners to help promote the region's individual neighborhoods.

Action Steps

- Promote North Lake Tahoe as a single, year-round destination which offers a variety of activities and is easily accessible from anywhere.
- Target those who are looking to get away and most likely visit a mountain destination, specifically Lake Tahoe.
- Identify and participate in targeted cooperative efforts to leverage available marketing budgets and resources through cooperative partnerships and programs.
- Expand participation in cooperative programs targeted at North Lake Tahoe's core audience
- Develop cooperative programs for participation from area members and constituents. These programs usually involve media or promotional opportunities. One specific program that will continue is the North Lake Tahoe ski coop in the San Diego Market. One new program under development is the small lodging property program.
- Provide marketing guidance and support to community marketing partners and other organizations working to enhance the visitors experience and encourage return visitation

Develop and Implement the North Lake Tahoe Brand and Conduct Market Research on Related Brand Impacts.

With consistent promotion of the North Lake Tahoe brand, North Lake Tahoe continues to support a strong brand message, vital to our ability to compete in destination markets. The brand will continue to be incorporated into all aspects of the NLTRA/NLTMC marketing and sales efforts in order to firmly establish a coordinated message across all consumer marketing programs.

Action Steps

- Reinforce the brand in all NLTRA/NLTMC marketing efforts
- Ensure consistent brand messaging in all aspects of consumer marketing
- Develop a comprehensive market research project designed to measure the impacts of the various marketing programs on consumer preferences, brand awareness and intent to travel
- Develop supplemental and ongoing market research for continual analysis of marketing efforts
- Use available research to refine brand message in all aspects of marketing communication
- Maintain brand while refreshing N campaign with new photography.
- Continue focus on Cool Deals, activities and events with the messaging.
- Select a media mix that complements and enhances the brand while effectively delivers the message to the appropriate target markets.

Promote North Lake Tahoe as a Year Round Travel Destination

NLTRA will continue to focus efforts on the promotion of the region as a year round travel destination by attracting new visitors to the region regardless of their geographic location, and developing programs designed to maintain and defend our traditional drive markets.

Action Steps

- Maintain a balance in expending resources between traditional drive markets and destination fly/drive markets.
- Concentrate advertising efforts heavier in the drive market in the summer versus the winter. There are less advertising dollars spent directly by other companies in North Lake Tahoe. There are many options available to drive market travelers for summer travel destination and interests. North Lake Tahoe needs to maintain awareness.
- Develop target destination markets with good air service to the region such as Los Angeles and San Diego.
- Continue to work with identified partners and programs and focus on efforts to maximize the effectiveness of programs, budgets and resources
- Identify and develop new niche marketing opportunities, strategies, partners and programs
- A portion of the media budget will not be committed in order to react to the following unforeseen marketing conditions such as: Snow Conditions, Unforeseen Downturn in Business or Unexpected Opportunities

Develop Programs to Expand Peak Periods

The NLTRA will play a key role in the development of programs designed to expand the peak visitation period. This effort will be applied across the entire fiscal year with the objective to broaden the attractive travel period for our consumers. As an example, efforts will be made to extend weekend stays, to expand the summer season to begin earlier and last longer, to promote winter mid-week availability.

Action Steps

- Continue to promote fall season under Fabulous Fall Festival Banner
- Promote events with brand alignment targeted to extend peak season visitation
 Example: High Notes Summerlong Music series.
- Develop programs designed to enhance third party events and programs that support the overall brand of North Lake Tahoe.
 Example: Amgen Tour of California
- Work with lodging partners to develop added value packaging for regional promotional
- The media budget will focus on the following four target periods
 January
 Late February-March
 June
 Late August-September

Key Measurements

Advertising/Promotions/Media:

INPUT

Leisure Coop Budget Amount

Direct Paid Media Dollars

Added Value Media

Coop Programs Investment (NLT Coop)

Gross Media Impressions

Response/Inquires

INPUT

Total paid clicks

OUTPUT

Total Leads

Database email open rate

Database email click thru rate

GTN Online Activity

INPUT

Number of Cool Deals Posted

Number of Events Posted

OUTPUT

Total Unique Visitors

Cost per Visitor

Percent of Direct/Bookmarked Visitors

Time Spent on Consumer Website

Number of Repeat Visitors

Percent of Repeat Visitors

Cool Deals Pageviews

Number of Lodging Referrals

Lodging Referrals % of Total

Search Engine Referrals

GTN Geographic Breakdown

OUTPUT

Top five cities and percent of total visitors

Total California visits

Percent of total visitors

Visits by top CA cities (attached graph)

Northern CA visitors

Northern CA percent of total visitors

Southern CA visitors

Southern CA percent of total visitors

Outside CA visitors

Percent of total visitors

Conference Sales

Consistent with mission of the Tourism Division, the primary function of the NLTRA Conference Sales Department is to increase the number of meetings held each year in North Lake Tahoe and to increase awareness of the Lake Tahoe area as a premier destination to the national and regional meetings industry. Specifically, the Department works to develop conference and group business and provides referral and conversion services. Its efforts are focused in partnership with the properties which are members of the NLTRA Conference Program; properties which have meeting and conference space and services.

Increase Conference Leads, Bookings & Revenue

One of the primary goals of the conference sales department is to generate leads and assist member hotels in the conversion of those leads into bookings.

Action Steps

- Target sales and marketing efforts in key markets that have continued to show strength even in poor economic times. The markets we will be concentrating on are the San Francisco bay area, Chicago & Washington, DC. In each of markets we will conduct targeted sales calls, attend trade shows and strategically place advertisements in industry publications
- Increase efforts to attract the regional and association market segments. While we will continue to pursue all market segments, we will focus on associations as most are mandated by their by-laws to hold at least one meeting per year. This segment has also shown great resilience over the past couple of years while corporate business has dwindled significantly.
- Conduct sales calls to target clients. All research shows that in person sales visits is the most effective way to build relationships and thereby generate new business. We will be conducting these sales "missions" individually as the Visitors & Convention Bureau as well as in conjunction with member hotels. In the past we have relied on our marketing efforts and cold calling for generating sales. This year we will spend much more time physically in our target markets.
- Increase the number of site visits to North Lake Tahoe. We offer hosted site visits to all clients who are looking at Tahoe but only about 5% actually take advantage of the offer. Of those that visit the conversion rate is well over 80%. We will attempt to increase that number by offering to purchase airline tickets for groups over 300 total room nights. We will also be more aggressive in pushing the advantages of doing a site visit and encouraging more clients to take advantage of the offer.

Increase Partner Participation in North Lake Tahoe VCB Programs

The Visitors & Convention Bureau offers a number of cooperative opportunities to its members including; advertising and marketing efforts, sales mission's trade shows and others. Increased partner participation is valuable in a number of ways. It improves

communication and trust, it provides leveraged opportunities that create expanded awareness a larger presence than we could afford as individuals.

Action Steps

- Conduct quarterly Director’s of Sales meetings. These meetings are an opportunity for director level staff from all member properties to come together to discuss strategy.

Increase Internet Conference Bookings

Recent research conducted by meeting professional’s reports that 87% of meeting planners use the Internet as their initial tool when researching and selecting destinations. Internet bookings now represent nearly 20% of all booked business and industry revenue. As meeting planners rely more heavily on the Internet, the NLTRA must ensure its Web Site is properly positioned and functional to be competitive and capture market share.

Action Steps

- Ensure competitive position, ease of navigation and quality of content on the NLTRA’s Web Site from the Conference Marketing and Sales perspective
- Utilize targeted email campaign to drive traffic and sales opportunities to Site
- Use Web Site as call to action on all Conference marketing materials

Key Measurements

Conference Coop Budget Amount

- Direct Paid Media Dollars
- Added Value Media Dollars
- Coop Programs Investment (NLT Coop)
- Partner Leveraged Dollars

Leads

- Number of leads
- Lead room nights
- Web page visits

Booked Business

- Number of bookings
- Booked room nights
- Booked attendance
- Booked Room Revenue

Lost Business

- Number of lost opportunities
- Lost room nights
- Lost attendance

Arrived Business

- Number of bookings
- Number of booked room nights
- Number of booked attendees
- Booked attendees spending

Leisure Sales

Consistent with the mission of the Tourism Division, the function of NLTRA's Leisure Sales Department is to increase destination leisure travel to North Lake Tahoe. The department focuses in on three distribution channels in order to obtain set goals: 1. direct to consumer, 2. travel agents, 3. tour operators, 4. international state programs.

Overview of each distribution channel

Historically, consumers have been reached directly through consumer trade shows, direct mail and also after brochure requests were made via email or through the NLTRA web site. Aside from some special instances, things have changed due to the fact that attendance at most shows are declining. However, leads and brochures generated off of GoTahoeNorth.com have not only remained. Unique visits on the web site remain on the rise thanks to a highly visible and successful consumer marketing campaign.

Consumer shows are often quite hard to track, as many are not ready to purchase a vacation package at the show. With ROI and the leveraging of dollars being a top priority for staff, most consumer shows attended are in partnership with NLTRA lodging, ski resort and activity partners as well as with Ski Lake Tahoe, the CTTC, NCOT and the RMC.

As airlines and others have reduced commissions paid to travel agents and with the growing popularity of travel research and bookings taking place on the Internet with OTA's or directly with suppliers, travel agents are losing share as a distribution channel. However, certain consumers, especially luxury and international travelers, continue to use travel agents. Agents are most often reached through industry trade shows, product launches, familiarization trips to the region, sales calls/trainings at their offices as well as with product placement and advertising in wholesaler brochures and industry publications.

Tour operators/wholesalers are also a significant distribution channel. This channel not only promotes sales through third and fourth parties, but also provides a platform for advertising, resulting in destination branding. International tour operators typically play a bigger role than domestic tour operators for the region; however, both play a significant role in sending destination leisure travelers to North Lake Tahoe. All key operators are met with annually at Mountain Travel Symposium and TIA's International POW WOW where contracting takes place and leads are generated and passed onto NLTRA partners.

In addition to all of staff's efforts within the channels mentioned above, NLTRA also spends significant funds buying into travel trade and PR programs set forth by the California Travel and Tourism Commission in key international markets. Each state program heavily leverages NLTRA dollars. On the travel trade side, each office conducts sales meetings and trainings, spends dollars on co-op advertising with top wholesalers, organizes product manager, call center sales staff and travel agents familiarization trips to North Lake Tahoe as well as put together key meetings and trainings for NLTRA staff when over for annual sales missions. Most of the CTTC international offices also have a consumer advertising budget which includes airing CTTC commercials, direct mailers as well as print and online advertising. In regards to

PR, each account manager pitches stories and circulates NLTRA and partner press releases, conducts monthly clipping services and PR reports, organizes media events in market to coincide with NLTRA sales missions and arranges for at least one media familiarization visit to North Lake Tahoe annually.

Historically, NLTRA has bought into the UK (our region's top international market) and Germany's programs. After many years of this combination, business began to flatten and even fall off from Germany; therefore, per direction from NLTRA partners, staff no longer buys into Germany and has redirected funds for the past three years into the Australian program. This strategic move has paid off considerably due to the fact that NLTRA still has a great working relationship with the German office as well as with all of the top tour operators in the country. NLTRA is seeing almost all benefit of being a partner without buy into the German program and has, now, expanded in Australia, a top emerging market for North Lake Tahoe.

Continue to grow Ski Tahoe North Interchangeable lift ticket as a vacation product

When the Ski Tahoe North (STN) interchangeable lift ticket first debuted, it was an extremely progressive program that helped put North Lake Tahoe on the map – effectively promoting the region as North America's most concentrated region of ski resorts. The ticket was and still very popular with tour operators looking for winter vacation product with variety and flexibility. Staff has continued to work closely with the 7 participating ski resorts to ensure that the STN remains to be one of the best interchangeable lift ticket models in the world.

Action Steps

- Improve overall consumer value of the Ski Tahoe North product
- Ensure that the STN product has value to the 7 participating resorts
- Remain to keep the STN product available to destination leisure travelers only
- Continue to contract with new ski wholesalers domestically and internationally and also with established companies new to add North Lake Tahoe to their product mix.
- Make changes so that sale and use of the product is not so "paper dependent," moving tour operators away from using their own internal paper vouchers, streamlining the customer experience – having STN ticket booklets waiting for the guests upon check-in at their lodging property

Trade Shows

Attendance at traditional, consumer trade shows has declined. As a result, participation in some shows now has a questionable return on investment (ROI). The NLTRA will continue to review and refocus resources on trade shows that demonstrate ROI in targeted markets.

Action Steps

- Continue to reduce the number of expensive trade shows that do not demonstrate a measurable ROI

- Reallocate resources to trade shows showing higher returns in targeted destination markets such as Chicago, New York, Boston, Texas, Florida and California's destination travelers from LA and San Diego
- Redirect limited resources and leverage funds with partners – joining forces with NLTRA lodging, resort, activity and transportation providers, the High Sierra Visitors Council, other CVBs such as LTVA and RSCVA, Ski Lake Tahoe, RMC, CTTC and NCOT
- Explore emerging markets, especially when linked together with new air service into the Reno Tahoe International Airport
- Redirect resources into sales missions within these markets
- Redirect resources to familiarization trips targeted at key travel providers, ski clubs and media within these markets
- Promote off-peak visitation, when appropriate

Continue to brand North Lake Tahoe within emerging markets while increasing visibility in established markets internationally by contracting with select California state international offices

NLTRA's leisure department will continually work to improve the value and productivity of the each contracted international office.

Action Steps

- Increase communication and coordination with each contracted state office, bringing in key North Lake Tahoe partners into every relevant sales and press effort possible
- Develop and implement program goals which are more measureable, such as working with more NLTRA partners to put together sales incentives to call center agents and travel agents
- Continue to dedicate at least one sales and media mission annually to each market

Increase familiarization (FAM) visits to the entire North Lake Tahoe region

It is the goal of the Leisure Sales Department to encourage, organize and host more FAM trips, both domestically and internationally for trade and media.

Action Steps

- Host at least two travel trade FAMs per year from each key market; one with a summer product focus and one with a winter focus
- Continue working closely with NLTRA's PR firm (Gilwee PR) as well as with the PR account managers from each contracted state office to host multiple domestic and international media FAM visits
- Solicit travel trade and media FAMs while conducting domestic and international sales calls, as well as during consumer and wholesale trade shows
- Work closely with NLTRA's partners in putting together all expense paid land package FAMs for top sales agents from key tour operators and travel agencies

Drive additional leisure, destination traffic to GoTahoeNorth.com

NLTRA's leisure staff will continue to use GoTahoeNorth.com as one of the best and most powerful tools for educating consumers, travel trade and media on the North Lake Tahoe product. Maps, video, photos, detailed descriptions, a continuously updated event calendar, itinerary suggestions and direct click-through to all partners continue to play a key role in branding the region and converting marketing into sales.

Action Steps

- Work closely with NLTRA's Director of Tourism and PR team to develop and implement programs which drive more destination leisure traffic from target markets to GoTahoeNorth.com
- Provide the travel trade and key media with access to the media kit containing photos for certain usage, the event calendar, suggested itineraries, maps and video to ensure accurate representation, increased brand knowledge and more detailed and effective travel trade web sites and brochures while, at the same time, keeping the press informed and exactly on target
- Work with international offices to produce sweepstakes or similar consumer and/or travel trade incentive programs to drive additional traffic to GoTahoeNorth while resulting in increased brand knowledge

Activity/Performance Measures:

Travel Trade/Sales

Total Travel Trade Spend

Leisure Trade Shows

Number of trade shows attended

Number of Coop shows

Number of Sales Missions (call center trainings)

Domestic

International

Leisure Familiarization Tours (FAMs)

Number of Site Inspections

Wholesale Product Placements

Domestic Brochure Placement

International Brochure Placement

Number of NLTRA Pages with Domestic Suppliers

Number of NLTRA Pages with International Suppliers

Number of Properties Featured on Domestic Websites

Number of Properties Featured on International Websites

Special Projects

Consistent with the mission of the Tourism Division, the function of the Special Event Department is to develop and implement events, programs and partnerships that drive increased visitation to North Lake Tahoe during designated “strike zones” and “off-peak seasons and times.

The Department produces, partners and provides marketing support to the NLTRA as well as to externally produced community special events and programs, assist community event producers in development and execution of event marketing plans to broaden the reach of their event, offer expertise in event management, operations, logistics and execution.

Staff actively seeks out major events, sporting and otherwise with the goal of bringing them to the North Tahoe Area, with a focus on the possibility of generating overnight stays, television broadcasts and major public relations for the region.

The Department also oversees the content manager for the NLTRA’s websites: www.gotahoenorth.com, as well as NLTRA content on www.visitcalifornia.com, www.visitcaliforniasnow.com and www.visithighsierra.com

Goal:

Continue to position Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival as a Must Attend Destination Event

Objective:

Drive overnight stays in the fall season and develop event to appeal to the culinary tourist.

Action Steps:

- Continue to expand the venue, feature cutting edge culinary and wine programs, noted chefs and vintners.
- Incorporate specialty seminars in the Northstar restaurants.
- Develop strong ties and partnerships for events and programs with The Ritz-Carlton Highlands, Lake Tahoe adding their brand image and cache to the Festival.
- Develop additional lodging packages to generate additional overnight stays utilizing Cool Deals on the GoTahoeNorth.com website.
- Continue to cross promote with all partners and sponsors and integrate the Festival with the Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week promotion thru Gilwee Public Relations
- Continue to strive to maximize the public relations and media value of the Festival through strong PR message thru agency, and editorial opportunities with Sunset Magazine and Edible Reno/Tahoe publications.

Measurement:

Overnight stays, public relations return on investment, ticket sales, overall attendance, overall impressions thru print, radio, media and web traffic and economic impact on restaurants, where trackable.

Goal:

Continue to position the North Lake Tahoe Area as a Premier Adventure Race and Race Destination

Objective:

Support adventure and other types of foot/triathlon racing through sponsorships, partnerships, public relations and marketing assistance for the purpose of generating overnight stays and bring national media attention to North Lake Tahoe as a race destination.

Action Steps:

- Support established events such as the Tahoe Big Blue Adventure Race, Exterra Tahoe, Big Blue 24 Hour race, Tahoe Big Blue Sprint, Burton Creek race Series: 5 & 10K, ½ and full Marathon, Big Blue Trail Run, Run to the Beach, Lake Tahoe Marathon Week and Lake Tahoe Marathon.
- Collaborate with race producers to bring more events to North Lake Tahoe thereby strengthening our overall marketing objectives.
- Identify and support other such events and activities as budgets and other resources allow.

Measurement:

Trackable overnight stays, participant numbers, spectator numbers, overall impressions thru print, radio, media, NLTRA and producers web traffic.

NEW EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Goal:

Continue to seek new events and partnerships consistent with its goals, objectives and role within the NLTRA. These partnerships depend to a large extent on resources that can be developed through public and private partnerships and sponsorships.

Objective:

Collaborate with various partners, sports production companies and community sports and event producers to bring new events to North Lake Tahoe.

Action Steps:

- Continue to collaborate with Lake Tahoe Visitor's Authority and the North Shore lodging and resort communities on a bid to bring a Stage One start and finish, and Stage Two start of the Amgen Tour of California, May 2011.
- Continue to promote North Lake Tahoe as the largest flat water paddle venue for a strong emerging sport of Stand Up Paddleboarding and SUP racing. Work with

local race producers to combine individual races into a summer-long paddleboard festival.

- Assist in the promotion and production of the recently won bid for the return of Mountain Travel Symposium due to arrive in 2012.
- Reach out to and bid on regional events staged by organizations such as CTTC, California Preservation Council, CalFest and others for their annual conventions and conferences which all generate overnight stays.
- Collaborate and cross promote with Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, incorporating Autumn Food & Wine and eventually develop a week-long schedule of activities and events leading up to the actual Festival.
- Continue to promote North Lake Tahoe as a music destination through the High Notes Summerlong Music Series marketing campaign.

Measurement: Number of new events staged in North Lake Tahoe, trackable room nights, attendance numbers, spectator numbers, total impressions generated by television, print, radio, media, websites, economic impact on local retail, activity and restaurant community.

Goal:

Support Continued Development and Implementation of the Community Grant Funding and Marketing Program

Objective:

Work in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce Advisory Committee and the NLTRA's community marketing partners; provide support as directed and appropriate to the Community Marketing Program.

Action Steps:

- Utilizing the GoTahoeNorth.com and NLT Chamber websites and marketing collateral, continue to develop and maintain an area wide calendar of events and activities for consumer distribution for coordinating the scheduling of events (to the maximum extent possible.)
- Meet with all grant recipients and assist with marketing plans, advertising plans, event development, logistics and planning; include in pr releases where appropriate, assist in permitting, and make all available contacts and resources available to them. Each grantee will receive a copy of the new Special Event Resource Guide developed by this department and staff.

Measurement: Assist and assess individual Return on Investment for all funded events utilizing attendance numbers, trackable overnight stays and advertising equivalency on all publicity generated by each event.

Website Development

The Website must provide content that is useful, valuable easily accessible and speaks to our target customers. Our goal is to firmly establish GoTahoeNorth.com as a comprehensive resource for Lake Tahoe information and vacation planning that will allow the NLTRA to increase the number of new and repeat users. A key to this is the further development of partnerships with NLTRA/NLTMC members and suppliers to deliver lodging, lift tickets and a full range of other attractions, as well as complete vacation packages.

Specifically Website development must continually improve: 1) content (design, usability, copy, features and functionality) that will stimulate users to make GoTahoeNorth.com their first choice for Lake Tahoe information, lodging, vacation packages and related services; 2) Referral Links - converting online users to online customers of our various partners; and, 3) Online Marketing -driving new customers to the Web Site and encouraging current users to return.

Action Steps

All elements of Website development are to support the mission to *produce a top tier tourism Website with the following five goals:*

- Provide the best, most comprehensive online content in support of North Lake Tahoe marketing, sales, and visitor information services.
- Clearly depict what North Lake Tahoe has to offer through quality design, content and imagery.
- Deliver pertinent information that is easy to access and navigate.
- Build and maintain customer relationships.
- Convert users of the Website into customers of the Web Site.

As online travel planning continues to gain momentum, it is imperative that we make ongoing improvements to the NLTRA's online booking system. Improvements will include: 1) add more links to properties and suppliers for available inventory; 2) further highlight the various offers and packages from our partners; 3) further refine the navigation to create an easy flow of information to the consumer; 4) actively promote the various events and activities as a core message from the website.

If the NLTRA delivers optimized content and a streamlined online booking engine, our target markets need to know these online services are available. The NLTRA must maintain its existing client database while concurrently generating new users and expanding the database. When appropriate, the NLTRA will market cooperatively with NLTRA members, suppliers and other partners.

Social Marketing/Media

Social marketing is not just a phenomenon, it's here to stay and has become a leading resource for destinations to enhance current marketing initiatives and engage directly with customers in an authentic and meaningful fashion. The power of social outreach lies in North Lake Tahoe's current followers and subscribers who in turn become advocates and third-party endorsers for the region spreading the viral message.

Goals:

- Engage with target audiences through authentic communication designed to promote and educate audiences about activities, events, attractions, deals, etc. in North Lake Tahoe
- Become an active and immediate voice for North Lake Tahoe
- Provide an active outlet for travelers to communicate directly with North Lake Tahoe

Objectives:

- Increase fans and followers over the last year
- Increase the level of communication delivered through the social platforms by North Lake Tahoe and audiences
- Increase participation among followers by developing ongoing contests, promotions, expert insights, etc.
- Using 2009-10 as a baseline, develop key measurements

Action Steps

- Content: Continue to utilize content to communicate with followers current happenings (website, e-news, advertorials, public relations)
- Blog: Continue with blog postings and enhance with guest bloggers who are deemed experts in their respective field; utilize PR's contacts of local experts
- Education: Continue to use the social outlets as a way to educate audiences about the destination as a way to endear them to the destination
- Flickr and YouTube: Further develop the library of Flickr photos and YouTube videos
- Contests/Promotions: Develop and conduct integrated Facebook contests targeting potential new followers with a customized Facebook landing page including the ability to secure e-mails and data
 - Estimated Cost: \$152 per contest set-up
\$100 recommended Facebook advertising to support
- Poll: Develop and conduct integrated Facebook polls targeting potential new followers and to engage current followers with a customized Facebook landing page including the ability to secure e-mails and data
- Advertising/Advertorial: Following closely the paid advertising schedule, target the region or area of focus to increase touch points for the consumer
- Immediacy: Compliment advertising and PR's trigger events (snow fall, etc.) with strategic and supportive social messaging
- Photos and Videos: Continue to hold follower photo and video contests and award prizes
 - Cost: None; soft dollars/comps

- Mobile Apps: Develop a customized mobile app (iPhone, iPad, iTouch, Blackberry and Android) designed to position North Lake Tahoe as the Tahoe resource for information, deals, reports, resources, etc. The customized platform would be designed to propel North Lake Tahoe into the national spotlight and become a destination role model
 - Estimated Costs: \$3,200 iPhone
 \$3,000 Blackberry
 \$3,500 Andriod
- Facebook Advertising: Integrated targeted Facebook advertising to coincide with key programs; RKPR to manage the Facebook advertising for monitoring, quick change and efficient program adoption
 - Cost: \$1000-\$1500 annually for advertising
- Social Stunts: Consider holding two to three social stunts each year to garner social media credibility, become a viral experience, garner new fans/followers and potentially secure news coverage. For example:
 - Host a TweetUp in San Francisco or LA and invite surprise guests (Olympian skiers) to “pop-in” and award prizes.
 - Estimated cost: \$3,000
 - On-site give aways at select events in an effort to garner social buzz; show up at a ski resort and award prizes working with that resort’s social team as well for added promotion
 - Estimated cost: \$1,500 and soft dollars/comps

Key Measurements

Blog

Number of posts
 Audience growth – unique and returns
 Subscribers
 Inbound links
 Technorati, Alltop and other directory listings
 SEO improvements

Facebook

Increase in those that “like” the page
 Monthly active users
 New likes (averaged by day each month)
 Post views (averaged by day each month)
 Post feedback (averaged by day each month)
 External referral sites
 Visitor demographics (gender and age)

Twitter

Friends/Followers and average increase
 Twitter rank
 Social capital – influence of twitter followers
 @replies and ReTweets rank
 Lists listed on

YouTube

Video views

Referrals from social video sites

Page ranking on key terms from YouTube

Flickr

Photo views

Referrals from social sites

Page ranking on key terms from Flickr

Public Relations

Public Relations play an integral role in promoting North Lake Tahoe as a premier year-round travel destination. It also plays a role in keeping the local community informed about the organization's programs, opportunities for input and involvement, as well as NLTRA/NLTMC accomplishments.

Public Relations Goals

The specific primary functions of public relations are:

1. Generate international, national, regional and local media coverage of North Lake Tahoe, using all facets and markets of the media (e.g. travel and tourism, outdoor recreation, family, ski, culinary, the meetings industry, heritage and arts, along with the cultural tourism and the spa/luxury markets)
2. Establish North Lake Tahoe as a premier year-round destination, with an emphasis on shoulder and non-peak seasons and times, with www.GoTahoeNorth.com as the prime source for travel planning
3. Establish North Lake Tahoe as a dependable source of information for all media outlets and their first call for facts, story leads, interviews, digital images, as well as b-roll and digital footage

Public Relations Objectives

1. Research, develop and execute public relations campaigns for identified niche markets and assisting organizations that spearhead niche market efforts

Action Steps

- Create and implement specific public relations campaigns geared to promote High Notes – North Lake Tahoe's Summerlong Music Series
- Continue supporting the annual winter efforts of the Olympic Heritage Festival through public relations opportunities, and hitting home's Lake Tahoe's Olympic ties and history
- Continue using Learn to Ski as a significant news hook for generating media coverage about early winter ski opportunities/conditions
- Build upon the Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival's 25th Anniversary's programs and events to help brand North Lake Tahoe as the best culinary mountain destination in the country, while securing media coverage in targeted media outlets
- Tie-in with existing culinary events, such as the inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week and the Tahoe City Wine Walk, to further validate North Lake Tahoe's culinary status and positioning
- Maximize public relations opportunities at Pow Wow 2011, held in San Francisco, to reach targeted international media outlets
- Tie-in with North Lake Tahoe advertising campaigns (and new flights to Reno/Tahoe) in LA and San Diego with public relations efforts/editorial desk-side appointments to leverage advertising dollars with editorial media coverage
- Identify public relations opportunities via Community Marketing Grant Program recipients, such as the 2010 Quicksilver Tahoe Stand-Up Paddle Board Race Series, and create stand-alone media materials that capitalize on North Lake Tahoe's outdoor, pure brand

- Research public relations opportunities with the California Travel and Tourism Commission and the Nevada Commission on Tourism that fit North Lake Tahoe's positioning, such as California Wine Month (September) and maximize our editorial coverage to national and international markets.
- Research interesting and new Snowfest story angles that generate media coverage and pique journalists' interest, and continue to build awareness of North Lake Tahoe as an unsurpassed winter product
- Use Public Relations Dashboard Measurements to gauge the success of each action, such as the advertising equivalency of generated editorial coverage (using a 1-to-1 ratio)

2. Develop and execute other public relations program enhancements

Action Steps

- Work with RKPR to expand on North Lake Tahoe's social media efforts, while increasing the number of journalists following our public relations posts on Facebook and Twitter
- Continue to enhance the summer and winter press kits to ensure it is the most comprehensive resource on North Lake Tahoe for media use
- Switch from press kit CDs to flash drives so information is fluid and can be updated as programs change, as well as individualized to each journalist's interest
- Work with Shelley Fallon to actively post media materials that enhance the Media Center on www.GoTahoeNorth.com and make it more useful to members of the media on assignment and/or those researching information about North Lake Tahoe
- Continue working with Smith/Jones to leverage placed advertising for both consumer and meeting markets with editorial coverage, as well as drafting advertorial copy for targeted media outlets
- Enhance digital images, along with b-roll and digital footage, with unique shots that complement North Lake Tahoe's branding
- Work with key event and festival producers, along with ski resort colleagues, to obtain recent and engaging images that complement North Lake Tahoe's existing portfolio and can be distributed with our one-off news releases
- Continue hosting qualified media on assignment to cover North Lake Tahoe, so they may experience the area firsthand resulting in better, more extensive stories
- Update our list of North Lake Tahoe local experts who can be made available to the media for interviews and/or source information for media stories about North Lake Tahoe
- Continue researching and attending trade shows and events where there are new opportunities for North Lake Tahoe in our target markets, while identifying cooperative event efforts that reduce costs, such as the successful region wide Golf the High Sierra Media Fam
- Continue working with Eric Brandt to create new video new releases and other electronic media efforts, releasing in a timely manner for maximum

media coverage, that give a consistent and accurate depiction of North Lake Tahoe

- Use Public Relations Dashboard Measurements to gauge the success of each action, such as number of media missions attended during the fiscal year compared to year prior

Key Measurements

Media/Public Relations

Total Public Relations Spend

Media Trade Shows

- Number of trade shows attended
- Number of appointments
- Number of qualified media in attendance

Media Missions

- Number of media missions
- Number of coop partners
- Number of media contacts

Media Familiarization Tours (FAMs)

- Number of FAMs
- Number of qualified media participating
- Number of publications represented

Press Releases

- Number of press releases issued
- Number of press releases downloaded from website

Number of Media Inquiries

Number of Media Interviews

Placements

- Total number of placements
- Regional vs. National
- Domestic vs. International
- Percent of LA
- Percent of Northern CA

Number of Impressions

Advertising Equivalency

% of Positive Media Placement

% of Media Coverage Reaching Target Audience

% of Media Coverage Including Website Address