



north lake tahoe

Chamber | CVB | Resort Association

PO Box 5459 - Tahoe City, CA 96145 Ph – (530) 581-8700 Fx – (530) 581-8762

MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, March 24, 2015 – 2 pm

Tahoe City Public Utility District

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Monson, Marguerite Sprague, Cara Whitley, Giles Priestland, Gregg Gibboney, Joseph Mattioli

RESORT ASSOCIATION STAFF: JT Thomson, Greg Howey, Judy Laverty, Sandy Evans Hall, Anna Atwood

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Shelly Fallon, Kristen Guinn

I. MEETING OF THE MARKETING COMMITTEE

1.0 CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH QUORUM

1.1 The Marketing Committee meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm and a quorum was established.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM

2.1 No public forum.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL

3.1 **M/S/C (Priestland/Matijevich) (7/0) to approve the agenda as presented.**

4.0 APPROVAL OF MARKETING MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 18, 2014 AND JANUARY 27, 2015.

4.1 **M/S/C (Sprague/Priestland) (6/0/1-Matijevich abstained) to approve the Marketing Committee minutes from November 18, 2014.**

4.2 **M/S/C (Priestland/Matijevich) (7/0) to approve the Marketing Committee minutes from January 27, 2015.**

5.0 RECAP OF WINTER MEDIA – LIZ BOWLING

5.1 Liz Bowling shared some of the winter media highlights:

- Public Relations January Results: 16 Placements, Total Publicity Value: \$61,374 and Total Impressions: **45,396,205**
Placement Highlights: VIA Magazine, Canada.com, CondeNastTravel.com, Yahoo Travel and Willamette Living. (Willamette Living is a publication in Oregon – ties in with direct flight market)
- Public Relations February Results: 18 Placements, Total Publicity Value: \$132,857 and Total Impressions: **125,654,498**
Placement Highlights: Yahoo Travel, SF Gate, Lexington Herald, OnTheSnow.com and Thrillist (Thrillist is an online publication with a huge reach in San Francisco)
- Public Relations March Results: 17 Placements, Total Publicity Value: \$99,152 and Total Impressions: **63,107,772**
Placement Highlights: Los Angeles Times, Thrillist, 7x7, Trekaroo and The Active Times.

Liz also shared some of the campaigns:

- Spring: Tahoe Trifecta – Spending your tax return
- Big focus on the New York Flight

Comments: 1) What impact will Vail Resorts have by pulling out of Ski Lake Tahoe on the New York Campaign? Liz shared that it shouldn't affect the New York campaign. It may or may not affect the Thomas Cook flight. Liz will keep the committee updated with news regarding this recent development. 2) With itinerary development, will there be opportunity to also include cultural elements? Liz definitely wants to include cultural elements and is open to suggestions.

6.0 VISIT CA OUTLOOK FORUM REVIEW – JT THOMPSON

- 6.1 JT Thompson attended Visit California's Outlook Forum. This is an annual travel marketing conference where global industry experts gather to discuss the latest marketing research, strategies and tactics. JT reviewed some of the highlights with the committee members:
- Visit CA increased their marketing budget from \$50 million to \$100 million. The legislation authorized self-imposition of an assessment by businesses that benefit from travel and tourism and it was renewed in 2015.
 - Dream Big Campaign: Visit California decided to reflect the state's diversity by commissioning and curating an impressive collection of short films/videos. This is being marketed both nationally and internationally.
 - Collaborate with Visit CA to ensure they have as much information as possible about our destination. This includes social marketing and all our press releases.
 - Social and Mobile Marketing. Huge engagement rate but it has to be organic. JT is working with The Abbi Agency on this. Last campaign we had was "Take a Snow Day." This campaign included user generated content in the form of video and it received some good submissions.
 - Chinese traveler! The Chinese visa can now be granted up to 10 years. It's important that we look at that market and put North Lake Tahoe on the map. This is an educational process too as there is different needs and some language barriers.
 - For more online information on industry statistics go to:
<http://industry.visitcalifornia.com/Find-Research/California-Statistics-Trends/>

Comments: 1) Does Visit California provide any sort of translation services. JT shared that Visit California can provide us with offices that we can go to at a cost. 2) How much of the marketing budget is used on domestically vs. internationally? JT reported he doesn't know for certain but he thinks it's about a 70/30 split. 3) How do we measure ROI in the International market, like China? JT responded by Tour Operators, Airlines and Travel Companies.

7.0 UPDATE ON GOTAHOENORTH.COM CONSUMER WEBSITE REDESIGN – JT THOMPSON

- 7.1 JT reported that GoTahoeNorth.com is undergoing a website redesign. Toward the end of the month it will be ready for testing. Both Andy Chapman and JT along with other committee members will test the site for about a week or so. The feedback will go back to School of Thought and the projected launch date of new site is May 1st. He shared a lot of requests were made in the January Marketing Committee meeting. This had to be cut at this time. He instructed staff and School of Thought that all changes will go through him.

Comments: 1) Where did we land on the Press Room? Liz Bowling shared the new site will have a Press Room. 2) Will the site have translation to other languages? JT shared that is on his wish-list for now.

8.0 ABBI & SCHOOL OF THOUGHT MARKETING SUMMIT REVIEW – JT THOMPSON

- 8.1 JT reported of a new Marketing Summit Review meeting taking place bi-weekly. He had noticed a disconnect in our communication and thought it would be beneficial to have all 4 partners meet on a regular basis. The four partners include: NLTRA, IVCBVB, The Abbi Agency and School of Thought. The purpose of the meetings is to talk about current strategies and messaging.

9.0 SPRING MEDIA AND SOCIAL MESSAGING STRATEGY – JT THOMPSON

- 9.1 JT reported March occupancy numbers are down 6% and April is flat. One of the things discussed in the Marketing Summit Review is how to drive traffic during shoulder season. Liz with the Abbi Agency reported on the Spring Campaign. She shared most of California and New York spend their tax return on travel. This campaign will be focused on the Tahoe Trifecta with skiing in the morning, golfing in the afternoon and enjoying entertainment at night. JT asked the committee for input on the campaign being focused to 60% Southern California and 40% Northern California.

Comments:

- Look at New York, Chicago or Boston.
- There is a lot of buzz about the new flight with JetBlue from New York to Reno.
- Have the message be “Summer starts sooner” and have the timing be earlier.
- We know peak summer is already busy in Tahoe so target earlier and end the campaign by June 30.
- Spring is pleasant in Chicago and New York and they tend to look at warmer destinations like Caribbean for their getaways.
- Be careful with strategy and the message that you can do the same summer activities in the winter.

10.0 PREPLANNING FY 15/16 MARKETING DISCUSSION – JT AND COMMITTEE

- 10.1 JT shared this is only his 3rd month on the job and he would like to get some feedback on the committee on what we should be focusing our efforts on. Here are some things he would like to see more focus on: 1) Groups and conferences 2) Travel Industry (Tour Operators, Wholesalers, OTA's, Receptive tour operators). He stated it would be great to see some growth and more funding be put towards these areas.

Comments:

- A lot of our marketing is focused towards sports and not enough on culture and arts. The area would really benefit from highlighting and presenting some of the cultural opportunities. There are great museums in the area and a lot of tour operators and not aware of them.
- The functionality of the new website will really help highlight our diverse sections like culture and arts.
- More efforts on Participatory Sports Group. Softball, Soccer and other groups fill the lodging properties and it's a great segway to our active outdoor lifestyle in Tahoe. Truckee is about to open their new aquatic center that is great for Swim Meets.
- Disconnect with Participatory Sports Groups and local information. Build a fact sheet with information on: Things to Do, Restaurants, What beaches are dog friendly. Include information on Trash and Bears.
- A lot of European travels flying in to LA drive up 395 and then in to Yosemite. From there they often go to San Francisco. More awareness and target these groups to visit Lake Tahoe.

Action to JT: Sit down with Marguerite to discuss Culture and Arts that needs to be highlighted on the new GoTahoeNorth.com website.

Action to Conference Sales: Build a fact sheet with local information that goes out to the participatory sports groups that comes to North Lake Tahoe.

- 10.2 JT reported that the landing page for our consumer website: <http://visitinglaketahoe.com> is going through a redesign. This redesign is being facilitated by Smith & Jones and committee have something to look at our next Marketing Committee meeting.

- 10.3 JT touched on the company's branding message and asked about Coop branding opportunities. He asked if the resorts would be willing to put our logo on their advertisement/message or if it's something we need to stay away from. Cara from Squaw shared they already do joint advertising with Alpine and Sugar Bowl and to put another logo on there would just blur the message. She

stated that if it was just Squaw's beautiful branding message she may feel differently about it. John with Sugar Bowl said after 4 years of drought, coop opportunities may be the future. Budgets are tight and it may be the only opportunity for some entities. From a resort view point, he agrees with Cara that the message is already hard to read. John did report that several destinations are levitating towards opportunities like this.

Action to JT: Add Ski Lake Tahoe as an agenda item in the next for either April or May meeting.

11.0 EVENT UPDATE – JUDY LAVERTY

11.1 Judy reported on the following events:

- Winter Wondergrass: First time event in Squaw Valley this last weekend with a 3-day sell-out. She shared that Bonfire Entertainment ran this Festival very professional. Cara recommended that we move it to the first weekend in April for next year.
- USA Cycling: Judy reported there have been some challenges with this event and adjusting race routes to satisfy different agency requirements. She is working on a daily basis with permitting for five counties, EMT, EMS, Caltrans, CHP, Fire etc. The expenses are higher than anticipated and Judy reported there may be a need to have this on the agenda next month for discussion on “pulling funding from elsewhere.” JT reported that Sandy has been in discussion with USA Cycling and they have allowed us to have a title sponsor and a Vendor Fair to help off-set some of the cost.
- Professional Disc Golf Association World Championships: Staff is working with the PGDA on submitting a proposal for the 2016 World Championships. The challenges are the low end room rate, \$5 per room rebate plus a 10% commission to PDGA. The good thing is the event is 8-10 days.
- Autumn Food & Wine: This year marks the 30th Anniversary of AFW and Judy is working on bringing some of the past celebrities chefs back for a reunion.
- California State Parks: Staff has had meetings with the permit coordinator for State Parks in our sector. Policy has been set for usage of Kings Beach, Donner Lake, Burton Creek and other State Park operated venues. When this is confirmed and in print she will share and distribute with the committee.

Comments: Cadence recommended that the NLTRA start looking at the timing of some of the large events and especially if events require use of public right of way and other first responding agencies.

12.0 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

- 12.1 **Advertising** – This report is located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet.
- 12.2 **Conference Sales** – Greg shared his report located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet.
- 12.3 **Leisure Sales** – JT shared his report located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet. He also reported that Jeremy will be leaving the organization in June to pursue other opportunities.
- 12.4 **Special Projects** – Judy shared her report located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet.
- 12.5 **Web** – Shelley shared her report located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet. She recommended everyone get all their calendars updated in the old site before it's moved over to the new site.
- 12.6 **Social** – Liz shared her report located in the departmental section of the Marketing packet.

13.0 COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

13.1 No committee member comments.

14.0 STANDING REPORTS

14.1 The following reports were posted on www.nltra.org:

- FEBRUARY MTRiP REPORT
- FEBRUARY LODGING REFERRAL REPORT
- CONFERENCE ACTIVITY REPORT
- FEBRUARY RENO TAHOE AIRPORT REPORT

14.2 JT asked if it's necessary to print out the Standing Reports. PDF files are uploaded online on the company website and there is a lot of paper wasted. The committee members agreed that it is not necessary to print them out but a committee member recommended that we do a snapshot page of the most important details. JT will have a draft ready at the next committee meeting.

Action to JT: Draft a snapshot of important details from Standing Reports.

15.0 ADJOURNMENT

15.1 The Marketing Committee meeting adjourned at 4.10 pm.

Submitted By:
Anna Atwood, Marketing Executive Assistant
North Lake Tahoe Chamber/CVB/Resort Association