



north lake tahoe

Chamber | CVB | Resort Association

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MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tahoe City Public Utility District Board Room Tuesday, September 26, 2017 – 2 pm

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Erin Casey, Judith Kline, Christine Horvath, Brett Williams, Becky Moore, Eric Brandt, Terra Calegari (2:10 pm)

RESORT ASSOCIATION STAFF: Cindy Gustafson, Jason Neary, Sarah Winters, Amber Burke

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Andy Chapman, Liz Bowling, Allegra Demerjian, Alexis Kahn, Lindsay Moore, Bart Peterson, Shelley Fallon, Greg Fine, Walt McRoberts (called-in)

I. MEETING OF THE MARKETING COMMITTEE

1.0 CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH QUORUM

The Marketing Committee meeting was called to order at 2:04 pm and a quorum was established.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM

No public forum.

3.0 AGENDA AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL

M/S/C (Casey/Moore) (6/0) to approve the agenda as presented.

4.0 APPROVAL OF MARKETING MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 24TH, 2017/

M/S/C (Brandt/Casey) (6/0) to approve the meeting minutes from July 24th, 2017.

5.0 PR/SOCIAL UPDATES – ABBI AGENCY

Allegra shared her Q3 highlights (July – September):

Public Relations

July: Second best month (to January) of PR placement by ad value - \$900,000 ad value

FAM Hosting: Jay Gentile of Chicago Tribune + Lonely Planet (Sept)

Event Outreach: Huge wins for Wanderlust, Autumn Food & Wine Festival, and Spartan Race Preparation

Social Media & Content

August 2017 saw the most Facebook engagement, impressions and shares in over a year. September 2017 Instagram milestones: reached over 50,000 followers

Notable Pitches

Wellness & Summer Events, Solar Eclipse, End of Summer; Fall Secret Season, Events: Autumn Food & Wine Festival, Wanderlust, Spartan Race

Notable Placements: Huffington Post, Paste, Mountain Living, 7x7, NBC Bay Area

August Facebook Live

Thunderbird Lodge, Reach: 24.9K, Views: 11.9 K, Engagement: 996

September Snow Announcement: 1.4M organic reach and 29.9K paid reach, 658K Video views, 20K+ Reactions, 6.4K shares, Contributed to 1.9K organic new page likes

Tahoe Luminaries Campaign: Jenni Charles & Dead Winter Carpenters, Douglas Dale & Wolfdale's, Bill Watson & Thunderbird Lodge, Adrian Ballinger & Emily Harrington. Performance: Total Video Views: 148,915, Social Campaign Reach: 345, 089, Social Engagement: 5,448 and Top Performing video: Bill Watson.

Oct – Dec 2017 Plans & Themes:

Themes:

Fall – Secret Season, Activities, Ale Trail

Human Powered Sports, Snow Season Lead-in, Luxury Winter Experiences, Holiday Season Travel, #TahoeSnowTracker, Winter, What's New.

Plans:

Local Luminaries: \$5 and #6

Thankful for Tahoe UGC and Content Features

#TahoeSnowTracker and Snow Social/PR Coverage

Partner Feature Opportunities: E-mail and Form

No committee member comments or questions.

6.0 CONSUMER MARKETING UPDATES – AUGUSTINE AGENCY

Alexis shared her Summer Campaign recap.

Executive Summary:

- Overall, the summer campaign served a total of 14 million impressions, resulting in 17.7K website sessions and 6.5K book now conversions. This equated to a \$15 cost per conversion and \$4 cost per website visit.
- Email and paid search ads, while driving less conversions, drove the highest quality web traffic.
- Compared to the Spring campaign, click-through rates and cost per book now conversion figures both improved.
- The Summer Campaign was effective at driving both website traffic and in turn book now conversions at a low cost.
- Web Performance: Visitors to GoTahoeNorth's website spent on average 48 seconds on the site and viewed 1.78 pages per session. Performance peaked in the middle of June and again late July, where traffic to the Things To Do and Events pages were above average.
- Display Performance: TripAdvisor and Retargeting placements continued to be effective strategies, driving cost per bookings under \$20. Prospecting ads outperformed the industry average CTR by 70%.
- Social Performance: Ads retargeted toward families featured the highest CTRs while ads targeted toward outdoor enthusiasts and workaholics featured higher engagement rates. Notably, younger travelers showed a higher propensity to click the book now button after clicking on an ad.
- YouTube Performance: YouTube ads accounted for 250K impressions and 88K views during the Summer Campaign, for an average view rate of 35%.

Comments:

- Brett questioned the Augustine Agency regarding Cost Per Click in the Northern California market (summer) as that is where our partners/constituents are visible too. Walt stated steps have been taken so he is not going after the same key words as constituents are using.
- Brett also suggested that the Email Blast going out be shared with the committee members. (Paid and consumer).

Winter Preview:

- Geographic Targets: Los Angeles, New York, Austin.
- Target Personas #1: Workaholics. Age 25-49, Higher Education, Dual income/no kids.
- Target Personas #2: Experiential Families. Age 35-54. Higher household income, seeking new experiences with the whole family.
- Target Personas #3: Outdoor Enthusiasts. Ave 18-34, Focused on health, Risk takers looking for new adventure

- Year round media spend will continue this winter, including SEM, retargeting display and video, and social media retargeting. The winter campaign will also include a mix of: Native advertising, Programmatic Display, Video, Rich Media, Social Media Conquesting.
- Given the success of last year's targeted spend in Los Angeles, additional media opportunities in that market include: Digital billboards, Sunset Magazine ad targeting Southern California, Experiential Campaign.

Comments:

- Brett stated that the destination has been helped with a couple of fairly new flights into Reno, one by JetBlue and one by Alaska Air from the Southern California. Will there be partnership opportunities with the carriers or ways to highlight this? Andy shared Alaska Airlines has shown willingness to work with RASC organization. Alexis stated this is also something that can be pushed out through their social media targeted to Southern California.

Experiential Campaign:

- Initiative: Promote North Lake Tahoe as a premier winter ski destination with a fun and eye-catching experiential activation. Timing: January 2018. Market: Los Angeles.
- Snow Fabricated Vehicles
- Themed Brand Ambassadors: Brand Ambassadors, dressed in theme, will be a fun way for North Lake Tahoe and any potential sponsors to engage with targeted consumers. Ambassadors will be fully trained on all brand talking points to remind people to visit North Lake Tahoe during ski season. Facebook live can be a great addition to the campaign.
- Sponsored Opportunities: Sponsors allow for program expenses to be split between multiple entities by providing sponsors with key branding space on various program elements. Possible sponsors include ski resorts, hotels and other local establishments.
- Estimated Cost: One vehicle over two non-consecutive weekends: \$52,800 or two vehicles over one weekend: \$57,350.

Comments:

- Andy shared there is a lot of further discussion that will need to take place regarding one vehicle versus two, timing and what local events could be tied in with this.
- There were some discussion on the ambassadors. Some committee member recommended that Augustine works with well-known Tahoe athletes that know our destination. They need to be true ambassadors and be authentic.
- What are the ambassadors handing out? Alexis said it could be a branded giveaways like an ice scraper or a hotel nights?
- It was recommended that we use a unique URL and or hashtag.
- Maybe look at a contest instead of a handout? (text to win)
- Look at ski shops in West LA or other areas to partner with.

Website Optimization:

- Increasing search engine ranking for GoTahoeNorth.com requires updated to both the code of the site and the content on the site and off-site link building (site speed, meta tags, H1/H2 tags, Image details, Keywords and keyword density, link details)
- Mobile Experience (Heat Map for Current Mobile Homepage)
- Mobile Experience: Simplified the vent blocks by removing the description but leaving important details. (Photo, Event title, date)
- Removed "More Events" link from every post and added a "See All Events" button at the end of section.

7.0 EVENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS – AMBER BURKE

Amber shared the Business Association & Chamber Collaborative Committee September meeting recap. The BACC would like to hold a professional facilitated strategic planning meeting for the committee in January or February. She shared moving forward there is a need to redefine BACC's mission, and to look at the four campaigns from a 30,000- foot view and decided on a strategy. She would like to include a few members from the Board and the Marketing Committee to make sure the BACC is aligned.

Comments:

- Time to look at each of the campaigns outcomes, how they fit with the budget and how they fit within the position in the market.
- Andy shared this committee changed from the Chamber Committee to the Business Association & Chamber Collaborative about 4-5 years ago. He shared the group wished for more autonomy outside of the NLTRA structure. It's a good time to look at the structure of the BACC committee as it currently becoming more staff focused.
- Erin shared that even though the committee may like to operate more independently it is still an entity of the NLTRA its efforts should be tied to the NLTRA strategic plan and the Marketing plan. These are two items being discussed soon so this conversation should be tied in to that strategic planning meeting.

Amber updated the committee on the Special Event Partnership Funding should be ready in about a month or so. There is a few items being ironed out by the accounting department and Finance committee regarding roll-over funding.

Amber shared some information that was discussed at the Board of Directors meeting last month regarding Event Producers asking for Sponsorship being present at the Marketing Committee meetings. Amber shared this could be tied in to a site visit or after the event (recap of the event). If they cannot attend they would be required to be available via phone.

It was recommended that the Event Producer come one month prior to when the contract is being presented.

8.0 EVENT CONTRACTS – AMBER

1. **Winter Wondergrass** – This is a 1 year contract for April 6-8, 2018 in Squaw Valley with a proposed \$15,000 cash sponsorship. In addition to that Amber has allocated \$4000 from the event specific contract with the Abbi Agency. Amber shared some of the results from last year contract and the event did sell out the Thursday prior. The attendance for last year's event was 16,000.

M/S/C (Brandt/Calegari) (7/0) to approve the \$15,000 Winter WonderGrass contract.

Action to Amber: Send out this survey result to the committee members.

2. **Tough Mudder** – This is a 1 year contract for June, 9-10, 2018 in Northstar. Last year's event was canceled due to too much snow. The proposed cash sponsorship is \$40,000. Amber did a recap of the 2016 event and it shows good attendance with an average night stay of 2.8.

M/S/C (Moore/Kline) (7/0) to approve the \$40,000 Tough Mudder contract.

3. **North Lake Tahoe Summit Classic Lacrosse Tournament** – This is a 1 year contract for June 15-17, 2018 with a proposed cash sponsorship of \$5,000. The attendance this year was 4,747 with a 100% of the participants being out of town. Registration for this will open Oct 5, 2017 for next year.

M/S/C (Brandt/Moore) (7/0) to approve the \$5,000 North Lake Tahoe Summit Classic Lacrosse contract.

Comments:

- Send out a survey to the participants.

9.0 FY 2017/18 CONFERENCE SALES IN-YEAR STRATEGY UPDATE – JASON NEARY

Jason stated that Fiscal Year 2017/18 revenue is pacing significantly behind the record years the CVB saw in FY 2016/17. While the numbers are pacing toward a 5 year average, the drop off from prior year was concerning. This is a trend that the team saw coming about 18 months out and have taken steps to address it. The following are some of the steps intended to generate more leads and short term bookings:

- Increased support and accountability for the CVB's Chicago representative. The CVB increased the funding for this position, established increased goals and expanded the number of shows, sales calls and in-market events she need to produce.
- Hiring a new conference sales person. This position is dedicated roughly 30% to conference sales in addition to supporting leisure sales and IVCBVB. (Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau)
- Entered into a strategic partnership with HelmsBriscoe and HPN.
- Allocated funds and aggressively pursuing major industry events that could bring a large number of meeting planners to North Lake Tahoe. (Connect California, CalSAE Elevate, Mountain Travel Symposium).
- Allocated additional resources in the California market that generates short term business and converts at a higher rate than other markets.
- Focused on creating in-market events in key markets versus attending some of the major national trade shows.

Some of these efforts are already generating results as the leads generated in the FY 2016/17 increased 25.7% over FY 2015/16. If conversion rates continues at a similar pace the organization is anticipating generating a similar revenue based on a 5 year average.

Comments:

- Terra from the Resort at Squaw Creek shared they are seeing a shorter booking cycle, and tech business has become as much of a producer as the association business.

10.0 CMO/TD RECRUITMENT PROCESS – WILLIAMS/CHAPMAN

Brett updated the committee on the recruitment process for the CMO/TD. Andy and Brett shared that the interview process is still taking place. It will be narrowed down to a second round, in-person interviews. The position start date may not be before the beginning of 2018.

11.0 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS – AUGUST

- **Conference Sales – Jason Neary**
- **Leisure Sales – Sarah Winters**
- **Events & Communications – Amber Burke**
- **Website Content – Shelley Fallon**

Shelley shared the website is running well but she is concerned that the event section and the deal section is lacking events. How do we get our partners, event producers to enter their events? Is the e-mail reaching the correct people? Amber shared she is working on an Event Producer distribution list and she will reach out to make sure we have the correct people on the list.

- **Public Relations – The Abbi Agency**
- **Advertising – Augustine Agency**

12.0 STANDING REPORTS

- **Destimetrics August Report**
- **RTIA Passenger and Cargo Report**
- **August Conference Activity Report**
- **August Lodging Referral Report**

13.0 COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Erin shared that DeDe Cordell has accepted a new job and will no longer participate on the Marketing Committee.

14.0 ADJOURNMENT

- The Marketing Committee adjourned at 4.35 pm.

Submitted By:

Anna Atwood
Marketing Executive Assistant
North Lake Tahoe Chamber/CVB/Resort Association