



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

Estes Park Local Marketing District: Visit Estes Park

2014 Operating Plan

This Operating Plan was approved by the Visit Estes Park Board of Directors on September 17, 2013. It was submitted to the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County on September 25th, before the deadline of September 30, 2013. It is pending approval by the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County. Please note that it was written before the devastating floods which began on September 11, 2013 and the subsequent road closures from the Front Range to Estes Park (Rt. 34, Rt. 36 and Rt. 7).

Introduction

While the Estes Park Local Marketing District (LMD) is still the legal entity under which the 2% lodging tax is submitted, in January, 2012, our 'doing business as' name changed to the more user-friendly 'Visit Estes Park'. An increasing number of official Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) have adopted the name 'Visit' preceding their destination, making the shift a natural move toward this emerging industry standard. As a result, the organization will sometimes be referred to as Visit Estes Park throughout this document, but the two names are essentially interchangeable.

As this 2014 Operating Plan will outline, the Visit Estes Park Board of Directors and staff have again made significant progress in 2013, and we are planning for continued success in 2014. As a results-driven organization, Visit Estes Park's strategy led to significant accomplishments in 2013. Accomplishments will be discussed in more detail throughout, but among the most notable are:

1. **DMO Accreditation:** Visit Estes Park is awarded the highly prestigious DMO accreditation from Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI)
2. **New Website:** Launched a powerful, consumer-driven VisitEstesPark.com website and mobile site resulting in significant growth and consumer engagement
3. **New Advertising Creative:** Retained new advertising agency who brought our brand to life with fresh new advertising creative based on brand strategy learnings
4. **Integrated brand strategy creative and messaging** across all advertising and marketing platforms including print, digital, social and the new VisitEstesPark.com website
5. **Began roll out of Phase Four of brand strategy** 'Delivering the Estes Park' to the entire community
6. **New Media Agency:** Retained new media planning and buying agency.

Visit Estes Park Organizational Structure

Organization

The formation of the Local Marketing District and the 2% lodging tax were approved by District voters in November 2008 and lodging tax collections went into effect on January 1, 2009. Staffing and operations began in January 2010. The Visit Estes Park Board focuses direction directly to the President & CEO of the Visit Estes Park staff. All Visit Estes Park Board direction

will be focused through the President & CEO, other than ordinary involvement in committees, in order to keep reporting direct and focused without confusion. We believe this is very important to keep individual agendas from getting involved in the direct line of reporting and direction that could cause confusion. Any necessary communication and direction to be given to the President & CEO during periods between Board meetings will be handled by the Visit Estes Park Chair with a follow-up summary to the entire Board. In the absence or incapacitation of the Chair, this responsibility will be handled by the Vice Chair.

The Local Marketing District (LMD) Model

According to Colorado State Statute, the Local Marketing District may provide any of the following services within the district:

Organization, promotion, marketing, and management of public events;

Activities in support of business recruitment, management, and development; Coordinating tourism promotion activities.

(II) No revenue collected from the marketing and promotion tax levied under section 29-25-112 may be used for any capital expenditures, with the exception of tourist information centers.

(f) To have the management, control, and supervision of all the business and affairs of the district and of the operation of district services therein;

(g) To appoint an advisory board of owners of property within the boundaries of the district and provide for the duties and functions thereof;

(h) To hire employees or retain agents, engineers, consultants, attorneys, and accountants;

(i) To adopt and amend bylaws not in conflict with the constitution and laws of the state or with the ordinances of the local government affected for carrying on the business, objectives, and affairs of the board and of the district; and

(j) To exercise all rights and powers necessary or incidental to or implied from the specific powers granted in this article. Such specific powers shall not be considered as a limitation upon any power necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes and intent of this article.

Visit Estes Park Board of Directors

Bill Almond, Chair, YMCA of the Rockies

Jon Nicholas, Vice Chair, Estes Valley Library

Scott Webermeier, Secretary/Treasurer – National Park Village

Lindsay Lamson – Rocky Mountain Resorts

Lynette Lott
Chris Wood – McGregor Mountain Lodge
Adam Shake - Neanderthal Productions Social Media Consulting

Kathy Palmeri was Chair in 2012 through August of 2013. Palmeri resigned when she moved to Loveland, Colorado, outside of the District, as she was no longer eligible to serve. Bill Almond became Chair at that time, and Jon Nicholas became Vice Chair. Scott Webermeier continues as Treasurer. In September, Adam Shake was appointed to the Board to replace Palmeri. The seven member Board is appointed, with five members appointed by the Town of Estes Park Board of Trustees and two by Larimer County Board of County Commissioners.

Visit Estes Park Staff

Peggy Campbell – President & CEO
Suzy Blackhurst – Director of Operations & Finance
Brooke Burnham – Director of Public Relations & Communications
Janice Mason – Group Sales & Services Manager
Kirby Nelson – Stakeholder Relations & Communications Manager
Mike Oline – Administrative Assistant
Kellen Schaffer – Digital Communications Manager

Key Players

Visit Estes Park Board of Directors
Visit Estes Park Staff
Town of Estes Park Government Officials
Town of Estes Park Staff
Larimer County Officials
Rocky Mountain National Park Leadership
Tourism Business Partners
Community Stakeholders

Visit Estes Park Mission, Vision, Core Values

Mission: Attract visitors to the District through effective and efficient marketing in order to drive year-round economic growth.

Vision: To be a year-round tourism and group destination that supports our healthy mountain community with a balance of financial success, memorable experiences for visitors and quality of life for our residents and employees.

Core Values: Accountable, Ethical, Proactive, Respectful, Responsive, Transparent

Travel & Tourism

Tourism: The Basis of the Estes Park Economy

In 2012, Visit Estes Park commissioned the first ever study to define the impact of tourism on the Estes Park economy. *The Economic & Fiscal Impact of Tourism on the Estes Park Economy* research study was conducted by Tucker Hart-Adams of Summit Economics, located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The study found that:

- Tourism is the basis of the Estes Park economy
- Estes Park welcomes over 2 million visitors per year
- Estes Park's 2 million visitors spend about \$187 million per year in the area
- Tourism provides more than half the jobs in Estes Park
- Tourism jobs result in \$46.7 million in earnings each year
- Visitors provided the Town of Estes Park about 54.1% of its revenues, almost \$18 million annually
- The tourism industry saves each Estes Park resident \$418 annually in municipal costs
- Tourism enhances the quality of life for each resident

Travel Trends

American enthusiasm toward leisure travel remains strong, according to *The State of the America Traveler* study conducted by Destination Analysts, Inc. and Miles Media in July 2013. The national study revealed that the proportion of leisure travelers planning to travel more increased to 30.2 percent, up from 27.5 percent over the same point one year ago. Spending expectations is also encouraging, with 31.1 percent expecting to increase their leisure travel spending in the coming year. Improvements in traveler finances and moderate gas prices continue to drive these positive results.

The improved financial positions of leisure travelers are also shown in the diminishing interest in travel deals and discounts. The proportion of American leisure travelers who expect to actively look for travel deals and discounts has been in decline over the last three years as less than half of travelers (49.8%) were so inclined. In comparison, in January 2010, a 63.1 percent of travelers said they would actively seek out deals and discounts.

The report examined the differences in travel behaviors between three key generations: Millennials (generally born 1984 - 2002), Generation X (generally born 1965 - 1983) and Baby Boomers (generally born 1946 - 1964). The study found that 'we are all humans with similar needs and aspirations' and so the three generations had some striking similarities. However, there are distinct differences that do exist between the generations. Nowhere are these

generational differences more pronounced than in how they plan their trips and the technology they use to do so. For example:

- Used mobile phone to plan travel: 51.1% Millennials; 35.9% Generation X; 19.2% Baby Boomers
- Took a laptop on a leisure trip: 52.1% Millennials; 50.6% Generation X; 45.6% Baby Boomers
- Used social media to complain about a travel experience: 14.8% Millennials; 9.8% Generation X; 3.3% Baby Boomers
- Accessed Twitter for travel planning info: 19.2% Millennials; 10.2% Generation X; 1.8% Baby Boomers

Millennials are more likely to travel and take more leisure trips than their older counterparts and they are more interested in urban destinations. Boomers show a pronounced desire for exploring and connecting with the great outdoors on their leisure trips.

Data gathered about growth markets revealed that by comparing the percent of leisure travelers actually visiting (in the past 3 years) to the percent expecting to visit in the next 3 years, a measure of a destination's latent potential for growth emerges. Encouraging for Estes Park, Denver, Colorado is among the top domestic destinations poised to capture more Millennials and Generation X'ers in the next three years. Denver did not make the cut for Baby Boomers.

It's clear that U.S. travelers overall are using a complex range of media and diverse sources of travel information. More than half use social media and/or user generated content. About 40% use a mobile phone to plan their travel. Around 44% use print publication of some type – illustrating continued strength in print use. About 34% use DMO websites and 15% use DMO print publications.

The Power of Travel & Tourism Promotion*

Wise and strategic investments in travel and tourism promotion feed a virtuous cycle of economic benefits. Travel promotion programs spur interest in visiting destinations among potential travelers. Stronger travel interest generates more visitors. Additional visitors spend more at local attractions, lodging properties, restaurants, retail stores and other businesses. Greater travel spending supports more local jobs and generates additional tax revenue for state and local governments

There are many case studies that clearly demonstrate that investments in travel promotion pay for themselves many times over. During the ongoing economic recovery, the travel industry has emerged as a key driver of U.S. economic growth. The data clearly demonstrate that travel has a major economic impact at the national, state, and local level.

Wise investments in travel promotion programs feeds the cycle of economic benefits – growing the number of travelers boosts spending at community businesses, which supports more jobs and increases tax revenue. Data and case studies yield several clear lessons for state and local government leaders:

- Travel is a vital contributor toward local communities. Travel spending not only sustains local jobs and businesses; it also represents a critical source of tax revenue for funding local services such as streets and police protection. Additionally, it creates an appealing environment to recruit even more travel and non-travel related businesses.
- Investment in travel promotion is crucial to maintaining market share. Reducing investment in tourism promotion results in fewer visitors, less travel spending and lower tax revenue. This underscores the importance of protecting and growing the funding source for Visit Estes Park.
- Enhanced travel-related offerings produce dividends for destinations. Destinations with stronger travel assets and more developed product offerings improve the quality of life for local residents, attract new businesses and skilled employees, and increase the appeal to potential visitors.

** Source: U.S. Travel Association – The Power of Travel Promotion*

2013 Operating Highlights

In July 2013, Visit Estes Park was awarded prestigious accreditation designation from DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International), the global trade association for official destination marketing organizations. Achieving accreditation through DMAI’s Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP), this accomplishment puts Visit Estes Park in elite company, joining just two other Colorado destination marketing organizations that achieved this distinction: Visit Denver and the Colorado Springs CVB.

“By applying for and receiving DMAP accreditation, Visit Estes Park has demonstrated a commitment to quality programs and services,” said Shelly Green, DMAP Board Chair. “Earning DMAP accreditation tells the community and potential guests that your DMO has attained a measure of excellence assuring that their trust is well placed and their business in good hands.” “Congratulations to Visit Estes Park,” said Richard Scharf, President & CEO of Visit Denver. “This recognition is just another way of illustrating their professionalism, effectiveness and significance to the Estes Park Community and economy.”

To achieve this distinction, Visit Estes Park was required to document its practices and policies in 15 key areas associated with destination marketing: Governance, Finance, Human Resources, Technology, Marketing, Visitor Services, Group Services, Sales, Communications, Membership, Management and Facilities, Brand Management, Destination Development, Research and Stakeholder Relationships. More than 75 specific documents were provided in the course of answering 155 questions, including items such as the budget showing the accepted use of account numbers, the employee handbook, insurance policies, the marketing plan, a media kit, the destination brand assessment, economic impact studies, and more.

When Visit Estes Park submitted its application in late March, only 137 other DMOs in the world had achieved the status. The designation was awarded during the Washington, DC based Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) organization's annual convention in Orlando, Florida.

In 2012, Visit Estes Park became an independent Destination Marketing Organization. Due to office space limitations, we moved our offices from the Estes Park Visitor Center to 1200 Graves Ave. With the move came a new address, new phone number, new email addresses, and independent IT infrastructure. In addition, we created and implemented our own Employee Handbook/HR policies and our own separate PERA (Public Employees Retirement Account) and payroll processing service.

In September 2012, an IGA between the LMD and Larimer County was developed. The 'Agreement for Distribution of Payment Between Larimer County, Colorado and Estes Park Local Marketing District' will result in payments by the County to the District. The County agreed to pay the Estes Park LMD two percent (2.0%) of all camping and cabin rental fees and charges collected from accommodation users of Larimer County's Hermit Park Open Space. Visit Estes Park very much appreciates our partnership with Larimer County.

In 2013 Visit Estes Park followed the Town of Estes Park's lead in choosing CliftonLarsonAllen, LLC. to conduct the Local Marketing District's annual financial audit. CliftonLarsonAllen, LLC. included the Visit Estes Park financials as an integral part of the Town's CAFR (certified annual financial review). In June, the company informed Visit Estes Park's President & CEO, Operations & Finance Director and accountant, that Visit Estes Park received a clean audit.

Beginning in early June, the Operations & Finance Director began working closely with our accountant to create ongoing cash flow projections through 2013. Having the document bridges the gap between budget projections and quarterly receipts of sales tax disbursements through the Colorado Department of Revenue.

In May 2013, the analysis of 2% lodging tax collections was transferred from Visit Estes Park Treasurer to staff, Director of Operations & Finance.

In 2013, we produced the 2012 Visit Estes Park Annual Report which was redesigned to include new photography, a new format, new creative look and feel and relevant content for our stakeholders.

On December 31, 2012 long-time veteran Advertising Manager Peter Marsh retired from Visit Estes Park. Peter, a respected advertising professional, valiantly fought cancer for seven years. We continue to be saddened by his death in January 2013.

A new hire was approved by the Visit Estes Park Board of Directors, and as a result, a new employee was added to staff in July. Kellen Schaffer, Digital Communications Manager, began on July 22, 2013, bringing the total number of employees back to seven. The President & CEO continues to report directly to the Visit Estes Park Board and directs the staff.

The Visit Estes Park Board of Directors and staff continue to benefit from a great working partnership with the Town of Estes Park, Larimer County and Rocky Mountain National Park.

2013 Marketing Highlights

Overview

In 2013, Visit Estes Park completed the last of the major strategic marketing projects identified as critical to the success of the newly formed Local Marketing District, now doing business as Visit Estes Park. Marketing Consultant, Scott Hannah of Hannah Marketing, hired by the Local Marketing District Board of Directors in 2009, was charged with a Brand and Marketing Assessment of what was then the Estes Park Convention & Visitors Bureau. From this, Hannah created the 2010 Strategic Marketing Plan, a marketing road map for the LMD and the foundation on which Visit Estes Park has been operating.

These strategic Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) marketing projects are major undertakings which can occur once every 5-10 years. They require significant funding, human resources, retaining experts in the field, and focus. These major achievements include a year-round visitor study (completed in 2011), destination brand strategy (completed in 2012), new marketing creative and messaging (completed in 2013), a new website/mobile site (completed in 2013), and a Customer Relationship Management system (completed in 2013).

While not specifically defined by Hannah, in 2013, Visit Estes Park also earned DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International) DMO accreditation, which is in effect for four

years. At the same time, we achieved success in other areas of on-going marketing efforts, including advertising, media planning/buying, public relations, social media, and others.

It should be noted that like 2012, the 2013 summer season again started with catastrophic wildfires in Colorado and the west, and again garnered much unwanted national media attention. The Black Forest fire, near Colorado Springs, began on June 11, 2013. The evacuation area covered 94,000 acres, 13,000 homes and 38,000 people. The fire was 100 percent contained on June 20, 2013, but 14,280 acres had burned, at least 509 homes were destroyed, and two people had died. This was the most destructive fire in the state's history, surpassing the 2012 Waldo Canyon Fire which also began near Colorado Springs. The Colorado wildfires affected tourism, in varying degrees throughout the state, as safety is the number one concern for consumers when making travel plans. Fortunately, summer in Colorado continued with the more typical monsoon weather, resulting in rainfall, which while there were wildfires later in the summer in Colorado, the fire danger was significantly reduced for the remaining part of the summer.

Launched New VisitEstesPark.com Website

A planned and purposeful multi-year strategy, the completion of several major strategic initiatives gave us the foundation on which to design, develop and launch a powerful, creative, feature rich website in June 2013. Completed strategic projects that were critical to developing and implementing the new website included the year-round visitor study (2010-2011), the national consumer brand awareness/perception study (2011), the destination brand strategy initiative phases 1, 2 and 3 (2011-2012), and new marketing creative and messaging based on brand strategy learnings (2013). The result is a new website that elevates the on-line Estes Park experience and provides consumers the travel tools they have come to expect.

An RFP (Request for Proposal) process began with assembling a stakeholder website selection committee to guide Visit Estes Park throughout the process. The team defined website requirements, performed research to determine qualified DMO website providers, studied each proposal, interviewed final candidates, and ultimately, unanimously, chose the Visit Estes Park website partner. This process resulted in the team choosing Simpleview Inc., located in Tucson Arizona. Simpleview is the leader in destination marketing solutions, providing products and services to more than 200 Destination Marketing Organizations. Simpleview was the first company to create a web-based Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system tailored to DMOs. Simpleview was also the first to integrate CRM systems with web-based Content Management Systems (CMS), giving DMO's the ability to maintain the websites that are designed and built by Simpleview.

A major undertaking for the first half of 2013, the new Visit Estes Park website was launched on June 5th. As will be discussed later in this document, new advertising creative based on brand strategy went to market early summer. As expected, the new creative drove consumers to the website, resulting in a streamlined and consistent message.

The website is a creative and feature rich, utilizing the latest technology and destination marketing best practices. The goal of the website is to improve internal efficiencies, provide real value to our stakeholders, reflect the Estes Park brand promise, delight the consumer planning their trip, effectively compete with any other destination website, and increase visitor conversion. The website was developed with the consumer in mind, giving them the features they have come to expect from a travel website. New website functionality includes:

- Lodging on-line BookDirect feature integration with JackRabbit systems
- Mobile website which also includes the JackRabbit Lodging Book Direct feature (more than 50% of Americans now own a smart phone)
- Tablet enabled
- Language Translation which allows virtually any web user in the world to use the site
- Advanced search feature where consumers can view results based on their individual preferences, e.g., pet friendly, hot tub, free Wi-Fi, etc.
- Trip builder allows the user to create and email to their friends and family their vacation itinerary based on their specific interests
- Social media integration
- Google maps integration
- Trip Advisor integration
- Enhanced advertising opportunities for stakeholder businesses to be showcased
- Dynamic content options, e.g. homepage megawidget, Visit Estes Park blog integration, media gallery, etc.
- Integrated SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Visit Estes Park DMO public 'Partners' section includes information about Visit Estes Park board meetings, staff contact info, DMO marketing programs, research and reports, and more.
- Stakeholder extranet allows stakeholders, via a password protected section of the website, to update their listings, contact information, photos, social media channels, submit communication to Visit Estes Park staff members, read important bulletins and messages posted by Visit Estes Park staff, and more.

BookDirect JackRabbit Integration

Included in the website launch on June 5th is the JackRabbit on-line BookDirect lodging search feature. Potential guests enter dates they may want to travel, along with preferences such as pet friendly, hot tub, on the water, etc. JackRabbit Systems automatically pulls data from stakeholder booking engines, displays those properties which have availability with rates, photos, description, amenities, etc. The JackRabbit BookDirect feature is also integrated with Visit Estes Park's Facebook page, on Facebook.com/EstesPark. This feature is available at no charge to lodging properties. If a lodging property does not have a booking engine, the property still displays, but instead of displaying rates, a 'Call for Availability' message with phone number is listed.

JackRabbit Systems lodging on-line BookDirect feature was implemented with the new website with the goal of driving higher lodging revenue to the Estes Park market. Research shows that consumers demand search efficiency. In fact, the most important travel website features cited by consumers is, #1, the ability to immediately check rates (84%), and #2, easy to use booking feature (74%) *Source: YPartnership/Harrison Group 2011 Portrait of American Travelers.*

JackRabbit Systems, which first launched in 2007 works with about 225 DMO's, including the State of Colorado, Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association and 15 other DMOs in Colorado, making JackRabbit the most widely used booking solution by DMO's in North America. Visit Estes Park chose the BookDirect solution because unlike OTA's (Online Travel Agencies), such as Travelocity, Expedia, Priceline and Orbitz, JackRabbit's BookDirect solution: 1) is the only solution dedicated to driving booking reservations directly to the lodging property website, 2) there is no cost to our stakeholders, 3) does not require lodging properties to manage separate inventory, 4) there are no additional 'middleman' fees incurred by our stakeholders, 5) results in a better guest experience as the guest has a direct relationship with the lodging property, 6) even if a property does not have an on-line booking engine, they can still participate and be listed, 7) includes Facebook and mobile integration for DMO's, 8) drives high quality leads directly to our lodging partners helping to increase and realize more bookings for our stakeholders from VisitEstesPark.com, and 9) is cost effective.

Website Change from EstesParkCVB.com to VisitEstesPark.com

The website URL was changed from EstesParkCVB.com to VisitEstesPark.com to align with website name used on our advertising and marketing, and also as a call to action to inspire consumers to 'visit Estes Park'. Launching a new domain is challenge even for the most established online brands. When an organization changes its name and appearance, consumers must go through a process of recognizing the new name and

navigating to the new domain. This challenge is compounded with the technical process of reintroducing the new domain name and URLs to the search engines.

In an effort to protect the old domain's stream of traffic, 274 page redirects were installed on the new site. The pages were mapped and matched up to maintain a consistent user experience. Meta data was installed on the site in accordance with SEO best practices to insure accurate page indexing. Also, Webmaster Tools for Google and Bing were installed and monitored. Any reported server errors were quickly corrected. All of these activities helped to insure a successful site launch and allowed VisitEstesPark.com to promptly out rank EstesParkCVB.com.

Destination Travel Network Partnership

The new VisitEstesPark.com website also allows increased and enhanced advertising opportunities for stakeholders to showcase their business. The addition of page sponsorships, banner ads, text links, listings with additional features, and mobile advertising, all give Visit Estes Park stakeholders better opportunities for brand awareness and visitor conversion on the site. These dynamic new options are being offered, created, managed, and serviced by Destination Travel Network (DTN), a division of simpleview. DTN works alongside Visit Estes Park to provide exceptional service for stakeholders throughout the process of electing, implementing, and analyzing their online advertising programs, including creative services (custom ad design), and custom analytics reports so that stakeholders can garner the most accurate and complete picture of the benefits of advertising on VisitEstesPark.com. These value-added benefits provide an elevated and enhanced experience for stakeholders, so that they can better and more effectively understand the return on their marketing investments with Visit Estes Park. Partnering with DTN also gives stakeholders additional flexibility with customized programs and billing options, and allows Visit Estes Park staff to spend time and attention on cultivating relationships with stakeholders, as well as strategic stakeholder communication planning.

Website Performance

In the 14 weeks since launch (June 6, 2013 through September 5, 2013) – VisitEstesPark.com has experienced a growth in traffic volume and significant improvement in user engagement, as reflected in Google Analytics reporting. Since launch, VisitEstesPark.com has been visited by 276,755 people, i.e., 21,859 more people have visited the site as compared to the same time frame in 2012. The new design features an SEO-friendly navigation structure that improves the user experience. Not only are more people visiting the site, they are also more engaged with the site's content.

Improvements to site engagement include:

- 8% increase in pageviews – More individual pages overall are being viewed
- 5% increase in pages per visit – Visitors are viewing more pages during their visit
- 76% increase in duration – Visitors are on the site over 2 minutes longer
- 14% increase in new visitors – More first time visitors to the site
- 23% improvement in bounce rate – More visitors are viewing two or more pages
- 1121 average per day lodging BookDirect click-throughs to lodging website/booking engine

Mobile and Tablet traffic to m.VisitEstesPark.com has also increased in the 14 weeks since launch. A user experience optimized for mobile devices has improved the bounce rate by 18%. This means more people are staying engaged with the optimized version of the site. Other improvements to mobile analytics include:

- 8% increase in visits – More people visiting 2 or more pages of the mobile site
- 23% increase in pageviews – More individual pages overall are being viewed
- 14% increase in pages per visit – Each visitor to the mobile site views more pages during his or her visit
- 87% increase in duration – Visitors are on the site over 2 minutes longer than when viewing the main site on a mobile device.

Launched New CRM System

Visit Estes Park implemented Simpleview CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System, which is integrated with the new website. The CRM is a single, integrated web-based system that replaced our old legacy databases and accompanying technologies. A massive data conversion effort, years of data collected from old legacy databases was analyzed, cleansed, tested, and successfully converted to Simpleview CRM. Transforming our business, significant process improvements are realized in Stakeholder Partnerships, Public Relations, and Group Sales & Services. The Simpleview CRM, created specifically for destination marketing organizations, allows Visit Estes Park to centralize data and as a result, work more cohesively across all spectrums of the DMO.

Stakeholder Relations & Communications

The Simpleview CRM includes a specific section for stakeholder use, called the extranet. The extranet allows stakeholders to log in to a password protected area to view their account and contact information; edit and update listings, photos, specials, social media channels; view analytics information about website listings; respond to media requests or group lead information; submit communication (emails) to Visit Estes Park staff members; read

informative bulletins posted by Visit Estes Park; submit data such as occupancy information to Visit Estes Park; and more. In short, stakeholders are able to have one place accessible through the VisitEstesPark.com website, where stakeholders can see both the opportunities and the results of their partnership with Visit Estes Park.

In addition, the Simpleview CRM has allowed stakeholder relations and communications to be more effectively integrated across Visit Estes Park's operations. Because all stakeholder information is now housed in one system, including account information, contacts, website listings, communication logs, lead responses, etc., documenting business changes, listing updates, site visits, and more is now a streamlined and efficient process. The Simpleview CRM also allows all staff members to effectively review other facets of stakeholder engagement, including responsiveness to group leads, participation in media groups, and more.

The Simpleview CRM provides consistent opportunities to enhance the partnerships between Visit Estes Park and our stakeholders. By housing DMO data in one area, and being able to analyze and review that data through customized reporting, Visit Estes Park is able to get a better 'big picture' idea of how stakeholders engage with and benefit from the DMO.

Public Relations

The CRM system allows for easier and more in-depth tracking of media relations. This includes tracking of media hits, press visits and press relationship management. Articles can be entered into the CRM and tagged to stakeholder accounts. Similarly, when media representatives visit Estes Park we are able to compile the experiences they had in the CRM and link those experiences to the associated stakeholder account. All of these entries, articles, and visits are also linked to the journalist and publication accounts so that we can easily track how productive a particular visit, journalist, or publication has been for Estes Park's media exposure. Communications are also tracked in the CRM, making it easy to report on and keep up with media connections and relationships. Stakeholder benefits, such as media tour participation and/or article mentions, are also tracked in the CRM and will be displayed in the extranet, so both the stakeholder and Visit Estes Park can see, at a glance, the impact of our media efforts.

By having a single system whereby we track communications with media and with stakeholders, the Visit Estes Park team is able to keep up to date on connections and communications made with each stakeholder. This vastly improves the efficiency of our stakeholder relations and enables us to be more informed on how each relationship is developing.

Group Sales & Services

Features now available within the Visit Estes Park CRM have greatly improved reporting for the group sales business. Several reports, including leads sent to stakeholders and leads pending,

are now available in real-time in the CRM. This allows Visit Estes Park to more effectively monitor lead status information for each individual stakeholder. The communications feature makes it possible to track when the lead was sent, which stakeholder received the lead, and continue to communicate with those stakeholders as additional requests are made by the group guest. This tracking through the CRM communication feature creates a clearer picture of the steps taken by Visit Estes Park to assist the stakeholder in booking the group.

This enhanced level of communication also extends to the extranet, in which stakeholders are now able to track their leads from Visit Estes Park. By responding to leads via the Visit Estes Park extranet, a stakeholder provides information to the Visit Estes Park Group Sales and Services Manager which can then be used to better assist the guest. The collaboration between Visit Estes Park and the business stakeholder increases the potential for group business conversion. In addition, response data entered by stakeholders builds a more accurate record for each lead and allows Visit Estes Park to supply stakeholders with more definitive results.

Allowing increased opportunities for Visit Estes Park and our stakeholders' group sales managers to share information, and housing this information in one place, results in a better picture of how Visit Estes Park provides value to our stakeholders. It also gives Visit Estes Park a more realistic picture of how our group market business is being captured, leading to more effective and efficient destination-wide group sales and services efforts.

Advertising

In 2013, Visit Estes Park changed advertising creative and media planning partners. For 2 ½ years, Visit Estes Park worked with advertising agency Hill Aevium, located in Edwards, Colorado. Hill Aevium was instrumental taking our marketing and advertising to the next level. With our brand strategy assessment, promise, and blueprint phases completed in 2012, Visit Estes Park decided to solicit information and proposals from some of the best agencies in Colorado, including Hill Aevium, to bring our newly defined brand platform to life. We also wanted a fresh perspective on media planning and buying.

An RFP (Request for Proposal) process began with assembling a stakeholder advertising agency selection committee to guide Visit Estes Park throughout the process. The team outlined our needs for new advertising creative, brand alignment, and media placements. In addition, the team identified qualified advertising agencies, studied each proposal, interviewed final candidates, and chose advertising partner. Through this process, the team unanimously chose Backbone Media, located in Carbondale, Colorado to manage our media planning and buying. We also chose Cultivator Advertising & Design, located in Denver, Colorado, to develop and produce new advertising creative. Backbone and Cultivator submitted a joint proposal and working with both firms has proven to be very effective and efficient.

Specializing in mountain lifestyle brands, Backbone blends trend analysis, and research to maximize our advertising investments. Backbone, working daily with Visit Estes Park, executes our media plan, reviews new opportunities, brainstorms ideas, and negotiates advertising contracts. Working with Backbone Media, we have modified our media strategy to place more emphasis on digital advertising.

After reviewing several campaign concepts, Visit Estes Park chose Cultivator's *Where Wild Meets Life* creative platform. The 'Where Wild Meets Life' theme line, developed by MMGY Global as part of the Brand Blue Print brand strategy phase, was the first choice of the Visit Estes Park Brand Team. Wildlife was defined as one of the most unique and distinctive experiences of the Estes Park brand. The Where Wild Meets Life campaign introduces the Estes Park Welcoming Committee, a crew of Estes Park's most hospitable residents, our wildlife spokes animals, who offer tips on how to make the most of your Estes Park vacation. This campaign plays up the breadth of our year-round activities, while creating a fun, authentic, emotional connection with our guests.

Advertising Campaign Objectives

- Build awareness for Estes Park as the ideal Rocky Mountain destination
- Encourage overnight stays in Estes Park
- Establish an emotional connection with guests
- Drive awareness, attendance and lodging surrounding key events
- Position Estes Park as a unique getaway
- Convey diversity of outdoor adventure
- Increase perception of Estes Park as a year-round destination

Advertising Strategy

- Raise awareness, increase competitive share of voice and build relevancy
- Maintain national and regional media mix
- Right message and the right time – creative should match the media environment
- Highly targeted advertising placements, optimizing for reach and frequency
- Reach new customers by advertising in new places (target location based on regional target audience analysis)
- High-impact creative sizes (full pages, dynamic digital)

Media Objectives

- Speak to the appropriate target audience based on overall marketing goals and budget

- Target the leisure market, including families, empty-nesters and adventurers
- Identify best media placements and executions for communicating Estes Park messaging to the target audience
- Develop thorough media plan that delivers best mix of reach and frequency
- Optimize media plan towards advertising objectives

Media Tactics

- Take a data-driven approach
- Be very targeted
- Feature beautiful and inspiring, full-page print ads in relevant books and digital sites
- Target people who have shown interest in Estes Park
- Ensure media is working at the most relevant times
- Migrate dollars to more online to improve efficiency, tracking, and precise targeting
- Put learning plan in place for continued optimization and improvement
- Test digital with findings from pixel placement, along with view-through and click-through conversion reporting – continually optimize
- Drive traffic to the new website
- Be thoughtful in creative direction and use the appropriate call-to-action in each and every application to drive results
- Continue to test back-of-book placements

Creative Assets

Visit Estes Park continues to expand our collection of creative assets for use in paid, earned, and owned media. In 2013 we have done this with assistance from our creative agency, Cultivator, to develop a series of ‘hero’ shots created by Allen Kennedy for use in the new Where Wild Meets Life campaign. To expand the photo library for use in the Visitor Guide, as well as online, we have planned a photo shoot at local stakeholder establishments. We are currently developing legal paperwork that would allow us to work with local photographers and stakeholder to utilize their assets for Estes Park marketing purposes.

Public Relations

Thus far, 2013 has been a very productive year in earning publicity and media interest for the Estes Park destinations and our stakeholders, surpassing our 2012 YTD performance exponentially. We continue to work with Turner Public Relations, with offices in Denver and New York, to expand our media relationships, increase awareness of Estes Park, and garner attention from the media. The media landscape continues to shift as the need for new and interesting content grows, print mediums struggle to redefine themselves and writers are

increasingly independent. Estes Park has developed successful strategies to continue expanding our relevance to writers and editors as these changes are taking place, resulting in a steady growth in consumer reach.

With limited funding, relative to our competition, Visit Estes Park depends heavily on earned media, or press exposure, to supplement our national, regional and local advertising campaign. For this reason it is imperative that we continue to garner national and regional attention to increase awareness of the Estes Park destination brand, as well as to stay top of mind in the local and statewide markets. As of this writing, we have reached almost 225 Million people (up 156% over 2012) through our media outreach with articles running in a variety of mediums from local to international, newsprint to digital. Press coverage is often measured by ad equivalency, the price we would pay for advertising of the same size in each publication. Occasionally, businesses will put a multiplier on that value to represent the added value of the information coming from the publication, rather than through a paid ad, however Visit Estes Park does not use multipliers. In the first 7 months of 2013 our ad equivalency (AE) is at \$4.6M (a 347% increase over 2012), essentially increasing our overall brand exposure by that amount of advertising.

Notable Stories Include:

- “Welcome to the Hotel Paranormal” in USA Today, result of a 2012 media visit 15M viewers; \$141K AE; 4 pick-up articles
- “9 hotels that Have Starred in Movies” on CNN.com - 16.5M viewers; \$1.6M AE; 20 pick-up stories
- “World’s Most Famous & Infamous Hotel Rooms” on MSN.com - 58.7M viewers; \$543K AE
- “Wiking, YogaAqua, Inn-to-Inn Hiking and 5 More Ways to Get in Shape” on ABCNews.com - 11.4M viewers; \$105K AE; JustLuxe.com - 1.97M viewers; \$18K AE; & HuffingtonPost.com - 9.1M viewers; \$491K AE. All results from the New York desk-side tour in January 2013
- “Best National Parks for Families” in Family Circle - 4.1M readers; \$38K AE
- “Celebrate National Get Outdoors Day in Estes Park” on Examiner.com, a result of a 2012 media visit - 8M viewers; \$80K AE
- “Family Weekend Getaway in RMNP” on Fodors.com - 405K viewers; \$4K AE
- “Girlfriend Getaway to Estes Park” photo gallery on Examiner.com, a result of a 2012 media visit - 8M viewers; \$16K AE
- “The 50 Best New honeymoon Spots for 2013!” on TheKnot.com - 1.98M viewers; \$18K AE
- “Rooftop Rodeo in Estes Park” on Examiner.com - 8M viewers; \$16K AE

Travel Writer FAM (Familiarization Tour) Program Highlights

- Did a desk-side FAM trip to New York in January to meet with prominent outdoors, athletic, family and travel writers and editors.
- Hosted a group FAM in February focused on winter and spring activities in Estes Park
- Hosting a group FAM in September in conjunction with Fort Collins CVB and Grand County Tourism/Grand Lake
- YTD have hosted 12 domestic and 8 international FAM tours and media visits – another 4 are in the planning stages.
- Arranging for a regional desk-side FAM tour in Denver in the fall.

Social Media

Social Media includes multiple digital channels where individuals interact in a virtual, but social way. These channels also provide opportunities for brand and organizations, such as Visit Estes Park, to directly interact with guests and potential guests. These conversations can take place in real time and offer the opportunity for consumers to become brand advocates by sharing their positive experiences with their friends and family. Visit Estes Park works to leverage these conversations to provide information, encourage engagement/sharing, answer questions and tell the Estes Park story to tens of thousands of ‘followers’ and, in turn, their friends and followers as well. Growing the reach of the Visit Estes Park messaging and enhancing the guest experience through the online conversations.

The past twelve months have brought a strategy of alignment to the various media channels owned by Visit Estes Park. We have been working to align our owned media, including digital and social, with our paid advertising and earned public relations. In July this effort gained new ground with the hiring of Kellen Schaffer as the new Digital Communications Manager to oversee the website, social channels, e-newsletter program and blog content. This additional bandwidth was utilized immediately with the ongoing Getaway Giveaway campaign being conducted through Facebook with the goal of increasing awareness of Estes Park as a mountain getaway by giving away seven getaway packages, each centered on a prominent Estes Park event or season. Social media will continue to be an integral part of telling the Estes Park story to our key target markets, moving consumers down the customer funnel to the purchase point and staying top-of-mind for past guests, converting them to returning guests.

Notable Key Indicators: Visit Estes Park has achieved considerable growth in social media followers so far in 2013, expanding our reach and increasing the opportunities for direct messaging, influence and referrals through follower interaction.

- **Facebook:** Grew by 46.9% in number of ‘Likes’ (followers) from 28,739 followers to 42,223 (13,484 new followers), making us the number two destination marketing organization in Colorado in number of followers, lead only by Denver.
- **Twitter:** Offering an opportunity to share real-time information, news and tidbits, Twitter has been a growing channel for direct communication to our followers. The use of hash tags (#EstesElkWatch) and the inclusion of other prominent handles (such as @Colorado) allows topic-based conversations and indirect exposure to our messaging. Tracking of keyword mentions (such as “Estes Park” or “Rocky Mountains”) also gives us a chance to engage guests in conversation, make recommendations and dispel misinformation. Our following grew by 37.8% in number of followers, from 1740 to 2397 (657 new followers) so far in 2013.
- **YouTube:** Have had 58.8% (3,026 vies) growth in video views since the end of 2012 (3,026 views)
- **Pinterest:** A virtual bulletin board for sharing images and linking to additional information, Pinterest allows branded messaging to potentially drive traffic to our website and blog. We have achieved an 87.1% growth in number of pin-board followers (507 new followers).
- **Google+:** Used mainly as a tool to enhance our Search Engine Optimization (SEO) by helping us rank better organically through keyword-related content, Google+ hasn’t been a focus of growth in 2013. We still have managed to acquire 51 new followers, a 47.2% growth.
- **Flickr:** Flickr has phased out stat reporting at the account level. We will no longer be able to track photo views without adding the views each month for all 200+ photos. We will continue to engage this audience, but given the move of the public to Instagram, that has become a more prominent focus for sharing new content.
- **Instagram:** The fastest-growing social media channel in 2013, Instagram has given Visit Estes Park the opportunity to engage a new, younger audience through photo sharing and interaction with those posting photos taken in and around Estes Park. The Visit Estes Park following has grown by 162 followers, or 117%.
- **Getaway Giveaway Campaign** – A social media driven promotional campaign focused on building awareness of Estes Park events and interaction with social media channels. Totals of campaign so far (after 3 giveaways): Over, 2,810 people have entered the contest with a reach of 443,552 people who have been exposed to the Estes Park Brand and event weekend experience message.

Email Marketing

Much like social media and web-based platforms, email marketing continues to be an important opportunity to communicate with past and potential guests about the Estes Park

brand, telling a compelling story of the destination. Thanks to investments in new services and updated design, our periodic e-newsletters are transitioning to regular, targeted emails with engaging, relevant content that is dynamic and interactive – driving visitation to our blog and our website. By utilizing the new CRM, Visit Estes Park will be able to improve tracking and to segment e-newsletter audiences to deliver more specific, interest-driven content.

Our visitor e-Newsletter Gained a total of 6,154 subscribers; 23.5% increase so far in 2013; Up 20% over 2012 YTD. Moving to a new design and the website interface with Distribion software in August (from Mailchimp to Distribion), allows integration with the new CRM and a branded template that will mimic the look and feel of the new website.

Destination Brand Strategy

We continued to implement DMAI endorsed Destination BrandScience community-wide brand strategy program. The focus of the program in 2013 was the community rollout (phase 4 of 4) and brand strategy implementation in creative messaging. Note this community rollout phase, unlike the first three phases of Brand Strategy, is an ongoing process and will continue throughout 2013 and into 2014 and beyond, in order to continue to ensure community engagement, engage new and seasonal staff, the resident participation, and more.

- Continued phase 4, Delivering the Estes Park Brand Promise, through interactive sessions with Duane Knapp and Visit Estes Park stakeholders, Estes Park key community influencers, Rocky Mountain National Park staff, Association for Responsible Development, Citizens Information Academy, and others. Garnered participation from nearly 100 community members over 4 sessions.
- Revised the Estes Park Brand Promise Guide, the takeaway piece to be used during Delivering the Estes Park Brand Promise sessions, to better reflect a key promise concept, “Everyone’s A Guest,” and to better reflect creative look and feel of new brand blueprint. Upon request, provided this guide outline to local business owners for use in staff trainings, handbooks, etc.
- Continued community engagement reach through conducting general Brand Strategy sessions to review brand strategy research, promise concepts, Estes Park Brand Promise, and more. Groups included the Estes Park Medical Center leadership team, Rocky Mountain National Park staff, Visit Estes Park consultants/contributors, Leading Edge class (as partnership of Larimer County Small Business Development Center), Association for Responsible Development, Larimer County city managers/town administrators, Estes Valley Library, and more.
- Conducted extensive brand strategy information session with new Visit Estes Park creative and media agencies, Cultivator and Backbone Media. Created brand

characteristics to further inspire creative direction for new advertising campaign, Where Wild Meets Life.

- Visit Estes Park was honored to be selected as case study in Global Destination BrandScience book, by Duane Knapp, published November 2012
- Visit Estes Park President & CEO, Peggy Campbell, was honored to be a panel of brand strategy experts at the DMAI convention in Orlando

Stakeholder Partnerships

- Focused on open communications and advocacy by continuing successful programs and launching new stakeholder communication channels.
- Completed first Stakeholder Survey in January 2013; developed in depth questionnaire for Visit Estes Park stakeholder base to gain feedback, thoughts and perceptions about Visit Estes Park's operations, relevance, performance, Board initiatives, etc. Processed and analyzed responses for use in development of stakeholder communication strategy.
- Continued organizing and hosting Association Forum, a quarterly gathering of local associations, tourism professionals, and other community leaders. Kept engagement high from all main associations, including EALA, EPWA, EVPC, ARD, the Restaurant Group, Economic Development Task Force, Estes Park Non Profit Resource Center, and more.
- Continued hosting public monthly Visit Estes Park Orientations, where stakeholders learn about Visit Estes Park goals, strategies, tactics, budget, operations, etc. and can experience open Q&A time with Visit Estes Park staff.
- Annual Visit Estes Park Stakeholder Meeting held on May 2 at Aspen Lodge. Key industry partners were keynote speakers from Cultivator, Backbone, and Colorado Tourism Office. Attended by over 100 industry partners.
- Added a bi-monthly email to inform stakeholders of the media exposure that Estes Park receives: The Estes Park Media Report. This new email report outlines earned (not paid) media in print, digital and broadcast media and includes both organic media hits and those initiated by our PR team through pitches, press releases, fam tours and media relations.
- Visit Estes Park's, Stakeholder Relations Manager, Kirby Nelson continues to sit on the Estes Valley Partners for Commerce Board of Directors, representing Visit Estes Park as a key supporter for local business community
- Visit Estes is an active member in the Estes Area Lodging Association, Estes Valley Partners for Commerce, and the Estes Valley Economic Development Task Force

- Visit Estes Park President & CEO Peggy Campbell, along with Visit Estes Park Board Member Jon Nicholas, is a member of the Estes Valley Economic Development Task Force, the ad-hoc Economic Development Advisory Committee, and the Economic Development Corp. In July 2013, the Board of Directors agreed to invest in Economic Development in the amount of \$10k in 2013, and \$20k in 2014.

Collateral Development

Estes Park Official Visitor Guide

Visit Estes Park directed content development and photo selection to ensure quality and brand alignment; advertising sales, ad proofing, and collections for the 2013 Estes Park Official Visitor Guide, which was ready for distribution on-time and as planned Christmas week 2012.

Advertising income totaled \$160,255.00 and expenses (including mailing, fulfillment, printing, and production) totaled \$158,301, resulting in a \$1,954 profit. In addition, mail distribution of the 2013 edition of the Visitor Guide is tracking is exceeding that of 2012 by about 9 percent.

As we analyzed our advertising market costs and eliminated spending in publications that were not yielding expected results, it became clear that through the advertising initiative, ancillary savings would be realized during the production and distribution of the 2014 Official Visitor Guide, produced in 2013. Savings associated with the traditional sales collateral piece are being passed on to advertisers through lowered advertising rates.

Using the team of Moore+Beckman, new creative and editorial is being developed in 2013 for the 2014 Official Visitor Guide. Design elements from the successful *Where Wild Meets Life* advertising campaign are being incorporated into the publication that is on track for distribution by December 12, 2013.

Visitor Center Material

For their work with guests stopping at the information desk in the Town of Estes Park's Visitor Center, Ambassadors and Visitor Center staff rely on an annual multi-page 'Lodging Grid' publication that details the features of 141 lodging properties, bed and breakfasts and campgrounds. The grid-format guide is created by Visit Estes Park. Cost to print the brochure is borne by The Town of Estes Park.

Continued publishing Estes Park Happenings, a weekly publication designed to enhance the guest experience. Happenings, a one page publication, highlights Estes Park's events and entertainment for that specific timeframe, a very popular piece, which is consistently picked up and published by the two local newspapers and shared on social media. The piece is emailed to all stakeholders and is used by our local businesses, Visitor Center, and residents.

Inspiration Brochure

The task of attracting the last-minute decision-maker to choose Estes Park for their Colorado mountain vacation has been assigned to an 8" x 9" brochure. That individual chooses to visit Colorado, but hasn't determined exactly where they'll go. Reaching that individual has been an advertising program goal for several years, but to refresh the program, the brochure used has been newly designed to align with brand strategy and reflects the message delivered by Visit Estes Park's advertising and social media programs. The distribution of 100,000 copies of the brochure is similar to that of prior years: top strategic points along Interstate 25 between Cheyenne and Trinidad, I-80 east to Burlington and I-76 east to Julesburg.

Regional & National Advocacy and Professional Development

Financially support and actively engage in leading industry associations and organizations.

- Three staff members attended the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) Conference, breakout sessions, and seminars in Orlando, Florida
- President & CEO chosen to participate on a brand strategy expert panel to discuss case studies from three destinations at the DMAI conference in Orlando, attracting over 200 audience members.
- Visit Estes Park earns DMAI DMO accreditation, only the third DMO in Colorado to achieve this honor
- Tourism Industry Association of Colorado (TIAC) – Kirby Nelson and Visit Estes Park Board members attended the annual legislative reception in Denver
- The Assembly – Year Round Mountain Tourism Symposium, sponsored by DestiMetrics, LLC, President & CEO Peggy Campbell chosen to participate in panel to discuss summer tourism. Over 300 audience members.
- PMP – Systematic Development of Informed Consent training – a three day class attended by President & CEO, Peggy Campbell, at the invitation of the Town of Estes Park Town Administrator
- Participated in community key initiatives including Economic Development Task Force, Town of Estes Park Master Planning, MPEC Center analysis, Performing Arts Center, Creative Arts District, America in Bloom, Visitor Center Parking Garage Structure, Community Wellness Center, others
- Board of Directors invited Colorado legislators Kevin Lundberg and Perry Buck to a meeting to discuss issues concerning tourism in Estes Park
- Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (CADMO)
- Visit Denver, the Convention & Visitors Bureau

2013 YTD Key Performance Indicators

Visit Estes Park tracks several key indicators to measure the results of our efforts and make the necessary adjustments. As of this writing, below are YTD key performance indicators:

- Website visits totaled 824,023 by the end of July an increase of 6.74%
- e-Newsletter subscriber growth through July was 6,154, an increase of 19.66%
- Facebook Followers growth through July was 13,494, a decrease of 45.55%. A high growth rate in 2012 was an anomaly, and due to Visit Estes Park's acquisition of a rogue Facebook site which accounted for about 18,000 new followers in one day.
- Visitor Guides mailed to households through July were 80,557, a decrease of 11.78%, the second year the printed guide was not requested as often as in the past.
- Visitor Guide digital page views through July were 279,060, a 9.57% decrease when compared to the same time period in 2012.
- PR value: Significant media hits contributed to a large increase in media value and impressions for 2013, including Examiner.com (8M impressions & \$80K), Huffington Post (9M, \$491K), MSN.com (59M, \$543K), Family Circle (4M, \$38K), The Knot (131.5K, \$300K), among others. Total publicity value through July reached 4,612,447, a 344.55% increase.
- Media impressions: In tandem with the increase in publicity value is media impressions which through July totaled 224,974,311, a 121.28% increase over 2012.
- Qualified group leads were 194, an 8% decrease from the level seen through August 2012.
- Group business: room nights booked through August showed a 1.98% decrease.

2014 Operations Plan

The Estes Park Local Marketing District continues to be organized by Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) between the LMD and the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County. In addition, the previously discussed IGA between the Local Marketing District and Larimer County for the PILT payment will continue in 2014.

The primary funding source for the district continues to be the 2% lodging tax which is collected by district lodging properties from their guests for stays of fewer than 30 days. This tax is remitted to the Colorado Department of Revenue on a quarterly basis and then distributed to the Estes Park LMD. LMD 2% lodging tax collections were \$1,250,623 in 2010, \$1,343,774 in 2011, and \$1,513,414 in 2012. Estimates for 2013 are too early to accurately forecast as only

payments through July have been received. Third quarter lodging tax, which represents our high summer season, will be received from the State on or around November 15, 2013, at which time 2013 revenue forecasts and 2014 projections will be more reliable.

Revenue is also received as a result of offering advertising to our stakeholders to promote their business through Visit Estes Park.

Continuing to work with independent financial auditors and the Town of Estes Park to ensure a smooth process and a successful audit will again be important in 2014. Visit Estes Park's audit is integral to the Town of Estes Park's CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report).

Visit Estes Park will focus more on working with the State of Colorado Department of Revenue in pursuing the collection of outstanding lodging taxes. Visit Estes Park will also place additional energy on both in Town vacation rentals and 'County' vacation rentals (those rental properties located outside of Estes Park Town limits, but inside the County / Local Marketing District). Visit Estes Park and the Town of Estes Park are currently in discussions to potentially partner on this effort.

Staff will continue to work closely with Visitor Services and Events, both of which are funded and managed by the Town of Estes Park, and are a part of the Town's Community Services Division.

2014 Marketing Plan

The 2014-2015 Marketing Plan will include details on planned tactics for 2014 and beyond. But highlights will include new social media programs, local campaign support, promotional campaigns to drive new guest traffic, Rocky Mountain National Park centennial promotion, and a series of seminars for business stakeholders to help them not only capitalize on our marketing efforts, but refine their own as well.

In addition, we will continue to leverage the new creative campaign, first introduced in summer 2013, that positions Estes Park as a welcoming, friendly destination that serves as the ideal basecamp for a variety of rocky mountain adventures. The campaign will evolve to include other seasonal stories and additional ways to experience Estes Park, targeting outdoor adventurers, couples, empty nesters, families, and the meetings and weddings markets.

For 2013 and beyond, Visit Estes Park has formed a best-of-breed team of marketing experts to extend our internal resources in the areas of Advertising and Marketing, Public Relations and

Media Strategy and Buying. Cultivator Advertising and Design, Backbone Media, and Turner PR, have come together to create an extended marketing team to support Visit Estes Park's ongoing efforts.

Advertising

Advertising Objectives

Secure our summer business: We will continue to provide core focus on sustaining our summer season tourism business through a collection of proven marketing tactics that not only drive awareness and consideration for visits to Estes Park, but also encourage both new and seasoned travelers to make Estes Park their destination of choice for next season's travels. In addition, we want to reinforce trip duration by helping guests understand the full scope of activities and amenities that Estes Park offers.

Generate awareness for diversity of activities: While visits to RMNP continue to lead the charge of destination activities, we want to build greater awareness for the diversity of activities that lead to extended stays and ever-greater memory making for our guests.

Grow our year-round base: While we appreciate the importance of our summer base business, we also realize the opportunity we have to grow our shoulder-seasons and winter business with more regional drive-market guests. This largely untapped market has the single biggest opportunity for year-over-year growth, not only with our lodging base, but with stakeholders across the spectrum of guest services.

Advertising Strategy

Be a bigger brand: Our competitive set includes an ever-expanding set of world-class mountain destinations that have the potential to erode our core base. With the evolution of our advertising campaign, we have taken a look-of-the-leader attitude in our communications, with larger format ad units, and a campaign platform that creates a more unique position that we can own.

Inspire our loyalists: Our "tribe" includes not only those guests who consider Estes Park their regular destination, but also our local workforce and even residents that have the opportunity to live the brand in the community and deliver on our promise to the guest. We need to assure that everyone that already knows and loves Estes Park has the information on our brand character so they are empowered to present the brand to our guests in their own, unique way.

Extend our seasons: To many, the “off” season is really the “on” season, when the character of the village takes on a decidedly more relaxed attitude, trail traffic diminishes to a whisper and the mountains unveil an entirely new style of breathtaking beauty. While the activities may shift, the variety and diversity of adventure does not. And, with our generally gentle climate, guests can experience everything from golf and fly fishing to snowshoeing and Nordic skiing, all within a short excursion from the ultimate Colorado basecamp.

Media Objectives

Objectives for 2014 remain consistent with those of 2013. We want to increase overnight visitation and awareness for Estes Park as the ideal Rocky Mountain destination and position ourselves as a unique getaway. We would like people to be inspired by Estes Park and spend more time here so we will encourage overnight stays. Establishing an emotional connection guests, we will be clear about all that Estes Park has to offer, growing the perception of Estes Park as a year-round destination with great diversity in outdoor adventure. We strive to retain loyal customers and attract newcomers, ultimately increasing intentional visitation and its economic benefits to the community.

Estes Park’s visitors range from families to empty-nesters to adventurers – our media will speak to the appropriate target audience, always taking into consideration overall marketing goals and budget. Backbone will identify the best media placements and executions for communicating the Estes Park message to the target audience, working hard to deliver the best mix of reach and frequency. The 2014 plan will be built with consideration of learnings from 2013 about engagement and conversion. While Backbone strongly supports a data-driven approach, they also understand the importance of the human element in the media planning process. Alignment with Visit Estes Park and their stakeholders' goals, thoughts and objectives is paramount to the success of this campaign.

Media Strategy

As discussed, in 2013, Visit Estes Park selected Backbone Media to manage our media planning and buying, along with Cultivator to develop and produce new advertising creative. The agencies collectively brought a fresh perspective on media to Visit Estes Park. They built a solid media platform for the brand and destination alike, and will build on that foundation and continue the momentum into and throughout 2014.

Specializing in destination and mountain lifestyle brands, Backbone works hard to maximize our advertising investment. They collaborate with us regularly to execute our media plan, review and present new opportunities, brainstorm ideas and negotiate advertising contracts. They successfully implemented Cultivator’s *Where Wild Meets Life* creative platform across all

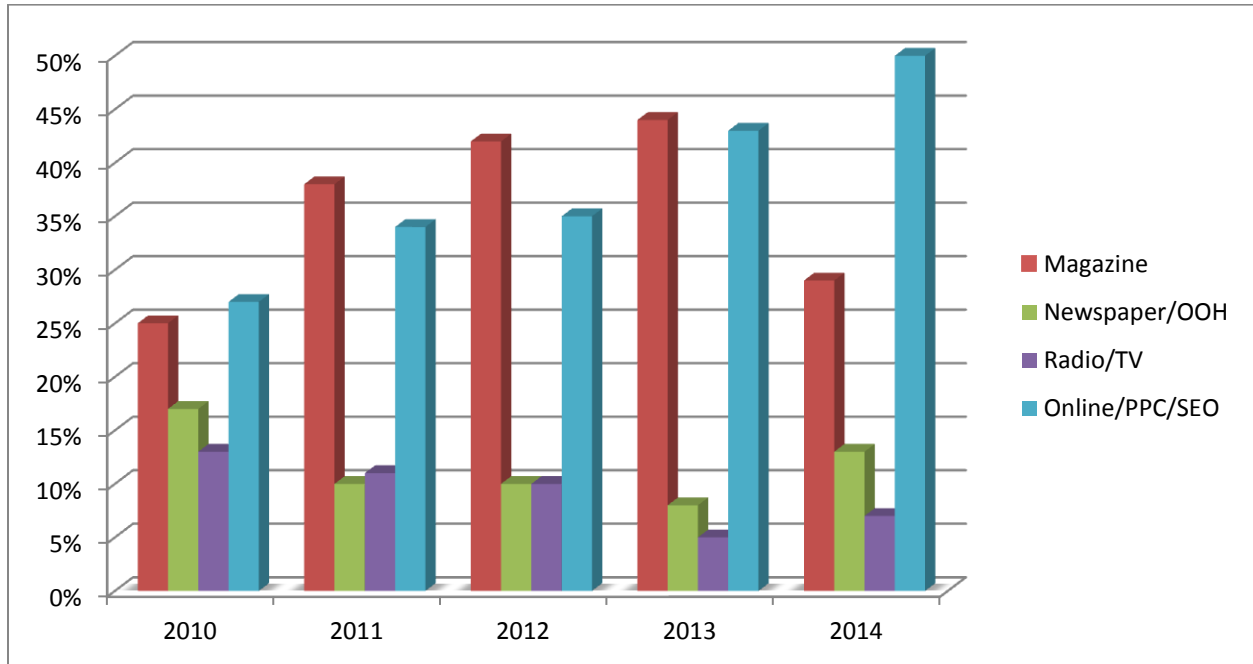
mediums. The campaign plays up the breadth of our year-round activities, while engaging with our guests in a fun, authentic way.

Through the implementation of a progressive and forward-thinking strategy, 2014 advertising strategy will continue to raise awareness, increase competitive share of voice and build relevancy resulting in greater overnight visitation. Backbone will develop our media plan to maintain a healthy mix of national and regional advertising. They will create a well-balanced, integrated mix comprised of print, digital, radio and social media. Delivering the best mix of reach and frequency, they will speak to both existing and new guests. The message will be scaled to effectively engage our target markets in an authentic and credible way. Our media will reach consumers at all stages of the funnel – from awareness to consideration to conversion.

Media Tactics

The 2014 plan will bring a shift from 2013 and previous media plans, placing even greater emphasis on digital advertising. Not only does this enable our messaging to be highly targeted and tailored to the relevant audience(s) to deliver the right message at the right time; it also improves efficiency and tracking ability. We'll continue to feature beautiful and inspiring creative in select books that speak to adventurers and focus on outdoor, active lifestyles. We will increase our spend in newspaper and radio to effectively reach select regions (Front range and surrounding areas, as well as Texas and any other key markets that drive traffic), and we may even introduce out-of-home advertising to the 2014 plan with placements at DIA. All placements will focus on high-impact creative sizes, including full pages in print and dynamic ad units in digital. Backbone will ensure our media is working at the most relevant times, and that the creative matches the media environment across all platforms. We will engage existing customers and focus on the lowest-hanging fruit (for example, those who have already shown interest in Estes Park and people who live in Colorado or neighboring states) to capitalize on opportunity for conversion. The call-to-action will primarily be Visit Estes Park's new website, which launched in June 2013 providing easier navigation and a more full-service experience for all users. A learning plan will be implemented for continued optimization and continual improvement toward campaign objectives.

Media Spend: 2010-2014



A diverse media mix has proven to be the most effective at reaching specified target markets. Looking year over year, there's a clear shift in the allocation of media dollars across mediums. The trend in destination marketing has shifted to digital as more and more people depend on digital and mobile platforms for researching and making travel decisions, and we're seeing greater conversion on those platforms every day. That said, we placed greater emphasis on digital advertising, allowing for a more efficient and effective media buy. Digital provides the opportunity to glean insight about the best-performing feeder markets and the type of people who visit Estes Park. Not only does digital give us the ability to be highly targeted against our audience, we are able to continually optimize ad units and placements to work toward our media objectives. We determined some necessary adjustments on the print side of things, and invested in publications that reach adventures and outdoor enthusiasts. Insertions will feature large-format ads to feature our new inspiring creative. We reduced our spend in traditional broadcast, putting most of the focus on radio event marketing and removing television altogether since it's expensive and provides no guarantee that we will reach our target. In all of this, we are able to maintain a solid mix of national and regional advertising to reach our audiences, while delivering the right message at the right time.

Public Relations

We will continue to integrate public relations (earned media) strategies and tactics with those of paid and owned media. Public relations efforts in the coming year will have an increased emphasis on reaching the national audience, targeting national media with pitches geared at both increasing awareness and positioning Estes Park as the ideal mountain base camp for families, active couples and empty nesters. This will be done by highlighting the outdoor adventures and experiences unique to Estes Park.

Through Stakeholder communications - utilizing educational sessions, the new extranet and CRM functionality, and traditional means - the PR team will increase the collaboration with stakeholders on developing media-friendly packages, specials and stories.

Destination Brand Strategy

In 2014, Visit Estes Park will fully roll out the destination brand strategy project to the community, heading full force into the fourth and final phase, called Brand Culturalization, or 'Delivering the Estes Park Brand Promise'. This rollout will include community-wide interactive sessions detailing the work of the project and focusing specially on the promise concept, "Everyone's A Guest." These sessions will target not only business owners and managers, but also front line workers, seasonal employees, international employee and residents. In addition, Visit Estes Park will develop an Estes Park Destination Brand Guide which will be made available to the entire community. The Estes Park Destination Brand Guide will outline the Estes Park brand promise, its importance to the community, Estes Park logo use, and long-term strategy and sustainability.

VisitEstesPark.com Website

Visit Estes Park will continue to evaluate and enhance the VisitEstesPark.com website and mobile site, developing strategic and thoughtfully -planned enhancements within the main website and customer relation management module. This will be an ongoing and fluid process built from internal review, emerging consumer trends, best practices, analytic reporting and feedback.

Social Media

Visit Estes Park recognizes the importance of using social media to cultivate advocates who share their Estes Park experiences before, during and after their stay. Coupled with the knowledge of evidence showing that consumers planning a vacation view recommendations from friends and family over any other source, proves social media is a powerful tourism tool. During the 2014 year, Visit Estes Park will continue to expand Visit Estes Park's social media reach by increasing key social media key indicators including number of followers, reach

and engagement. We will accomplish this by developing strategic content which is tailored and targeted for awareness of Estes Park as a destination, keeping Estes Park top-of-mind, and also promoting news and events with the goal of converting fans into consumers. We will be focused on improving both internally-generated and fan generated video content on Instagram, Vine and YouTube to meet the consumer trend of increased video consumption. With the update to the Visit Estes Park Blog, now living within the new website, we will continue to increase the number of site visits and develop the blog to become a well-used and established source of current information. Social media will continue to be an integral part of telling the Estes Park story to our key target markets, moving consumers down the customer funnel to the purchase point and staying top-of-mind for past guests, and converting them to repeat guests

Email Marketing

Develop a consistent and brand-motivated e-mail newsletter through our new and enhanced system, Distribion, highlighting events and news in Estes Park. E-mail newsletters will focus on driving traffic to the VisitEstesPark.com website and encouraging overnight stays by increasing conversions to the lodging section of the website. Monitoring and evaluating performance of content, layout and open rates while adjusting as necessary to receive maximum views and interactions within the email message. By utilizing the new CRM, Visit Estes Park will be able to improve tracking and segment e-newsletter audiences to deliver more specific, interest-driven content. In addition, we will encourage new signup for e-newsletter service by directing prospects to the website sign-up widget and strategic placement of widget on the website

Collateral Development

Providing visitor materials that reflect the Estes Park brand will continue to be of significant importance in 2014. Working in collaboration with the Estes Park Visitor Center, collateral to be distributed will include newly designed maps and an updated edition of a lodging grid. The Visitor Center will continue serving as one of the primary distribution points for the Official Estes Park Visitor Guide. Design elements and contents for the 2015 Visitor Guide will be reviewed during the first quarter of 2014.

Visit Estes Park's 2013 Annual Report is scheduled for distribution in March/April 2014.

Stakeholder Relations & Communications

In 2013, the need for and power of collaboration and partnership between Visit Estes Park and Visit Estes Park stakeholders became more evident than ever before. It is clear that Visit Estes Park's relationships with local business owners and constituents are an integral cornerstone to the success of the destination. Visit Estes Park's goal is to continue to build strong and

productive stakeholder partnerships that help to enhance the destination experience and growth.

Stakeholder Relations & Communications will continue to focus on community outreach to solicit ongoing feedback and to inform stakeholders and industry partners about the role of Visit Estes Park as the marketing expert in the Estes Park community, as well as the DMO's mission, vision, marketing strategies, accomplishments, and marketing/educational opportunities available through the DMO. The Stakeholder Relations & Communications role is essential to creating a community-wide effort to improve and elevate Estes Park's tourism industry, and the Estes Park Destination Brand. While all staff roles are involved with stakeholder communication, the Stakeholder Relations & Communications role must focus on Visit Estes Park and tourism advocacy within the Estes Park business community and beyond. Objectives include:

- Enhance communication structure between Visit Estes Park and stakeholders, beyond traditional methods and utilizing new DMO tools, including the CRM and stakeholder extranet
- Create marketing educational program for Visit Estes Park stakeholders. Potential topics include social media, Google Analytics, marketing coop advertising, and Delivering the Estes Park Promise. Engage Visit Estes Park partners such as Cultivator, Backbone, simpleview, and Turner PR
- Encourage stakeholder feedback and engagement with Visit Estes Park objectives. Provide on-going recommendations for stakeholders to partner with the DMO
- Maintain strong and effective community partnerships with tourism and business associations.
- Provide exceptional customer service to stakeholders.

The following Stakeholder Relations & Communications objectives entail three main areas: Stakeholder Partnerships, Destination Brand Strategy, and CRM Enhancements. All three areas are tightly knit and together, provide a great opportunity for Visit Estes Park to augment its role in the Estes Park community.

Stakeholder Partnerships

A significant focus of 2014 will be the launch of marketing educational sessions for Visit Estes Park business stakeholders. As marketing experts, Visit Estes Park is in a unique position to develop and lead these sessions. These seminars will be designed to help businesses capitalize on Visit Estes Park marketing efforts, and enhance and improve their own marketing efforts. Sessions will include topics such as social media, delivering the Estes Park Promise, coop advertising, and how to read and interpret website analytics reports. The Stakeholder Relations

& Communications Manager will involve other Visit Estes Park staff and partners in preparing these sessions.

Visit Estes Park will also continue to assume the role of destination partner with the Town of Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park tourism and business associations, and other community groups. By continuing to lead the Association Forum, and working closely with the lodging association and other business associations, Visit Estes Park will look to increase the level of cooperation and collaboration for a destination-wide approach to driving travel and tourism in Estes Park.

Destination Brand Strategy

In 2014, Visit Estes Park will fully roll out the destination brand strategy project to the community, heading full force into the fourth phase and final phase, called Brand Culturalization, or 'Delivering the Estes Park Brand Promise'. This rollout will include community-wide interactive sessions detailing the work of the project and focusing specially on the promise concept, "Everyone's A Guest." These sessions will target not only business owners and managers, but also front line workers, seasonal employees, international employee and residents. In addition, Visit Estes Park will develop an Estes Park Destination Brand Guide which will be made available to the entire community. The Estes Park Destination Brand Guide will outline the Estes Park brand promise, its importance to the community, Estes Park logo use, and long strategy and sustainability.

CRM Enhancements

An excellent resource for Visit Estes Park is the newly established (in 2013) customer relationship management system, or CRM. The CRM has allowed Visit Estes Park, for the first time ever, to consolidate all operations of the DMO into one productive database. The Visit Estes Park CRM has allowed the DMO to already work more effectively, and the full utilization of this system will be pursued in 2014. Stakeholder Relations & Communications will also work with stakeholders to encourage and sustain the use of the extranet. This forum allows stakeholders to view the benefits of their partnership and engagement with the DMO, while also allowing the DMO to expand their reach to the stakeholder base.

Group Sales & Services

In the last two years, group sales and services has operated as an inside sales operation and an extension of stakeholder sales teams. The goal is to increase room nights booked by providing exceptional customer service, quickly qualifying leads, sharing leads and information with stakeholders, and following through with both stakeholders and guests. Primary sources of leads include Estes Park Visitor Center (phone and walk-ins), Visit Estes Park website, bridal

publications, and trade show attendance. In 2013, Visit Estes Park had a booth at three Bridal Festival trade shows in Loveland to increase brand awareness and acquire weddings market leads. Tradeshows in 2014 will be evaluated as more information becomes available.

Year to date, the group market mix is 45% for weddings; 36% for reunions, and 19% for meetings. Booked groups through August showed a 2% increase. Qualified leads are down -8% from this time last year, and room nights booked are down -1.98%. Fewer guests have called in for group assistance, and *The Knot* leads were down by 62%.

In August 2013, Visit Estes Park began meeting individually with group stakeholders to obtain feedback regarding group business in order to plan for 2014 and beyond. Information gathered from stakeholders will play an important part in

Key Performance Indicators

Tracking and reporting will continue to monitor the return on investment for each initiative allowing adjustments where necessary. Additional activities will be monitored particularly as it relates to social media and website.

Estes Park Local Marketing District 2014 Budget - Annual Operating Plan

	Actual 2012	Budget 2013	Projected 2013	Budget 2014
Revenues				
Visitor Guide	\$168,715	\$128,400	\$128,400	\$130,000
2% Tax*	\$1,513,414	\$1,513,414	\$1,373,414	\$1,414,616
Stakeholder Services	\$202,125	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$170,000
Town of Estes Park Marketing Investment	\$85,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Larimer County PILT			\$9,524	\$9,500
Other	\$4,248	\$0	\$1,867	
Investment	\$60	\$0	\$60	\$60
Total Revenues	\$1,973,562	\$1,811,814	\$1,683,265	\$1,724,176
Expenses				
Personnel Services	\$506,084	\$519,176	\$517,676	\$546,880
	\$506,084	\$519,176	\$517,676	\$546,880
Marketing & Operations	\$1,408,476	\$1,585,824	\$1,469,982	\$1,236,073
Total Current Expenses	\$1,914,560	\$2,105,000	\$1,987,658	\$1,782,953
Total Expenses	\$1,914,560	\$2,105,000	\$1,989,158	\$1,782,953
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	\$59,002	(\$293,186)	(\$305,893)	(\$58,777)
Other financing sources (transfers in)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
OTHER financing uses (transfers out)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Increase (decrease) in fund balance	\$59,002	(\$293,186)	(\$305,893)	(\$58,777)
Beginning Fund balance	\$986,534	\$850,444	\$1,045,536	\$658,777
Ending Fund balance	\$1,045,536	\$557,258	\$739,643	\$600,000
RESTRICTIONS				
TABOR Reserve: 3% of expenditures	\$57,437	\$63,150	\$59,675	\$53,489

*2014 budgeted tax receipts are 3% higher than the projected 2013 tax receipts.

This budget was prepared in early September 2013 specifically for the 2014 Operating Plan which is due to the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County by September 30, 2013. This budget was approved by the LMD Board on September 17, 2013. However, in light of the catastrophic flood in Estes Park that began on September 11, 2013, and the subsequent closures of US Hwy 34, US Hwy 36 and CO Rt 7, the final Estes Park Local Marketing District 2014 budget will change, perhaps significantly.