



**POCONO MOUNTAINS<sup>SM</sup>**  
VISITORS BUREAU

# PMVB Special Webinar

March 25, 2020

Please mute Phones and Computers

# PMVB COVID Resource Team and Information

- ▶ Chris Barrett, Advocacy, Governmental and Community Relations
- ▶ Brian Bossuyt, Marketing and Media Inquiries
- ▶ PR@Poconos.org, Public Relations and Social Media information
- ▶ Membership@Poconos.org, Membership related information, contact updates
- ▶ CRM@Poconos.org, Property Updates on reopening dates, closure updates, service and hour updates and event updates
- ▶ Sales@Poconos.org, Updates on rescheduled and/or cancelations for meetings and groups
- ▶ **COVID-19 Resource for information:**  
<https://www.poconomountains.com/covid-19/>
- ▶ **Alert driving traffic to a microsite on member business updates:**  
<https://www.poconomountains.com/covid-19/updates-coronavirus/>

# Our Main Strategy

- ▶ Preserve the brand
- ▶ Implementing and Adjusting the Short-Term Plan
- ▶ Design two marketing plans: 1. Inner Market, 2. Outer market (Other than NY and Phila)
- ▶ Advocating for 1. Grants to protect the workforce, 2. Loans to stabilize business, 3. Tax Relief, 4. Keep The PM Moving and Working
- ▶ Bring everyone to the table, Chambers and other CVB's (Regional CVB Meeting-Weekly)
- ▶ Help the general community recover
- ▶ Keep the PR machine cranking
  - ▶ Short term local campaigns
  - ▶ Long term regional and overall mid-Atlantic states

# What is the PMVB Doing?

- ▶ Continuing to monitor Industry Trends
- ▶ Collecting data from our members and stakeholders
- ▶ Continually updating PMVB social media positioning: Clean and Green, messaging and ads helping local restaurants, messaging supporting non-profits and adding messaging to enjoy the Poconos when the time is right
- ▶ Short-term marketing plan: Continuing to update social messaging and COVID-19 landing pages. All marketing efforts are focused on local initiatives

# Short Term Marketing Initiatives

- ▶ Based on data and recommendations from our partners and industry blogs (Google-Bing) we're maintaining our main website messaging and listings for now. All changes are being driven to our COVID specific pages
- ▶ We're continually monitoring trends and collaborating with other DMO's, Partners and attending Webinars daily on best practices for messaging.
- ▶ Developing recovery plans and messaging so they are ready when needed
- ▶ Looking at local and regional plans to start and build confidence in the consumer again
- ▶ Focus on what the Poconos has to offer, proximity, open space and natural beauty

# Long Term Marketing Plans

- ▶ Begin building a plan for outreach to our members to curate strong offers to attract visitors back to the Poconos
  - ▶ Develop offers that will work both for our members and the visitor
- ▶ Updating the website currently with spring and summer content so the site is ready to drive traffic when the time is right
- ▶ Developing a forecasted marketing budget and a tiered advertising plan to roll out to our markets
- ▶ Working with current media partners so they are ready when we are to have a seamless deployment

# Recommendations for Long Term Planning

- ▶ Prepare relevant offers for when you reopen
- ▶ Take it slow at first- Modify your call to actions from dreaming to welcoming messages (Dreaming messages now)
- ▶ Take a “Messaging” rather than a “Marketing” approach at first
- ▶ Lean into storytelling while watching your call to actions still
- ▶ Utilize your own data to contextualize your strategy
  - ▶ Web traffic trends both historic and trends
  - ▶ Look at your social followers' engagement, Enews sign ups, booking windows, collateral requests
  - ▶ Engage your consumers where they are. Ramp up media channels slowly, look at your markets as they recover
  - ▶ Opportunities are close to home messaging, close and easy to get here, affordable, outdoor amenities

# What is the PMVB Learning? (STR)

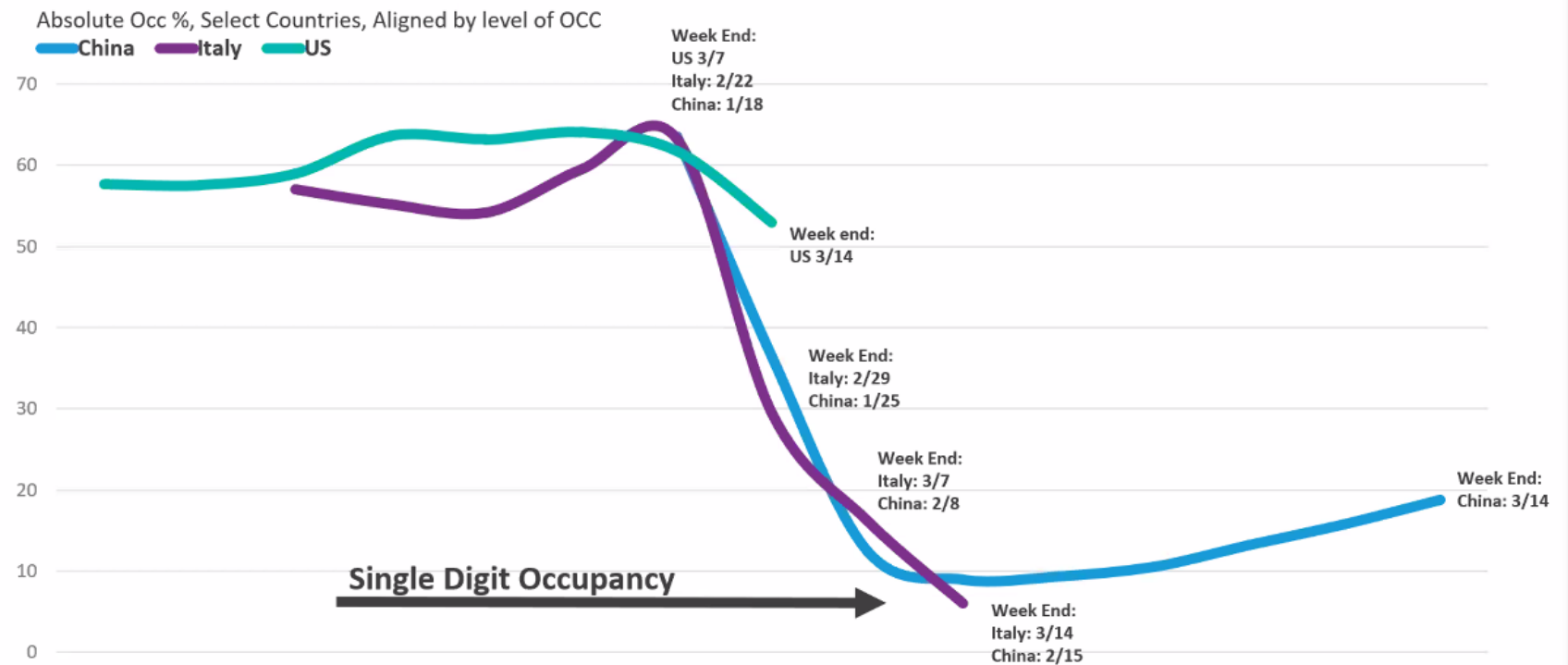
- ▶ China: Occupancy Dropped from 70% to Signal Digits
  - ▶ But we now see from early March through March 14<sup>th</sup> they have now gone from 10% to over 18% so it is beginning to trend up slowly
- ▶ Occupancy is down 40% (10% Increase over Last Week) worldwide
- ▶ While as of the end of March 14<sup>th</sup> the US experienced anemic growth, but Social Distancing hadn't spread to the entire country
- ▶ We are already seeing this accelerating decline with preliminary numbers this week
- ▶ The next slide shows world data from STR as of March 14<sup>th</sup>



- ▶ China is beginning to realize growth again after the week ending March 14, 2020
- ▶ Will this be the US trend?
- ▶ We continue to monitor data weekly

## Italy and China Show What's To Come

China OCC Data Seems 8 Weeks Ahead of U.S. OCC Data



# What is the PMVB Learning? (STR)

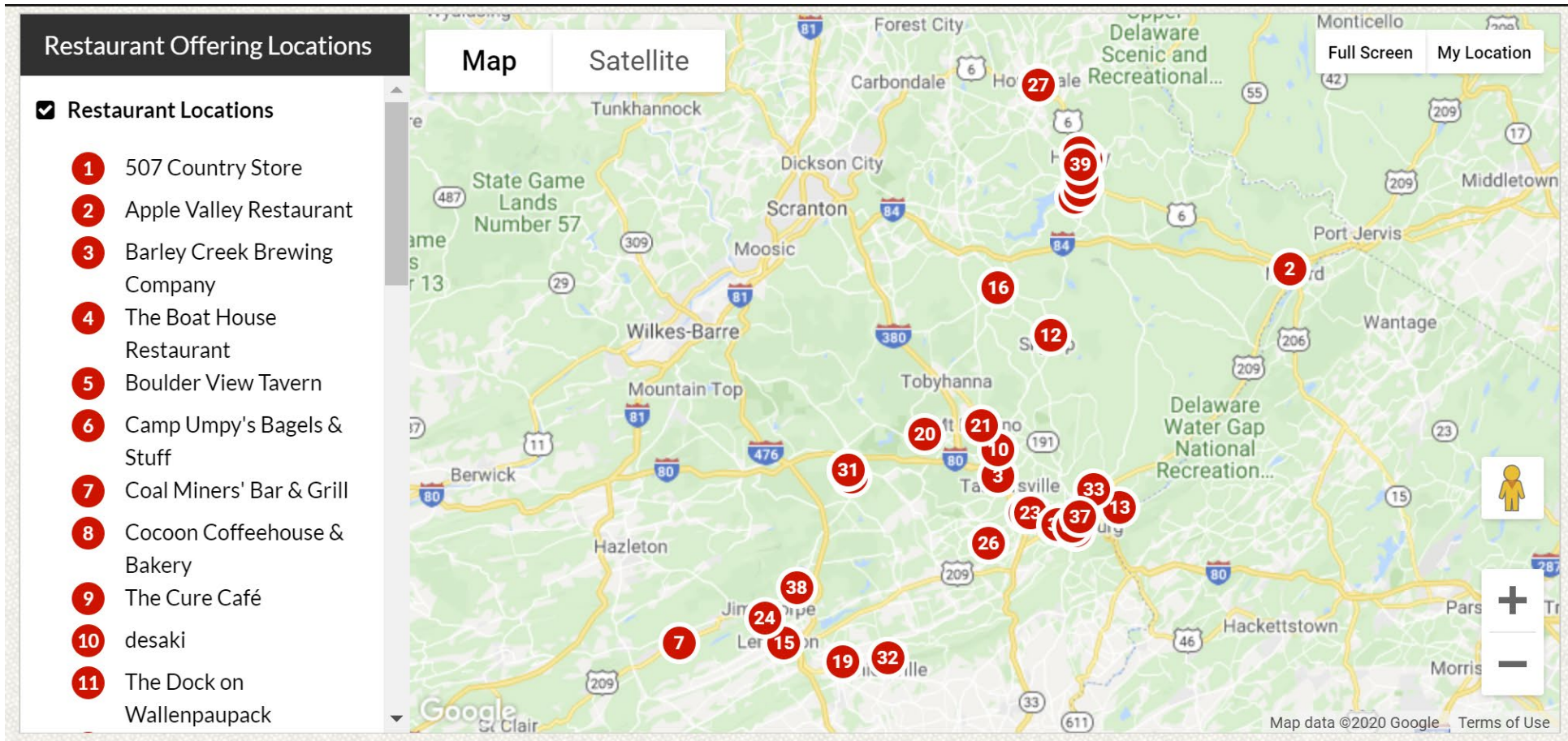
- ▶ Other trends reveal that luxury brand hotels are feeling the steepest declines, this is due mainly to meeting and business travel cancellations
- ▶ STR is offering weekly webinars at [STR.com](https://www.str.com)
- ▶ **Updates from Oxford Economics**
- ▶ US Travel revenue will be 75% below normal for March and April.
- ▶ Unemployment will most likely settle above 10% across the country in the short term, the travel sector is projected at 6.3%
- ▶ A strong demand rebound is typical in a recovery. In 2021, metrics will accelerate. In 2022, we will note performance like 2020, it will take a couple of years to achieve, but the data indicates recovery will be quick.
- ▶ If travel acceleration begins in the summer months, even if it is regional travel, it will help the Poconos bounce back faster.

# What is the PMVB Learning? (Group/Corp)

- ▶ Make it easy for the client/guest to do business with you
- ▶ Include a "No Attrition" clause in early bookings
- ▶ Pay a 10% commission rate
- ▶ Know that the PMVB is here to assist by offering sponsorships to encourage bookings and room pickup
- ▶ We can sponsor meeting coffee/tea breaks
- ▶ Please continue to communicate with us. Tell us what the meeting planner is saying
- ▶ Most of the declines are in major cities like NYC, Philly and Chicago

# Website Updates

- ▶ Continuing to monitor and update COVID landing pages
- ▶ Added interactive map for Restaurant Offerings
- ▶ Added New Videos to Enhance Content





# COVID-19 Resource Page

► Resource page updated daily

## **PA Governor:**

**Daily Updates**

**Small Business Financing Assistance**

**NCAC Non-Profit Assistance**

**Process for Questions and Seeking Exemption from Governor's Order**

Wolf Administration Orders Closure of Non-Life-Sustaining Businesses

A list of life-sustaining businesses is [here](#)

**Waiver of Penalties on Accelerated Sales Tax Prepayments**

**PLCB Release:** March 18, 2020

**Gov. Wolf, Sec. of Health Update: March 12, 2020**

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## **PRLA:**

PRLA **Information and Resources**

# Website updates

- ▶ Looking at website traffic data comparing the last 2 weeks to last year, decline in overall traffic to the site is **59%**
  - ▶ This is attributed to a few factors
    - ▶ Paused our PPC and social ad campaigns on March 14<sup>th</sup>, traffic has dropped off within those two sectors
    - ▶ Organic traffic is down **49%**, due to the closure notices in our feeder markets and the diversion of organic traffic as people search for COVID-19 information
- ▶ Traffic to our COVID pages are at around 6,900-page views for the Resource page and Restaurant offering page each
- ▶ We are moving forward with the Website RFP on Monday, March 30. Proposers' applications are due April 24, 2020. Goal is to still have a new website launch by March 30, 2021

# Travel Guide Update

- ▶ Still moving forward with Travel Guide
- ▶ Should have first comps to review by next week
- ▶ We still plan on still having the Guide printed and ready by mid-May
- ▶ We will adjust distribution schedules based on market openings
- ▶ 200,000 copies
- ▶ Distribution to PA, NJ, NY, MD, VA

# PMVB COVID-19 Response Continues

- ▶ Collaborating with regional partners
- ▶ Updating member information regularly. We're reaching out to members and we're also soliciting information from members directly.
- ▶ We will continue to do this each day as needed
- ▶ We will continue to send information out to membership from Federal and State authorities related to employment, governmental aid and virus information as it relates to our region
- ▶ Health systems in our area are cooperating



# PTN and CTV promotions in the works

- ▶ PMVB now has an in-house production team
- ▶ We are formulating packages...
  - ▶ Package directed at community to support food pantries and school lunch programs (COMPLETED)
  - ▶ Package directed at online/takeout services that our restaurant members are offering now (COMPLETED)
  - ▶ Package highlighting a message to getting outdoors, staying active, using our parks, trails and recreation areas (ON HOLD)
  - ▶ Package with caring message for the guest (COMPLETED)
- ▶ PTN is now in 400,000 homes carried over multiple cable systems, perfect for "back yard" messaging

# PTN and CTV Continued

- ▶ Working on more packages...
  - ▶ Working with local Health Care Systems to see how we can help get their messaging out(ON GOING)
  - ▶ Adding Packages directed at online/takeout services in all 4 counties. Wayne county shot yesterday (ONGOING)
  - ▶ Working with all counties on charity and non-profit efforts to help get messaging and support out(ON GOING)
  - ▶ Continuing to work on school lunch programs in all our counties (ON GOING)
- ▶ Goal is to continuing adding these packages weekly as we shoot, edit and distribute

# Digital Best Practices

- ▶ Please check your **Google My Business page** to ensure that business hours and contact information reflect what is accurate at this present time, especially if there have been changes
  - ▶ Utilize posts on these pages for updates
- ▶ New site schema markup is being fast-tracked to help businesses convey some coronavirus-related business updates and changes. By implementing these markups, search engines can more easily read and display information to online users. Please see below.
- ▶ Don't make rash decisions about unpublishing content. It's easy to undo years of SEO work by removing important pages. It would be better to remove a page from navigation vs. removing it from the site

# Digital Best Practices Continued

- ▶ With many events being canceled or postponed, it's a good idea to add a note on your events page suggesting visitors check official event websites for the latest news. Similar notes can be added to the Hotels page and Restaurants pages, as appropriate.
- ▶ Don't remove Event details for those canceled events. Instead, update the titles to include "Canceled" or "Postponed." This way, you're providing necessary information and if the event occurs later, the details can be updated.
- ▶ Keep creating content! You may want to change the timing on some pieces but eventually, the search volume will be back. Having content running and indexed will put you ahead of the game when it is once again safe to plan trips.
- ▶ [Inside Google Marketing: 5 principles guiding our media teams in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak](#)

# Digital Best Practices Continued

- ▶ Digital Advertising Best Practices during COVID-19
- ▶ Many businesses are slowing down or powering down their operations, so we have paused all PMVB campaigns except for Golf A Round Cards, Takeout Campaigns and the Caring Message
- ▶ All co-op campaigns have been paused and the remaining unspent budget will go towards a future campaign.
- ▶ When the time is right, we may shift dollars away from traditional media and into awareness tactics like Connected TV and online video since many individuals are at home and watching TV
- ▶ Will reforecast PMVB spend/budget for summer programmatic buys
- ▶ While minimal campaigns are running, we're taking this opportunity to learn more about digital advertising and the capabilities of our DSP, Basis. We are watching national brand tending
- ▶ Pull back on PPC Campaigns, save those resources to bolster our message once we reopen and the current "stay in place" messaging is over

# PR and Social Best Practices

- ▶ Be transparent and honest
- ▶ Work in the correct messaging when appropriate
- ▶ Promote what you have open (if you're not closed)
- ▶ Update your business hours on your Social pages
- ▶ If you're closed, consider promoting gift cards or offers for the upcoming summer
  - ▶ Guests are going to be searching for something pleasant amid all of the negative messaging
- ▶ PR and Social Messaging
  - ▶ If you're assisting local non-profits and/or community programs share with visitors
  - ▶ If you're supporting your employees share with our visitors
  - ▶ Start building campaigns you can deploy in the future when normality comes closer
  - ▶ Keep information flowing to the PMVB so we can help amplify your messaging

# PR and Social Best Practices-Continue

- ▶ Don't be hasty in posts/sharing info. Pause and think about it
- ▶ Be your own news/info source. Use the digital tools that you are best acquainted with
- ▶ Maintain positivity and avoid panic. Worry and uncertainty will be viewed as more "noise"
- ▶ Join forces....power in numbers. Associate with positive brands
- ▶ Avoid imaging that relate to germs/virus. That is extremely unhelp unless it represents something specific
- ▶ Ask for help....be transparent, be truthful and be timely

# SBA Offers Daily Disaster Loan Training Webinars for Small Business

- ▶ Schedule begins Tuesday, March 24 and continues daily through Friday April 3. Webinars are offered Monday through Friday.
- ▶ Each Webinar starts at 12:00 noon and concludes at 1:30 p.m.
- ▶ Log in Information: <https://score.zoom.us/j/723846010>
- ▶ Call our SBA District Office at 610-382-3062 with any questions about the training.



# PRLA information on PEMA and FEMA

- ▶ PEMA and FEMA are working to collect information from hotels interested in offering their lodging for lease should they be needed in this crisis. Here are two links to access forms to get their information and resources to these agencies:
- ▶ Any questions please contact [Heidi Howard](#)
- ▶ Federal <https://forms.gle/PfQfqkHMPbF5KMGi6>
- ▶ State of PA <https://bit.ly/PAFoodShelter>

# PMVB COVID-19 Response (Continued)

- ▶ Please keep the PMVB posted as to your operations regarding reopening, updated schedules and offers.
- ▶ Questions and updates feel free to contact:
- ▶ Chris Barrett, [cbarrett@Poconos.org](mailto:cbarrett@Poconos.org)
- ▶ Or Brian Bossuyt, [bbossuyt@Poconos.org](mailto:bbossuyt@Poconos.org)

# COVID Resource Links

- ▶ **COVID-19 Resource for information:**  
<https://www.poconomountains.com/covid-19/>
- ▶ **Alert driving traffic to a microsite on member business updates:**  
<https://www.poconomountains.com/covid-19/updates-coronavirus/>
- ▶ **PRLA(PA Restaurant and Lodging Association) Resource Page:**  
<https://www.prla.org/coronavirus.html>
- ▶ **Wayne County EDC:** <https://wayneeconomic.com/>
- ▶ **Pike County EDC:** <https://www.edapikepa.org/>
- ▶ **Pocono Mountains EDC:** <https://www.pmedc.com/>
- ▶ **Discover Carbon County EDC:**  
<https://www.carboncountychamber.org/>
- ▶ **Destinations International Resource Page:**  
<https://destinationsinternational.org/covid-19-coronavirus-travel-industry-resource-hub>