



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee Meeting & Retreat

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

8:30 am - 5:00 pm

SLO Brew Rock – 855 Aerovista Lane, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

1. Breakfast

Visit SLO CAL hosted breakfast for the committee.

2. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Ashlee Akers, Jim Allen, Audrey Arellano, Terrie Banish, Molly Cano, Cheryl Cuming, Gordon Jackson, Stacie Jacob, Lori Keller, Kathleen Naughton, Joel Peterson, Lynette Sonne, John Sorgenfrei, Jill Tweedie, Michael Wambolt

STAFF PRESENT: Chuck Davison, Cathy Cartier, Tracy Campbell, Melissa Murray, Eric Parker, Riley Grim, Camille Silvera, Catherine Cropp

AGENCIES PRESENT: Harry Balfour- Pensara, Nick Evans- Pensara, Tammy Haughey- The Shipyard, Dave Mering- The Shipyard, Deborah Park- Turner PR, John Risser- The Shipyard, Beth Shaini- The Shipyard, Maureen Thielen- The Shipyard, Brooke Wieck- Arrivalist

Call to order at 9:09 am

3. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

None.

4. Introductions & Discussion Overview

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of February 8, 2022 Marketing Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by Jacob/Peterson to approve the February 8, 2022 Marketing Committee Minutes.

MMotion carried: 13:2

5. Notes from the CEO

Davison welcomed the marketing committee and provided an overview on finalizing SD 23. He then touched on the air service recovery standpoint. He also announced new projects in place to help build out more Visit SLO CAL 2050

initiatives. He announced that Visit SO CAL will soon begin working on SD 2026.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

5. Marketing Feedback Overview

Cartier shared the results of the annual survey that went out to the committee prior to the meeting. The results consisted of feedback from the committee on what priorities and opportunities they want to see in the next FY.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Cano requested to see an economic impact study.

Jacob added that she would like to see an economic impact and brand lift study.

Jackson added that he would like to see a resident-focused research study to which Davison replied that next year's budget will include this after running it by the advocacy team. Davison added that it will also include a possible co-op opportunity.

7. Visit SLO CAL Priorities

a) Accomplishments

Cartier provided an overview of the large initiatives that have been completed over the fiscal year. The paid initiatives included *The Land of* shoot and campaign productions, launch of \$3M media buy, paid media delivering 115M+ impressions through 1/31, and House of Brands Phase 1 co-branding adoption. The owned initiatives included the launch of the new SLOCAL.com website, the 2022 Visitor Magazine redesign, 2022 Restaurant Month, SLO CAL Crafted video series, and Visit California Localhood stories reaching 20,000 views. The earned initiatives included hosting 13 FAMS and the Portland/Seattle Influencer activation which was nominated for a Visit California Poppy Award.

Mering and Haughey gave an overview of the 2022 trends in the travel landscape.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

b) Revised Phases

Cartier went over the revised plans for the House of Brands Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, and possible Phase 4 strategies.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

c) Break

Cartier released the committee for break.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

d) Digital and Social Strategy

Evans provided an overview of Visit SLO CAL’s current strategy and discussed solutions on how to enhance the efforts and strategy. Evans added that a brand voice will be determined for Visit SLO CAL with help from The Shipyard. Evans then touched on various social platforms on the rise while showing possible opportunities in the travel space.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

e) Lunch

Cartier released the committee for lunch.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

f) House of Brands Phase 1

The Shipyard presented initiatives added to House of Brands Phase 1. These included the use the “Community of SLO CAL” language on partner sites, the use of #SLOCAL on all destination partner social media posts and adding topographic design elements to the destination partner websites to create a universal brand aesthetic.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

g) House of Brands Phase 2

The Shipyard presented on the unified brand aesthetic and home page graphics. They announced that the interactive map on the SLOCAL.com website should be implemented by the end of the fiscal year.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Naughton asked if the estimated drive time on the interactive map will be hard coded or if it would be pulling live from google maps to which Thielen replied that it would be hard coded with data pulled from google maps.

Peterson asked for clarification between the logo adaption and the topographic design elements being added to photo assets on the destination partner websites to which Haughey confirmed that the topographic design elements add a connection to the overall SLO CAL region and is more visible than the logo lockup on the footer of the partner websites. Jacob added that the overall strategy makes sense, but that she would like to see how they measure the metrics and ROI from this direction. Shaini responded that Visit SLO CAL would need to figure out how to code the click outs and work with the destinations to determine the measurement. Jacob added that this determination will be a deciding factor on considering adoption.

Cano added that she is challenged with this adoption because all the individual destinations are already spending a significant amount of dollars in their campaigns already. Cartier added that there would need to be a conversation to determine how to adopt this without negatively affecting the destination partner’s individual initiatives.

Sonne added the addition of the topographic design elements are very subtle and may not have a large impact to which Haughey responded that it will not make-or-break people being aware of the destination, however, it is a subtle aspect to help consumers understand the greater picture of the destination.

Jackson asked if the topographic map elements were literal to the destination, to which Haughey replied that no, it is a design aspect.

Sorgenfrei agreed that the partner destinations would need to see referrals.

Jacob added that she would like the destination partner logos on the SLOCAL.com website to bring a greater adoption to the vision. Cartier responded that this is something Visit SLO CAL is analyzing and is working towards a next step to link back to the partner websites.

Davison added that this has been an ongoing conversation but that a majority of the SLOCAL.com website handoffs are going to partners in the community and Visit SLO CAL needs to figure out how to balance them with the destination partners, restaurants, lodgings, etc.

h) House of Brands Phase 3

Haughey reminded the committee on the SD 23 goal to increase cross visitation. She touched on data from Arrivalist and the Visitor Profile Study. She then presented a strategy to help increase cross visitation.

Risser touched on the cross-visitiation strategy using framework from the *Land of* campaign. Risser then played demo videos for the committee showing how to target different audiences.

Haughey then touched on the possible House of Brands Phase 4 that includes using tourism business identity variations by adding descriptive words to the SLO CAL logo to encourage more partners to adopt the brand aesthetic. Cartier added that this phase would occur in the next fiscal year and asked the committee if it is something they would be interested in.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Regarding the cross-visitiation strategy, Peterson asked if there was a strategy on how Visit SLO CAL is directing visitors from one destination to the next to which Risser replied that there will be a strategy created, however right now they are focusing on assets.

Peterson then asked if there was a case study that showed the success in adopting the strategy behind the possible HOB Phase 4 using descriptive words with the logos.

Sorgenfrei added that this adoption would be too big of an undertaking and many businesses are still trying to get through the pandemic. Sorgenfrei then added that using social channels would be the best way to adopt this.

Keller added that there needs to be a benefit to the businesses who adopt this strategy to which Cartier agreed that like the SLO CAL Crafted videos, partners need to see a tangible benefit.

Risser added that this adoption would be a way to build local pride and get the community more connected in a way that businesses and partners would want to be associated.

Wambolt added that a local PR effort would be important to first get people aware of the SLO CAL brand. Wambolt then added that these descriptive words can be used on the SLOCAL.com website under Things to do.

Jacob suggested expanding the SLO CAL Crafted certified program from locally made products to services and experiences.

Cartier replied that this wouldn't be possible for the SLO CAL Crafted certified program due to its guidelines, though a separate program could be considered.

Wieck added that there are many businesses that would want to be part of these new programs in the community and if partners are interested, Visit SLO CAL could bring influencers in from the industry to help promote the strategy.

Wambolt added that time may be an issue for the Morro Bay destination to adopt the possible Phase 4 strategy due to current priorities.

i) Break

Cartier released the committee for break.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

j) Breakout Groups

The committee members broke out into breakout groups to discuss possible cross-visitation itineraries and promotion ideas.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

k) Media Review

The Shipyard presented on Visit SLO CAL's market prioritization, media performance, and timing. Shaini gave an overview on how she is targeting the purposeful traveler while focusing on three tiers of geotargeting: drive markets, drive/fly markets, and fly markets. Regarding media performance Shaini added that the current ad performance is exceeding goals with site sessions 41% ahead of goals.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

l) FY 23 Co-op

The Shipyard presented co-op opportunities for the next fiscal year. Cartier added that based on the destination partner survey that went out prior to the retreat, partners are interested in research, media, and creative assets.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Peterson added the Paso Robles Wine Alliance has received a grant to market Paso Robles wines to fly markets and are looking to make trips to those markets to host consumer activations. Park added that using influencers could help benefit those activations.

Regarding creative assets, Sonne added that she recently conducted a photoshoot in which she would be willing to share the photos with the committee.

Regarding media, Peterson asked if there were any planned podcast integrations in the media to which Cartier replied that yes it was something Visit SLO CAL was considering.

m) PR & Communications

Parker and Park gave an overview of the FY 22 PR initiatives. Top initiatives included hosting 13 domestic/international writers/influencers. Park also went over travel trends in PR. She then went over editorial impacts and media seedings that went out to media. Lastly, Park asked the committee questions revolving PR seedings, conferences, influencer strategies.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Regarding PR seedings, Jacob added that Travel Paso has seen great results from them.

Regarding future conferences, Cartier added that these conferences could involve co-op opportunities.

Cuming added that Highway 1 is attending Travel Classics and SATW.

Cartier then asked if the committee would like help with influencer activations to which the committee responded yes. Jacob added that influencers are prioritized in PR. Sorgenfrei and Peterson added that influencers are prioritized in both PR and social media.

8. Wrap Up and Next Steps

Cartier gave the committee an opportunity to speak on changes for future Marketing Committee Meetings.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Jacob stated that it may not be necessary for Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee meetings to be held monthly. She added that virtual options should be available.

Peterson added that the drive from Paso Robles is a hurdle in attending the meetings.

Sonne added that she found a benefit in doing more breakout sessions at the meetings.

Sorgenfrei suggested adopting monthly zoom meetings with quarterly in-person meetings.

Davison responded that due to the Brown Act, Visit SLO CAL cannot legally have a hybrid option. To do a virtual meeting over zoom, the board would need to conclude that there is a state of emergency. He added that to do bi-monthly meetings, the committee would need to receive a signed letter from the local municipalities to make this change. Cathy added that she would look further into this.

9. Hosted Reception

Cartier released the committee for a hosted reception.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 4:26 pm.