



MINUTES

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee

Visit SLO CAL Marketing Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 8th, 2022

8:30 am - 10:30 am

Visit SLO CAL – 81 Higuera St Suite 220, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

1. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Ashlee Akers, Jim Allen, Terrie Banish, Molly Cano, Cheryl Cuming, Stacie Jacob, Lori Keller, Joel Peterson, Lindsey Roberts, John Sorgenfrei, Jill Tweedie, Michael Wambolt

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy Cartier, Trevor Lynch, Melissa Murray, Eric Parker, Riley Grim, Kristin Buhning, Rachelle Ramirez, Lauren Miller, Alyssa Manno, Brooke Weisbecker, Camille Silvera, Theresa Nagai, Mayla Lohnes

AGENCIES PRESENT: Tammy Haughey, Beth Shaini, Maureen Thielen– The Shipyard

Call to order at 8:32 am

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (On Non-Agenda Items)

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of September 13, 2022 Marketing Committee Minutes

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

ACTION: Moved by Sorgenfrei/Allen to approve the **September 13, 2022** Marketing Committee Minutes.

Motion carried: 11:1

CMO REPORT

4. Visit SLO CAL CMO Report

Cartier introduced the new Visit SLO CAL staff members: Mayla Lohnes, Public Relations Coordinator, Rachelle Ramirez, Event Manager and Lauren Miller, Graphic Designer.

Cartier reminded the committee to buy tickets for the 2022 Destination Summit being held on November 10th at Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo. The Destination Summit is Visit SLO CAL's annual address on the state of tourism

locally and globally. The event will include keynote speeches from Adam Sacks, President of Tourism Economics and Chuck Davison, CEO of Visit SLO CAL, along with panels on Sustainable Tourism and Strategic Power Behind Social Media.

Cartier detailed the RFP process for Visit SLO CAL's International Trade & PR agency.

Cartier shared the new Visit California campaign launching in February of 2023, Visit Kidifornia. The new campaign spotlights kid friendly tourism destinations throughout California and will include two SLO CAL destinations, Pismo Beach and Paso Robles in the campaign.

Cartier gave an update on the number of SLO CAL Crafted partners and requested assistance from the committee members to find and share new partners with the Visit SLO CAL Team. Cartier also shared the SLO CAL Crafted video strategy.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Peterson asked what time Adam's keynote starts during Destination Summit and if the event is all in one room. Cartier told the committee the event will start at approximately 12:30pm and will be hosted in the same event room. Jacob asked how many people were attending and Cartier responded with approximately 180 attendees. Wombolt asked if the RFP is in conjunction with Monterey County and Cartier informed him that Visit SLO CAL will not be working in conjunction with Monterey County for the RFP.

BUSINESS ITEMS

5. Events Update

Cartier updated the committee on the SLO CAL Open sponsorship. The SLO CAL Open will be hosted in Pismo Beach in January and in Morro Bay in February. The Pismo event was originally a 1000 series event, however, Visit SLO CAL increased sponsorship to make the event a 3000 series event which brings in higher level surf competitors.

Cartier also updated the committee on the Spartan Race sponsorship. The Spartan Race will be returning to SLO CAL in 2023 and will be hosted on November 4th at Santa Margarita Ranch. More information on how Visit SLO CAL will maximize the sponsorship and the co-opt opportunities will be shared with the Marketing Committee in the future.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Banish shared the Bovine Classic brought in tourism from international travelers. Cano discussed the reservation component for Spartan Race was a challenge using one specific booking site and asks how we can resolve this for next year's event. Cartier let the committee know there will be a discussion opportunity where the committee can ideate on how to resolve for past issues to ensure a smooth event.

6. Restaurant Month

Cartier updated the committee on the new strategy for featuring culinary experiences in SLO CAL. Instead of only highlighting local restaurants in January, Visit SLO CAL will be moving towards a year-round approach to feature culinary. For FY22-23, Visit SLO CAL will be launching a new strategy featuring a strong social media push starting in January featuring a social media takeover highlighting local restaurants as well as multiple giveaways. Additionally, Visit SLO CAL is producing culinary focused videos that will be pushed out through social media each month beginning in January. Visit SLO CAL is also requesting restaurants to reach out to be featured in the social media push.

Cartier shared the first video to be launched in January for the culinary video series.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Cano shared with the committee that SLO will be pushing an Eat Local Bonus program in the month of January. Lynch responded by requesting committee members to share their strategies to highlight restaurants in order to best collaborate for a unified approach. Jacob commented on the culinary video stating the narrative was confusing because the message didn't connect whether it was event promotion or culinary scene.

7. Co-Op Programming

The Shipyard agency representatives presented their strategies for co-op opportunities for the committee members to discuss.

Haughey and Theilen presented the Welcome to SLO CAL Co-Op. The current problem is identified as a need to strengthen connectivity between the destinations and the SLO CAL brand. The "Welcome to SLO CAL" solution would be the creation of destination specific co-branded signage to be featured within communities throughout the region.

Haughey and Theilen also presented the Pinterest Co-Op strategy. This strategy would include the development of a custom Pinterest extension campaign and deployment of a custom interface featuring participating destinations across SLO CAL. Partners would receive increased exposure within the media campaign, suite of custom Pinterest assets and increased alignment of cross visitation. Visit SLO CAL would provide platform development, paid media support, asset development and delivery and creative asset templates.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Joel Petersen asked The Shipyard representatives if they have seen other communities work like this on county-wide scale? Theilen answered that they have seen similar, but not on a county-wide scale. Jacob asked if the Welcome to SLO CAL Co-Op opportunity was shared with the Advisory Board. Cartier responded that we wanted buy-in from the Marketing Committee first and would not share with the Advisory Board without buy-in. Jacob also asked how much design specificity the destinations would get and requested more elaboration on the destinations' responsibilities vs. Visit SLO CAL's responsibilities.

Banish asked what the timing would be. Cartier responded to Jacob and Banish that Visit SLO CAL can do a focus on what timelines could be to make sure we can make impact on visitors. Additionally, designs could be dependent on the community and their feedback. Cartier elaborated that Shipyard would provide design support and files and destinations would be responsible for production and installation.

Sorgenfrei stated that we would need a great deal of flexibility for the process and must seek out creative placement. There will be some level of difficulty trying to push signage through the city's requirements. Theilen responded to say there could be flexibility with the overall goal to reinforce the destinations as a community of SLO CAL.

Petersen added that this program would be a long-term play but he likes the Welcome to SLO CAL county entrance points signage.

Cano shared that in order to accomplish signage with the city's efforts, it would be ideal to work with cities who are working to do signage projects already and partner with them. Cartier responded to the committees' feedback by acknowledging the need to put together a feedback chain for parameters for each community and how Visit SLO CAL can customize to the destinations.

Sorgenfrei stated that Pismo would be interested in the co-op opportunity.

Keller stated that the program would be a great extension to your Land of Campaign.

In response to the Pinterest Co-Op opportunity, Petersen asked how the Pinterest platform works for targeting. Haughey responded to say they can mirror in on specific demographics on Pinterest. Jacob stated that Travel Paso has Pinterest and is not using the platform to its full potential, so this opportunity would be a great way to lean in.

Cartier informed the committee that based on their feedback we will continue to advance the Pinterest co-op strategy.

8. Monarch Butterfly Murals

Cartier updated the committee on the Mural Trail progress and shared the final draft thumbnails of the artwork for the murals. Cartier also shared the next steps for each of the participating cities where the murals will be painted.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Askers asked if the destinations could receive a notification when the walls are being painted to catch content and Cartier responded with yes.

9. Website Advertising

Cartier informed the committee that Visit SLO CAL will be ending their DTN plan as there were not enough businesses buying ads on the website. Cartier stated this decision to end the contract is based on not feeling that this program serves the needs of the SLO CAL community.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

10. Luxury Forum

Cartier recapped the Luxury Forum which was a 3-day event, facilitated by Visit California, which brought 40 luxury travel buyers and 40 suppliers to the destination. The event featured 40 unique experiences to do in the destination which involved 80 local partners and was hosted in locations throughout the county including Hotel SLO, Hotel Cerro, Vespera Resort, The Cliffs Hotel & Spa, Cass Winery and Allegretto Vineyard Resort.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Jacob asked if the assets would be used on the website? Cartier replied to say yes and Visit SLO CAL is doing a website user study in order to build out the website based on the results. Jacob also asked if these assets would be included in Explore It, to which Cartier replied that no they would be used on the Sales page. Keller asked if the committee would receive data on ROI from Luxury Forum. Cartier said yes, Connections will poll buyers on the bookings they make in SLO CAL.

11. WTTC Content Partnership

Cartier shared the WTTC Destination Spotlight commercial with the committee. The Destination Spotlight Series was created by the World Travel & Trade Council and highlights destinations across the world with a focus on sustainability in tourism. SLO CAL is the first destination in the world to be highlighted in the series. The series will be distributed through WTTC channels. Visit SLO CAL will own all the assets and will share with the destinations.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

12. Travel & Trade Marketing Update

Parker updated the committee on Earned Media, which included the Luxury Forum Group Media Fam. Additionally, Visit SLO CAL will be hosting a bi-annual PR Educational Media mixer to create an opportunity for those bringing media to SLO CAL to collaborate.

Grim provided an update on the September and October social media and website highlights. She also updated the committee that the social media integration taskforce met in October with meetings following quarterly. Lynch provided an update on the new blog content as well as the paid media performance.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

13. SLO CAL Welcome

Murray updated the committee that SLO CAL Welcome, Visit SLO CAL's customer service training program which is launching in November with the Spanish version launching in December. She added that a communication push is planned across the various audiences.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – None.

14. Events & Festivals Strategy

Murray provided an update on the Events & Festivals Strategy Phase 2: Strategy & Calendar Development. She announced that the fourth working group session is expected for late November/early December with calendar completion slated for FY 23.

Public Comment – None.

Committee Discussion – Jacob added that there are many people uploading to event websites besides just the destination partners to which Cartier agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:41 am.