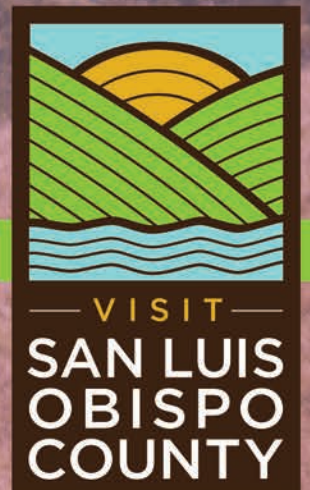




FY2016-18  
**MARKETING  
PLAN**





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# DEAR STAKEHOLDERS,

Visit San Luis Obispo County (VSLOC) is excited to unveil our 2016 – 2018 Marketing Plan. As we consider the past year, we are proud of the progress and accomplishments our organization has achieved. With new, in-depth research, a new marketing agency focused on establishing a unifying and emotionally resonating SLO County brand and a multi-year strategic plan, the stage is now set for some major advancements in the coming years. Moving forward, our focus continues to be on: 1) creating greater awareness of our county and its assets, and 2) increasing demand for overnight stays.

Earlier this year, in partnership with Merrill Research, VSLOC conducted a first-of-its-kind data collection about SLO County. A demographic and share-of-wallet study, as well as a feeder market awareness study were conducted. The findings from this research will continue to be used to craft our brand, our position and our target market strategy for the immediate future.

Also in 2016, VSLOC contracted Coraggio Group on the development of a multi-year, countywide strategic plan. Over the course of several months, the development process included interviewing stakeholders, assembling a planning committee and taskforce and the vetting of the plan and process with our board and constituents to determine key initiatives. The strategic plan has provided our organization with an illuminated roadmap and navigational direction for the next three years of the Tourism Marketing District. New vision and mission statements were established, as well as key imperatives containing specific objectives and initiatives, placing the consumer at the front of all we do.

Our new marketing agency, BCF, hit the ground running in July 2016. Their foremost task was to create and unveil a new consumer brand, approved by our Board of Directors in November 2016. As a major strategic plan initiative, this brand will be the trademark of San Luis Obispo County as we develop our shoulder season campaign designed to increase feeder market awareness of our destination throughout the Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Phoenix and Las Vegas areas. BCF will work with VSLOC to establish a regional market media plan, a new engaging website and fresh, consumer-friendly content.

VSLOC recently celebrated a big win in partnership with the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport and the Economic Vitality Corporation, as Alaska Airlines announced new nonstop service to San Luis Obispo from Seattle, beginning April 2017. This win produces a new destination choice for the Seattle consumer to explore, providing easy access to our region for more than a million potential visitors.

San Luis Obispo County will hit the road in 2016–2017 as VSLOC collaborates with local restaurant, winery, brewery, spirit and activity partners to create “SAVOR—A San Luis Obispo County Experience” at food, wine and lifestyle events throughout key regional feeder markets. The events will showcase the best of San Luis Obispo County with the goal of encouraging those attending to plan a trip to experience the destination firsthand.

As we look toward the future, the opportunities that lie ahead seem endless. Included in this Marketing Plan, you will find a detailed outline of the 2016–2018 marketing initiatives for Visit San Luis Obispo County. We invite you to discover how your business can be a part of it all.

All the Best,



**Chuck Davison**  
President & CEO  
Visit San Luis Obispo County

# INTRODUCTION

Established in 1986 as a 501(c)6, Visit San Luis Obispo County (VSLOC) is the countywide destination marketing organization. Its goal is to promote San Luis Obispo County through marketing, advertising, public relations, group sales, promotions, events and sponsorship, branding the region as a choice destination for regional, national and international travelers alike. To do so, VSLOC partners with tourism-related businesses, including lodging properties, restaurants, wineries, breweries, distilleries, activities, golf courses and retail stores to create a unified marketing approach that promotes the culinary, cultural and coastal assets of the county.

## *Our Vision*

A vibrant and prosperous San Luis Obispo County, fueled by a collaborative and flourishing tourism industry

## *Our Mission*

Inspire travel and foster our unique experiences to create life-long ambassadors and economic growth for San Luis Obispo County

## *Our Values*

**Future Focused:** Delivering today with an eye on tomorrow

**Collaboration:** Our partnerships inform and support economic success

**Drive:** We bring enthusiasm to our initiatives and focus on results

**Stewardship:** We are mindful of our resources and the San Luis Obispo County brand

## *Our Brand Intention*

**Strategic:** "They plan and execute."

**Connector:** "They bring people together."

**Creative:** "They innovate and think differently."

**Inspiring:** "They show us what's possible."

**Essential:** "We need them in order to succeed."





# 2015 - 2016 HIGHLIGHTS



VSLOC continues to serve as a strategic partner of the San Luis Obispo County Regional airport, in cooperation with the Economic Vitality Corporation to attract visitors to the area. New service this year included an additional flight from the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport to Phoenix on American Airlines. After years of discussion with Alaska Airlines, new air service between Seattle and San Luis Obispo will begin in April 2017.



In April 2016, Visit San Luis Obispo County announced their new marketing agency partnership with BCF agency, effective July 1, 2016. BCF will use market research and a multiyear strategic plan to create and launch an impactful new brand for Visit San Luis Obispo County, ultimately resulting in a marketing campaign geared toward promoting the region in the shoulder season, during off-peak months.



In 2016, VSLOC increased international awareness by partnering with Visit California on their multi-city China CEO Mission and China Sales Mission, visiting with the country's largest travel agencies. VSLOC showcased a major footprint at IPW, the largest international tour and travel tradeshow. Australia, China, France and the UK all conducted familiarization tours in the county. Looking forward, VSLOC will expand their international footprint with direct representation in the UK/Ireland, first time co-op attendance at ITB Berlin, a Mexico sales mission, as well as hosting a first-time, global-ready seminar to prepare constituents for increased visitation from China.



"There's nothing like an American road trip, and the coastal road between Los Angeles and San Francisco offers one of the best." Australian author Tim Richards wrote this in a Lonely Planet article after he completed a visit hosted by VSLOC. The piece featured San Luis Obispo County's local fare and geography and positioned it as the perfect place to take a break on the California road trip. This is just one of many featured articles on San Luis Obispo County in 2016.



In early 2016, VSLOC announced it would shift gears with their SAVOR event, developing a new partnership with local restaurant, winery, brewery, distillery and activity partners to take SAVOR on the road as "SAVOR—A San Luis Obispo County Experience." These destination roadshow experiences will be held at food, wine and lifestyle events in key regional feeder markets. The first event will take place at the San Diego Bay Wine + Food Festival in November 2016, with additional events in early 2017.



# 2015 – 2016 *TOURISM* YEAR-OVER-YEAR IMPACT



4.5% increase in tourism-supported jobs:

**17,870**



7.0% increase TOT revenue:

**\$35,924,681**



Tourism spending:

**\$1.58B**



Travel & tourism earnings:

**\$510M**

Travel spending created **\$59.1M in local tax revenue**. Equal to:



**886**  
police officers



**69** paved miles  
of 2-lane roads



**1,052**  
firefighters



# TRAVEL & TOURISM TRENDS

## A Growth Industry

The U.S. vacation and tourism market is growing, and is expected to continue the upward trend through 2020 reaching \$285B. (Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism Satellite Accounts/Mintel)

## The Sharing Economy Continues

The regulatory issues surrounding the sharing economy are not acting as much of a deterrent for new entrants on both the supply and demand side. Interest in lodging at alternate accommodations (e.g., Airbnb, HomeAway, etc.) resonates across household incomes and generations.

## Less “Me, Too” And More “Just Me”

A research study by Virtuoso in 2016 found that U.S. tourists are more interested than ever in exploring lesser-known, hidden jewel destinations. Another study reports that just 31% of travelers book a trip based on their past experience at a destination. (Source: Skift, *The Megatrends Defining Travel in 2016*)

## Travel Is Mobile

There is no going back when it comes to mobile—whether it’s the platform used to do research prior to travel, or for in-market research; the convenience and ease of mobile is undeniable. Furthermore, mobile allows destination brands to create more immersive experiences with their travelers. (Source: Skift, *The Megatrends Defining Travel in 2016*)

## Experiential Travel Marketing Is Exploding

Experiential marketing—messaging you can touch, feel or view in a physical space—provides destination brands with visible and impactful opportunities to stand out and to be more personal with their traveler targets. Experiential marketing moves beyond the message toward a more tangible relationship. (Source: Mintel)

## Online Suppliers > OTAs

According to a recent Mintel research study of 2,000 internet users aged 18+, there is a preference for booking travel online directly over using an online travel agency (37% vs. 27% for hotels; 38% vs. 27% for air travel), though OTAs are still valued during the research phase of trip planning.

## Pocketwise Travel

Consumer confidence is up 2.3 points over the previous year as of September 2016, which makes leisure travel more appealing. (Source: *The Conference Board*) While consumers are willing to spend, they remain cautious when it comes to value for their dollar. Instead of buying more, they’re looking to get more out of what they buy.

## Multi-Generational Travel & Groupaways

The face of family travel has changed to include extended families. 31% of U.S. grandparents took at least one trip with their grandchildren in the past 12 months. (Source: Mintel) Beyond traditional family vacations, there is also an emerging trend toward group getaways, driven by the value of friend networks and the rise of what PSFK Labs calls the Nomad Class, “untethered creatives, who maintain successful careers and personal lives as they adventure around the world.”





# *STRATEGIC PLAN*

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Under the facilitation of Coraggio Group and with the active participation of stakeholders throughout the county, Visit San Luis Obispo County assembled a three-year Strategic Plan to align staff and stakeholders on the direction of the organization, its strategy and how the organization's success will be measured. The process, which spanned from April to June 2016, began with a stakeholder survey about the long-term direction of tourism in San Luis Obispo County. At the same time, Coraggio Group conducted telephone interviews with 20 stakeholders, including several lodging partners, local Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) representatives and city managers. Next, Coraggio held three two-day workshops. Each workshop included several hours spent with the Planning Team, consisting of VSLOC leadership, Michael Manchak from the San Luis Obispo Economic Vitality Corporation and Clint Pearce of Madonna Enterprises as the appointed board representative. These workshops were followed by sessions with the Board Strategic Planning Task Force, as well as separate sessions with stakeholders.





# Imperatives

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## *Optimize our organizational capacity*

### **Objectives**

- Increased employee engagement and satisfaction scores
- Ratio of administrative cost to economic impact

### **Initiatives**

- Align our organizational structure with our strategic plan
- Establish a continuous learning program for the VSLOC Team
- Evaluate and develop the tools, systems and technologies we need to succeed

## *Establish brand clarity and increased awareness through unified efforts*

### **Objectives**

- Bi-annual growth of awareness in targeted visitor categories
- Bi-annual growth of awareness in targeted markets
- Bi-annual growth of awareness in targeted segments

### **Initiatives**

- Establish a unifying and emotionally resonant SLO County brand
- Produce and share data-driven strategic insights
- Inspire and activate tourism ambassadors

## *Build and expand strategic partnerships*

### **Objectives**

- Balanced inventory of partnerships
- Inbound partnership opportunities
- Earned Partnership Value (EPV)

### **Initiatives**

- Develop a system for annual partnership planning
- Align resources to manage partnerships
- Identify, develop and activate relationships
- Work with our partners to identify and reduce duplication of efforts

## *Advocate for the development of critical tourism infrastructure*

### **Objectives**

- Increased domestic visitor volume
- Increased international visitor volume
- Draft of Tourism Infrastructure Master Plan completed
- Increased total air service

### **Initiatives**

- Develop long-term Tourism Infrastructure Master Plan
- Enable access to SLO County via increased transportation options
- Initiate feasibility study for conference center
- Advocate and educate to support international tourism readiness

## *Demonstrate value to our stakeholders, partners and communities*

### **Objectives**

- Year-over-year growth in total stakeholder participation at VSLOC events/meetings
- Increased stakeholder satisfaction scores
- Year-over-year growth in local media coverage
- Deliver on objectives as stated in annual marketing plan
- Community engagement with countywide tourism

### **Initiatives**

- Develop an engaged and high-functioning tourism culture for SLO County
- Create an impactful annual marketing plan and timeline
- Develop and execute a local communication strategy
- Develop a plan for advocacy on behalf of stakeholders

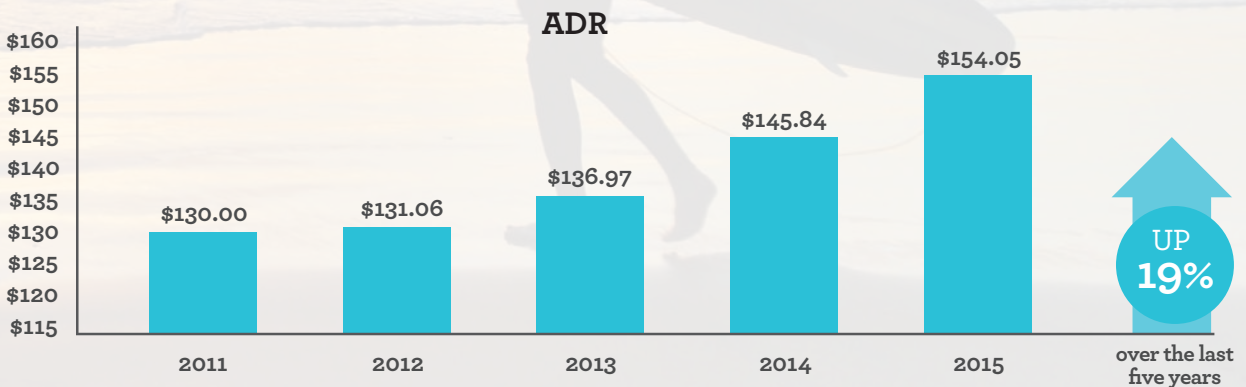
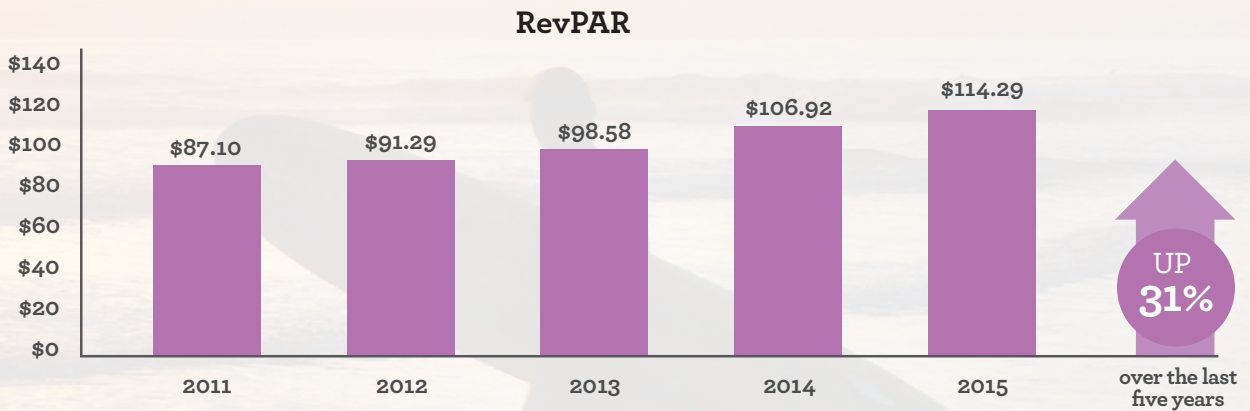
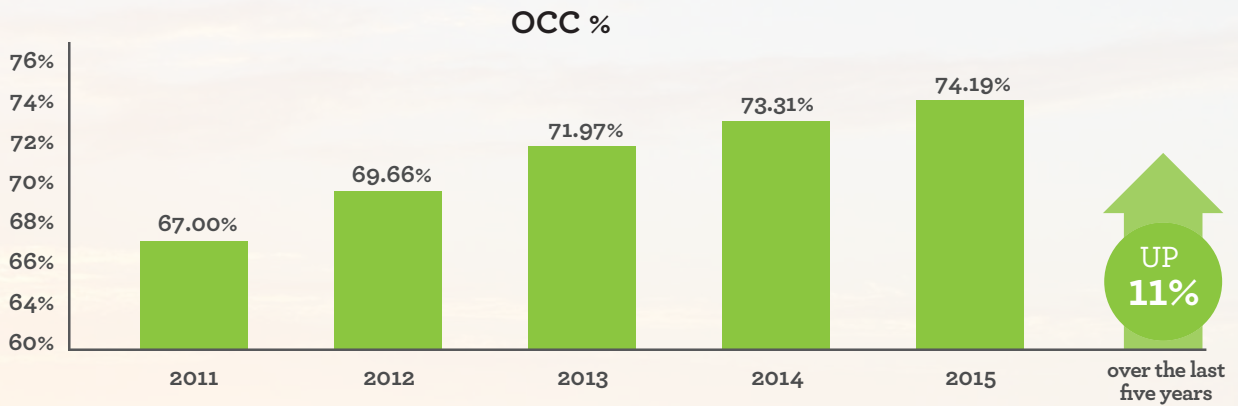
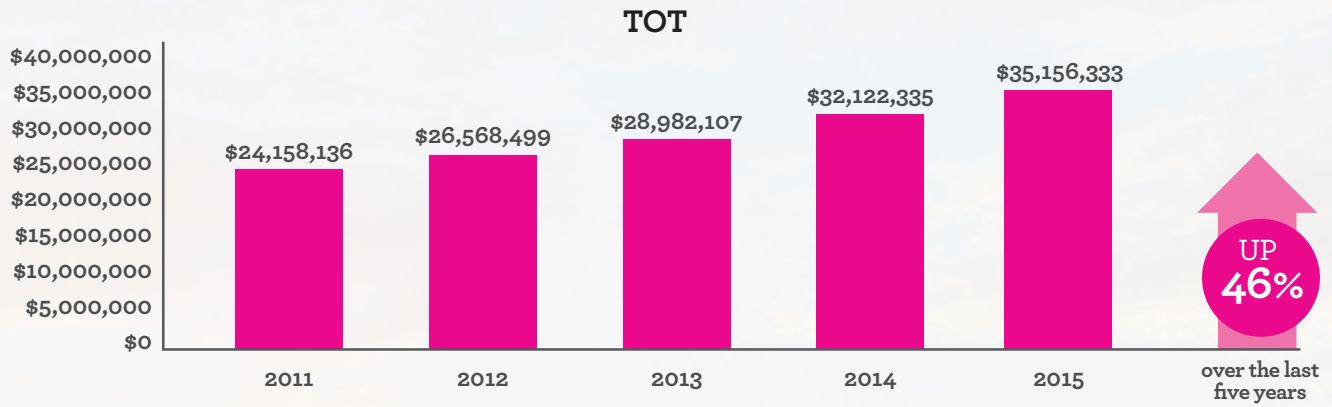




# *TRENDS IN TOURISM*

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The county has enjoyed consistent growth in tourism's contribution to the local economy for several years, and we do not expect that trend to change for the 2016–2018 period. VSLOC will be keeping a close eye on metrics related to overnight stays to ensure that this Marketing Plan is doing the work we expect it to for the county.



*Note: Data reflects an 8.4% increase in room inventory from 2011–2015*



# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Visit San Luis Obispo County worked with Merrill Research on two distinct market research projects to define existing and potential visitors.

## Project 1: Share of Wallet Study and Demographic Study (SOWS)

1,000 respondents (500 California Residents and 500 Non-California Residents) were surveyed, including San Luis Obispo County visitors, prospects and fence-sitters. This study provided VSLOC with the opportunity to learn about customer share of wallet spending for visitors to the county and visitors to competitive destinations. Some relevant data about current visitors includes:



**75%** Married & College Graduates

**60%** Males

**15%** Hispanic

**63%** Aged 22–39

City of SLO accounted for

**25%**

of county spending

Food & Lodging accounted for

**50%**

of visitor spending

\$2,100 was the average spend

**44%**

of total annual leisure spend

Prospective visitors skewed older and were more likely to be females, living in Seattle, St. Louis, or Riverside/San Bernardino. Approximately 60% of prospective visitors include San Luis Obispo County in their consideration set, but not at the top of their list.

The characteristics of the county that draw visitors speak to the personality of the area—friendly, casual, adventurous, down-to-earth, fun and genuine. And, as compared to the competing counties, San Luis Obispo County ranked highest in characteristics of friendliness, relaxed atmosphere and for being the least snobby.

## Project 2: Feeder Market Awareness Study (FMS)

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1,254 respondents from San Francisco, Central Valley, Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Seattle DMAs were surveyed on their awareness and perception of San Luis Obispo County. This study provided VSLOC with valuable information about the current level of awareness among travelers in regional markets and their attitudes about reasons to visit the county.

The county was ranked positively by past visitors for being a relaxing destination with family-friendly activities and beach access. However, FMS also uncovered that the county lags behind in past visitor perceptions of other attributes compared to other counties in the set.

A similar gap exists for prospective visitors, who did not report perceiving that San Luis Obispo County had any advantages over the other counties.

The information from the FMS and SOWS, when viewed in combination, provides focus for our marketing efforts. In addition to looking at the six feeder markets (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Las Vegas, Phoenix and San Diego) generally, we were able to see which demographic targets within them had the most promise and what about the county would motivate them to visit. This information forms the foundation of our Marketing Plan. We will conduct ongoing research as required throughout the 2016–2018 plan period.



# *MARKETING OBJECTIVES*

VSLOC's marketing program has four key objectives. Because those objectives have been developed for the long term, the objectives for 2016–2018 echo those of the previous year and were refined to address the current context.





## Build a brand platform for San Luis Obispo County

*This is a pivotal year as we introduce and launch our new SLO County brand. We will leverage the new county brand identity, while positioning, energizing and unifying our partners in its deployment.*

**Plan to Achieve:** countywide partner engagement, brand guide

**Plan to Measure:** partner feedback and brand adoption

## Build awareness of the San Luis Obispo County brand and destination

*Leverage the strength of the new brand and the relationships with partners to magnify the reach of San Luis Obispo County.*

**Plan to Achieve:** paid media; co-op marketing; earned, owned and social media; sponsorships; travel trade; public relations; promotions and partnerships; film commission

**Plan to Measure:** brand awareness lift, co-op participation, sponsorship results and media coverage

## Develop stronger & deeper engagement with visitors

*Work in support of the mission to reach the audiences with the highest potential, creating life-long ambassadors and economic growth for the county.*

**Plan to Achieve:** website redesign; owned media and social platforms; content development and distribution

**Plan to Measure:** site visitors; time spent on site; website heat map analysis; cost per non-bounced user; cost per minute of engagement; interactions with social media: followers, impressions, comments, likes and shares

## Drive demand for visitation to the county

*Deliver an integrated marketing campaign built to reach targets with the highest potential for visitation and that supports activity in other sales channels (Travel Trade, Film Commission, etc.).*

**Plan to Achieve:** paid media; co-op marketing; earned, owned and social media; sponsorships; travel trade; public relations; promotions and partnerships; film commission

**Plan to Measure:** arrivals in market, revenue for available room (RevPAR) and TOT



# *BRAND*

## *DEVELOPMENT*

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The economic value of tourism to our region is substantial. The competition to attract visitors is increasing, resulting in the need to set San Luis Obispo County apart from other destinations. The objectives of the rebrand were to concept and develop a new brand position for San Luis Obispo County that would be differentiating, emotionally engaging and authentic.

The VSLOC brand is not just a logo, a picture or a slogan; it is the essence of the destination itself, why it is great and how it is better than all competing regions. The VSLOC brand tells consumers about who the brand is, what the brand stands for and how people experience it; it is the promise and pledge of quality.

### *OUR BUSINESS CHALLENGE*

VSLOC has certain characteristics that attract tourists and inspire them to spend their time here. It can attract tourists for its inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance, flora and fauna, natural or built beauty, leisure offerings, adventure and amusement.

The challenge is that visitors don't know much about San Luis Obispo County as a destination. That lack of awareness, coupled with the fact that the county is relatively difficult to get to and includes multiple distinct communities, leads potential visitors to just go with what they know—Santa Barbara and Monterey. Visitors are looking for more value and aren't willing to risk their limited vacation time and money on a destination they aren't familiar with.



## Destination Realities

1. The competition has higher brand awareness.
2. There are challenges in physically getting to San Luis Obispo County.
3. San Luis Obispo County doesn't have the media spend to truly saturate the primary draw markets.

## Strategy

Disrupt the current competitive set by focusing on San Luis Obispo County's way of life versus its specific product offerings.

## Our Process

We started with the building blocks: Brand Name, Brand Identity, Brand Promise.

We arrived at SLO Cal, which establishes a geographical location for the county, while at the same time representing the pace of life and personality of the location. "SLO" builds off the short hand vernacular used to represent the county, the awareness that exists with the university community at Cal Poly, and the largest city in the county. When you think about SLO Cal, it evokes a feeling of relaxation and freedom to take life at your own pace.

## Brand Identity & Promise Work Together

BRAND IDENTITY	BRAND PROMISE
Simple, adaptable, legible	Resonates emotionally
Reflects the spirit of the brand	Differentiates
Timeless and distinct	Exerts competitive advantage
Likeable	Memorable
Stands out in the marketplace	Mediagenic, executable, believable, remarkable

In order to ensure that the identity matches up to the brand promise, we looked back to the research to confirm that the county product (destination) meets the consumer truth.

### Product Truth

In San Luis Obispo County, visitors aren't limited to one or two quintessential California experiences. Here, visitors enjoy a wide variety of options, most of which are a mere thirty minutes from each other, all served up by friendly, welcoming hosts who live the county's enviable laid-back lifestyle.

### Human Truth

Our consumers want to live life on their own terms. They seek a destination that is casual, authentic and unpretentious, but also provides a variety of options that allow them to do the things they love. They want to enjoy destinations at their own pace. They don't want to be limited by time, money or experience.



## The One Thing

What's your rush? San Luis Obispo County gives you the freedom to enjoy the trip of your dreams at your own pace.

## Even Simpler

San Luis Obispo County gives you the freedom to live at your own pace.



# *BRAND*

*DELIVERY*





NO OFFENSE TO FAST,  
BUT SLOW IS GOOD FOR YOUR SOUL.

SLOW CAN SET YOU FREE.

WHEN THE REST OF THE WORLD IS RACING TO THE END,  
SLOW GIVES YOUR LIFE THE ATTENTION IT DESERVES.

AWAY FROM THE NOISE

AND THE CHAOS OF CROWDED STREETS,  
SLOW SHINES A GOLDEN LIGHT ON THE WORLD.

A WORLD YOU'VE BEEN TOO BUSY TO SEE.

IN THIS PLACE, SLOW IS NOT FALLING BEHIND,

IT'S THE FREEDOM TO CATCH UP

WITH THE THINGS THAT MATTER MOST TO YOU.

SOON ENOUGH,

YOU'LL SEE A WORLD THAT'S JUST YOUR SPEED.



LIFE'S  
TOO  
BEAUTIFUL  
TO  
RUSH





## Online Brand Delivery

The branding will be used in every visitor touch point, from paid media and public relations activities to the county's owned channels. The SLO Cal brand will be the catalyst for the creation of a completely new visitor website acting as a gateway for visitors seeking countywide experiences.

The new website will provide an opportunity to expand the brand, user experience, ease of functionality and content along with leveraging the Booking.com partnership to drive demand in the county.

The brand guidelines include direction for improving the user experience on site, including the look, feel and navigation, encouraging visitors to increase their engagement time. Site development work will be conducted with VSLOC's website and SEO development partner,



with brand oversight provided by BCF. The site is expected to launch in late Spring 2017.







# ***DRAW MARKETS***

## *OVERVIEW*



Using the FMS and SOWS data, BCF analyzed VSLOC's draw markets based on the following criteria:

### **Moderate/Low Awareness**

BCF believes the greatest opportunity for growth is to focus on age cohorts who have a lower awareness of the county. In BCF's experience, marketing/advertising best practices indicate that there is greater opportunity at the brand development stage to move the needle from moderate awareness to high than it is from high to even higher. It also exposes the destination to a new set of prospects for message testing.

### **Prospect Very Likely to Visit**

While the county scores high when combining "very likely to visit" with "somewhat likely to visit," BCF recommends narrowing the focus to those audiences that are "very likely to visit."

### **Travel Spending**

Because economic growth and tax revenue are critical for San Luis Obispo County, the recommendation is to focus on those travelers who have a higher propensity to spend more on trips in general or have spent more while visiting the county. BCF analyzed various cross tabs from the SOWS as well as the FMS to develop this position.

### **Familiarity with the Destination**

Familiarity with the destination cited as the reason for travel, and lack of familiarity with the region cited as the reason for lack of visitation, were considered in prioritizing the geographic markets.

### **Average Advertising Cost**

By assessing the size of a potential geographic market, along with average "costs to advertise" for effective penetration, BCF was able to determine the budget allocations required per market to prioritize the media budget allocations to maximum effect.

*Note: Because of these qualifiers, we will not be placing media in the Central Valley, leaving opportunities for city-specific marketing.*



# #1 LOS ANGELES

## Ventura & Los Angeles County

In general, Los Angeles ranks highest of all the geographic markets in awareness. In addition, it is a close-in market with a critical mass of population from which to draw. Within this geographic market, the target populations are A25–34 and A45–54. The rationale for selecting these two demographics based on the data and the criteria used as inputs for prioritizing them is:

- **Awareness:** Los Angeles has the highest initial awareness of all markets, however A25–34 and A45–54 have the lowest awareness of all cohorts within the LA market, and rank 10th and 8th respectively among all cohorts measured.
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** Comparatively, Los Angeles scored low on likelihood to visit, with A45–54 ranking 7th and A25–34 falling out of the top 10. However, this lower ranking was mitigated when looking at the other factors contributing to attractiveness for A25–34 (e.g., spending in market, awareness, critical mass of population, proximity).
- **Travel Spending:** A45–54 and A25–34 ranked 10th and 3rd, respectively, on the travel spending for the cohort.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** The A45–54 ranked 4th and A25–34 ranked 7th in citing familiarity as a reason to visit the destination.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** While high, the cost of advertising in this market is not prohibitive. And given the size of the market, ability to hyper-target within it, and relative ease of travel from Los Angeles to San Luis Obispo County, it did not lower the prioritization.
- **Other:** Based on past visitor data, we also know that the interests shared by these two groups overlap and perform strongly as points of differentiation for the county:
  - o weather, beaches, dining
  - o A25–34 also cited family and quality
  - o A45–54 also cited familiarity and wine





# #2

# SEATTLE

## King County & Snohomish County

Even though Seattle is a fly market, it ranks high on the prioritization list and provides an opportunity for expansion should we be able to drive sufficient demand to garner an additional flight(s) into the county. The cohorts selected for Seattle are A25–34 and A35–44.

Seattle ranks first in lack of prospect awareness on the whole, and within the cohort group we saw that the A25–34 and A35–44 were least aware.

- **Awareness:** A35–44 had the lowest awareness of all cohorts, while A25–34 ranked 3rd lowest.
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** A25–34 and A35–44 ranked 1st and 5th, respectively.
- **Travel Spending:** A25–34 and A35–44 ranked 1st and 2nd, respectively.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** Seattle scored lowest in familiarity with the area as reason cited for visitation, with A25–34 ranking 5th among all cohorts on this factor. Seattle rises among markets on the strength of its scores on other factors.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** The cost of advertising is significantly lower than in other target geographies given its relative small size.
- **Other:** One of the reasons to push Seattle high on the prioritization list is what we know from past visitor responses about spending in the county. For past visitors, these two cohorts ranked 1st (A25–34) and 2nd (A35–44) in spending. The other obvious factor that played into Seattle’s ranking is the new direct flight route on Alaska Air, which we hope will be a wedge to open up more flights on that route.
  - o events, weather, family, excitement
  - o A25–34 also cited beach and dining
  - o A35–44 also cited value and quality





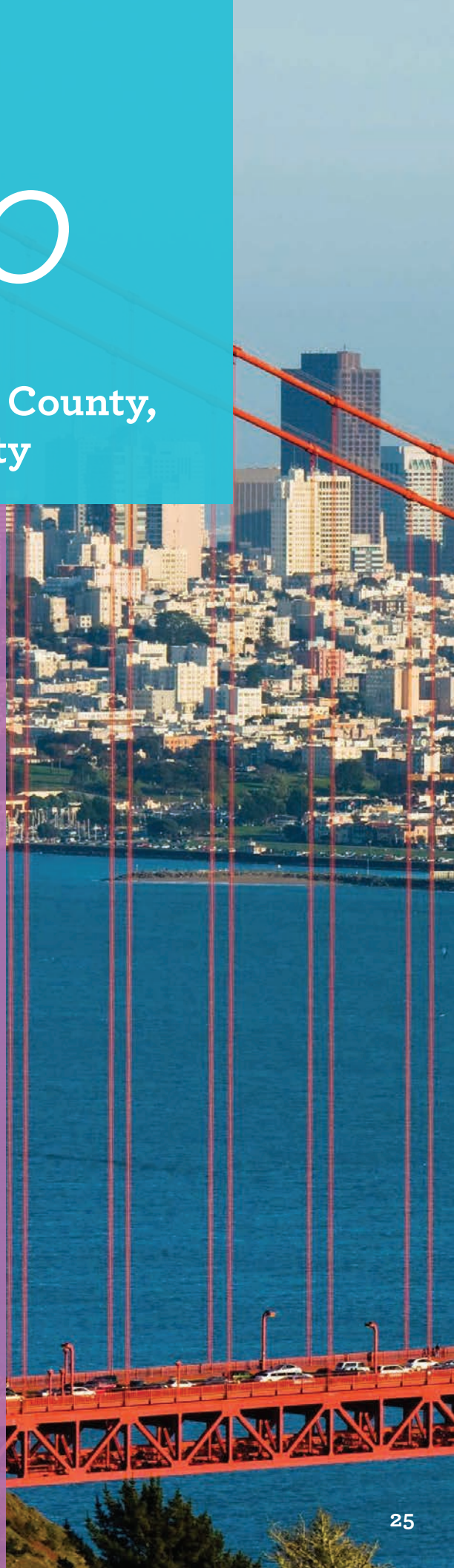
# #3 SAN FRANCISCO

## City of San Francisco, Contra Costa County, Alameda County, Santa Clara County

San Francisco is another close-in market with a critical mass of population. It is ranking as number three because awareness in this market is relatively high compared to the other target markets.

We believe there is opportunity in San Francisco, however, especially within the selected cohorts of A25–34 and A35–44, based on their awareness levels.

- **Awareness:** These two groups ranked lowest (A25–34) and 2nd lowest (A35–44) on prospect awareness among the San Francisco market, while ranking 4th and 10th respectively among all cohorts.
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** As compared to other markets on the whole, the likelihood of visitation is low for the San Francisco cohorts, but within the cohort set, A25–34 ranks 1st and A35–44 ranks 2nd.
- **Travel Spending:** For travel spending, A25–34 ranked 4th while A35–44 fell out of the top 10.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** San Francisco as a whole did not perform well on citing familiarity as the reason for visitation with all cohorts falling out of the top 10 on this metric. This was a primary reason for dropping San Francisco down in prioritization.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** The costs to advertise to our target in San Francisco are in the high range among all the other markets.
- **Other:** Interestingly, based on past visitor data, unlike the previous cohorts, these two groups in San Francisco did not have the same kind of overlap in interests in the types of experiences they choose in the county:
  - A25–34 also cited weather, beach, exciting, family, quality
  - A35–44 also cited familiarity, accessibility, value, dining





# #4

# PHOENIX

## Maricopa County

Another fly market, Phoenix, ranks 4th on the prioritization list. Industry data, of course, indicates that we can expect travelers coming from fly markets to stay longer, which is a point for Phoenix and the other fly markets on the list. That fact, coupled with the finding that Phoenix ranks 2nd lowest in prospect awareness, explains Phoenix's position in the rankings.

The cohorts selected for Phoenix are A35-44 and A45-54.

- **Awareness:** These two groups deliver the lowest awareness (A35-44) and 3rd lowest (A45-54) among all cohorts in Phoenix, with A45-54 in a virtual tie with A25-34 in the market.
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** A35-44 tied for 3rd on likelihood to visit the county. The A45-54 group fell out of the top 10.
- **Travel Spending:** Phoenix performed particularly well on this factor, as A35-44 ranked 9th in travel spending, and A45-54 ranked 7th.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** Phoenix performed poorly on this metric, with each cohort falling out of the top 10.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** Phoenix's media costs place it in the mid-to-high range of the target market list.
- **Other:** Referencing past visitor data, we know that the two groups share some similar interests:
  - o weather, family
  - o A35-44 also cited value, exciting, dining
  - o A45-54 also cited beach





# #5 LAS VEGAS

## Clark County

Las Vegas is a fly market, and even though there is more than one flight per day (unlike Seattle) into the market, the general population density/critical mass of the target and the almost 50/50 level of propensity to visit for most of the cohorts resulted in this market's 5th place ranking.

However, there is opportunity in the A25-34 and A35-44 set because both rank relatively well in the likelihood to visit and travel spending.

- **Awareness:** The A25-34 ranked 2nd in awareness, while A35-44 fell out of the top 10 among all cohorts
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** The A35-44 group ranked highest in likelihood to visit, ranking 6th among all cohorts. A25-34 fell out of the top 10.
- **Travel Spending:** The A25-34 was the highest in the cohort set in travel spending, ranking 6th while all other Las Vegas cohorts fell out of the top 10 in this metric.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** Las Vegas scored particularly low on this metric and this was the key metric pushing Las Vegas down in priority.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** The cost to advertise to our targets in Las Vegas is on the lower end and was a contributing factor in ranking them at #5 as opposed to #6.
- **Other:** We accounted for the fact that, as previously noted in other fly markets, the propensity to stay longer (and therefore spend more in market) was a factor for Las Vegas's ranking. However, the limitation of three flights a week also factored into the ranking. Past visitor data showed some overlap in desired experiences for these two groups:
  - o weather, family, beach, dining
  - o A25-34 also cited quality, exciting, wine
  - o A35-44 also cited familiarity





# #6 SAN DIEGO


San Diego rounds out the prioritization list at #6 for several reasons. Even with its proximity and market size, the fact that the market delivers the 2nd lowest likelihood to visit scores and underperforms on familiarity scores means that any marketing attention given to the market should be minimal.

Within the San Diego market, we found that, of the potential targets, the A25–34 and A45–54 held more potential than other cohorts, but we do not plan to pursue these at this time. For reference:

- **Awareness:** The A25–34 was lowest on awareness, and A45–54 was tied for 2nd lowest among San Diego cohorts, but still highly aware at 83%.
- **Likelihood of Visitation:** As stated previously, the likelihood to visit scores for San Diego as a whole were low. The A45–54 had the highest among this cohort set though, and the A25–34 came in at 3rd place.
- **Travel Spending:** San Diego performed particularly well on this factor, as A35–44 ranked 9th in travel spending, and A45–54 ranked 7th.
- **Familiarity with the Destination:** San Diego scored particularly low on this metric and this was the key metric pushing San Diego down in priority.
- **Average Advertising Cost:** The costs to advertise to targets in San Diego fall in the mid-to-low range.
- **Other:** Past visitor data showed some overlap in desired experiences for these two groups:
  - o accessibility, value, weather
  - o A25–34 also cited quality, exciting, family, wine
  - o A45–54 also cited beach, dining







# *DEMOGRAPHICS & MEDIA CONSUMPTION*

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Traditional demographics are helpful, but by themselves, they are not enough to build a strategic picture of the target audience for VSLOC. Psychographic segmentation takes the nuance of our targets' lives into account. It goes beyond the HHI, age, education level, etc., to uncover the beliefs, motivations, aspirations and lifestyles that will enable us to meet the person—not just the target. Understanding the way the people in the target geographies interact with information about travel and what informs their decisions is a start. The crux of our media strategy is digital, which falls in the top two sources for most prospective respondents across all target markets.



(Source: FMS & SOWS):

	Los Angeles 25-34	Los Angeles 45-54	Seattle 25-34	Seattle 35-44	San Francisco 35-44	San Francisco 45-54	Phoenix 35-44	Phoenix 45-54	Las Vegas 25-34	Las Vegas 35-44	San Diego 25-34	San Diego 45-54
Family & Friends	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Websites	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Print	5	5	5	4	5	6	4	5	3	5	4	4
TV Travel Shows	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
TV Advertising	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	5	5
Radio Advertising	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	6	4	4	6	6

**1 = most important; 6 = least important**

BCF built traveler profiles that span geographies and that VSLOC will use to craft messaging content and delivery tactics. BCF analyzed the draw markets of visitors and potential visitors for SLO County and analyzed syndicated data from Nielsen’s PRIZM segmentation and research from Mintel to identify key attributes of the people in the target markets.

Although it is not the sole driver, selecting for HHI first helped identify the segments in Nielsen’s PRIZM data most likely to be able to spend money on travel. The segments were a mix of families, couples and singles with HHI of \$75K plus. When BCF added a filter for age ranges that matched the selected cohorts for each target market, they were able to narrow the set to ten Nielsen segments to begin deeper interrogation.

BCF then analyzed those segments against the target market demographics and interests stated as reasons to travel by past visitors to the county to refine the profiles. The FMS and SOWS illustrated the attributes of the county that past visitors experienced as key draws to be family-friendliness and beaches. Beaches is a simple attribute to solve for; the county has several different beaches. However, family-friendliness is a broad attribute, so BCF overlaid the Nielsen segments “to want and be able to travel with their families” as a value they held.

Finally, BCF looked at the State of California’s persona set against the remaining segments to confirm or deny the plan for persona development for VSLOC. The goal was to ensure that the county and state weren’t working at cross-purposes, and targeting segments/personas/profiles in a way that precluded us from supporting each other.

That final exercise resulted in the identification of three target personas for our marketing/media strategy.

The result is a streamlined persona set based on our marketing budget, target markets and the county’s offering. BCF made the decision that it was the best use of marketing dollars to focus on three high-potential personas: The Active Adventurer, the Mom to the Max and the Cultured Class, instead of casting so wide as to be ineffective. Research clearly indicated that a culinary persona was relevant; however, that particular interest was already shared by two of the personas selected (Cultured Class and Active Adventurer).



# #1 ACTIVE ADVENTURER

Active, Mid-High Affluent, Educated, Deeply Passionate Experience-Seekers

*"I keep on the go, but like to plan my travels for outdoor communing. I stay connected to share my travel, experiences and memories, but my real motivation is seeing the world. Breathing salty air and eating fresh local foods bring me back to myself and that's why I travel."*

## What matters to the Active Adventurer?

The Active Adventurer persona has many attributes in common with both the state's Avid Adventurer and Natural Nurturer, living at the intersection of the two, so there will be dual contacts with this persona in the sales funnel. The Active Adventurer is motivated by an active and participatory lifestyle with a tendency to forge deep and abiding connections with brands and places. Forty-three percent of outdoor consumers have kids at home and they are committed to grooming the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. *(Source: Mintel, Outdoor Enthusiasts-US, August, 2016)*

## Why the Active Adventurer matters for VSLOC

With green hills, countless miles of hiking and biking trails, great bouldering and an average of 300+ days of sunshine, San Luis Obispo County is a paradise for the Active Adventurer. This group fits squarely in our target market; with interests aligned with the county lifestyle, attributes and products, and we know that prospective visitors to the county are not aware of the outdoor activities and/or do not think them compelling enough to make a trip.

With their interest in outdoor pursuits such as paddle boarding, we expect that 30% will spend \$2,500 or more and the other 70%+ \$1000 or more. *(Source: FMS and SOWS)* Each one of our draw markets features lifestyles that are attuned to outdoor activities—not extreme adrenaline junkies, but just an appreciation of nature's bounty and the desire to be in it. The highest numbers come from Seattle (61.5% of adults 25–34 spend at least \$2,500 per trip) and Los Angeles (31% of adults 25–34 spend at least \$2,500 per trip).

## The Active Adventurer and media

Social media, the digital space and friends and family are dominant sources of information for this group. For a subset of the persona (GenX and millennial males), TV is also influential but on-demand and streaming usage limits the effectiveness of broadcast with this group. They're heavy users of mobile and internet; they like to discover the undiscovered and are regularly searching online for events, trips and opportunities to jump into new experiences.



# #2 MOM TO THE MAX

Scheduled, Connected, Affluent,  
Transparent (the Good and the Ugly)

*"I want to be in the know, connected, and learning from other mothers and their experiences. I want to make my money work harder and last longer. I try to stay on top of cultural trends, especially when it comes to the well-being of my family."*

## What matters to the Mom to the Max?

Family and friends motivate mom. She's highly digital and rarely misses an Instagram post or an opportunity to share her inspirations. Creativity and new trends in home care, family life, decor and travel experiences are top of mind for mom.

Mom and her partner's commitment to their family is everything. She wants it all for herself and her family, but she wants value for her dollar, too.

## Why the Mom to the Max matters for VSLOC

Mintel's research shows that heritage and culture are cited as prime motivators of her travels, thus she demands educational value and authenticity in her family's travel experiences. Our Mom to the Max and her family are thrilled to take a day trip to the Mission, search for shells on the beach and will take full advantage of sitters so she and her partner may enjoy the more mature experiences that SLO County has to offer.

Mom to the Max will be traveling with family which makes it more likely that she'd spend at least \$2,500 in-market. Factors such as eating out with the family, kids' excursions and child care fees contribute to the spend, which is likely easily reached over a two to three day stay in market.

## The Mom to the Max and media

In priority order, the Mom to the Max interacts on: internet, mobile devices, television, radio, print, direct mail, OOH product placements and sponsorships. She watches TV, but is more apt to stream that content via Hulu or other platforms where commercials can be blocked; or, when she is watching traditional broadcasts, she uses the commercial breaks as a time for her to check work email or tend to something around the house.





# #3 CULTURED CLASS

**Educated, Risk Takers,  
Gracious, Confident, Professionals**

*"I'm never unplugged—a new age renaissance person. I'm always engaged and on the cusp of new trends. Education, music, family, the arts and fine culinary experiences drive me to connect, continue to learn and be the first-to-know in my friend group. I want out-of-the-box experiences. I want to return from a trip renewed, revived and ready to take on the next thing. I demand value when I invest in leisure and relaxation."*

## What matters to the Cultured Class?

The Cultured Class is motivated by the unexpected and new. Whether they are single, single with children, married or married with children, they look for experiences that can elevate their lives and connect them to the world in unexpected ways. These are the people who not only want to have the experience for themselves, but who, as trusted advisors to their friends, family and follower groups are invested in sharing new things and encouraging others to join in.

## Why the Cultured Class matters for VSLOC

The Cultured Class (with annual household income greater than \$100K) is more likely to take vacations (92%). (Source: Nielsen PRIZM data and Mintel Research) The affluent Cultured Classers tend to be older. Four out of five have children, so when targeting the affluent Cultured Class, families (i.e., with young children) need to be taken into consideration.

The Cultured Class picks their destinations by researching more than three sources. (Source: Nielsen PRIZM Segmentation) While the majority of the Cultured Class prefers to start planning trips three to four months in advance, this spontaneous generation of travelers is also two to three times more likely than older travelers to start planning within just two weeks of departure. SLO County is the perfect last minute (booking) getaway for our Cultured Class.

Experience, education, culinary expertise and local culture are drivers of this group and SLO County has a menu of options that feed their needs. Wine tasting, trips to the Mission and a couple nights stay at a boutique hotel meshes perfectly with our Cultured Class. For these travelers, the food and drink is not only an interest to be incorporated into a travel experience, but a major factor that actually drives travel decisions. Indulging in fresh, local culinary experiences for a quick getaway or "girls weekend" is highly appealing about SLO County to the Cultured Class. (Source: 2016 Food Travel Monitor Study)

## The Cultured Class and media

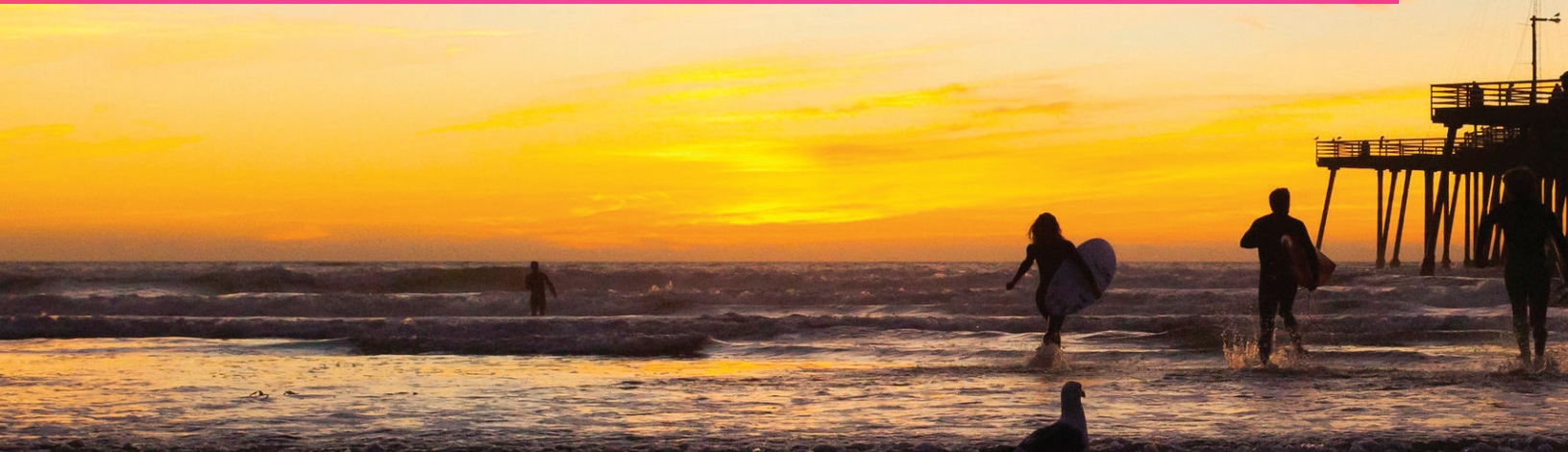
They are selective when it comes to media interactions and are the only one of the set where radio (digital and XM) makes the list. The top performers for this group are the internet and mobile.





# MEDIA STRATEGY

Our persona-based media strategy focuses primarily on digital executions. We know that consumers are influenced by the web (internet searches, websites) when making travel decisions and that other forms of paid media like print, OOH and radio are less important to them. Our plan is to exploit this preferred channel by building brand awareness and affinity while supporting it with paid search, paid social, owned and earned activity.



BCF's approach to media relies on three foundational pillars:

**Efficiency:** The placement is the most cost efficient while reaching the most people.

**Targeting:** The placement employs the best targeting tactics to reach the campaign's distinct geographic and demographic targets.

**Context:** The placement is contextually relevant to not only the campaign's goals, but to the brand as a whole.

In a perfect world, BCF would only buy placements that fall into all three categories, but these types of placements are very hard to come by.

As such, BCF focuses on placements that meet two of the three requirements. All placements proposed are reviewed for best performance throughout the life of the

campaign and optimizations are made to ensure the best performance possible. BCF will ensure that the media strategy continually delivers the most significant, targeted consumer impact with strong reach, frequency and CPM/CPC/CPV metrics.

We will focus our media flying in support of the shoulder and low seasons, with the majority of the campaign running late January through April, while search and social will be extended from early January to the end of May. Of the total budget, 80% will be allocated toward brand initiatives, while 20% will be allocated toward co-op programs.

Outside of the co-op funds, we recommend maintaining some budget fluidity throughout the different media channels, in order to shift budget on an ongoing basis based on campaign performance.

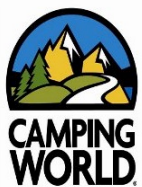


# PAID MEDIA

## #1 Digital Media Across Markets (Web & Mobile) (45% budget allocation)

- **Traditional Digital Advertising (20% of total allocation):** Utilizing partners with the ability to target the most relevant consumers, we will deliver ad formats that are proven to engage and allow us to test effectiveness of message content, element and placement, inclusive of video units (pre-roll and in-stream) as well as high-impact banners. These units will be purchased through biddable, exchange-based DSP platforms to control costs, while providing detailed pockets of optimization against a cost-per-engaged-user model and cost per in-market visitor.
- **Native Advertising (25% of total allocation):** Native advertising has evolved into the one of the most effective forms of paid media. Sold on a cost-per-click basis, native units mimic the natural form and function of the user experience making them more apt to engage the user. As with the traditional digital elements, native will be continually optimized to a cost per engaged user, however, cost per in-market visitor will not be available due to the technical delivery method of native ad units.
  - o Native Display: We will use proven partners for native display ad formats, including recommended articles, blog posts, videos, etc. In the past, we have worked with partners like Outbrain or Taboola.
  - o Native In-stream: Native in-stream works similar to native display, but rather than appear as suggested stories, these units fold into the on-page experience of a given website, and appear alongside editorial content, while mimicking the look and feel of the editorial content. Partners in this space include Sharethrough and TripleLift.
- Consumer targeting strategies will emphasize contextual relevancy with placements on travel, outdoors and culinary websites. In addition to contextual targeting, we will leverage behavioral targeting and interest targeting.

We will focus on outlets with strong affiliations with websites like:





## #2 Search Engine Marketing (15% budget allocation)

- We will engage in SEM activities in each of the target markets. While demographic targeting is not available in SEM, we will focus on upper funnel search queries specific to regional travel (such as, Central California beach vacations and California winery tours) to ensure that the VSLOC brand and destination reaches them when they are actively searching specifically for travel. Focusing on upper funnel searches only will allow partners the opportunity to target active searches for city-specific activities and accommodations, reaching a more “down funnel” consumer. In local communities where SEM is not being targeted, BCF may consider an alternate approach to achieve maximum penetration results.
- We will monitor SEM on a monthly basis to identify keyword performance opportunities and update accordingly. In addition, we will work with county partners who are actively engaged in SEM to develop a strategic approach to bid management and keyword coverage to ensure maximum share of voice and minimal bid inflation. SEM will be measured against a cost per engaged user, however, cost per in-market visitor will not be available due to technical limitations of the tool.

## #3 Paid Social Media (20% budget allocation)



- Social media is one of the most important tools in our arsenal for building awareness, engagement and consideration for the VSLOC brand.
- The focus will be on Facebook and Instagram, two of the most effective platforms for user engagement around travel/destinations.
  - Paid Facebook ads and boosted existing posts will be used for content messages on more immediate/urgent opportunities for visitation like promotions, special events and deals.
  - BCF will also leverage the impact of Facebook’s newest Canvas offering for its storytelling capabilities through videos, still shots and call to action buttons.
  - Paid Instagram photo, video and carousel ads will be used in a similar way as Facebook Canvas to move beyond ads to a deeper engagement with our target and deliver our marketing messages through image-based storytelling.

## #4 Co-operative Advertising (20% budget allocation)

THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST

**BuzzFeed Sunset**

- The co-op advertising plan is designed to provide solutions which extend opportunities to the partners that would not be possible on an individual basis and that will provide measurable and tangible results. It will include:
- Native Brand Partnerships: We will partner with brands like The Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, Sunset or other platforms relevant to the target to deliver more robust native advertising. These partnerships will provide custom created content, stories, listicles, etc., with guaranteed views of the content pieces. Partnering with VSLOC on these stories will allow partners to offset the high cost of these pieces (\$100,000+) by sharing cost across partners. We recommend partnering with a publisher to produce two custom content pieces: one specific to outdoors and a second related to culinary. We expect to solicit five partners plus VSLOC to share the costs of each article, 50% VSLOC and 10% per partner.









# TRAVEL TRADE

Over the course of the last year, VSLOC's Travel Trade program has grown substantially, leading to increased awareness, consideration and demand for the VSLOC product. Targets for Travel Trade include:

- International and Domestic Tour and Travel
- Meeting and Conference
- Individual Travel Agents and Agencies
- Key Industry Association Memberships
- Association and Government

## **Tour and Travel**

Over the next year, VSLOC will strategically target key international and domestic tour operators to reinforce the SLO County product. In the international market, VSLOC will begin sales efforts in the UK, through a new exclusive partnership with Black Diamond, and in China, Canada and Mexico through sales missions in partnership with Visit California. Trade show attendance at NTA, IPW, GoWest and for the first time ITB Berlin, will build upon the sales mission strategy and expose new markets to SLO County offerings. Coordination of familiarization (FAM) trips will highlight the unique assets of the county. Regional sales missions will focus on international receptive operators based in California, and industry communications highlighting our area are to be distributed quarterly to Tour and Trade operators. Education is key, and the Tour and Travel program, Global Ready, assists lodging partners to become China ready and better understand how to service this growing clientele. The International and Domestic Tour and Travel market is a long-term investment and brings unlimited potential for business in shoulder and off-peak season in San Luis Obispo County.

## **Meeting and Conference**

VSLOC will also target corporate, association and government meeting planners focusing on the key feeder markets throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, Los Angeles and Orange County. By utilizing strategic partnerships and optimizing sponsorship opportunities, the team will create enticing meeting and conference packages and pitches, and use these to establish awareness at key trade shows (e.g., MPI, CalSae and GBTA). Quarterly sales missions into feeder markets and a meeting and conference specific FAM will be coordinated to expose meeting planners to the VSLOC product. Building upon last year's efforts, VSLOC will create awareness for SLO County, positioning it as an accessible and unique destination for meetings and conferences.



# TRAVEL TRADE

## ACTIVATIONS CALENDAR

		Q1			Q2		
		July	August	September	October	November	December
FY2016/2017	TRADE SHOWS						
					RVIA 10/13 Pamona, CA	SD Wine + Food 11/19 San Diego, CA	CalSae 12/1 Sacramento, CA
					IMEX 10/18-20 Las Vegas, NV		
	SALES MISSIONS & FAM						
					Visit CA Canada		
				T&T Southern CA		M&C 11/7-9 Sacramento, CA	
				VCA UK Super FAM	VCA China FAM		
	PARTNER/MEMBER						
FY2017/2018	TRADE SHOWS						
						SD Wine + Food San Diego, CA	NTA 12/14-18 Texas
						WTM 11/7-9 London, England	CalSae Sacramento, CA
					RVIA Pamona, CA		
	SALES MISSIONS & FAM						
	VCA UK/Ireland				VCA Canada		
				M&C Northern CA		T&T Southern CA	
	PARTNER/MEMBER						
					Packaging Party		



		Q3			Q4		
		January	February	March	April	May	June
FY2016/2017	TRADE SHOWS						
		GoWest 2/22-23 Reno, NV	ITB 3/8-12 Berlin, Germany	CA Cup 4/30 Los Angeles, CA	VRMA Western 5/8-9 Anaheim, CA	IPW 6/3-7 Washington, D.C.	
		Seattle Food + Wine Experience 2/26 Seattle, WA	MPINCC - Expo 3/9 San Francisco, CA	Smart Meetings Southern CA			
		NTA 2/26-31 St. Louis, MO	Connect 3/22-23 San Jose, CA				
	SALES MISSIONS & FAM						
		VCA 1/30-2/4 Mexico		VCA 4/10-14 China			
			M&C Northern CA		T&T Southern CA		
				Black Diamond Mission United Kingdom	M&C FAM		
	PARTNER/MEMBER						
			Packaging Party				
FY2017/2018	TRADE SHOWS						
		Smart Meetings Northern CA	Connect CA TBA		IPW 5/19-23 Denver, CO		
		World AG Tulare, CA	ITB 3/7-11 Berlin, Germany				
		GoWest 2/28-3/1 TBA	MPINCC - Expo TBA				
	SALES MISSIONS & FAM						
		VCA Mexico		VCA China			
			M&C Northern CA		T&T Southern CA		
				Black Diamond Mission United Kingdom	M&C FAM		
	PARTNER/MEMBER						
			Packaging Party				



# PUBLIC RELATIONS

The county is currently without an agency of record (AOR) for public relations activities. In the interim, these activities will continue to be handled in-house, and include:

- **An Updated, Branded Press Kit:** A new brand means the need to have a new way to communicate key message points to targeted media. Hard copies and electronic copies will be developed for distribution.
- **Brand-Centric Story Ideas:** We plan to craft story ideas that are not only in service of the brand and key messaging strategy, but also capitalize on current travel trends and pitch them to targeted media.
- **Media Familiarization Trips:** One of the best ways to influence coverage for San Luis Obispo County is to have media visit the area firsthand to experience a range of activities, accommodations and attractions relevant to their readership. Our internal team will identify and qualify media to visit the destination, either individually, as a group, directly or through partners like Visit California, and develop itineraries designed to expose them to local attractions and accommodations consistent with their stated interests.
- **Desk-Side Briefings:** Another way of exposing San Luis Obispo County to travel writers is to take the show to them, especially if they're not willing or able to travel to the area. Whether leveraging planned travel or as a stand-alone event, we plan to book meetings with targeted travel writers in specific markets.
- **Visit California Media Receptions:** Our public relations team will participate in the following Visit California Media receptions:
  - Chicago Media Bootcamp November 2016
  - Visit California Media Reception March 2017
  - Visit California Media Bootcamp / Spring April 2017
- **A Media Outreach Schedule:** Because of the variety of activities and promotions that take place each year, we want to ensure that we are not left out of any relevant planned stories or published event calendars. This master outreach schedule will allow us to pitch story ideas and provide event descriptions accordingly.
- **Social Media Activation:** San Luis Obispo County offers an array of great offerings and events that are well suited for the social media space. As a result, we have developed a detailed social activation calendar of topics to post as well as corresponding monthly giveaways.



# SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATIONS

MONTH YEAR	THEME	CONFERENCE	CONTENT	GIVEAWAY
Oct. 2016	Culinary Harvest/Fall	E-Tourism Summit	Fall into Fall in SLO County! Showcasing the culinary bounty, artisanal product offerings, breweries, distilleries, hard cider producers and unique seasonal offerings of San Luis Obispo County	Pop-up giveaways featuring olive oil partners, brewery tours, and seasonal events
Nov. 2016	Golf and Stay		Hit the links in SLO County because November is all about golf, wellness and relaxation	Small pop-up giveaways
Dec. 2016	Holiday		Experience the holiday happenings of each community, from lighted boat parades to holiday tours at Hearst Castle and a walk down Vine Street in Paso Robles	12 Days of SLO County: 12 small pop-up giveaways, 1 large getaway giveaway
Jan. 2017	Restaurant Month		Restaurant partners throughout SLO County offer special menus in celebration of California Restaurant Month	4-8 Restaurant Month giveaways (gift-cards to participating restaurants)
Feb. 2017	Romance Month		From spas and wellness activities to adventure and adrenaline, SLO County celebrates romance in every way	Mini-moon Giveaway
Mar. 2017	Film and Arts Month	Social Media Marketing World	Lights, camera, action! Go behind-the-scenes in SLO County at these film locations and catch the wave in the local arts scene	SLO Film Festival ticket giveaways
April 2017	Pet-Friendly Month		Travel with your four-legged friend to SLO County. Highlights include: pet-friendly lodging, dining, hiking trails, beaches and unique activities	Top Dog Photo Contest, winner receives a SLO County pet-friendly getaway
May 2017	National Travel and Tourism Month and Bike Month		Amgen Tour of California and National Travel and Tourism Week	Bike-related giveaway items and Mini-vacation giveaway during NTTW
June 2017	Great Outdoors Month		Get outdoors in SLO County to experience endless hiking and mountain biking trails, kayaking, paddleboarding, bi-plane rides, sky diving and so much more	Outdoor Getaway giveaway
July 2017	Historic Buildings, Markers and Monuments		Relive the past and learn about SLO County's storied history at the Atascadero City Hall, both California Missions, the James Dean Memorial and countless others	Summer Vacation giveaway
Aug. 2017	Family Travel		School is almost back in session so take one last summer vacation to SLO County and experience the family-friendly activities, events and outdoor fun	Family-Friendly giveaway (1 large and 3 small)
Sept. 2017	California Wine Month		California Wine Month	SLO County Wine Country Giveaway (large giveaway); 4 small giveaway items
Oct. 2017	Culinary Harvest/Fall	E-Tourism Summit	Fall into Fall in SLO County! Showcasing the culinary bounty, artisanal product offerings, breweries, distilleries, hard cider producers and unique seasonal offerings of San Luis Obispo County	Pop-up giveaways featuring olive oil partners, brewery tours, and seasonal events
Nov. 2017	Golf and Stay		Hit the links in SLO County because November is all about golf, wellness and relaxation	Golf Getaway giveaway
Dec. 2017	Holiday		Experience the holiday happenings of each community, from lighted boat parades to holiday tours at Hearst Castle and a walk down Vine Street in Paso Robles	12 Days of SLO County: 12 small pop-up giveaways, 1 large getaway giveaway
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Mar. 2018	Film and Arts Month		Lights, camera, action! Go behind-the-scenes in SLO County at these film locations and catch the wave in the local arts scene	SLO Film Festival ticket giveaways





# ***PARTNERSHIPS***

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The county will engage with strong regional and national brand partners to elevate the new brand through mutually-beneficial marketing and/or promotions activities. Ultimately, the goal is for the county, the partner and the consumer to find value such that:

- Consumer loyalty to one brand is extended to another
- Both partners are able to expand reach and enter into new markets and/or segments
- Marketing costs are reduced (or less than they would be if the partners attempted the activity on their own)
- Visitors and consumers find value in the partnership



We have identified the following list of partners and possible opportunities for consideration:



**LeftLane Sports:** In partnership with LeftLane Sports, the county can create a social campaign that puts featured products to the test in SLOC.



**Alaska Airlines + Local SLOC Winery:** Free wine tasting for qualified travelers on the SFO-LAX route courtesy of the county and a local SLOC winery.



**Alaska Airlines + Sanuk:** Business travelers on the SFO-LAX route receive a complimentary pair of Sanuk sandals with the idea of "keeping business casual."



**Amtrak:** First class travelers will enjoy a complimentary "SLO Your Scroll Pack," a fun, quirky and Instagrammable toolkit for planning and sharing the SLOC experience.



**Firestone Walker Brewing Company:** Partner with Firestone Walker Brewery to create a branded bottleneck hanger pairing experiences in the county with their delicious brews.



**Blue Apron:** Create a subscription series with Blue Apron that expresses the culinary experience on offer in the county; this is also an opportunity to promote the SAVOR experience.



**Levi's + Madonna Inn:** Partner with Levi's to create, transform and design a room at The Madonna Inn, a hub for social travelers and influencers.



**Thule:** Thule can become the county's "The Official Carrier", using a branded vehicle for targeted surprise and delight events and social giveaways.



**GoPro:** Leverage GoPro's "Be a Hero" brand in a social initiative that promotes the lesser known adventures in the county through the eyes of the "heroes" who experience them everyday.



**Dakine:** Partner with Dakine to promote sandboarding in the county with exclusive gear designs and accessories.

A full partnership plan will be put in place after negotiations are complete.



# SPONSORSHIPS & PROMOTIONS



## SAVOR—A San Luis Obispo County Experience

Visit San Luis Obispo County has developed a branded traveling destination experience to promote the county at food, wine and lifestyle events in key markets. The ongoing effort, SAVOR—A San Luis Obispo County Experience, will kick-off at the San Diego Bay Wine + Food Festival in November 2016 followed by the Seattle Wine and Food Experience in February 2017, with additional dates and locations scheduled in early 2017.



## Alaska Airlines

Following the announcement of the new direct route from Seattle to San Luis Obispo, the county began conversations with the airline to develop marketing activities surrounding the new route launch. The program details are being finalized and activation activities will center on grassroots efforts, with paid support.

## Ongoing Promotions

Monthly promotional activities will provide the opportunity to work with the constituency to build awareness for the partners and the county. A detailed calendar of planned promotions for 2016 – 2018 will be designed and distributed to partners at the completion of the rebrand. We will also provide the partners with a brand “tool-kit” to help ensure message and brand consistency with these promotions:

- **January:** Restaurant Month
- **February:** Romance Month
- **March:** Film and Arts Month
- **April:** Pet-Friendly Month
- **May:** Bike Month and National Travel and Tourism Month
- **June:** Great Outdoors Month
- **July:** Historic Landmarks Month
- **August:** Family Travel Month
- **September:** California Wine Month
- **October:** Culinary Harvest/Fall Month
- **November:** Golf & Stay Month
- **December:** Holiday Travel Month



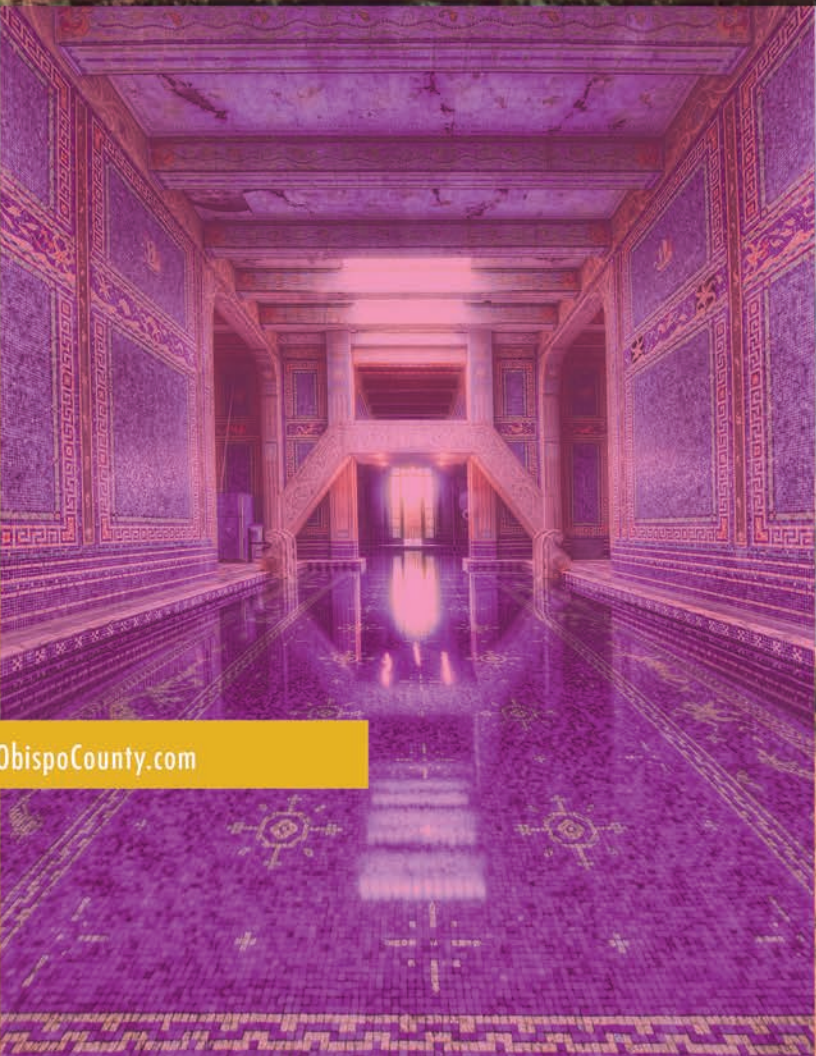
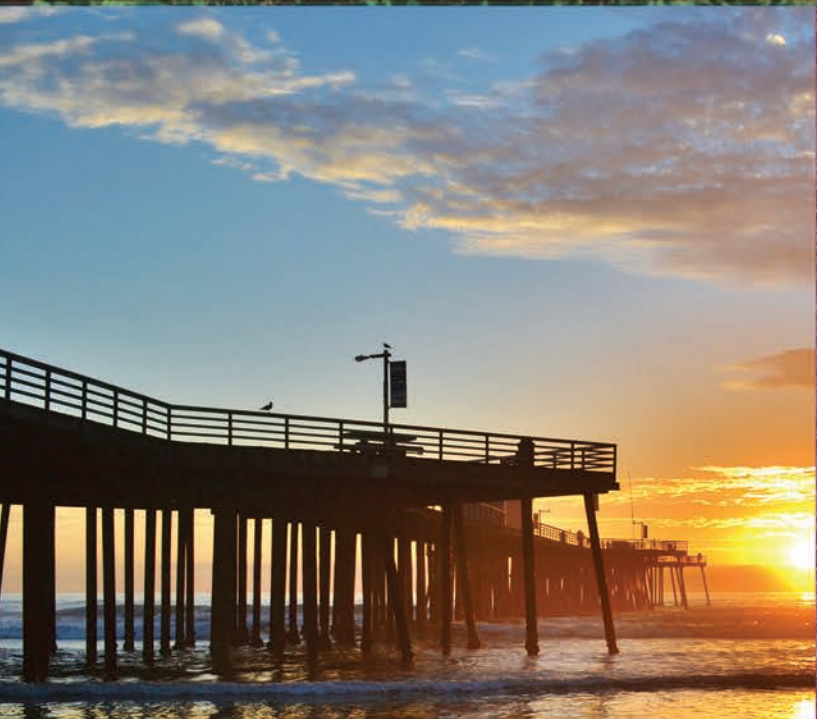
# FILM COMMISSION

VSLOC will continue the previous year's growth in the Film Commission contribution to the county, inviting productions for television, feature and documentary films, product shoots, etc. to work in San Luis Obispo County. In light of the VSLOC re-brand, the Film Commission will also work with BCF to re-brand itself, including an updated visual identity and web presence, along with other collateral and/or digital assets as required.

The VSLOC team will conduct proactive outreach to targeted leads from past productions, and identify new opportunities and markets at the same time. In addition to the individual productions, VSLOC will continue the success of hosting major events like the SLO Film Festival in March 2017, as awareness builders and lead generation tools. The county will also continue its vibrant and effective partnership with Film Liaisons in California Statewide (FLICS) in order to access filming professionals at conferences, educational symposia and other industry events.

The VSLOC team will communicate any developments and opportunities via quarterly email distribution and hosting a semi-annual partner meeting.





[www.VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com](http://www.VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com)

