



Meeting Summary: Travel Santa Ana Marketing Advisory Group

Date: April 17, 2024

Attendees:

- Wendy Haase-Roberts, President & CEO, Travel Santa Ana
- Erin Warady, Marketing Consultant, The Cannabis Chamber of Commerce
- Logan Crow, Executive Director & Founder, Frida Cinema/DTSA Artwalk
- Paul Eakins, Public Affairs Information Officer, City of Santa Ana
- Darlene Gonzalez, Senior Business Development & Marketing Coordinator, MainPlace Mall
- Maria Gonzalez, Content & Community Engagement Manager, Travel Santa Ana
- Cori Lantz, Recreation & Community Services Supervisor, City of Santa Ana
- Scott Melvin, Vice President of School Relations, Mater Dei
- Kelly Radomske, Vice President of External Affairs, Bowers Museum
- Cherie Whyte, Vice President, Marketing, Discovery Cube
- Maribel Silva, Operations Coordinator, Santa Ana Zoo
- Mary Long, Management Analyst, Santa Ana Zoo
- Jason (J-Bird) Venable, Co-Founder, Suavecito

Absent:

- Amanda Blazey, Director of Marketing, Orange County School of the Arts

No public comments.

Key Points Discussed:

The meeting aimed to enhance Santa Ana's marketing strategies through collaboration among local businesses, organizations, and Travel Santa Ana. Erin Wardy emphasized the importance of pooling collective marketing insights to promote the city effectively.

Roundtable Introductions: Participants introduced themselves, their roles, and discussed their activities for the next 60 to 90 days.

- **Cheri:** Highlighted the Discovery Cube just finished their Bubblefest two-week event. Talked about the upcoming DinoQuest exhibit opening May 25th featuring a new dino tracker quest for guests to discover dinosaurs and to experience the new animatronics giant T-Rex. She also mentioned they are getting ready for the fall Halloween festivities.

- **Paul**, the Public Affairs Information Officer for the City of Santa Ana, collaborates with Cori and the City Manager's office to promote events and programs, including partnerships and initiatives like Santa Ana Active Streets for bicycle classes. He highlighted Dia de Los Nino event on April 27, The Fun Run, and Public Works Week in May as key upcoming events. He urged everyone to visit the city's website for details on these events, city council meetings, and resources. Additionally, Ekins emphasized the work center's job support services, including job fairs, underscoring the city's commitment to community engagement and support.
- **Cori**, the community engagement supervisor for Santa Ana's Parks and Recreation Department detailed her role and projects like the Cultura Magazine which comes out 3 times a year. The next issue will be released in May covering June-Sept. She spotlighted key events: the Me Encanta Santa Ana Earth Day and Arbor Day celebration, the Santa Ana Fun Run, and summer camp registrations.
- **Logan**, Executive Director and Founder of the Frida Cinema, the only nonprofit model cinema in OC showcases classics to revivals and outdoor screenings with their 20 to 40-foot drive-in events to bring cinema entertainment under the stars. He highlighted their Tuesday free RCD-based international films paired with different new wave origins. Also mentioned they have sensory screening matinees for people with autism series matinees for people with autism and who need the lights on or want to move around freely.
- **Scott**, Vice President of School Relations at Mater Dei, highlighted his role and history of Mater Dei and its significance to the city. He mentioned there is always something happening at Mater Dei. They have a busy schedule ahead with upcoming events such as CIF playoffs and graduations, and numerous performing arts events in the coming month. Additionally, they anticipate hosting four out-of-state football teams next year, emphasizing the opportunity to showcase Santa Ana's offerings.
- **Kelly**, Vice President of External Affairs, Bowers Museum. She discusses the current exhibition, "Asian Comics Evolution of an Art Form," showcasing over 20 Asian countries' comic art, aiming to engage younger audiences. She highlighted their late-night extended hours with Cosplay encouraged on the last Friday of each month, offering discounted admission for Cosplayers. Additionally, they mention a special offer for Santa Ana residents, providing free general admission to the museum until September 8th, with a \$10 upcharge for the Asian Comic Show. They seek assistance in spreading awareness of this offer through community partners. Finally, they mention free family festivals on the first Sunday of every month, featuring diverse cultural celebrations.
- **Jason "J-Bird", Suavecito**, introduced himself as one of the three co-founders and owners of Suavecito, a local business in Santa Ana. He highlighted his deep roots in the city and the company's origin with the pomade company approximately 12 years ago. He

mentioned branching out into other ventures, including a brewery that opened in late 2020 or early 2021, a barbershop operating for about 10 years, and a coffee shop. Additionally, he discussed involvement in local community events and initiatives, emphasizing giving back to the community, particularly engaging with youth.

- **Darlene**, MainPlace mentioned the "Big Art at Main Place" program, which involves partnering with an art gallery owner to feature murals throughout the mall. Additionally, she outlined several free family-friendly events held monthly, including the upcoming Earth Day event and the Orange County Arts and Disability Festival partnership. She also mentioned the upcoming free summer play dates, featuring kid-friendly activities such as music selfie backdrops and craft giveaways. Furthermore, they shared information about the upcoming annual Taste of Santa Ana event, with save-the-date notifications set to be sent out this month for the October event.
- **Maribel and Mary**, Santa Ana Zoo, Maribel, shared updates on upcoming events at San Ana Zoo, established in 1952. Maribel expressed enthusiasm for her role and the events they organize. She mentioned the monthly Resident Day, held every third Sunday, and the upcoming Butterfly exhibit opening in May, likely scheduled for the first or second week, followed by Brew at the Zoo, an after-hours event for adults aged 21 and over in October.
- **Wendy: Travel Santa Ana Updates:**
 - Wendy introduced Travel Santa Ana's efforts in destination marketing, including launching a visitor guide, cannabis tourism promotion, and a public art guide compilation. The organization seeks to differentiate Santa Ana from other OC destinations and attract overnight visitors.
 - Collaboration Opportunities: The discussion highlighted potential collaborations, such as integrating events to give visitors reasons to stay longer and working together to promote Santa Ana as a unique destination.
 - Wendy invited the group to attend quarterly board meetings, participate in a tourism academy course to become certified Santa Ana experts.
- Scott offered Mater Dei students service hours or internships to support local events and organizations.
- Maria emphasized the importance of early event date sharing for better media coverage.

Next Steps: Wendy will create a Google Doc with Travel Santa Ana materials and contact information for all attendees.

Action Items:

- Participants to share event dates and information with Maria for inclusion on Travel Santa Ana's website.
- Attendees to consider collaboration opportunities and contact Scott for volunteer or internship support from Mater Dei students.
- Wendy to set up a Google Doc with meeting materials and follow up with information on the tourism academy and board meetings.