**Visit Mendocino County Board Retreat**

**Notes from breakout exercise and brainstorming on**

**Connecting with Constituents**

All Government Agencies—Board of Supervisors, Cities, legislators etc.

* We need to provide consistent and regular communication throughout the year. No one wants to see you on the day you need something. Develop that relationship over time.
* Include regular visits to local congressional district office and offices of state senator and assembly members.
* Need to include with our communications ancillary entities such as the farm bureau and state park system.
* Currently our report is “defensive.” (Change?)
* Demonstrate benchmarking. Describe where is VMC in relation to our prime competitors around? (Demonstrate VMC’s ROI?)

General Businesses (those not tourism-focused)

* Develop a brochure that describes who we are, the benefits we provide, and how to be our partner.
* Create a PowerPoint presentation that can be used for service clubs such as the Rotary.
* Provide a regular article in newspaper that describes recent successes and how that benefitted the county. People need to know the hard numbers.
* Seek opportunities to promote this message on local radio stations and Community TV
* Invite businesses to join the closed Facebook group, VMC Partners at Work
* Chambers are good partners in getting this message out. The relationship with Chambers of Commerce has improved. They can help tell the story of why VMC matters.

Lodging

* Run a targeted campaign for lodging, thanking lodging industry for bringing the money into the county and how this translates into what the tourism community is doing. Calendar this campaign annually.
* Provide talking points for Board and staff on BID Basics
* There are 3 things on our agenda: Campsite issue, going to a 5-year bid cycle and 2%.

**Action Needed**:

1. Create a BID Basics for Staff and Board. It could be a business card with talking points.
2. Put into budget an annual public relations campaign targeting lodging—April 15.
3. Prepare a Power Point that can be used by all for presentations to service groups.
4. Should we create a Committee focused on PR?
5. Re-activate the activity of producing a regular column in the local newspaper.
6. VMC can create a regular document (pdf) that can be shared with organizations such as Chambers and other networks, so the organizations of board members are aware of the successes of VMC.
7. Provide a report from the E.D. that can be used for P.R. and advocacy efforts
8. E.D. can create a newsletter article with bullet points indicating recent successes.
9. Prepare a public education campaign that prepares our partners and local businesses for the brand launch and the influx of business.
10. Consider resurrecting the concept of an annual meeting—can be used for public education described in #9.
11. Provide a short presentation to the Board of Supervisors about the launch of the new brand.
12. Secure radio station publicity for letting people know about this new brand campaign.