



VISIT MENDOCINO COUNTY

Strategic & Marketing Plan 2013/14





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...WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING



DRIVING “HEADS IN BEDS” AND WHY TRAVEL MATTERS

On behalf of the Mendocino County Lodging Association, the Mendocino County Promotional Alliance, the County of Mendocino and Visit Mendocino County, Inc., we are pleased to present our research based Strategic and Marketing Plan for 2013-2014. This plan describes how we, as Visit Mendocino County, Inc., will market the county to visitors from the Bay Area and beyond. By working with travel industry partners throughout the county, region and state, we will raise the awareness of our visitor offerings and will ensure we keep Mendocino County “in the conversation.”

Included in this report are our vision and mission statements, strategies for putting “heads in beds” and the tactics used to accomplish our goals and objectives. Also included are methods for measuring program effectiveness and results. In the plan, we once again stress the importance of businesses and organizations working together to increase visitation, target shared customers and improve the overall visitor experience. We launch a new sponsorship program which leverages a new fiscal resource “OPM” (Other People’s Money) and allows businesses of all sizes to participate at higher levels of engagement. We are proud to launch a new visitmendocino.com - the focal point for all marketing efforts, including increased online marketing, greater social media efforts and targeted editorial components. We strive towards discovering more of your stories to share with a wide spectrum of publics (consumers, industry professionals, local residents and destination advocates)—for it is our unique stories that make this destination so special.

Investment in our festivals and your events continues with our three countywide collaborative Crab, Mushroom and Earth IS First Festivals. Assistance with enhancing your events, or even exploring new events, remains part of our tactics of giving additional reasons for potential visitors to choose Mendocino County over other destinations.

We are an organization dedicated to making tourism matter, to positively impact our economy and the livelihood of the thousands of people who work in and benefit from the success of the local tourism industry. Now, more than at any other time, we fight for visitor dollars. We have reached the nexus of all our efforts to achieve unified success that will bring a larger share of the visitor market to Mendocino County, driving an increase in heads in beds and thereby increasing the vitality of the local economy.

The key to our success, creating an atmosphere of thriving businesses, will be in leveraging: dollars, relationships, reputations and consumers. The more we work in collaboration to truly share resources and assets, the further we will be able to project our message, our brand and our impact. The objective is to provide opportunities that increase business, to all partners large and small, in every corner of the county.

Travel matters, not only as a list of strategies and tactics in a marketing plan, but in the real-life applications that make the plans’ impacts so important in the everyday lives of its constituents and consumers. Our promise to this community is to use this plan as a road map toward achieving a new level of success. Together, we can all make travel matter for Mendocino County.

Warmest Regards,

Scott Schneider, President & CEO
Visit Mendocino County

Hal Wagenet, Chairman
Visit Mendocino County

VMC STAFF & CONTRACTORS



Scott Schneider
President & CEO



Richard Strom
Director of Sales



Jen Filice
Marketing & Communications Mgr



Erin Placido
Director of Operations



Colby Bowans
Sales Assistant



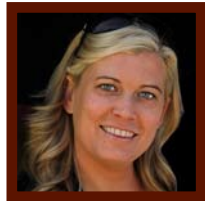
Susan Peakall
Admin. Assistant



Alison de Grassi
Event Coordinator



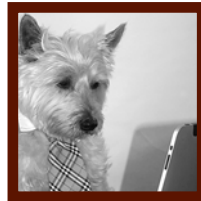
Brendan McGuigan
Dir. of Interactive Media



Heather Noll
HypeHouse
Contractor



Mark Seyvar
HypeHouse



Hairy Putter
Canine Ambassador



Hal Wagenet/Chair
Mendocino Arts Council



Robert Pinoli/Vice Chair
Skunk Train



Jan Rodriguez/Secretary
Baechtel Creek Inn



John Kuhry/Treasurer
EDFC



Glenna Blake
MTA



Cally Dym
Little River Inn



Renata Dorn
Mar Vista Cottages



Janis MacDonald
AVWA



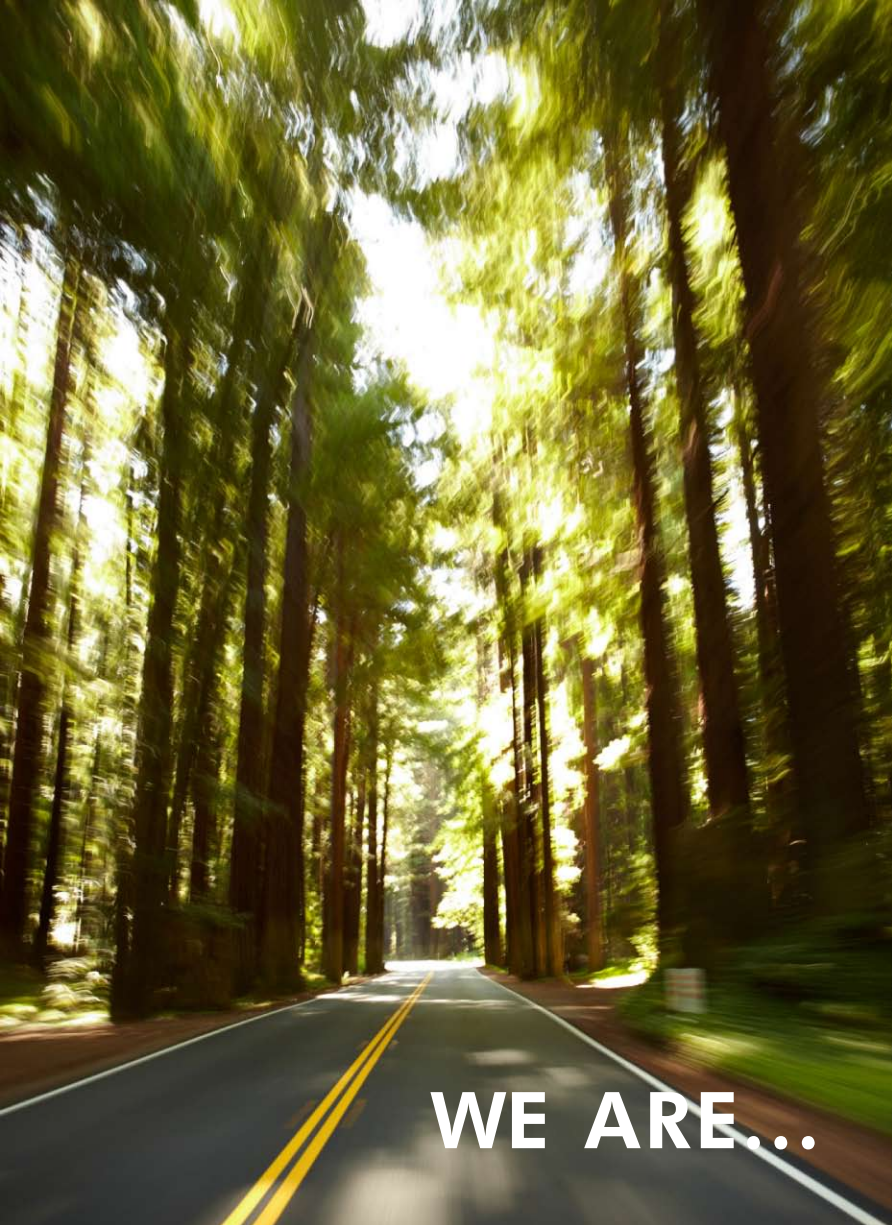
Jeff Stanford
Stanford Inn



Pauline Zamboni
Victorian Gardens

CURRENT VMC BOARD MEMBERS

...WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING



WE ARE...

This Marketing and Strategic Plan is our collective, community vision of tourism promotion for Mendocino County. In 2012, Visit Mendocino County created over 220 million media impressions, generated nearly 14,000 advertising leads, created new contracts for group business, and grew the consumer database by 19%. We are the Inspiration Highway. We encourage local businesses to provide exits off the highway, giving visitors reason to stop, stay and play!

THE INSPIRATION HIGHWAY



STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

Establish Mendocino County as a premier destination featuring quaint and charming villages, towering redwood forests and intimate and unique wineries resulting in high return on investment and increased room nights.

VALUES

Innovation

Seek and implement new strategies and tactics to further advance the Mendocino County brand.

Teamwork

Respect diverse opinions and work together to find strategic, quantifiable solutions to achieve shared goals.

Enthusiasm

Apply the passion that we have for our region's fierce beauty, independent spirit and natural lifestyle to each project that we undertake.

Accountability

Strategically plan our program of work, track our progress and make necessary adjustments to programs in order to realize the best value possible from our tourism-marketing investment.

Communication

Effectively share information about processes, programs and progress within our organization and the greater Mendocino County community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Drive Overnight Visitation

The VMC Board held a retreat defining the unifying goal of Visit Mendocino County: to increase room nights sold. All programs instituted in the 2013-14 marketing plan will support this key goal.

- **Research**

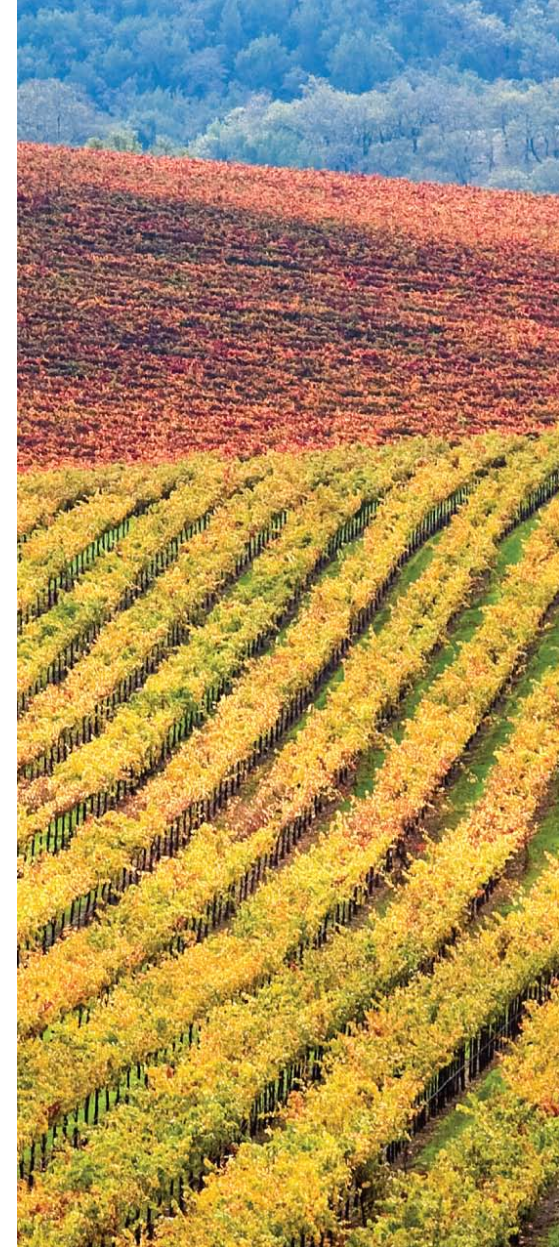
We will work with MCLA to conduct a research project updating the 2008 Randall Research study that will provide current information on visitors, trends and return on investment.

- **Communicate priorities, processes and results**

Just as the organization is focused on delivering the VMC message to consumers, it will also succeed in communicating its priorities, processes and results to stakeholders, government officials and residents in Mendocino County.

- **Develop an integrated approach**

We will create an integrated calendar to marketing programs that will allow the staff and stakeholders to leverage advertising, promotions, sales missions, social media, online campaigns, events, the VMC Marketplace and public relations outreach throughout the year.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **Launch a new website**

Create a robust website that provides consumers with rich editorial content that is relevant during each stage of the consumer buying cycle, expands VMC's mobile footprint and is fully optimized.

- **Establish a tracking process for overnight stays**

Collaborate with accommodations partners in tracking room nights, allowing the organization to better understand its impact beyond TOT and marketing values, including market share and efficiency.

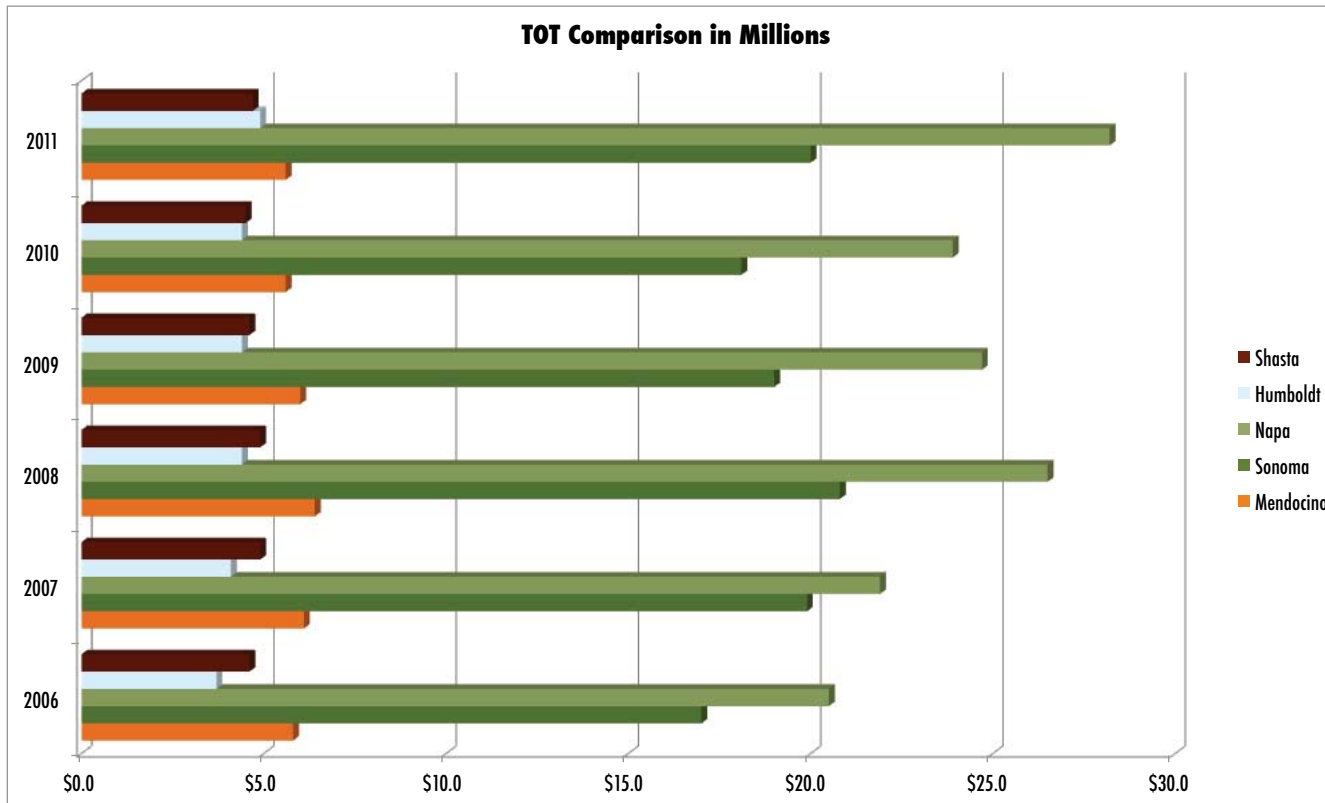
Currently, VMC has limited access to travel-tracking figures relating to market share, occupancy, daily rate or revenue per available room, which would be indicators for both the success of the region's combined tourism-marketing efforts and the health of the regional tourism industry. VMC does have access to tourism occupancy tax totals, and some larger-scale indicators that illustrate a portion of the local tourism industry's impact. When compared to competitive destinations, Mendocino County's recovery after the 2009 economic downturn is on par with other rural communities.

VMC will continue to work with lodging establishments on ways to measure occupancy rates, average daily rates, revPAR, etc. to assist in analyzing the effectiveness of marketing programs and initiatives.



TOT COMPARISON

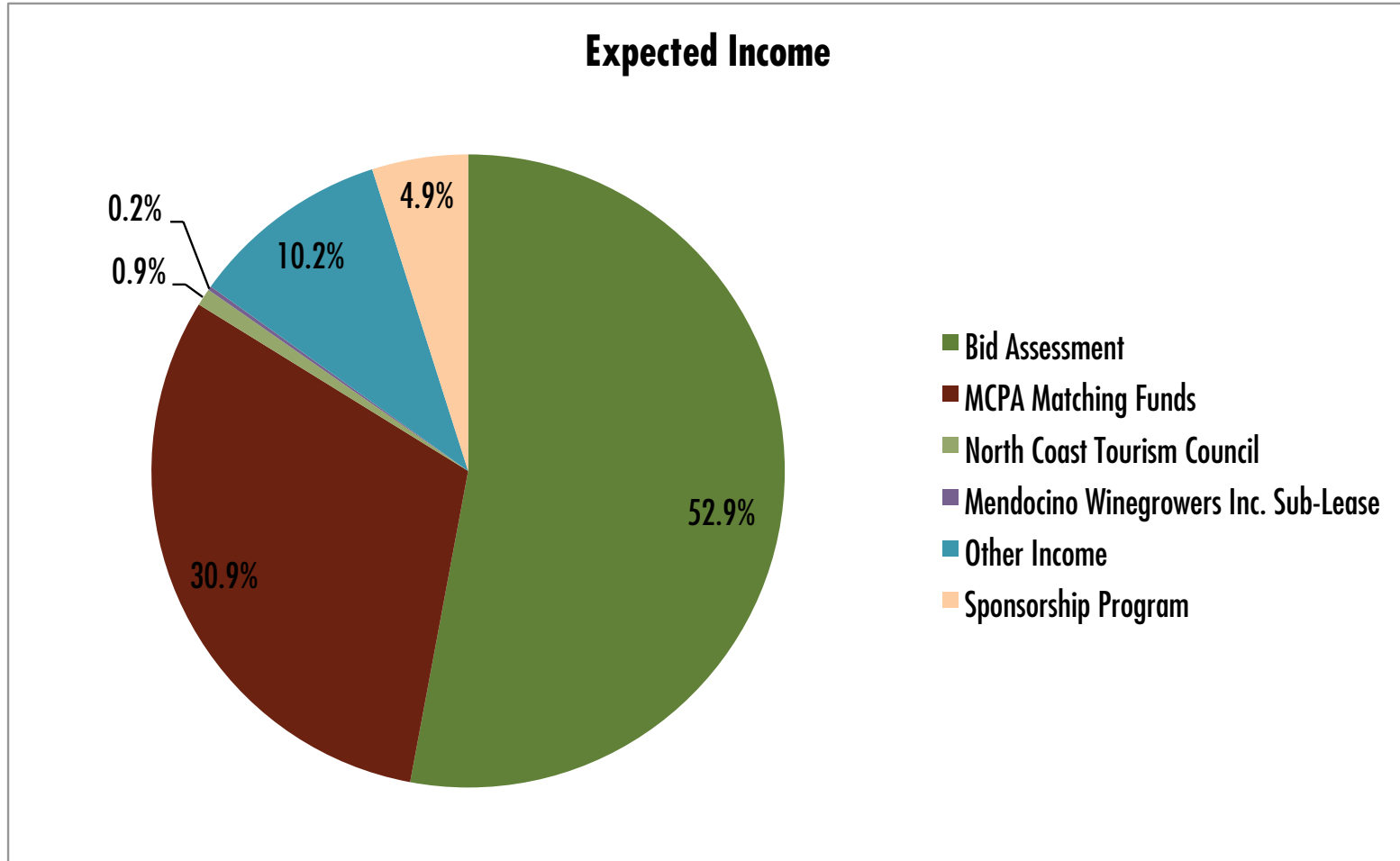
| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Total Annual Travel Spending | \$299 Million |
| Spending on Hotels/Vacation Homes | \$184 Million |
| Total Employment | \$88 Million |
| Local Tax Receipts | \$7 Million |



Dean Runyan & Associates,
2010

2013-2014 INCOME

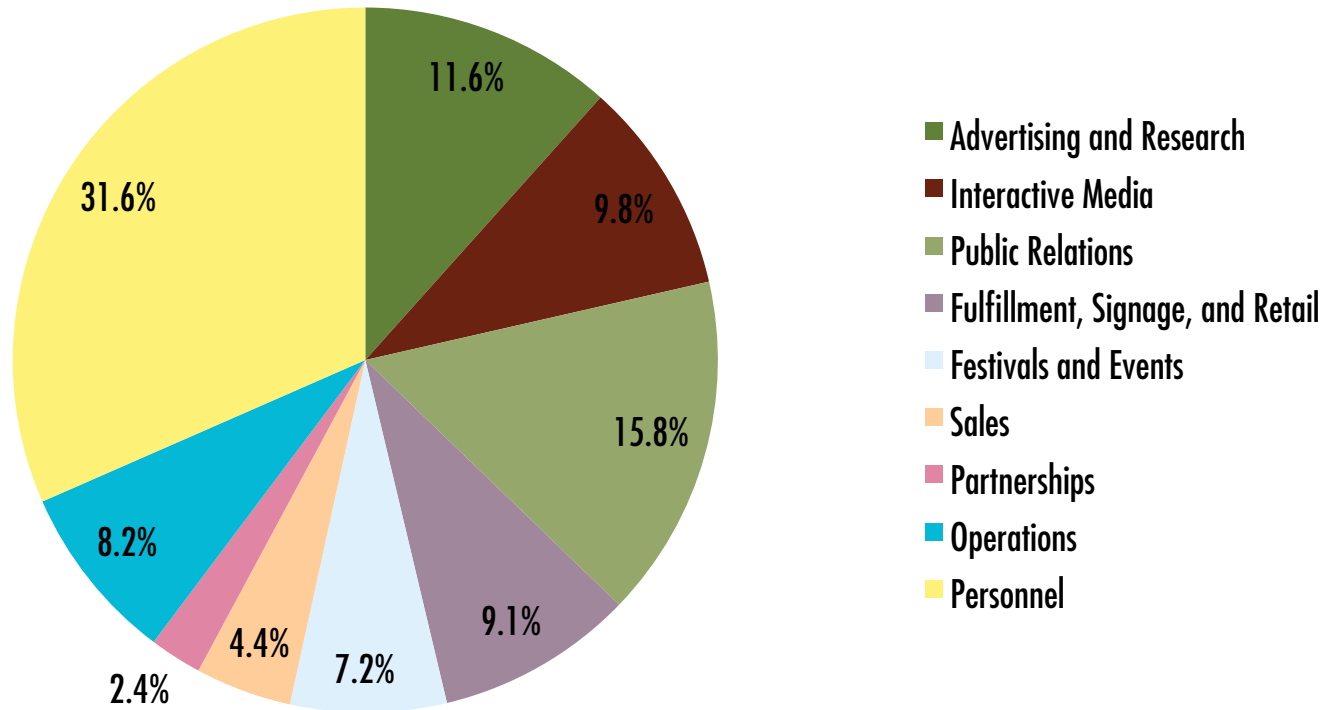
\$1,020,130



2013-2014 EXPENSES

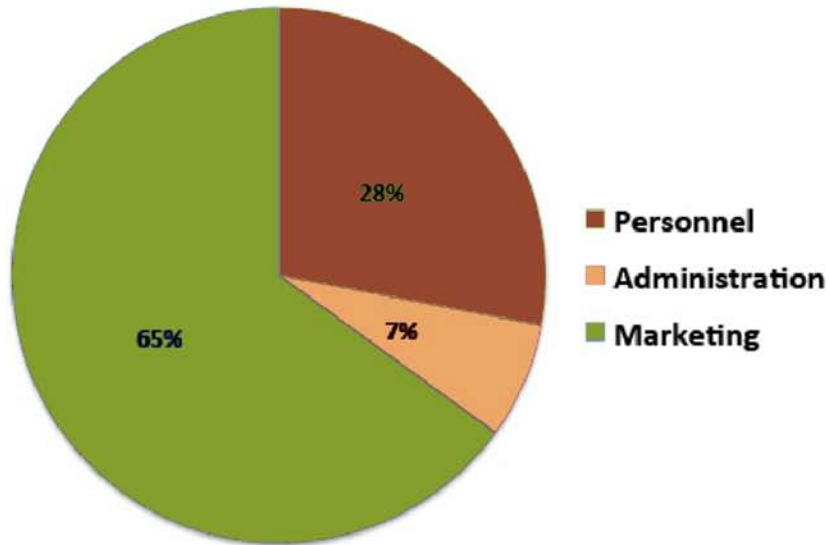
\$1,019,900

Expenses by Category

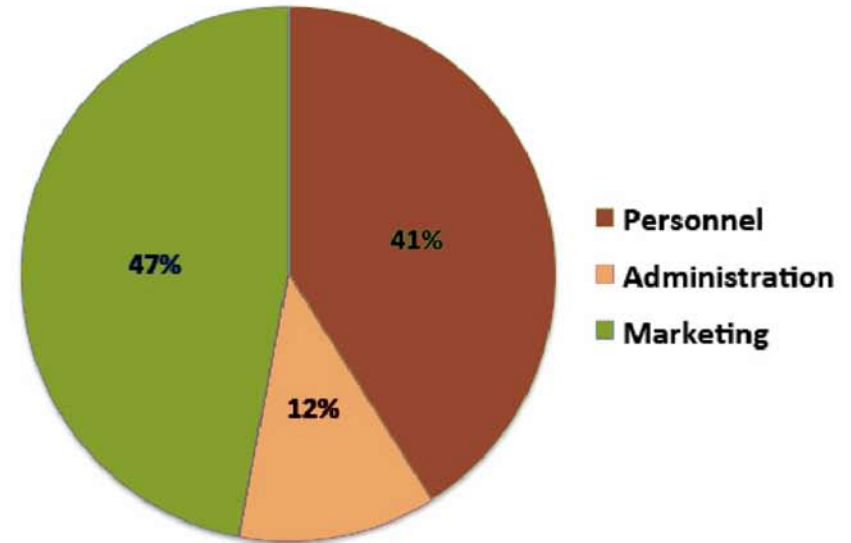


INDUSTRY COMPARISON

Visit Mendocino County 2011/2012 FY Spend



Industry Average*



* Represented by a Sample of 195 DMOs that Participated in DMAI's 2011 DMO Organizational & Financial Profile Study

GLOBAL MARKETING

Visit California recently announced that they are taking their focus, and their \$50 million budget, global by expanding marketing efforts beyond a centralized, domestic-centric brand platform. International visitors to California provide the highest value to the state's tourism industry, because they stay longer, spend more than domestic travelers and they travel year-round, including mid-week. Under the umbrella of the new global brand, Visit California will promote its key pillar segments: culinary, outdoor, family fun, arts and culture, and indulgence and luxury. Marketing partners will be linked into the overall plan via cooperative opportunities through these segments. Brand USA reported that international travel is expected to increase 36% by 2016, and it will be applying its \$200 million budget to capture a larger piece of that market share. Currently, 75% of inbound travel comes from Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom. However, an emphasis is being placed on the emerging China market. Chinese visitors stay an average of 10 days and spend 8 times what American tourists spend.

Visit Mendocino County, even with its modest budget, can take advantage of these new developments by continuing foreign individual traveler and group sales outreach, participating with Visit California and Brand USA on no- and low-cost cooperative marketing opportunities, and introducing product innovations in response to markets that show a return on investment. As in past years, this can be accomplished through our strong partnership with and administration of the North Coast Tourism Council.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Baby boomers (49 to 67 year-olds) continue to be the most influential group in travel, with 26% of the population and the largest amount of disposable income. With their characteristic youthful mindset and approach to life, boomers are looking for travel that is unique and different.

They are interested in exotic places, but they don't want to "rough it;" they expect some luxury. As they continue to work through retirement, they take shorter, weekend trips.* Travel researcher Peter Yesawich recently reported that more than 20% of active travelers are grandparents and of those, 40% have taken a trip with a grandchild in the last year. In addition, 80% of the time, a parent comes along. Multi-generational travel provides an opportunity to increase return on investment with larger trip sizes. Like boomers, millennials (12 to 30 year-olds), are drawn to new experiences. Ninety-three percent are more likely to try new things on vacation and 89% prefer to go to a new destination. While this generation has been the most impacted by the economic downturn, Yesawich believes that "smart money in marketing is no longer in trying to repatriate the existing guest; it's in cultivating the sense of wanderlust that's percolating in the next generation."



SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

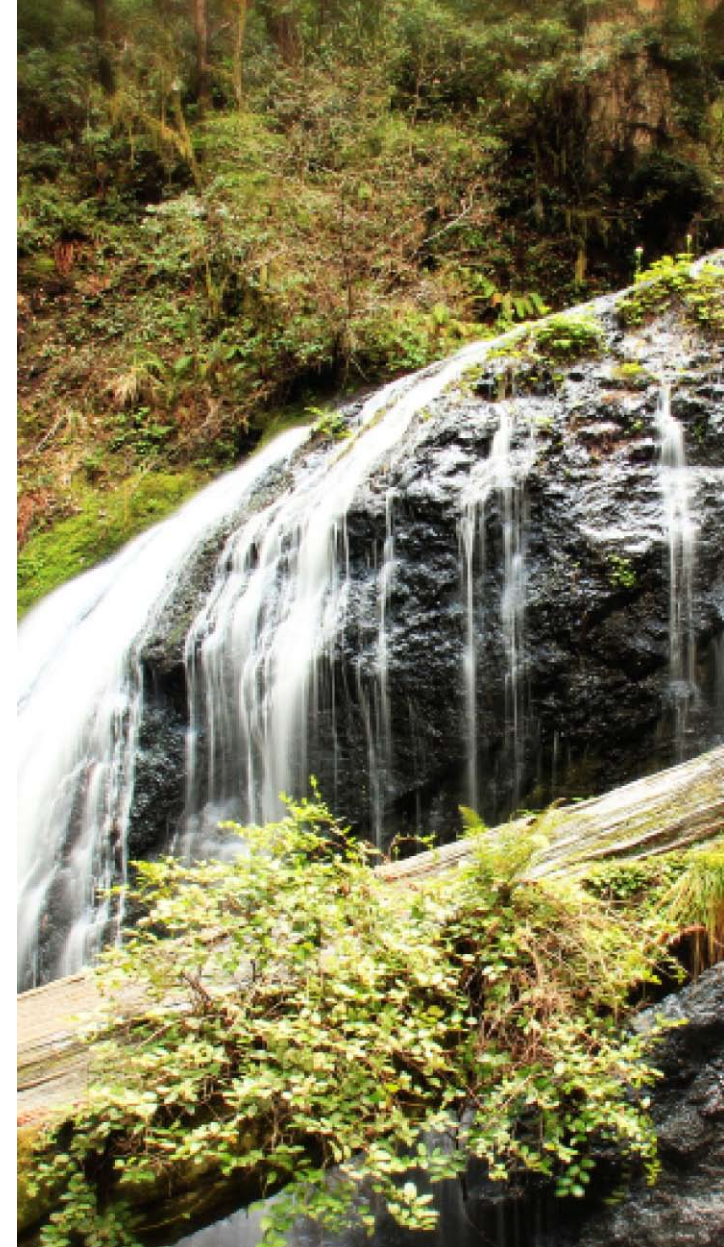
According to the 2008 visitor research study conducted by Mendocino County partner organizations, the average guest is a baby boomer, traveling without children, who stays in a bed and breakfast accommodation. While it is important that Mendocino County remains a favorite destination for boomers, it will also be increasingly important to reach out to the next generations of travelers. Visit Mendocino County will use its marketing investment to reach out to boomers in the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as in reaching out to and engaging younger generations. Another interesting result from the 2008 visitor study showed that 30% of travelers arrived in Mendocino County through a fly/drive transportation combination. Visit Mendocino County will use this as an opportunity to partner with appropriate media or travel organizations who also target a younger demographic in fly/drive markets, like Los Angeles.

*New York Times, "In Travel, We're All Boomers Now." February 1, 2013



ONLINE MARKETING

More than half of all Americans have a smart phone. Twenty-seven percent have a tablet and 20% have both. As mobile devices become more pervasive, it also becomes necessary to provide content about Mendocino County through mobile means. Progressively more travelers are using mobile devices during all stages of the buying cycle, and a larger amount of travelers are beginning to book trips via mobile access. In addition, the social landscape continues to deepen with 73% of travelers having Facebook accounts, 63% checking Trip Advisor before making their transactions and 32% visiting YouTube for customer reviews. Online travel agents continue to benefit through their web-based real estate. They are conveniently available online, always open and the strength of their marketing is formidable. A majority of consumers have the perception that they find the best deals on OTAs like Expedia and Travelocity, even when it often is not the case.





ONLINE MARKETING

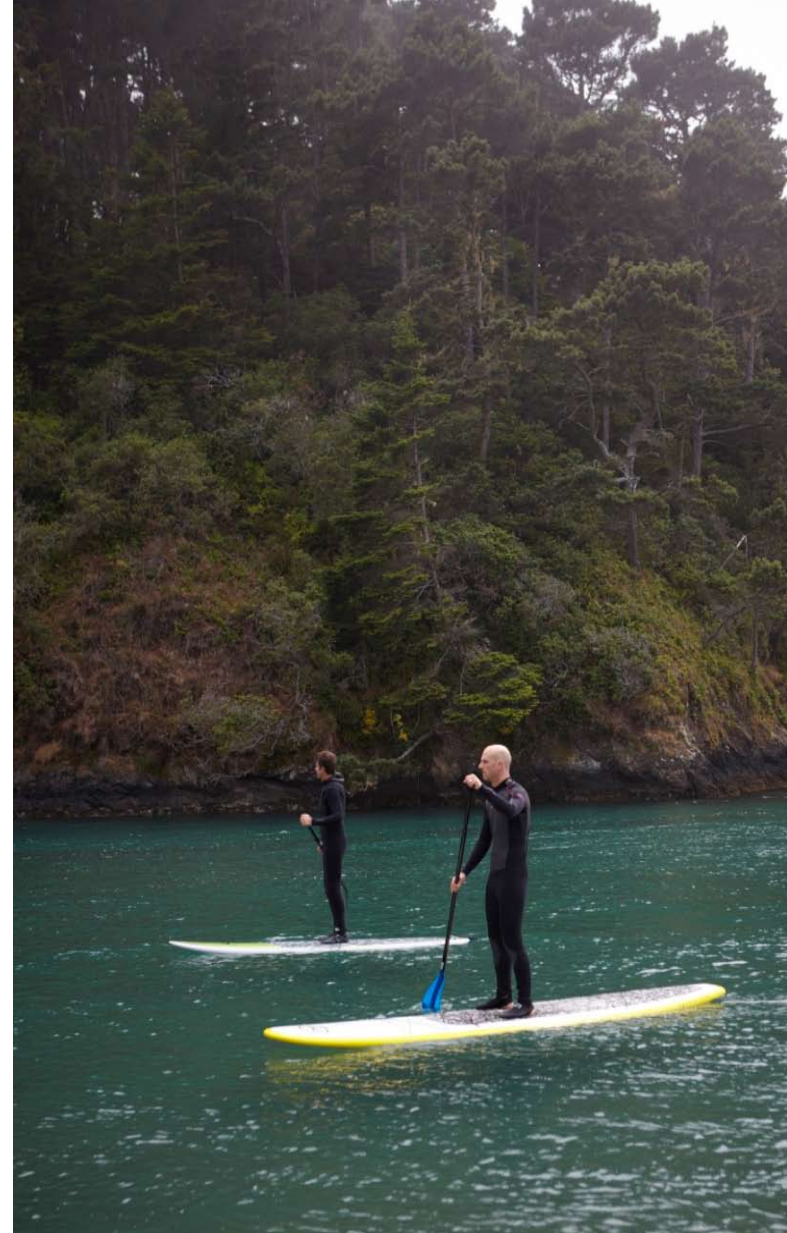
The online marketplace continues to evolve, and Visit Mendocino County will activate all of its current marketing assets in pursuit of relevance to the consumer. With the 2013 launch of a new website bringing improved mobile functionality, VMC will be primed to be where consumers are looking when they are dreaming, researching, buying and reminiscing about travel. In addition, Visit Mendocino County will seek partnerships with media and online entities to further leverage our online marketing investment. In turn, the VMC website will serve as a funnel for leads received from marketing efforts, creating the opportunity for hotel bookings and itinerary planning.

SEGMENTS

LGBT Travel Marketing

Mendocino County is fortunate not only in the beauty of its rural surroundings, but in its proximity to one of the largest and most progressive urban areas in the United States. In addition, the San Francisco Bay Area is home to a large lesbian and gay population with disposable incomes. According to the 2011-12 Gay and Lesbian Tourism Report, compiled by Community Marketing Inc, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) travelers are more likely to both travel to destinations and choose hotels with gay-friendly reputations. Half of those surveyed considered themselves "budget travelers," preferring to spend money on dining, attractions and additional trips, and 65% of those surveyed booked with hotels directly. And, 68-70% posted updates and photos to facebook during and following their trip. Clearly, this segment is composed of savvy travelers, who given a great experience, become destination brand advocates.

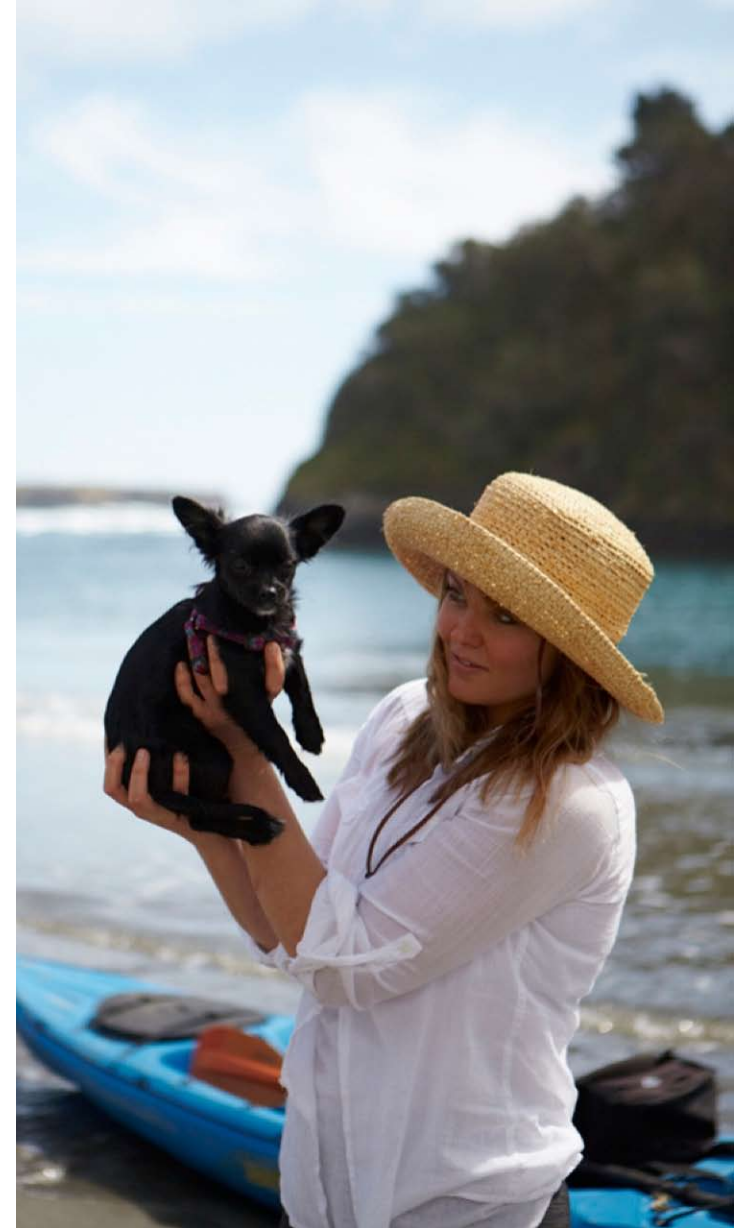
"Exploring a new destination" and "rest and relaxation" topped out as LGBT motivators to travel, providing Mendocino County with a potential for brand affinity. VMC will work to open communications with our LGBT consumers, and seek opportunities to create increased countywide engagement with this market.



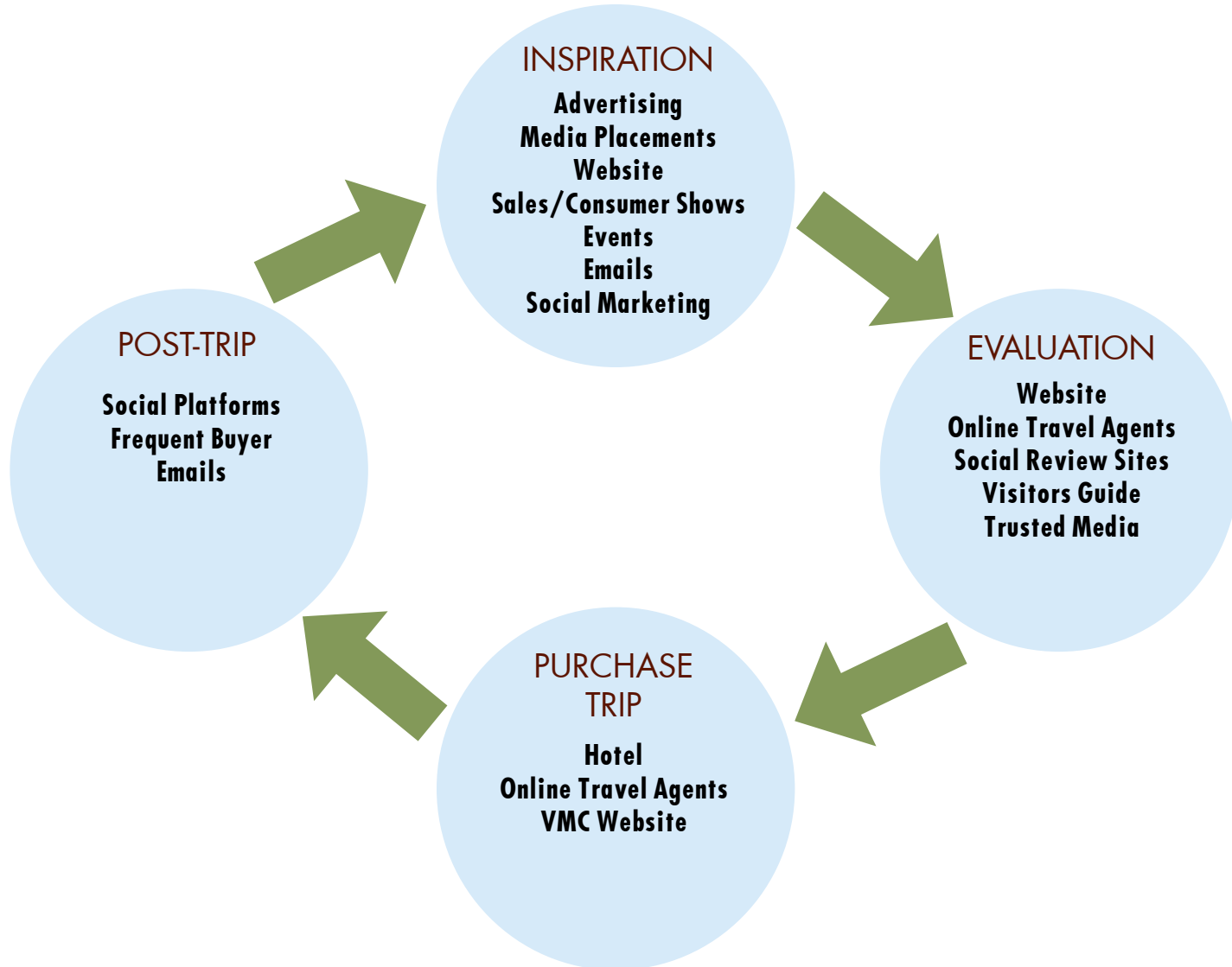
SEGMENTS

Pet Friendly Travel

According to a recent study conducted by Destination Analytics and dogtrekker.com, 47% of all leisure travelers own a dog and 41% of those that do have traveled with their dog in the past two years. In researching travel, this segment turns to online search engines, guide books, and friends and family for best recommendations on pet friendly accommodations and services. VMC's pet friendly campaign continues to be a fun and engaging way to communicate with these travelers. This year, VMC will work with a number of regional tourism partners to produce and distribute a California pet-friendly brochure, and continue promotions with VMC "Director of Barketing" Hairy Putter.



CUSTOMER BUYING CYCLE



MARKETING

As the region's destination marketing organization, Visit Mendocino County takes the leadership role in defining the regional brand, establishing key marketing messages, and designing and implementing an integrated marketing plan. Visit Mendocino County interacts with travelers during each phase of the buying process, and will inspire, extend and participate in the conversation that promotes visitation. Further involvement by VMC partners serves to expand the impact of each marketing program and increases overall awareness of Mendocino County.

Visit Mendocino County invests a portion of the marketing budget in paid media advertising and research. Advertising serves as a pivotal tool in increasing awareness and communicating promotional messages. Research provides important insight into the Mendocino County visitor and program efficiency. Research best practices recommend that visitor research is refreshed at least every five years. The 2013 research study will provide an update to the 2008 Randall study, as well as a baseline for future return on investment measurements.





MARKETING

Goal: Increase awareness of the Visit Mendocino County brand, and increase visitation and participation with the website, social marketing platforms and visitor database.

- Target key visitor demographics with branded traditional, online and social advertising and promotions.
- Drive visitation during spring and fall shoulder seasons.
- Further extend advertising impact by instituting supporting segment programs with low-cost promotions, social media, email marketing, public relations, leveraged opportunities and online tactics.
- Conduct visitor research study, providing valuable information on visitor demographics and perceptions, trip information and utilization of VMC marketing tools in trip planning process.

Measured Outcomes

- Research study responses reporting significant impacts from paid media.
- Increased visitation and engagement in the VMC website and social media platforms, and increased size of the consumer database.

MARKETING INITIATIVES

Brand Advertising

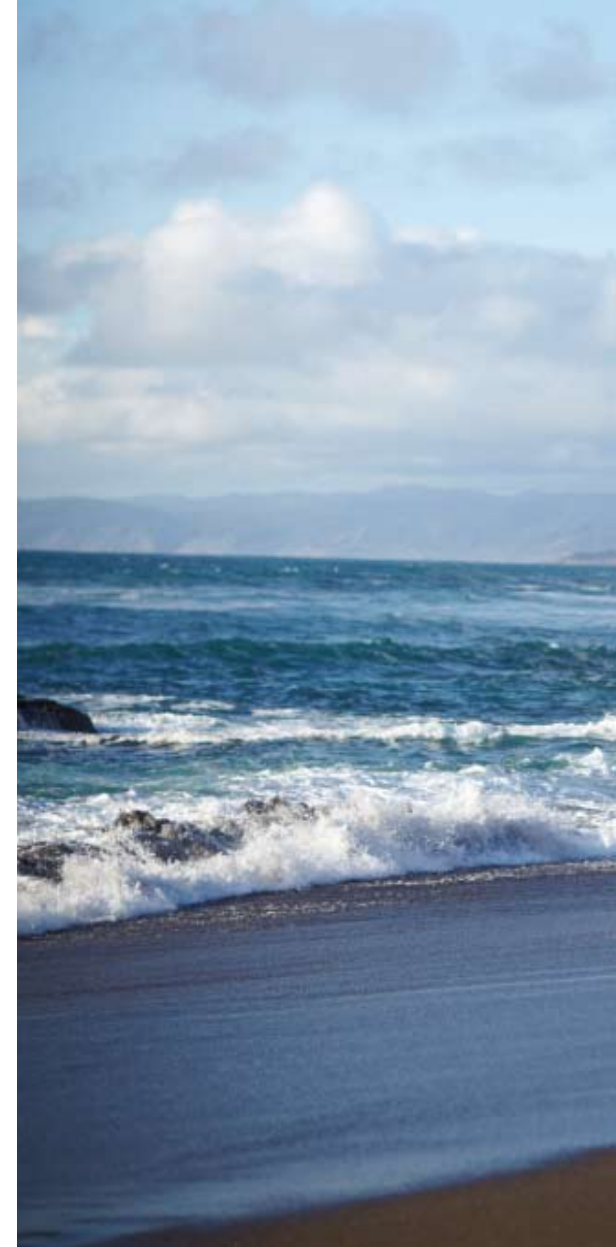
VMC will continue to target key markets using the new brand advertising created in FY 2012-13. Emphasis will be placed on creating awareness of the Mendocino County brand and in clearly defining the brand promise and attitude.

Segmentation

In addition to the traditional target (SF Bay Area boomers), VMC will target and test key interest segments that align with the Mendocino County brand, including: soft adventure, millenials, gay and lesbian, pet friendly and fly/drive markets.

Partnerships

Continue to engage and strengthen partnerships that will further extend the VMC mission and brand, including: North Coast Tourism Council, Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, Visit California, San Francisco Travel, Mendocino Winegrowers Inc., Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association, Visit Ukiah, local Chambers of Commerce, Fort Bragg Promotions Committee, California State Fair, and others.





MARKETING INITIATIVES

Promotions

Using all VMC marketing tools, design promotions in order to drive immediate results. Seek opportunities to provide low-cost and no-cost marketing programs and advertising buy value-added extensions.

Packaging

Work with accommodations, attractions, restaurants, events and winery partners to develop marketable packages to drive room night sales. Research partnerships with third-party marketing entities.

MARKETING CALENDAR: JULY – DECEMBER 2013

| | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| VMC ADS | | | In Market SF | | Mushroom SF | |
| VMC PROMOTIONS | Soft Adventure SF/LA | | Fall Promotion SF/LGBT | | Foodie SF/LA | |
| INDUSTRY EVENTS | | | CA-LA Media Rec CA Wine Month | | | |
| LOCAL EVENTS | Music Festival | MC Wine Comp. | Kinetic Carnivale | | Mushroom Fest | Holiday Promotions |
| VMC TOURISM WORKS | | | MCLA Tourism Summit | | | |
| GEO-TARGETS | Central Valley | | | | | |
| HOLIDAYS | July 4th | | Labor Day | Halloween | Veteran's Day Thanksgiving | Winter Holidays |
| PRESS RELEASE SCHEDULE | | NC Personality | Crab Fest | Wine Tasting | | |
| | | What's New Summer | Holiday Promotions | Specials/Events | | |
| CO-OP PARTNERS - VIA | | | Sept/Oct | | Nov/Dec | |
| SALES: TRADE SHOWS | State Fair (VMC) | | Western Assoc. of CVB - (VMC) | Reception with SF Travel for Tour Operators (VMC) | | L. A. Reception for Tour Operators (NCTC) |

MARKETING CALENDAR: JANUARY – JUNE 2014

| | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| VMC ADS | Crab | In Market SF | | | | |
| VMC PROMOTIONS | | Spring Promotion | | | Pet Friendly | Taste of Mendocino |
| INDUSTRY EVENTS | CA Restaurant Month | Visit CA Outlook | | | | |
| LOCAL EVENTS | Crab Fest | Alsace | Whale Fests | Earth IS First | Pinot Fest | Film Festival SNWMF |
| VMC TOURISM WORKS | | | | | US Travel Tourism Works | |
| GEO-TARGETS | | | | | | |
| HOLIDAYS | | Valentine's Day | Spring Break | | Mother's Day Memorial Day | Father's Day |
| PRESS RELEASE SCHEDULE | | | | | | |
| CO-OP PARTNERS - VIA | | | March/April | | May/June | |
| SALES: TRADE SHOWS | Go West (NCTC) | Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show (VMC), NTA (NCTC) | | | Sales mission Canada (PAY FOR PLAY) | Sunset Celebration Weekend (VMC) and POW WOW (NCTC) |

More than any other component of VMC's marketing, public relations efforts that result in media coverage for VMC partners are able drive destination awareness. The public relations campaign is a major investment for VMC, providing an equally significant payoff in earned media value. The public relations program has driven millions of consumer impressions, and provides an opportunity to connect with potential visitors, local government officials and regional residents through the valued and trusted voice of a third party. This year, public relations efforts will include a strong internal communications plan, tightly linking organization constituents with information about the VMC's processes, results and opportunities.

Goal: Increase awareness of the Visit Mendocino County brand and brand partners, and increase visitation.

- Showcase the positive Mendocino County message among key publics who will ultimately inspire travelers to visit, including: media, VIP travel and media opinion leaders, internet media, key government leaders and internal audiences.
- Integrate the public relations campaign to align with VMC's overall marketing campaigns and programs, and leverage paid and promotional media placements.
- Develop and strengthen internal communications campaign in order to share the VMC story with local partners, VIPs and regional residents.

Measured Outcomes

132,929,000 Earned Media Impressions

\$5.5 Million Ad Equivalence

PUBLIC RELATIONS INITIATIVES

Personality Pitch

Promote storytelling that showcases the brand personality of Mendocino County, its unique people, attractions and locations.

Segmented Messaging

Craft messaging that targets specific audiences to inspire travel to Mendocino County.

Broadcast and Video

Seek opportunities to increase high-quality broadcast coverage, gaining increased impressions on television and in online video productions. Plan, produce and execute new VMC video for enhancement of visitor brand interaction, and to provide inspiration and resources for media.

In-person Editor Meetings

Set up face-to-face meetings (desk sides) with key editors in major media markets such as New York, San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento and Los Angeles. Meetings will be solo and in collaboration with Visit California and other partners.

Taste of Mendocino

Plan and co-host a special event showcasing Mendocino County to editors, producers, travel VIPs and industry opinion leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Internal Public Relations

Establish an internal public relations program that includes direct communication with members, presentations at regional meetings, mixers and build a partner ambassador program.

VisitMendocino.com is VMC's primary source of disbursing information about Mendocino County online and is the heartbeat of all of VMC's efforts. In the coming year the website will transition to becoming an editorially rich, emotionally resonant portal to the Mendocino County experience. Our new site will be built on contemporary technology, seamlessly integrating mobile- and tablet-based browsing, and offering a full suite of social sharing options. This is an exciting step forward in how we communicate our brand message.

Goal: Increase user engagement and reach.

- The new website will feature more story-driven editorial content, highlighting the differentiators of Mendocino County, and referencing specific locations and businesses within the county. The new site will shift toward interconnectedness, allowing potential visitors to explore everything the county has to offer.
- Support website launch with online marketing campaign that includes search engine and display advertising, and partnerships.
- Continue to grow and engage with VMC social media and database of consumers, inspiring more visits to the region.

Measured Outcomes

Total Monthly Impressions (Page Views):
69,600

Time on Site: 4:30

Total Consumer Database: 30,000

Engaged Consumer Database: 3.0%

Total Facebook Fans: 23,400

Average Facebook Reach: 1:1.6

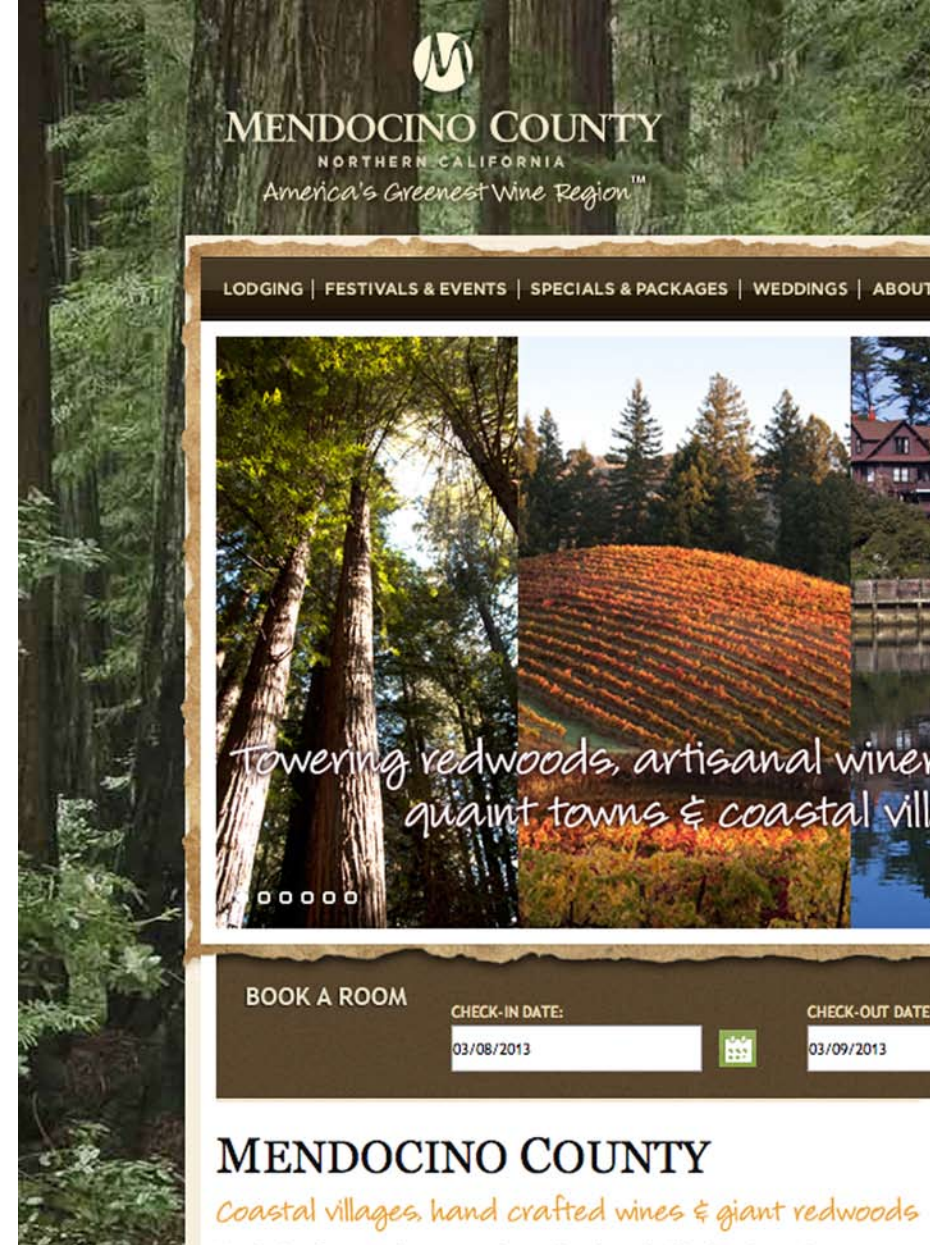
INTERACTIVE MEDIA INITIATIVES

Integrate Editorial Content and Interconnectedness

Our new website will feature more story-driven editorial content, highlighting the differentiators of Mendocino County, and referencing specific locations and businesses within the county. Large, vibrant imagery will accompany every page of the website. The new site will shift toward interconnectedness, allowing potential visitors to explore everything the county has to offer.

Mobile and Tablet Functionality

The new VisitMendocino.com will be built as a fully responsive site, with touch-gesture functionality, and dynamic sizing of image and content areas, providing the best experience possible for visitors as they continue to shift toward mobile and tablet devices as their primary source of trip planning.





INTERACTIVE MEDIA INITIATIVES

Track Consumer Interaction

A robust website back-end will allow us to track specific user paths, giving VMC and its partners important information about visitor interest. VMC will be able to follow usage patterns, to assist in evolving our online presence and furthering the impact of the Mendocino County brand.

Social Sharing

Synchronizing with our shift toward more editorial content, integrated social widgets will allow visitors to share their favorite image or comment with their broader circle of influence. This form of social sharing is quickly becoming an important driver of decision making, as users shift some of their attention away from searches to peer recommendations.

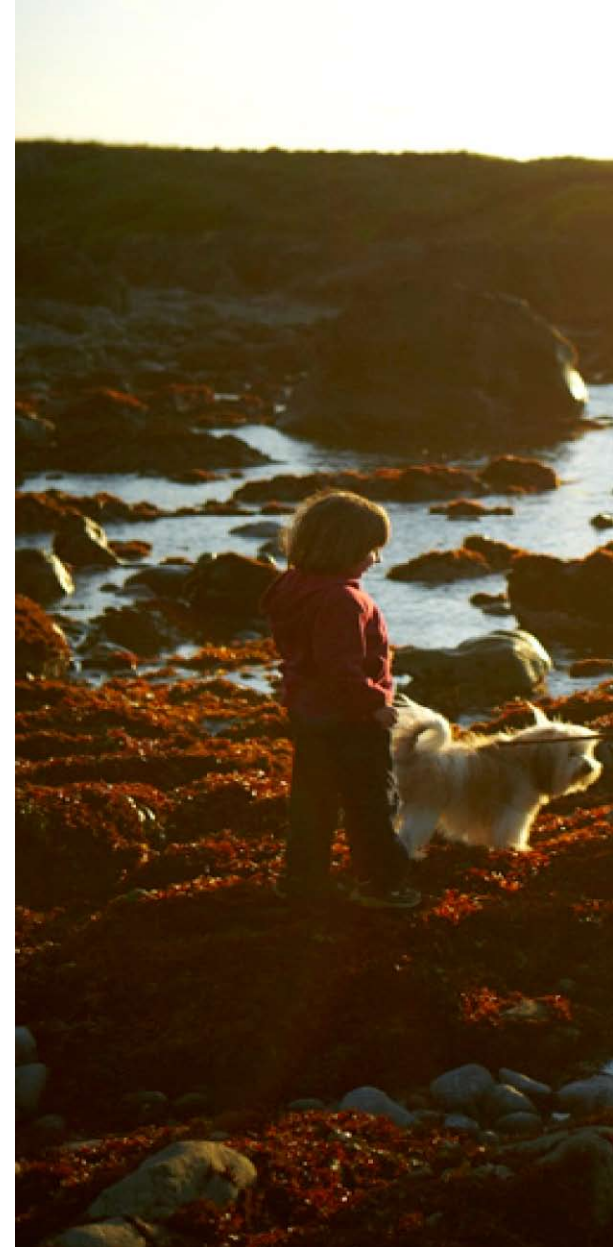
Broader Search Engine Optimization Strategy

VMC will use best practices to optimize search engine results.

GROUP SALES

The Visit Mendocino County consumer sales effort includes participation in key direct-to-consumer leisure shows and personal visits to California-based tour operators, receptive and travel organizations. In addition, VMC benefits from a leveraged sales program through the administration of the North Coast Tourism Council (NCTC). NCTC primarily targets international group and FIT business, bringing additional opportunities, with the goal to attract visitors to all North Coast partners.

The process of building a DMO sales program is a multiple year, multiple contact undertaking, with payoffs over time occurring through relationship building, education and inspiration about our destination, as well as active follow up. These relationships translate into opportunities for partner accommodations and attractions to capture their own sales, completing the outreach effort. Over the past two fiscal years, we feel confident that the VMC sales effort has resulted in at least 500 room night sales. At an average room rate of \$140 and an average daily spend of \$491, those room night sales have made a \$315,500 impact on the county and its partners.



GROUP SALES

Goal: Create opportunities for partner businesses to realize room night sales.

- Attend the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show and Sunset Celebration Weekend.
- Provide support collateral to potential clients, helping to tell the Mendocino County story: sample itineraries, photos, media angles, maps and visitor guides.
- Coordinate efforts with partner organizations including: Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, Visit California, San Francisco Travel, Sacramento Visitors & Convention Bureau, Southern Oregon Travel, and DMOs in Sonoma, Del Norte, Humboldt and Marin counties.
- Track room night sales sold through all available means.
- Target domestic FIT (Foreign Individual Traveler) and group business.

Measured Outcomes

Acquire 6,000 consumer leads.

Sell 1,000 room nights as a result of VMC sales efforts.



GROUP SALES INITIATIVES

Leisure Shows

- Continue participation in direct to consumer tradeshows, Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show and Sunset Celebration Weekend, providing inspiration for travel to Mendocino County and acquiring consumer database leads. Investigate some niche market shows including wedding, pet, motorcycle, bicycle and car shows.

Develop Tracking Mechanism

- Open communications with accommodations partners and group travel companies to ensure VMC is able to track booked room nights as a result of outreach and relationships. Create a process for tracking and reporting these leads, room nights and resulting economic impact.

Partner with North Coast Tourism Council

- VMC administers and participates in the Visit California established regional/rural cooperative program that brings North Coast DMOs together to leverage marketing dollars. Through this partnership, VMC reaps the benefits of a combined international outreach that would be impossible without participating partners.
- Sales Missions/Trade Shows – NCTC attends international and domestic tradeshows that target the group travel and FIT professional, providing additional exposure to potential leads. Sales missions have included receptions in Los Angeles, New York, Canada and the UK, targeting specific markets for travel to Mendocino.
- FAM Trips – Familiarization trips allow potential group and FIT tour operators to get educated about a destination, its attractions, accommodations and environment. FAM trips are an important component of sales efforts.

VISITOR SERVICES



Visitor Services represents the extra-special effort that VMC devotes to ensuring that visitors have top-notch experiences with the Mendocino County brand. Visitor Services programs include: event coordination, collateral creation and distribution, information request fulfillment, and maintenance of visitor information centers.



EVENT COORDINATION

Countywide events and festivals are a motivation for visitors to make the County their destination, increase the length of their stay, and provide a service to partners and visitors alike. The Beer, Wine & Mushroom Festival, the Crab, Wine & Beer Festival, and the Where the Earth IS First Festival are focal events.

Goal: Increase and lengthen overnight stays, and increase opportunities for editorial placement about Mendocino County.

- Work with businesses to develop new events that both highlight the unique aspects of the County and utilize value partnerships.
- Engage other visitor serving organizations to create cross-promotional alliances.
- Increase partner participation and visitor attendance for focal events through direct outreach and public relations efforts.
- Produce and distribute a county wide event calendar in both its printed and online form, as well as focal event collateral.
- Add an Olive Oil Festival to Mendocino County event offerings.

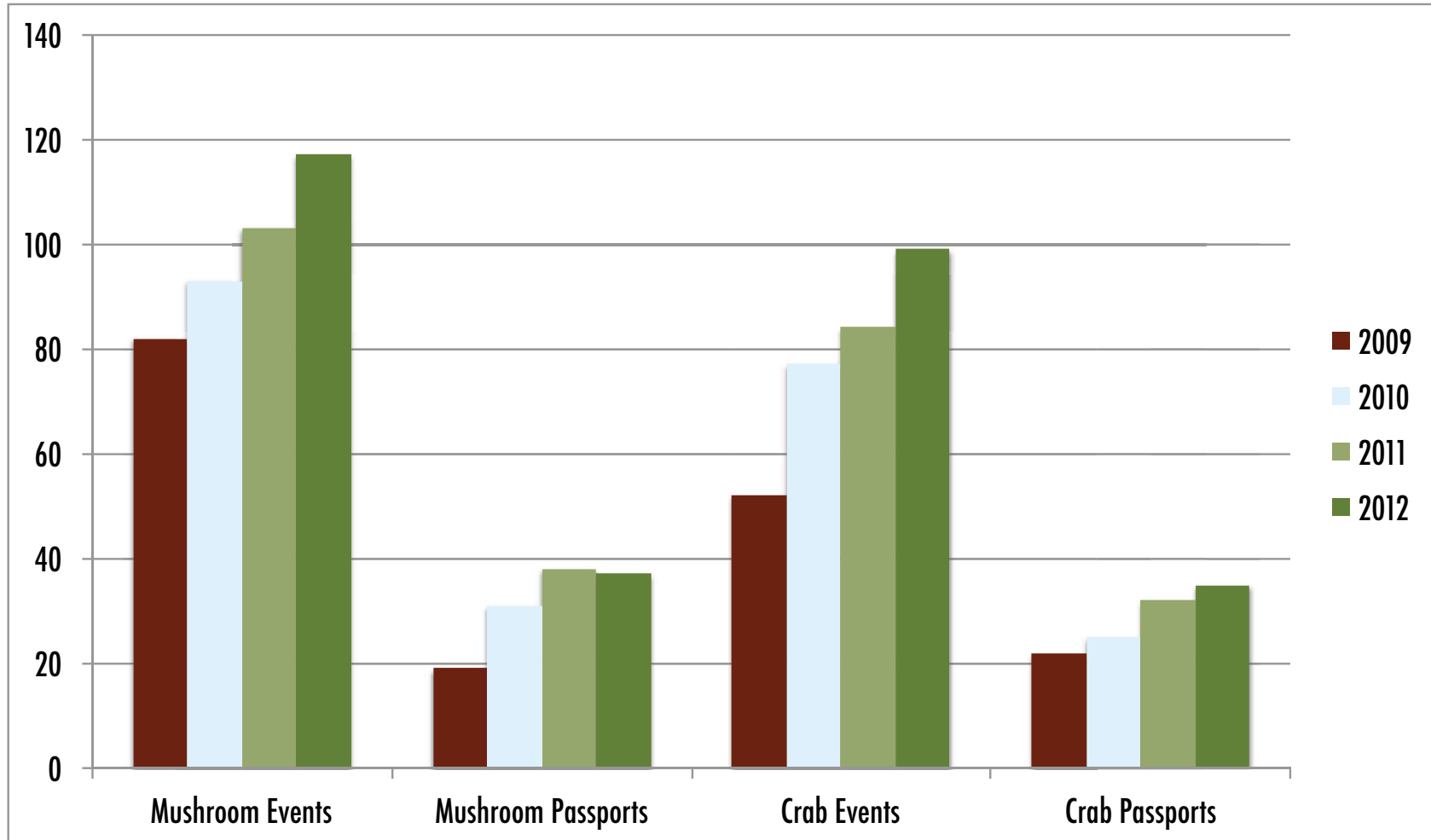
Measured Outcomes

Increase Beer, Wine & Mushroom Festival events by 10%; passports by 8%.

Increase Crab, Wine & Beer Festival events by 10%; passports by 8%.

EVENT COORDINATION

Over time, the countywide festivals continue to show a measured increase in participation, both with individual events and Passports.



SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

One of the clear messages from the Randall Research study encouraged VMC to assist visitors by providing improved signage and wayfinding materials. In response, VMC created a series of tear-off maps, an award-winning Visitor Guide and installed a gateway sign on Highway 101, the first of five.

Goal: Increased visitor satisfaction with improved wayfinding signage.

- Research sponsorship and/or partnership opportunities in continued printing and distribution of tear-off maps for North Coast, South Coast and Willits. Complete development of Ukiah tear-off maps. Create farm trails guide and maps.
- Produce and distribute 50,000 comprehensive Visitor Guides, and research opportunity to create a smaller Visitor Guide “light” that serves as a driver to the website and mobile applications.
- Produce annual wall calendar, shared with media and VIPs; produce California pet-friendly guide (partnered).
- Maintain support of Redwood Coast Chamber Visitor Center.
- Install visitor information center at the Hopland Real Goods retail store in partnership with Solar Living Institute, install visitor information center in Noyo Harbor, and conceptualize plans for Confusion Hill visitor-serving facility; finalize operations for Anderson Valley kiosk; produce and install second gateway sign on Hwy 20; add a third gateway sign on Hwy 1 in Gualala.
- Provide follow-up Customer Service workshops.

Measured Outcome

Receive improved scores in the updated visitor survey, and conduct in-market surveys of visitors to determine their level of satisfaction.

MARKETPLACE

In 2012, VMC got innovative and opened a local Marketplace in its new office space in downtown Fort Bragg. In addition to the friendly staff, the space offers visitor information, a wall map of the County, as well as locally made products, arts and Mendocino County logoed items. Tracking and sales data report that the majority of the over 2,000 walk-ins to the Marketplace are travelers, non-locals, who are not only interested in maps, activities and restaurant ideas, but are also drawn to the wide array of local products, with sales of over \$5,000 to date.

Goal: Increase number of visitors served.

- Promote visitation to the Marketplace and visitor information center through VMC and partner businesses' marketing assets.
- Begin collecting more detailed data on visitors through an incentivized survey.
- Add new local products to the retail store, including local wine and beer.
- Promote monthly First Friday events featuring countywide artists, wineries and events through social marketing and local media outreach.

Measured Outcomes

Attract 3,500 Marketplace visitors.

Track annual sales of \$10,000 in local products.



"The Visit Mendocino Marketplace is a wonderful asset to both local purveyors and visiting tourists. In a small community such as the one represented by the Marketplace, cross-promotion potential is very powerful and can help small, emerging businesses succeed."

BECKY AHMADI, PACIFIC PRESERVES

Vital to what we do, partnerships allow for expanded networking opportunities and economies of scale. Partner relationships provide the ability to leverage other organizations' budgets in pursuit of a common goal. It is within these ideal win-win circumstances that partners are able to stretch together toward opportunities previously out of reach when attempted individually.

Goal: Extend the VMC marketing budget through leveraged partnerships.

- Implement a VMC sponsorship program leveraging brand promise and increasing overnight visits to the County.
- Continue to lead NCTC enabling Mendocino County to maintain an international and group sales effort.
- Explore brand alliances with regional and national brands.
- Attend key travel industry conferences to provide access to industry trends and successful example of best practices, furthering internal knowledge and benefiting the VMC program of work.
- Partner with Visit California and San Francisco Travel in order to capitalize on their large marketing budgets (\$50M and \$30M, respectively).
- Continue to partner with organizations such as Visit Ukiah, Mendocino Winegrowers Inc., Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association, Destination Hopland, Fort Bragg Promotions Committee, Chambers of Commerce: Mendocino Coast, Redwood Coast, Greater Ukiah, Anderson Valley, and Willits.

Measured Outcome

Increase the VMC budget by 15% through leveraged partnership opportunities.

Leveraging your partners' dollars, reputation, resources and assets for parallel goals to target shared clients.

What's great about this? Your partners receive the exact same benefits.

Other People's Money (OPM): When you collaborate, you get to use the value of your partners' resources, increasing the power of your smaller, individual investment.

Visit Mendocino County presents a sponsorship program with the goal of increasing revenue in order to increase marketing activities and initiatives. Through these additional revenues, partner businesses and organizations can utilize VMC's assets to further their own goals and missions, while at the same time expanding VMC's goals and mission. Only by working together can we increase our share of voice throughout Northern California and, ultimately our return on investment—more heads in beds. Five distinct partnership tiers allow businesses and organizations at all levels to take advantage of this opportunity to work together in maximizing resources.

The leveraged marketing program, when fully developed, will double the current VMC marketing budget, making it possible to make an even larger impact in our target markets.

Goal: 46 Partners

\$160,000 Sponsorship ~ \$326,980 Value

As a leadership organization in the Mendocino County community of businesses, the Visit Mendocino County organization itself has become a stand-out asset. VMC is served by a dedicated professional staff, who continues to innovate, seeks learning opportunities and provides marketing and educational opportunities to its internal partners.

Goal: Create an environment that inspires the best support, programs and ideas that continue to push the VMC mission forward.

- Attend key travel industry conferences to provide access to industry trends and successful examples of best practices, furthering internal knowledge and benefiting the VMC program of work.
- Achieve accreditation from the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program, offered by Destination Marketing Association International. Continue Certified Destination Marketing Executive training for President/CEO.

WHY IS DMAI ACCREDITATION IMPORTANT?

The Destination Marketing Association Program establishes a higher level of standards, procedures and values for Visit Mendocino County as a destination marketing organization. It ensures our partners of the industry's highest level of operational integrity and accountability. It also signifies to potential clients and corporate partners that Mendocino County is among the most select DMOs in the industry.

PERSONNEL & ADMIN

As a leadership organization in the Mendocino County community of businesses, the Visit Mendocino County organization itself has become a stand-out asset. VMC is served by a dedicated professional staff, who continues to innovate, seeks learning opportunities and provides marketing and educational opportunities to its internal partners.

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- Achieve accreditation from the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program, offered by Destination Marketing Association International. Continue Certified Destination Marketing Executive training for President/CEO.
- Maintain an environment that encourages an engaged, productive staff with the tools and knowledge to assist in creating success for as well as partner organizations and businesses.

Measured Outcomes

Destination and executive Destination Marketing Accreditation status.

Maintain a qualified, engaged and enthusiastic team of staff and contractors to carry out the programs and initiatives of VMC.

Continue to successfully administer the Mendocino County Lodging Association, Mendocino County Promotional Foundation, Mendocino County Promotional Alliance and the North Coast Tourism Council

MARCH 2012 – MARCH 2013

MARKETING

| | GOAL | LAST YR. | % CHANGE |
|------------------------|---------|----------|----------|
| WEBSITE VISITATION | 153,954 | 128,295 | +20% |
| VISITOR GUIDE REQUESTS | 6,215 | 5,650 | +10% |

PUBLIC RELATIONS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|------|
| EARNED MEDIA IMPRESSIONS | 132,920,000 | 120,840,000 | +10% |
| AD EQUIVALENCE | \$5.5 MILLION | \$5 MILLION | +10% |

INTERACTIVE MEDIA

| | | | |
|---|--------|--------|------|
| TOTAL MONTHLY IMPRESSIONS (PAGE VIEWS) | 69,600 | 58,000 | +20% |
| TIME ON SITE | 4:30 | 4:00 | +13% |
| CONSUMER DATABASE | 30,000 | 25,000 | +18% |
| CONSUMER DATABASE ENGAGEMENT | 3.0% | 2.4% | +22% |
| FACEBOOK FANS | 23,400 | 18,000 | +30% |
| AVG. FACEBOOK REACH | 1:1.6 | 1:1.4 | +50% |

SALES

| | GOAL |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED | 1,000 |
| TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT | \$631,000 |

VISITOR SERVICES

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| EVENT PARTICIPATION | +10% |
| PASSPORT ENTRIES | +8% |

VMC MARKETPLACE

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| MARKETPLACE VISITORS SERVICED | 3,5000 |
| MARKETPLACE SALES | \$10,000 |

PARTNERSHIPS

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| LEVERAGED INCREASE TO BUDGET | 30% |
|------------------------------|-----|

PERSONNEL & ADMIN

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| DMAI ACCREDITATION | Dec. 2013 |
|--------------------|-----------|

