

**Utah Office of Tourism  
Board Meeting  
Friday, April 10, 2020  
Online ZOOM Meeting**

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**Members Present:** Lance Syrett, Nathan Rafferty, Kym Buttschardt, Dirk Clayson, Dean Cox, Elaine Gizler, Brian Merrill, Greg Miller, Glen Overton, Mike Taylor, Sara Toliver, Shayne Wittwer, Jim Powell

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**Members Excused:**

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**Staff:** Vicki Varela, Dave Williams, Andrew Gillman, Anna Loughridge, Becky Keeney, Celina Sinclair, Denise Jordan, Emma Cheketts, Flint Timmins, Haley Rodgers, Kelly Day, Melissa Kinney, Rachel Bremer, Sandra Salvas, Lorraine Daly, Rosie Serago

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**Visitors:** Adam Whalen, Adriana Chimaras, Alana Blumenthal, Alison Garner, Alison Yamamoto-Sparks, Amber Christenson, Bill Malone, Breck Dockstader, Cierra Miller, Cody Adent, Cody Draper, Colin Greenberg, Des Barker, Eric Thompson, Ethan Koehler, Janette Patross, Joan Hammer, Jonathan Smithgall, Josh Scheer, Judy Cullen, Katherine Schmidt, Kylie Kullack, Lee Banov, Mackenzie Miravet, Megan Griffin, Melanie Marier, Molly O’Niell, Monica Franco, Monique Beely, Nancy Volmer, Pitt Grewe, Raelene Davis, Randy Rhodes, Robert Stephenson, Sarah Lehman, Scott Sorenson, Stacie Boney, Tana Toly, Tess Pascua, Thomas Vossler, Tom Love, Kaitlin Eskelson, Wendi Hassan, Kevin Lewis, Darshan Kansgara, Nick Como, Lynne Mayer, Sasha Jackson, Kamron Dalton, Sean Brownell

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**WELCOME**

Lance Syrett called the meeting to order.

**MINUTES**

**MOTION: MIKE TAYLOR MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 14, 2020 MEETING THAT WAS HELD AT WOODWARD PARK CITY. SHAYNE WITTEWER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Vicki Varela, Managing Director, UOT, reported on the following items:

- COVID-19: Utah is positioned better than other states in our preparedness. Vicki is serving on two economic taskforce groups to represent the tourism industry.
- Thanked Tourism Board members, Utah Office of Tourism (UOT) staff, Struck and Love Communications for their emergency work during COVID-19.
- UOT is using the Mighty 5® campaign again to communicate core messaging in light of the pandemic.
- DMO assistance – UOT is putting together tool kits and workshops to help DMO’s weather the storm.
- Introduced Bianca Lyon, the new UOT director of community and partner relations.
- Introduced Pitt Grewe, the new director of the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation.
- Introduced Cody Adent, the new UTIA executive director.

## MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Marketing Committee Report**
  - **Impact of COVID-19 on Current Marketing Campaigns - Jonathan Smithgall, Media Buyer, Love Communications ([Presentation](#)):**
    - 2019 Winter Campaign Digital Summary:
      - So far in the campaign we have seen over 586K post impressions, for a total post impression rate of 0.67%.
      - There have been 126,137 post impression activities on Visit Utah specifically, compared to 280,716 last year.
      - Competitive targeting continues to be more efficient than the rest of our targeting strategies, currently 68% more efficient.
      - We have tracked 23,778 hotel bookings for a total revenue of \$7.75M. This was a 10% increase from last month and the lowest percentage increase in the campaign.
      - Year Over Year Analytics Data
    - 2019/2020 Winter in Southern Utah Digital Summary:
      - Our campaign delivered a total of 27.8M display impressions, with over 183k post impressions and a post impression rate of 0.65%.
      - Visit Utah received 31,407 post impressions, with Discover Moab, St. George, and Kane County as the next highest among key southern Utah destinations.
      - We tracked 7,520 hotel bookings for a total revenue of \$2.03M.
  - **COVID-19 Metrics ([Presentation](#)) – Jonathan Smithgall**
    - Three-Season 2020 Utah Report
      - Notes from January & February of 2020:
        - Expedia had tracked an additional 5k room nights booked compared to the same time period from last year.
        - TripAdvisor had tracked an additional 200k page views on Utah content within their website. This was an increase of 14% YOY.
        - As of 3/13/2020, this year's three-season campaign reached last year's record-breaking booking benchmark (three weeks ahead of schedule).
        - Our campaign has driven a total of 50,455,566 impressions, with over 100k post impressions and a post impression rate of 0.19%.
        - Visit Utah has received 14,299 post impressions, with Discover Moab, St. George and Kane County as the next highest among key southern Utah destinations.
        - We have tracked 7,781 hotel bookings for a total revenue of \$2.57M.

- **Plan and Messaging Related to COVID-19 – Kylie Kullack, Head of Client Partnership, Struck; Lee Banov, Strategist, Struck; Scott Sorenson, Creative Director, Struck ([presentation](#)):**
  - Highlights
    - What will be our KPI's to indicate that it's time to return to advertising?
      - State by state monitoring of when active cases peak.
      - There must be a sustained reduction in cases for at least 14 days.
      - Consumer Optimism begins to increase.
      - Page Views via TripAdvisor, Expedia and VisitUtah begin to show an upward trend.
    - Current Campaign Performance
    - Third Party Search Trends
    - Market Performance VisitUtah.com
    - Global Web Index: Audience Measurement
    - Covid19.Healthdata.org: Expected COVID-19 Case Peaks
    - TripAdvisor Consumer Research:
      - 82% of respondents are excited to plan their next trip post COVID-19.
      - 63% have spent time in the last week planning and researching potential trips to take post COVID-19.
      - 50% have spent up to five hours in the last week planning their next trip post COVID-19.
    - Current Media Campaign
      - What we have paused: Broadcast, Connected TV, Programmatic Advertising, Out-of-home, Expedia and Kayak.
      - What we have live: TripAdvisor and Google Paid Search
      - TripAdvisor has been the only partner to show benefits in staying live:
    - Next Steps
      - Continue COVID-19 meetings twice per week.
      - Sent Marketing Committee a weekly executive summary to be delivered each Friday.
      - Monitor COVID-19 re-launch KPI's
      - Partner with Entrada to field survey
      - Launch custom survey to run every two weeks regional. Question TBD.
  - Renaissance
    - Background:
      - Along with most other travel and tourism boards around the world, UOT's planned campaigns have been put on hold while the world seeks solutions to the coronavirus pandemic.
      - Social distancing measures and overall uncertainty have decimated visitations numbers, but with its Mighty 5 National Parks and beautiful landscapes, Utah's unique offerings match up well with what visitors will be looking for when travel resumes.

- Over the next few weeks and months, UOT will establish a powerful, industry-defining voice for mitigating the virus' community impact.
- Key Issues: Uncertainty, Behavior, Etiquette
- Our Unique Position
  - Existing audiences (out-of-state & residents): Explorers, Achievers, Families, Traditional National Parks Visitors.
  - Current audience mindset: Travelers in Waiting
- Objectives:
  - Use inspiration and hopeful messaging centered around Utah's Mighty 5 national parks to reframe the conversation around COVID-19 and stimulate economic growth through strategic media, partner and community engagement as well as tourism industry advocacy.
  - Convert share of social conversation to messages and actions that support Utah communities, promote wellness and build local business while continuing to cultivate future travel.
  - Demonstrate empathy and active support for travel planners and dreamers across UOT's communications channels and trade partners using fresh Mighty 5-led creative, inspirational content and timely resources that attract and build an audience of highly motivated travelers.
  - Promote well-prepared visitation to The Mighty 5 national parks and beyond to our existing Explorer, Achiever, and Family audiences, as well as Utah's who may be considering a Utah trip.
- Strategy
  - The Renaissance Construct
  - Although they will come to life differently in each phase of messaging, inspiring messages centered around Utah's Mighty 5 National Parks will ultimately be what connects each phase of our comeback effort. We'll focus first on the wellbeing of our audiences, then on welcoming visitors back to Utah, authentically.
  - Pillars: Stay United, Permanence, Openness
  - High-level Phases: Immediate, Renaissance, Normalcy
  - High-level Media Phases
- **COVID-19 Content, Creative and Social Media Strategies – Andrew Gillman, Tourism Creative and Content Manager, UOT ([presentation](#)):**
  - Communication Goals:
    - Use inspiration and hopeful messaging centered around Utah's Mighty 5 national parks to reframe the conversation around COVID-19 and stimulate economic growth.
    - Convert share of social conversation to messages and actions that support Utah communities, promote wellness and build local business.
    - Demonstrate empathy and active support for travel planners and dreamers across UOT's communications channels.

- Promote well-prepared visitation to The Mighty 5 national parks and beyond to our existing audiences, as well as anyone else considering a Utah trip.
- Industry Updates
  - Seven distributions
  - 44-58% open rate
  - Travel.utah.gov toolkit
  - SBA and bridge loan support
- Virtual Content
  - Cultural events
  - Educations experiences
  - Outdoor experiences
  - Cinematic road trip
- Consumer Newsletter
  - Stay inspired, informed and safe
  - Try a virtual experience
  - 24,000 opens (40% open rate)
- Connectivity
  - 850+ conversations in three weeks
  - FACQ
  - Proactive support
  - Landing page
- Public Relations
  - Top (current) pitches
    - Experience Utah Virtually
    - Stay Inspired, Plan Ahead, Bucket List Planning
    - Utah Tourism Industry Recovery Initiatives
    - #UtahFromHome Recipes
    - Culinary virtual hosting
- Content Goals
  - Remind travelers of Utah’s differentiating assets, and nurture continued interest in the destination.
  - Highlight innovation within Utah communities along the theme of “creativity within constraints.”
  - When travel restrictions are lifted, encourage road trippers to plan their travels and engage with communities, businesses, wellness activities and our renowned outdoor recreation assets anchored by The Mighty 5.
  - Promote businesses and cultural offerings in urban basecamps, and way to support these businesses while encouraging safety.
- Highlights
  - New and refreshed article content
  - Utah: On Camera and social video ads
  - Utah: One of a Kind, Contests
  - #UtahFromHome, Virtual Hosting
  - Utah Master Class: Travel Prep
  - Urban Utah Explorer’s Guide, Voice of the Wasatch
  - Comprehensive social media strategy and playbook

- What's Next
  - Develop innovative content
  - Engage influencers & ambassadors from home
  - Measure overall sentiment via social listening
- **Update on VisitUtah.com Re-Platform Project – Stacie Boney, President, Hanson Dodge; Ethan Koehler, VP Digital Experience & Technology, Hanson Dodge; Katherine Schmidt, Copywriter, Hanson Dodge ([presentation](#)):**
  - Strategic Vision
    - Immersive, compelling experience
    - Sustainable, distributed visitation
    - Self-guided discovery
    - Personalized
    - Efficient with reusable content
    - 2019 Project Plan
  - Strategic Foundation
    - Goals
      - Inspire visitors to consider Utah for their travel
      - Increase Red Emerald visitation
      - Integrate Brand and Campaigns
      - Improve customer service
      - Strengthen the tourism experience
      - Improve UOT's operational capability and capacity
    - Measuring success
      - KPI's defined
      - Leverage deeper data insights
      - Regular reporting and enhancement cadence
  - Re-platform
    - Benefits
      - Editing experience
      - Components and templates
      - Information architecture and taxonomy
      - Site search
      - SEO tools
      - Eliminate technical debt
      - Content workflow
      - Performance optimization
      - Training, upgrading and enhancing
      - Improved analytics
    - 2020 Project Plan
  - Design Preview
- **Ski Utah Request for \$90,000 for polybagging of Ski Utah Magazine with Outside Magazine – Raelene Davis, VP Marketing & Operations, Ski Utah**
  - Ski Utah and its marketing committee support once again poly-bagging 175,000 copies of *Ski Utah* magazine with the December issue of *Outside* magazine (in key markets). Ski Utah will work with the circulation department of *Outside* in determining the right audience for the recipients.
  - This year's poly-bag initiative with *Outside* magazine will continue to strategically work with Outside Online and Love Communications to ensure that

the maximum marketing efficiencies can be reached. To that end, Outside Online will follow GDPR and CCPA rules when providing Utah Office of Tourism with a custom audience that received the Poly-bagged copy of *Ski Utah* magazine. With these addresses, Utah Office of Tourism will be able to activate an advertising campaign targeting those who were exposed to the print component. Potential tactics include retargeted Display ads, Pre-Roll, Mobile and ConnectedTV.

- The total cost for this marketing initiative is \$256,795. Raelene would like to propose a continued partnership, whereby, Ski Utah pays the lion's share of the cost (\$166,795) and the UOT covers the remaining \$90,000. As added value for your participation, Ski Utah will reserve the inside back cover of *Ski Utah* magazine for the Utah Office of Tourism, a \$12,800 value.

**MOTION: SHAYNE WITTEW MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE SKI UTAH REQUEST FOR \$90,000 FOR POLYBAGGING OF SKI UTAH MAGAZINE WITH OUTSIDE MAGAZINE. DEAN COX SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Nathan Rafferty recused himself from the motion due to a conflict of interest.*

#### **CO-OP COVID-19 ADAPTATIONS**

Kym Buttschardt, Chair of Cooperative Marketing Committee, requested the following amendments to upcoming Co-op application requirements:

- For the next round of funding, Round 2020, applicants will be able to include 15% of the total project cost or up to \$35,000 - whichever is greater - of in-state marketing in their application.
- Everyone awarded co-op money last year can also redirect any remaining balance they may have to in-state marketing at 15% of the total remaining amount or \$35,000, whichever is higher. Applicants will be required to send Kelly (program manager) updated project budgets if they choose to participate.
- We encourage joint applications as long as no individual contributor goes over the \$275,000 cap. Joint applications would also be eligible for the 15% vs. \$35,000 in-state marketing option.
- The 2020 application deadline is currently set for June 25, 2020; however, we will continue to monitor the COVID19 situation and bump the date to later in the year if necessary.
- all applicants currently working toward their final reports will be given leniency on their ROI metrics in light of the pandemic.

**MOTION: KYM BUTTSCHARDT MOTIONED TO MAKE THE ABOVE COVID -19 CO-OP RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED. MIKE TAYLOR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **UTAH TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION UPDATE**

- UTIA report – Cody Adent, Executive Director of UTIA
  - Hospitality Tourism Training Program is in the process of launching.
  - COVID-19
    - UTIA has created a platform that allows people to buy gift cards from local restaurants all on one website. The purchase can also be made online and not in-person.
  - Tourism Conference – September 22-24 at the Salt Palace.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Breck Dockstader thanked everyone involved in the letter of support that was drafted including all 63 hotels in the Mighty 5 areas.
- Monique Beeley thanked the Tourism Board, Utah Office of Tourism and partners for their efforts during COVID-19 uncertainty.

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**