

**Utah Office of Tourism
Board Meeting
Friday, December 11, 2020
Online ZOOM Meeting**

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

Members

Excused:

Staff: Vicki Varela, Julia Barnhouse, Becky Keeney, Lorraine Daly, Dave Williams, Andrew Gillman, Anna Loughridge, Bianca Lyon, Denise Jordan, Jody Blaney, Melissa Kinney, Rachel Bremer, Sandra Salvas, Flint Timmins, Emma Checketts

Visitors: Adam Whalen, Adriana Chimaras, Chris Pieper, Hannah Saunders, Joan Hammer, Judy Cullen, Kylie Kullack, Lee Banov, Lizzy Duffy, Maria Twitchell, Mason Miller, Megan Griffin, Monique Beeley, Nancy Volmer, Raelene Davis, Robert Stephenson, Randy Rhodes, Sara Otto, Sean Brownell, Sydnie Furton, Tom Love, Val Hale, Justin Anderson, Chris Newton

WELCOME

Lance Syrett called the meeting to order.

MINUTES

MOTION: SHAYNE WITTWER MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 11, 2020 MEETING THAT WAS HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM. SARA TOLIVER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vicki Varela, Managing Director, Utah Office of Tourism (UOT), reported on the following items:

- Governor-Elect Spencer Cox transition – There is a leadership transition within the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). Val Hale will be serving an LDS mission in L.A., CA. The new director nominee is current senator Dan Hemmert. The nomination will be placed on January 4, 2021 and will be confirmed after a 30-day review process.
- CARES Act Funding – Kori Ann Edwards has shown great leadership for our office and the state. Any unspent CARES money will go into the state unemployment fund. We anticipate to use all of our allocated money. There is a new grant in process to provide \$3 million towards event organizations. The new grant will be released the week of December 14, 2020.
- COVID-19 Unified Command – Vicki has formed an advisory committee that includes members of the Tourism Board and other prominent members of the tourism community, as well as Leavitt Partners.

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Marketing Committee Report**

- Ski+ Campaign update - Jonathan Smithgall, Vice President Digital Marketing and Media, Love Communications
Andrew Gillman, Tourism Creative and Content Director, Utah Office of Tourism
 - Utah Vacation Intent:
 - We are now 12 waves into our travel intent research, currently being delivered via Google.
 - Ski vacation Searches: Google Trends
 - Looking at trends compared to late year, you can see that search intent for ski vacations have not reached the same frequency that they had reached out last year.
 - Digital Summary:
 - So far, this campaign has driven over 105k post-impressions for a total PIR of .43%.
 - There have been an estimated 887k hotel searches amounting to a total estimated hotel revenue of \$10.7M.
 - Competitive targeting has been our most efficient driver of website visits and hotel bookings.
 - Native advertising is proving to be one of the most efficient drivers of hotel revenue across all media tactics.
 - Age Breakdown:
 - There has been a 48% increase in those ages 25-34 booking hotels to Utah to last year.
 - We have also monitored a 24% decrease in those ages 55-64 booking a hotel in Utah compared to the same time period last year.
 - YOY Post Ad Exposed Page Views
 - Considering the lack of snow and that the campaign launched roughly a month later than last year's Ski+ campaign, post-ad exposed page views are relatively strong across the board.
 - Custom Audiences
 - This year we launched a narrowed targeting approach, one which involved targeting past visitors to Epic, Ikon and Utah Ski Resorts. Early into this strategy, we are monitoring stronger success with our Repeat and Ikon targeting tactics.
 - Pre-roll Performance
 - With the delayed programmatic launch, our Pre-Roll campaign is still in the early stages of optimizing.
 - Creative Performance
 - V2, V4 and v6 of our creative ads are performing the strongest across our main KPI's of hotel searches, post ad exposed page views and hotel bookings
 - V1 of our creative has been the lowest. Performer to date and it is our recommendation to rotate this ad out.
 - Website Ski Content Performance
 - Ski content on VisitUtah.com has generated an estimated \$2.16M in hotel revenue since October 1st.

- Content Team:
 - Active with organic social since September, paid ads starting back up in December, social-first content and influencer planning is underway.
 - Pitches resonate with current travel landscape and IMVs lining up for first-hand experiences.
 - Website equipped to ease COVID concerns and promote responsible recreation.
 - Pool of contributors producing experiential staycation narratives, off-the-slopes information and itinerary options.
- Campaign Highlights:
 - Recent Coverage: Thrillist, Haute Living SF
 - Early 2021 Media Visits for first-hand experiences in Utah & coverage
- Southern Utah+ Winter update - Jonathan Smithgall, Vice President Digital Marketing and Media, Love Communications
Andrew Gillman, Tourism Creative and Content Director, Utah Office of Tourism
 - Digital Summary:
 - So far, this campaign has driven over 32k post-impressions, for a total PIR of .15%.
 - We have tracked an estimated \$2.3M in hotel revenue, which is slightly off last year's pace.
 - Our custom audience that targets past visitors to Southern Utah has been our most efficient driver of bookings.
 - Age Breakdown
 - There has been a 22% reduction in hotel purchases from travelers aged 45-54.
 - Display Performance
 - Our Dark Skies creative has been the most efficient driver of post ad exposed pageviews.
 - Pre-roll performance
 - Robbers Roost is the lowest performer pre-roll asset. This is similar to what we monitored in last year's campaign wrap.
 - Custom Audience Performance
 - As widely predicted across multiple research studies, targeting potential repeat visitors has been our most efficient driver of bookings.
 - YouTube Performance
 - Women Artists in Helper is producing the highest completed view rate, the WISU: geology unit is driving post impressions at a much greater frequency in conjunction with good viewability metrics.
 - Content Team
 - Active with organic social October, paid ads starting back up in January, Social-first content and influencer planning is underway.
 - PR storylines capturing "what to expect," winter stargazing and Southern Utah base camps.
 - New winter-specific hub page for each national park capitalizing on increased interest.
 - Pool of contributors working on WiSU road trip itineraries, fresh editorial and new photography.

- Southern Utah+ FY2019/2020 Integrated Marketing Campaign performance review -
Molly O’Neill, Strategist, Struck
Jonathan Smithgall, Vice President Digital Marketing and Media, Love Communications
Andrew Gillman, Tourism Creative and Content Director, Utah Office of Tourism
Denise Jordan, Marketing Analytics & Research Manager
 - The Objectives:
 - Stimulate economic growth and support Utah communities through strategic media, partner, and community engagement; tourism industry advocacy; and hopeful, inspirations, Mighty-5-led advertising.
 - Support Utah travel dreamers and planners by demonstrating empathy, inspiring with fresh creative, and delivering timely resources for travel.
 - Promote well-prepared visitation by educating Utah travelers.
 - The Audiences
 - Traditional National Park Visitors: Seeking recreational opportunities in beautiful natural areas. Activities include hiking, biking, kayaking camping, rafting, photography.
 - Explorers: seeking opportunities for discovery and unique, personalized experiences. Activities include hiking, biking, stargazing and cultural sites.
 - Achievers: Seeking challenges and more intense physical activities. Activities include running, hiking, biking, climbing kayaking, canyoneering.
 - Families: Seeking unique family adventures that offer an easy, safe way to explore. Activities include hiking and geology exploration, visiting petroglyph sites or natural history museums.
 - Utah Residents
 - The Message
 - Immediate Phase: demonstrate empathy for the consumer to strengthen the Utah brand. Simple, quiet, calm and inspiring mages and content.
 - Renaissance Phase: Provide inspiration, optimism, and reassurance by highlighting Utah’s permanence and the healing power of the desert, while utilizing the Mighty 5 spot as awareness play.
 - What Got Us Here:
 - Rather than pausing the entire campaign, we kept Utah top of mind by adjusting into a new 3-phase strategy
 - Established weekly marketing committee meetings to review booking trends, travel research, and campaign performance.
 - Developed a custom dashboard that provided real-time data and insights on campaign performance, COVID-19 trends, consumer optimism, OTA trends, etc.
 - Built a COVID-19 page that provided up-to-date guidance on Utah’s travel restrictions, park and regional closures. This page showed a unique ability to provide consumers with the confidence to book a future trip. To-date we have tracked an estimated \$1.8M in hotel revenue.
 - Removed all underperforming vendors from the campaign and shifted budgets to our top performing partners. This enabled us to stretch our marketing efforts all the way through October.

- Advertising Awareness
 - Overall, 33% of consumers recall seeing some element of the Immediate and Renaissance advertising
 - Utah has the highest awareness at 525
 - Out-of-state awareness ranges from 24-42%
 - 9.2M ad-aware households
 - \$0.54 spent per household reached
 - Advertising Creative Evaluation & Impact
 - Advertising excels:
 - At delivering the right message at the right time
 - At generating interest in traveling to Utah
 - “Intent Impact” reflects a 9% lift over unaware respondents
 - Ad-influenced travel
 - 7.7% lift in ad-aware vs. unaware travelers
 - >700K ad-influenced Utah trips
 - Among targeted audience segment “personas”
 - Campaign more impactful
 - Intent to travel to Utah higher
- Campaign Performance
 - We tracked an estimated \$145M in hotel revenue from people exposed to the media campaign.
 - CTV drove an Arrival Lift of 21.3%. We uploaded a custom audience into this campaign and it drove an arrival lift of 16.2%.
 - Those exposed to our Digital OOH advertising showed a 2% lift in consideration to visit.
 - Addressable cable drove a strong lift in visitation of 11/3%, further proving the effectiveness of this more targeted medium.
- Website Performance
 - With the increase in users generated from mid-June through November, VisitUtah.com saw an additional 765k users compared to the previous Year.
 - Website visitors to VisitUtah.com SoutherUtah+ content generated an estimated hotel revenue of \$21M.
- Social Media and PR
 - Social Overview
 - Content Themes:
 - Responsible & safe travel
 - Road trips
 - Support local
 - Approach
 - Regional videos were almost immediately due to COVID and negative sentiment
 - Used remaining 3-season funds for Renaissance ads May-Sept 2020
 - Takeaways
 - Tons of new articles way more distributed.
 - Successful despite pausing social ads in April and July.
 - Public Relations
 - Media Visits
 - Paused from 3.12 – 6.1
 - Pitch Topics

- Immediate:
 - Inspirational armchair travel with photo-driven content through the destinations.
 - Virtual experiences- #UtahFromHome.
 - Small, but Might
- Renaissance:
 - Reconnecting with nature, health benefits of nature.
 - Responsible visitation and education, Forever Mighty.
- Normalcy:
 - The Great American Roadtrip
 - Guided Experiences
 - Wide open spaces, off-the-beaten path destinations – social distancing
- Key Takeaways
 - The bucket list – true adventure travel
 - Wellness
 - Support local
 - The Great American Road Trip feat. Southern Utah will continue.
- Just released
 - A feature four-page placement of Utah in the Winter 2020 issue of Elite Traveler
 - A labor of love to have her in-market for a total of 2 weeks at a challenging time.
 - Elite Traveler’s first-ever destination guide for a road trip.
 - Provides a firsthand account of an adventure through the state, including accommodations, activities and experiences
 - Zion Wildflower Resort, Amangiri, Coral Pink ATV Tours, Escalante Yurts, Handle, High West, Sundance Mountain Resort and more.
- Content and Website
 - Overhauled each national park page with a focus on addressing relevant subtopics and improved internal linking.
 - Each national park has new supporting things to do, where to stay, best hikes, and camping pages.
 - Road Trips & Drive Markets
 - Search analysis of a to b queries where the searcher intends to drive, not fly.
 - Improved landing pages and reframed existing itineraries to create specific a to b experiences.
 - Build Traveler Confidence
 - Visitor-facing COVID-19 travel alert & responsible travel information page.
 - Support Local landing page
 - Intercom chat

- Southern Utah+ FY2020/2021 Integrated Marketing Campaign plan review -
\$4,281,943.62 CARES, \$803,429.38 TMPF and \$104.866.36 of Carry forward TMPF
Molly O’Neill, Strategist, Struck
Jonathan Smithgall, Vice President Digital Marketing and Media, Love Communications
Megan Griffin, Vice President/Media Director, Love Communications
 - Opportunities and Challenges
 - Demand Considerations:
 - Possible decreased demand due to increased competition
 - Lack of group and international travel
 - Congestion and overcrowding
 - Recovery of flight markets
 - Sustained popularity of vacation rentals
 - Uncertainties:
 - Economic condition
 - National parks operations and capacity
 - Large group event recovery
 - Other Challenges:
 - Effects of the COVID-19 news cycles
 - Grand County advertising/ promotional policy resolution implications
 - Objectives
 - Responsibly drive travel to aid in economic recovery
 - Encourage longer stays and greater spending per trip
 - Help to distribute visitation to manage overcrowding
 - Education about responsible travel, in accordance with our “Forever Mighty” principles.
 - Key Messages
 - Regional travel: promotion regional Utah trips with a Mighty 5 park as an anchor
 - Post-Covid travel: leveraging newfound interest in wide open spaces and a desire to reconnect with nature and each other after COVID-19
 - Forever Mighty: advancing “support local” messages to aid in recovery and sustain traveler sentiment and in-state momentum established during the pandemic.
 - Key Audiences
 - Traditional National Park Visitors
 - Explorers
 - Achievers
 - Families
 - Utah residents
 - Media Plan Recommendations
 - Run a flexible campaign that can be adjusted as needed
 - Capitalize on top performing vendors from last years campaign
 - Utilize custom audiences across all aspects of the marketing campaign to help drive a more efficient campaign
 - Continue the evolution into always on strategy that was established last year
 - Continue our innovative growth
 - Keep Filling the Funnel

- To keep filling the consumer funnel, broad reach media is a key piece of our campaign strategy. With one-to-many placements, broad reach media provided efficiencies of scale for maintaining strong brand awareness.
 - Linear TV and Out of Home continue to be our strongest choices to maintain UOT's brand value with high impact video, larger-scale and in environment messaging.
 - Although we're always using data to refine our placements to the best audience through TV and OOH, these mass media vehicles keep Utah in front of a broader population to protect brand longevity.
- Linear Television
 - Even as viewers trends have changed YOY, Linear TV is still the viewing platform for most time spent across a core A35-64 demo. With all age groups engaging with Linear TV in one form or another during their daily routines, Linear TV stands to provide national reach at the largest scale.
 - Layered data allows us to create a targeted campaign while maintaining scale for strong brand awareness.
- Out of Home
 - Out of home placements provide a mix of large-scale and unique environmental placements to break through to audiences and carry impact for high funnel brand awareness.
 - Even among these different times, outdoor media is providing high exposure with consumer commute patterns showing 70% recovery as of October.
 - A recent Harris Poll reports 45% of Americans saying they are noticing OOH more during the pandemic.
- Digital Out of Home
 - Refine Targeting
 - Go National
- AFAR
 - 71% of our audience is looking to ravel by car in the next 6 months, driving an average of 410 miles from home on their next road trip.
 - Will tailor four unique all-American road trip itineraries
 - First-to-market: Interactive Journey's Map
- TripAdvisor
 - Strategy: Always On
 - Implementation:
 - Curated guides
 - Native articles
 - Social media activation
 - Competitive targeting
- Expedia
 - Strategy: economic relief
 - Implementation
 - Competitive targeting
 - Coupon relief
- Southern Utah+ (Holiday Blitz)
 - The objectives

- Run a targeting high-impact campaign that capitalizes on historical trends of vacation searches peaking between 12/26 and 1/6 every year
- To remove any possibility of overlap with our Ski audience, partner with the same high-impact CTV partner currently live in our Ski+ campaign.
- Provide clear and transparent past-campaign data to measure the effectiveness of this tactic.
- Run our top-performing Southern Utah+ Regional ads.
- Cross Channel Targeting:
 - A custom audience of past visitors to competitive destinations will be deployed across CTV and Social Media.
 - Flight Dates: 12/26/2020-1/6/2021
 - Budget: \$200,000

MOTION: SHAYNE WITTEW MOTIONED TO APPROVED THE RECOMMENDED INTEGRATED MARKETING CAMPAING PLAN BUDGET AS OUTLINED. GLEN OVERTON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- TMPF and CARES budget adjustments -
Dave Williams, Associate Managing Director, Utah Office of Tourism
Move \$182,027.03 of TMPF Urban funds to Southern Utah + TMPF media buy
Move \$182,027.03 of CARES Southern Utah + funds to CARES Urban budget
Move \$159,351.32 of TMPF Statewide funds to Southern Utah + TMPF media buy
Move \$159,351.32 of CARES Southern Utah + funds to CARES Statewide budget
 - Dave Williams referenced a discussion that took place at a previous board meeting when the deadline for taxes to be submitted, which created a cash-flow issues for the State. The State took back \$1.5M from the TMPF funds temporarily and, in order to continue the momentum on our marketing efforts, money was taken from the ski budget with the assumption that the \$1.5M taken would be restored. This amount has been returned to our budget.
 - Due to COVID-19, we were unsure of when we would be able to launch our urban and statewide marketing. This was budgeted in the TMPF budget, but an opportunity arose to launch the campaign sooner with CARES Act funding. All of the campaign amounts are still the same, but we need to shift funds in order to be able to spend all of the allocated CARES Act funding that our office received.

MOTION: KYM BUTTSCHARDT MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES IN THE BUDGET:

- **Move \$182,027.03 of TMPF Urban funds to Southern Utah + TMPF media buy**
- **Move \$182,027.03 of CARES Southern Utah + funds to CARES Urban budget**
- **Move \$159,351.32 of TMPF Statewide funds to Southern Utah + TMPF media buy**
- **Move \$159,351.32 of CARES Southern Utah + funds to CARES Statewide budget**

MIKE TAYLOR SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UTAH TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Sara Toliver, UTIA Executive Board member, gave the following update:

- The hiring process for the new UTIA executive director is in process.
- Tourism Day on the Hill 2021 has been cancelled. UTIA is looking for alternatives to have successful and impactful discussions with legislators.
- UTIA membership renewals are coming up in January 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Dirk Clayson – Supports a vaccine reservation system to help promote safe and healthy travel.
- Vicki Varela – Acknowledged Sara Toliver for the work she has been doing for UTIA until a new director is named.
- Greg Miller – He has seen an increase in car sales which indicates that there is a growing demand for domestic travel.
- Kym Buttschardt – Congratulated Jonathan Smithgall on his new title
- Monique Beeley – the winter issue of Discover Utah Magazine is in proof.

MEETING ADJOURNED