

**Utah Office of Tourism
Board Meeting
Friday, November 13, 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

Members Excused: Dirk Clayson

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

Visitors: Judy Cullen, Kevin Lewis, Kylie Kullack, Adam Whalen, Breck Dockstader, Christopher Pieper, Ethan Koehler, Hannah Saunders, Jaclyn Osterloh, Jason Marden, Jennifer Wesselhoff, Jonathan Smithgall, Kori Ann Edwards, Lizzy Duffy, Martin Stoll, Mason miller, Megan Griffin, Monique Beeley, Nancy Volmer, Raelene Davis, Robert Stephenson, Samantha Browning, Sara Otto, Sean Brownell, Stacie Boney, Syndie Furton, Tom Love, Camille Johnson, Lee Banov

WELCOME

Lance Syrett called the meeting to order.

MINUTES

MOTION: MIKE TAYLOR MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 9, 2020 MEETING THAT WAS HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM. DEAN COX 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 – Confident about the individuals serving on the transition team, including Steve Starks, Lynne ward, Natalie Gochnour, Mike Leavitt, Nolan Caris. Jeff Birmingham is leading on the GOED transition. Val Hale has announced his retirement and his replacement will be announced in the next month. The GOED incentives strategy is being revisited. There will be no substantial changes to the Utah Office of Tourism and there is more opportunity to dive deeper into Red Emerald Strategy. The Governor counts on the tourism industry to generate revenue for the state, but also to build the State's brand and be a cohesive industry.
- Grateful for the engagement and partnership with UTIA, especially during COVID-19.
- The Governor's budget will be released in the coming weeks. There will be a challenging budget year ahead.
- COVID-19 Unified Command – UOT respects and values the thoughtful approach and adjustments shown to marketing campaigns in response to COVID-19, but we have been tasked with engaging the industry better with unified command to sort through COVID-19 strategy. Vicki is forming an advisory committee to make sure policy is well communicated to everyone in the industry.

- Moab – The Grand County Council has asked the tourism department in Moab to limit their marketing campaign to stewardship education. A working group is being formed to help sort options. UOT would like to remain good partners with Grand County and the Moab area.

MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Marketing Committee Report**

- Review and approval of \$515,000 Urban Integrated Marketing Campaign plan ([presentations](#)):
 - Goals and Strategies – Molly O’Neill, Strategist, STRUCK
 - Goals
 - Increase transient room tax
 - Increase hotel occupancy and short-term rentals in urban corridor
 - Drive awareness for the Wasatch Front performing arts and cultural offerings.
 - Long-term Goals
 - Grow external positive brand reputation and urban identity; correct misconceptions
 - Increase resident buy-in and awareness
 - Opportunities
 - Less urban density means wide-open streets and clean lines of sight to backyard mountains reinforcing the metro to mountain (indoor-outdoor) relationship.
 - Utah’s metropolitan corridor remains an underappreciated urban destination with distinctive character and culture mixed with quality amenities.
 - International qualities and language proficiency imported by returned missionaries and a community welcoming of refugees add texture and diversity to our cities.
 - The Challenges
 - Certain aspects of urban travel remain constrained or of less interest due to the pandemic.
 - Ogden and Provo-Orem MSA may need a distinct urban hook from Salt Lake City.
 - Davis County is classified urban but its urban offerings are limited.
 - Car culture
 - Some businesses close on Sunday, a common travel day.
 - The Audiences
 - All visitors considering landing in, departing from or passing through Salt Lake City and the Wasatch Front
 - Travelers who are drawn to cities and those who want assurance of the comfort and resources of home within a wider Utah outdoor adventure.
 - Travelers from nearby drive markets who see the Wasatch Front as their closest destination for urban offerings.
 - The Messages
 - Main campaign message themes:
 - An outdoorsy population and distinctive mountain cities – combo indoor/outdoor vacations.

- Heritage, culture and sense of place inspired by natural surroundings.
 - Supporting messages:
 - Base camp and launching point to red rock, and world-class ski resorts.
 - Undiscovered qualities: access to culture and dining without the big city crowds.
- Collaboration and Momentum
 - Stay current on COVID-19 and opportunity.
 - Learn about urban marketing goals and product of our partners.
 - Involve urban partners in auditing their visitutah.com destination content.
 - To maintain momentum, UOT public relations and social media kicked off new urban efforts early in fiscal year.
- Review Media Buy – Hannah Saunders, digital Media Supervisor, Love Communications
 - Look Back Urban FY19-20
 - Main tactics:
 - Native articles- total of 13 article pieces
 - PPC
 - Market focus: Los Angeles, Phoenix, Boise, Bozeman, Denver, Boulder, L.A. / San Diego, San ran, Santa Fe, Reno
 - Flighting:
 - Launched October 2019 – March 2020
 - Relaunched June 2020-September 2020
 - Content analysis and refresh early August 2020
 - From 2019-2020, native advertising served just shy of 60 million impressions, generating 271K clicks for a CTR of .46%.
 - Over the course of the full campaign, native generated 1,032,118 ad exposed hotel searches, resulting in 41,386 hotel bookings for a total of \$11.2 million in hotel revenue.
 - Amplified article content
 - Content engagement
 - Media Recommendation
 - Budget: \$380k
 - Markets:
 - Focus on regional small urban pockets that have shown historical engagement while introducing Texas markets.
 - Continue leveraging a combination of native on site and off site with proven partners.
 - Utilize YouTube to promote Wasatch Front series and other long form videos.
 - Introduce display retargeting to help move consumers down the funnel.
 - Media Partners: Nativo, Pulsepoint, YouTube, Double Click Bid Manager
 - Media Flowchart and Timing
 - Paid Search
 - Look Back Urban FY19-20
 - Main Tactics:
 - Campaign restructured

- Ad copy rewritten
 - Search strategy revised
 - Market: nationwide
 - Flighting: consistent throughout year, budget reduction
 - Moving Forward
 - Refine targeting
 - With custom audiences that weren't available to us last year, we can more directly target travelers that are in-market or intending to visit, have affinities for urban experiences, and are COVID-19 resilient.
 - Expand Search History
 - Our audience's search intent extends beyond music, dining, and activities. We have the opportunity to address new search topics this year.
 - Moving Forward
 - Remain Flexible – by labeling detailed variables in our PPC account, we'll be able to pause/enable aspects of our campaigns at a moment's notice.
- Content Strategy – Andrew Gillman, Tourism Creative and Content Director, Utah Office of Tourism:
 - Social
 - Themes
 - Support local/ TravelZoom Deals
 - Explorer's Guide
 - Women's Suffrage Anniversaries
 - Articles and high awareness of Wasatch Front communities
 - Domestic Organic Social
 - Domestic Paid Social
 - Content Creators
 - Public Relations
 - Urban FY20
 - Key takeaways
 - Focus on increasing high-level awareness and influencing perceptions/misconceptions of Utah's urban corridor/identity
 - Food and beverage and a strong/unique storyline
 - Innovation and pivoting will be a major focus in 2021
 - Urban FY21
 - PR Tactics:
 - The Urban Base Camp: creating links between the urban center & off-the-beaten path destinations – “great American Road Trip” momentum.
 - Media Hosting – In-person & virtual for fist-hand experiences in Utah's urban corridor & coverage including:
 - Kimberly Wilson
 - Jenn Rice
 - Utah U

- Monthly PR headlines to KPI media outlets and freelancers
 - Messages/FY21 Trends
 - Urban adventure base camp
 - The flexible city experiences
 - The cultural mix: creative/art communities
 - Community initiatives
 - Culinary experiences/culinary changemakers
 - Rise of the staycation/remote learning & work
 - How to support local
 - Unique, private “pod” experiences
 - Website
 - Urban Website Content FY19-20
 - Starting January 20th, we designed a new pixel strategy that included segmenting out our Urban content on VisitUtah.com for the purposes of more detailed tracking.
 - TravelZoo Activation
 - As a part of the Shop in Utah program, UOT created a program with TravelZoo to promote our state and help drive more visitors to our hotels and attractions. Urban deals were included in the Northern Promotional Page.
 - Our campaign with TravelZoo has already tracked more than \$79k in hotel revenue. This is an estimated \$1.3M in hotel revenue.
 - Hanson Dodge designed and built a new landing page emphasizing the support local message, which brought together ideas and articles with promotion of Shop in Utah travel deals hosted by Travel Zoo.
 - This page received 11,000 pageviews between Sept. 1 – Nov. 1, and is still live; the format was modified to fit the new visual design.
 - Digital Utah Explorer’s Guide
 - Website Priorities
 - Set up new data layer to track urban content performance
 - Involve urban partners in auditing their visitutah.com destination content
 - Review analytics on urban pages for takeaways or insights
 - Consider what website enhancements fit into our 6-12-month enhancement roadmap based on supporting urban communities
 - Content
 - Upcoming Distribution
 - Voices of the Wasatch
 - Utah Cultural Alliance Native Articles
 - Visitutah.com Content
 - New Content
 - Hike and Dine – Ogden, Davis, SLC, Provo
 - Salt Lake’s Tattoo Scene: Inclusivity in the New Frontier
 - Cultural Cuisines Find New Homes in Provo

- You Are Where You Eat: The Best Latino Food Spots in SLC
- Women-made wine imported to Utah, Terrestoria
- Art Deco in Motion: Ogden's Creative Remodel
- Utah Female Artists Explore the Sublime Through Art
- The Myth of Provo-bition
- Provo's Music Scene
- Native Village at This is The Place
- Wasatch Wellness Itinerary
- Additional Content Tasks
 - Audit needed to develop additional informational and inspirational content to satisfy key stories
 - Audit content for improved engagement or COVID-context adjustments
 - Development of two or three new itineraries anchored in urban areas
 - Finalize video distribution plans and supporting content
- Creative Additions
 - Native articles to be distributed on behalf of the content goals of Utah Cultural Alliance, complemented with UOT article coverage
 - Team to review banner display retargeting tactics once content is determined.

MOTION: NATHAN RAFFERTY MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE \$515,000 URBAN INTEGRATED MARKETING CAMPAIGN PLAN. SHAYNE WITWER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Social Media Update – Melissa Kinney, Social Media Manager, Utah Office of Tourism ([presentation](#))
 - Introduced new Social Media Agency – Sparkloft Media
 - UOT Media Funnel
 - See: TV, out-of-home, endemic outdoor brands, display, social media
 - Think: CTV, native, programmatic pre-roll, PPC, display, social media
 - Do: Endemic OTAs, PPC, display, social media
 - Care: Endemic OTAs, native, display, social media
 - UOT Social Funnel
 - See: social advertising
 - Think: organic social, social advertising
 - Do: community management
 - Care: user-generated content, influencers, ambassadors
 - Strategic Priorities
 - Transition to Sparkloft Media
 - Learn from analytics and social listening
 - Build ambassador and influencer programs
 - Feature and collaborate with diverse content creators
 - Increase collaboration with industry partners

- Update on VisitUtah.com re-platform project – Rosie Serago, Content Strategist, Utah Office of Tourism ([presentation](#))
 - Next Steps
 - Launch major VisitUtah.com update
 - Track key metrics, KPI and usability testing
 - Partner content audit
 - Define enhancement road map
 - Kick-off work on 2021 roadmap
 - Content Audit
 - Develop partner relations playbook
 - Segment content for partner review
 - Share content with partners for feedback and suggested improvements
 - Collaborate on making edits
 - Next Phase Enhancements
 - User research needs and strategic objective
 - Contenders include:
 - Increase Forever Mighty content
 - Build regional maps
 - Establish audience personas
 - Design solves that cater to drive markets

- International update – Rachel Bremer, Tourism Global Markets Director, Utah Office of Tourism and. Hannah Saunders, Digital Media Supervisor, Love Communications ([presentation](#)):
 - Overview
 - Current State of things
 - Increase international visitation
 - Increase spending
 - Flights
 - DE/CH
 - FR/BL
 - UK/IL
 - CA
 - AU/NZ
 - International Strategy
 - International marketing
 - We know the messaging we do this year or season, impacts international travel decisions for 1-3 years out
 - Encouraging vaccine news can positively impact consumer sentiment of starting to research international travel again and we want Utah to be top of mind during this process.
 - Typically, at the beginning of the calendar year, we focus on marketing southern Utah to key European markets.
 - Tentative Media Strategy
 - Based on the learnings from FY19-20 international campaign and our international budget, we recommend leveraging 2 OTA partners to drive efficiencies.
 - Budget: \$400K
 - Partners: TripAdvisor and Expedia

- FY21 Consumer Marketing
 - Originals
 - USA Discovery Program
 - Other Brand USA Programs
 - Rep led co-op campaigns
 - Love Communications – Affinity/Programmatic
- Social Media
 - FY21 social media
 - Paid social
 - Always on organic

UTAH TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

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

- Tourism Day on the Hill 2021 has been cancelled. UTIA is looking for alternatives to have successful and impactful discussions with legislators.
- Transient Room Tax challenges are expected for the upcoming legislative session.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Vicki welcomed David Williams back from his leave of absence and congratulated him on his recent diagnosis.
- Greg Miller – The Miller Family made the decision to sell a majority of their ownership of the Utah Jazz to Ryan Smith, CEO of Qualtrics. This decision was not made lightly and the Miller Family is confident that Ryan will be a great leader for the Utah Jazz. The sale will allow the Miller Family to invest more into the Miller Family Foundation, secure the Miller Group of companies, and explore new business ventures that will produce a positive economic ROI.
- Nathan Rafferty confirmed that ski season will begin on November 20, 2020.
- Dean Cox shared an update on the Habitat Conservation Plan for the Desert Tortoise in Southern Utah.

MEETING ADJOURNED