



Mammoth Lakes Tourism Special Board Meeting

Friday, May 20, 2016

Call in # (310) 372-7549 - Participant Code 934985 - Host Code 3838

8:30 – 9:30am Westin Monache Resort

Special Meeting Agenda

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Whitney Lennon (MLT) 8:40 a.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Sean Turner, Michael Ledesma, Matthew Lehman, Paul Rudder, Kirk Schaubmayer, Brent Truax
3. **Board Member Comments/Reports/Agenda Additions** – None
4. **Public Comment** – Please limit to three minutes or less – None
5. **Minutes** – Tabled - approval of both April and May minutes at next regular board meeting June 1
6. **Strategy review with MLT Team and Mering Carson**

Brand Development – Lori Bartle from MeringCarson

- MC did exploratory brand research in 2013/2014 to develop brand campaign in 2014 – No Small Adventure
- Using SMARI to measure ad effectiveness – one of the best in the industry
- More than 1/3 of travelers to the region are aware of the brand campaign (40 million travelling households, 122,000 incremental visits (new and repeat) and \$133 million in economic impact)
- Visitors who are aware of the ad/brand campaign tend to spend more
- Mammoth Lakes is in the top 10% nationally of ad effectiveness according to SMARI

2016-2017 Fiscal Year Marketing Strategy Review – Christy Anderson from MeringCarson

- Main objective: make Mammoth Lakes a strong year-round destination by aligning with Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board goal to generate a minimum of \$1 million in TOT per month for 10 out of 12 months of the year, grow/maintain consistent visitor base year round, attract new investment opportunities
- Six strategic platforms:
 1. Continue to support brand positioning of year-round activities being right outside your door in ML
 2. Continue building visitation from key feeder markets (LA, San Diego, San Francisco, Las Vegas)
 3. Drive midweek visitation year-round (particularly in winter)
 4. Address seasonal opportunities for growth (September, October and June)
 5. Expand and prioritize targets by season – who are visitors/what is important to them?
 6. Activate participation and conversation via social media channels and campaigns
- Paid media communication priorities
 - Prioritize seasonal approach with persona-based audience targeting
 - Implement fall campaign to expand perception of the area offerings and drive visitation
 - Use website as a more effective educational tool for consumers to reduce “active evaluation” layer
 - Continue building social activation through adventure stories to engage audience in conversation (user-generated content)
 - Build on key feeder markets
 - Consider air service partnership to expand awareness of destination accessibility
- Questions
 - Paul Rudder – how do we get people to come here in the fall? Passes are open, there’s nothing stopping them.
 - Lori Bartle – MC hasn’t done a specific paid campaign pushing seasonality, but this fall we plan to.

- Paul Rudder – what is the messaging to push midweek visitation?
- Lori Bartle – team is still in progress, but thinking about getting more out of your experience, don't waste time waiting in lines.
- Sean Turner – Bluesapalooza is about to spend its last three months of marketing dollars. What are our key feeder markets to look into?
- Lori Bartle – LA, SD, SF, Vegas, etc.
- Prioritizing personas for paid media
 - Prioritize audience personas with largest reach potential for paid media while using all personas on owned and earned efforts
 - Support fall initiative with 25% of budget while continuing to support winter and summer
 - Layer seasonal activities and behavioral interests – fall target is outdoorsy person with kids or empty nester, winter is snowsporter with or without kids, summer is active outdoorsy person with or without kids
- Creative Concepting – Christy Anderson with MeringCarson
 - Banner ads: leaf changing firework example featuring “soft adventure” rather than extreme sports
 - Call to Action: “start your legendary fall”
 - Year-round rich media: now focusing on seasons instead of activities
 - Hover mouse over fall, winter, spring or summer and the image on the left changes
 - Ad expands and lets you select activities or interests – then drives people to website
 - Fall campaign would start late summer – August/September
 - Video ideas
 - New brand video – film from a point of view (POV) perspective – walking with the camera through different seasons so the viewer can experience it personally
 - Most authentic method would be filming in each season, so release full video a year from now
 - Ask ML visitors to create their own POV pieces and share on social
 - Possibility of 360-degree video, virtual reality, etc.
 - Incorporate line drawings brand imagery into virtual reality and/or 360 videos to keep people engaged – this is very innovative and cutting edge (people are just starting to do it)
 - 1,000 step journey concept
 - Walk 1,000 steps and take a photo of where you end up – fits with No Small Adventure theme
 - Bring in local influencers to kick the campaign off (get local market involved first)
 - Potential for partnership with FitBit or similar company to co-brand and co-promote campaign
 - What better place than ML to get your steps in for the day?
 - Jeff Guillory – Westin has RunWestin/RunConcierge program with someone who takes guests out on runs twice a week. Check with area businesses to see if there are brands/companies they already work with for partnerships like this.
 - Michael Ledesma – Could we get an international spokesperson?
 - All campaigns have year-round possibility, but initial goal is to get fall campaign up and running by end of summer
- Questions
 - Brent Truax – How are leveraging the Centennial of parks and using ML as a base camp for Death Valley, Yosemite, etc.?
 - Whitney Lennon – This is just the beginning of the conversation, and this doesn't include our owned and earned channels. Our dynamic website expands message to include all the opportunities while you're in ML.
 - Lori Bartle – MC works with Outside Magazine for editorials and native advertising. This is a better place to spread that message than with paid advertising (tends to be more of a brief message).
 - Brent Truax – We should unify our message in town so that we're all talking in the same way – footer on emails, etc.
 - John Urdi – That will be part of the discussion at the local marketing meeting in June.

- Jeff Guillory – Would be good to coordinate the big players in town to promote the same message/theme for each season, etc.
 - Whitney Lennon – MLT is having internal conversations about how to bring in others from the area – ML’s footprint is much larger than just MLT’s programs
 - Kirk Schaubmayer – Is there anything our peers have that we really need? Conference center, etc.
 - John Urdi – That falls under the three board strategies. A conference center would take us to 12 month viability potential, but it’s aspirational and far off right now.
 - Lori Bartle – MeringCarson has a lot of experience in the meetings industry with Disney, San Diego, Pebble Beach, etc. Because ML is so remote, the experience outside the meeting room here would have to be very robust, but ML has that potential. Especially if a unique venue was created.
 - Jeff Guillory – Most meetings are 75 people or less, so getting the word out to the meetings market may be better than working on a conference/convention center for larger groups.
 - Matthew Lehman – fall is difficult because of weather variability, could we capitalize on photography since it’s not weather-dependent?
 - Josh Wray – MLT hosted an Instagram meet-up last fall with about 100 people and accumulated about 2 million impressions from that day
 - John Urdi – Josh is focused on working with influencers (Instagram users who get hundreds of thousands of likes on photos)
 - Paul Rudder – Does the meeting market need daily air service?
 - John Urdi – It’s not a priority right now. Michael Vanderhurst is mostly teaming up with businesses that sell their own meeting space – Mammoth Mountain, for example.
 - Sean Turner – I think #mammothstories works better than #nosmalladventure. We need to get locals involved with storytelling.
 - Michael Ledesma - #Nosmalladventure sets ML apart from other generic ski town ads in magazines, etc. The people from outside the community are what we’re targeting with #nosmalladventure campaign.
 - John Urdi – MLT is telling local stories – Mountain Healing, Racing the Sun, all local bloggers, videos featuring locals and their favorite spots.
- Action Steps – Whitney Lennon
 - Will send demographics from initial market study and link to marketing plan about ML visitors to board
 - Sean Turner – Board needs enough info about tactical marketing so that we can convey that to people who ask us questions.
 - Paul Rudder – Is part of the strategy figuring out what will motivate people to come here?
 - Lori Bartle – We have been in high level brand content so far, which has done well, but now we’re becoming more seasonally focused and adding urgency to the call to action – plan now for fall.
 - Matthew Lehman – Summer grassroots campaign during the bankruptcy time worked well (lodging community distributing the same message) – good to have fall campaign in the works.
 - John Urdi – Getting tangible benefits from TBID and MLT programs to partners will be part of discussion at local marketing meeting on June 13.

Future Meeting Dates

Next scheduled Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, June 8th 1-3pm @ MLT Conference Room