

Tourism Means More

Strategic Plan Initiative: Create and Convey Value

Public Affairs Plan

Overview

The Division of Tourism (TravelNevada) FY16-17 strategic plan outlines six key agency initiatives, one of which is “Create and Convey Value.” This initiative is designed to heighten awareness of travel and tourism as the state’s leading economic engine through helping all stakeholders understand the importance of the tourism industry and its capacity to create jobs, drive the economy, generate a global brand for the state and enhance the quality of life for all Nevadans.

TravelNevada has achieved proven results in driving tourism throughout Nevada. Providing a series of strategic programs and activities to support these efforts as well as those undertaken by in-state partners, the state has realized increased traveler visits year-over-year through rural grant programs, aggressive marketing and public relations campaigns, comprehensive and interactive social media campaigns and through the development of tools and resources designed to attract both domestic and international visitors.

TravelNevada, in collaboration with partners like The Abbi Agency as part of the integrated marketing team, will execute a strategy to inform, educate and engage in-state partners and influencers, the critical audiences, as part of a robust awareness campaign. This will be accomplished through the creation and employment of communication platforms and opportunities that highlight the overall impact of the industry, the efforts of the statewide partners and the agency’s achievements.

TravelNevada understands this initiative will work most effectively if the programs undertaken by the agency are operating at the highest possible level. Trust among all constituent groups is imperative for this initiative to be successful.

The following plan outlines the programs and timeline for helping the agency to Create and Convey Value of the Nevada tourism industry and TravelNevada.

Goals

- Raise awareness of the value of the Nevada tourism industry in creating jobs, driving the economy and raising the global brand perception of Nevada.

- Help legislators and other influencers understand the importance of retaining revenue-generating dollars in revenue-generated activities, while identifying solutions for innovative financing of other agencies.
- Enhance relationships between TravelNevada and its key constituents.

Strategies

To achieve these goals, The Abbi Agency will execute an omni-channel public relations campaign rooted in a microsite as a central hub of information and communications. The campaign will be supported by digital marketing efforts, proactive public relations outreach and an emphasis on external communications. A more in-depth look at the strategy is below:

Digital Outreach - Through an engaging and informative microsite all campaign tools, such as a video, infographics, links to resources, and annual recap, will together provide an engaging, informative, and shareable experience. The information will be shareable ensuring that stakeholders, legislators and Nevada citizens are able to educate themselves about tourism and its impact within the state of Nevada.

Influencers Outreach – Identify those to whom the messaging will be conveyed within the key audiences and prioritize according to sphere and potential; identify opportunities to engage with influencers. Engagement with influencers will occur through a series of personal outreach such as one-to-one and event attendance, as well as digitally via newsletters and social media.

External Communications - Create opportunities for consistent public appearances and media coverage that generate awareness in the tourism industry's position as an economic engine; develop and employ a two-way communication tool for TravelNevada and in-state partners to maintain constant contact and communications with the following messages; coalesce educational messaging, agency ROI numbers, and economic statistics derived from proprietary and secondary research sources, highlighting the value of the industry and accomplishments of TravelNevada based on proven results.

Message

Due to recognition of the campaign, hashtag and branding, the agency will use the pre-existing "Tourism Means More" campaign brand throughout the evolution and implementation of this campaign.

Target Audiences

While there are many important audiences that TravelNevada communicates to on a regular basis, for the purpose of this campaign, the agency will focus all communications and outreach on reaching influencers directly. TravelNevada will employ a variety of communication tools to reach the following audience.

Influencers include elected officials statewide, Federal agencies that provide grants and oversight of arts, history and cultural entities, and statewide vertical industry partners, e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development organizations, regional marketing groups, municipality governance organizations.

While legislators are the primary audience, the media throughout the state are a second target. The media across the state helps to inform and educate residents and legislators thoughts and opinions on TravelNevada as well as the great tourism industry in the state.

Tactics by Audience

TravelNevada will achieve its objectives and reach its defined audience through the following tactical elements:

Audience: Influencers

TravelNevada will define the individuals and leaders who comprise this informed group of decision makers. This group includes and is not limited to: state legislators, political action groups, travel and marketing industry associations and co-operatives, economic development regional agencies, county commissioners, city mayors and managers.

- Identify influencers by organization type, sphere
- Work to develop key legislative initiatives that TravelNevada can employ with influential politicians.
- Key legislative initiatives for the 2017 Nevada legislative session includes meeting and arranging one-on-one meetings with new legislators as well as current legislative advocates to provide education on TravelNevada's initiatives and impact.
- Define and schedule industry association speaking engagements involving associations, civic groups, business organizations, etc. throughout the state of Nevada.
- Identify and apply for award opportunities for TravelNevada.
- Define a selective list of events in Reno/Carson, Las Vegas and rural Nevada TravelNevada can attend to connect with local representatives.
- Educate each community through developed collateral and messages informing them of the programs, effectiveness and vision of TravelNevada.
- Create and implement a bi-monthly newsletter to these influencers with updates on TravelNevada activities
- Create and distribute electronic and print copies of infographics and an annual report, all with the message Tourism Means More, to legislators.
- Create a video with testimonials of the immensely positive impact of Nevada's tourism on Nevada's economy and residents.
- Execute a stunt on Nevada Tourism Day in the Legislative Session, TBD based on day assigned by legislature.
- Enhance TravelNevada.biz to provide messaging and opportunities for partners to help convey consistent information regarding the tourism and hospitality industries.
- Pursue highly visible opportunities for TravelNevada and key constituents (Commissioners, brand champions) to participate in meetings and in special appearances that offer opportunities to interact and influence key stakeholders in the public and private sectors.

- TravelNevada will provide training to the industry to enhance understanding of the legislative outreach process.

Secondary audience: Media

The statewide media must be informed as to the value of the industry to help ensure the stories written represent the true picture. The media can be a tremendous partner if they have the stories, insights and vision required for them to consider TravelNevada a trusted source.

- Identify a list of key media and outlets in Nevada that have potential for conveying the tourism business message.
- Develop an editorial calendar that builds a strategic framework for messaging and story pitches.
- Coordinate and host two regional media mixers per year allowing the media to meet with TravelNevada and industry champions.
- Plan and execute deskside meetings as needed with key TravelNevada representatives.
- Provide rigorous media training to any TravelNevada representatives who will be speaking with media.
- Craft and publish a series of op-eds and other expert positioning pieces focused on high-level topics that are currently trending in Nevada. Work with TravelNevada to draft thoughtful, impactful responses.
- Work with in-state journalists to highlight the state's programs and year-over-year results through data-driven storytelling in up to ten (10) pieces in a mix of the state's media outlets.

Key Messages

- The tourism industry employs more than 474,000 Nevadans, offering jobs at all levels of professional growth as well as entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs for retirees. This makes up roughly 30% of Nevada's workforce.
- Travel and Tourism (including hospitality and gaming) continues to be Nevada's leading economic engine. In 2015, just over 55 million travelers visited Nevada (up 2.9 percent over 2014), with Las Vegas experiencing record-breaking attendance at more than 42 million visitors.
- Just over 13% of Nevada's GDP is attributed to the travel industry.
- Travelers visiting Nevada last year spent \$62.2 billion, a year-over-year increase of \$3 billion.
- For every \$1 TravelNevada spends on marketing and advertising, it generates \$77 in local and state tax revenue.
- TravelNevada offers \$1.4 million in marketing grants for rural communities per year, and \$100,000 in infrastructure grants for infrastructure improvements every other year.
- Tourism affects the entire state, not just metropolitan areas. Elko saw a 22 percent room tax revenue increase from 2011 to 2013. Over the past four years, room tax revenue has remained steady at an increase of 9 percent.
- TravelNevada is one of the only state entities to generate money for the General Fund each year without drawing any money off of it.
- The state of Nevada has a statewide room tax of 1 percent, TravelNevada receives 3/8ths of the tax and 5/8ths is returned to the local convention and visitors bureau or fair/recreation board to spend locally.

- TravelNevada's marketing support has helped increase airlift to North Nevada by five flights in FY 2015/2016, and at least three additional planned flights for FY 2016/2017.
- TravelNevada's marketing is impactful. 61% of people exposed to a TravelNevada advertisement, owned page/image, social media chatter or article/stories/blogs are able to recall them, of that 47% of people said they are extremely likely to visit Nevada overnight in the future.

Evaluation

TravelNevada will track its results through the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

- Enhanced commitment from lawmakers and decision makers to retain agency's budget.
- Increased support among state influencers through shared information and advocacy of TravelNevada and its programs.
- Scheduling and pursuit of twenty (20) meetings with lawmakers and influencers (conducted by champions outside of the TravelNevada staff).
- Eight (8) secured speaking engagements for TravelNevada leadership among political, industry and regional groups.
- Secured placements in ten (10) state-based media outlets on TravelNevada efforts, programs and achievements.

Travel Nevada will measure these efforts in conjunction with work done by the TravelNevada team and Commissioners on whether or not legislation changed in a more favorable manner.

Timeline

May 2016

- Done: Outline plan/budget – Abbi, Marty, Bethany
- Done: Begin content collection for microsite, infographics - Abbi
- Done: Define decision makers to align with and schedule meetings - Abbi

June 2016

- Done: Research and launch other paid-content opportunities (i.e. This is Reno) – Abbi and Bethany

July 2016

- Done: Media relations outreach begins and continues throughout entire campaign – Abbi
- Done: Research/gathering of all incumbent Nevada legislators - Abbi

August 2016

- Done: IFC Meeting, August 23: Talking points provided, letter to be provided - Abbi
- Done: Messages outlined for annual report – Abbi and Bethany (Claudia has suggested some input)
- Done: Refine messaging around TravelNevada's return-on-investment and KPIs – Abbi, Marty, Bethany

- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers when needed – Abbi and Bethany
- Done: Create inserts in NNBW and Jon Ralston's The Flash– Abbi and Bethany

September 2016

- Microsite map developed, to live on travelnevada.biz – Abbi and Marty (out of existing Fahlgren digital budget)
- Microsite content developed - Abbi
- Video storyboarded– Abbi (out of existing budget or TN's internal P.A. budget)
- Continued coordination of NNBW and The Flash inserts – Abbi
- Exploration of PAC begins – Abbi
- Exploration of standing booth at Nevada legislature begins - Abbi

October 2016

- Provide media training for TravelNevada spokespersons – Marty
- Editorial calendar is created for external communications (Newsletter, press releases, social media, op-eds) – Abbi and Bethany
- October 10: Northern Nevada Business Weekly inert goes live – Bethany and Abbi
- October 15: The Flash advertising insert goes live - Bethany and Abbi
- Microsite to go live – Abbi and Marty
- Shareable social graphics with stats are created and sent to TravelNevada – Abbi (out of TN's internal Public Affairs budget)
- Provide media training for TravelNevada spokespersons – Marty
- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- October 25: IFC Meeting in Carson City

November 2016

- Monthly newsletter communications begin to all elected legislators - Bethany and/or Abbi
- Mail TravelNevada annual report to all legislators – Claudia
- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Op-ed outreach begins – Abbi

December 2016

- Review Governor's Recommended Budget to refine messaging – Abbi, Marty, and Bethany
- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Monthly newsletter communications continues to all elected legislators - Bethany and/or Abbi
- Ask grant recipients to send thank you letters to legislators – Abbi
- Plan Tourism Day at the Legislature (Feb. 15) – Abbi, Marty, Bethany, Claudia

January 2017

- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Annual Report is finalized – Abbi and Fahlgren
- Mail infographic 1 to legislators – Claudia

- Monthly newsletter communications continues to all elected legislators - Bethany and/or Abbi
- Second phase of op-ed campaign begins - Abbi

February 2017

- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Execute Tourism Day at the Legislature – Feb. 15 - ALL
- Mail infographic 2 to legislators – Claudia
- Monthly newsletter communications continues to all elected legislators Bethany and/or Abbi

March 2017

- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Monthly newsletter communications continues to all elected legislators Bethany and/or Abbi

April 2017

- Execute meetings with key decision makers and lawmakers – Claudia
- Monthly newsletter communications continues to all elected legislators Bethany and/or Abbi

May 2017

- Measure effectiveness of campaign – Abbi and Marty

