



marketing toolkit

anatomy of a marketing plan

Community

executive summary

- After your plan is complete, create a summary/overview of what your goals and plan is for the year(s).

target customers

- Who is coming to your area now?
- Do you know? If no, how can you start collecting that information?
 - Ask local businesses to ask for customer zip codes?
 - Is there research already in existence? (Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, local attraction, winery etc.)

unique selling proposition

- What is the iconic attraction/event or lure for your area?
 - Try this exercise with your local group to help you narrow this down.
 - Take 5 minutes to list all the things to see and do in your region
 - Take 2 minutes to narrow down the list to the best of the best
 - Take 20 seconds to list the top three reasons why people should visit your area
- Those top three things are your main iconic lures
- Brand the region with these things in mind
- What are the **strengths and weaknesses** of your area?
 - Lodging amenities
 - Dining amenities
 - Gas stations
 - Human bandwidth
 - Financial bandwidth
 - What attraction/event needs a boost to make it a true asset?
 - Hours of operation, funding, labor
- What is your **competing region doing well**?
 - What competitor region, inside or outside the state, is doing a good job?
 - What is it they are doing? (research)
 - How did they do it?
- This is not meant to emulate, but to research what is resonating with visitors and to avoid pitfalls.
- **Pricing & Location Strategy**
 - Is your region affordable? If yes, use that as a selling point.
 - Is your region close to some significant attraction? City? River? If yes, use that as a selling point and as a way to clearly define your location.

positioning strategy

- How do you want to position your region within Oregon? The Willamette Valley?
- How do you want people to talk about your region?

goal setting

- **Don't be too ambitious.** Starting a tourism program and planning takes time. You will want to set reasonable goals to keep your committee involved and enthusiastic. **Seeing goals that are reached motivates committees.** Example:
 - Create an asset inventory for the region
 - Post 100% of all events in the area to TravelSalem.com
 - Create three itineraries of the area based on the following themes...
 - Identify a person/business in the area with an interesting story
 - Create a tracking mechanism for businesses to track visitor zip codes

marketing strategy

- Go after the **low hanging fruit** first
 - Post events of the region on all the free promotional websites (Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, Travel Portland, local newspapers)
 - Gather all high resolution (300dpi or higher) images currently in existence and share them with Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, Oregon Film & Video Commission
 - Take new photos and distribute (use interns, volunteers, professionals)
 - Create an asset inventory (list of everything to see and do in the area including hotels, B&B, parks, events etc.)
 - Create a list of interesting stories from your area that the media may be interested in and share them with Travel Salem to pitch to the media
 - Is there a person in your area with a fascinating story? (wine maker, chef, farmer, store owner etc.)
 - Is there a business in your area with a good story? (100 years old, family owned since 1900, building is haunted, etc.)
 - Locations that are great for pets (cute pet story)
 - ⇒ Dog, cat, llama, pig, sheep, cow
 - Are there current attractions or businesses with mailing lists, email lists that can be used to help promote the region? (must send an email asking if they are interested in receiving information first)
 - Are there businesses in the area that are willing to help promote events?
 - Create a variety of itineraries for your area to be shared with Travel Salem & Travel Oregon to be used for the foreign & domestic tour trade (tour operators, travel agents and travel media)
 - Half-day, full day & multi-day
themed or variety itineraries (history, wine, agriculture, shopping, event, dining, overnight). Refer to example itinerary in the toolkit.

- **Advertising**

Traditional, online, social, broadcast

- Take advantage of the free opportunities
 - Public service announcements
KGW, KATU, KOIN events calendars
 - Invite a morning broadcast host out to kick-off your event or season
 - Is your region submitting the 5 free listings to be included in the Salem Area Visitors Guide & TravelSalem.com?

promotions strategy

- Is there a promotion you can run that will attract visitors or encourage repeat visitation?
- Think about the seasons and what you already offer
 - Partner with an attraction or business (e.g., offer a sweepstakes and the person selected wins a guided tour of the area, meal and wine/ag product etc. Those who enter the sweepstakes, and select to be added, can be added to your subscribers list. Refer to sample sweepstakes form in the tool kit.

digital marketing strategy

- Websites
 - Be sure your region is fully utilizing the online resources that are currently available (Travel Salem, Travel Oregon, local attractions)
 - An online presence is only as good as the information kept up to date on the site AND you need marketing strategies in place to drive traffic to the website otherwise it is not a good use of funds.
- Social Media
 - Utilize the online resources that are currently available

joint ventures & partnerships

- Mashups
 - Don't be afraid to partner with an unlikely business or organization (i.e., Bud Light and Game of Thrones, museum and restaurant, ag producer, and artist)
 - Remember that residents are your ambassadors and salespeople so be sure your local community is well educated about what there is to see and do in the region (i.e., Create a cheat sheet for businesses)

cross promotion strategy

- Work with businesses, attractions and events to promote other locations to visit in the area.
 - "Thanks for visiting. There is a great burger place on the next block if you're hungry."
 - "Thanks for visiting. Be sure to come back in March for the Spring Garden Extravaganza."
 - "Thanks for visiting. Before you head home be sure to stop at..."

budget

- Year one – What do you realistically need funding for? Be honest about what you can actually do, and do well, in the first year and beyond. Refer to Grant Opportunities list in the toolkit.
 - human bandwidth (intern, volunteer)
 - creating a non-profit
 - actual programs

metrics

- How will you measure your success?
 - In the beginning it might include:
 - reporting on start-up project tasks. Are they in the research stage, underway or complete?
 - Are their point people for each task & are they continuing to be engaged?
 - How many businesses are collecting visitor zip codes?
 - When more projects are underway the metrics will start to include:
 - Visitation/attendance numbers compared to previous years without regional promotions. Be sure to get baseline data to see if you are moving the needle.
 - Refer to the list of metrics in the toolkit.

stakeholder communications

- Share your plan and reports with stakeholders and potential funders. Tout your successes and communicate the details of your efforts. Also, share the areas that need more help or where you have run into stumbling blocks. By sharing this information, you may find the person/people to help get you over those blocks.
- Be sure to show appreciation to all stakeholders and those who are in the trenches making your region shine.

considerations when developing your plan

- Look for some **low-cost/no-cost** ways to promote your region
- Try to **limit your marketing message**. You can't be all things to all people. The "we have it all" syndrome.
- You can demonstrate the **value of your region along with the quality**. Low cost doesn't mean less of an experience. It can mean a more **authentic** and better one-on-one experience.
- Develop a **high-level hospitable experience**. People return to locations where the service is top rate. Handle a **visitor's complaint quickly and with a positive attitude**. Preserve your relationship with them otherwise they will be telling others about their **unhappy experience**.
- **Collect testimonials** from your visitors and use them in all your advertising. Testimonials provide evidence that your destination is worth the visit. For maximum impact, use only testimonials that describe specific examples of what the visitor enjoyed. (e.g. "The setting at Champoege Heritage area was beautiful. The campsites are roomy, and the park staff was so nice!")

- Continually test and **evaluate everything** you use or do to promote your region. Allocate **80 percent** of your marketing budget to **proven promotions**. Use the other **20 percent** for testing new variations.

Direct questions to:

Kara Kuh, Chief Marketing Officer
503.581.4325 ext. 124
Kara@TravelSalem.com