Santa Maria Valley Tourism Marketing District (SMV TMD)

Advisory Committee Minutes

November 8, 2017
3:00 p.m. (Radisson)

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Advisory Committee: Ryan Swack, JP Patel, Jerry Patel
Absent: Jean-Luc Garon (excused), Susan Garcia (excused)
City Staff: Jason Stilwell
Chamber|Staff: Chris Slaughter, Glenn Morris, Jenn Harrison, Terri Prouty, Cheryl Cuming
Guests: Karen (Radisson)
KPS3: Rob Gaedtke, Chrisie Yabu

Call to Order by Vice Chair Ryan Swack at 3:08 p.m.

Public Comment None

Consent Calendar: Minutes and Financial Report
Minutes and financials accepted. Motion: JP and 2nd Ryan. Motion carries.

Business Items
#SantaMariaStyle and creative assets: Rob reviewed the newly prepared #SantaMariaStyle campaign, including 3 :15 video spots which will be shown as pre-roll, on Facebook and YouTube. The AC shared their concerns that the spot was too fast and had too many elements, and would prefer if the spots focused on specific assets (like the ocean). KPS3 will revised spots and provide edited versions at the January meeting. Rob also shared the evolved website and how the ideal home base concept will be integrated. He also shared a sampling of the most recent photo and video shoot, and reminded the AC that these assets are all available for use by all lodging constituents (located on the industry section of the website).

Monthly reporting, including PR and SEO: Rob noted that the website launched 1-year ago in November 2016, with 9,788 monthly sessions up from 2,000 from prior year. October showed almost 510,000 impressions. JP asked about the conversion detail, and Jason asked why conversions went down Y/Y. Rob explained our transition from
awareness-based digital media (Adwords and Facebook) to engagement-based media (digital display, native and remarketing). Rob noted that October’s organic search was +6%. JP asked that a goal summary be provided at each meeting so if can be referenced. Chrisie reviewed recent PR coverage, including that SMV was ranked #12 among the Happiest Cities in the US. Chrisie also discussed how we are evolving our PR strategy to generate more content (blogs and native), and focusing on how PR efforts can impact SEO. Chris noted that the Discovery Museum will be coming online with a Launch exhibit to focus on the 5/5 Mars launch at Vandenberg. JP noted how impressive it was to see the number of publications that SMV has been featured in. Chrisie also touched on native content, noting that it is a hybrid of paid and earned content, were we have control over the message and access to the data. Also, SMV is up for a Silver Spike Award, and KPS3 will also submit for the VisitCA Poppy Award (February 2018).

Rob also reviewed details about our evolving SEO strategy, sharing details on our Goggle rankings and our focus on a boarder content approach with the ideal home base messaging strategy.

2017 | 2018 Media, including Social Media: Rob reviewed our current social media stats, and encouraged lodging properties to engage with our posts. Cheryl suggested a social media training in January, and AC agreed that it would be beneficial. The available media contingency was noted at $45,408. Cheryl noted that Travel 50&Beyond was already confirmed due to deadline and will provide email leads to grow our database. JP asked that the AC provide monetary parameters for future media contingency funding needed between meetings. Cheryl will place on the January agenda. Rob also touched on the Keys to the Coast partnership totaling $2,700/year. Ryan asked about the investment moving from the CVB to the TMD, and Glenn noted that it is out-of-area with a solid following and strong content generation, so the expense does fall within the TMD’s out-of-area focus.

Action Items
TripAdvisor Premium Destination Partnership: Rob also provided details to confirm that the current buy on TripAdvisor was not delivering good results and will be pulled. Details were presented for the TripAdvisor Premium Destination Partnership opportunity whereby KPS3 can control the content, add video and feature events totaling $2,500/year. A motion was made by Jerry, and 2nd by JP. Motion carries.

Santa Barbara Visitor Guide: AC review the opportunity within the guide that has a 90,000 distribution. JP noted that is isn’t trackable. Jenn responded that there is a perceived value from a regional standpoint, as it speaks to SMV being part of Santa Barbara County. All agreed we should look at other ways to penetrate SB County.

Clarification on Administrator Role: Glenn addressed a concern brought forward by JP that the current TMD administrator’s primary focus is to be the day-to-day voice of the
lodging constituents, and know that their first priority is to represent the best interests of the lodging. JP noted that the administrator must “watch out” for the interests of the lodging assessment payors as noted in the TMD formation documents. Jason noted that the city is very supportive of more ‘heads in beds’. JP also asked about TMD monies that support Chamber staffing costs. JP noted his frustration of the lack of communication from the Chamber to the lodging membership. Glenn noted that 14% of the budget was allocated to admin costs, and JP questioned whether that was enough to adequately provide the needed services. JP asked if there was additional support needed at the Chamber to better service the TMD so that there could be improved communication and information sharing. Glenn noted that the internal communication piece has been addressed, and will be a greater focus for Chamber staff. Glenn also noted that he feels the current funding is adequate, and as the AC considers the need for expanded services, that the funding discussion can be readdressed in the future.

The updated TMD administrator scope was shared with the AC. A motion was made by JP and 2nd by Ryan. Motion carries.

**Updates**

- Chairman’s Report: None
- VCB/TMD Report: Jenn shared the City Council presentation, and JP asked how it went. Jenn confirmed that they were supportive and thrilled with the success of the Wine Trolley. Jason reiterated that the City continues to support the TMD efforts and wants to help build on the success thus far.
- Jenn also noted that the small hotel URL’s will be completed before the January 2018 meeting. Jenn will be heading to CAL SAE in Sacramento in December, and will be attending the Leisure Show in San Diego in January and in Los Angeles in February 2018. Jenn also provided specifics on the World of Pinot Noir sponsorship, which the CVB has decided to support. They are coordinating a Farm to Fork media dinner, and will be representing the SMV branding throughout the event.

**Committee Member Reports:** None

**Good of the Order:** None

**Future Agenda Items:**
- Front desk FAM/concierge training
- Media contingency spend parameters

**Adjourn** by Ryan at 5:01pm

**Next meeting:** Wednesday, January 10 (meeting was moved to January 17)