

VISIT GRAND JUNCTION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSHOP NOTES

November 14, 2017

Grand Vista Hotel
2790 Crossroads Blvd.
Grand Junction, CO

PRESIDING: Julie Shafer, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susie Kiger, Brad Taylor, Britt Mathwich

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Reimer, Jamie Lummis, Don Bramer, Josh Niernberg, Tim Pollard (resigned as of 9/26/17)

STAFF PRESENT: Debbie Kovalik, Barbara Bowman, Mistalynn Meyeraan, Holly Prickett, Kim Machado

GUESTS: Gaylene Ore – Ore Communications, Karin Mast and Kelly Smith – Miles Partnership, LLLP, Dennis Conley and Darshann Ruckman – Clarion Inn

Due to lack of a quorum, the regular meeting was adjusted to a workshop which began at 3:00 p.m.

Julie Shafer recognized the Visit Grand Junction (VGJ) staff for their hard work toward making the 2017 Governor's Conference on Tourism a success. Barbara Bowman explained the reception and conference activities. Comments from participants were positive. A brief slideshow of the conference was presented.

Debbie Kovalik recognized Dennis Conley from the Clarion Inn for the exceptional customer service he provided during the Governor's Conference as noted by a conference attendee who wrote a letter to VGJ detailing how impressed she was with his service. He was presented with an award from VGJ and a Downtown gift card.

Gaylene Ore, from Ore Communications, recapped the public relations activities for 2017. Highlights include 17 media visits, meetings with media at the SATW conference and Travel Media Canada, 4 desk-side meetings in Phoenix, hosting of group winter and fall golf press trips and a summer wine-themed trip with the Colorado Wine Board. Key media placements include Salt Lake Magazine, World's Best Golf Destinations, Gear Patrol, Elevation Outdoors, World's Best Golf Destinations, Albuquerque Journal, Outdoor Sports Guide, Smart Meetings and The Daily Meal. Of all the stories, 58% were outdoor related, 30% food/wine and 12% ski/winter related. Total impressions through November are over 30 million with an estimated ad value of \$600,000. The return on investment is estimated to be \$13 for every \$1 spent on public relations.

Ore Communications will work with VGJ to identify three key campaign messages to focus on for 2018. A targeted media outreach list focused on local, regional and national media, along with a series of pitches to support the key messages, campaign-focused press releases and media visits will be developed for each campaign. Media blitzes are planned in New York as well as Denver/Boulder and Phoenix.

Gaylene thanked the Board and staff for awarding Ore Communications the public relations contract and looks forward to a successful 2018.

Karin Mast and Kelly Smith, from Miles Partnership, presented the online marketing performance through October 2017. The new responsive site launched earlier this year has produced a 9% increase in total sessions and 2% increase in total pageviews over 2016. Average bounce rate is 50% and average time on site is 2:19 with 2.4 average pages viewed per session. Partner referrals are up 29% and personalized content interactions are up 91%. Over 250,000 emails were sent through the email program resulting in a 23% average open rate and 8,500 clicks to the visitgrandjunction.com website. Pay-Per-Click advertising averaged \$0.90 cents per click with total impressions of almost 312,000 and over 14,000 clicks to the website. New videos on the website this year focused on climbing and biking, exploring downtown, river adventure, hiking and ATV riding which resulted in 19,256 total views and 22% viewing the full-length of the video.

Karin presented the agency transition plan and creative process for rebranding. Research and intercept studies from the past two years will be used to understand visitor segments and primary motivators which will assist with defining the vision and developing the audience messaging and creative brief. The goal is to have this ready for testing in January 2018 along with the media plan. Final creative approval will be presented in February with asset development and campaign launch in March and April.

On behalf of Miles Partnership, LLLP, Visit Grand Junction received the HSMAI Adrian Bronze Award for the 2016 Responsive Website. The award recognizes creative excellence and best practices in hospitality, travel and tourism-related marketing. Karin presented the award to Debbie.

The workshop adjourned at 5:03 p.m.