

Visit Mendocino County

Marketing Plan:  
July 2022 – June 2023

Submitted to Mendocino County Tourism Commission & County of Mendocino

May 12, 2022

DRAFT

**Executive Summary:**

To be completed upon approval

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## **Strategic Plan:**

This Marketing Plan adheres to the initiatives set forth in the three-year strategic plan that has been adopted at the organization's May 2021 Board of Directors (BoD) meeting and was put into action at the start of the 2021-2022 fiscal year (FY). The purpose of the plan is to align the core strategies of the organization. (The Strategic Plan is attached to this Marketing Plan as Appendix 1.)

## **Vision:**

A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.

## **Mission:**

Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County experience.

## **Values:**

- Transparency: We foster trust through openness and integrity
- Accountability: We are outcome-oriented and professional
- Partnership: We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships
- Community: We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County
- Innovation: Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our cultures and landscapes

## **Position:**

In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Visit Mendocino County:

- Consistently markets the Mendocino County experience to key regional and domestic markets
- Creates, develops, and manages brand awareness for the county
- Connects people and organizations to opportunities
- Provides tourism resources and information to in-county partners
- Optimizes return on investment through responsible fiscal management

## **Action Plans:**

### **Marketing & Advertising**

- Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses
- Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners
  - Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources
- Refresh our brand identity to align with target segments and gain a competitive advantage
- Create a new website that focuses on mobile-friendliness

The Visit Mendocino County team will work hand-in-hand with its Web Development and Social Media contractor, Agency Xi, to build on the current robust and engaging Awareness and Advertising campaigns. The focus will remain on brand awareness, followed by festivals and shoulder season activities in order to drive tourism during those critical times.

### **Brand Management:**

For the 2022/2023 Fiscal year, VMC staff will:

- Manage the Visit Mendocino County brand
  - Continue work on the refresh of its brand identity
- Explore new brand opportunities, partnerships, and communication pillars
- Guide other VMC partners in the use of the new brand style guide
- Manage awareness studies as requested by the Marketing Committee and BoD

### **Research:**

VMC staff will manage research & trend forecasting and partner with VMC committees and BoD to determine research needs through:

- Primary: focus groups and intercepts
- Secondary: Secure cost-effective secondary market research
- Creative testing

### **Creative Development:**

VMC staff will develop creative collateral that reflects the brand for:

- Website
- Online and offline advertising
- Retargeting campaigns
- Social media campaigns
- Print opportunities
- Consumer media opportunities

The VMC Marketing Committee and staff will continue to build out new creative assets for the new countywide festivals that will reflect the brand and provide accompanying website landing pages. VMC will focus on developing creative campaigns that continue to raise awareness for Mendocino County as a world-class tourism destination.

### **Build Awareness:**

VMC will raise awareness by:

- Exploring new ways to find and connect with potential visitors
- Creating more shareable assets (videos, photos, podcasts, television commercials, radio commercials, others to be determined)
- Assisting partners and stakeholders with community event marketing
- Developing and helping to manage new promotions (e.g., Beer Trail, Travel Passports and give-a-ways.)
- Managing all media planning, buying, and reporting
- Managing online demand generations
- Launching new and updated retargeting campaigns

### **Website Maintenance & Upgrades:**

Agency Xi and VMC staff will maintain the perfect working order of the VisitMendocino.com website

- Ongoing support as needed, typically resolved within 24-48 hours of request except for weekends and holidays
- Maintain the working order of the Bookdirect.net booking link on the VMC.com website and continue to integrate new partners to the booking link
- Continue to expand on new website framework as new technologies and best practices become available
- Perform regular usability audits for mobile and desktop browsing
- Refine usage metrics for Google Analytics tracking
- Periodic software updates and backup and security consulting as needed
- Agency Xi will continue to offer VMC staff training on website best practices and operations

**Marketing Goal: Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to County vitality.**

**Total marketing investment: \$782,500**

### **Public Relations:**

- **Increase tourism revenue through the development and implementation of the annual integrated marketing and public relations plan**
- **Increase website traffic**
- **Increase shoulder season visitation rate**
- **Boost community support of the tourism industry**
- **Boost brand awareness**

The PR team works to expand VMC's branding and media messaging using communication pillars to identify and secure media coverage for Mendocino County. As of writing, fiscal year 2021/2022 again showed milestones for VMC's PR team, achieving nearly 735 third-party placements with an ad equivalency of \$611+ million dollars by working with media visitors, giving them the inspiration to create new stories to share with readers via personally curated dynamic micro-trips spanning the breadth of assets available in Mendocino County.

The COVID-19 post-pandemic recovery continues in the tourism industry and Mendocino County by nature is a prime destination for road trip visitors. Due to inflation and subsequent rising fuel prices, air travel continues to be low going into the 2022/2023 FY. The team will continue to keep the Mendocino County voice amplified in key markets to keep our destination top-of-mind for the road-trip traveler. For the 2022/2023 FY, the PR team will work on and deliver the items outlined below.

### **Program Objectives:**

Drive overnight visitation throughout Mendocino County via the following objectives:

- Assist VMC in promoting a sustainable, clarified image/brand as a premier California destination
- Stimulate demand/increase tourism revenue during critical shoulder seasons
- Initiate awareness among key market niches and lifestyle/passion segments to buoy off-season revenue
- Cultivate collaborative industry relationships to ensure successful, cost-effective and equitable coverage of Mendocino County stakeholders and stretch VMC's budget

### **Strategies:**

- Influence the influencers/drive media coverage via multiple venues/channels (traditional/emerging)
- Ignite media interest via proactive campaigns focused on print, television, social media/key influencers
- Leverage and create "news" value as an economic driver for visitation
- Convert customers predisposed to California getaways by differentiating Mendocino County via focusing on distinct benefits/unique assets

- Strengthen industry partnerships with Visit California, North Coast Tourism Council, San Francisco Travel, BrandUSA, etc., via cooperative programming

## **Targets:**

### **Demographics:**

- Primary: Millennial, Gen-Z, Gen-X
- Secondary: Baby Boomers/Time Affluent Market
- HHI: \$100k+

### **Geographic:**

- Primary: State of California (nearly 80% of U.S. market)
- Secondary: U.S., key fly/drive markets: Colorado, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada
- Tertiary: International/Western Canada

## **Core Program:**

Leverage ongoing trends and news value to drive awareness of Visit Mendocino County via a series of timely, hard-hitting media-appropriate materials targeted to key industry niches. A Communications Platform will be created tied to an annual timeline.

### **Activities include:**

- Development of 2022/2023 Communications Platform
- Proactive media relations campaign tied to timely themes, news, seasons, trends
- Goal: 9-11

## **Media Missions/In-Market Editorial Appointments**

Maximize external communications via editorial missions in key media-rich markets. Where possible, tie in with Visit California to offset costs. Suggested markets:

- Vancouver/Canada
- Phoenix
- Goal: 1

## **Media Familiarization/Social Influencer Program**

Pitch/secure in-market media visits to generate editorial coverage, further brand messaging/positioning within key lifestyle/passion segments. Activities include:

- Conduct individual media outreach based on agreed-upon communication pillars
- Vet and manage all media and social influencer/blogger requests
- Work with VMC to create media itineraries
- Goal: 18-20

### **Content Creation**

- Draft consumer-facing web copy mirroring release output
- Goal: 11

### **Trade Shows**

Attend targeted media trade shows to boost visibility and secure future editorial visits. Coordinate participation with VMC staff.

- Visit California/San Francisco (Sept.)
- Society of American Travel Writers Conference (Oct.)
- Visit California Media Mission/Pacific Northwest (Nov.)
- IMM/New York (Jan.)
- Visit California/Los Angeles (Apr.)
- IPW/Texas (May)
- Goal: 2

### **Community/Stakeholder Relations**

Maintain VMC's credibility in the local media landscape; augment internal program to assist in positioning as the leader in tourism marketing.

- Assist VMC in maintaining visibility; broaden stakeholder support
- Draft/distribute stakeholder public relations highlights/monthly
- Attend/present at annual stakeholder meetings, as needed
- Quarterly local press releases on VMC happenings and coverage in collaboration with VMC Partner Relations and Communications Manager

### **Digital Footprint/social media**

Augment in-house social media campaign to extend VMC'S digital footprint

- Dovetail social media marketing promotions with publicity support; coordinate efforts with in-house staff
- Expand and enhance social media/key influencer database and outreach



## **Crisis Communications**

Work with VMC to coordinate outreach efforts to consumer-facing and stakeholder targets during crisis periods (fire, pandemic, earthquake, social unrest, tourist incident)

- Deliver crisis counseling, coordinate tourism partner efforts, draft/disseminate key messaging, releases, updates as required, conduct media outreach under separate agreed-upon budget

## **PR Toolkit**

- Retain vendors/subscriptions on behalf of VMC:
  - Vocus Cision Media Database (KOLI contract)
  - Burrelles Media Tracking Service (VMC contract)
  - Constant Contact Distribution Service (KOLI contract)
  - Society of American Travel Writers' Membership (KOLI membership)

## **Programming**

- Provide ongoing counsel/insight on market developments and opportunities
- Execute annual Public Relations Workplan and Timeline
- Draft/distribute Bi-Monthly Public Relations Reports
- Draft/distribute Bi-Monthly Media Impact Reports
- Conduct monthly VMCPR conference calls
- Attend client, VMC Board and marketing committee meetings as needed
- Participate in quarterly site checks surrounding new hotel properties/attractions
- Draft/distribute Fiscal Report, draft/distribute PR Workplan

## **Key Performance Indicators:**

- Realize \$10 million in advertising equivalency
- Secure 500 qualified media placements
- Reach an estimated 250 million potential visitors/circulation

**Total PR Investment: \$192,700**

## **Website & Social Media:**

- **Increase website traffic**
- **Increase VMC communication and engagement rate**
- **Refresh VMC's brand identity to align with target segments**

The VisitMendocino.com website continues to be our calling card and is continually calibrated for best appeal. Ambient home page videos are switched out monthly along with an ever-

changing array of “MendoMoments” inviting website visitors to stay awhile and explore the county.

Due to our website being our calling card and technology is rapidly advancing, VMC staff in collaboration with Agency Xi will continue the buildout of a new website launching in the fall of 2022/2023 FY. This website will be optimized for mobile navigation and will include new plugins that will enhance the visitor experience.

VMC will continue to develop and deploy digital campaigns that build on the successes of past campaigns. The organization has been successful in engaging audiences and increased website visitation by 32.26% over the previous period (September-June vs July-April) and 65.31% over the previous year (July-April). We experienced a better than predicted increase in actual visitation for 2021/2022 FY. Our goal is to build on these achievements and drive even more traffic to the VMC website and also increase outbound referrals to stakeholder and partner websites. The implementation of a new lodging booking link on the website has allowed the organization to report direct ROI and B to B conversion. This booking link will continue to be a key element to the new website.

On Instagram, VMC will continue to curate content to land on the “Let’s Get Social” portion of the VMC website. A new contract with CrowdRiff will allow VMC access to user-generated photo content to include in this section of the website and access to assets for development of creative.

The website will continue to auto-generate a monthly report to all stakeholders and partners, for whom VMC has an email address, that shows the total number of website visitors and the number of click-throughs to their particular website.

Social media continues to grow as a motivator for travel, spanning all demographics. People look to their friends and family for recommendations on travel destinations - increasingly more often than traditional media and advertising. Our social presence seeks not only to directly engage new potential visitors and remind previous visitors of the destination but also excite our core visitors to share and spread the word about Mendocino County. To that end, VMC will engage with key content producers via Instagram and Facebook to generate dynamic visual content, with the aim of increasing overall reach. Social media engagement is the measure of the public shares, likes and comments for VMC’s social media efforts. Engagement has historically been a common metric for evaluating social media performance and it is measured on Facebook by shares, likes and followers, and in Instagram by likes, followers, and hashtags/mentions.

Agency Xi and VMC will continue the creation of a series of 15 and 30-second videos to run on social media platforms that will highlight iconic Mendocino County experiences. Metrics have shown that audiences engage with experiential video at a higher rate than with passive video shoots.

## Social Media Goals:

- Use visual marketing software to increase organic traffic to our social media portfolio
- Integrate a call to action in social media posts
- Continue to increase engagement on all social media channels YOY

## Website Goals:

- Launch new website
- Continue to monitor, measure, and analyze website traffic in order to drive visitation

## Total Website Development Investment: \$64,200

### Sales:

- **Increase website traffic**
- **Increase VMC communication and engagement rate**
- **Refresh VMC's brand identity to align with target segments**

Sales is an important piece of the VMC promotional efforts puzzle. Much of sales is inspirational, reminding potential visitors how close geographically we are to our main markets of the SF Bay area and the Chico to Stockton/Central Valley region; informing them how easily they can get here and getting them excited about what they can do once they arrive. Our messaging has shown to be key in recovery post-pandemic. Our key sales activities annually are based on the research generated by Visit California, which also adds economic feasibility to participate in VCA's already arranged sales efforts.

We are in a competitive region. Our neighbors in Napa and Sonoma outspend us in marketing dollars by at least 6 to 1. We need to differentiate ourselves by showcasing our assets and variety of cost options. This is a continuous process since many tourists focus on the last thing they saw or heard, and we have to be in the travel decision narrative. Going into the 2022/2023 marketing year, we continue to believe our geography has greatly bolstered our efforts as travelers continue to seek outdoor experiences and "room to roam".

We continue to rely on research from Visit CA and Visa Vue to define and refine our sales efforts. We also use anecdotal evidence from our hotel partners, regional partners and various tour operators to adjust our sales activities to match the ever-changing market.

For FY 2022/2023 the integrated sales approach will focus on the following:

- **Consumer trade shows (all efforts are based on trade show availability)**

The most effective way to interact with thousands of potential visitors is to personally meet them at consumer trade shows. We promote the entire County by handing out logoed orange bags and promotional literature such as the Explorer's Guide and Players Guide. We also answer questions and provide recommendations. We have built a strong partnership with the North Coast Tourism Council (CA's North of Ordinary Region) by hosting larger regional booths at tradeshow within our targeted markets. Giveaways are a key attractor of tradeshow audience and are advertised on posters prominently placed at the booth. We have also upgraded our booth to include electronic email sign-ups, greatly reducing the amount of staff time necessary to process the information. Immediately following the tradeshow we follow up with an email to those who have provided one welcoming them to our list and inviting them to enjoy the most recent MendoMoment. VMC will attend the SF/Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara, Travel and Adventure Show in Los Angeles, Bark in the Park, a pet-friendly event in San Jose.

- **Continue development of regional partnerships**

Anecdotally, visitors come to the county as part of a regional trip. VMC, therefore, partners and coordinates with convention and visitor bureaus such as San Francisco Travel, Oakland, Sacramento and DMOs in Lake, Humboldt, Del Norte, Sonoma, San Mateo, Marin, Yolo and Napa counties. We also have positive working relationships with Tahoe, Shasta and Monterey counties, who directly compete with us as tourist destinations from our target markets. We work together on promoting the entire northern CA region and multi-jurisdiction trips and itineraries.

- **Provide FAM (familiarization) tours for tour operators/receptives**

We make a concerted effort to influence travel professionals by bringing them to Mendocino County in the belief that a visit will prompt them to recommend a county visit to clients. FAM participants can be either domestic or international, and many are recruited and vetted by Visit California. FAM participants can create packages and promotions that include the county.

- **Manage the North Coast Tourism Council (NCTC)**

Mendocino County benefits from its administration and marketing efforts for the NCTC, one of eight rural regions designated by Visit CA to influence CA travel beyond the gateways. The NCTC budget is funded by participating counties with a \$60,000 Visit CA match. The ED is the Administrator and treasurer for this regional group, thus increasing Mendocino County's impact and visibility. Mendocino County is consequently able to have a presence at important venues and domestic trade events without impacting the VMC budget. Events include IPW, Go West, RTO (receptive trade organization) and the Visit CA Outlook Forum. The NCTC also funds sales participation on various international trade missions. Regional itineraries are created, with, for example, Eldorado and Shasta counties. NCTC also has a vibrant web and social media presence that highlights Mendocino County.

- **Attend industry events which focus on group sales**

Mendocino County is a challenging group market due to the absence of large group hotels and CalTrans coach length restrictions on highways to the coast. Nevertheless, through the NCTC, we participate in both the National Tour Association and the American Bus Association trade conventions in an attempt to get our share of this lucrative market, particularly for inland Mendocino County.

- **Contracts between tour operators and hotels**

The desired end result of both domestic and international sales efforts is signed contracts between tour operators and local hotels. We assist by obtaining appropriate leads and assisting with negotiations. Leads are defined as opportunities for hotels to obtain group and FIT (foreign international travel) business. Once a contract is established the likelihood for steady and increased business increases.

**Sales Goals:**

- Consumer Shows - Attend 2 consumer trade shows at various geographic locations and obtain 1,000 new names for consumer database
- FAMS - Participate in 2 domestic FAMS
- Group Sales – Attend at least one event and obtain 5 new groups to County (when appropriate)
- Hotel Contracts – Facilitate the signing of 5 new contracts
- Sales missions – Attend one domestic sales mission in partnership with Visit CA

**Total sales investment: \$50,150**

**Visitor Services:**

- **Increase Mendocino County Sales Tax Receipts Over 3 Years**
- **Increase County Investment in Tourism Products and Infrastructure**
- **Boost Community's Support of the Tourism Industry**

While VMC's primary goal is to increase county visitation, a secondary task is to support visitors once they are here. Increased visitor satisfaction will result in repeat visits and encouragement to extend their stays.

We support the various Chambers and visitor centers in the county by making sure they have collateral such as wine maps, mini-guides, visitor guides, event guides and tear-off maps. We also match funds provided by Sonoma County to the Redwood Coast Visitor Center.

Goals for the 2022/2023 fiscal year are:

- VMC will continue to distribute the new Explorer's Guide
- Continue distribution of tear-off maps for North Coast, South Coast, Willits and Ukiah
- Circulate the newly designed Redwood Highway Map created and funded by the NCTC
- Increase the reach of VMC's branding by distributing orange bags with logo
- Identify locations and obtain quotes for new gateway signs

**Total visitor services investment: \$198,799**

#### **Visitor Services:**

- **Increase Shoulder Season Visitation Rates**
- **Increase Participation Rate in VMC Programs**

Unique and interesting festivals and events are a key component for the traveler's potential choice of Mendocino County over other destinations. While tourism to the county is robust during certain times of year, there are months it is not. To remedy this, VMC currently sponsors two umbrella festivals per year: Crab FEAST Mendocino in January and Harvest FEAST Mendocino in November (Festival titles TBD). The organization launched a Spring "Beer Trail" FEAST in April 2021/2022 FY. Building on events already taking place, rather than creating an entirely new concept, will be an avenue to increase partner/stakeholder participation.

FY 2022/2023 goals are:

- Launch a successful recreation of Harvest FEAST Mendocino with a broader theme
- Work with event holders of previous FEASTS to develop new festival and event offerings to attract visitors to Mendocino County in the shoulder season
- Record partner & stakeholder participation in our internal database; update and add contacts/businesses
- Encourage event holders to work with other "visit" organizations, Chambers, Destination Hopland and winery/vineyard promotional organizations to revamp existing events and create new ones that will attract overnight visitation
- Continue to revise stakeholder surveys to extract relevant information such as room nights, consumer spending and relevancy of FEAST(s) events.

**Festival and events expenses are part of the Visitor Services budget.**

#### **Partnerships:**

- **Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses**

- **Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners**
- **Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources**
- **Create process and framework for the evaluation and investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder seasons**

The Strategic Plan references ways that VMC can work with its partners in businesses throughout the county as to the benefits of the tourism industry and its effects on the local economy. With a larger focus placed on partnerships and partner communication and offerings under the newly adopted Strategic Plan, the VMC team will continue to keep its finger on the pulse of new tourism-related businesses in the county by personal visits, phone calls and emails and surveying partner websites, etc. We will also work on the development of new partner resources and expand our array of offerings available.

Goals for 2022/2023 are:

- Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses
- Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners
- Work with partners to develop, promote and strengthen beneficial tourism activities and events
- Continue Hotel Adoption Program visits to properties and updates to internal database.
- Promote the VMC Partners at Work Facebook page
- Creation of partner brochure and Tourism Matters Card to further education on the value and mission of VMC
- Attend Chambers of Commerce meetings, city promotional meetings, and events to gain and share ideas, and show community support
- Partner with other business sectors in Mendocino County to investigate how VMC can play an active role in the development of our communities in their entirety
- Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations
- Advocate for County investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure

**Total partnership investment: \$83,337**

**Personnel, Operations & Administration:**

- Ongoing staff training on website usage and best practices for stakeholder and consumer communications, database usage, office procedures
- Ongoing Team and Board development
- Review new and up-to-date technologies specifically designed for destination marketing

- Attendance at key travel industry conferences to provide access to industry trends and successful examples of best practices, furthering internal knowledge benefiting the VMC program of work
- Maintain accreditation from the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program, offered by Destination Marketing Association International
- Create and distribute quarterly and annual reports
- Create and distribute VMC's annual Marketing Plan
- Executive Director to work with BID Advisory Board on annual BID report for the County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors' approval
- Keep the MendocinoTourism.org website updated with Board and Committee agendas, packets and minutes
- Attend Board and BID Advisory meetings
- Attend County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors' meetings as warranted

**Total personnel, operations and administrative investment: \$384,790**

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**Proposed Budget for FY 2022-2023 Annual Budget Including BID assessments, Mendocino County Matching Funds and Miscellaneous Income**

INCOME	
MCTC BID Assessment	\$1,161,972.12
County of Mendocino Matching Funds	\$580,986.12
County Administrative Fee	-\$34,859.16
Event Brochure Ads	\$0.00
Interest	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,708,099.08</b>
EXPENSES	
Advertising/Media	\$782,500.04
Marketing/Public Relations	\$192,700.08
Website Maintenance & Development	\$64,200.00
Leisure & Group Sales	\$50,150.00
Partnerships	\$83,337.58
Visitor Services	\$198,799.48
Administrative Expenses	\$119,745.88
Personnel	\$384,790.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,876,223.50</b>
Portion From Unrestricted Reserve	-\$168,124.42
<b>BOTTOM LINE</b>	<b>-\$168,124.42</b>



## Staffing:

- **Executive Director:** Travis Scott
- **Marketing & Sales Manager:** Ramon Jimenez
- **Partner Relations & Communication Manager:** Jamie Peters-Connolly
- **Marketing & Communications Coordinator:** Mckenzie McLain
- **Festival Coordinator:** Janis MacDonald
- **Administrative Support:** Kathy Janes
- **Public Relations:** Koleen Hamblin, KOLI Communications
- **Social Media & Website:** Brendan McGuigan, Agency Xi
- **Accounting:** Teresa Crudo, WiPFLi

## Executive Board of Directors:

- **Chair:** Scott Connolly; Medium Lodging Operator, Coastal
- **Vice Chair:** Cally Dym; Large Lodging Operator, Coastal
- **Treasurer:** Kasie Gray; Regional Promotional, Inland
- **Secretary:** Bernadette Byrne; Winery/Winegrower

## Directors:

- Brett Schlesinger; Food & Beverage, Inland
- Elizabeth Cameron; Arts Organization/Attractions, Coastal
- Raakesh Patel; Large Lodging Operator, Inland
- Katrina Kessen; At Large, Inland
- Sharon Davis, Regional Promotional, Coastal

- Open Seat; At Large – Large Lodging Operator
- Open Seat; Small Lodging Operator, Coastal

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## Visit Mendocino County 2021–2023 Strategic Plan



<p><b>Vision</b></p> <p>A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.</p>	<p><b>Mission</b></p> <p>Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County experience</p>	<p><b>Position</b></p> <p>In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Visit Mendocino County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markets the Mendocino County experience to key regional and domestic markets</li> <li>• Creates, develops, and manages brand awareness for the county.</li> <li>• Connects people and organizations to opportunities.</li> <li>• Provides tourism resources and information to in-county partners.</li> <li>• Optimizes return on investment through responsible fiscal management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Values</b></p> <p><b>Transparency:</b> We foster trust through openness and integrity.  <b>Accountability:</b> We are outcome-oriented and professional.  <b>Partnership:</b> We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships.  <b>Community:</b> We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County.  <b>Innovation:</b> Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our cultures and landscapes.</p>	<p><b>Reputation</b></p> <p><b>Leader:</b> We motivate and facilitate the tourism community.  <b>Accessible:</b> We welcome—and are responsive to—input from community members and stakeholders  <b>Collaborative:</b> We actively seek engagement and collaboration with our stakeholders and partners.  <b>Bold:</b> We deliver on smart, effective, and forward-thinking ideas.</p>
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<p><b>Imperatives</b></p> <p><b>Optimize and demonstrate our impact through relationships and collaborations</b></p>	<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Participation Rate in VMC Programs</li> <li>• Increase VMC Communication Engagement Rate</li> <li>• Boost Community's Support of the Tourism Industry</li> </ul>	<p><b>Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses</li> <li>• Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners</li> <li>• Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to County vitality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Website Traffic</li> <li>• Grow the BID Fund 5% Over 3 Years</li> <li>• Increase Shoulder Season Visitation Rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and diversify visitor target market segments and competitive set</li> <li>• Refresh our brand identity to align with target segments and competitive advantage</li> <li>• Create process and framework for the evaluation and investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder seasons</li> </ul>
<p><b>Steward and Advocate for the Mendocino County Experience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase County Investment in Tourism Products and Infrastructure</li> <li>• Increase Mendocino County Sales Tax Receipts Over 3 Years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations</li> <li>• Advocate for County investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure</li> <li>• Align destination development activities to Visit California's Stewardship Objectives</li> </ul>

Appendices:



## Glossary

This glossary is included to explain the terms used in this plan and in other reports and documents issued by Visit Mendocino County. While staff and contractors are familiar with the terminology, some of the terms need a brief explanation.

<b>Advertising equivalent</b>	This dollar figure represents the amount of money it would take to purchase the equivalent in advertising space in a print publication or digital equivalent. The VMC PR team uses a 1:1 ratio unlike many PR firms who use a multiplier to boost numbers.
<b>Impressions</b>	The number of views a print or digital article is estimated to reach based on circulation and subscription data.
<b>Media Placement</b>	A story (print or digital) about an aspect of Mendocino County that arises from PR efforts.
<b>Media Mission</b>	A trip by the PR team to a particular market, e.g., Vancouver BC, to meet local journalists and writers and inspire visitation to and coverage of Mendocino County.
<b>Releases</b>	This can either refer to a press release or a "hot sheet," which is distributed to the press and highlights new and upcoming businesses and openings in the county.
<b>FAM</b>	Familiarization tour or trip. Media FAMs involve members of the media who are vetted by the PR team prior to a visit. Sales FAMs apply to tour group operators who are visiting the county with the aim of including Mendocino in tour packages.
<b>Millennials</b>	The segment of the population born between the early and the mid-1990s to early 2000s. Also known as Generation Y, they are the children of baby boomers and older Gen Xers.
<b>Gen-Xers</b>	The population segment born between the early-to-mid 1960s and ending birth years ranging from the late 1970s to early 1980s. Children of the Baby Boomers.
<b>Baby Boomers</b>	Those born between the early-to-mid 1940s up to about 1964.
<b>Content marketing</b>	Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.
<b>Google Analytics</b>	A reporting tool provided by Google that can be used to analyze traffic, ad words, digital marketing campaigns, demographics, etc. for VisitMendocino.com.
<b>Facebook Insights</b>	A reporting tool for analyzing traffic, advertising campaigns, and other activities on Facebook.

<b>Activity Provider</b>	A person located in a tourist destination who provides a unique, local activity for a visitor to do while on vacation. Examples of such activities include kayaking, bike riding or arts and crafts, among others.
<b>Free Independent Traveler (FIT)</b>	A person or a couple that is not traveling with a group; usually references foreign travelers out on their own (Foreign Independent Traveler).
<b>Inbound Tour Operator</b>	Someone specializing in providing tours to overseas travelers to a destination, either operating the tour themselves or working through established partnerships with local suppliers.
<b>Receptives</b>	In effect, "middle men" between tour operators and hotel/lodging owners, chiefly in overseas markets. Receptives obtain contracts with hotels for booking arrangements and offer these to tour operators looking to satisfy tourist demand.
<b>Search Engine Marketing</b>	A marketing tactic using paid advertising services so that interested clients and customers can reach a business quicker and easier while searching online.

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