



# **QUARTERLY REPORT**

## **JANUARY – MARCH 2017**

**(FY Q3)**

**Submitted to**

**MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION**  
**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**WEDNESDAY MAY 10, 2017**



# quarterly activities report

## january – march 2017

Marketing Plan strategic goals are:

- Increase overall visitation to Mendocino County, specifically in the spring and fall shoulder seasons
- Increase length of stay per visitation
- Increase visitor spending per day

project		2016–17 goals	year totals	% complete
public relations	materials issued	11	11	100%
	audience reach	110 million	315+ million	315%
	ad. equivalency	\$4.6 million	\$82.5 million	846%
	placements secured	170	405	238%
	FAM programs	18	18	100%
	media missions	2	1	50%
sales	consumer leads	9,000	6,888	98%
	room nights	1,250	1,050	84%
	FAMs	8	12	150%
	consumer/trade shows	6	8	133%
website/social media	consumer database	35,000	34,242	97.8%
	consumer newsletter engagement	15.0%	14.05%	93.66%
	FB fan base (likes)	55,000	55,596	101%
	engagement (reach, like, comment)	5%	3.07%	77%

project		2016–17 goals	year totals	% complete
advertising	Increase VisitMendocino.com unique visitors to 240,000	drive traffic to new website through targeted paid online advertising, SEO, and viral sharing of editorial pieces	171,780	71%
visitor services	signage/wayfaring	1	0	in process
	festivals & events	3 festivals	2	66.6%
	mushroom, wine & beer	brochure and website listings complete	1	100%
	crab, wine & beer	brochure and website listings complete	1	100%
marketplace	visitors	2,000	1,678	83.9%

## advertising & paid media

The third quarter saw the continuation of digital programs as well as a print takeover of the Eat, Drink, Play section of the Bay Area News Group in early January. To the end of the quarter, advertising expenditure is \$189,062.84.

### CC Media

- Digital marketing media buys are made by CC Media with an expenditure of \$46,450 for the quarter. Campaigns included Google general search and remarketing, lodging, events, Queerty/Gay Cities, geo-fencing, and the Enthusiast Network. Over 3.8 million impressions were recorded with 15,237 click-throughs to the VisitMendocino.com website.

### Other Digital Campaigns

- TravelGuidesFree.com: cost \$450 for the quarter with 862 consumer leads and 488 email opt-ins.
- VacationFun.com: cost \$3,687.50 with just 81 email leads.
- The Bay Area News Group campaign cost was \$21,000, of which \$2,500 was invested in a digital campaign that yielded a 0.06% click-through rate. The remaining \$18,500 was a takeover of the Eat, Drink, Play print section of the January 8, 2017 edition.
- TripAdvisor.com: \$3,750 with 1,471 clicks.
- DogTrekker remained the leading contender for digital marketing with an impressive average CTR of 85%.

## E-Newsletters

- Mother Jones ran two dedicated emails in January and February, each to an audience of 24,000 (average). Cost was \$2,340 with 621 clicks at a CPC of \$7.15. An email was sent to Homeaway.com subscribers, an audience of over 6 million for the cost of \$12,000. Clicks to the website were less than 8,000.

## Print Advertising

- See digital for information regarding the BANG print campaign. January saw the publication of an advertisement in Today's Bride. Due to malfunction on the part of the publisher, we have been unable to obtain results of the associated digital campaign. The cost for the campaign was \$6,825 with one co-op partner coming in for \$1,000 to reduce gross expense. The magazine has a circulation rate of 33,000.

## Broadcast

- A broadcast campaign was run with Comcast. The impact is unknown as there was no digital campaign included in the buy of \$22,733.50.

# website & social media

## website

- During the third quarter, the [VisitMendocino.com](http://VisitMendocino.com) website team embarked on a long overdue update to the back-end of the WordPress site. Work includes:
  - \* Update to latest version of WordPress and updates to underlying theme and all plug-ins; add new plug-ins, configure, and address style issues caused by updates
  - \* Optimize all images on site and add compression for faster load time and better user experience
  - \* Remove Google map from home page for faster loading
  - \* Clean up copy and images for continuity of style
  - \* Add descriptive header to all landing pages for improved SEO results
  - \* Update mapping for events
  - \* Implement https:// for better SEO and security
  - \* Complete "Favorites" feature so visitors can save their top likes on the site
  - \* Reconfigure the home page to add more events
  - \* Enable audit logging to track changes on the site
- Currently in process are:
  - \* Tagging pet-friendly businesses/wineries

- \* Add area for suggested itineraries
- \* Build out community pages to allow visitors to explore specific cities and towns
- As new branding guidelines are developed, the team will work with marketing company, TheorySF, to refresh the look and feel of the site, an exciting development!
- Our website blogs continue to be a hit with readers. In the past quarter, we've published 8 blogs on topics ranging from team-building to paddling Big River and from romance to riding the bus!
- We continue to carry key messaging across multiple platforms: blog, monthly consumer newsletter, and social media for highest audience penetration.

## google analytics january – march

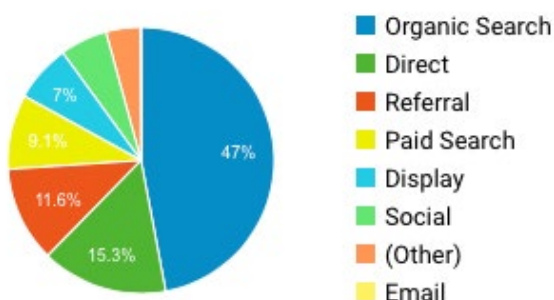
Analytics for the quarter rose dramatically for January as a result of a Homeaway.com “Spring Break” campaign outreach. Unfortunately, while visitation to the site increased, engagement was flat meaning the site saw no long term gains in the \$12,000 campaign.

	january	february	march	total/avg	% inc/dec
<b>unique visits (sessions)</b>	31,117	17,454	19,860	68,431	+21.4%
<b>users</b>	15,539	13,769	15,393	57,402	+28.4%
<b>avg. time on site</b>	0:02.52	0:02.50	0:02.27	0:02:43	-6.3%
<b>avg. bounce rate</b>	63.13%	64.05%	59.29%	62.16%	+4.66%
<b>new sessions</b>	80.93%	77.47%	78.21%	78.87%	+5.78%

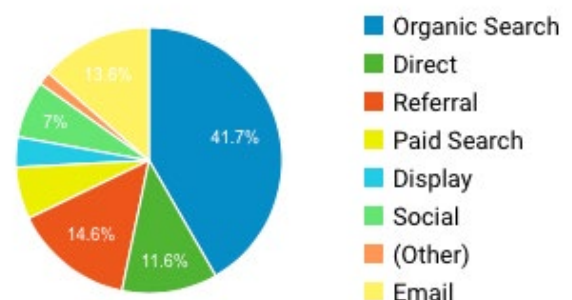
**Top search channels** are shown in the following graphics, quarter 3 vs. quarter 2.

### Top Channels





















Oct 1, 2016 - Dec 31, 2016



Jan 1, 2017 - Mar 31, 2017



Analytics for the quarter indicate the top ten landing pages (that is, the first page the user first goes to) include the home page, spring break specials, crab festival, etc. Please see next graphic for further information.

Page		Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /		24,865	 16.11%
2. /springbreak/		10,681	 6.92%
3. /event/crab-wine-beer-festival/		5,202	 3.37%
4. /mdocs-posts/2017-crab-wine-beer-festival-brochure/		4,550	 2.95%
5. /mendocino-county-events/category/event-types/		3,338	 2.16%
6. /event/legendary-boonville-beer-festival/		3,211	 2.08%
7. /mendocino-county-directory/directory-category/things-to-do/		2,915	 1.89%
8. /mendocino-county-events/list/		2,606	 1.69%
9. /mendocino-county-directory/directory-category/lodging/		2,605	 1.69%
10. /mendocino-county-bucket-list/		2,108	 1.37%

## social media

- FaceBook fans increased by 0.5% for the quarter with an increase in posts (including video) from 42 to 65.
- While total impressions increased, average engagement continued to dip to 1.3%, down by 50% from the previous quarter.




IMPRESSIONS METRICS	TOTALS
Organic Impressions	172,007
Viral Impressions	95,391
Paid Impressions	673,022
<b>Total Impressions</b>	<b>940,420</b>
<b>Users Reached</b>	<b>766,552</b>

Total Impressions increased by

**8.0%**

since previous date range

- The “**Top Three**” Facebook posts by enagement are:

Post	Reactions	Comments	Engagement ▼	Reach
<b>Visit Mendocino County</b> Cool video from whale watchers off the coast of Fort Bragg.  (Post) March 23, 2017 8:28 am	390	20	10.1%	9,990
<b>Visit Mendocino County</b>  (Post) March 24, 2017 7:33 pm	244	5	7.3%	3,893
<b>Visit Mendocino County</b> Mendocino Coast Botanic Gardens in the running for USA Today's top 10. Your vote counts and you can vote daily: <a href="http://ow.ly/w4qy309pV95">http://ow.ly/w4qy309pV95</a>  (Post) February 27, 2017 2:50 pm	280	18	6.7%	5,630

- Women between the ages of 35-44 appear to be the leading force among fans.
- Top markets for Facebook are depicted below.

TOP COUNTRIES

	United States	53,719
	Mexico	204
	United Kingdom	194
	Philippines	147
	Canada	103

TOP CITIES

Sacramento, CA	2,392
Ukiah, CA	1,346
San Francisco, CA	1,092
San Jose, CA	848
Los Angeles, CA	707

Our **Instagram** presence continues to grow, increasing 14.3% during the quarter to 6,810 followers.

# public relations

Public relations continues to be a strong pillar of the Mendocino County Tourism Commission. Key highlights include placements in *Love Wins California*, *Modern Luxury Magazines*, *Alaska Airlines*, *Expedia*, *KRON-4*, *VIA magazine*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Thrillist*, *Pure Wow*, and more. The Marketing & Communications Coordinator attended the Visit California Outlook Forum in Santa Barbara and the SFTravel Marketing Conference.

## press visits january – march (KOLI Communications)

name	publication	FAM trip	focus
Mark Gross	<i>Splash!</i>	January 21	Inland
Matt Kirouac	<i>Zagat</i>	January 26–28	Crab Fest
Bob Ecker	<i>Freelance wine writer</i>	January 26–28	Crab Fest
Mary Buttaro	<i>FunofTravel.com</i>	January 26–28	Crab Fest
Brian Wiatrak	<i>Wine Enthusiast</i>	February 17–21	Wine
Laetitia Wianapel	<i>Madamoisellerobot</i>	February 29–March 2	County

## media placements & reach

- Reporting for the second quarter of the fiscal year reveals 122 media placements, with over 827 million impressions and an advertising equivalency of almost \$30 million.
- We issued press releases to over 3,000 outlets and updated our “New & Noteworthy” sheet:
  - \* Crab, Wine & Beer Festival/Annual Events
  - \* Right Brain Retreats
  - \* Almost Fringe Fest



## sample placements

The following are a sampling of *some* of the stories that hit the print and online press during the first quarter. All our media articles are stored in a digital archive. Please call our Fort Bragg office if you would like to review them.

<i>Bay Area News Group</i>	<i>Expedia</i>	<i>Pure Wow</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>NBC Bay Area</i>	<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	<i>Luxury Travel</i>	<i>Thrillist</i>
<i>Coastal Living</i>	<i>Alaska Airlines</i>	<i>Wine Advocate</i>	<i>SF Gate.com</i>
<i>Sunset</i>	<i>Bindu Trips</i>	<i>Westways</i>	<i>South Bay Accents</i>

## video

The video is complete and one version has been released to GayTravel.com.

## marketing committee

The Marketing Committee continues to meet on a regular basis to make recommendations regarding PR and marketing programs.

## sales

- Representing the North Coast tourism Council, participated in the Visit CA Canadian mission. Met with approximately 400 retail agents and 50 tour operators in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Canada is the number one international market for Mendocino. Shared leads with our partners.
- Attended the Here and There Trade Show in Portland OR. OR is one of our secondary markets and there was a lot of interest in Mendocino. Obtained several hundred names for our database.
- Reprinted the mini guide.
- Reprinting the Redwood Highway map.

## visitor services

- Did repair work on both existing gateway signs due to vandalism. Willits is in consultation with CalTrans about more Bypass signage so we will again begin investigation of a highway 128 gateway sign.
- New updated tear off maps are almost completed for Willits and underway for Ukiah.

- Redwood Highway map has been reprinted and distributed. Updates for reprint of the Visitor Guide are complete. The object is to have enough on hand until our new marketing firm provides future direction for guides.
- The schedule and budget for consumer trade shows and events for FY 17/18 has been approved.
- Green Bag sponsors have been secured and new bags are being produced.
- Volunteers to staff Sunset Celebration Weekend and prize giveaways have been obtained.

## festivals & events

- Coordinated with Mendocino Coast Clinics event coordinator for another successful Crab, Wine & Beer Festival; conducted post-festival survey
- Attended Rosé Festival kick-off event
- Coordinated Almost Fringe Festival events and lodging specials; worked with staff to add to website; distributed rack cards and signage
- Informed qualified candidates of availability of Grant Funds, reviewed applications and processed awards as follows:
  - \* Ben Wood \$2500 for Portrait of Mendocino (Production)
  - \* Family Medicine Education for Mendocino County \$2500 for Rural Health Rocks (Marketing)
  - \* Mendocino Center for Circus Arts \$2185 (Production)
  - \* Mendocino Winegrowers Inc \$2500 (Marketing)
- Coordinated and staffed monthly Festival Committee meetings
- Attended monthly AVWA BoD Meetings; worked Grand Tasting Check-in table for 12th Annual Alsace Festival in Boonville.

## ops & admin

- MCTC engaged in a contract with the Coraggio Group to develop a three-year Strategic Plan for the organization. Coraggio secured interviews and stakeholder sessions around the county to inform the findings for the plan, which was adopted by the Board at their March 2017 meeting. A copy of the plan is Appendix 1 to the document.
- Secured the services of TheorySF, a marketing company, whose brief for the period April through June 2017 is to:
  - \* Perform competitive alternative research of similar destinations

- \* Meet with members of the Board, Marketing Committee, and county businesses to gain insight into past strategies and desires for the future.
  - \* Monitor VisitMendocino.com Google analytics to observe traffic flow, volume, search patterns, etc.
  - \* Conduct focus groups with visitors to understand their perception of Mendocino County and why they chose to visit.
  - \* Develop and present preliminary positioning options. What is Mendocino County?
  - \* Begin branding creative exploration including 3 – 5 creative approaches for review and approval of one; brand style guide
  - \* Regular reporting and meetings
- Brent Haugen resigned as Executive Director effective March 31, 2017; he gave notice in mid-January.
  - Alan Humason (ED at Yolo County CVB) accepted the position of Executive Director effective April 3, 2017. Alan will be part-time until June 12, 2017 so he can fulfill obligations for Yolo CVB.
  - The former ED and contractor, Alison de Grassi, participated in the BID Advisory Board Meetings to develop the annual report.
  - Regular attendance at industry meetings and functions throughout Mendocino County.

