



Visit Mendocino County Quarterly Report: January – March 2020

SUBMITTED TO MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION & COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

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visitmendocino.com

VMC Quarterly Activities Report: January – March 2020

Executive Summary

- In January, the Mendocino County Tourism Commission (MCTC) Board of Directors (BoD) held its first meeting of the calendar year, seating two new board members. Following the meeting the team (MCTC Board and Staff) held its annual training session where a series of presentations were made by Visit Mendocino County's (VMC) contractors (TheorySF, Koli Communications and Media Matters Worldwide) that were followed by supplemental presentations by the staff on their individual areas of responsibility.
- The Executive Director (ED) worked with the Business Improvement District (BID) Advisory Board to complete the annual BID report for submission to the Board of Supervisors (BoS).
- The Partner Relations Manager (PRM) initiated a set of stakeholder trainings in partnership with local leaders in the hospitality industry. These trainings were designed to continue hospitality training and education of not only innkeepers and staff but other industry workers who come into contact with Mendocino County visitors, as well.
- The Director of Marketing & Media (DMM) worked closely with marketing consultants TheorySF (TSF) and Media Matters WorldWide (MMWW) on a series of robust digital campaigns to target markets and audiences using programmatic advertising.
- The ED and Finance Committee revised the annual budget to reflect actual to-date income from the BID and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and necessary reduction in spending. The amended budget will be presented for approval in the April MCTC BoD meeting.
- Public Relations continued to see generous results in top-tier publications with coverage in "big glossies" and regional publications: USA Today, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, New York Times, 7x7 Magazine not to mention coverage on KTVU 2 SF Bay Area and KTLA 5 Los Angeles.
- The staff continued to track their work as it related to the Strategic Plan.
- In March the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closures hit Mendocino County with a shelter-in-place order made effective by the State of California on March 19, 2020. The ED made the necessary and required changes to operations of the organization.
- The ED, PRM and Marketing & Sales Coordinator (MSC) attended both the San Diego and Los Angeles Travel and Adventure Shows.

Strategic Plan

The activities in this report relate to the initiatives set forth in the three-year Visit Mendocino County (VMC) Strategic Plan that was put into action in 2017. The purpose of the plan was to realign the core strategies of the organization. (The Strategic Plan may be viewed at <http://1lmo5u1yd9e7vpr6s3zkdv9p.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/Visit-Mendocino-County-Strategic-Plan-FINAL-4.pdf>). This report directly related the VMC Marketing, PR, Sales and other VMC staff activities during the quarter to the Imperatives, Objectives and Initiatives contained in the Strategic Plan.

VISION:

Enriching experiences for our guests, enhanced lifestyle for our residents, and stability and diversity for our economy.

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 culture and landscapes

IMPERATIVE: *Demonstrate and strengthen VMC's contribution to county and economic and community vitality*

- **OBJECTIVE:** **BID Assessment growth at 5% over average of top 3 competitors**

In September 2019, the Mendocino County Treasurer-Tax Collector's office published their annual TOT/BID collections report. The report shows that revenue from lodging businesses decreased to \$5.68 million, a decrease of 0.46% over the past year. Business Improvement District assessment collections decreased less than a quarter of a percent.

TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR COUNTY OF MENDOCINO (Data as of September 1, 2019)

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Collections by Calendar Quarter

Fiscal Year	1st Quarter (July - Sept.)	2nd Quarter (Oct. - Dec.)	3rd Quarter (Jan. - March)	4th Quarter (April - June)	Fiscal Year Collections
2010-11	\$ 1,159,942.85	\$ 738,735.49	\$ 509,240.81	\$ 870,484.86	\$ 3,278,404.01
2011-12	\$ 1,257,508.60	\$ 784,212.12	\$ 604,215.73	\$ 926,946.51	\$ 3,572,882.96
2012-13	\$ 1,295,039.41	\$ 785,491.85	\$ 617,128.37	\$ 984,800.75	\$ 3,682,460.38
2013-14	\$ 1,377,790.23	\$ 894,744.19	\$ 676,573.91	\$ 1,072,883.77	\$ 4,021,992.10
2014-15	\$ 1,483,327.89	\$ 996,032.33	\$ 779,025.16	\$ 1,195,852.18	\$ 4,454,237.56
2015-16	\$ 1,651,009.69	\$ 1,073,998.95	\$ 835,844.53	\$ 1,298,416.75	\$ 4,859,269.92
2016-17	\$ 1,771,396.93	\$ 1,149,101.65	\$ 820,094.23	\$ 1,452,094.06	\$ 5,192,686.87
2017-18	\$ 1,994,982.25	\$ 1,223,461.26	\$ 1,018,540.84	\$ 1,457,731.72	\$ 5,694,716.07
2018-19	\$ 1,968,361.87	\$ 1,270,846.67	\$ 929,184.41	\$ 1,500,273.08	\$ 5,668,666.03

Business Improvement District (BID) Assessment Collections by Calendar Quarter

Fiscal Year	1st Quarter (July - Sept.)	2nd Quarter (Oct. - Dec.)	3rd Quarter (Jan. - March)	4th Quarter (April - June)	Fiscal Year Collections
2010-11	\$ 200,677.35	\$ 120,225.57	\$ 88,797.28	\$ 146,920.70	\$ 556,620.90
2011-12	\$ 214,391.01	\$ 127,996.14	\$ 103,057.37	\$ 158,824.10	\$ 604,268.62
2012-13	\$ 228,091.30	\$ 155,123.16	\$ 108,135.40	\$ 171,533.18	\$ 662,883.04
2013-14	\$ 243,828.04	\$ 149,944.46	\$ 116,839.01	\$ 185,967.80	\$ 696,579.31
2014-15	\$ 259,245.43	\$ 167,825.51	\$ 139,735.12	\$ 204,382.49	\$ 771,188.55
2015-16	\$ 273,600.95	\$ 178,776.82	\$ 147,456.87	\$ 222,007.69	\$ 821,842.33
2016-17	\$ 305,169.89	\$ 190,066.75	\$ 148,194.72	\$ 247,927.29	\$ 891,358.65
2017-18	\$ 333,850.91	\$ 213,895.87	\$ 171,966.42	\$ 252,024.26	\$ 971,737.46
2018-19	\$ 344,190.66	\$ 207,171.54	\$ 165,784.35	\$ 253,257.63	\$ 970,404.18

PLEASE NOTE: The collections reflected above represent the actual quarters in which the lodging establishments collected the taxes and assessments. If applicable, penalties and interest collected by the County are also included in the above totals. Previous fiscal year collections have been adjusted to reflect delinquent payments received in FY 2018-19.

In the March meeting of the MCTC BoD, direction was given to staff that the competing destinations for the purposes of reporting would be Humboldt, Yolo, Shasta and Mariposa counties. There should also be reference to Napa and Sonoma with regard to competition for tourist draw (SF Bay Area and Sacramento). The data in the chart below is from the [2019 California Travel Impacts Report](#) (Dean Runyan), which is an annual report commissioned by Visit California and undertaken by Dean Runyan Associates. The data below is self-explanatory.

	TRAVEL RELATED SPENDING		% INCREASE /DECREASE	TAX REVENUE		% INCREASE /DECREASE	EMPLOYMENT (TRAVEL SECTOR)		% INCREASE /DECREASE
	2018	2019	YOY	2018	2019	YOY	2018	2019	YOY
Mendocino	482M	484M	0.41%	44M	46M	4.55%	6.89K	6.4K	-7.11%
Humboldt	453M	484M	6.84%	39M	42M	7.69%	5.54K	5.97K	7.76%
Mariposa	473M	464M	-1.90%	35M	35M	0	4.12K	4.11K	-0.24%
Shasta	520M	545M	4.81%	42M	44M	4.76%	4.85K	5.06K	4.33%
Yolo	449M	454M	1.11%	38M	39M	2.63%	5.11K	5.22K	2.15%

• **OBJECTIVE: Year-over-year increase of sales tax receipts in Mendocino County**

The [California Travel Impacts Report](#) shows a positive YOY trend in sales tax receipts for the county. New sales tax figures will be released upon the publication of the next California Travel Impacts report in May 2020.

• **OBJECTIVE: Year-over-year increase in stakeholder and partner survey response rate**

VMC sends a survey to partners and stakeholders at the conclusion of each FEAST Mendocino and response has historically been lackluster. For the Crab FEAST Mendocino survey (2020), staff conducted an anonymous approach meaning that respondents were not required to reveal their identity, which garnered more attention and staff saw an increase in the response rate of 80%. YOY responses are show in the graph below:

Number of Surveys Completed		
Year	Crab Fest	Mushroom Feast
2014	18	30
2015	20	15
2016	11	0
2017	0	19
2018	5	18
2019	9	4

INITIATIVE: Increase tourism revenue through the development and implementation of the annual integrated marketing, public relations and sales plan.

Activities during the quarter were based on: 1) the annual Marketing Plan (http://1lmo5u1yd9e7vpr6s3zkdv9p.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/Marketing-Plan_2019_20_final-1-1.pdf); and 2) the three-year Strategic Plan.

The DMM and ED worked closely with the Public Relations agency of record, KOLI Communications, marketing consultants, TheorySF, and media buyers, Media Matters WorldWide, to achieve the goals described in the Marketing Plan. With the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the ED recommended to the BoD that all tourism marketing cease immediately and the contract with MMWW end immediately. The BoD directed staff to stop marketing and negotiate the end of the MMWW contract.

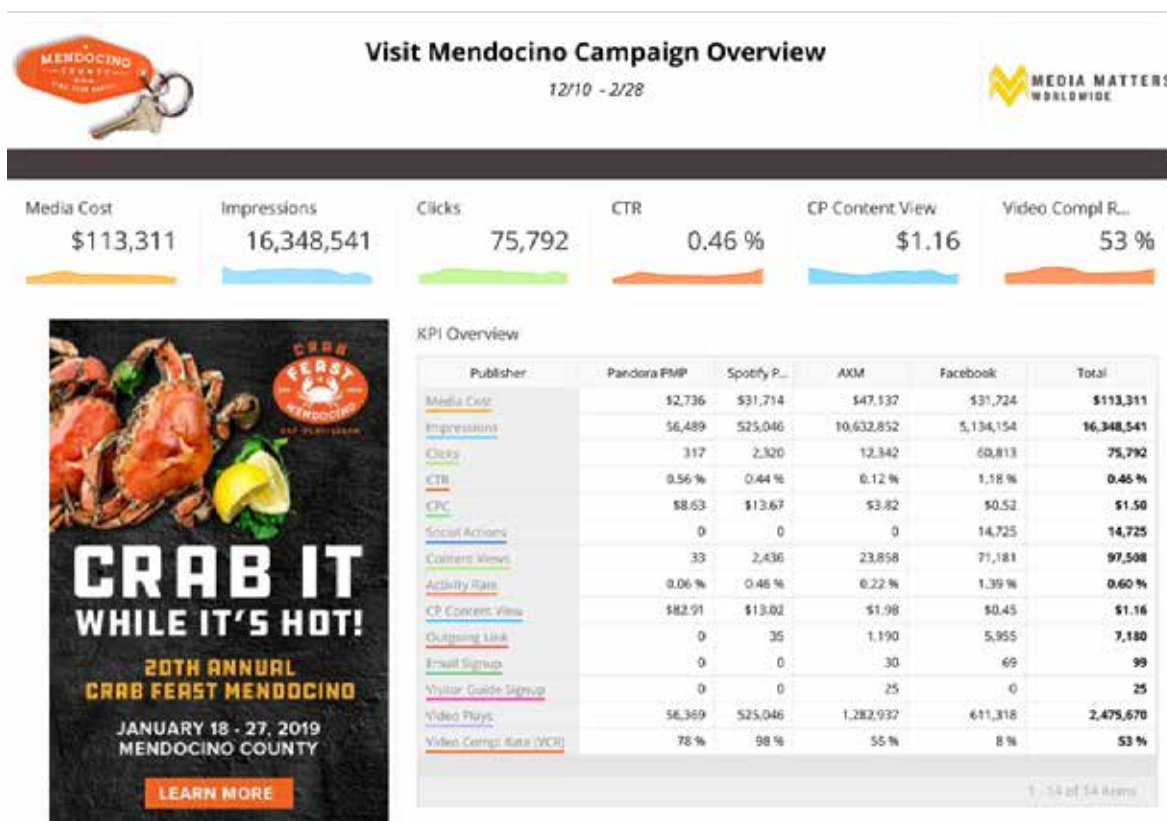
A review of the digital campaigns from inception to the end of the MMWW contract shows:

- Although the campaign dipped in terms of awareness lift from January, the campaign continues to blow Survata norms out of the water. This indicates that there is room to spend more for incremental impact (we have not reached our saturation point for programmatic media).
- The digital media campaigns continue to grow awareness and visit intent for Mendocino county by engaging audiences across digital platforms.
- As the travel season takes off, we expect Visit Intent to increase.
- Audience targeting's data-driven approach continues to drive a strong lift in Mendocino visit intent and consideration (at the time of writing 6.3ppt and 8.2ppt respectively).

KPI*	2/11: Visit Mendocino Programmatic	1/27: Visit Mendocino Programmatic	12/4: Visit Mendocino Programmatic	Survata Norm
Awareness	6.8ppt	10.7ppt	15.1ppt	1ppt
Consideration	6.8 ppt	9.3ppt	10.8ppt	1ppt
Visit Intent	Not significant yet	Not significant yet	Not significant yet	1ppt
Recommendation	14.4ppt	11.8ppt	15.3ppt	1ppt

Landing pages on the Visit Mendocino website were driven by marketing efforts with the homepage leading in visits, followed by Skunk Train, Rail Bikes, Mendocino County Bucket List and lastly Crab FEAST Mendocino. Campaigns for the quarter included Crab FEAST Mendocino and Whale Festival. This leads us to believe our aging Festivals/FEASTS are not attracting our target demographic.

The graph below illustrates the results of the digital campaigns through 2/28, the preset campaign end date.



The creative performance of the Crab and Whale Festivals shown in the graphs below:

Crab FEAST Creative Performance 11-26-19 to 01-31-20

Publisher	Concept	Spend	Imp.	Clicks	CTR	CPC	Content Views	CP CV	Outgoing Link	Email Signup	Visitor Guide Signup
AXM	Crab 2020	\$7,924	2,003,170	2,210	0.11%	\$3.59	6,287	\$1.26	340	10	3
Total		\$7,924	2,003,170	2,210	0.11%	\$3.59	6,287	\$1.26	340	10	3
Facebook	Crab	\$2,006	253,865	3,927	1.55%	\$0.51	4,525	\$0.44	720	3	0
Total		\$2,006	253,865	3,927	1.55%	\$0.51	4,525	\$0.44	720	3	0
Grand Total		\$9,929	2,257,035	6,137	0.27%	\$1.62	10,812	\$0.92	1060	13	3

Whale Festival Creative Performance 12-10-19 to 2-23-20

Publisher	Creative Concept	Impressions	Clicks	Content Views	Email Sign-ups	Visitor Guide Sign-Ups	Spended	CTR	CP Content View
AXM	Whale Creative	770,360	1,845	3,684	0	3	\$ 4,404.00	0.24%	\$1.20
Facebook	Whale Creative	765,685	4,832	7,426	8	0	\$ 3,703.00	0.63%	\$0.50
Totals		1,536,045	6,677	11,110	8	3	\$ 8,107.00	0.43%	\$0.73

Crab FEAST Mendocino was again a success in terms of ticket sales and revenue generation. The MCC's Crab Cake Cook-off realized increases across its events for 2020. The annual Cioppino Dinner served 506 guests an increase of just under 5% not to be outshined by the Crab Cake Cook-off revenue generation of \$199,330 a sharp 15% increase in gross revenue. These events drew guests from Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Washington, as far south as San Diego, Orange County, Los Angeles and throughout the State of California. The majority of sales at the Cook-off was generated by consumers from the SF/Greater Bay Area, including Silicon Valley and north into Sonoma County, extending throughout the Sacramento area. Roughly 80% of Cook-Off sales are from out of the area, requiring lodging.

2020 Mendocino Whale Festival

	2020	2019	Difference	%
BPT- Wine	\$9555.00	\$6825.00	\$2730.00	40%
BPT- Chowder	\$2090.00	\$1750.00	\$280.00	16%
BPT- Beer	\$425.00	\$435.00	-\$10.00	-2%
Chamber- Wine	\$1295.00	\$2065.00	-\$770.00	-37%
Chamber- Chowder	\$145.00	\$570.00	-\$425.00	-75%
Chamber-Beer	\$35.00	\$135.00	-\$100.00	-74%
Crown Hall-Chowder	\$1550.00	\$1741.00	-\$191.00	-11%
Crown Hall- Beer	\$495.00	\$425.00	\$70.00	16%
Crown Hall- Water	\$59.00	\$34.00	\$25.00	74%
Ford House- Wine (cash)	\$2715.00	\$2090.00	\$625.00	30%
Ford House- Wine (Square)	\$1050.00	\$2111.00	-\$1061.00	-50%
Ford House- Wine Yokes	\$0.00	\$120.00	-\$120.00	-100%
Total	\$19354.00	\$18301.00	\$1053.00	6%

The Whale Festivals are held annually on the first three weekends of March, with the Mendocino and Fort Bragg weekends being organized by the Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce. The information available to us is less than that of MCC's Crab events. However, we can report that even with the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic attendance for these anchor events did see an increase in ticket sales of 6%. The detail of sales is shown in the graph to the left.

The lift in both festivals can be attributed, at least partly, to the rigorous marketing efforts put forth by VMC prior to each festival.

In January 2019, VMC wrapped light rail train cars on two lines in the heart of Sacramento extending out from the city center east along Highway 80. It was reported by Ionic Media, our outdoor media buyer, that one of these trains was still wrapped through mid-February 2020.

VMC continues contracting annually with KOZT The Coast radio running spots that not only reach a local audience but visitors listening in-market and afar in the Sacramento and Bay Area markets.

Results of our relationship with the North Coast Tourism Council are not quantifiable at this time. The NCTC marketing group is currently re-tooling itself as an organization with the following objectives:

- Refresh the brand to continue visibility and viability in the tourism marketplace.
- Realignment with member counties' (Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake and Mendocino) marketing goals.
- Reduce overhead by bringing all administrative and management duties under the direction of member counties: Humboldt and Mendocino. This goal is to ensure that the maximum value in marketing efforts is garnered by its membership contributions.
- Work directly with Visit California to reshape the direction of the Rural Region program.

The North Coast Tourism Council is on-course to resume its marketing efforts with new vigor at the beginning of the 2020/2021 fiscal year.

VMC also continues in partnership with the Shasta Cascade, another of Visit California's rural regions. This partnership enables VMC to attend and be represented at travel tradeshows, international trade missions and IPW (formerly International Pow Wow) at a hugely reduced cost. The tradeshows for the 2020 winter season have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

INITIATIVE: Improve data-driven decision making through increased participation & “buy in” from all of our partners.

Visitmendocino.com continues to automatically send a monthly report to stakeholders for each website listing that has an associated email address. The chart on the following page shows the top ten outbound referrals from the VMC website for January through March. These results show the impact of our marketing efforts on behalf of our partners and stakeholders.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS: VMC SITE TOP TEN OUTBOUND REFERRALS Q3 2019/20					
January		February		March	
Property	Opens	Property	Opens	Property	Opens
Stanford Inn	230	Little River Inn	298	Lake Mendocino	156
Montgomery Woods	202	Stanford Inn	239	Stanford Inn	110
Vichy Springs Resort	199	Montgomery Woods	236	Glass Beach	108
Glass Beach	195	Glass Beach	175	Little River Inn	104
Skunk Train FB	178	Vichy Springs Resort	173	Skunk Train FB	97
Little River Inn	147	Skunk Train FB	170	Chandelier Drive Thru-Tree	81
City of 10,000 Buddhas	144	Chandelier Drive-Thru Tree	143	Vichy Springs Resort	79
Orr Hot Springs	140	Bowling Ball Beach	113	City of 10,000 Buddhas	74
Chandelier Drive-Thru Tree	123	Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens	110	Bowling Ball Beach	60
Bowling Ball Beach	117	B. Bryan Preserve	107	Ford House Museum	59

VMC staff continues to identify additional partners and create website listings for each of them to fold them into the reporting cycle. Further, the team actively identifies new businesses opening in the county, making a point to visit properties, meet management and include their information in our database and MailChimp email distribution. The PR team also notes these openings and upgrades to properties to share bi-annually with both domestic and international media with the goal of media interest and visitation.

The PR team (Koli Communications, DMM and ED) communicate with partners and stakeholders on a monthly basis informing them of media stories. The team also requests partners and stakeholders submit content and information to VMC for dissemination by Visit California. An example of a pitch made during the quarter and published by Visit CA on their site features the Glendeven Inn & Lodge and its Forest Bathing package in: [6 Great Restorative Escapes](#).

Following the departure of VMC's DMM, the ED and PRM hit the streets to meet with partners and stakeholders. The goal of these immediate visits was to ensure that “buy-in” and trust with our partners was unwavering. It was identified that partnerships will continue to remain strong and participation of stakeholders in VMC sponsored media visits, promotions and tradeshows would continue as it previously had.

In 2017 VMC subscribed to Visa Vue and has continued its contract through Visit California to receive quarterly data sets. These data sets provide us an analysis of international visitor spending patterns in the county on a quarterly basis by calendar year. The data set below shows activity by these international visitors:

INTERNATIONAL VISITATION TO MENDOCINO COUNTY EXPRESSED VIA DATA FROM VISA VUE
CALENDAR YEAR DATA

CALENDAR YEAR DATA								
	Q1 2018	Q1 2019	Q2 2018	Q2 2019	Q3 2018	Q3 2019	Q4 2018	Q4 2019
Total dollar amount charged	\$449,251	\$390,109	\$707,677	\$713,574	\$1,026,130	\$1,025,077	\$569,738	\$587,135
Y/Y increase/decrease *	22.80%	-13.20%	4.20%	0.80%	-9.70%	-0.10%	5.30%	3.10%
How the money is spent **								
Lodging	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$300,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Restaurants	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Other ***	\$100,000+	\$100,000+	\$300,000+	\$300,000+	\$300,000+	\$300,000+	\$200,000+	\$200,000+
Ranking by country								
1	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada	Canada
2	China	UK	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	UK	Germany
3	UK	China	UK	UK	UK	UK	Germany	UK
4	Germany	Germany	France	Australia	France	Australia	France	Mexico
5	Italy	France	Australia	China	Australia	France	Spain	Spain
Other top 10 countries	France	Australia	China	Mexico	Switzerland	China	Australia	France
	Australia	Mexico	Denmark	France	Denmark	Mexico	Mexico	China
	Taiwan	New Zealand	Switzerland	Denmark	Italy	Switzerland	China	Australia
	Malaysia	Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico	Switzerland	Mexico	New Zealand	Switzerland	Switzerland
	Singapore	Spain	Italy	New Zealand	China	Spain	Denmark	Argentina

** Numbers beyond the total, lodging, restaurants etc., are given in increments rather than exact amounts

*** "Other" includes Fuel, Food and Grocery, Retail, Discount stores, Home Improvement and Apparel;

**** Visa reports approximately 44% of credit card charges. Other credit card data is unavailable.

2018			2019		
Total International Visa Visitor Spending 2018****	2018 Total Direct Visitor Spending	2018 International Spending with Visa as % of Total	Total International Visa Visitor Spending 2019 YTD****	2019 Total Direct Visitor Spending	2018 International Spending with Visa as % of Total
\$2,776,090	\$482,200,000	0.58%	\$2,715,895	\$482,200,000	0.56%

Key Highlights from the data above:

- 8,505 cardholders (8290 consumer; 215 commercial) with a total spend of \$1,025,077 a decline over Q3 2018 of 4.3% and 0.1%
- 16,352 transactions at an average of \$62.69 per ticket
- Canada continues to remain the top originating country for both the number of cardholders visiting and spend amount: 2,923 and \$281,345, respectively
- Lodging is again the top marketing segment by spend amount at \$326,324 for the quarter
- The top three market segments YOY by spend growth are wholesale clubs, home improvement and, department stores
- Countries which showed the most growth were China (92.8%), Mexico (21.4%), Australia (6.9%) and Canada (5.3%). The countries showing decreased spending amounts were Denmark (-21.8%), UK (-21.2%) and France (-15.6%). Note that local factors as well as vacation cultural vacation habits cause degrees of variation.

INITIATIVE: Develop a data sharing process that offers context and insights for partners

The Executive Director worked with the BID Advisory Board on the 2020/2021 report and recommendations. Again, the Board will recommend that the County adopt the BID assessment and TOT returns forms previously created by VMC. These forms include the collection of Average Daily Rate (ADR) and Average Daily Occupancy (ADO). Further, these new versions of the forms will provide VMC with new data to evaluate its performance.

IMPERATIVE: Cultivate VMC's relationships & collaborations

VMC Staff continues to work side-by-side with Mendocino Winegrowers Inc. on their annual event "Taste Mendocino".

The ED volunteered at the Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce Whale Festival Annual chowder tasting. The ED continues holding seats on both the Anderson Valley Winegrowers and Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce to ensure that VMC reaches each area of the county. Collaborations between organizations ensures continuity year-over-year in events and marketing of those events.

• OBJECTIVE: YOY increase in stakeholder and partner survey response rate

The fourth quarter of the fiscal year generally brings the beginning of outreach to partners and stakeholders to discuss their participation in Mushroom FEAST Mendocino happening in the fall. The VMC Festival and Marketing committees will address this ability to promote this FEAST as more information with regard to tourism and travel in the COVID-19 Pandemic becomes available.

• OBJECTIVE: YOY increase in "opportunities" page visitation on VMC website

Staff will make a recommendation to the BoD to change the verbiage of this objective to YOY increase in "opportunities" page visitation on MendocinoTourism.org website.

MendocinoTourism.org is MCTC's internal website and the repository of the organization information and documents. The "Opportunities" page on the site is where staff places notifications of upcoming trade shows, educational events and BID/BoD seats available. Staff keeps this page up to date as necessary and talks with partners and stakeholders about visitation during HAP visits. The team continues to investigate ways to prompt habitual visitation to this page by partners and stakeholders.

• OBJECTIVE: Solicit new applicants for BID and MCTC Board positions and committee membership

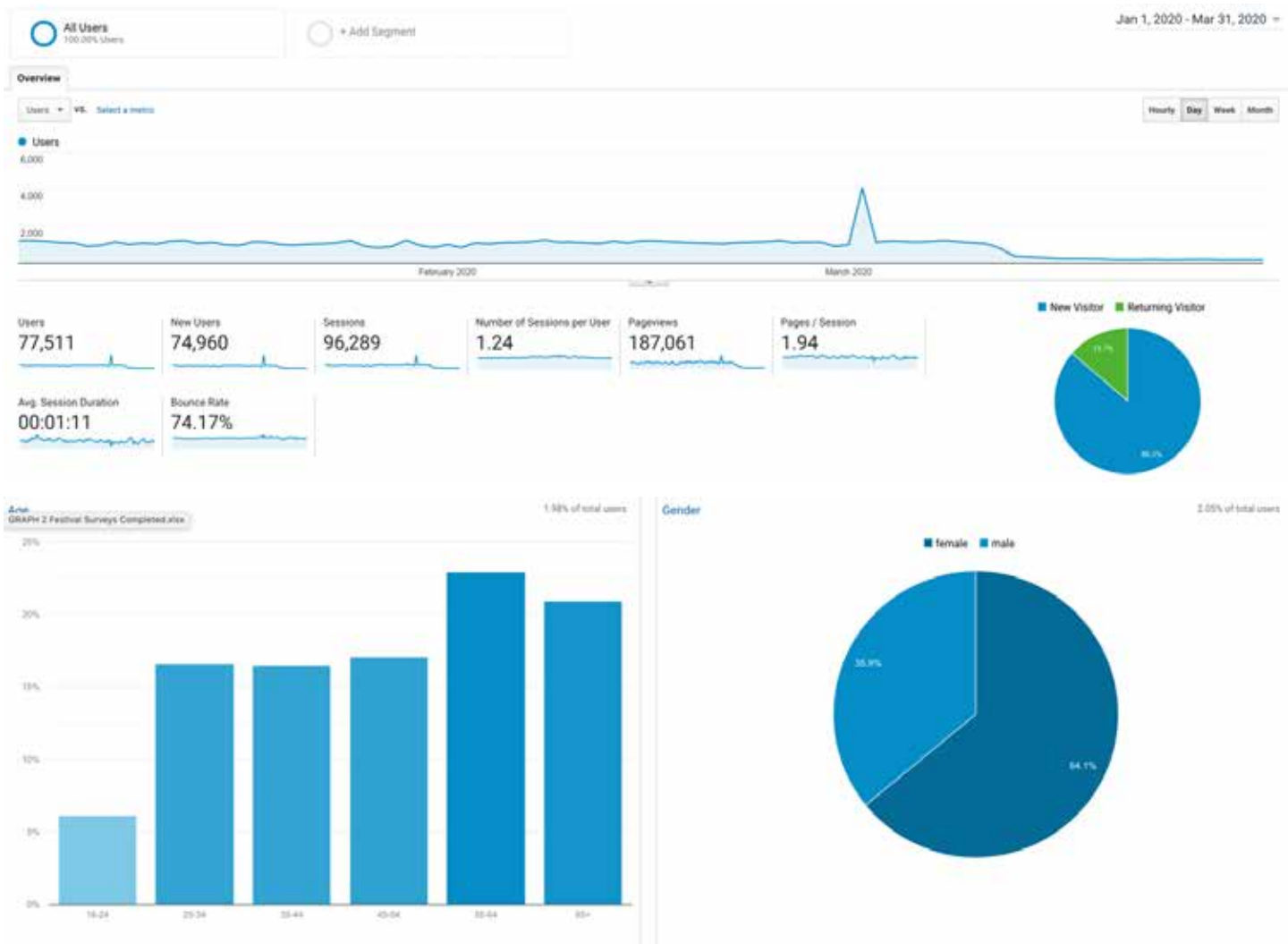
With a fully seated board, it is not necessary for the Executive Director to solicit at this time. Two positions will be vacated in the upcoming fiscal year and the ED will begin to identify potential candidates for these elected positions in the summer. The BID Advisory Board has two vacant seats. The BID Advisory Chair and the ED have lobbied potential stakeholders for these positions with little success.

INITIATIVE: Foster collaboration and countywide alignment by creating and developing the "go to" website for all tourism stakeholders

*Staff will recommend to the BoD that a clarification to this initiative be given, with regard to which website VMC should report information for. In past reports data has been reported for VisitMendocino.com, the organizations outward facing website, as will be reported below. However, the initiative states "website for all tourism **stakeholders**"; in staff's opinion that would be MendocinoTourism.org.*

The top-line data of the third quarter website analytics reveals:

- Q3 2020 visitors are down 16.6% from Q3 2019 (77,511 vs 92,936)
- Most traffic is from Northern California San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento followed by Southern California. International numbers for Germany, Mexico and France are steadily increasing.
- Business listings received 26,627 views during the quarter
- Demographics are shifting to the 55-65+ age range
- Highest interest – traveler, shoppers and food & drink



Website traffic is being driven by the digital ad campaigns running on Facebook, Instagram and the programmatic targeting and retargeting buys.

An analysis of website visitors demonstrates that they are value-conscious, outdoor enthusiasts who own pets, and love food and dining out. The website is also seeing increased visitation from international markets with a YOY 31.06% increase. Of note, local viewers are tuning into VisitMendocino.com with an overall countywide increase of 25.63%.

INITIATIVE: Strengthen regional tourism relationship to leverage broader marketing opportunities

The team continues to submit media content to Visit California that highlights unique aspects of Mendocino County. This project is ongoing.

The ED continues as Administrator of the NCTC and recently spent time meeting with both Humboldt Visitor and Convention Bureau and the Lake County Tourism Improvement District.

VMC staff currently hold seats on the Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce, Anderson Valley Winegrowers, Willits Chamber of Commerce and Destination Hopland.

The team continues to hold a seat and work closely with the Visit California Rural Regional Committee and upholds a partnership with Shasta Cascade.

INITIATIVE: Proactively educate and communicate with all tourism stakeholders

As discussed elsewhere in this report the team regularly communicated with stakeholders sharing media coverage of the county and, during the quarter, sent 3 updates to partners. The team also shared PR hits and other news on the VMC Partners at Work Facebook group. In addition, staff sends any articles to stakeholders that result from media FAM visits.

The PRM partnered with local leaders in tourism and hospitality to create a set of stakeholder trainings intended to continue education and training of innkeepers, owners, managers and staff. The PRM is also continuing to investigate the potential of creating a Certified Tourism Ambassador program to bring to Mendocino County. The goal of this program is to further educate other members and leaders of our communities on the assets of the tourism industry in Mendocino County.

VMC continues partnership with KOZT The Coast radio hosting spots that target the community and stakeholders alike to raise awareness of programs and opportunities.

INITIATIVE: Raise awareness of the Mendocino County experience

• OBJECTIVE: Year-over-year increase in Mendocino County awareness score

The role of social media in creating and raising brand awareness is critical as shown in the campaign overview referenced earlier in this report. The data set on the following page shows the YOY metrics for the quarter. The total number includes paid impressions, which we have broken out into Paid Impressions and Organic & Viral Impressions. Impressions/Posts are based on the latter number to avoid skewing the figures.

Social Media Results YOY FY 2018v. FY 2019 Q3					
FACEBOOK			INSTAGRAM		
	FY 2018 Q3	FY 2019 Q3		FY 2018 Q3	FY 2019 Q3
Impressions	6,858,962 Total (6,280,546 Paid/ 578,415 Organic+Viral)	4,493,786 Total (4,168,550 Paid /325,236 Organic+Viral)	Likes Received	14,300	1,746,680
Engagement	24,428	25,591	Impressions	N/A	1,746,680
Link Clicks	69,977	40,972	Likes Received	N/A	16,734
Posts	26	32	Comments	176	207
Impressions/Post	22,246	10,164	Posts	27	36
Engagement/Post	940	800	Likes/Post	530	465
Fan Base	58,116	59,294	Comment/Post	6	6
			Followers	12,906	17,378

VMC hosted a social media influencer trip in February 2020. The three travelers from Granite & Light began their three-night stay in Hopland and ended in Philo at the Brambles, with stops throughout the county. Their entire adventure, which will launch on Social Platforms in June can be viewed here: <https://www.graniteandlight.com/mendocino-magic-visit-mendocino-winter-2019>.

• OBJECTIVE: Year-over-year increase in impressions and ad equivalency

The PR team was pleased to introduce a string of A-List features that hit during the quarter in publications and stations such as Los Angeles Times, Alaska Magazine, KTVU Fox 2 Bay Area and CBS 8 San Diego. The data below shows the PR team's direct impressions and ad equivalency for the quarter.

YOY PR Results for Q3										
Year	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2018	FY 2019
	Hits		Ad Equivalency		Impressions		Releases		FAM Visits	
January	54	63	\$1,978,988.23	\$34,184,426.00	112,189,665	120,291,986	1	1	4	4
February	32	66	\$11,071,731.00	\$64,640,864.00	63,748,065	181,928,176	1	2	4	3
March	83	21	3,937,477.70	\$85,626,606.00	67,558,336	149,404,321	0	2	1	1
YOY Total	169		\$16,988,196.93		243,496,066		2		9	
YTD		678		\$304,904,654.25		1,242,821,840		15		30
2019 Goals		300		\$6,600,000.00		150,000,000		11		18

• OBJECTIVE: Year-over-year increase in experience perceptions score on in-market visitor survey

The Visitor Services committee has taken on the task of researching and identifying an organization to carry out a new in-market visitor survey.

The team is currently working with Ink Fish design on finalizing a new version of the Visitor Guide, the potential release is scheduled for Spring 2021.

INITIATIVE: Increase Mendocino County brand awareness and positive perception

As reported earlier in this report, the team is working vigilantly to raise awareness of the Mendocino County brand through full-scale digital marketing and social media campaigns that began in December 2019. The campaign ended on February 28, 2020 as a reaction to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The end of the campaign due the COVID-19 pandemic also paused further rollouts scheduled for Taste Mendocino and the newly created “Beer Trail” set to begin in mid-March.

The ED, MSC and PRM attended both the San Diego and Los Angeles Travel and Adventure shows collecting a total of 744 contacts of potential visitors. These leads have been added to our MailChimp email distribution and those potential visitors will receive all consumer news from VMC.

INITIATIVE: Work with partners to develop, promote and grow strong and beneficial tourism activities and events

At the time of writing, all future events and festivals have been placed on pause by the BoD due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, staff had been working on the release of a new spring FEAST that highlighted a new “Beer Trail” and outdoor adventures.

INITIATIVE: Explore options to influence and shape potential cannabis tourism

The ED is working with the president of Mendocino County Promotional Alliance (MCPA) to schedule and organize a meeting of their board of directors to officially transfer responsibility of cannabis promotion from MCPA to VMC.

Glossary

This glossary is included to explain 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.

Advertising equivalency	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.
Impressions	The number of views a print or digital article is estimated to reach based on circulation and subscription data.
Media Placement	A story (print or digital) about an aspect of Mendocino County that arises from PR efforts.
Media Mission	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.
Releases	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.
FAM	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.
Millennials	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.
Gen-Xers	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.
Baby Boomers	Those born between the early-to-mid 1940s up to about 1964.
Content marketing	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.
Google Analytics	A reporting tool provided by Google that can be used to analyze traffic, ad words, digital marketing campaigns, demographics, etc. for VisitMendocino.com.
Facebook Insights	A reporting tool for analyzing traffic, advertising campaigns, and other activities on Facebook.
Activity Provider	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.
Free Independent Traveler (FIT)	A person or a couple that is not traveling with a group; usually references foreign travelers out on their own (Foreign Independent Traveler).
Inbound Tour Operator	Someone specializing in providing tours to overseas travelers to a destination, either operating the tour themselves or working through established partnerships with local suppliers.
Receptives	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.
Search Engine Marketing	A marketing tactic using paid advertising services so that interested clients and customers can reach a business quicker and easier while searching online.

Block	A number of rooms, seats, or spaces reserved in advance, usually by wholesalers, tour operators, or receptive operators who intend to sell them as components of tour packages.
Conversion	Getting “heads in beds” or otherwise closing the sale. Differs from “hospitality.” Hospitality is being warm, friendly and helpful. Conversion is active selling.
Demand generators	Strategies and programs developed by DMOs and suppliers to generate destination demand. Examples include festivals, events, cultural tours, and consumer promotion.
Engagement	On Facebook (and other social media platforms), engagement is when people perform actions on your Page. They may like a post, click on a link, or comment on an image for example. With Facebook Insights, engagement is measured as the number of times a post is clicked, liked, shared, or commented on.
Reach	A measure of the range of influence of any content; it is the measurement of how content is spread across various social media channels. Think of it as the number of eyeballs a piece of content is getting. On Facebook, for example, “total reach” is the number of people that have seen a particular post.
Selected Key Industry Associations	
DMA West	Destination Marketing Associations West, a membership organization of visitor bureaus throughout the western United States.
Visit California	The tourism marketing agency for the state.
California Travel Association	Membership organization offering education and advocacy for state tourism operators.
U.S. Travel Association	National, non-profit organization representing and advocating for all components of the travel industry.
Destination International	Global association of travel industry agencies and groups, offering education and advocacy for members. Visit Mendocino holds a certification from the globally recognized Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP); this serves as a visible industry distinction that defines quality and performance standards in destination marketing and management.
Brand USA	Agency chiefly responsible for marketing the USA as a destination to the rest of the world.
North Coast Tourism Council	One of eight rural regions designated by Visit CA to encourage international tourism beyond the gateways. Mendocino County is one of the four counties in the Council.