

CITY OF PALM DESERT



FY2014/1
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MARKETING PLAN

This plan will serve to provide direction for the City of Palm Desert's marketing efforts for fiscal year 2014/2015. It identifies target markets, marketing objectives, strategies, and tactics which will continue to strengthen the Palm Desert brand and, ultimately, put heads in beds. It is an evolving document that may be reviewed and altered throughout the year as priorities and programs develop.

CITY OF PALM DESERT

MARKETING PLAN FY 2014/15

INTRODUCTION

Palm Desert and the Coachella Valley rely on tourism as a major source of revenue. It is estimated that the tourism industry generates over \$22 million per year in revenue for the City of Palm Desert alone. This number represents 54% of the City's total general fund revenues used to fund programs, projects, public safety, and the daily operations of the City. Of the 54%, approximately 18% will be generated through transient occupancy tax (TOT), and 36% through sales tax.

In order to strengthen Palm Desert's brand and grow its market share, the City will implement a diversified marketing program to include the following:

- Local, regional, national and international advertising efforts
- Use of a variety of advertising tools such as print, digital, radio, social media, etc.
- Targeting of proven geographical and demographical markets
- Public relations
- Cooperative advertising campaigns with community partners

PALM DESERT BRAND

Palm Desert is a uniquely situated resort community offering a small-town feel with big city amenities. Its character is decidedly upscale, yet comfortable and family friendly. A place of relaxation and escape, Palm Desert also offers countless pursuits for active lifestyles including exciting outdoor activities in a beautiful, natural environment. Convenient access to world-class shopping, recreation, culture and the arts combined with 350 days of predictable sunshine each year make Palm Desert one of the world's premiere destinations.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

The ultimate goal of Palm Desert's marketing program is to create enhanced public awareness through comprehensive marketing that will result in increased visits, extended stays, and increased spending to support a strong business environment. Palm Desert's marketing program includes the following fundamental goals:

- To increase the number of visitors to Palm Desert
- To increase Transient Occupancy Tax revenues
- To increase sales tax revenues

- To increase investment within the community (commercial & residential)

TARGET MARKETS

Geographic Markets:

Pacific Northwest (San Francisco, Seattle, Portland)

Canada (Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg)

Southern California drive market (San Diego, Los Angeles, Orange County, Inland Empire)

Additional airport feeder markets: Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Texas, Cincinnati,

Indianapolis, Denver, New York

Demographic Markets:

Middle to upper income; affluent

Ages 30 – 70+

Married couples

Singles

Families

Interest Markets:

Travel: resorts, events, attractions, value, ease of access, safety

Outdoor: family activities, tennis, hiking, biking, golf

Family: value, activities, attractions, events, arts & culture

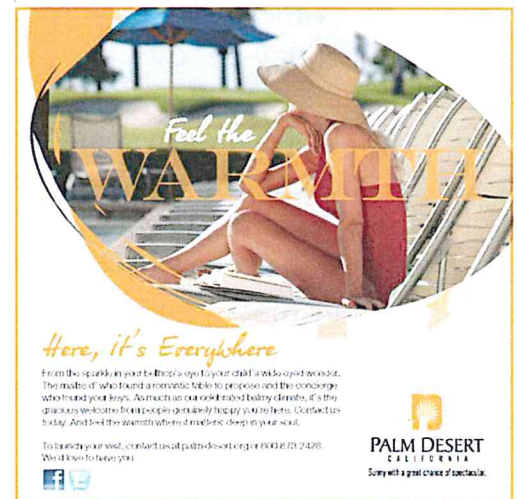
Friends: shopping, dining, resort amenities, rest and relaxation, arts & culture

Party: nightlife, events, attractions, happy hour, concerts

Ownership: second homeowners/potential home buyers

Events: concerts, festivals, shows

Weather: sun, temperatures, outdoor environment, pools, sports



STRATEGIES

The following goals will serve as a foundation for this year's advertising strategy and initiatives:

- Increase brand recognition throughout Southern California, Canada, and direct-flight markets in order to capture market share.



- Ensure brand visibility during key points of the trip planning process to allow Palm Desert to be top of mind.
- Intercept potential tourists during the decision-making process to encourage Palm Desert visitation.
- Encourage in-market spending at Palm Desert restaurants, hotels, shopping, golf and events.
- Leverage co-op partnerships with various Palm Desert organizations.

Advertising

- 1) Develop a comprehensive **advertising and digital marketing** program that aligns with the goals to promote Palm Desert.
 - a. Work with Off Madison Ave to develop a digital media plan to include a combination of pay-per-click and paid advertising focusing on identified geographical markets and demographic segments.
 - b. Utilize proven search engine platforms such as Google and Bing/Yahoo to drive qualified potential visitors to the City's website.
 - c. Utilize social media as a source of advertising, which will direct activity to the City's website as well as grow the Facebook community, expand content reach and increase page "likes".
 - d. Continue to invest in targeted advertising (retargeting) which delivers the Palm Desert message to consumers based on previous related Internet actions.
 - e. Develop and test online banner ads, including engaging and interactive media options that speak to targeted segments and capitalize on seasonality and target markets.
 - f. Develop mobile ads to direct in-market visitors searching for information to the Palm Desert mobile-friendly website.
 - g. Initiate search engine optimization as identified and needed to support campaign successes.
 - h. Explore using digital resources to test new and emerging tourism markets such as cultural, medical and culinary tourism.
 - i. As appropriate, develop co-op opportunities with a variety of community partners.
- 2) Develop a comprehensive **traditional media** program that strengthens the Palm Desert brand, increases awareness, and promotes visitation.
 - a. Work with JNS Media Specialists to produce a detailed media plan that includes a balance of local, regional, national and international advertising in high profile publications within identified target markets.



- b. Develop co-op opportunities with a variety of partners including the Greater Palm Springs CVB, California Tourism, The Living Desert, JW Marriott Desert Springs, Palm Springs Art Museum in Palm Desert, Desert Willow Golf Resort and El Paseo Business Improvement District.
 - c. Explore whether we continue to invest in radio advertising, sponsoring weather and traffic reports in relevant markets.
- 3) Participate in advertising opportunities that direct visitors to Palm Desert businesses and attractions and encourage in-market spending.
- a. Advertise the Palm Desert Visitor Center and its services in local tourism publications such as the monthly editions of Travelhost and Desert Guide.
 - b. Distribute Visitor Center rack cards through Certified Folder Display to relevant valley and Southern California locations.
 - c. Consider continuing participation in the DCTV program, providing video footage of Palm Desert in 1,400 hotel rooms valley wide.
 - d. Advertise in the Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce annual directory and map.
 - e. Work with City staff and community partners to support additional events and activities as outlined within the Economic Development and Envision Palm Desert Strategic plans.
- 4) Maintain relevant and engaging marketing tools and information including committing to embracing and utilizing technological advancements in order to reach the maximum number of potential visitors.
- a. Continually refresh the existing website including use of new photography to enhance the site's overall appeal and relevancy.
 - b. As available, provide additional interactive and visual features such as videos and slideshows on the tourism website.
 - c. Continue to integrate and cross promote social media, website and all marketing resources.
 - d. Continue to develop content that is engaging for new and returning visitors.
 - e. Develop engaging advertising content through video and photography necessary to keep Palm Desert relevant in all mediums.
 - f. Conduct additional research on the use of apps and determine whether a need exists that is not currently being met through other platforms.
- 5) Support the growth of existing events and development of new events that focus on increasing tourism activity to Palm Desert.
- a. Review and recommend event concepts and present to Marketing Committee for consideration.



- b. Support valley-wide events through social media and other marketing channels as appropriate.
- c. Work with City staff and community partners to provide financial and staffing resources for First Weekend, Fashion Week, and other City-sponsored events.

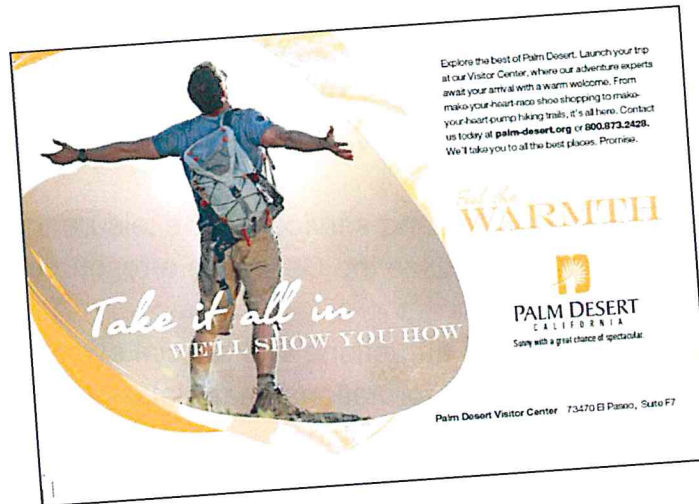


Public Relations/Communications

- 1) Research and recommend options for implementing a public relations program which seeks online exposure, editorial coverage and program growth through consumer engagement.
 - a. Distribute press releases on pertinent Palm Desert information and activities.
 - b. Develop a social media strategy to ensure Palm Desert is reaching audiences in an effective and engaging manner through Facebook, Twitter, and other relevant programs.
 - c. Develop a content calendar for social media establishing key targets and events to highlight throughout the program year.
 - d. Develop and implement a blogger outreach campaign focusing on high profile bloggers in the travel, food, art/culture and fashion categories.
 - e. Continue to work with Off Madison Ave to develop social media promotions (contest/sweepstakes) to engage key audiences (e.g. photo sharing, testimonials, etc).
- 2) Utilize a variety of marketing resources that allow for innovative and flexible methods of information delivery to our visitors including partnerships and/or independent programs.
 - a. Support international marketing efforts through opportunities with the Greater Palm Springs CVB and Visit California.
 - b. Participate in opportunities offered by Visit California including website content, literature distribution, etc.
 - c. Create guidelines for and execute on managing, monitoring and engaging in "chat" about Palm Desert on digital venues such as Trip Advisor, Flickr, Yelp, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, etc.



- d. Prepare a wish list of local tourist-driven events and regional and national travel industry shows in which Palm Desert should have a presence.
 - e. Invest in a professional booth for use at tourism events.
 - f. Identify resources for staffing such events.
- 3) Provide quality tourism information and services to the leisure traveler through efforts at the Palm Desert Visitor Center. Utilize the Center as a resource for business support and referral services.
- a. Make tickets available to local attractions and special events.
 - b. Distribute the most up to date informational materials such as vacation guides, hiking and biking maps, and dining guides.
 - c. Optimize the City's sale of Palm Desert brand merchandise through better display and merchandising, improved product offerings, and enhanced marketing.
 - d. Support local real estate through distribution of relocation guides, realtor, education, demographic and community information.
 - e. Continue to development outreach programs that reach out to the business community and inform them of the services provided by the Center.
- 4) Engage Palm Desert residents and businesses in order to keep them informed and interested in community activities and happenings.
- a. Produce an annual calendar and make available to general public through distribution points such as the Visitor Center, City Hall, and the Library.
 - b. Produce Brightside newsletters for delivery to residents and businesses six times per year.
 - c. Promote activities and events hosted by the Palm Desert Aquatic Center, The Living Desert, Palm Springs Art Museum in Palm Desert, McCallum Theatre, Desert Willow, El Paseo, etc. through the website, social media and print resources.
 - d. Support the updating of the City's e-government website to enhance its usefulness to residents and businesses.
 - e. Participate in community meetings and events such as El Paseo Business Improvement District, Chamber activities, etc.
 - f. Reach out to Art in Public Places Committee and staff to explore existing programming and advertising efforts in order to ensure a cohesive message and adequate promotion of cultural tourism.



- 5) Track, research, and evaluate marketing programs to ensure positive results.
 - a. Staff and Marketing Committee to continue to receive monthly reports from Off Madison Ave summarizing results of all online programs.
 - b. JNS Media Specialists to provide quarterly reports summarizing results of print and radio advertising.
 - c. Where applicable, incorporate tracking mechanisms into marketing efforts.
- 6) Encourage, support and participate in convention and business travel marketing efforts undertaken by the Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau and California Tourism.
 - a. Participate in regular CVB marketing committee meetings.
 - b. Work with the CVB to participate in and support familiarization trips (FAMs) for travel writers, tour operators and travel planners as time and budget allows.
 - c. Sponsor co-op advertising opportunities with the CVB as identified within the media plan.
 - d. Attend annual tourism industry conferences as appropriate.
- 7) Create opportunities to partner with and support business segments within the community.
 - a. Support the efforts of the City's Department of Economic Development to work more closely with the hotel and hospitality industry.
 - b. Research opportunities to strengthen online information to support the local real estate market.
 - c. Explore additional ideas for promotional activities that support various segments of the business community (e.g. restaurants, the arts, etc).

- d. Support local business promotions as appropriate.

BUDGET

Palm Desert's total marketing budget is proposed to remain consistent with the previous fiscal year. General allocations are identified below with specifics detailed within the City budget as well as the digital and print media plans.

\$55,000	Collateral – design & development
\$298,850	Administration/Contracts
\$3,800	Operations
\$92,000	Community Relations – Brightside & calendar
\$535,000	Media Buys (OMA @ \$160,000/JNS @ \$155,000/Co-ops @ \$100,000/Visitor Center @ \$40,000/Misc @ \$45,000/Community Events @ \$35,000)
\$984,650	Total

All programming and media plans support the stated objectives within this document. Additional concepts outside of the budget have been included within this document and may require additional City Council consideration and/or additional resources above and beyond those currently allocated. Media plans and the marketing budget for fiscal year 2014/15 are attached as part of this document.



