

DELTA COUNTY



TOURISM CABINET

2017-18 MARKETING PLAN



»→ DELTA COUNTY, COLORADO ←«

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Overview

Delta County is off-the-beaten tourism path, but a true gem for those who find it. The challenge for Delta County has been getting the word out about their wonderful area of Colorado and convincing the tourist to make the journey to this neck of the woods.

The natural beauty, outdoor adventure, rich history, food and arts culture of the region make for a true getaway to a Western Slope gem. The people of this area are as nice as they come, welcoming and talented craftspeople who are eager to share their passion for the place they feel fortunate to call home. Like experienced outdoors guides, the people of Delta County love to share their passion for their outdoor playground with everyone from weekend warriors to cross-country travelers.

Six Towns, Two Groups, One County

There appear to be two groups who call Delta County home. The ones who have been there a long-time and have seen the county change and those that are new in recent years. There are also those that love to hunt, fish and snowmobile, while others love to hike, bike and climb. But what brings everyone together is a love for the outdoors and the place where they live. The community desires a unifying plan to bring these two groups together in their common effort to increase tourism in the county.

Within the county there are six distinct towns, each with its own character and tourism assets. Alone, the towns struggle to get traction to bring tourists to town. Some have more success than others, but together they offer a multi-day experience worth traveling long distances to experience. This was recognized by the towns and the Delta County Tourism Cabinet was formed to provide a unified marketing force.

Marketing the region and the sum of the parts has its benefits, including:

- Stronger cumulative marketing power
- Greater ease of brand recognition and recall
- Increase in net promoter score due to greater brand recognition
- Greater awareness of all assets in the region resulting in longer stays
- Increase in intent to return due to awareness of other things to do / places to stay in the region

Surrounding the region there are wonderful natural assets that already see tourists coming in larger numbers including the North Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and the Grand Mesa National Forest. Leveraging these assets as regional draws will increase the pool of potential tourists coming to Delta. The challenge is to get in front of this audience during the travel planning stages, as appealing to the tourist mid-trip is often too late.

Background

Delta county lost about 3,000 jobs in a county of 30,000 people in the past decade. This has resulted in a need to find new ways to bring income to the region. Colorado as a whole has seen big increases in tourism in recent years, thus tourism in Delta County is being looked at as a great area for potential economic growth. While Delta has seen some growth in the past few years, it has not been at the same level of growth in tourism in other regions of the state with ski areas, major metro areas and national parks. The desire is to develop a marketing plan that brings together the people, towns and marketing power of the region into one unified marketing force.

Fortunately for Delta County, the leaders have seen the potential of tourism as a growth and revenue area for the county. The county has established a channel for dedicated lodging taxes to fund the Tourism Board. They have also contracted with an experienced tourism professional with a passion for Delta County, to lead the charge.

This marketing plan is part of a larger effort by the Colorado Tourism Office to drive growth in tourism in Delta County leading to more jobs, more investment and long-term prosperity for the residents of the county.



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TRAVEL TRENDS

Travel Trends

Understanding travel trends ranging from local to international will help Delta County put into perspective its situation and help drive decision-making.

International Travel Trends

The past few years in travel have been very strong in the United States. BrandUSA has marketed the country with a budget of nearly \$200 million. Since the creation of BrandUSA in 2011, US Arrivals have increased from about 62 million to more than 80 million in 2016. Their goal is 100 million international arrivals. Given the rise in US dollar value, this growth curve may change.

What does this mean for Delta County?

- 1) International tourists often come for weeks at a time and look to get out away from the cities and resorts. Delta County is a perfect “Western Experience” and offers an authentic way for international tourists to experience Colorado. Reaching this audience will primarily be accomplished through work with the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO). Details on working with the CTO are in the Owned and Earned Media sections of this report.
- 2) Compression – This is an industry term which means that because availability is being driven down and costs driven

up in the most popular areas of the state, less visited areas can see an increase in travel as a "side effect". Basically, the international tourists are driving up the costs and down the availability of the destinations Coloradans are used to visiting and the locals are looking for new places to go that they can still afford and that aren't as crowded.

Domestic Travel Trends

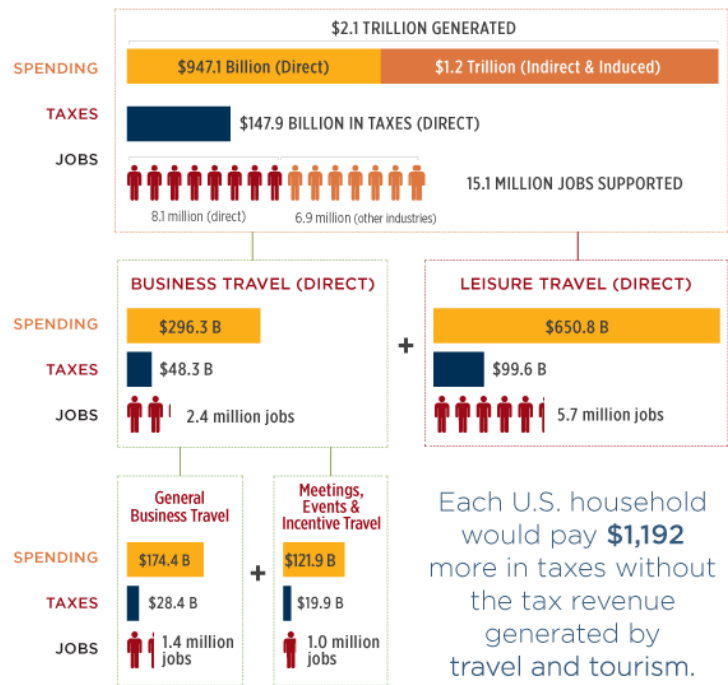
Domestic leisure travel has been on the rise since the recession and is expected to continue to grow at a similar pace. This has similar implications for Delta County to the international trends. However, even though there has been an increase in travel demand, an increase in marketing spending by destination markets has made competing for those travelers equal or greater to the increase in demand.

What does this mean for Delta County?

1 Increase in demand on primary tourism markets in Colorado is resulting in overcrowding and people looking for alternative vacation spots within the state that are yet to be discovered by the masses.

2 Increase in spending by competing markets means tourism marketing is more competitive than ever.

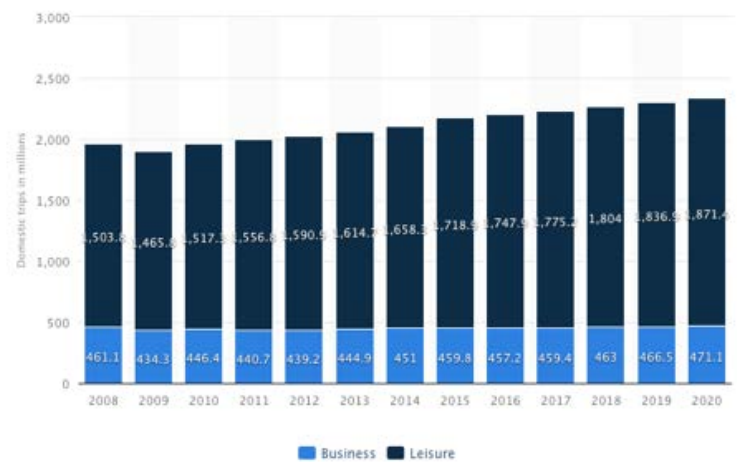
U.S. TRAVEL INDUSTRY IMPACT



Source: U.S. Travel Association
 Note: Direct spending totals do not include international passenger fares

= 1 million jobs

Source: USTravel.org



Source: Statista.com

Colorado Travel Trends

Colorado has been one of the leaders in the nation in tourism growth since the recession. In 2015 a record 77 million visitors spent over \$19 billion dollars in the Centennial State. The CTO spends \$19 million per year marketing the state.

What does this mean for Delta County?

- 1) There are more people to pull into the Delta County area who are visiting from out of state.
- 2) Again, increased demand on popular tourist destinations is creating a larger pool of people, mostly locals, looking to escape the crowds and find new undiscovered areas of Colorado.

Delta County Travel Trends

Research is not readily available on the tourists coming through Delta County, but the professionals who work in tourism every day paint a good picture of who is visiting the county and when. Lodging-based tax dollars are approaching pre-recession levels.

What does this mean for Delta County?

- 1) Positive growth is likely to continue as long as macro-trends cooperate (Economy and Weather).
- 2) Without a significant investment in tourism infrastructure, rapid growth (10+%) is unlikely. This plan will work towards achieving 5-10% growth for Delta County through its combination of sustainable marketing and one-time awareness boost efforts.

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) Trends

DMOs or Destination Marketing Organizations are spending at record levels in competition for tourism dollars. DMOs on the county level are primarily funded by lodging taxes (88%) as well as through memberships and advertising. The average taxes and fees on a hotel room from a national study in 2015 by Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) was 13.1%. This study primarily consisted of much larger counties than Delta. In contrast, Delta County lodging taxes and fees significantly below national averages and below market competitors. Should the county decide it wants to leverage greater marketing abilities for the county to drive additional awareness of the region and visitors to the region, there is certainly a lot of room between Delta County's funding and the current market average both nationally and regionally. County lodging taxes are paid by visitors staying in overnight accommodations and not by locals. The taxes collected by the county must be used in the promotion of tourism to directly benefit the growth of the tourism industry. Funds must be protected from local advertising, local events and things that do not drive overnight visitation to Delta County. This report is not intended to be a recommendation on lodging taxes or to provide any legal advice, but to simply point out market competitive trends in travel.



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OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective:

Grow Delta County lodging tax collections by 7.3% in the coming year to return to pre-recession levels.

Objectives

- Serve as an economic engine for Delta County, CO
- Drive tourism dollars to Delta County, justifying public and or private investment in tourism infrastructure including additional hotel rooms, conference space and venue facilities that capture and retain more nightly visitors
- Drive overnight stays, attractions visits, restaurant, golf course and retail spending, event attendance and all things that contribute to the local economy and create jobs in Delta County
- Grow the brand platform for Delta County and expand its reputation and brand recognition in Colorado and the region as a destination of choice
- Engage community members, who are the local leaders in tourism, in a sustainable plan to improve the quality of life for residents of Delta County through an ongoing growth plan for the year-round visitor industry
- Shine a spotlight on Delta County as a destination for leisure, meetings and sports events through Colorado, regional, national and international media coverage highlighting the local attractions and reasons to visit Delta County
- Work with the community to create, recruit and grow one-time and year-round events in Delta County that bring in overnight visitors



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MARKETING METHODOLOGY

Marketing Methodology

Advances in technology have made premium marketing tools available to smaller marketing budgets. Setting up a marketing system that starts with good data, allows for precision targeting and provides real-time feedback is now the standard.

Below are the steps to creating a high performing marketing system:

- 1) Conduct professional research to gain insight into potential visitors and get feedback from past visitors. (Every 3 years)
- 2) Set up real-time monitoring including Google Analytics, social media, PR and email monitoring software. Also get partners to provide a feedback loop of monthly reporting on hotel, attraction and restaurant numbers. Share this report amongst participating partners.
- 3) Invest in owned media outlets (Website, Social, Email, Visitors Guide) to be able to reach your core audience at minimal costs. (Ongoing)
- 4) Invest in earned media professionals who have experience in placing destinations into the travel planners' funnel. (Ongoing)
- 5) Purchase paid media that has targeted, guaranteed placements in front of high-propensity visitors but also has the potential to go viral.
- 6) Make data-driven decisions on what is and isn't working



for driving visitation. Research, conducted every 2-3 years, drives overall strategy and establishes audiences. Real-time data drives quick decisions on what is working and what isn't to optimize expenditures.

Recommendation: Collect formal research on the current and potential visitors.

The research should capture the following information:

- Visitor Characteristics/Demographics: Origin, Age, Household Income (HHI)
- Trip Characteristics: Spending Patterns; Trip Length; What did they do during their visit; Return v. New
- Trip Planning & Transportation: Booking Window, Method, Car vs. Plane
- Competition: Who else was considered, Why, Etc.
- Positive Impressions/Needs Improvement: What did they like/dislike; Activities missing

Recommended Vendors:

H2R – Hospitality Research Company that works with DMOs across US
RRC Associates – CO-based Research Company, works with Ski Industry

Cost - \$5-10k for online surveys of about 1,000 people in Colorado.

Primary Benefit:

Too often destinations give the visitor what they think the visitor wants and never actually ask them what they want. Research is a true form of hospitality, listening to your visitors and understanding the barriers that are keeping them from coming, understanding their planning windows on booking their trips and offering so much insight into their wants and

needs for leisure time. Research allows the destination to really know the audience and potential audience. This allows for greater targeting in your marketing efforts and lets you understand strengths and weakness of the county.

Some of the key pieces of data the research would provide:

About the Visitor

% Overnight Visitors	Average Nights Spent
Average Number of Visits	% Visit for Recreation
Average Age of Visitor	Average Number of People in Party
% Empty Nesters	% Plan More than a Month Out
% With Children	% Visitors from Colorado
Average Household Income	% Visitors from Denver
\$ Spent Per Visiting Party	

About the Visit

% Visited Delta	% Enjoyed Scenery Most
% Cedaredge	About the Visit
% Crawford	% Enjoyed Laid Back Feel Most X Out of 5 –
% Hotchkiss	Overall Cleanliness X Out of 5 –
% Orchard City	Lodging Quality % Highly Likely to Return
% Paonia	% Highly Likely to Recommend
% Lodging in un-incorporated Delta County	(Net Promoter Score)
% Stayed in a Hotel	% Stayed Longer than 29 Nites
% Stayed in BnB	% Went to Grand Mesa
% Arrive by Car	% Ate Out
% Arrive by Plane	% Shopped

Where else did you visit on your vacation
 X out of 5 – Interest in art, music and history
 X out of 5 – Level Delta County lived up to expectations
 Types of media consumed

Target Audience

Marketing By Interests – Marketers have long used demographics to determine their audience, looking at location, HHI, age, etc. These things are still relevant, but **interests** have become the most important factor in determining a potential audience.

Research from a company with expertise in tourism research will really bring light to not only who currently visits Delta County, but who does not visit and why. There are perceptions out there amongst potential visitors that may need to be corrected and research will provide insight into what those perceptions are. Without high-quality research, we will here attempt to paint a picture of the current visitor based on interviews conducted with professionals in the tourism industry in Delta County.

Primary Audience: Front Range Escapers

Delta County visitors primarily originate from the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. From Fort Collins to Boulder to Denver and down to Colorado Springs, the Front Range holds the majority of Colorado's residents and produces the largest number of Delta County visitors.

Why they visit: This group tends to want to escape the crowds, relax, enjoy the outdoor recreation away from the busy Front Range and crowded resorts.

Creative: The primary message to this crowd is that Delta County is an adventurous escape. Walking a fine line of offering a break from crowds, but still offering plenty to do to make it worth the trip and not be too sleepy or boring.

Media Consumed: Facebook, 5280, Denver Post, Evening News, Drive-Time Radio, Pandora, Community Papers

Interests: Skiing, hiking, Denver Broncos, road trips, Colorado, fishing, hunting, travel, travel for food, wine and art

Secondary Audience: Locals

Delta County needs to empower its locals to be the biggest ambassadors of the county. This means that the people who live in and around the county need to be informed of the tourism things to do, places to stay and restaurants in Delta County.

The DCTC should put to use its owned and earned media arms to keep the local community informed of tourism related information.

In order to best accomplish this, press releases should be sent to local media, tourism events should be listed on local calendars and DCTC should schedule regular time on local radio and in local publications discussing Delta County things to do.

Social media targeting should include people in close proximity to Delta County as well as out of town potential visitors.

Paid media marketing (aside from social advertising) needs to stay focused on out of town marketing, in order to maximize the return on investment.

Additional Audiences (Not Ranked):

- **International Explorer** – People from overseas who have multiple weeks to fully explore Colorado
- **Road Trippers** – People exploring the country and stopping in Delta for a night or two on their way across the state.
- **Festival Goers** – Attending one of Delta County's annual festivals

Activity Based Outdoors Visitors:

- **Bikers** – Whether road, mountain or motor, biking is a huge leisure activity in the county
- **Hunters/Fishers** – Normally not staying in a hotel, but camping or driving in for the day
- **Boaters** – Not always spending the night, but purchase supplies and may return
- **Birders** – One of the fastest growing segments of outdoors travel
- **Hikers/Campers** – Normally not leaving much economic impact behind, but can be great ambassadors or come back when they have kids
- **Snowmobilers** – Normally not leaving much economic impact, but bring some business at slowest times

Sports – Not mentioned as a large economic impact, but has potential for bringing in youth sports for western Colorado counties with right facilities for softball, lacrosse, soccer, etc. Youth sports tend to draw the whole family for days at a time for tournaments.

Meetings – Not mentioned as a large economic impact, but has potential for associations of Colorado looking for places to meet on the west side of Colorado with the right meeting facilities.

Groups – Not mentioned as a large economic impact, but tour groups are already visiting some of the local attractions and with coordination, they could potentially be convinced to spend the night in Delta County.

Western Slope Day Trippers - Closer in visitors from the Western Slope, tend to be day trippers, utilizing the outdoor recreation, but spending far less money in Delta County than the overnighters coming from the Front Range.

We will focus on the Front-Range Escapers for the purposes of this report. Each one of these audiences and others could be developed with a full plan based on the principles of this marketing plan, but given the limited resources of the DCTB, the dollars and time need to be focused on the primary audience to have an impact.



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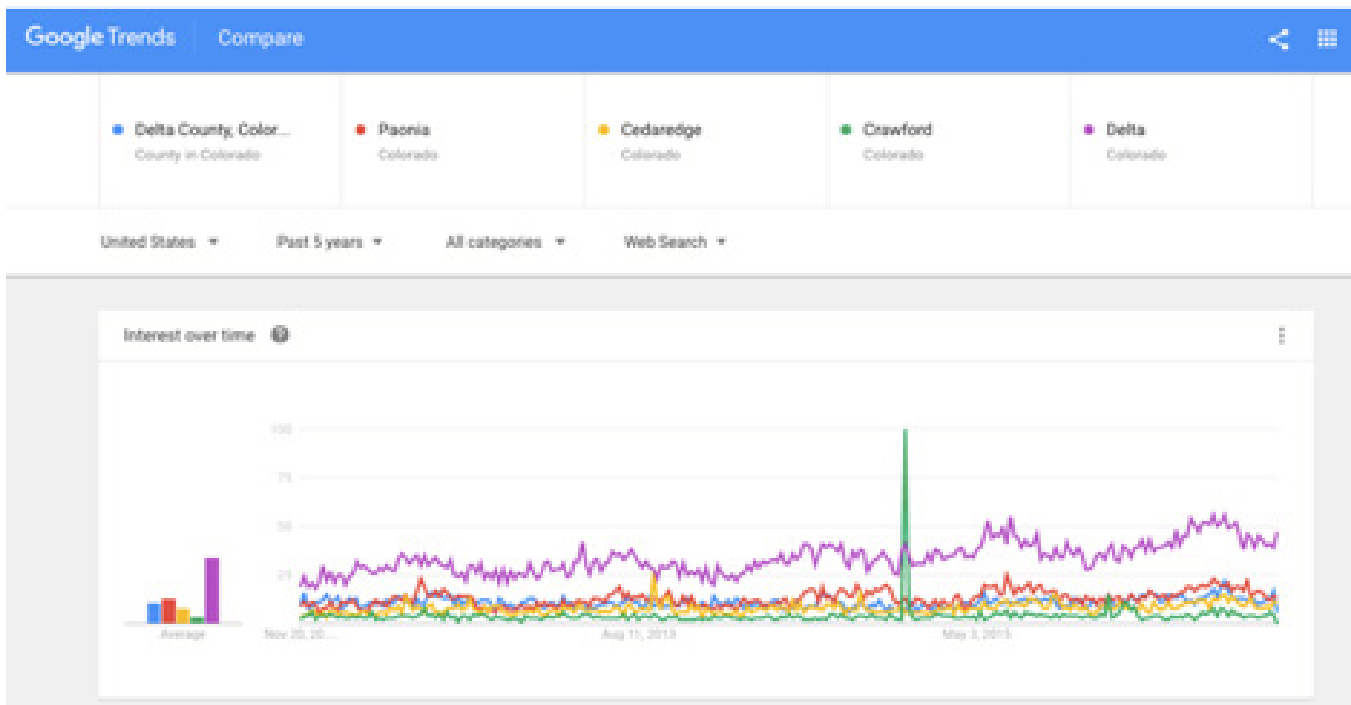
THE BRAND

Delta County's Brand

We as marketers do not control our brand. It is controlled by our customers. When we look at a brand this way, we are more careful with how we represent our product to our customers. We want to make sure every one of them whom chooses to engage with our destination walks away an ambassador for our brand.

The graph on the next page shows the amount over time that the towns of Delta County are Googled. It shows that each town is playing on a similar level with the exception of the biggest town (Delta, in purple) that shares the county name. This works in the favor of using Delta County as the term to build the brand around.

Delta County develops ambassadors well on a personal scale. However, the Delta County brand is limited to the Western Slope with only minimal brand recognition on the Front Range. Fortunately, the product is strong and there is a high-demand for discovering Colorado's gems in the market. Delta County is primed for the brand to be discovered through targeted marketing to high-propensity visitors. The message must be delivered through a controlled brand voice hitting on all the strengths of Delta County, also known as its brand pillars.



Brand Pillars

Outdoor Recreation – Delta County is at the gateway to rivers, mountains and canyons for all types of outdoor recreational play year-round. Access to back country experiences, the North Rim of the Black Canyon National Park, Grand Mesa National Forest, the Gunnison Gorge and Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Areas just to name a few spots makes Delta County and the Western Slope base camp for exploration and adventure.

Audience Interests: Hiking, Hunting, Fishing, ATV, 4-Wheeling, Cross-Country Skiing, Snowmobiling, Climbing, Mountain Biking, Road Biking, National Parks, Black Canyon, Grand Mesa, Gunnison Gorge

Note on Outdoors as a Marketing Pillar for Tourism:

This is the main driver of tourism to Delta County for leisure tourism. The challenge with Outdoors being the core of the brand is that it attracts many who spend little to nothing in the area. The key is targeting the right outdoors interests and the right type of visitor who stays in lodging, eats out and shops, but still has outdoors as a major driver of their selection of their destination. Digital marketing companies such as Quantcast can build these audiences for you. For Facebook targeting, looking at interests that don't include camping, but do include hiking, Bed & Breakfasts and locally sourced dining for example.

Farm-Fresh Food, Beverages & Experiences – Delta County is the source of good farm-fresh food for Colorado. From the wineries/cideries to the farm fresh restaurants, Delta County offers foodies the ability to escape the big city restaurant scene and experience the source of their food first hand.



Audience Interests: Food, farms, horseback riding, hard cider, wine, wineries, fruit picking, harvest festivals, dog trials, Napa

Creative Historic Communities – In each town, Delta County has a creativity to its people that captures the spirit of the West through world-class art. That creative spirit can be found not just in the galleries, but in the food and beverages made in Delta County. It stems from the Native American history, the early settlers and modern movers to the area. That creative spirit can be best experienced wandering the main streets, listening to live music or enjoying the festivals of each town.

Audience Interests: Arts, Culture, Cherry Creek Arts Festival, Crested Butte Arts Festival, The Source, Stanley Marketplace, Native American History, Rock Art, dinosaur fossils, harvest festivals

Small Town Charm – The people of Delta County are diverse in their interests, but unified in their kindness. Delta County residents love where they live and love to share their passion for their home. They share that passion with a spirit that warms the heart and rests the soul.

Audience Interests: Small Towns, country life, hospitality, bed & breakfasts, authentic experiences, Nederland, Salida

Brand Voice - *(See Appendix 1)*

This is a guide to how Delta County communicates as a clear and consistent voice true to its brand.



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MARKETING MIX

Marketing Mix

Now that the brand pillars and voice have been established, it is time to get the message out. The Marketing Mix is the amount of time and money put into each marketing tool. Below you will see a breakdown in order of importance the marketing mix for Delta County.

Content Marketing

To feed the owned, earned and paid media outlets, Delta County needs a content marketing editorial calendar that hits on the brand pillars and brings the consumer of the content into a long-term engagement with DCTC.

Example: Leverage long fall color season, with longest season in the state with altitudes from 4,000 to 12,000. Editorial content should include itineraries, seasonal activities, seasonal dishes, festivals, etc. Editorial content should live on website and be promoted via email, social and distributed via digital advertising. That content then gets them to follow DCTC socially or via email.

Total Content Creation Marketing Budget: \$6,000

Owned Media

This is the most important and biggest opportunity for Delta County at this time. Developing a brand starts with developing an engaged audience that can help spread your message. There is no better form of marketing than word of mouth and content marketing generated from your owned media outlets is marketing's best way to spread that word.

Delta County needs to invest in its owned media, which requires a website that is easy to update and easy to add new content to on a platform that is friendly to mobile devices. It needs to invest in time to create fresh, original content to its audience. It needs to invest in distributing the content it has created.

Website – Delta County Tourism Cabinet is currently in the process of redoing its website. A sitemap has been provided and is in the appendix of the report. However, a website is not like print. It must be constantly fed with fresh, relevant content for the potential visitor. A sample editorial calendar is attached.

Google Grant – While the Tourism Cabinet is not eligible for this, all Delta County 501(c)3 tourism operations should be made aware and encouraged to apply.

Types of Owned Media:

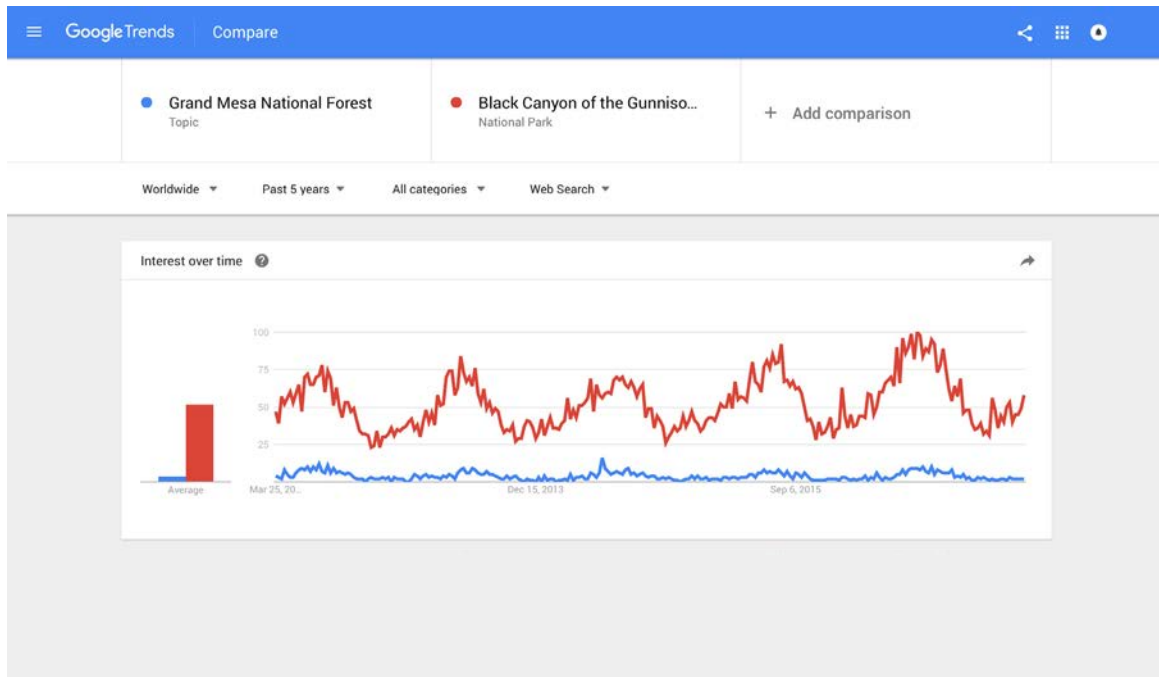
Website – The website is now at the center of all marketing for any destination. Investment in a quality, mobile-friendly, responsive site is a must.

Sitemap - A sitemap has been provided and is in the Appendix of this document. This sitemap hits all of the highlights of tourism musts and has some room for growth of the site.

SEO – Terms used in the content of the website help drive search engine traffic to the website. Simple rules include Googling the term to determine how people are searching and choose one of the drop down options from the Google instant results list. Google Trends also provides good insight into comparing terms and the number of times people are Googling them. Advanced software is available from MOZ, but not necessary at this time for Delta's purposes.

Content Marketing – The website is your home base for all content marketing. This means creating content that is often Googled. You can determine what is more popular for searches by using Google Trends. Say you are thinking do I write about Grand Mesa or Black Canyon? The answer is clear when you use data. You can also see that May to August is a key time for people Googling "Black Canyon" and your article should be published on your site in May to capture the most searches and

should use the term “Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park” in the title, first sentence as well as the image and meta description for SEO purposes. We will also drive traffic to this article through boosted social posts, email and paid advertising.



Editorial Calendar – A sample editorial calendar for April 2017 is in the Appendix. This should be developed out for the whole year. The calendar not only lays out the content, but also how traffic will be driven to that content on the website.

Email – Building a high-quality email database is key for a destination. It helps keep those interested engaged and get those that have visited to come back sooner. If a database has not already been established, use Constant Contact for a low-cost solution with good reporting and A/B testing.

Frequency – Email monthly or up to twice a month. Anything less and the person forgets that they subscribed to your list and are likely to unsubscribe.

Content – Use the editorial calendar to drive content. Content within the email should be thought of as billboards. Seven words or less than link to the actual content on your website. Your goal is not to inform, but to entice into clicking through to your website for the whole story.

Acquisition – Acquiring emails can be done through a variety of ways. First, a sign-up for on your website. Second, contents where the entering party provides their email (must be optional. Third, as part of a paid buy, the vendor collects emails for you.

Social – Taking Delta County’s social media presence to the next level will involve a community effort and a budget. The partners need to provide content to the DCTC including photos, videos and news. The budget will be used to gain a much larger audience through targeted boosting.

Content – The content calendar should drive the content of the social media feeds. Images, videos and FB Live should be the majority of the content. Links back to the website with itineraries, blog posts and events will help engage and drive website traffic.

Boosting – Boosting posts is now a must. Social media is no longer free. We are going to focus on Facebook out of the gate and use their boosted posts and target people by their interests who live in Colorado. This will have the effect of generating buzz on social media around Delta and all of the wonderful things to do there. You will occasionally use the people who like our page and their friends, but mostly develop specific audiences to target.

Acquisition – About 20% of the Facebook social budget should be used to grow the audience through the promoted page ads. Also, easy follow and share widgets for social should be added to the website and emails.

People you choose through targeting [Edit](#)

Location - Living In: United States: Alabama; Georgia; Tennessee

Age: 18 - 65+

People who like your Page

People who like your Page and their friends

Local Entertainment

Animals Broad

Music

Beer

Accessibility

Photography

Visitors Guide – There are 3 visitors guides produced by Over The Hill Media. Advertisers, DCTC and the publisher all expressed interest in creating a single guide for Delta County. This would create a unified guide that compliments this marketing plan. The Brand Voice could be used as the guide for the style of the guide. Instead of printing 10,000 of three guides, one guide could be printed with 30,000 copies. Additionally, the new DCTC website could be sold through Over the Hill Media as a package with Visitor Guide. This change could result in a positive cash flow instead of a negative one for DCTC and use minimal internal resources. Win, Win Win.

Two other publishers, the Delta County Independent and the High Country Shopper also produce visitors guides and could be approached with the same plan to unify the visitor information and advertiser messages. These publishers were not consulted for this plan, but certainly should be.

Earned Media

Earned Media or Public Relations has changed dramatically over the past decade, but what has remained consistent is that it takes human capital or time to make this work. It also takes getting journalists and now digital influencers to your market to experience it.

Short-Term Strategy – Leverage Kelli’s connections to the State and involvement with the public relations committee to get FAMs into Delta. Kelli knows her stuff and this budget should be flexible to allow for opportunities as they arise.

Long-Term Strategy – If the budget for Delta County Tourism Board grows to \$100,000+, the DCTC may want to consider hiring a freelance Public Relations specialist with experience in destination marketing. This person would develop story angles, pitch media and digital influencer contacts, follow up media, monitor media trends, apply for accolades, run FAMs and provide reporting. Cost: \$1500 - \$2500/mo

Paid Media

Delta County Tourism Board needs to keep its paid media budget driving brand awareness and intent to visit focused during peak visitation months in peak visitation markets. The biggest brand building tools, TV, Radio & Outdoor, are unavailable to Delta County with current budget restraints. However, digital advertising, when used properly, can act as a brand awareness tool that drives intent to visit. It can also act as a conversion tool to inspire travel when timed correctly with the right content. Below is a combined strategy of brand building and conversion for Delta County.

Media Type: Pre-Roll

Vendor: Pandora and/or TravelSpike

Budget: \$500/mo March – September (\$3,000 Total)

Content: Brand Building 15-second video that includes elements of brand pillars and conversion of “Plan Your Trip at DeltaCountyColorado.com”

Media Type: ReTargeting & Like Audiences

Vendor: Quantcast and/or AdRoll

Budget: \$500/mo March – September (\$3,000 Total)

Content: Display Advertising about the experience front range escapers can expect in Delta County.

About ReTargeting & Like Audiences: This technology looks at visitors to your site and competitors' sites and delivers advertising to them and others like them around the web during their trip planning cycle

Media Type: Social Advertising

Vendor: Facebook

Budget: \$250/mo Year-Round (\$3,000 Total)

Content: Boost the content you are putting into Facebook to targeted audiences in targeted markets. This content always ties back to the brand pillars and is inspirational to travel.

About Social Advertising: Facebook is no longer free. Those not boosting their posts are wasting their efforts with content creation.

Media Type: Internet Radio

Vendor: Pandora

Budget: \$500/mo March – September (\$3,000 Total)

Content: Radio copy hitting on all of your brand pillars, inspiring visitation with conversion of driving to website. Can be accompanied with pre-roll, if in budget.

Media Type: Native Travel Marketing

Vendor: Travel Spike

Budget: \$500/mo March – September (\$3,000 Total)

Content: Native content placed into travel newsletters targeted to Colorado market. About Native Content: Most trusted form of advertising that tells a deeper story about travel to Delta County.

Media: Outdoors Native Content & Distribution

Vendor: RootsRated

Budget: \$1,000 quarterly (\$4000 Total)

Content: Native content created by RootsRated for distribution across outdoor retailer distribution networks.

About Outdoor Native Content: Builds Delta County as an outdoor destination brand through trusted native content distribution.

Content Creation Budget: \$6,000

Digital Marketing Budget: \$19,000

Total Electronic Marketing Program: \$25,000

Tracking and Measuring Success

Three methods need to be implemented to track success:

Overall Success: Intake from Hotel Lodging Tax, Attraction Attendance, Local Sales Tax Collections, Jobs & Economic Impact Report from USTA & CTO

Bi-Annual Branding Success: Research tracking brand awareness, net promoter score and intent to travel every two years.

Short-Term Tracking: Google Analytics and Quantcast installed on website to measure traffic and success of campaigns.



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BUDGET

Budget

The budget in the appendix is broken out with a 10% increase in budget for 2018, doubled budget to give a look at what a larger budget may do to the allocations and as percentages totaling 100% for all line items to allow to be adjusted to any size budget.

Recommendation: Aim for \$5,000 in advertising revenue per year from the website to cover the cost of development.

Budget Notes:

- Delta County is spending too little on its personnel according to national survey. 46% of the budget of DMOs under \$500,000 is spent on personnel. Currently that number is 38% for Delta County Tourism Cabinet. Upping it to 46% would increase the budget to \$30,000 and 72 hours per month. Should Delta County secure additional funds, upping the personnel time should stay near 50% of the budget. This is because so much of marketing with a limited budget is about time spent creating content, touring and pitching media and keeping an engaged audience through owned media channels.
- Investing in creating and distributing original content is a must for Delta County and budgets need to be adjusted to allow for this marketing method.
- Research is a must for 2018's budget. It is the foundation for all good marketing.



Additional Revenue Generation

Delta County has reached the maximum lodging tax allowed by state law. However, other parts of Colorado and 14% of all US DMOs are leveraging marketing districts or service fees to generate additional funds.

Recommendation: Conduct a local study on the appetite for and potential outcome for an additional tax dedicated to marketing Delta County paid for by tourists. This is not a recommendation to implement a new tax, but to understand how it would be done, the amount of money it would generate, the economic impact and the local appetite.

Advertising Revenue

The new website will bring in new visitors. Elements of this marketing plan will drive visitors to the website. Tracking will be set up to understand the number of visitors to the new site. Monetizing the new site could be lucrative for the Tourism Board.

Suggested forms of advertising: Sliders, banners and featured members could be sold as packages at the top of the attractions, lodging, events and restaurants pages. Pricing depends on the amount of traffic, then set to market rates. Remember, these are the highest qualified leads for the hotels, attractions and restaurants and should be priced appropriately.



»→ DELTA COUNTY, COLORADO ←«

STEP-BY-STEP PRIORITIES

Step-By-Step Priorities

Delta is strongly positioned for growth, but with limited resources, priorities are paramount. Below is a list in order of what the DCTC should take on and when.

2017 Priorities

- 1) Develop new website with the Sitemap provided as a guide for navigation, Brand Voice document as a guide for content and advertising advice as a guide for monetizing in the near future.
- 2) Make sure tracking is in place by installing Google Analytics and taking a quick online crash course in using analytics. Also install Quantcast's pixel for more insight into your visitors and potential future use with digital marketing.
- 3) Establish funds in 2018 budget dedicated for Research to develop a complete picture of your visitor and potential visitor. Understand visitation barriers and learn which are your best feeder markets, but more importantly learn your potential visitors' interests to better target your visitors.
- 4) Establish a regular channel for fresh content for your owned media outlets. This includes itineraries and blogs for the website, email content, videos and imagery for social media. Sourcing material from the local media,

freelancers, state, and towns will be key. A sample editorial calendar is attached.

- 5) Grow your owned media audience. Capture emails, grow engagement on social media outlets and drive traffic to your website. Utilize boosted posts on Facebook to grow engagement targeting interests and demographics discussed in the target audience section.
- 6) Continue the FAM trips, but add Digital Influencers into the mix that have Front Range Escapers in their audience.
- 7) After website and Quantcast pixel are live for at least 90 days, launch a retargeting campaign through Quantcast that serves ads to people who have been to your site, your competitors' sites and like audiences.
- 8) Select a key initiative from this report and apply for additional funding from the CTO through their grant program.
- 9) Encourage local 501(c)3 organizations in tourism to apply for Google Grants.

2018 Priorities

- 1) Establish who will conduct research, content of the surveys, key markets and timeframe for research. Suggest conducting during peak planning or visitation months May-July.
- 2) Develop seasonal campaigns and tie in editorial content to reach visitors during their peak planning periods. Research will give exact number, but likely 60+ days in advance of trip. Each season should have its own theme and hit on the key reasons for visitation during that season.
- 3) Work with RootsRated or another content provider and distribute to generate outdoors content and distribute to your target audience through their channels.
- 4) Develop additional festivals with the community to drive overnight visitation. There should be a festival for every fruit grown and adult beverage made in Delta County.
- 5) Develop a partnership with the radio station broadcasting out of Paonia for a weekly segment on What's Happening in Delta County targeted at Grand Junction and farther out listeners.
- 6) Develop training program for those who work in hospitality. This program gives basic hospitality training to front-line workers like police, front desk staff, servers, etc and lures them in with a free pass for two to experience local attractions.

Delta County Brand Voice Guide

GOAL:

To create an over-arching framework for all Delta County Tourism communications that exemplifies the personality and values of Delta County.

WHO IS DELTA COUNTY?

Delta County speaks like an experienced outdoor guide. Whether guiding a hunting or hiking experience, you make everyone's trip special. You are friendly, knowledgeable, patient, enthusiastic and entertaining. You are a great storyteller. You've experienced a lot and are glad to impart that knowledge to others who are interested and respectful. You recognize the blessing of living every day in such a beautiful place and want to share that feeling with visitors.

WHAT IS DELTA COUNTY?

An epic outdoor playground filled with larger-than-life adventures and unforgettable scenery any time of year for all kinds of travelers. A home to creative and talented artisans of all kinds, who express their passion for Delta County through food and art. A place full of stories old and new, where people gather at the end of each day to share their experiences over fresh-local cuisine and beverages.

WHAT DELTA COUNTY ISN'T:

EXCLUSIVE: Everyone is welcome here. That's why it's fun. This isn't Telluride or Aspen. Whether someone has summited Everest or is out for their first-time back country hiking, that doesn't matter. It's about people enjoying themselves.

BORING: Boredom is the enemy of adventure and Delta County is full of adventure, so there's no reason to be bored.

SCATTERED: We're cool, calm and collected; not erratic, spastic or over-excited.

APATHETIC: We're cool, but not cold. We love life and we want to share that passion with people.

FLOWERY: We value creativity, but we're not here to provide an outlet for your repressed inner-poet.

TO NE:

CONFIDENT, BUT NOT COCKY: Delta County is a world-class outdoors destination. That means we've seen the rest of the country and we know we've got something really cool here.

DIRECT, NOT BLUNT: We want to speak to our audience in a straightforward manner, but not end up being curt or insensitive.

HONEST, NOT TACTLESS: We understand the destination and want to share that in an authentic, truthful way, but we don't need to sweep dirt out from under rugs or reveal anyone's dirty secrets.

CASUAL, NOT LAZY: Delta County is laidback, which is one of the reasons why people like us, but don't cross over from easy-going to slovenly.

POSITIVE, NOT IMPRACTICALLY OPTIMISTIC: We are promoting this area, but we don't want to be so caught up in that pursuit that we misrepresent things. We don't brag that we've got better lodging or restaurants than Aspen or Vail.

ENTHUSIASTIC, NOT OVERLY SWEET: We all love this place, that's why we choose to live here. We should honestly share why we love it, but not force our tone into being sickeningly sweet.

FUN, NOT VAPID: Our audience has a lot of choices when it comes to destination content, so it's important that our content is fun. But that doesn't mean everything is so fun all the time that it becomes empty-headed.

SPONTANEOUS, NOT ERRATIC: We're up for anything and like having fun, but we're not scary-crazy or out of control.

KNOWLEDGEABLE, NOT A KNOW-IT-ALL: We want to be good experts, not the kind of experts who talk over people's heads. Think about how Neil DeGrasse Tyson approaches astro-physics in a way that is both entertaining and informative to lay-people and strive for that.

INSPIRING, NOT FLOWERY: We want to inspire people with beautiful sensory details but not mire them in paragraphs of gratuitous prose.

EMPATHETIC, NOT OVERLY FEELY: We want to understand what visitors would want and try to give that to them. We want them to feel like they are part of this community when they visit. But we aren't a New Age self-help seminar.

EXPERIENCED, NOT TOO OLD TO HAVE A GOOD TIME: We give good advice because we've done the things we talk about. But just because we've been around for a while doesn't mean we're turning into curmudgeons.

INCLUSIVE, NOT GENERIC: We want everyone to feel welcome here, but we don't want to water ourselves down to the point of meaninglessness.

Above all else, Delta County strives to communicate in a way that is authentic and inspiring to the reader.

WEB/VISITORS GUIDE

When it comes to differentiating writing for the website or visitors guide versus content for the blog, there are some important differences. The writing for the website and visitors guide should embody the characteristics outlined in this document, however, because the web pages and articles are intended to be evergreen and more informational, content will tend to be more straightforward in its approach and tone.

VS.

BLOG:

The blog content offers more freedom stylistically, but that should not be understood as a call for lawless self-expression. The blog should emphasize storytelling in the style of travelogues and adventure journalism. Preference is still for use of second- and third-person, however, some first-person can be injected where appropriate, to emphasize the personal quality of the storytelling.

INTRODUCTION EXAMPLE:

DO: "Get outside and enjoy the crisp air, bright sun and fall colors in Delta County this Fall. Our peak season is longer than anywhere in the state with altitudes ranging from 4,000 to 12,000 in Delta County alone."

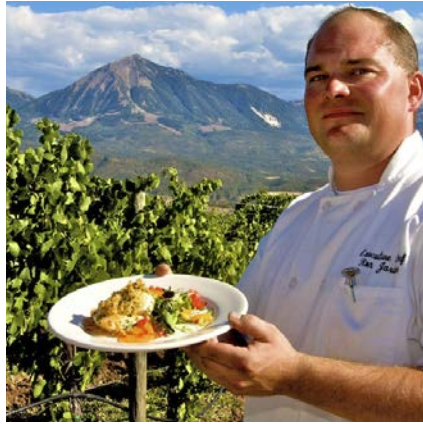
DON'T: "As summer tourists leave, the leaves on the trees begin to turn. Delta County is THE BEST place to see fall colors!"

DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE:

DO: "Start your morning off right with breakfast in Paonia at The Living Farm Cafe, a local favorite, with farm-fresh everything. For a locally sourced treat, try the Smoke Pork Green Chili Burrito. Go ahead, you'll burn it all off kayaking down the Gunnison River later anyways!"

DON'T: "There are plenty of places to eat. Restaurants are opening everywhere that are better than you can find in Aspen!"

IMAGERY: Fresh food, tracks, open space, experiences. Stunning scenery, outdoor fun and farm-freshness. (See next page)



ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:

EXPRESS PASSION: Content should always express passion Delta County. Writing should be enthusiastic about the subject matter and informative for the reader. It should not devolve into overly broad marketing-speak (ex: “Delta County is the most amazing place on earth!”)

WRITE WITH PURPOSE: Content should orient visitors to amazing experiences and help them enjoy themselves more while they are visiting. Writing should always serve the reader (potential visitors in some way. Ask yourself, am I serving a purpose to the reader and what is that purpose? Whether it’s recommendations on a unique thing to see/do, helpful tips for navigating the towns, or directions for better outdoor experiences, the value proposition of content should put the visitor first.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE: Content should exist for a purpose within the travel-planning funnel between inspiration and booking. There are many kinds of potential visitors: Some want to take a trip but don’t know where yet; others have a short-list of possible destinations and are looking to make a decision; and a few know exactly where they want to go (Delta and are looking to decide on accommodations, activities and more itinerary items. A piece of content on the Delta County tourism site should always serve at least one of those purposes, and some could be useful to more than one phase.

SPEAK DIRECTLY: Preference for second-person (you, your pronouns; speaking directly to the audience and injecting them into the setting. Content should be inclusive and make visitors feel like they are part of the community, not outsiders.

BE CLEAR: Be especially clear and concise when you’re asking readers to do something. Want them to order a visitor guide, sign up for the email list or read more related content? Tell them that and let them decide whether or not to follow through.

SHOW, DON’T TELL: Don’t just say that Delta County is really great. Use specific examples that reinforce the point you’re trying to make.

The difference between “Dave is an awesome chef.” And “Dave was nominated for the prestigious James Beard Award for Best New Chef last year.” Don’t use jargon unless it’s absolutely necessary; and if it’s necessary, explain the jargon for those readers who might not understand. This goes back to being inclusive—no one wants to feel like they don’t belong.

NO SLANG: Avoid unnecessary use of slang, idioms and colloquialisms, which can hinder comprehension by international audiences.

IN SUMMARY:

You are a great knowledgeable guide who is touring your best friend’s neighbor. You don’t know the person you are touring directly, but you want to help them have the best time, so they go back and tell your mutual friend how great their experience was and that they are truly grateful for having such an incredible guide.

Delta County Editorial Calendar Sample

ASSIGNMENT	Memorial Day Activities	Fishing in Delta	Pioneer Days	Best Spots to Photograph in Delta	Sipping Delta County
WEBSITE	Article about all the things to do	Article about best spots, guides, etc.	Article celebrates settlers and pioneer days	Article with great images, giving credit to photographers	Wineries and Cideries Article
FACEBOOK	"In Delta County its already sunny and warm! Memorial Day Weekend here's what's happening ...	"Fishing starts early on the Gunnison with some brookies and rainbow trout running strong"	"Pioneers, Cowboys, outhouse races and Cowboy Church on June 7&8 at the Crawford Pioneer Days"	"These 10 spots are simply picture perfect!"	"You don't have to go to Napa to get great wine and cider. Oh, and our views are better!"
INTERESTS	Weekend Getaways, Delta, West slope, Crested Butte, Telluride, Colorado	Fishing, outdoors, Bass Pro Shops, Rivers	Cowboys, Pioneers, History, Western, Country Music, Festivals	Photography, outdoors, ansel adams, national parks, hiking	Wine, cider, alcohol, wineries, hard cider, napa, sanoma, palisades
IMAGE	Photo of Parade	Image of fisherman	Image from event	Best Photos in slideshow	Great view with wine in shot
EMAIL SUBJECT	Subject: "Memorial Day Weekend Escape"	2nd Story "Fishing the Gunnison"	Festivals this Summer	Subject: 10 Picture Perfect Spots in Delta	Wineries, Cideries & Scenery
PR	Send release to Editorial Calendars 5280 writer	Give to Fishing Digital Influencer Coming in	Pitch as part of Western Events Roundup	Pitch to top ten type sites like Libability	Pitch roundup story of wineries with the best views
TOWNS	Ask to post to their sites and social media	Ask to email to their database	Coordinate with Crawford and Attraction	Ask towns to submit their best photos and Photographers to submit theirs	Ask to share with their followings